

EN
P-005703/2018
Answer given by Ms Bieńkowska
on behalf of the European Commission
(6.12.2018)

The Commission recognises the serious health and social consequences of problem gambling. However, despite the existence of some studies into problem gambling¹, it is generally acknowledged that it is difficult to gauge the prevalence of gambling disorders and their economic and social impacts.

There is no sector-specific EU legislation on gambling. Member States are free to regulate gambling activities as long as they are in line with the rules on the internal market established by the Treaty and as interpreted by the Court of Justice of the EU.

Nevertheless, the Commission Recommendation of 14 July 2014² on principles for the protection of consumers and players of online gambling services and for the prevention of minors from gambling online contains recommendations in areas such as player support, time-out and self-exclusion. It encourages Member States to collect statistical data on, amongst others, the number of self-excluded players and those experiencing a gambling disorder.

Moreover, the Commission supports Member States in their ongoing efforts to modernise their national online gambling legal frameworks. It has facilitated the exchange of information and good practices between national gambling regulators, in particular through discussions in the Expert Group on Online Gambling Services³. It has also facilitated the conclusion of an Administrative Cooperation Arrangement⁴ between those regulators, which foresees for example the exchange of information on the results of surveys and studies conducted by regulatory authorities on the subject of gambling disorders and gambling addictions.

¹ For example, between 2011 and 2016, the Commission co-funded ALICE RAP, a European research project into addiction. One of the themes under that study concerned gambling addiction:
https://www.alicerap.eu/resources/documents/doc_download/128-policy-paper-2-gambling-two-sides-of-the-same-coin.html

² 2014/478/EU.

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2868>

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/24162>