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CLEN ACTION 2

DISCUSSION MEETING OF THE 3RD PROFICIENCY TEST ON SPIRITS, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND ALCOHOL-BASED PREPARATIONS

26 January 2017 in Prague, Czech Republic

Minutes reported by ^{CLEN}TAS, under contract TAXUD/2016/DE/306.

First version submitted 15 February 2017.

Version 2 March 2017

Approved by the test coordinator, the meeting participants
and the representative of DG TAXUD Unit A4.

To be approved by the Head of DG TAXUD Unit A4.

1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

The meeting took place at the **Customs Technical Laboratory, General Directorate of Customs, in Prague**, Czech Republic. The participants were first welcomed on arrival in Prague, then during a get-together dinner the day before the meeting and on the meeting morning by Czech team (members of the Czech Customs Technical Laboratory and the Czech Customs 2020 coordinator).

The chairman (representative of the European Commission DG TAXUD) and the test coordinator (operational manager of the Czech Customs Technical Laboratory) opened the meeting.

The meeting discussions were conducted by the test coordinator.

The meeting agenda was presented and adopted.

- 1/ Presentation of the 3rd edition of the proficiency test on spirits, alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based preparations: background, objectives, samples, results and first draft report;
- 2/ Discussion and interpretation of the analytical results;
- 3/ Discussion on tariff classification;
- 4/ Conclusion of the meeting.

Previous meeting minutes

The previous meeting was the preparatory meeting of the 3rd proficiency test on spirits, alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based preparations. The meeting was held on 3 March 2016 in Prague. The meeting draft minutes were first submitted on 10 March 2016 and the final approved minutes were released on 1 April 2016.

2. Nature of the meeting

This meeting was organised to discuss the results of the CLEN (Customs Laboratories European Network) third proficiency test on spirits, alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based preparations.

This meeting was not public; it was restricted to one representative of the participating Customs Laboratories per country, the test coordinator (Czech) and a member of DG TAXUD Unit A4.

The meeting gathered 25 participants. The list of participants is provided in part 7.

3. List of points discussed

3.1 Presentation of the 3rd CLEN proficiency test on spirits

Presentation of the 3rd edition of the proficiency test on spirits, alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based preparations: background, objectives, samples, results and draft report.

The **discussion was supported by a presentation** prepared by the Czech test coordinator, **which is provided in Annex**. The reader may also refer to the **1st draft report of the test**.

Background and objectives

The first and second CLEN similar proficiency tests were performed respectively in 2009-2010 and in 2014. The conclusions of the former tests were briefly reminded (*Annex-slide 3*).

The decision to perform a 3rd test was taken during the CLEN 18th Plenary Meeting, held on 19 February 2016 (report TAXUD/83610/2016).

This 3rd test was performed in 2016 in order to provide and compare the analytical results obtained from many Customs Laboratories for the analyses of alcohol content, alcohols, volatile compounds, acids, sugars and other parameters in several alcoholic beverages or alcohol-based products.

The test concentrated on parameters or products for which there are no commercial proficiency test available and focused on correct tariff classification.

This meeting was organised for the participants to discuss the test results, with one representative invited per country having taken part in the inter-laboratory test.

Participants

45 Customs Laboratories, belonging to 26 countries, effectively took part in the test (*Annex-slide 4*)

Samples

The test was conducted on 4 samples (*Annex-slides 5 to 8*):

- **S1 - fruit in alcohol** (cherries, sugar and alcohol. 15 % vol. alcohol content),
- **S2 - vermouth type beverage** (Génépi. 40 % vol. alcohol content),
- **S3 - suspicious distillate** (Grappa spiked with isopropyl-alcohol. 38 % vol. alcohol content),
- **S4 - sweet sparkling wine** (produced from Muscat. 11.5 % vol. alcohol content).

The **purpose or specific interest of each type of sample** was reminded, for example the difficulty of a mix of solid and liquid product for the fruit in alcohol sample.

In the test report: “vermouth type beverage” will be used instead of “vermouth” as Génépi is considered as a vermouth type product but is not a “Vermouth” according to legislation.

