

## Zero Zone - Brewing a better Europe

Written by Stefan Orłowski on 14 October 2019 in Opinion Plus  
Opinion Plus

The new European Commission is planning to turn young peoples' aspirations into action, making clear that this mandate aims to provide answers to key issues facing all European citizens. HEINEKEN Europe stands firmly behind this vision.



Photo credit: HEINEKEN

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The new European Commission is planning to turn young peoples' aspirations into action, making clear that this mandate aims to provide answers to key issues facing all European citizens. Commission-President designate Ursula von der Leyen has the ambition to lead the transition to a healthy planet and new digital world. At HEINEKEN Europe we stand firmly behind this vision.

This is a challenge we are more than ready to accept. As an industry, we have always taken a collaborative approach to addressing the needs of consumers and a responsible approach to consumption and marketing. We stand ready to work transparently alongside the new Commission and Parliament, to share knowledge and to actively contribute. Together we can Brew a Better World for European citizens.

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European brewers face three key issues at the start of this mandate; health and wellbeing, responsible consumption and sustainability. At HEINEKEN we are addressing all three. We want to ensure that our products fully respond to consumer needs and allow them to make informed choices. We have decided, for example, ahead of any regulatory requirements, to provide full consumer access to ingredients and nutritional information on packaging for all our European beer and cider brands. It is part of our strategy to provide variety and choice through our Zero Zone range of low and no-alcohol beverages, catering for different occasions, to create a sustainable long-term business.

We strive to make moderation cool. In that context, we understand the weight of our brand and influence that it wields. As signatories to strict responsible marketing codes we take concrete steps to prevent under-age audiences from being exposed to, and consuming, alcohol, both online and offline across Europe. In fact, 10 percent of our media and advertising spend is committed to promoting responsible consumption.

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In parallel, by 2030 we have committed to increase our share of renewable thermal energy and electricity from the current level of 14 percent to 70 percent. We aim to reduce our CO2 footprint in production by 80 percent, find innovative solutions to reduce the environmental impact of our packaging, decrease our water footprint and replenish the water we use for our operations. The European Green Deal is a bold step forward, and an ambitious challenge, demanding deep changes and European leadership in the coming five years. Our view is that this is in line with the demands and interests of consumers too.

HEINEKEN and the wider beer industry are woven into the fabric of European history and have seen the benefits that a united Europe has brought for citizens and businesses alike. As the leading brewer in Europe, our history dates back over 150 years. Much has changed in that time, but the beer industry continues to thrive. We directly employ over 28,000 people in Europe and with many more jobs supported in the hospitality, agriculture and logistics industries. Our ambition for Europe and HEINEKEN alike is one of sustainable growth, wellbeing and collaboration, and we look forward to working closely with all our partners in the years to come.

Let's brew a better Europe!

### **About the author**

Stefan Orłowski is Europe President at HEINEKEN International

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