

# Responsible Gaming

Action Plan 2018-2022



NATIONAL  
BETTING  
AUTHORITY



NATIONAL BETTING AUTHORITY  
NOVEMBER 2017 | NICOSIA | CYPRUS

# Contents

**3** Address by the Authority's President Ms. Ioanna Fiakkou

## **THE CONTEXT**

**6** National Betting Authority

**7** Contribution to the National Betting Authority –  
Social Responsibility

**8** The Authority's Stakeholders

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**10** Values and Vision of the National Betting Authority

**11** Why There is a Need for a Responsible Gaming Strategy

**12** Priority Pillars

**13** Strategic Plan

**14** Priority Pillars for Accomplishing the Authority's Objectives

## **MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN**

**19** Monitoring of the Implementation of the Action Plan

**20** Conclusion

# Address by the Authority's President Ms. Ioanna Fiakkou



Dear friends,

It gives us great satisfaction to be able to present our first Action Plan on Responsible Gaming, which is part of the National Betting Authority's Strategic Planning. This Plan marks the beginning of a new series of activities, actions and policies for the period 2018-2022.

The gambling sector has contributed to the economic development of the country significantly in recent years and has the potential to contribute even more. The Authority, being responsible for safeguarding the regulatory framework and the proper functioning of the market and being respectful for the values it serves, such as integrity, social responsibility and empathy, takes initiatives that go beyond economic contribution.

Being aware of the particular features of the gambling sector, the Authority deals with the issue of gambling addiction with the respective responsibility. Hence, it has a leading role in educating and cultivating a culture of responsibility across the spectrum of the gambling activities.

Throughout all the programs it implements, the policies and its organization culture, the Authority seeks to educate the public about the terms and conditions by which gambling is a healthy and entertaining activity, in order to minimize the negative consequences that may arise from betting activity.

Based on this philosophy, the first Action Plan on Responsible Gaming by the National Betting Authority consists of the following priority pillars:

- ▶ Education of society and stakeholders
- ▶ Promotion of responsible gaming
- ▶ Prevention and combating gambling addiction
- ▶ Protection of young people and vulnerable social groups from gambling addiction

Our major aim is to comprehend the needs and particularities of every interested party which is involved in betting activity, either directly or indirectly, and respond effectively with various actions, as well as with cooperation with other related parties.

We make sure that the actions and programs we develop respond to the social needs and have a positive impact. We see great importance in the achievement of cooperation among all social entities in order to accomplish a common strategy.

The constantly evolving environment of betting activity and the availability of gambling products, as well the social impacts of these dynamic changes, are priorities that are included in the Authority's strategic planning.

This strategy sets a course of action that ensures that both players and the society are as benefited as possible from their involvement in betting activity. By channeling the necessary resources into the structures and programs that strengthen the social fabric, the economic benefits of promoting responsible gaming are also maximized.

Through the implementation of the Authority's Action Plan, we expect to raise awareness on the potential threats of irresponsible gaming and to create a mentality in which every person involved in the betting activity goes about it responsibly and considers betting a recreational activity.

We feel proud of the Authority's efforts that enabled us to present today our strategy to promote Responsible Gaming and we invite the readers to get informed, participate and work with us. From our part, we are committed to stepping up our efforts for a responsible gambling industry.



Ioanna Fiakkou  
Chairwoman



# The Context

Responsible  
Gaming

## i. National Betting Authority

The National Betting Authority was established in 2012 following the adoption of the Betting Law 106(I)/2012. It is an independent authority both financially and politically.

Among the Authority's responsibilities are the regulation, supervision and control of betting activity in the Republic of Cyprus. The Authority is responsible to grant Class A and B licenses to bookmakers and authorized representatives, to conduct inspections, to supervise the licensees and to draft and issue directives that aim to a more effective implementation of the law.

The inspections which are conducted by the Authority aim to ensure that the betting activity is legal, transparent, fair and complying with the regulations, the profits are paid to the players, the taxes are paid to the government and the contributions to the Authority, and that the licensees comply with the terms of their respective licenses.

It is the Authority's responsibility to take preventive measures against money laundering. Therefore, a guide is being drafted, which will be approved in cooperation with the Unit for Combating Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism.

