



# WEEK 22

FRIDAY MAY 29 2026

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**IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE:**  
ASA, BET365, ANJ & PREDICTION MARKETS

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## THIS WEEK

- THE LATEST IN BRAZIL

- EU REGULATION ROUND-UP

- MOVERS & SHAKERS

- ALL THINGS RG

- DEBRIEF: POKIES

- GUEST INTERVIEW  
Willem van Oort



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this World Cup and what the power of  
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## ADVERTISING: THE CELEBRITY TEST

Two football posts, two very different outcomes. The ASA's latest gambling rulings offer an insight into what operators can and can't get away with as World Cup ad spend peaks

▶ Oddschecker posted images of Harry Kane and Erling Haaland to Instagram in November 2025. Both carried explicit references to sports betting – odds, bookmakers, backing percentages. The company argued the posts were “editorial commentary,” not advertising. The Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) disagreed, this week upholding the complaint and ruling the posts irresponsible under CAP Code social responsibility rules.

Betway, meanwhile, posted a quote from Thierry Henry about Arsenal's title chances. Henry, 48, retired from professional football over a decade ago. His Instagram audience skews older; of his 4.32 million followers, only around 19,500 were both under 18 and UK-based – well below the 100,000 threshold that CAP guidance uses as a benchmark for “strong appeal to minors.” The ASA let it go.

### TWO POSTS, TWO OUTCOMES

The distinction seems fair, and the reasoning is sound. The question of whether a footballer appeals to children isn't a gut-feel judgment – the ASA is applying a quantitative framework, cross-referencing audience demographics with platform data.

Thierry Henry is, of course, a footballing legend in his own right – but his playing career ended over a decade ago, and his current profile is built around punditry and analysis rather than active competition.

That matters, because the ASA's test isn't about how famous someone is; it's about who finds them famous. Kane and Haaland, on the other hand, are two of the most prominent active players in world football right now, and their audiences reflect that.

Oddschecker's editorial argument isn't without logic, but applied to two current athletes of this profile, it was always going to face an uphill battle with the regulator.

### A WORLD CUP-SHAPED PROBLEM?

Here's where the industry should be paying close attention. The 2026 World Cup is the first 48-team edition, stretching across the US, Canada and Mexico from June to July.

The absence of age disclaimers or responsible gambling messaging – which Oddschecker defended on the grounds that editorial content doesn't require them – only compounded the problem. And operators banking on a similar defence during the World Cup should factor that into their compliance planning.

It is, by a significant margin, the largest sporting event ever staged – and it arrives at a moment when UK gambling advertising is under more sustained regulatory pressure than at any point in living memory.

The ASA scanned nearly 60 million online ads in 2025 and resolved more than 40,000 complaints. University of Bristol researchers are actively monitoring gambling promotions and filing complaints. The Oddschecker and Betway posts were made in November 2025 – before the tournament even began. The volume of football-related gambling content that will flood social media between June and July is almost impossible to overstate, and operators will be reaching for the biggest names in the sport to cut through the noise.

The pipeline of potential ASA complaints almost writes itself. Kylian Mbappé. Jude Bellingham. Pedri. Lamine Yamal. These are global superstars with audiences that skew dramatically young. Any gambling operator that features them in promotional content – even content dressed up as editorial, even content with GambleAware logos – is taking a significant regulatory risk.

Indeed, The Midnite ruling over Son Heung-min, and the Lewis Hamilton case against Betway, have already established that the ASA is willing to act against household names. The Oddschecker ruling confirms that framing doesn't save you if the underlying content is promotional.

### THE MORAL CASE

There is also a broader ethical dimension that the rulings gesture toward without fully articulating. The University of Bristol's Hub for Gambling Harms Research is not a neutral observer – it exists specifically to study and prevent gambling-related harm. When its researchers are the ones filing ASA complaints, they are, in effect, doing the monitoring work that the regulator itself cannot do at scale.

That matters. Because the question of whether a gambling ad “strongly appeals” to under-18s is not only a regulatory question – it's a public health one. Young people are in a formative period for attitudes toward risk, money and reward.