Results and draft report

The test samples were shipped to the participants on 8 August 2016. The laboratories performed the analyses and had until 28 October 2016 to submit their results.

A first draft report of the test, including the test presentation, all the results, data treatments and statistics was sent to the participants on 10 January 2017.

This meeting aims at discussing and interpreting the test results.

Analytical results were provided for some 25 parameters in total:

- **Alcohol content** for all samples
- **Density** for vermouth type beverage, suspicious distillate and sweet sparkling wine
- **Ethanol and IPA** for suspicious distillate
- **Overpressure** for sweet sparkling wine
- **Glycerol** for vermouth type beverage and sweet sparkling wine
- **Butanediol** for vermouth type beverage and sweet sparkling wine
- **Isotope ratio (IRMS & NMR)** for fruits in alcohol, vermouth type beverage and sweet sparkling wine
- **C14 activity** for suspicious distillate
- **Volatile compounds and methanol** for suspicious distillate
- **Total acid** for sweet sparkling wine
- **Volatile acid** for suspicious distillate and sweet sparkling wine
- **Acids** (malic, lactic, succinic, tartaric and citric) for vermouth type beverage, sweet sparkling wine
- **Dry extract** for sweet sparkling wine
- **Sugars** (glucose, fructose, sucrose, invert sugar) for all samples
- **Alpha and beta-thujone** for vermouth type beverage
- **Classification (CN Code)** for all samples

3. II Discussion and interpretation of the analytical results

The results discussion was conducted per parameter.

3.II.1. Alcohol content

The main results are given in *Annex-slides 11 to 14*.

During the test, the unit for alcohol content initially chosen was kept (*Annex-slide 11*) even if it differs from the unit in the Additional note 4 to chapter 20.

S1: The laboratories' decision on the sample preparation and way to conduct the analysis had a significant impact on the results:

- Most of the laboratories performed the alcohol content determination on the mix of the liquid and solid part of the product. Mixing (using a simple house-hold blender) the liquid and solid and analysing the viscous mix is considered the most appropriate way to obtain a determination which is representative of the complete product.
- A few laboratories determined the alcohol content in the liquid and in the solid separately, and then, from the respective weight of the two parts calculated the average alcohol

content. This technique is also fine, providing that the weight is measured and expressed in grams and not in millilitres for the calculation (because the densities of the solid and liquid parts of the product are a priori different).

- But, some laboratories determined the alcohol content only on the liquid; which is not representative of the full product.

S2: the results were not so satisfactory, with 5 outliers observed out of 45 laboratories in total: a high number for a simple routine product. These laboratories must check their procedures, equipment and calibration.

S3: the results were rather good for the alcohol content in this sample.

S4: good results were obtained (except for one laboratory also having difficulties with the other samples).

The preparation of the sample to remove sparkling (gas bubbles) was discussed. Two good options were in particular mentioned and recommended:

- pouring the wine in a Erlenmeyer, shaking it by hand rather gently (removes a large part of the gas) and then setting for 1 to 3 minute in an ultrasonic bath to remove gas;
- or performing filtering (paper filter) with activated earth in the filter, also works perfectly.

The preparation should be quick, less than 5 minutes in total, not to lose alcohol.

Conclusions: the alcohol content results were satisfactory, except for the vermouth type beverage which has an unexpected high number of outliers.

For the fruit in alcohol product, 8 outliers were considered acceptable as most laboratories do not regularly faced such kind of solid-liquid mixtures.

Recommendations were given to prepare sparkling samples (cf. S4 above)

Recommendations were made for alcohol content determination in solid-liquid sample:

The complete sample has to be analysed.

- For heterogeneous samples that consist of solids only or samples of which a representative sample can be taken (like a series of identical chocolates filled with liqueur), the following sample portion is taken without sample preparation:
 - ca. 100 g if the alcohol content is not more than 60 l pure alcohol per 100 kg of sample
 - ca. 60 g if the alcohol content exceeds 60 l pure alcohol per 100 kg of sampleThe sample's weight is determined up to 0.01 g.

- For heterogeneous samples that consist of two different phases (like fruits in alcohol) or samples of which no representative sample can be taken (like a box with all different chocolates filled with liqueur), the whole sample is mixed in a blender to obtain a homogenous paste.