Moreover, the Authority is responsible for the implementation of certain preventive measures for the protection of young people and vulnerable groups from gambling addiction, as well as for the drafting of regulations on protection mechanisms for young people and addicted players.



NATIONAL  
BETTING  
AUTHORITY

## ii. Contribution to the National Betting Authority – Social Responsibility

According to article 71 of the Betting Law 2012, for every financial period, the Authority is entitled to a contribution of 3% of the net revenue from betting from the companies it licenses and supervises. This amount is allocated as follows:

1. Two per cent (2%) of the net revenue from betting is offered to the Cyprus Sports Organization, which allocates this amount as follows:
  - i. 1.5% of the amount is allocated to the Cyprus Federation which organizes the annual football championship and is distributed to the football clubs and their academies
  - ii. 0.5% of the amount is offered to the other Cyprus federations of group sports and is distributed to their clubs and academies
2. One per cent (1%) of the net revenue from betting is offered for the improvement of mechanisms and programs for young people and addicted players.

In order for an organization, company or regulatory Authority to be considered socially responsible, it needs to take into account the consequences of its actions on the society. By allocating the contribution it receives in this way, the Authority undertakes a leading role in raising awareness on the threats of excessive betting activity and gambling in general. The Authority aims at making information on responsible gaming and betting products that are offered by its licensees accessible to the public, and to facilitate access to gambling addiction treatment programs and services. The ultimate purpose of the Authority is to achieve prosperity for all society, to contribute to the country's financial development and to increase social benefits. Thus, in the context of social responsibility and sensibility, the Authority has developed an Action Plan on responsible gaming, which consists an integrated part of the Authority's social responsibility strategy.

Through its Action Plan, the Authority's aim is the creation of programs, the implementation of a policy on responsible gaming, and the preservation of the entertaining aspect of the gambling sector.

### iii. The Authority's Stakeholders

The Authority defines its stakeholders as individuals or legal entities which interact with the Authority and affect its function and aims, and are also affected by the function and aims of the Authority. Defining the stakeholders is, therefore, crucial for the Authority in order to be able to plan its actions, business activities and social responsibility, and so as to strategically address each involved party, as well as its needs.

The stakeholders have an impact on the Authority's direct and indirect environment and each stakeholder maintains a different kind of relationship with the Authority, such as relationship of authority, cooperation, negotiation, etc. The Authority's policy encourages the involvement of all stakeholders in its processes through a constructive dialogue, and it safeguards transparency in all procedures that involve its stakeholders. The activities that are described in the current report are based on the needs and particular features of each stakeholder and are the foundation of the strategy.

#### Stakeholders



Operators supervised by the Authority (Class A and B licensed bookmakers and authorized representatives)



Players and their families



The European Committee



Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other organized social groups



Under-aged people



Young people



Elderly people and other vulnerable social groups



Research and academic centers



Public sector services and other regulatory authorities



The Authority's staff





# Strategic Planning

Responsible  
Gaming

## i. Values and Vision of the National Betting Authority

The National Betting Authority is driven by values which govern its function and sphere of action, as well as its objectives. The Authority's philosophy comprises of the following Values:

### **Commitment**

Personal and collective commitment of the President, members and staff of the Authority for the accomplishment of its intensions, objectives and ultimate targets which have been set by the Authority.

### **Compliance**

A firm value is the compliance with every legal (national and European) and ethical obligation which is related with the Authority's function and scope.

### **Respect and Integrity**

Transparency, equality, sincerity and honesty in decision making, and the execution of administrative and regulatory activities based on respect and integrity towards all stakeholders without exception.

### **Professionalism and Responsibility**

The Authority's staff constantly attends education and training seminars and performs with exceptional professionalism and responsibility in providing services to the State, cooperating bodies and citizens. The

Authority's aim is a constant increase of its staff, in order to improve its efficiency.

### **Reliability**

In order to fulfill the Authority's responsibilities and role, reliable services are provided based on accurate information within the given deadlines.

### **Cooperation and Initiative**

The promotion of cooperation, team spirit and the initiative for development and improvement contribute to an enhanced fulfillment of the Authority's aims.

