

EQUITY NOTE: ZWACK UNICUM

Recommendation: HOLD (unchanged)

Target price (12M): HUF 17,054 (revised)

27 May 2021

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We revised slightly down our 12M target price to HUF 17,054 from the previous TP of 17,083 HUF/share for Zwack Unicum (Zwack HB; ZWCG.BU).

As Zwack showed resilience in terms of revenues in January-March 2021 again, we revised slightly up our sales forecast for the coming years. The restrictions introduced last November – e.g. night curfew, and the prohibition of the on-site consumption – hit bars and restaurants again, and affected the whole calendar Q1 as Hungary slid into the third wave of pandemic from February. Vanishing on-trade sales however did not hammer down Zwack's revenues as they had done during last year's lockdown: strong consumer demand generated considerable growth in the retail segment even after a price increase from 1 January 2021 (early purchases supported revenue growth in October-December 2020, as one-off effect).

With mass immunisation at elevated level and reopening already having started, the outlook for economic recovery has improved. Q2 and Q3 are expected to witness considerable rebound as more and more industries contribute to the aggregate economic growth.

However, uncertainties for the short-term outlook are still high as the pandemic may still deliver surprises – this adds downside risks to our forecast. With this level of immunisation, Hungary's tourism & restaurant industry is expected to recover quickly (unspent cafeteria plan benefits also support demand) and Zwack will gain from this development.

Regarding profitability issues, Zwack had to tackle growing raw material costs due to weaker HUF. The recent change in the monetary stance of the MNB, who flagged the possibility of a future rate hike, could stop the long depreciation trend of the HUF. As a consequence, the expenses of imported raw materials may decrease, but at the same time, the strengthening HUF stops supporting Zwack's HUF-denominated export performance. Strengthening wage dynamics may also pose a risk to maintaining the usual profitability level.

We expect EBIT to increase to HUF 2.0bn in the current business year (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2022) from 1.8bn in 2020/2021. EPS is expected to increase to 743 HUF/share in 2021/2022 and HUF 924 in 2022/2023 from the previous year's HUF 706. Changes in our yield forecast had a downside effect on the discounted cash flows.

Our current target price is 4.0% higher than the HUF 16,400 closing price on 26 May 2021, the day Zwack's earnings report was released. Expected total return is 8.0% on a 12-month horizon, supposing that dividend payment for the current business year also befalls in the next 12 months. We assumed 50% payout ratio from last year's profit.

Zwack Unicum's shares gained 2.5% yesterday, the day its earnings report was released, and the BUX added 1.3%. In terms of YTD performance, Zwack stands at -2.4% trading in the HUF 16,000-17,000 range, while the BUX index climbed 10.3% higher.

Summary/Earnings Highlights

- Zwack reported higher-than-expected HUF 2.1bn net sales revenue in January-March 2021. Top-line growth was 2.0% YoY, but revenues slumped 60% QoQ in due to seasonality.
- Domestic sales revenues rose by 1.4% YoY in a tough period when lockdowns hit again the catering industry throughout the quarter compared to the base period when the covid restrictions affected the bars and restaurants only partially.
- While the on-trade sale practically vanished during January-March 2021 as third wave of covid swept Hungary, domestic retail trade remained strong, especially in March.
- Export revenues in HUF terms gained 5% YoY, while on a quarterly basis, export sales have halved. The FX-effect had a significant role in HUF-denominated YoY export growth.
- Profitability was a mixed picture in the past quarter with HUF 1.3bn gross profit and 60% gross profit rate in line with our expectation, while negative EBIT has doubled and negative EBITDA has tripled YoY. Quarterly EPS fell to -HUF 203, after registering HUF -132 EPS one year before.
- In the past business year (FY 2020/2021), 4Q cumulated net sales revenues dropped 6% YoY with domestic revenues shrinking 7% and export losing 2%. Due to HUF-depreciation during the year (EUR/HUF climbed almost 7% YoY when comparing yearly averages) export sales' decline without FX-adjustment was even sharper.
- We maintain our domestic sales forecast and slightly revised up the forecast on export revenues in line with recent expectations of consumption growth in the EU and earnings releases of Zwack's European peers. Our updated model also reflects the significant rise in yields from January 2021. In the current business year, we expect net sales revenues to climb to HUF 14.2bn representing 9% top-line growth while bottom-line growth is estimated at 5%. The EPS of the current FY is expected to rise to HUF 743.
- The new HUF 17,054 target price reflects our expectations for the next 12 months, although risks related to new covid variants still lingers. We maintain our HOLD recommendation and we note that if Zwack maintains its regular payment, and dividend payout for the current business year will not be postponed to the next one, then shareholders may get dividends of two business years in 12 months' time.
- On May 26, 2021 Zwack released the invitation for its AGM scheduled to June 30, 2021. The AGM proposals are yet to be announced.

