



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 5.05.2015
C(2015) 3027 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion concerning the Communication "Towards a comprehensive European framework for online gambling in the Internal Market" {COM(2012) 596 final}.

As regards administrative cooperation, the Commission notes that it is working closely with Member States in the group of experts on gambling services. The underlying objective is to facilitate cooperation and to share information between Member States' authorities on a number of issues pertinent to regulation and supervision in the field of gambling.

The Commission Decision of 5 December 2012 setting up the group of experts on gambling services provides in Article 3 that the Commission may consult the group on any matter regarding gambling services. One of the tasks of the group is to advise and assist the Commission in the preparation and implementation of policy initiatives relating to gambling services, as provided in Article 2 of the Commission Decision.

In connection with the above, in drawing up the Commission Recommendation of 14 July 2014 on principles for the protection of consumers and players of online gambling services and for the prevention of minors from gambling ("the Commission Recommendation"), the Commission has since the first meeting of 5 December 2012 discussed with Member States' authorities on a continuous basis and benefitted from their input. In a similar vein, the Commission will continue to work with Member States' authorities in preparing its evaluation of the Commission Recommendation by January 2017. This approach is also in light of information that Member States may communicate to the Commission by July 2016, as envisaged by the Commission Recommendation. The Commission Recommendation is intended to provide a set of principles to assist Member States, as regards inter alia the protection of consumers and players of online gambling services, and is not in itself a harmonisation instrument. Nevertheless, the principles set out for example in Section III, and in the respective recitals, are intended to ensure that consumers and players are duly cognisant about the website they are accessing, inter alia the operator, the terms and conditions and the rules of the games as well as information about gambling per se. Its take-up, encouraged by the Commission, is a matter for the Member States. The expert group on gambling services will provide a forum for Member States' authorities to discuss the principles proposed in the Commission Recommendation.

*Mr Volker BOUFFIER
President of the Bundesrat
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Finally the Commission would like to point out that as far as the Convention regarding the manipulation of sport competitions is concerned, in line with EU procedures for international agreements, as a first step, the Commission intends to submit a proposal to the Council of Ministers for a Decision to authorise the Commission to sign the Convention on behalf of the EU.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the concerns raised in the Opinion of the Bundesrat and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Elżbieta Bienkowska
Member of the Commission*