### **Social Responsibility and "Responsible Gaming"**

The Authority maintains continuous and direct contact with the public, focusing on communication with young people and vulnerable social groups, aiming at contributing actively and substantially to combating gambling addiction. It, therefore, promotes "Responsible Gaming" and prevention, giving special attention to the significance of such a concept on the broader society.



**Players' Protection:** Players' protection is related to the players' fair betting and their general experience throughout their involvement in gambling. The Authority's ultimate aim and objective is the provision of betting services in a transparent and fair way that ensures players' safety.

The Authority's aim is to keep the gambling sector in the sphere of entertainment and recreation and to reduce the negative consequences of excessive betting, while at the same time promoting responsible participation in this activity.

## Why There is a Need for a Responsible Gaming Strategy

Taking into consideration the particularities of the betting sector, which is regulated, licensed and supervised by the Authority, the implementation of a Strategic Planning for responsible gaming is necessary. The enhancement of the sector is a crucial development pillar for the economy, which may create new job opportunities and give an impetus to the economy of Cyprus. In order for this model to be sustainable, the practices which are implemented on the sector should be responsible, ethical, legal and transparent, aiming at social prosperity. Therefore, the reliable participation of the companies and all stakeholders in the betting sector ensures the sector's right development and the minimization of the negative consequences of excessive betting.

With the implementation of an Action Plan on responsible gaming, the Authority sets the protection of society and vulnerable groups as a priority, without leaving aside its role to ensure smooth gambling activity. The strategy on responsible gaming will be the basis on which certain actions and activities will be developed, in order to achieve the Authority's aim.

### iii. Priority Pillars

The responsible betting strategy has been built on the following topic areas, which consist the Authority's basic objectives:

- Education of society and stakeholders
- Promotion of responsible gaming
- Prevention and combating gambling addiction
- Protection of young people and vulnerable social groups from gambling addiction

For a more efficient accomplishment of the objectives, the following priority pillars have been created in order to respond to the strategy's objectives fully:



Research and knowledge acquisition



Education and awareness



Participation and involvement of all stakeholders



Protection of young people and vulnerable groups



Commitment of stakeholders to take necessary measures



Cooperation and coordination of involved services and organizations



Improvement of treatment services and facilities

## iv. Action Plan 2018-2022

### 1. Short Introduction

#### Target Age Groups



Through the above topic areas, the responsible gaming strategy addresses the whole society, with particular focus on young people and vulnerable social groups. The age groups in this strategy are divided as follows: underage people (under 18), young adults – 18-35 years old, people between 35-65 and elderly people. With this age group division, the Authority will be able to develop and promote more direct and targeted interventions, taking the distinctive features of each age group into account.

#### Duration of Strategy



The responsible gaming strategy will be implemented in the period 2018-2022. The objective is that, during this period long-term programs and actions will be put in practice in order to respond to the targets that arise from the set priority pillars. These targets shall be accomplished through continuous monitoring, assessment and adjustment of the strategy, if necessary.

The above-mentioned priority pillars will be presented more thoroughly with specific targets and actions in the next section.

## 2. Priority Pillars for Accomplishing the Authority's Objectives



### Research and Knowledge Acquisition

The knowledge regarding the public's involvement in gambling, as well as the scale of addiction in Cyprus, is currently limited. Thus, it is imperative to achieve a greater understanding of the proportions of the situation, as well as a clearer and more comprehensive idea of the extents it takes in Cyprus. Taking into consideration the popularity of betting and gambling, as well as the levels of addiction to gambling, which will derive from studying and comprehending the phenomenon, the Authority will develop tools and strategies especially designed for the needs of the Cypriot society.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ Research conduct in cooperation with qualified research institutes and academic institutions
- ▶ Identification of needs and particular features of each social group
- ▶ Undertaking a research on betting activity and gambling addiction that will cover all Cyprus and forming suitable strategies and policies against it
- ▶ Undertaking a research on responsible betting awareness levels in various social groups
- ▶ Research on best practices that are applied in promoting responsible gaming
- ▶ Improvement of research on current treatment and rehabilitation practices for addicted people and development of new treatment practices
- ▶ Support to NGOs that facilitate research and education in the society



