

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Online gambling: European Parliament takes clear stance on protecting European consumers against illegal operators and keeping Member States in the driver seat

- IMCO committee calls for concrete enforcement measures against illegal operators and supports EC approach to not propose a Directive for online gambling
- IMCO highlights the sustainable contribution and specific role of lotteries that should be acknowledged in discussions at EU level

Brussels, 30 May 2013 – EL welcomes the report on online gambling adopted by the European Parliament committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) this morning.

In today's report, the IMCO committee has clearly endorsed the approach of the European Commission's Action Plan to not propose a sectoral harmonisation Directive for online gambling.

EL President Friedrich Stickler: "We commend the European Parliament for its clear position on the need for Member States to remain in the driver seat, a position which runs through the entire text of the report. We welcome the European Parliament's insistence on law enforcement at the national level and cooperation between the Member States, in particular its demand that online gambling companies violating the laws of one Member State should lose their licence in other Member States."

The European Parliament has taken a strong stance on the need for measures to fight illegal operators, such as setting up of payment blocking mechanisms, black lists and white lists. EL now urges the European Commission to include these fundamental points in its forthcoming Recommendations on consumer protection and advertising.

EL highlights that the European Parliament today expressed support for the strict regulation or prohibition of dangerous forms of gambling, which should be defined through an in-depth evaluation at the national level. The association welcomes the clear position that gambling is an economic activity of special nature and the

insistence of the European Parliament on the application of the principle of subsidiarity. The European Parliament very clearly underlines the right of Member States to set their own gambling policy according to their own values and enforce it effectively.

Finally, EL also particularly welcomes the IMCO committee's recognition of the sustainable contribution and specific role of lotteries that should be acknowledged in discussions at the European level. EL members contribute more than 20 billion EUR per year to the state budget or directly to public interest causes.

Today's vote in the lead committee follows the adoption of opinions by the committee on Legal Affairs and the Culture and Education committee. In line with the report adopted today, these committees had stressed the importance of subsidiarity and underlined the need to protect sport from the threat of match-fixing.

The European Parliament's vote in plenary is scheduled for the week of 1 July.

ENDS

Contacts

Friedrich Stickler, EL President and Board member, Austrian Lotteries

Tel. +43.1.79070.1300, friedrich.stickler@lotterien.at

Jutta Buyse, EL General Delegate, Brussels

Tel: + 32.(0)2.234.38.20, jutta.buyse@european-lotteries.eu

About EL

The European Lotteries (EL) is the European umbrella organisation of national lotteries operating games of chance for the public benefit. EL has members from 48 European countries including all 27 EU Member States. The association's EU members contribute more than 20 billion EUR 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.

Link

The text of the European Parliament's motion for a resolution is published (in all official EU languages) at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/imco/reports.html#menuzone>

The final text of the resolution will be available on the European Parliament website in the next days.