Financial highlights of Zwack's FQ4 2020 earnings report

Financial Q4 (HUFm)	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2020	YoY Change
Domestic sales	1 761	1 737	1%
Export sales	381	362	5%
Net sales income	2 142	2 099	2%
Material-type costs	861	802	7%
Gross profit	1 281	1 297	-1%
Employee benefits	827	669	24%
Depreciation	166	130	28%
Other operating expenses	813	774	5%
Total operating expenditures	1 806	1 573	15%
Other incomes	59	54	9%
EBIT	-466	-222	110%
EBITDA	-300	-92	226%
Pre-tax profit	-463	-207	124%
Tax	-49	61	-180%
After-tax profit	-414	-268	54%

Financial Q4 (HUFm)	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2020	YoY Change
EPS (HUF)	-203	-132	54%
4Q-rolling EPS (HUF)	705	833	-15%
Gross profit rate	59.8%	61.8%	2.0 pp
Operating profit rate	-21.8%	-10.6%	-11.2 pp
EBITDA rate	-14.0%	-4.4%	-9.6 pp
ROE	-4.2%	-4.2%	-1.5 pp
4Q-rolling ROE	25.6%	25.6%	-3.8 pp
ROA	-2.2%	-2.2%	-0.6 pp
4Q-rolling ROA	14.7%	14.7%	-3.2 pp

Sources: Zwack Unicum, OTP Research

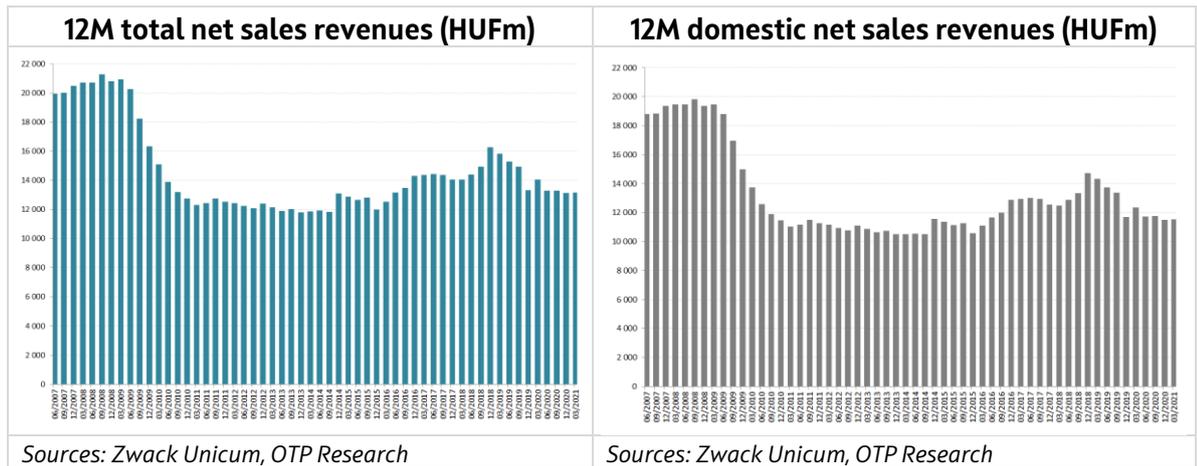
Sales performance was resilient. Zwack reported higher-than-expected HUF 2.1bn net sales revenue in January-March 2021. Top-line growth was 2.0% YoY, but revenues slumped 60% QoQ in the quarter that is seasonally characterized by modest revenues.