### Education and Awareness

A crucial factor for social progress and development on all levels, especially regarding matters of responsible gaming, is education. Education is related to knowledge acquisition and culture development in society –which leads to awareness of the potential consequences of betting in a person's life– as well as the development of skills which protect people from excessive betting activity. Through the information they receive, people are able to recognize indications of excessive betting, they know where they can look for assistance in order to deal with addiction problems and are able to decide based on adequate and accurate information. The Authority aims at reducing excessive betting through education, information and awareness raising in society.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ Enhancement of society's general knowledge on gambling addiction, and of ways and programs that deal with it
- ▶ Awareness raising of the public, especially young people, on responsible gaming and on prevention of excessive betting
- ▶ Provision of adequate tools, programs, information and support to players and the society in general, in order for them to be able to make decisions based on adequate and accurate information
- ▶ Awareness raising campaigns targeted to vulnerable groups and the general public
- ▶ Training of employees in the betting sector on promoting responsible gaming and on the developments in this field, as well as on relevant skills development
- ▶ Training of the Authority's staff on the legal framework and applicable practices regarding responsible gaming, so as to be able to provide adequate and accurate information and support to the public

- ▶ Existence of a website on responsible gaming in order to provide information, raise awareness and develop preventive measures for citizens, especially those who are involved with betting
- ▶ On-site employees and managers' training on the potential threats of betting activities during work
- ▶ Education and training of other social groups on the Authority's actions regarding the promotion of responsible gaming



## Participation and Involvement of All Stakeholders

Some of the Authority's main objectives are social participation in decision making processes, social involvement in actions concerning responsible gaming and the creation of an effective strategy on raising awareness on addiction. The organizations and people who are considered as stakeholders should be able to participate and have a say on designing the measures for promoting responsible gaming. Being part of designing and implementing the measures entails that the stakeholders are concerned about the benefit of society, create strategies, promote actions and participate in social campaigns.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ Creation of a communication platform with the public which will facilitate the development of dialogue on issues that concern society and the opportunity to file complaints
- ▶ Enhancement of social cohesion by allocating the contribution collected by the Authority back to the society, through activities and actions with positive social impact
- ▶ Support and coordination of public initiatives and actions that promote responsible gaming
- ▶ Promotion of protection programs and creative activities for elderly people who are involved in gambling
- ▶ Development and support of community activities and actions on responsible gaming, social welfare and well-being
- ▶ Encouragement of social groups to promote the Authority's activities and actions on responsible gaming



## Protection of Young People and Vulnerable Groups

A significant part of the Authority's strategy is the protection of vulnerable groups, especially young people, from the threat of gambling addiction. Young people are the future of a society; therefore, it is essential for them to be informed, in order to be able to analyze and think critically about issues of their concern. They should be able to realize the dangers that arise from excessive betting, and know the ways one can bet responsibly. A substantial aspect which should be applied is young people's skills development, along with the development of creative activity programs, in order for them to be able to think critically and make informed decisions.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ A series of actions on creating awareness among young people regarding the negative consequences of excessive gambling
- ▶ Strategic partnership with the Youth Board of Cyprus for promoting youth empowerment and creative engagement programs for young people
- ▶ Development of responsible gaming consciousness among young adults through providing adequate and accurate information and prevention programs
- ▶ Design of innovative skills development programs which prevent betting and gambling addiction for young people

- ▶ Cooperation with the involved services and institutions for promoting awareness raising and skills development school programs
- ▶ Creation of campaigns and of an informational platform for informing both parents and young people about the threats that may arise from young people's involvement in gambling
- ▶ Ensuring the law implementation and betting companies' compliance with the laws and regulations that forbid betting for people under 18 years old



### Commitment of Stakeholders to take necessary measures

The Authority's objectives to promote responsible gaming and to prevent excessive betting cannot be achieved without the commitment of all parties involved in the betting sector to take the required measures. Every organization or service which is involved in the betting sector should cooperate with the Authority and engage in a productive dialogue that will lead to the employment of programs and practices for the benefit of the society.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ Adopting a Code of Practice on Advertising, which outlines all the features required by an advertisement or promotion in order to be socially responsible and protect underage and vulnerable social groups
- ▶ Creating a code of application regarding responsible gaming practices, designating the standards that should be met by the Authority's supervised entities, i.e. the betting companies. This set of standards shall be reached and maintained by all bookmakers
- ▶ Ensuring the implementation of the responsible gaming code of practice by the Authority's supervised entities



