

Public consultation on the Green Paper on on-line gambling in the Internal Market

You are invited to reply to the on-line questionnaire. The questions listed in the Green Paper are reproduced in the same order hereunder. A pdf version of the [Green Paper](#) is available in all EU languages for guidance to the questions.

There are 51 questions in the consultation document. You may reply to those questions in any one of the EU languages. You may focus your contributions on the areas of most interest to you; you are not obliged to answer all the questions.

Please save this document on your computer. Once you have completed the questionnaire, come back to the on-line questionnaire. You will be able to upload your answers on page 3 of the on-line questionnaire.

The consultation will close on 31/07/2011.

We thank you for your participation.

Your name / Your organisation:

Questions from the Green Paper on on-line Gambling in the Internal Market

1. Regulating on-line gambling in the EU: Recent developments and current challenges from the Internal Market standpoint
 - 1.1. Purpose of the consultation
 - 1.2. On-line gambling in the EU: current situation

(1) Are you aware of any available data or studies on the EU on-line gambling market that would assist policy-making at EU and national level? If yes, do the data or study include licensed non-EU operators in the EU market?

(2) Are you aware of any available data or studies relating to the nature and size of the black market for on-line gambling services? (Unlicensed operators)

(3) What, if any, 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?

I have used several gambling services located in other member states, because my country hasn't had any offerings for such services until recently.

The operators in other countries forced Finland to open their own Internet poker site, which hasn't been very successful.

The impact of operators from other member states has been good availability of Internet poker in Finland and healthy competition among operators.

The larger the total market area is, the better the service is. Fragmentation into small licensed "territories" should be avoided at all costs.

(4) What, if any, is your experience of licensed non-EU on-line gambling operators providing and promoting their services in EU Member States? What are your views on their impact on the EU market and on consumers?

Same points apply as in previous question, although I have some bad experience with operators that haven't fulfilled their financial duties towards me. 99% of the operators outside EU have been fine.

(5) If any, which are the legal and/or practical problems that arise, in your view, from the jurisprudence of national courts and the CJEU in the field of online gambling? In particular, are there problems of legal certainty on your national and/or the EU market for such services?

There are many problems here. In Finland, the local authorities claim that EU-based gambling operators are breaking the Finnish law when they offer services to Finnish citizens.

On the other hand, these operators claim that they are operating according to the license of their home country.

There should be a clear resolution that would make gambling equal to other trading inside the EU.

One problem of this unclear legal situation is, that even players might think that gambling online is illegal, when only the offering of online gambling might be illegal.

(6) Do you consider that existing national and EU secondary law applicable to on-line gambling services adequately regulates those services? In particular, do you consider that coherence / consistency is ensured between, on one hand, the public policy objectives pursued by Member States in this field and, on the other hand, the national measures in force and/or the actual behaviour of public or private operators providing on-line gambling services?

I don't think that coherence / consistency is ensured. The reasoning for my opinion lies in the answer to the (5) question.

Another point here. The Finnish government claims that the main reason for monopoly in Finland is protecting citizens from fraud, gambling problems and so on.

However, I think the main reason is financial gain, especially for politicians. The local gambling monopolies have "retirement duties" for politicians. Also, the local gambling institutions have been caught issuing funds to politicians for their election campaigns.

Furthermore, the local gambling addiction help phone (Peluri) was offered money by a gambling operator located in the EU.

Peluri wasn't allowed to accept the money for some reason, it has to manage with the funding given to it by the local monopolies, which it considers insufficient.

Other comments on issues raised in section 1

2. Key policy issues subject to the present consultation

2.1. Definition and organisation of on-line gambling services

(7) How does the definition of on-line gambling services in the Green Paper differ from definitions at national level?

Green Paper defines only the "wagering a stake with monetary value".

Finnish legislation defines: "Wagering a stake with a possibility to receive a prize worth money."

Another difference, Green Paper uses only: "in games of chance", while Finnish legislation uses term: "In games based on partially or completely on chance".

Finnish legislation covers all gambling, not only online gambling like Green paper.

(8) Are gambling services offered by the media considered as games of chance at national level? Is there a distinction drawn between promotional games and gambling?

