

CMS | Romania proposes initiatives to safeguard players' rights in games of chance



Romanian lawmakers have submitted two legislative initiatives to the Romanian Senate seeking to strengthen the rights of players engaged in gambling activities.

The first initiative focuses on enforcing the legal regime around self-exclusion and ensuring that gambling operators respect a player's expressed choice for self-exclusion. (Self-exclusion refers to the ability of a player who is addicted to gambling or incurring unsustainable losses to request that he or she be excluded from a casino or online gaming site). The draft provides that:

- it should also be possible for self-exclusion requests to be submitted to the Romanian gambling regulator (National Office for Gambling or NOG) in person and online. Currently, self-exclusion can only be registered with the gambling operator.
- the NOG should make available a self-exclusion option (i.e. button) in a visible place on the top of its website, which must also show in real time the number of registered and processed self-exclusion requests.
- gambling operators must communicate to the NOG all self-exclusion requests within two working days from the date of the request, together with the list of individuals who have been declared "undesirable" by the gambling operators, within five working days from the elaboration or amendment.
- players who can prove that they have completed self-exclusion procedures are entitled to reimbursement of any amounts gambled during the period of self-exclusion, within 48 hours from a request submitted with the gambling operator.
- an operator failing to comply with the measures set out above will be fined between RON 50,000 and 100,000 (EUR 10,000 and 20,000) and receive the correlative penalty of a licence suspension for a period of six months.

The second legislative initiative restricts the amounts of money that individuals can gamble, by instituting a maximum monthly threshold that may be gambled (i.e. 10% of the player's monthly revenues in the previous month). A gambling operator that fails to observe these rules will be fined up to RON 500,000 (EUR 100,000). A second breach will lead to cancellation of the gambling operator's licence.

These legislative initiatives are in their early stages of the legislative process. If they are adopted in the current form, they will materially impact the gambling industry.

For more information on these legislative initiatives and regulations governing Romania's gaming industry, contact your CMS client partner or this CMS expert **Cristina Popescu**.