

## Editorial News

### Cheers for EU Drinks Industry

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has concluded that Japanese liquor taxes discriminate against imports. The WTO Report should help remove serious hurdles that currently hinder the European drinks industry's exports to Japan.

The Commission will now urge Japan to accept the WTO findings and to adapt its tax regime in next year's budget.

### Germany and the CEEC Countries

In a Press Release of 19 July reporting a conference in Austria, the German government has confirmed its support for the CEEC countries and emphasised that the changes in these countries after the fall of Communism have totally changed their foreign trade structure as more than half of it is now with the western industrialised nations, and half their European Union trade is with Germany.

Herr Walter Kittel, the German government's economic adviser for Easter Europe emphasised that ongoing reform in the CEEC countries should concentrate on:

- continuing the process of privatisation;
- creating structures to encourage the emergence of medium-sized firms;
- building an effective service sector, including finance and banking;
- extending social insurance to ease the burden of economic change on the public; and
- completing and streamlining the market economy.

This puts the onus on the EU and the international community at large to encourage these countries by opening up their markets to their products and services and helping them to build an efficient transport and communication infrastructure, where possible with the help of private capital.

### Free Movement and Schengen

With Norway and Iceland seeking to join the Schengen free movement zone in Europe, the European Parliament has adopted a joint resolution designed to ensure that this will not diminish the EU's own objective of ensuring free movement of persons in accordance with the Treaty.

MEPs are calling on the Council and the Commission to take the necessary steps to implement free movement within the EU. The resolution also

stresses that the integration of the Nordic countries into Schengen must not jeopardise the implementation of the Third Pillar of the Maastricht Treaty.

### 'Joint Venture' in Legal Firms

Stephenson Harwood, a London based international law firm has linked up with the Zagreb based firm of Žurić & Partners, one of the most prestigious law firms in Croatia. The two firms have developed a mutually beneficial professional relationship which has led to them formalising the relationship.

They have now signed an association agreement which commits each party to refer work to each other, to introduce clients to each other and to provide office facilities. Staff exchanges are proposed.

### European Institute of Public Administration Seminar

From 16 to 20 September, the Institute, in cooperation with the Brookings Institution of Washington, DC, USA, is organising its annual seminar on the US Governmental System and Transatlantic Relations. This is to be held at the Brookings Institution and aims to provide a better understanding of the basic institutions of American government at federal level.

The programme will also explore the major issues in the relations between the US and the EU.

The seminar is sponsored by the the European Commission, Brussels and the German Marshall Fund of the USA.

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#### Other Seminars

The European Institute of Public Administration will also be organising a series of seminars from September to December this year:

*19 & 20 September* - Recent Developments in EC Competition Law

*18 & 19 October* - Recent Developments in Community Labour Law

*28 & 29 October* - Public Procurement in Practice

*5 & 6 December* - Current Trends in the Case Law of the ECJ and the Court of First Instance

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