Domestic sales revenues increased by 1.4% YoY in a tough period when the lockdown hit the catering industry throughout the quarter, while in the base period pandemic restrictions affected bars and restaurants only partially. Zwack raised prices from 1 January, 2021, which supported sales in the previous quarter through early purchases by partners but was expected to set back revenues in Q1.

While on-trade sale practically vanished during January-March 2021 as the third wave of covid swept through Europe, domestic retail trade remained strong, particularly in March, Zwack said. The past quarter's market research data also confirm strong demand in the market of distilled beverages.

Export revenues in HUF terms gained 5% YoY, while on a quarterly basis, export sales have halved. Exports to Germany grew considerably in the January-March period, offsetting the decline of sales to Italy and the nosediving duty-free sales as pandemic-related restrictions curbed international tourism. FX effect had a main role in HUF-denominated export growth as the EUR/HUF increased by 6.5% YoY when comparing quarterly averages.

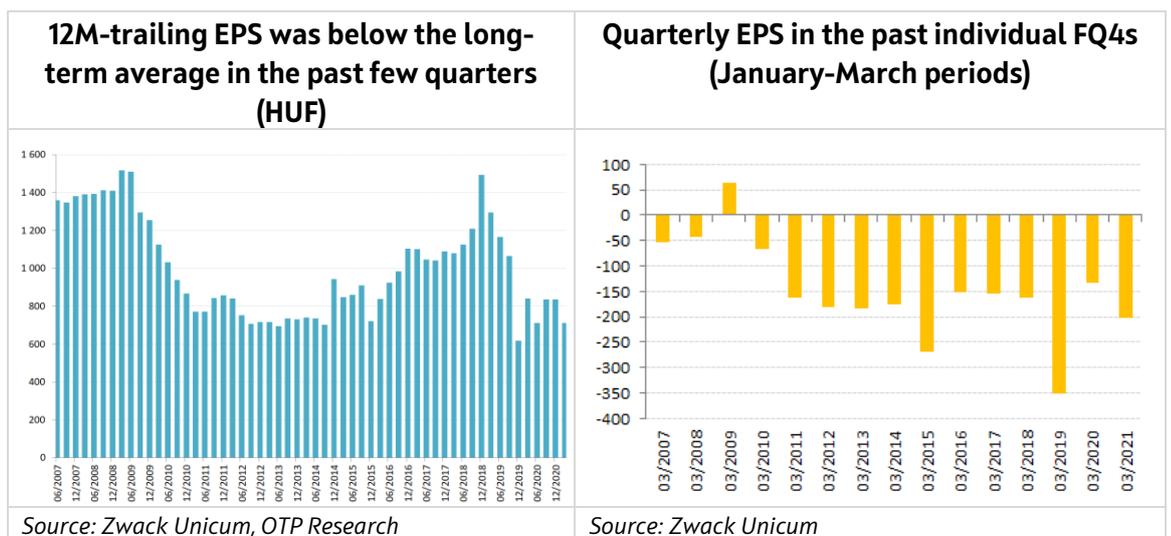
In the past business year (FY 2020/2021), 4Q cumulated net sales revenue dropped by 6% YoY, with domestic revenues shrinking 7% and exports losing 2%. Due to the HUF's depreciation during the year (the EUR/HUF climbed almost 7% YoY when comparing yearly averages), export sales' decline in FX terms was even sharper.



Profitability was a mixed picture in the past quarter: the HUF 1.3bn gross profit and 60% gross profit rate was in line with our expectation, while negative EBIT has doubled and negative EBITDA tripled YoY. Material-type costs shaved off almost 40% of total net sales, the same as in normal times, even though raw material costs increased by 7% in yearly comparison. The HUF's weakening made imported raw materials more expensive, the company said.

