

Question 3

What is your experience of EU-based on-line gambling operators licensed in one or more Member State and providing and promoting their services in other EU Member States?

What are your views on their impact on the corresponding markets and their consumers?

On-line gambling services have a cross-border nature, thus it is very current that an on-line gambling operator being registered and licensed in one Member State is offering its services to customers of another EU Member State. In lack of a harmonised legislation at European level, such operators are facing several difficulties: Firstly, it is disputed if their activity is legal, thus they might face administrative and court proceedings. Secondly as such on-line gambling operators are present in various Member States, they have to promote their services in accordance with the different national regulations and keep up with the legislative changes. Harmonised rules would provide more legal security for operators.

Harmonisation of on-line gambling rules is not only in the interest of the operators, but also that of the consumers. Consumers have access to various on-line gambling sites, which have to comply with different national rules according to the Member States applicable legislation. This can result in different conditions regarding gambling that have to be understood and respected by consumers. A harmonised on-line gambling legislation would also result in more customer-friendly on-line gambling services. Furthermore, national rules aiming to protect consumers (such as age limits, payment methods, rules to prevent gambling addiction) are not efficient today, as consumers can easily switch to on-line gambling websites subject to – more permissive - rules of another Member State.