

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001710/26
to the Commission**

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(27 April 2026)

Subject: Digital gambling advertising

The rapid expansion of digital gambling advertising, particularly through social media platforms, raises serious concerns regarding social welfare, mental health and the protection of minors.

Scientific research demonstrates that online gambling is associated with increased rates of addiction, anxiety, depression, impulse control disorders and financial ruin, with long-term psychological impacts on affected players, on their families and on their social environment.

Advertising through podcasts and short-form video content (reels) and, unfortunately, through the use of willing influencers, leads to the recruitment of victims from vulnerable groups in society, including minors.

The constant projection of ‘successful’ role models, the normalisation of gambling as a form of entertainment, and its association with economic and social success directly affect the psychology of children and adolescents, shaping distorted perceptions of risk, chance and money.

At the same time, a significant share of digital gambling advertising is disseminated through algorithmically targeted advertisements on social media, within environments that remain, to a large extent, insufficiently controlled with regard to age verification, content and frequency of exposure.

The Commission is therefore asked:

1. How does it assess the impact of digital gambling advertising on addiction and mental health, particularly with regard to minors?
2. Does it intend to propose stricter rules or limitations on the advertising of digital gambling on social media platforms?

Submitted: 27.4.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission

(3 July 2026)

The Commission recognises that minors face risks online from exposure to inappropriate or exploitative gambling-related practices ⁽¹⁾.

The Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽²⁾ provides a framework for protecting minors on online platforms, including social media. Online platforms must establish measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors on their service ⁽³⁾. The DSA also prohibits advertising based on profiling using minors’ personal data.

The DSA guidelines on the protection of minors ⁽⁴⁾ recommend measures to prevent access to age-inappropriate content, such as gambling, and exposure to practices that may encourage compulsive or addictive behaviour.

Users can notify gambling advertisements that they believe are illegal, for example under applicable national laws or the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD) ⁽⁵⁾ using the notice and action mechanism provided for in the DSA ⁽⁶⁾.

The UCPD prohibits misleading or aggressive advertising affecting consumers’ transactional decisions, especially when it targets vulnerable consumers, such as minors. It acts as a safety net without prejudice to national laws that restrict gambling advertising.

The upcoming Digital Fairness Act (DFA) aims to address specific gaps in EU consumer protection rules in the online environment.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TEXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C_202505519.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TEXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022R2065>.

⁽³⁾ Article 28(1) DSA.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/commission-publishes-guidelines-protection-minors>.

⁽⁵⁾ Directive 2005/29/EC.

⁽⁶⁾ Article 16 DSA.

The Commission is considering additional measures to enhance child safety online, also based on the upcoming findings of the Special Panel of Experts on Child Safety Online.