The World Cup will generate enormous betting revenue and, inevitably, enormous regulatory exposure. The fact that nearly 20,000 UK children follow a retired pundit who appears in a gambling ad – and that this still falls within the rules – illustrates just how precisely the current framework is calibrated.

Operators who push that calibration further, whether through active playing stars or thinly disguised promotional content, aren't just risking an ASA ruling. They're risking the kind of sustained reputational scrutiny that makes the next round of regulatory reform harder to resist.

...And it may not just be the players getting red cards this summer.

# THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

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## EXECUTIVE ROUND-UP: BET365, PREDICTION MARKETS, & MORE...



€65.7m

Lithuania's reported Q1 2026 GGR (\$76.5m)

€500m

Milestone societal contributions made by Paf since its inception (\$581.5m)



20%

Tax on betting winnings currently being considered by Kenyan lawmakers

\$17m

Amount in illegal gambling funds frozen by Brazilian police



7

Number of hours change in Svenska Spel's petition to wind the Swedish clock back for the World Cup

As Europe prepares for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, **bet365** expanded its presence across the continent with a long-awaited launch in France this week. Having received licensure from the **Autorité Nationale des Jeux (ANJ)**, the operator also partnered with the Association de Recherche et de Prévention des Excès du Jeu to provide effective support for players displaying signs of problematic gambling behaviour. The launch comes just days before Paris Saint-Germain take on Arsenal in the UEFA Champions League Final, of which bet365 serves as an official global partner. Global CMO Alex Sefton stated bet365 will create a product "tailored specifically" for French players, as the operator looks to manoeuvre the growing but historically testing marketplace.

In neighbouring **Spain**, the country's Ministry of Consumer Affairs launched proceedings against **Polymarket** and **Kalshi**, accusing both prediction market operators of providing gambling services without the required licences. The Ministry also ordered the blocking of both platforms' websites in Spain as a precautionary measure until the proceedings reach a final resolution. Polymarket first built its presence in the country after forming an inaugural European football league partnership with La Liga on 6 April, becoming the organisation's exclusive prediction market partner in the US and Canada.

**Polymarket's** regulatory challenges extended beyond Europe and the US this week, with **Indonesia** choosing to classify the company as an illegal online gambling site amid a broader national crackdown on online betting. The Communications and Digital Ministry believes platforms which facilitate wagers on specific event outcomes are considered gambling under Indonesian law, even while presented as "prediction markets." Ministry Official Alexander Sabar confirmed the Government will also track social media accounts affiliated with or promoting Polymarket. While no individual bets were referenced as part of its formal

statement, the Ministry stated Polymarket's activities involve speculation and betting on unresolved events, which violate national regulations.

In the US, **Tennessee** Governor Bill Lee signed House Bill 1885/Senate Bill 2136 into law, making it the seventh US state to officially prohibit the operation of sweepstakes casinos. Indeed, the bill bans any virtual-currency, dual-currency or multi-currency games which replicate other forms of gambling, such as lottery games, slot machines, table games, unlicensed sports wagering, video poker and bingo. Given HB 1885/SB 2136 passed on the final day of legislative sessions, any rejection from Lee may have concluded all efforts to ban sweepstakes casinos for the remainder of 2026.

In additional oversight news, the Comisión de Juegos del Gobierno de **Puerto Rico** agreed to a new partnership with idPair to allow residents of the country to voluntarily exclude themselves from all gambling activity. Launching in June 2026, Puerto Rico residents will have the ability to self-exclude themselves from access to gaming operators and platforms across multiple jurisdictions and gambling types. Puerto Rico's current gambling ecosystem includes offerings for casinos, sports wagering and many other regulated gaming activities.

To Finnish this week's key gaming news, Finland's gambling market reform has renewed debate over the future of state operator **Veikkaus**, as governing parties are either withholding their position or taking a cautious approach to a potential sale. Under the country's expected market liberalisation in summer 2027, Veikkaus will lose its monopoly on online casino and sports betting, but the change has also raised questions on if the state should continue to own a gambling operator in an open market. Nevertheless, Maija Strandberg, Director General for State Ownership Governance at the Prime Minister's Office, previously stated a sale of Veikkaus is unlikely before 2030.

