



Rialálaí an Chrannchuir Náisiúnta Regulator of the National Lottery

Preventing Problem Gambling: measures in place for the National Lottery

Measures in place to prevent problem gambling and support healthy enjoyment of National Lottery games mostly originate in the legislation, the Licence (including Codes made under it), in schemes of games approved under the Licence, but may be introduced by the Operator unilaterally or following engagement by the Regulator.

The following measures are currently in place. The Regulator and her officers conduct a variety of regular and ad hoc checks to ascertain that these measures are operational and effective.

Primary Prevention measures involve preventing and delaying National Lottery play by minors, limits on product availability, and transparent and informative communications of game odds and risks associated with gambling.

Minors

1. It is an offence to sell a National Lottery ticket to someone under 18 years old. Alleged offences may only be investigated by An Garda Síochána.

Retail

2. Retail agents must display signage showing that the products are not for sale to those under 18 years of age.
3. The Operator must use its best endeavours to ensure that its retail agents do not sell tickets to minors.
4. Retailers must ask younger looking players for proof of age.
5. The Regulator conducted the first ever underage mystery shop of National Lottery tickets to establish the level of compliance and a baseline for measuring improvement.
6. A Think21 campaign is in place to prompt retail agents to ask for ID (most retailers have put in automated till prompts in response).
7. The Operator conducts regular mystery shopping exercises to assess retailer compliance and applies sanctions for failure to comply.
8. All National Lottery tickets must be marked 18+.

Online

9. The online channel must clearly show that the products are not for sale to those under 18 years of age.
10. Anyone seeking to register an online account and purchase a ticket must provide a photo of a valid identity document to verify that they are over 18.
11. The Operator must conduct spot checks of its online players to ensure that they are at least 18 years of age and conduct age and identity checks for all prizes over €500.

Public Education and Awareness

1. Information on how to play and avoid harm is available on lottery.ie, accessible from any part of the website or the National Lottery app.
2. All National Lottery advertising and promotion must carry a responsible gambling message.
3. Each scratch card and online instant win game must display the odds of winning the top prize and the odds of winning any prize.
4. The odds of winning in a National Lottery draw based game is available via the landing page of the game on the website or app.
5. The rules of every game on sale must be available on the National Lottery website or in hard copy by request.

Limits on product availability

6. The product mix is confined to a limited range of specific products.
7. Draw based game tickets must not be sold between 10pm and 6am either in retail or online.
8. Online instant win game tickets must not be sold between 11pm and 6am.
9. Online spend is limited to €75 per day, €300 per week and €900 per month (spending of any winnings is counted in reaching these limits).
10. National Lottery tickets cannot be sold on a premises where alcohol is served.

Secondary Prevention is focused on screening and monitoring for problems, including during game design, encouraging players to be well informed about how to gamble safely, and early interventions with players before indicators of potential player harm translate into problem gambling.

Limits on product availability

1. Every proposed new game (or change to an existing game) must be assessed with regard to the risk the game (or game change) may present to a vulnerable player. This assessment must form part of the request to the Regulator for approval of the game prior to launch.

Retail environment

2. Scratch card transactions are limited to 10 scratch cards.
3. Retail agents receive training in spotting problem play in retail settings and information to provide to the player.
4. Information on how to play and avoid harm is made available to players on a standalone website (responsibleplay.ie), with the website address printed on the reverse of each scratch card and draw ticket, to avoid directing players to the online sales channel for such information.

Online environment

5. In addition to the mandatory spend limits prescribed in the Licence, players have the facility to set lower spend limits for themselves and are encouraged to do so at registration and periodically thereafter.

6. Anyone seeking to register an online account and purchase a ticket must provide a photo of a valid identity document to verify their identity and algorithms are in place to prevent them opening a second account to circumvent the spend limits.
7. Credit cards are not accepted as a form of payment online.
8. The Operator screens online play for indicators of potential player harm and applies early interventions with players to prevent actual harm – encouraging players to use the screening test or self-exclusion tools.

Promotion activities

9. A detailed Advertising and Promotion Code applies to all aspects of advertising, marketing, and promotion of the National Lottery on all platforms and it reflects the nature of the products. The Code must be reviewed annually and must comply with the ASAI and BAI Codes and rulings.
10. Direct marketing messages may only be sent to players who have actively opted into receiving them and players must be able to opt out at any time.
11. Free tickets are not used for promotional purposes, only as prizes in games.

Tertiary prevention is concerned with preventing further or ongoing harm to those already showing signs of problem gambling and includes measures like screening and interventions, self-exclusion support and treatment services.

Retail environment

1. The reverse of all scratch cards and draw-based game tickets, and the website and apps, provide a helpline number for players concerned about their gambling.

Online environment

2. The online channel must provide certain self-exclusion options to players such that they will not have access to their account (or to instant win games only) for the period chosen and receive no marketing messages from the Operator for the period.
3. Self-excluded accounts are not automatically re-activated upon the expiry of the period of exclusion. Players must actively request that the account is reactivated. The Operator does not recommence sending marketing messages unless the player specifically opts-in again to receiving such messages.
4. Anyone seeking to register an online account and purchase a ticket must provide a photo of a valid identity document to verify their identity and algorithms are in place to prevent them from opening a second account to circumvent a self-exclusion.
5. The Operator screens online play for indicators of potential player harm and applies stronger interventions to players showing signs of harm to prevent further harm, up to and including imposing exclusions on a player for their own welfare.
6. Links to treatment services in Ireland and third-party apps that block access to gambling websites are available on lottery.ie

General Requirements

Certification

In addition to the above specific requirements, the Operator is required to achieve Responsible Gaming Certification from either the World Lottery Association or European Lotteries. This involves periodic auditing and assessment by the relevant body.

Continuous Improvement

The Operator is required by the Licence to operate the National Lottery “*in accordance with responsible gaming practices that prevent problem gaming*”. This principle has been invoked to ensure that the Operator continuously improves and adds to the measures in place.

Last Updated 18 November 2025