There have been no court cases on gambling services offered by the media. I assume that "guessing games", where answering speed matters are included in this definition.

In my opinion, these games are strictly games of chance, and should be governed by the current legislation.

(9) Are cross-border on-line gambling services offered in licensed premises dedicated to gambling (e.g. casinos, gambling halls or a bookmaker's shop) at national level?

No

(10) What are the main advantages/difficulties associated with the coexistence in the EU of differing national systems of, and practices for, the licensing of on-line gambling services?

Points in question (5) apply here too.

Other comments on issues raised in section 2.1

The status of poker as a game of chance is questionable. In the long term, it is unarguably a game of skill.

Therefore poker shouldn't be included in gambling laws.

2.2. Related services performed and/or used by on-line gambling services providers

(11) With focus on the categories mentioned in the Green Paper, how are commercial communications for (on-line) gambling services regulated for at national level? Are there specific problems with such cross-border commercial communications?

(12) Are there specific national regulations pertaining to payment systems for on-line gambling services? How do you assess them?

(13) Are players' accounts a necessary requirement for enforcement and player protection reasons?

(14) What are the existing national rules and practices relating to customer verification, their application to on-line gambling services and their consistency with data protection rules? How do you assess them? Are there specific problems associated with customer verification in a cross-border context?

Other comments on issues raised in section 2.2

2.3. Public interest objectives

2.3.1. Consumer protection

(15) Do you have evidence that the factors listed in the Green Paper are linked to and/or central for the development of problem gambling or excessive use of on-line gambling services? (if possible, please rank them)

(16) Do you have evidence that the instruments listed in the Green Paper are central and/or efficient to prevent or limit problem gambling relating to on-line gambling services? (if possible, please rank them)

(17) Do you have evidence (e.g. studies, statistical data) on the scale of problem gambling at national or EU level?

The Finnish helping phone for gambling problems (Peluri) publishes a yearly report on distribution of calls based on the type of problem.

Most of the problems are caused by slot machines, which are located practically in every shop here in Finland.

(18) Are there recognised studies or evidence demonstrating that on-line gambling is likely to be more or less harmful than other forms of gambling for individuals susceptible to develop a pathological gaming pattern?

(19) Is there evidence to suggest which forms of on-line gambling (types of games) are most problematic in this respect?

Yes, slot machines

(20) What is done at national level to prevent problem gambling? (E.g. to ensure early detection)?

Age limits were recently raised, but otherwise there isn't much done.

The Casino run by the local monopoly doesn't actively track problem gamblers. Self-exclusion is available for limited periods.

(21) Is treatment for gambling addiction available at national level? If so, to what extent do on-line gambling operators contribute to the funding of such preventive actions and treatment?

Yes, there are some underfunded organisations providing treatment.

The organisations cannot receive funds from foreign Gambling organisations. For example, Betfair was willing to give funds to Peluri operation, but Peluri declined to receive the funds due to pressure.

(22) What is the required level of due diligence in national regulation in this field? (e.g. recording on-line players' behaviour to determine a probable pathological gambler?).

(23) What is the statutory age limit for having access to on-line gambling services in your Member State? Are existing limits adequate to protect minors?

There is no specific age limit for online gambling. The general gambling law age-limit is 18 years.

(24) Are on-line age controls imposed and how do these compare to off-line 'face-to-face' identification?

(25) How are commercial communications for gambling services regulated to protect minors at national or EU level? (e.g. limits on promotional games that are designed as on-line casino games, sports sponsorship, merchandising (e.g. replica jerseys, computer games etc) and use of social on-line networks or [video-sharing](#) for marketing purposes.

(26) Which national regulatory provisions on license conditions and commercial communications for on-line gambling services account for the risks described in the Green Paper and seek to protect vulnerable consumers? How do you assess them?

Other comments on issues raised in section 2.3.1

2.3.2. Public order

(27) Are you aware of studies and/or statistical data relating to fraud and on-line gambling?

(28) Are there rules regarding the control, standardisation and certification of gambling equipment, random generators or other software in your Member State?

(29) What, in your opinion, are the best practices to prevent various types of fraud (by operators against players, players against operators and players against players) and to assist complaint procedures?