## PIX, ADVERTISING, SÃO PAULO & MORE...

### AT A GLANCE

- Government to close loophole that allows use of PIX credit
- Senate to review legislation on restriction of betting advertising
- Online betting on the rise in São Paulo
- Pinheirinho to send betting taxes to hospitals

Brazil's Federal Government plan to close a regulatory loophole that allows consumers to fund betting accounts **PIX credit**. PIX is an instant payment system developed by the Central Bank, allowing users to transfer money around the clock, through banks and digital wallets. Certain banks still allow PIX credit payments for wagering, with operators arguing that they cannot detect

whether a PIX transfer is from a standard bank balance or from a credit-linked transaction processed internally by banks. However, the Government's response to this is the launch of the Desenrola debt renegotiation program, which is designed to reduce gambling-related indebtedness.

Further restrictions on gambling regulations continued this past week as **Brazil's Senate** began reviewing a legislation that will introduce tighter restrictions on betting advertising across TV, radio and social media. The proposal links gambling advertising to negative impacts on mental health and campaigns involving influencers would also fall under the restriction.

A new study in **São Paulo** showed that 35% of bettors in Brazil's largest city gamble

seeking a "rapid increase in income." The figures are up from 25% from 2024 and researchers interviewed 600 people in early May. The survey published by FecomercioSP shows that the motivation to use online betting platforms in order to support their household is stronger among lower-income households, and 96% said the use of PIX for betting payments.

From Minas Gerais, Congressman **Pinheirinho**, introduced a bill which proposed that 50% of tax revenue generated by fixed-odds betting operators should be redirected to philanthropic hospitals and Santa Casas within Brazil's healthcare network. The bill would seek to redistribute funds generated from betting activities and be allocated to medical supplies - among other things.



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# THE WEEK IN QUOTES

## EU REGULATION

### ROUND-UP

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*We want to combat illegal betting and make legal betting subject to stricter regulation than tobacco in Brazil.*

PEDRO CAMPOS SAID DURING AN EVENT ORGANISED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY FRONT FOR THE PROMOTION OF MENTAL HEALTH

*It is critically important that the CFTC's exclusive authority over Prediction Markets is maintained, and that they will thrive. Under my leadership, we are setting "rules of the road" that are the Gold Standard for the States. We cannot have SCUM like Chris Christie, Letitia James, Tim Walz, and JB Pritzker setting the rules!"*

DONALD TRUMP'S COMMENTS VIA TRUTH SOCIAL ON PREDICTION MARKETS AND THE CFTC'S AUTHORITY

## NORWAY, ITALY & MORE...

### AT A GLANCE

- Norway's Lotteritilsynet reports strong rates of channelisation
- Court of Cassation cancels €20,000 fine
- North Macedonian MPs urged to reject gambling reforms

Norwegian regulator, **Lotteritilsynet**, reported that in 2025, 2.6% of players used foreign gambling companies, down from 3.8% in 2024. However, estimates show that Norwegian players lost NOK 1.9bn (\$205m) to illegal operators in 2025, almost four times the regulator's 2024 estimate. Additionally, **Norsk Tipping** saw an increase in casino gaming among young people and over the past five years, with the number rising by 200,000 since 2020. Norway's Government has become increasingly concerned around rising gambling engagement among the nation's youth.

Elsewhere, Italy's **Court of Cassation**

revoked a 20,000 (\$21,700) fine imposed by the Customs and Monopolies Agency (ADM) on the owner of Il Belvedere Bar Ristorante Pizzeria in Lanciano. The initial fine came after an inspection in 2019 saw authorities discover a printer for betting receipts and a monitor showing a link to an online betting site. The Court of Cassation however, overturned the position on the case after Italy's Constitutional Court ruled in judgment 104/2025 that the provision was unconstitutional.