If there are stones in the fruit, the sample is cut by hand instead of using a blender or the stones are removed before blending and added afterwards to the paste.

The same sample portion is taken as described above.

Should a laboratory prefers to analyse separately the liquid and solid phase, then

- First weigh the respective liquid part and solid part. Calculate % mass of liquid sample and solid sample;
Then, distillate a known mass of liquid sample (flash distillation) and a known mass of solid sample (steam distillation) collecting 100 ml of distillate and read the density (% vol) in a digital densimeter.
To end, calculate the results from the alcohol content of the respective weights of the two parts (weight in grams to take into account the possible density differences).

In a future test, another solid-liquid sample should be included; maybe a difficult one including fruit stones (in such case, stones are part of the product and must also be included in the distillation step).

3.II.2. Ethanol

S3: results and comments in *Annex-slide 15* showing a standard deviation higher than in the euro-denaturant test. The hypothesis is that probably in this test some laboratories eluted the IPA together with the ethanol. However, the Euro-denaturant also contains IPA at the same concentration level - so this hypothesis is questionable.

Minor note: the first draft report had no error on Lab 2385 results reporting (Lab 2382 provided an analytical results but no comment, whereas Lab 2385 made a comment but did not gave a result).

Conclusion: the ethanol analysis by GC can still be improved. The recommendation for ethanol determination by GC made by the Fiscalis group during the euro-denaturant test should be followed.

3.II.3. Isopropyl alcohol (IPA)

S3 results are summarised in *Annex-slide 16* and show margin to improve the analysis.

However, one participant, with an outlier result, is not able to identify any mistake in their procedure.

Conclusion: IPA is a good marker for denaturation. The procedure established by the Fiscalis group is recommended.

In a future test, such determination should be repeated.

3.II.4. Density

S2: the results pattern (*Annex-slide 17*) is same as for the alcohol determination. Consequently, for the outlier laboratories, it was not the distillation part that was un-correct but rather their densimeter or the choice of calibration solutions for the densimeter (cf. part 3.II.1)

S3 & S4: (*Annex-slides 18 and 19*): the two products showed similar densities, but one outlier laboratory (Lab 4648) reported a much higher density for one and a much lower density for the other sample, which was puzzling (this laboratory should undertake a corrective action). On the overall, the density results were satisfactory.

3.II.5. Overpressure

The term "pressure" will be corrected for "**overpressure**" in the test report, as overpressure is the correct term and parameter measured.

S4: the results (*Annex-slide 20*) showed a large range of values, dispersed.

A recommendation was made should a future test include a sparkling product: the homogeneity control should be performed both on the density (a relevant parameter for homogeneity control) and also on the overpressure because it would help interpreting the results for this parameter. The analyses on 20 bottles, performed with a single equipment on the same day and by same operator would provide information on the natural dispersion of the product's overpressure.

3.II.6. Glycerol content

S4: (*Annex-slide 21*) 5 laboratories were outliers: probably an error of unit for two of them and one of them identified a problem with their new operator and has consequently since easily taken a corrective measure.

Conclusion: the results were satisfactory in terms of standard deviation, even if there were 5 outliers.

3.II.7. Butanediol content

S4: (*Annex-slide 22*) the results were comparable to the previous test for Butanediol, a marker metabolite to identify fermented products. The analysis is considered simple in wine. Only a few laboratories performed this analysis, as the customs laboratories are not all equipped with the right HPLC column. Several laboratories only rarely have this determination to perform, and when required they are using an enzymatic method.

3.II.8. Isotope ratio

Isotopic determinations were performed on 3 samples, by 7 to 8 laboratories (depending on equipment availability), by IRMS or by NMR (*Annex-slides 23 to 26*).

The standard deviations obtained are comparable to the former tests, as well as to other isotopic testing schemes or the OIV results. By NMR (D/H)I and (D/H)II ratios are good too.

Conclusion: the techniques are well established and well performed by the equipped laboratories and the results were satisfactory.

3.II.9. Determination of C14 activity by liquid scintillation method

S3: (*Annex-slide 27*) the determination of C14 by LSC was performed by 9 laboratories (those equipped).