### Cooperation and Coordination of Involved Services and organizations

The enhancement of cooperation among organized social groups, governmental services and informal groups is an important aspect of the Authority's strategy. The authority should strive to bring together all the groups that are influenced by the gaming sector, either directly or indirectly, and to facilitate a constructive dialogue among them. A significant target is to encourage the development of common activities by various social institutions through a coordinated promotion of efforts to reduce excessive gaming.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ Cooperation with governmental services on addiction issues and prevention so as to adopt a common vision for the drastic reduction of gambling addiction
- ▶ Cooperation with groups and organizations which deal with social issues and addiction problems, in order to put forward common and coordinated efforts against excessive gambling, and to make their efforts known to society
- ▶ Participation at local and international seminars on responsible gaming and gambling addiction by the Authority's personnel
- ▶ Development of cooperation among mental health professionals and various social groups





## Improvement of treatment services and facilities

Along with the promotion activities of responsible gaming, actions and awareness raising on addiction prevention, the Authority supports addiction treatment programs and services, as well as support programs for people addicted to gambling. The Authority strives to promote such programs and services in order for people to know how to access specialized counseling, support and treatment. Moreover, the Authority intends to improve and develop the services and institutions which offer support and treatment to addicted individuals.

The side objectives for the fulfillment of this priority pillar are the following:

- ▶ Development and support of governmental services, treatment and support centers for addicted people, in order to improve the support and services provided to them for a more effective treatment and rehabilitation
- ▶ Improvement of the accessibility to treatment and support services
- ▶ Development of early intervention strategies for the reduction of factors that increase the risk of addiction
- ▶ Creation and operation of a national help line for addicted people and their families for confidential and specialized counseling and support
- ▶ Professional development of the personnel of treatment programs through training programs in the field of addictions. The training programs will be selected based on the best practices which are implemented in countries where such treatment centers already operate successfully
- ▶ Development of support programs for people who are at a high-risk level for developing addiction and for their family and friends, specially adjusted to the needs of every social group
- ▶ Support and funding of programs by services which align with the Authority's objectives
- ▶ Campaigns that present and promote the counseling and treatment programs and services



Monitoring of the  
Implementation of  
the Action Plan

## Monitoring of the Implementation of the Action Plan

The Action Plan's success and efficiency will be continuously and regularly assessed. Based on the assessments, the strategy will be revisited and reconsidered so as to adjust to the new circumstances that will occur. During this process, the opinion of consultants specialized on responsible gaming and social responsibility will be taken into consideration.

In addition, the impact of every action on the respective target group will be regularly measured, in order to assess the level of objectives accomplishment as set in the Action Plan. The results will be followed by proposals and suggestions for the improvement of the Authority's actions. The progress evaluation will be both qualitative and quantitative, based on specific performance indicators which will be consulted in order to define the accomplishment levels of every action.

There will be constant communication with consultants specialized on responsible gaming, as well as constant readjustments to actions and priorities when necessary, in order for the Strategy to respond to the fluctuating situations and dynamic developments in the gambling industry.



## Conclusion

The National Betting Authority acknowledges the necessity of having a comprehensive strategy for the successful operation of the betting sector and for minimizing excessive betting. Hence, it has developed a strategy based on social sensitivity and the promotion of a responsible gaming mentality.

Taking into account the needs and particular features of every stakeholder and involved party, the Authority will implement the objectives which have been set and analyzed thoroughly in this strategy, within the period 2018-2022.

[www.nba.gov.cy](http://www.nba.gov.cy)

Michael Karaoli & Gregori  
Afxentiou, 1439 Nicosia  
**Call centre:** 22 601215  
**Fax:** 22 605043  
**Email:** [info@nba.gov.cy](mailto:info@nba.gov.cy)

[www.responsiblegaming.gov.cy](http://www.responsiblegaming.gov.cy)

Michael Karaoli & Gregori  
Afxentiou, 1439 Nicosia  
**Call centre:** 22 601215  
**Fax:** 22 605043  
**Email:** [info@nba.gov.cy](mailto:info@nba.gov.cy)



NATIONAL  
BETTING  
AUTHORITY

