

# Deposit return around the world: Good for business



## What is deposit return?

Businesses today face an increasingly challenging environment. Finding ways to cut costs, make better use of materials and build a positive reputation are crucial to future success.

A deposit return system for single use drinks containers means consumers pay a small deposit on cans and bottles, which is then fully refunded when they return it to a reverse vending machine, a shop or other facility.

Deposit return systems operate in around 40 other countries and regions around the world from Croatia to Australia, Canada to Fiji. Deposit return is proven to be effective in increasing recycling and reducing litter, as well as creating a range of opportunities for business.

Businesses large and small in the dozens of countries and regions with deposit return systems understand that it benefits them, as well as society and the environment.

'The deposit system in Norway has been operating since 1999 and is wholly owned by beverage manufacturers and food retailers. Infinitum is a private company set up to deliver the deposit return system, from collections to reprocessing at our sorting plant. Norway's geography and population is similar to Scotland's and we use our existing retail distribution networks to collect empty drinks containers that have been returned for a deposit to retailers and restaurants so no extra journeys are needed.

Deposit return has created a stronger circular economy in Norway, where deposit return is owned and managed by business. There are also other benefits. It has become part of the way we live in Norway, and littering of drinks containers is rare because they are worth money.

Countries in Europe with deposit return enjoy 85-97% of drinks containers recycled, compared to around 40-75% in countries without deposit return. Those plastic bottles, for example, often end up in landfill or as litter – used only once, as opposed to the 17 times plastic bottles in deposit return systems go through the system.

Infinitum plays a key role in delivering an effective deposit return system that is good for businesses in Norway.'

**Kjell-Olav Maldum, Director, Infinitum**

'We feel an obligation to take care of our country, society and nature. That is why we wanted to design a deposit return system that would work as well as possible for citizens, producers, importers and traders. Today, we are proud of a deposit return system, which brings us closer to a cleaner, more beautiful and more modern Lithuania.

A deposit return system in Scotland would benefit its people, countryside, producers and manufacturers. Any successful, modern business should be eager to get involved, as it will benefit them.'

**Saulius Galadauskas, Head of Lithuanian Brewers Association, Chairman of the Lithuanian deposit return system**

'South Australia has operated a Container Deposit Scheme for 40 years and is the envy of every other State in the Commonwealth. It has protected the environment and virtually removed beverage containers from the litter stream and landfill. The public fully support the scheme, which is currently achieving return rates of more than 80%.

Thousands of tonnes of valuable resources have been diverted from landfill, reducing the need for further finite natural resources. Recently the Northern Territory introduced a similar scheme and New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia have committed to introduce similar schemes in their States as soon as possible.'

**Bob Naismith, Executive Officer, Recyclers of South Australia Inc**

'Our deposit system has proven itself. Consumers and manufacturers have become accustomed to it. It has led to a significantly higher recovery rate of metal and PET beverage containers. Today, 96% of cans and PET bottles are recycled in Germany. One-way packaging no longer ends up in the landscape as litter, but has moved from waste to resource.'

**Bund Getränkeverpackungen der Zukunft**

Association of Beverage Packaging of the Future, Members include: Aldi, Lidl, Lekkerland, beverage producers MEG, PepsiCo, Red Bull, Ball Packaging and Rexam.

## Businesses in Scotland are becoming increasingly aware of the benefit a Scottish deposit return system would offer them. The statements below are from some of the businesses who are 'Have You Got The Bottle?' campaign partners.

'As a small and growing Scottish restaurant chain with locations in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Stirling we handle a lot of empty drinks containers. As a result, we pay a significant amount of money each year to have empties uplifted for recycling.

A deposit return system in Scotland would likely mean these uplifts are provided for free by those who run the system - as is the case in countries who already have deposit return. This would save Boozy Cow a lot of money and might even bring in a small amount of extra cash instead.

I should think anyone in the Scottish restaurant trade would find that prospect equally appealing. Deposit return works for businesses like ours in other countries. It's time for deposit return here.'

**Boozy Cow**

'Since Barney's was originally founded in 2010 we have been consciously looking for ways to minimise the impact our manufacturing has on the environment.

We have introduced new cleaning techniques to reduce energy & chemical usage, consolidated deliveries through another distributor and are currently involved in a project to utilise Scottish-grown beans as an alternative, more sustainable source of starch than barley.

It is important for even small manufacturing companies to add their voice to the demands for more environmentally-friendly ways to operate, such as the deposit return system. Whilst on our own we are far too small to change the way the brewing industry operates, the collective voice of our industry will lead to changes. For that reason, we're happy to be partners with the 'Have You Got The Bottle?' campaign.'

**Barney's Beer**

'Changeworks Recycling operates a high-quality recycling service across Central Scotland. A Scottish deposit return system would complement our high-quality ethos and maximising the capture of recyclable materials is a major step towards building Scotland's sustainable circular economy.'

**Changeworks Recycling**

'The New Leaf Co-op is a small wholefood shop based in Edinburgh. Like many other food shops, we are part of our local community and are constantly looking for ways to improve our business as well as our community.

A Scottish deposit return system ticks a lot of boxes - it's good for our business, good for our customers and good for our environment. We would welcome the opportunity to take back our customers' empty drinks containers, for which they receive a small deposit. No doubt such a system would be popular with existing customers, but it would also likely attract new ones and would increase footfall and probably sales in our shop.'

**New Leaf Co-op**

'Luvians is a small, family-owned bottle shop in Fife. We are rooted in our community and supported the carrier bag charge, which has been good for our business, the environment and our customers. A Scottish deposit return system would be of similar value. It works for shops like ours in other countries and it would work for businesses like ours in Scotland. We would sign up tomorrow if one were introduced here.'

**Luvians Bottle Shop**

### About 'Have You Got The Bottle?'

Launched in late 2015, 'Have You Got The Bottle?' campaigns for a deposit return system to be introduced in Scotland. The campaign is led by The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland and includes a growing coalition of several dozen partners. They include organisations from the business, recycling, charity and education sectors, together representing around 300,000 people. More importantly, 'Have You Got The Bottle?' represents the voice of the nearly 79% of people in Scotland who said they would like us to have our own deposit return system.

[www.haveyoutothebottle.org.uk](http://www.haveyoutothebottle.org.uk)



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**Have  
You  
Got  
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