Thanks to the Belgium Customs Laboratory, the following table and elements were discussed with the meeting participants.

The results showed wide scatter and 3 physically impossible values:

Lab code	Result submitted	Comment	Result in the correct unit (dpm/ g alcohol)
2218	7.77		
3567	23.73	Impossible value	(no value)
4784	7.12		
5155	14.90	Maybe expressed per g/C ?	7.77
5451	6.91		
5536	6.55		
5562	13.32	Maybe expressed per g/C ?	6.95
5755	4.64		
5953	7.09		

The physical limit relates to the specific activity of bio-carbon: ca. 14 dpm/g C or 7,3 dpm/g ethanol. The unit in which the results should be expressed is dpm/g abs. alcohol (with 2 decimals place -- 3 significant figures).

Besides, confusion must be avoided: g absolute alcohol is not g carbon.

In this test, the presence of IPA probably affected the results, and it is unclear whether it should be taken into account.

The effect is however limited (for Lab 5536: 6.55 dpm/g ethanol + IPA \geq 6.80 dpm/g ethanol; for Lab 5953: 6.83 dpm/g ethanol + IPA \leq 7.09 dpm/g ethanol). IPA was synthetic and thus lowering the mean value of C14 in the product.

If the standard deviation is re-calculated from the corrected dataset (for 8 laboratories, all values in bold in the above table), then the results are:

- **Assigned value = 6.85 dpm/g**
- **Standard deviation = 0.99 dpm/g**

And these data can be compared to the results of the previous test edition of 2014:

Sample F (flavour):	Assigned value = 7.1 dpm/g of ethanol (22.8 cBq/g C) Standard deviation = 0.13 dpm/g (0.5 cBq/g C)
Sample S (fruit spirit):	Assigned value = 7.1 dpm/g of ethanol (22.8 cBq/g C) Standard deviation = 0.28 dpm/g (0.9 cBq/g C)
Sample N (Neutral alcohol):	Assigned value = 6.98 dpm/g of ethanol (22.3 cBq/g C) Standard deviation = 0.25 dpm/g (0.8 cBq/g C)

The contractor, TAS, will first ask the 3 laboratories for confirmation/information (two for suspected wrong unit - Lab 5155 and 5562; and one for impossible result - Lab 3567).

TAS will keep the results as they are in the test report; and will add the above elements, interpretation and corrected results together with their data treatment.

3.II.10. Volatile Compounds (according to Reg. (EC) No 2870/2000)

S3: (*Annex-slide 28*) the results showed a few errors, such as a 10 fold factor which are obviously not equipment, calibration or technical problem, but simple reporting or calculating errors. It was recommended to follow the method described in Regulation (EC) No 2870/2000 precisely.

Request for a future test: In the former tests, the results of the individual volatile compounds were requested. For this test only the sum of volatile compounds was requested. However, for some laboratories, accreditation is obtained from the individual compounds' results. For a future test, the **individual volatile compounds results** (higher alcohols and volatiles) will again be requested.

3.II.11. Methanol

S3: (*Annex-slide 29*) a few erroneous results were linked to different units (/100 g anhydrous alcohol; /100 g alcohol). For most products, reporting results /100 g ethanol or /100 g alcohol would be the same; but for this Sample 3 with the presence of IPA, the results differ. For this test, in order to obtain comparable results, the unit required was /100 g ethanol.

It was reminded that in the Regulation, the results are in g/hectolitre of alcohol.

Conclusion: the test results were satisfactory. The outliers were probably linked to problems of reporting units.

3.II.12. Total acid

S4: (*Annex-slide 30*) in this test, 2 decimal places were requested in the results, but from the analytical protocol and calculation the total acidity only have one significant decimal.

It was agreed that the test report will be kept unchanged, except for the addition of an information note. In a future test, only one decimal place will be asked.

3.II.13. Volatile acidity

S3 & S4: (*Annex-slide 31*) the results for volatile acidity were satisfactory and comparable to the performance in previous test.

3.II.14. Acids

Organic acids determinations results are summarised in *Annex-slides 32 to 36*.