Payroll expenses also dented quarterly profitability, with 24% YoY increase as wage dynamics further strengthened in the manufacturing industry. With higher depreciation due to accounting changes and higher other costs, EBIT fell to HUF -466m, from HUF -222m a year earlier.

With the negative tax burden, after-tax loss moderated to HUF 414m compared to the pre-tax loss of HUF 463m. Quarterly EPS fell to -HUF 203, after registering HUF -132 EPS a year earlier. 12M-trailing EPS dropped to 705 HUF/share, the third lowest value in five years.



Comments

- Zwack reported better-than-expected sales figures for January-March 2021, even as the covid restrictions were still in force in the first quarter of the calendar, which practically undermined the hospitality sector in Hungary. Although restrictions were similar to the lockdown in spring 2020 in terms of effects on bars and restaurants and Zwack's on-trade sales, the company ended the past quarter with stronger sales performance than in April-July last year.
- Consumer demand in the spirits' market showed resilience in the second half of 2020, after a temporary slowdown in April-June. The retail market of distilled beverages expanded by 8.2% in real terms and by about 13% YoY in current prices, market survey data for the April 2020 – March 2021 period show, after 4.7% real term and 9% nominal term growth in April-December.
- The QoQ plunge was usual at this time of the year, but Zwack managed to raise revenues YoY despite heavy early stockpiling due to the pandemic in the base period. On the other hand, the lack of on-trade sales, tourism demand and other restrictions in effect throughout this period hindered the recovery of Zwack's sales performance.
- The fact that immunisation reached an elevated level in Hungary and the steady easing of the restrictions are drastically changing the outlook, and help the battered hospitality and other service industries to recover, starting from the second half of calendar Q2 2021. Strong and pent-up demand is also supported by employees' yet unspent cafeteria plan benefits.
- Nevertheless, some uncertainty still lingers around the economic recovery in short- and medium-term. The pandemic has not ended, and it may have a longer-term effect on consumer demand. Future local and/or periodic lockdowns are not out of the question; higher unemployment and CPI, as well as more cautious consumer behaviour also add to downside risks.

Valuation

- We revised slightly up our revenue forecast to HUF 14.2bn in the current financial year (2021/2022) and to HUF 15.3bn in 2022/2023. We maintain our previous view that Zwack will definitely benefit from the quick recovery of domestic tourism and restaurant businesses. Besides, EU export markets also show signs of recovery as the latest earnings report of Zwack's European peers confirm. The return of international tourism and thus the revival of the duty-free segment would be the icing on the cake regarding Zwack's export sales.
- However, our forecast still bears some downside risks in terms of future sales growth as the emergence of new covid variants may undermine the ongoing recovery.
- With the Hungarian economy returning to the path of recovery, and inflation coming to the fore, the MNB recently flagged the possibility of June base rate

hike. That could stop the long depreciation trend of the HUF that has characterized the market. The tightening of monetary conditions may cause gradual HUF strengthening or sideways moves in the HUF, after one single step of appreciation. As a consequence, the strengthening HUF stops supporting Zwack's HUF-denominated export performance, while on the cost side it will have the opposite effect.

- Our estimate for the current and next business year's EBIT stands at HUF 2.0bn and 2.4bn, while EPS is expected to increase to 743 HUF/share (FY 2022/2021) and 924 HUF/share (FY 2023/2022).
- We revised slightly down our target price to 17,054 HUF/share from the previous 17,083 HUF/share. We modified the discount rate in our valuation models in line with the yield curve increase experienced this year. Accordingly, our DCF (FCFE) model indicates 17,394 HUF/share 12M target price, while the valuation from DDM reflecting future dividend payments suggests 16,969 HUF/share 12-month target price. In our DDM we assumed 50% theoretical payout ratio and HUF 353 DPS for the past business year (FY 2021/2020).
- Our target price of 17,054 HUF/share is 4.0% higher than the HUF 16,400 closing price on 26 May 2021, the day Zwack's quarterly earnings report was released. The 12-month estimated total return would be 8%.
- We maintain the previous HOLD recommendation.