In **North Macedonia**, Civil organisations pushed MPs to reject proposed amendments to the law on Games of Chance and Entertainment Games, arguing that the changes could result in weaker transparency for how funds are sent to vulnerable communities and those in need. A protest was staged in Skopje against the proposed changes to gambling reforms and the civil groups urged lawmakers to either withdraw or revise the proposal.

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# THE WEEK IN QUOTES

RG

ROUND-UP

## BRAZIL, KOREA & MORE...

### AT A GLANCE

- Brazil's online self-exclusion platform surpasses 500,000 users
- Korea launches youth campaign to tackle illegal gambling
- Casino Plus strengthens player protection

The federal self-exclusion platform for online betting in **Brazil** surpassed 500,000 registered users this week, an increase of 8% from the 462,000 recorded last month. According to government figures, this info highlights growth and the continuation of responsible gambling tools in the country. The platform was launched in December 2025 by the Secretariat of Prizes and Betting in partnership with Brazil's Ministries of Finance.

In the **Republic of Korea**, the Sports Lottery and Sports Racing General Division of the Korea Sports Promotion Foundation launched a campaign this past week to

address illegal gambling amongst youngsters. Carried out in collaboration with Gwangmyeong Police Station, the campaign reached 880 high school students and were also introduced to the campaign for Adolescent Gambling Intervention screening tool. In addition, an outreach program drew over 4,000 participants across several local venues in Gwangmyeong City, consisting of students and residents.

After securing a PHP 1bn (US\$16.24m) surety bond this week, **Casino Plus** will now reinforce its player protection framework. The bond was issued by Philippine First Insurance Co. Inc. and provides a financial barrier in case the company is unable to return confirmed player deposits or verified account balances. Casino Plus introduced the bond last year and stated that it complements existing compliance measures, financial safeguards, and responsible gaming policies aligned with PAGCOR's Responsible Gaming Code of Practice.

*Prize competitions are primarily marketing tools where players do not wager any stake.*

GRA DIRECTOR GENERAL PETER M KARIMI ON THE REMOVAL OF THE CLAUSE INTRODUCING A 20% WITHHOLDING TAX ON WINNINGS FROM PRIZE COMPETITIONS

*Young people can see betting as something small or something that belongs to football, but that is precisely why it is important to open up the conversation and talk about the risks.*

NOAH ZEEUW, INFLUENCER AND FOOTBALL PLAYER ON THE NEW "DON'T LET YOURSELF BE LOST" CAMPAIGN PUBLISHED BY THE KSA

# GAMING IN HOLLAND

part of GAMING IN EUROPE

## CONFERENCE

Moving forward in a highly regulated market

Thursday 4 June 2026 | Amsterdam  
at the Royal Tropical Institute

## POKIES IN POLITICS

0.3% and 18%. These are the figures usually thrown around when talking about pokies in Australia. Those translate to Australia having 0.3% of the world's population and 18% of the world's slot machines. In Victoria alone, citizens lost AU\$7.3bn (US\$5.23bn) to different types of gambling during the 2024-25 fiscal year. Notably, pokies in hotels and clubs accounted for AU\$3.1bn of this, while lotteries brought in AU\$766.6m.

But what is a pokie? Well, a poker machine is just another name for a slot machine. No matter what they are called, the New South Wales Government is planning to hold a vote in July to reduce the 87,000 pokies in the region by 50% during the upcoming NSW Labor Annual State Conference. This would reduce "preventable misery," according to Inner West Mayor Darcy Byrne.

In 2024, a survey found that 53.5% of

NSW adults participated in gambling within the previous 12 months, although 40.9% of participants played the lottery. Pokies were the second-most popular, with 14.3% of adults playing them at one point during the year. According to the NSW Government, 0.9% of adults showed problem gambling behaviour – and pokies are responsible for 54.6% of these gambling harm cases. Almost one in five people who use poker machines experienced moderate or high-risk gambling (18.5%), compared to 5.8% of all gamblers.