Malic acid: Both HPLC and enzymatic methods were used, with a predominance of HPLC.

A **technical recommendation** was given by a laboratory: **malic acid interferes with fructose**. Consequently a laboratory using a UV detector from HPLC method might obtain a higher value than real content of malic acid. A preparation to remove sugars (ion exchange) is required (to get rid of the fructose before the malic acid analysis).

Lactic acid: the standard deviation observed was good.

Succinic acid: the standard deviation was much better than in the previous tests and there was no outlier: a good performance in this test.

Tartaric acid: the standard deviation was comparable to the previous tests and there was only one outlier: a good result.

Citric acid: good results obtained too; better than for the previous tests in which the standard deviations observed were very variable, depending on the products.

3.II.15. Dry extract

S4: (*Annex-slide 37*) satisfactory results were obtained, with a standard deviation comparable to the former test and a reasonable number of outliers compared to the number of laboratories.

3.II.16. Sugars

Results on sugars are summarised in *Annex-slides 38 to 41*.

Glucose, fructose: good results were obtained for the standard deviation when a significant amount of sugar is present in the product (the few high standard deviations are linked to the low content in sugars). No significant difference was observed between the enzymatic and HPLC results.

Sucrose: the results were good (no possible comparison with previous tests).

In the test report; for sucrose in S2, the table was correct but the inserted graph (erroneous) will be replaced in the 2nd version of the report.

Invert sugar: was requested to be expressed as sucrose/100 g of sample. From the laboratories comments, different ways of calculating were used.

Invert sugar (IS) – calculation used:

1/ $IS = (glucose + fructose) \times 0.95$

2/ Regulation (EC) No 900/2008: $IS = sucrose + 0.95 \times (fructose + glucose)$

3/ Regulation (EC) No 635/2016: $IS = glucose + fructose + maltose + lactose + (sucrose \times 1.05)$

The coordinator received questions during the performance of the test and recommended using the first one (1/; not from Regulation, but from the invert sugar chemical definition).

This point was further discussed during the meeting:

- Invert sugar correspond to the first line formula (1/).
- The formula for Meursing products (2/) is not to be applied for the spirits and alcohol containing products.
But this formula (2/) is recommended for Sample 1. For this fruit in alcohol sample, the total amount of sugars is calculated according to the Additional note 2a of Chapter 20. Results are expressed in % /mass. This recommendation makes sense with the customs tariff nomenclature.
- The last formula (3/) is included in a Regulation which has been established in 2016, during the performance of this proficiency test – and so for this test, the results and report should not be modified.

Besides, the participants mentioned that none of the represented Customs Laboratories had been consulted nor informed during the preparation of this new Regulation.

For future work and tests: the new Regulation (3/), which apply to beverages, is to be followed.

Addition to the test report: results expressed according to Regulation (EC) No 635/2016:

The participants were interested in keeping the results as they are in the current test draft report, as they were relevant in 2016, but they were also interested in adding the results as they would be if the third equation (3/) from the new Regulation (EC) No 635/2016 was applied.

At first thought it was suggested asking the participants to send new sets of **results for invert sugar in samples S2 and S3 calculated with formula 3/ (and expressed as g/L unit)**. But, considering that the amount of maltose and lactose in these two samples is null or negligible; it is possible to calculate S2 and S3 invert sugar content according to the new Regulation from the detailed individual results already submitted by the participants.

TAS will consequently perform the calculation of invert sugar in S2 and S3 according to Regulation (EC) No 635/2016, perform the statistics and include the outcome in the test report.

3.II.17. Thujones

S2: (*Annex-slide 42*) only a few laboratories performed the thujone determination, which was surprising as most are equipped with GC-MS (but in several counties, it is not a routine analysis and the laboratories have no product to control). It is difficult to conclude, but it was a good exercise for the laboratories to make sure they were able to identify the presence of thujone.

As regards the quantification of alpha- and beta-thujone, the laboratories performed well as the product contained alpha-thujone in a quantifiable amount whereas it contained beta-thujone in concentration near the quantification limit.

3. III Discussion on tariff classification

CN codes suggested and comments are provided in *Annex-slides 43 to 46*.

