



## Commission closes infringement procedures and complaints in the gambling sector

Brussels, 7 December 2017

**In line with its political commitment to be more strategic in enforcing EU law, the European Commission has today decided to close its infringement procedures and the treatment of complaints in the area of gambling.**

From the start, the Juncker Commission has been focusing on its [political priorities](#) and pursuing them vigorously. This political approach is also reflected in the Commission's handling of infringement cases. The [Communication "EU law: Better results through better application"](#) sets out the Commission's approach to prioritising cases in a strategic manner, carefully weighing the various public and private interests involved.

In this vein, the Commission has today decided to close its infringement procedures in the area of online gambling and the treatment of relevant complaints against a number of Member States.

The Court of Justice of the European Union has repeatedly recognised Member States' rights to restrict gambling services where necessary to protect public interest objectives such as the protection of minors, the fight against gambling addiction and the combat of irregularities and fraud. The Commission acknowledges the broader political legitimacy of the public interest objectives that Member States are pursuing when regulating gambling services. The Commission also notes Member States' efforts to modernise their online gambling legal frameworks, channel citizens' demand for gambling from unregulated offer to authorised and supervised websites, and ensure that operators pay taxes. With that in mind, it is not a priority for the Commission to use its infringement powers to promote an EU Single Market in the area of online gambling services.

The Commission will continue to support Member States in their efforts to modernise their national online gambling legal frameworks and to facilitate cooperation between national gambling regulators.

### Background

The Commission considers that complaints in the gambling sector can be handled more efficiently by national courts also in the light of the numerous judgements of the Court of Justice of the EU on national gambling legislation. Complainants are therefore encouraged to make use of national remedies when facing problems with EU law in the gambling sector.

Member States are autonomous in the way they organise their gambling services, including the level of taxation, provided the fundamental freedoms of the Treaty are respected. The Court of Justice of the European Union has helped to clarify which restrictions on Single Market principles can be justified in the light of public policy objectives such as the protection of consumers and minors in the area of gambling.

The Commission is assisting Member States in their efforts to combat unauthorised gambling, protect vulnerable citizens and prevent other related illegal activities. Following the [2012 Communication on online gambling](#), the Commission has launched a series of initiatives, including, for example, [recommendations on consumer protection and advertising in the online gambling sector](#), has encouraged enhanced administrative cooperation and has started an Expert Group on Gambling Services for EEA gambling regulators to exchange good practice, facilitate administrative cooperation and improve trust. Moreover, EU rules in areas such as anti-money laundering apply to the gambling sector.

### For More Information

- On the key decisions in the December 2017 infringements package, see full [MEMO/17/4767](#).
- On the general infringements procedure, see [MEMO/12/12\(an info graph\)](#).
- On the [EU infringements procedure](#).

IP/17/5109

[Lucia CAUDET](#) (+32 2 295 61 82)

[Maud NOYON](#) (+32 2 298 03 79)

[Victoria VON HAMMERSTEIN-GESMOLD](#) (+32 2 295 50 40)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)