



Press release

BEER, SIMEI: BOOM IN CRAFT BEERS BUT A "SINGLE TEXT" NECESSARY

(Milan, 18 November 2022). In the last 7 years, the number of companies in the beer sector has more than doubled and the average monthly expenditure on beer in Italy has risen by 23%, recording an increase in volumes consumed between 2017 and 2021 of 127%. Yet, the current beer sector is in conflict with an obsolete regulatory framework, which in some cases is a good sixty years old. Photographed today at SimeI organised by the Unione italiana vini (Fiera Milano, 15-18 November) in a conference on craft beers held by Unionbirrai along with the UIV, Italian beer is now asking for a change of pace in terms of legislation in order to ensure the development and competitiveness of the sector.

For the general secretary of the Unionbirrai Association, Simone Monetti: "The time has come to regulate Italian legislation on brewing with a Single Text on Beer, as was previously done for wine. The current legislation on beer as a product is obsolete and stratified, and is often incomplete and contradictory, misleading in the presentation of products to the consumer. Besides inhibiting innovation - he concluded -, this is an obstacle to the marketing of beers produced in Italy, favouring the entry of more innovative proposals from foreign markets". Among the examples, the parameters in force (dating back to the 70s) in terms of acidity, which are likely to hold back the segment of sour beers produced in our country, or those on carbon dioxide, which penalise products aged in casks with a minimum retention of CO₂. According to the agricultural representative of ICQRF Emilia Romagna and Marche, Amleto Conocchiarri, most of the regulatory system is based on a law of 1962 (n° 1354 and subsequent amendments and additions: Hygiene rules for the production and trade of beer) and on the D.P.R. (presidential decree) 30-12-1970 (n° 1498: Determination of the characteristics and requirements of the different types of beer), provisions over than half a century old.

According to the focus on craft beers carried out by the Craft Beers Observatory ObiArt-DAGRI of the University of Florence and presented to SimeI by the coordinator, Silvio Menghini, the Italian beer sector currently has 1,326 companies and just over 9,600 direct employees (data in October 2022) and is made up of small and microbreweries (representing 8 out of 10 companies while employing only 19% of employees) and medium/large companies. In 2018, craft breweries in Italy produced between 400,000 and 600,000 hectolitres with a highly localised distribution of the product and almost entirely destined for the domestic market. The typical Master Brewer is about 40 years old, has a diploma or a degree, and has been in the business since 2010. The crisis that hit the entire sector in 2020 has led to a reduction in the number of employees in the sector associated with large-scale industry, but not for farm breweries that today represent 22% of national breweries, an increase of 233% in the last 7 years. On the consumption side, it is estimated that households spend on beer in general about 30% of the budget for alcoholic beverages (24 euros per month in 2021).