Classification of S1 – fruit in alcohol

The correct classification from the analytical data clearly showed the product belong to 2008 60 sub-heading.

A laboratory confirmed the obvious typing error in the chapter number '2208 60 11' was supposed to be '2008 60 11'.

The crucial point for the classification was the presence in high amount of the cherries. The product was to be declared as cherries.

Classification of S2 – Vermouth type beverage

26 % of the laboratories classified it in heading 2205 and 74 % in heading 2208.

The correct heading was 2208.

Then, because of the high amount of sugar, it is classified as liquor. Généri is also defined in Regulation No 110/2008. The correct classification was 2208 70 10.

Classification of S3 – suspicious distillate

58% of the laboratories classified it in heading 2207 and 42% in heading 2208.

This Grappa was spiked with IPA at 3.87 l/hl.

The HS Explanatory Note 2207 states that “Ethyl alcohol and other spirits, denatured, are spirits mixed with substances to render them unfit for drinking but not to prevent their use for industrial purposes. The denaturants used vary in different countries according to national legislation. They include wood naphtha, methanol, acetone, pyridine, aromatic hydrocarbons (benzene, etc.), colouring matter.”

The difficulty was to decide if this sample was “denatured” and “unfit for drinking”.

No Member State approves the alcohol denaturation only with IPA alone in such (small) amount.

In addition, from a sensory test, it was obviously possible to drink S3.

The product is consequently fit for drinking in a Customs understanding (not from a health and safety understanding).

The definition of denaturation differs for Customs and for Excise. If the sample can be considered as denatured from a Customs point of view, then for the Excise, the level of IPA is very low and so the product would be considered as not ‘properly denatured’.

In conclusion, for Sample 3, the test participants cannot state which of the heading 2207 and 2208 is the ‘correct’ one.

The decision would differ depending on how the product would be presented on the market.

Should S3 be presented on the market as ‘alcoholic beverage for human consumption’ it would be rejected and have to be destroyed. The participants discussed several other examples found in their market product controls, including vodkas or whiskies.

The participants agreed that a clarification/criteria is required for such cases: a limit should be set to clarify the definition of term “denatured” and “unfit for drinking” for purpose of customs classification, especially for low sensory active and naturally present substances such as IPA, ethyl acetate, t-butanol or methanol.

Classification of S4 – sweet sparkling wine

From the analytical results the classification should be 2204 10 96.

Some laboratories considered that the information on the label were un-sufficient. It was reminded that when a laboratory is not in position to prove the contrary of the label mentions (with scientific evidence) then the laboratory can only state it complies with the label. In this case, no analyse could prove that this wine did not come from Muscat grape.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

Proficiency test conclusions

Main conclusions on the test:

Satisfactory results were achieved in the CLEN 3rd proficiency test on spirits, alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based preparations.

The standard deviations for all parameters were good or acceptable.

The performance of the determinations of total acid, volatile acid and butanediol could be improved.

The participants also reiterated their interest in such test tailored to the needs of the Customs Laboratories and which provide valuable information and recommendations on numerous analytical determinations (advice on sample preparation procedures, operating conditions, choice of methods, etc.) in addition to the main purposes (list of purposes per parameter provided in the draft report and in Annex -slides 47 and 48) of taking part in such test: to obtain or keep methods' accreditation, for quality control and also for classification purposes.

Main conclusions on Tariff classification from the test:

It was first reminded that **several laboratories are not responsible for tariff classification**: these laboratories perform the analytical determinations and then the classification is done by another Customs department.

This should be taken into account, as the laboratories should not be 'evaluated' for their performance in tariff classification. The CLEN test reports are issued only in the CLEN and European Commission services; they are not published; nevertheless, to respect transparency policy, an economic operator asking the European Commission will be provided with a copy of the test report (anonymous report). A **warning note** will be added to the test report, stating that most of the laboratories are not in charge of tariff classification.

From the test work on a suspicious distillate (S3), a request was made: the **definition of "denatured" or "unfit for drinking" should be clarified for the purpose of Customs classification**.