The average NSW citizen who gambled less than weekly spent AU\$374 a year on gambling; but those who gamble weekly or more often spent on average AU\$3,631 a year. Those ranked as minimal-risk spent AU\$309 annually, while those ranked moderate spent AU\$2,563 and high-risk

spent AU\$13,906. This means there is an exponential acceleration in harm that would be easy for politicians to target and take action against and look good in the public eye while doing so.

Cutting the number of pokie machines in half would also support the gaming reforms that were introduced in 2023, including the ban on all external gambling signage, introducing Responsible Gambling Officers in venues and maintaining a Gambling Incident Register. It is clear that pokies do contribute some level of harm. But would reducing the numbers actually reduce the harm, or would it push players onto the increasingly accessible online black market, or simply to venues with pokies even if there were less of them?

As always, enforcement isn't straightforward – but the issue is there to be tackled.



MOVERS &

SHAKERS

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**DOUGLAS BROWN**  
CEO  
*Sportsbet*  
Australia

Succeeding long-term CEO Barni Evans, **Brown** will move into the top job at the Australian operator after over 10 years with the company. He will move on from his position as COO to oversee all operations.



**SIMON RAVN**  
CEO  
*Prime Entertainment*  
Europe

Stepping down as CEO from Evoke after eight years, **Ravn** will join Prime Entertainment as CEO and has a previous four-year tenure as Brand and Marketing manager for Betsson Group.



**IAN PENROSE**  
Senior Independent Director  
*Playtech*  
UK

Playtech announced that **Penrose** will step down as Senior Independent Director. The previous Vice Chairman at Weatherbys will remain on Playtech's board until 31 December 2026.



**CHRIS THORNTON**  
Director of Operations  
*GamCare*  
UK

Prior to joining GamCare, **Thornton** served as Director of the North of England and the Isle of Man for the British Red Cross. And in his new role he will ensure that services are safe and sustainable



