



Heineken Exits Russia, Sells Operations for 1 Euro

August 25, 2023



The Heineken brewery in Yekaterinburg. **Donat Sorokin / TASS**

Dutch brewer Heineken on Friday announced it was pulling out of Russia after selling its operations to the Arnest Group, Russia's largest manufacturer of cosmetics, household goods and metal packaging.

Like other major Western companies, Heineken pledged to leave the Russian market following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, but it drew criticism earlier this year after a Dutch investigative website reported that it was continuing its Russian sales.

The company apologized in March for creating "ambiguity" on its vow to leave the country, saying it was hoping to secure jobs for its Russian employees but struggling to find a buyer for its Russian business.

Heineken said on Friday that it had finally sold its Russia business to Arnest Group for a symbolic one euro, along with a three-year employment guarantee to 1,800 Russian employees.

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“The transaction has received all the required approvals and concludes the process Heineken initiated in March 2022 to exit Russia, incurring an expected total cumulative loss of 300 million euros,” Heineken said in a statement.

Heineken, the world's second-largest beer company, had suspended new investments, production, advertising and sale of its namesake brand in Russia "in response to the continued escalation of the war."

“We are happy with this deal. We take good care of our people and leave in a responsible way,” said top executive Dolf van den Brink, according to the daily *Algemeen Dagblad*.

“I don't believe there is one other company that leaves Russia for 1 euro,” he added.

Heineken had said it expected a loss of around 300 million euros (\$319 million) from the sale.

The sale follows the July seizure of Danish brewer Carlsberg's Russian operations and its transfer to Kremlin-linked executives.

Since December, the Kremlin has forced foreign companies leaving the country to sell their assets to Russian buyers at a 50% discount and charged them an exit fee of at least 10% of the transaction value.

AFP contributed to this reporting.

Original url:

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