DG TAXUD representative **asked for the addition** (in the test report annexes or as a separate document) **of the reasoning for the different suggestions of tariff classification** made on this test samples. The contractor, with the help of the test coordinator and maybe one or two other laboratories will try to draft such annex).

Training on the classification of alcoholic beverages would be of interest for the laboratories.

Future 4th proficiency test

The participants insisted on the **importance of the preparatory meeting** for such test organisation.

The future test will be **similar in principle**: tailored to Customs needs, with the same parameters and performed on several matrices.

As regards **parameters**, the same should be kept. In particular, the C14 determination by LSC would be kept, as an increasing number of laboratories are equipped or intend to purchase the equipment, and as there is no commercial proficiency test on this determination in beverages.

As regards **samples**, the following suggestions were made:

- a solid-liquid sample (for example chocolate filled with liquor. Should such a solid-liquid sample be confirmed, short recommendations will be given on sample preparation);
- a liquor with a high amount of sugar (such as those with egg yolk);
- a denatured alcohol sample - made with IPA and Bitrex for example;
- keeping one fermented beverage;
- adding a mixture of fermented and distilled beverage (in particular for the butanediol determination interest).

Other points

The participants thanked DG TAXUD, the coordinator and the contractor for the organisation of this proficiency test.

DG TAXUD representative mentioned a new Regulation to be published related to REACH and the use of methanol: Regulation amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards methanol.

According to this future Regulation, methanol will be forbidden in denatured alcohol, in concentration equal to or greater than 0.6% by weight. The quantification of methanol in spirits is consequently a parameter for which the controls must be pursued.

5. Next steps

A second draft report of the test will be provided by the end of February 2017 to the test participant laboratories (and the meeting attendees) for comments or approval. The contractor will draft this 2nd test report, except for the conclusions which will be drafted by the test coordinator.

Once the second draft report validated by the participants, it will be submitted to the final validation of DG TAXUD Head of Unit A4, before issuing the final report.

The final report of the CLEN 3rd proficiency test on spirits, alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based preparations is expected to be available in April 2017.

6. Next meeting

There is no need for another meeting.

7. List of participants

European Commission

Mr Hervé SCHEPERS TAXUD A4

Member States

Ms Inge VINCKIER	Belgium
Ms Albena DIMITROVA	Bulgaria
Ms Ana GRGUREVIĆ KONJEVIČŽDEK	Croatia
Ms Rebecca KOKKINOFTA	Cyprus
Mr Jiří MAZÁČ	Czech Republic
Mr Stanislav ONDROUŠEK	Czech Republic
Mr Roman SCHOULA	Czech Republic
Ms Andrea KOBRLOVÁ	Czech Republic
Ms Laine PARTS	Estonia
Mr Timo AHOLAINEN	Finland
Ms Christina VLACHOU	Greece
Ms Mónika CZERMANN-TÓTH	Hungary
Mr David SAVAGE	Ireland
Mr Alessandro TERRACCIANO	Italy
Ms Iveta LAPELE	Latvia
Mr Rolandas JURTAUTAS	Lithuania
Ms Ilda DIAS	Portugal
Mrs Crina Ioana HOTOIU	Romania
Ms Tamara VRANOVÁ	Slovakia
Ms Marjetka BIRK	Slovenia
Mr Jesús LAMANA	Spain
Mr David MILES	United Kingdom

Contractor

Ms Delphine SALVAT-BRUNAUD	CLEN Technical Assistance Secretariat (Eurofins)
Ms Elvire MESSINEO	CLEN Technical Assistance Secretariat (BIPEA)

Excused

Mr Franz-Michael SIEBERTH	Austria
Mr Erik BJARNOV	Denmark
Ms Sophie ROSSET	France
Ms Vincent BRUNEAU	France
Ms Nadine VARRA	France (CLEN Action Leader)
Mr Martin BUHMANN	Germany
Mr Ruud de GROOT	Netherlands
Mr Pzemyslaw SOLTYS	Poland
Mr Arnvid Gunar LIE	Norway

Annex – Presentation of the test results during the 26 January meeting

Slides of the presentation of the test results and comments by the coordinator

Refer to the separate electronic document (separate file for the draft version of the meeting minutes; will be combined in a single pdf file once the minutes approved).