Deduction of 12M TP

Zwack's valuation (HUFm)	Base Year							FCFE in the explicit period
	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022*	2022/2023*	2023/2024*	2024/2025*	2025/2026*	
FCFE	2 264	2 818	-1 103	1 934	2 563	2 782	2 746	
Discount factor	0,92	0,92	0,91	0,91	0,90	0,90	0,90	
DCF	2 076	2 578	-1 002	1 591	1 905	1 860	1 652	6 005
Terminal Value (HUFm)								39 980
Net Present Value - FCFE (HUFm)								29 956
Net debt								-2 208
Equity value (HUFm)								32 164
Number of shares								2 035 000
Expected return on equity								10,0%
12M Target price (DCF)								17 394
12M Target price (DDM)								16 969
12M Weighted Target price (HUF) - Dec 31, 2021								17 054
Current price								16 400
Upside/Downside								4,0%
TR Upside/Downside								8,0%

Source: OTP Research

Profit & Loss Statement (HUF m)	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022F	2022/2023F	2023/2024F
Domestic net sales	14 238	12 281	11 442	12 477	13 658	14 068
Export sales	1 501	1 679	1 641	1 740	1 571	1 645
Net sales income	15 739	13 960	13 083	14 217	15 230	15 713
Material-type costs	5 723	5 287	5 149	5 545	5 795	5 963
Gross profit	10 016	8 673	7 934	8 672	9 434	9 750
Total operating expenditures	7 355	6 965	6 509	7 102	7 564	7 686
EBIT	3 079	2 169	1 787	1 982	2 418	2 648
Pre-tax profit	3 310	2 184	1 780	1 963	2 441	2 629
Tax	460	488	344	452	561	605
Profit after tax	2 850	1 696	1 436	1 512	1 880	2 024
Dividend	2 442	611	718	756	1 692	1 822
EPS (HUF)	1 288	833	706	743	924	995
DPS (HUF)	1 200	300	353	371	831	895

Balance sheet (HUFm)	2018/2019	2019/2020F	2020/2021F	2021/2022F	2022/2023	2021/2022F
Property, plant, equipment	3 330	3 336	3 442	3 513	3 477	3 443
Intangible assets	84	102	85	83	75	100
Non-current assets	3 582	3 585	3 652	3 766	3 729	3 727
Inventories	2 386	2 661	2 800	3 002	3 282	2 775
Receivables and other current assets	2 115	3 007	2 617	3 396	2 923	3 292
Cash and cash equivalents	3 064	2 709	3 989	2 785	2 991	2 830
Current assets	7 565	8 377	9 406	8 527	9 159	9 035
TOTAL ASSETS	11 147	11 962	13 058	12 294	12 888	12 762
Share capital	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000
Capital reserve	165	165	165	165	165	165
Retained earnings	4 915	4 011	4 847	4 151	4 996	4 344
Total Equity	7 080	6 176	7 012	6 316	7 161	6 509
Long-term loans and other liabilities	472	453	531	400	384	369
Non-current liabilities	472	453	531	400	384	369
Loans and credits	0	1 250	1 250	1 250	220	220
Payables and other short-term liabilities	3 567	4 071	4 255	4 253	5 049	5 583
Current Liabilities	3 595	5 333	5 515	5 577	5 342	5 885
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	11 147	11 962	13 058	12 294	12 887	12 762

CONSOLIDATED CASH FLOW (HUFm)		2018/2019F	2019/2020F	2020/2021F	2021/2022F	2022/2023F	2023/2024F
EBITDA		3 643	2 646	2 311	2 589	3 101	3 308
Cash flow from operation		3 215	1 482	3 414	-388	3 567	3 220
Cash flow from investment		-655	-480	-591	-701	-605	-659
FCFF		2 560	1 002	2 823	-1 089	2 963	2 561
FCFE		2 563	2 264	2 818	-1 103	1 934	2 563