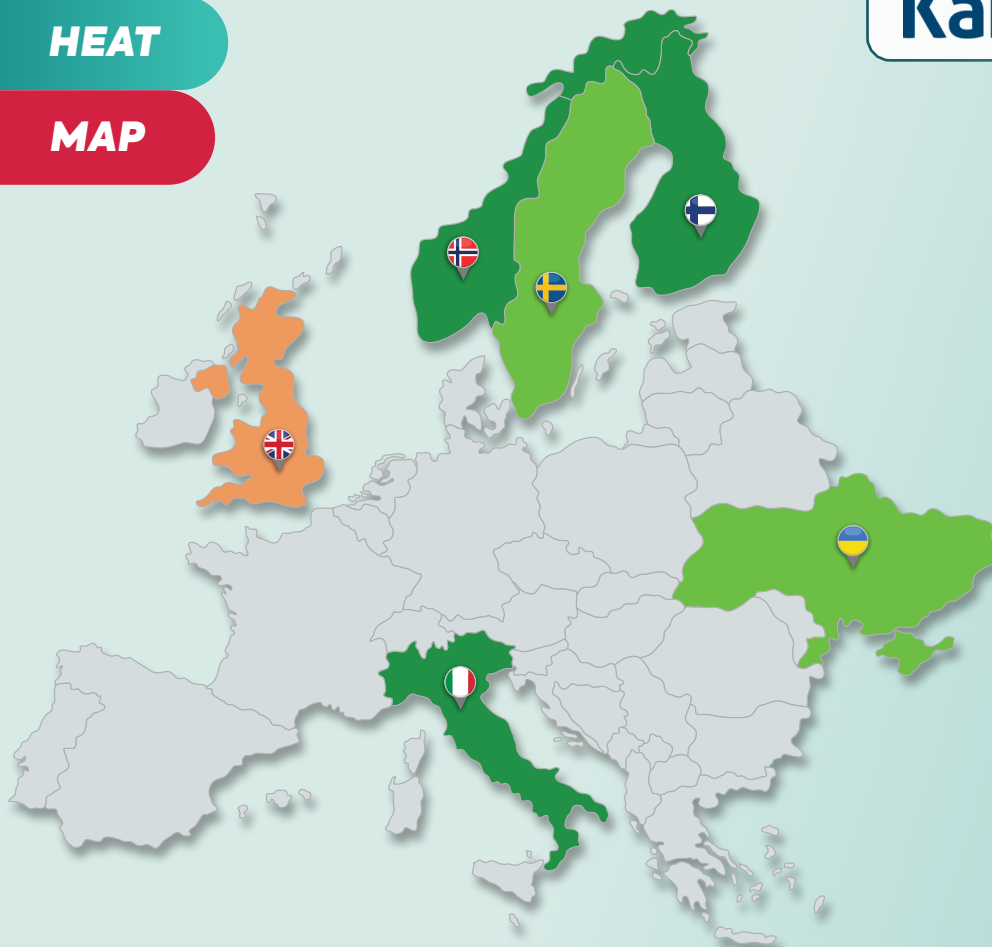
**ALEX WALSH**  
CFO  
*Skillz*  
US

**Walsh** has departed from his role of CFO from Aristocrat Gaming and will join Skillz under the same title, and he also previously served as Head of Finance for the LEGO Group.



**ERIKA SPITERI BAILEY**  
Co-Chair  
*GREF InfoStat Working Group*  
Europe

The Malta Gaming Authority confirmed **Bailey** will Co-Chair the group and will be responsible for increasing co-operation between members and improving the group's direction in data management.



### UK

The Gambling Commission received a list of questions from the BGC before it considers rolling out its financial risk assessments – furthermore it will also begin to wind down its market impact dataset



### FINLAND

Nordic operator Paf achieved a rare milestone where it saw over €500m (\$579m) in funds given back to society



### UKRAINE

Fines all around from PlayCity as it charged operator All City Games UAH 4.32m (US\$ 97,618) and Ukrainian influencer Tatyana Yusupova UAH 4.8m for violating online gambling laws



### ITALY

Italy's Court of Cassation annulled a €20,000 fine from the ADM on a Pizzeria in regards to providing gambling activities to the public



### SWEDEN

Can we turn back time? Sweden hopes so as it launched a petition to turn the clocks back seven hours to watch the 2026 World Cup



### NORWAY

The Norwegian regulator, Lotteritilsynet, reported improved rates of channelisation but the number of online casino players at Norsk Tipping has doubled in the last five years to 400,000

## NEW JERSEY Q1 2026 CASINO RESULTS

- New Jersey reported a statewide casino revenue figure of \$725.6m during the first quarter of 2026, down by 0.6% year-on-year
- Borgata was the state's key revenue driver, generating \$182.3m, up 4.7%, while Caesars recorded the largest upswing of 10.6%
- In Atlantic City, specifically, casino revenue dropped 22.6% year-on-year to \$102.83%
- All but three properties experienced year-on-year revenue declines, with Golden Nugget and Bally's Atlantic City recording losses during the quarter

### RESULTS BY OPERATOR (STATEWIDE)

OPERATOR	REVENUE (\$M)	% CHANGE YEAR-ON-YEAR
Borgata	182.3	+4.7
Bally's	41.6	-0.1
Caesars	55.4	+10.6
Golden Nugget	30.6	-10.9
Hard Rock	127.9	-5.3
Harrah's	69.3	-1.1
Ocean Casino	115.8	+2.4
Resorts	37.4	-7.6
Tropicana	57.4	-6.1
CIENJ	5.2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>725.6</b>	<b>-0.6</b>

### RESULTS BY PROPERTY (ATLANTIC CITY)

OPERATOR	REVENUE (\$M)	% CHANGE YEAR-ON-YEAR
Bally's AC	(-0.86)	+73.3
Borgata	39.75	-17.6
Caesars	4.97	+40.2
Golden Nugget	(-1.79)	-163.6
Hard Rock	19.77	-24.9
Harrah's	13.57	-13.1
Ocean Casino	18.76	+2.4
Resorts	0.88	-75.9
Tropicana	7.79	-41.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102.83</b>	<b>-22.6</b>



**GUEST**

**INTERVIEW**

**WILLEM VAN OORT**  
FOUNDER,  
GAMING IN HOLLAND

*Next week, the annual Gaming in Holland conference will once again kick off in Amsterdam. Global Gaming Insider spoke with the Gaming in Holland Founder about what to expect from this year's event, as well as some of the recent developments in the Dutch market*

**What can we expect from this year's Gaming in Holland Conference?**

As always, Gaming in Holland is the best place to meet all the key decision makers in the Dutch regulated gambling market. All licensed operators will be there, as well as the regulator and other stakeholders.

