

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Pernod Ricard champions responsible drinking through student outreach

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Pernod Ricard is encouraging students to drink responsibly. Image courtesy of Pernod Ricard

By STAFF REPORTS

Wine and spirits group Pernod Ricard is raising awareness for the dangers of excessive imbibing through a renewed partnership with Erasmus Student Network.

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For the eighth year in a row, Pernod Ricard will work with the student association on a program of peer-led education events aimed at preventing excessive alcohol consumption. So far, the initiative has already reached 367,000 students in Europe, with an independent survey finding 61 percent have changed their habits as a result of the initiative.

Party with a purpose

Pernod Ricard, which includes products such as the Glenlivet Scotch whiskies and Perrier-Jout Champagnes, signed a renewed agreement with Erasmus Student Network (ESN) in Brussels on Jan. 24.

Together, ESN and Pernod Ricard have launched upwards of 580 "responsible soirees," where students are given advice and tools to achieve responsible drinking habits.

A Pernod Ricard-sponsored survey of 30,000 students conducted by a researcher from Louvain-la-Neuve Catholic University found that more than two-thirds of respondents would not be considered binge drinkers. Almost nine in 10 students said the Responsible Party program is useful and about half say it helps raise awareness.

ESN's Responsible Party program

Per the European School Survey on Alcohol and other Drugs, binge drinking among students in France in particular has dropped 30 percent since 2011. Students in general show a reduced consumption of alcohol from 2011's figures.

"The partnership we renewed with ESN on the Responsible Party program is crucial for me," said Alexandre Ricard, CEO and chairman of Pernod Ricard, in a statement. "First, because it falls within Pernod Ricard's unwavering policy in favor of an increasingly responsible and therefore convivial consumption; and second, because students are largely exposed to the risk of irresponsible consumption.

"The various signs suggesting a reduction in binge drinking at the European level are a result of effective actions like ours, which associates committed industry players with associations and NGOs around relevant and useful prevention projects," he said.

With alcohol abuse a serious concern, particularly among younger consumers, many spirits brands have taken up the cause.

Mot Hennessy USA and fine alcohol distributor The Charmer Sunbelt Group are working to raise awareness for the dangers and health concerns associated with serving alcohol to underage consumers.

The partnership will promote the Federal Trade Commission and The Century Council's "We Don't Serve Teens" campaign in the New York area, with the centerpiece a PSA from Sen. Kristen Gillibrand. Taking a stand on an issue that directly relates to its products may help the association stick in consumers' minds ([see story](#)).

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