

Dutch online casino blacklist

The Ministry of Justice in The Netherlands wants to impose its own version of America's Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act (UIGEA) by holding banks and credit card criminally liable if they facilitate Dutch citizens in gambling on foreign online casino sites.

Holland's State-owned Holland Casino monopoly stated that some 400,000 people gamble online even though the activity is illegal in the nation with the Ministry of Justice claiming that over 30 foreign firms are targeting Dutch users.

Under new regulations being proposed, a list of banned websites is to be circulated this spring along with a request that banks and financial payment processors block any Dutch transactions to or from these Internet sites.

Dutch gambling rules are currently under pressure from the European Union as it investigates whether they are a form of protectionism and contravene single market rules and this latest move is seen by many as a way of protecting a national monopoly on gambling from outside competition, as has been the case with other countries.

The investigations surround a leaked letter from the European Union's Internal Markets Commissioner, Charlie McCreevy, which states that Holland's Government is actively increasing spending on advertising State-run gambling in contravention of European Union rules. The government claims advertising expenditure for its lottery has fallen but McCreevy stated that figures from research bureau Nielsen Media show that the number of adverts for the Lotto rose by 42 percent between 2002 and 2004.

Irishman McCreevy also questioned evidence that the state monopoly on gambling has led to a fall in addiction and a reduction in gambling-related crime.