Specifically, attendees can expect contributions from the CEOs of Nederlandse Loterij and Holland Casino. FDJ, the owner of Unibet, will also send a leading executive to share their views on the current state of the Dutch market. The Netherlands Gambling Authority (KSA) has decided to send two different speakers this year: one to discuss the regulator's view on new regulation, and the other to discuss some very specific new player protection measures.

Besides a packed conference programme, there will also be a lot of opportunities for networking and getting to know the key players in the Dutch market; for instance during our traditional boat tour through Amsterdam's picturesque canals.

**Tell us a little bit more about the idea behind Gaming in Holland's/ Gaming in Europe's new "Reclaim the Market" mission statement.**

As with many regulated markets when the regulatory screws are being tightened, the regulated Dutch iGaming market has been losing market share to increasingly aggressive offshore competitors. Naturally, we would like this development to stop and ideally even be reversed. This is what we mean by "reclaiming the market."

Together, licensed operators have quite a bit of market power, which allows them to put significant pressure on those parts of the iGaming industry – suppliers, payment providers, marketing channels, etc. – that also serve offshore operators. The challenge is to create coordinated efforts to ensure that this pressure will tell. And, of course, involving the regulator is also part of this.

Neither licensed operators nor regulators can be happy with a growing offshore market. There is definitely a common interest here. Apart from discussing the latest market data – even to the

level of consumer preferences – we will also explore strategies to reverse this trend of black-market proliferation. A common, coordinated industry response could make a significant contribution to that aim, we think.

**Tackling the black market, while important, is sometimes approached as a topic by operators to promote relaxed regulations. How do you approach this delicate balance when developing something like the GIH agenda?**

Looking at the Dutch market but also, of course, the Dutch political environment, this boat has sailed, to put it frankly. "We need more relaxed regulations" is a message that simply will not play, politically speaking. While we, as an industry, can nonetheless demand it, such a demand would go absolutely nowhere. It would be a waste of effort.

I think the goal is rather to find a new balance, to see what is possible in the current environment. Maybe there are some specific enforcement efforts that could compensate for the competitive disadvantage of licensed operators. Or perhaps the industry could trade additional player protection measures for a lower tax rate.

The goal is to keep the licensed market economically viable and competitive, not necessarily as deregulated as possible.

**Regulation aside, do you believe operators could place more emphasis on innovation as a means to tackle the black market in Europe and the Netherlands looking forward?**

Innovation could certainly help in making the legal offer more attractive. However, how do you prevent black-market operators from simply copying these innovations? Product innovation by itself will not protect us from the black market.

Where I see a bigger potential for change is in societal attitudes towards gambling. In the Netherlands at least, gambling is still something that is a bit shameful, somehow. I would argue that this is one thing that makes it easier for players to end up with illegal operators. But what if we could normalise it more? Make it into something that is wholly above board?

In such a scenario, player attitudes might change so that of course they would play with licensed operators. It simply becomes the natural thing to do. I think this is where there is still quite a bit to be gained.

COMPANY	NEW PARTNER	VERTICAL	REGION
Kambi	CBN	Sports betting	Canada
Fanatics	American Express	Payments	US
Betby	Vibra Gaming	Sports betting	LatAm
Norsk Rikstoto	NEP Mediabank	Sports betting	Norway
Bally's Intralot	Hellenic Lotteries	Lottery	Greece
NetBet	Speedy Tomatoes	iGaming	Europe
Comisión de Juegos Rico	idPair	iGaming	Puerto
Rio Branco F.C	Esportiva Bet	Sports betting	Brazil
Hub88	Black Lagoon Games	iGaming	Europe
Evoplay	F12.bet.br	iGaming	Brazil



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