

## PRESS RELEASE

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## European Commission presents new Anti-Money Laundering Directive proposal– Europe’s lotteries warmly applaud the extension of the scope to the full gambling sector

*Brussels, 5 February 2013*– This afternoon, the European Commission has published its proposal for a revision of the Anti-Money Laundering Directive. One of the main innovations in the new proposal is the extension of the scope of the Directive, which currently applies only to casinos, to all forms of gambling.

The European Lotteries (EL), the umbrella organisation of national lotteries operating games of chance for the public benefit, and by far the largest and most representative European organisation in the gambling sector, warmly **welcomes** this extension of the Anti-Money Laundering Directive’s scope.

EL points out that given the high financial flows inherent to any gambling activity, it is an area with a high vulnerability to fraud and money laundering where not regulated appropriately, or where the existing regulation is not enforced. Money laundering is often associated with various other criminal activities involving in particular organised crime such as tax evasion, corruption, fraud and match fixing, gambling being used as a vehicle for laundering the proceeds of such criminal activities

EL President Friedrich Stickler: “We have consistently called loudly, clearly and unambiguously for an extension of the scope of the Directive. We are thus very satisfied that the European Commission is today taking this important step towards fighting money laundering in the field of gambling. The match-fixing scandals uncovered as late as yesterday by Europol, for which there are indications that they could be linked to money-laundering, are only one of the examples that a clear stepping up of the fight against money laundering in gambling is urgent and needed”.

EL is pleased that its contributions, as expressed for example in its submission to the consultation launched by the European Commission on the revision of the Directive, have been taken into account. Notably EL highlights the importance given in the new Draft Directive to the identification and verification of the winners’

identity where their prize exceeds a predetermined threshold. This practice, which is already implemented by several of its members, has proven to be an effective weapon against laundering.

EL is furthermore pleased that the Commission has taken into account the fact that certain activities present a lower risk (article 13 of the Draft Directive), as would be the case for games with low average stakes and winnings, low risk of frequency of play and a low payout ratio, among other criteria. The new Directive would leave Member States room for deciding, at the national level through a risk-based approach, to apply adapted diligence procedures to activities representing lower forms of risk than others.

Finally, the association warmly welcomes that the principle of identification of the beneficial owners, effective senior directors and officers now also covers all of the gambling sector. This requirement – which will apply to gambling providers from inside as well as outside of the EU – is crucial in order to uncover potential links and collusions between organised crime and unscrupulous or dishonest professionals.

The Directive now moves forward for adoption by the Council and the European Parliament.

ENDS

Links:

[European Commission proposal for a revision of the Anti-Money Laundering Directive](#)

[The European Lotteries submission to the consultation on the Revision of the Anti-Money Laundering Directive](#)

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European Lotteries (EL) is the European umbrella organisation of national lotteries operating games of chance for the public benefit. EL has members from 45 European countries including all 27 EU Member States. The association's EU members contribute more than 20 billion € p.a. to the state budgets and the funding of sport, culture, social projects, research and other causes of general interest. Unlike many commercial online gambling operators, EL members only offer gambling and betting services in the jurisdictions in which they are licensed by the respective national government.