(30) As regards sports betting and outcome fixing - what national regulations are imposed on on-line gambling operators and persons involved in sport events/games to address these issues, in particular to prevent 'conflicts of interest'? Are you aware of any available data or studies relating to the magnitude of this problem?

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(31) What issues should in your view be addressed in priority?

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(32) What risks are there that a (on-line) sports betting operator, which has entered into a sponsorship agreement with a sports club or an association, will seek to influence the outcome of a sports event directly or indirectly for profitable gain?

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(33) What concrete cases are there that have demonstrated how on-line gambling could be used for money laundering purposes?

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(34) Which micro-payments systems require specific regulatory control in view of their use for on-line gambling services?

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(35) Do you have experience and/or evidence of best practice to detect and prevent money laundering?

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(36) Is there evidence to demonstrate that the risk of money laundering through on-line gambling is particularly high in the context of such operations set up on social web-sites?

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(37) Are national e-commerce transparency requirements enforced to allow for illegally operated services to be tracked and closed? How do you assess this situation?

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Other comments on issues raised in section 2.3.2

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2.3.3. Financing of benevolent and public interest activities as well as events on which on-line sports betting relies

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(38) Are there other gambling revenue channeling schemes than those described in the Green Paper for the public interest activities at national or EU level?

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(39) Is there a specific mechanism, such as a Fund, for redistributing revenue from public and commercial on-line gambling services to the benefit of society?

There are three license holders in Finland.

Veikkaus Oy is a state-owned company, which operates sports betting, lottery, keno and scratch cards.

The profits go to arts, sport, science and youth education.

Raha-automaattiyhdistys is an association, which funds different organisations in the country, for example elderly care, youth associations, disabled people associations etc. Any "good cause" association can ask for funds. Good part of the funds also go to political organisations for election campaigns and different conferences for association management.

Fintoto is the third operator, which runs the local horse betting. Proceeds go to caring of horses and welfare of horse farming.

(40) Are funds returned or re-attributed to prevention and treatment of gambling addiction?

A fraction of proceeds is handed out to prevention and treatment of gambling addiction.

(41) What are the proportions of on-line gambling revenues from sports betting that are redirected back into sports at national level?

25%

(42) Do all sports disciplines benefit from on-line gambling exploitation rights in a similar manner to horse-racing and, if so, are those rights exploited?

(43) Do on-line gambling exploitation rights that are exclusively dedicated to ensuring integrity exist?

(44) Is there evidence to suggest that the cross-border "free-riding" risk noted in the Green Paper for on-line gambling services is reducing revenues to national public interest activities that depend on channelling of gambling revenues?

(45) Do there exist transparency obligations that allow for gamblers to be made aware of whether and how much gambling service providers are channelling revenues back into public interest activities?

Other comments on issues raised in section 2.3.3

2.4. Enforcement and related matters

(46) Which form of regulatory body exists in your Member State and what are its competences, its scope of action across the on-line gambling services as defined in the Green Paper?

(47) Is there a national register of licensed operators of gambling services? If so, is it publicly accessible? Who is responsible for keeping it up to date?

(48) Which forms of cross-border administrative cooperation are you aware of in the domain of gambling and which specific issues are covered?

(49) Are you aware of enhanced cooperation, educational programmes or early warning systems as described in the Green Paper that are aimed at strengthening integrity in sport and/or increase awareness among other stakeholders?

(50) Are any of the methods mentioned in the Green Paper, or any other technical means, applied at national level to limit access to on-line gambling services or to restrict payment services? Are you aware of any cross-border initiative(s) aimed at enforcing such methods? How do you assess their effectiveness in the field of on-line gambling?

None applied.

(51) What are your views on the relative merits [in terms of suitability and efficiency] of the methods mentioned in the Green Paper as well as any other technical means to limit access to gambling services or payment services?

DNS based filtering is trivial to circumvent, anybody willing to gamble can quite easily find a way to circumvent it.

IP-based blocking could be more effective, however it can be circumvented too.

Other comments on issues raised in section 2.4

Other comments on issues raised in the Green Paper

One particular interest group concerning this paper is professional poker players, who make their living by playing online poker.

The larger the overall market is, the better chances these professionals have earning a living with poker.