



Brussels, 16th November 2011

The European Pari Mutuel Association (EPMA) welcomes the adoption by a large majority of the Initiative Report by Mr Jürgen Creutzman (ALDE, Germany) on online gambling during the plenary session in the European Parliament on 15 November 2011 in Strasbourg.

With the adoption of this Report, the Parliament has, first of all, insisted on the need to reinforce the protection of European consumers in the debate on online gambling and betting.

In this way, the political groups within the EU Parliament agreed to call on the European Commission to respond to the issues that have been emphasised by the strong growth of the gambling and betting sector, placing the emphasis on consumer protection and, to this end, favouring the strengthening of cooperation between Member States.

The EPMA welcomes very favourably the way in which the European Parliament has been able to understand the relationship between betting organisations and the organisers of sporting events on which betting is based. This is undoubtedly an innovative step forward. By doing so, the Parliament has recognised clearly the 'commercial' use of sporting events made by betting operators. The result of this is the recognition of **the betting right** which will allow for the clarification and regulation of the relations between the organisers of events and betting operators.

It would, moreover, be very appropriate if this position that the Parliament has taken spurs Member States to work on such legal arrangements.

The EPMA welcomes, therefore, these significant advances which demonstrate a clear recognition at the European level of the necessary and natural support of gambling and betting operators for the organisers of sporting and horseracing competitions.

For the operators of Pari Mutuel/Tote in Europe, such financial support for the horse sector as a whole will help contribute to the preservation of the integrity of the sport and goes beyond a simple case of sponsorship.

The members of EPMA regret, however, that a more categorical affirmation of the need to support the horse sector is not expressed in the text adopted yesterday in Strasbourg, despite the fact that this was explicitly mentioned in the Green Paper on online gambling published in March 2011 by the European Commission. EPMA sees, nonetheless, in the recognition of a betting right and a fair "financial return" some extremely positive signs in favour of the interests that it represents, that is to say those of a sector which in all its diversity is of great societal and economic importance in what are very often rural regions.

EPMA will follow with great attention the developments on this dossier and will continue, within the body of the preparations for the Action Plan announced by the Commissioner, Michel Barnier, for mid-2012, to assert the legitimacy and the need of supporting the horse sector in Europe by way of a “financial return”.

Members of EPMA are present in 10 countries, traditionally active in developing horseracing and horse breeding (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom). They wish to share their common concerns about developing efficient regulations taking into account the promotion of the equine sector and consumer's fairness and protection.

AB Trav. Galopp (ATG), Sweden - Fintoto Oy, Finland, German Tote GmbH, Germany - Société de la Loterie de la Suisse Romande Suisse - Foundation Norsk Rikstoto, Norway - Pari Mutuel Urbain (P.M.U.), France - Horserace Totalisator Board, Great Britain - Tote Ireland Limited, Ireland - Unione Nazionale Incremento Razze Equine (U.N.I.R.E.), Italy, Wiener Trabrennverein, Austria, WinRace, Germany.



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