

Annette KOK

President of the “EUROMAT European Gaming and Amusement Federation”



1) Who We Are

Euromat represents the gaming and amusement device industry outside casinos.

2) Replying to Today's Symposium

To the question "How to regulate gambling and betting Europe?" we reply that gambling in Europe is already regulated. However, the newest channel through which gambling and betting services are provided, the remote channel, seems to flout the law and ignore regulations while there is no real enforcement by Member States as to whether consumers online are being properly protected.

Our products are designed to provide customers with an enjoyable leisure and entertainment experience, in a safe and controlled environment. We pioneered the promotion of responsible gambling. Our long-established measures are now enshrined in national legislation. In some EU Member States this knowledge and experience is recognized through the licensing systems they have put in place which link an online operation to an existing operation - given the enormity of the illegality of companies providing gambling services online, and this without oversight in terms of player protection, this approach is the right one and one which should be replicated EU wide.

3) Our Principles

In all of our dealings with our customers, we apply three main principles of corporate social responsibility: research, effective education and communication, and regulation. We have been calling for a European responsible gambling forum long before the existence of online gambling. We are also strong supporters of the role played by national authorities in the treatment of pathological gambling. As recognised by the European Parliament's resolution on online gambling, the risks to consumers in the online gambling environment are greater than those in the land-based environment. It is the duty of national and EU regulators to properly regulate the newest channel of gambling services. National and EU regulators should make use of our knowledge and experience with respect to consumer protection measures that have proven to be very effective

There is a need for better and more wide-reaching research on problem gambling EUwide.

Compulsive gambling, underage gambling, and protection of the vulnerable are serious issues. All legal gambling actors should share responsibility and take positive, constructive action in addressing them. Governments who enjoy substantial revenue from gambling activities cannot demure from playing a part.

To sum up: Consumer protection in the gambling environment is highly necessary. The greater risk involved in the online environment has been recognised. Online or remote gambling service providers must be legally obligated to properly protect their players, regardless of where the players are located. The rules must be properly enforced. The land-based gaming and amusement industry, should be seated at the table of discussions. National and EU regulators should make use of our knowledge and experience.

Annette KOK, President of the VAN Speelautomaten Branche-Organisatie (Dutch Gaming Machine Organisation), was first elected as EUROMAT President in May 2008 and re-elected again for a second term in 2011.

She holds a Master's Degree in Law from the Erasmus University (Rotterdam, Netherlands) and an Executive MBA from the Nyenrode Business University (Breukelen, Netherlands). Having held several positions in the VAN Dutch Gaming Machine Organization and JVH games, she has more than 20 years of experience in the gaming and amusement sector.

Speech delivered by Mrs. Annette Kok at EU Symposium "How to regulate gambling and betting in Europe", held on the 27-th of July, 2012, at EU Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.