Sources: Zwack Unicum, OTP Research

Risks surrounding Zwack's economic activity

Covid-effect: Although Zwack operates in the non-cyclical consumer sector, a considerable part of demand for Zwack products comes from the catering and event business, the sectors that took the biggest hit from covid-19. While the pandemic had a positive effect on Zwack's sales performance in the January-March 2020 period, April 2020 sales plunged. With restrictions lifted, Zwack's revenues showed quick recovery in Q3, but September was also somewhat depressed in the wake of the second wave of pandemic. With on-site consumption prohibited and night curfew introduced, the new restrictions implemented in November added a further blow to the restaurant industry. Zwack lost a considerable part of its on-trade revenue in the last two quarters of FY 2021/2020 while in terms of export, duty-free sales also plunged due to very subdued air travels. With mass immunisation at elevated level by May 2021 and reopening already having started, the outlook for economic recovery has improved. Q2 and Q3 2021 are expected to witness considerable rebound as more and more industries contribute to the aggregate economic growth. The hospitality sector is expected to revive and Zwack may easily be one of the recovery's beneficiaries. However, the pop-up of new covid variants may endanger the expected and persistent recovery and pose considerable downside risks to our forecast.

Regulatory risk: In recent years, regulatory changes in the industry caused headwinds to the company's profitability. The most notable was the liberalization of spirit distillation at home in small quantities in 2010. The EU lately expressed criticism of discriminative taxing policy of spirits in Hungary and threatened to start infringement process against Hungary. The latest regulatory changes (increase of NETA), which took effect on 1 January 2019, were aimed to resolve this conflict with the EU and increase budget revenues at the same time.

In the summer, the EU's decision-making body modified the initiative on the taxation of home-distillery of 'palinka'. According to the new regulation, every citizen of full age in the EU is entitled to distil tax-free 86 litres of fruit spirits a year. Hungary will introduce the new regulation from 1 January 2021.

Exchange-rate risk: As the company operates in foreign markets as well, and the share of exports among revenues is increasing, in case of HUF appreciation, the exchange rate risk can be an issue, if not managed properly. The HUF's weakening poses more risk on the cost side, as most of Zwack's raw material prices are EUR-denominated, so a significant depreciation of the HUF against the EUR could weigh on the company's profitability. That can be counterbalanced to a certain extent by the higher export revenue in HUF.

Cost-inflation risk: Due to the improving economic conditions and labour shortages in various industries, real wages started to increase significantly in 2016 and kept rising since then. With the imminent and fast post-covid recovery of the Hungarian economy, the unemployment accumulated due to the pandemic may get absorbed very quickly, and result in tight labour market. This will further strengthen wage

dynamics, which did not really lose steam even in the period hit by the pandemic. Further increasing payroll expenses may dent profitability again.

Notes:

[The initiation report, which contains the assumptions of the models used, is available here.](#)

[The valuation methodology used in this present equity research note to determine our price targets and recommendations is available here. \(Also available in Hungarian\)](#)

This investment recommendation has not used proprietary models.

The risk warning, which includes the adequate explanations of the length of time of the investment to which the recommendation relates as well as a sensitivity analysis of the assumptions, is indicated in the part of this recommendation where the length of time and the risks of the investment are presented.

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OTP Bank Plc's recommendations and price targets history for Zwack Unicum in the past twelve months:

Period	Recommendation	% of recommendations
Q1 2020	BUY	0
	HOLD	100
	SELL	0
Q2 2020	BUY	0
	HOLD	100
	SELL	0
Q3 2020	BUY	0
	HOLD	100
	SELL	0
Q4 2020	BUY	0
	HOLD	100
	SELL	0

Date	Recommendation	Target Price	Publication
21/05/2020	HOLD	HUF 15,214	Quarterly Earnings Update
05/06/2020	HOLD	HUF 15,214	News Comment
10/06/2020	HOLD	HUF 15,214	News Comment
07/08/2020	HOLD	HUF 15,407	Quarterly Earnings Update
15/12/2020	HOLD	HUF 17,083	Quarterly Earnings Update
05/02/2021	HOLD	HUF 17,083	Quarterly Earnings Update
27/05/2021	HOLD	HUF 17,054	Quarterly Earnings Update

[The list of all recommendations made in the past 12 months is available here.](#)

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This document was finalized at 11:51:28 PM on 27 May 2021