



Medietilsynet
NORWEGIAN MEDIA AUTHORITY

Report

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Study of the scheduling of gambling advertisements from British TV channels targeting Norway

In the spring of 2015, the Norwegian Media Authority and the Norwegian Gaming Authority examined the scope of marketing for unlicensed gambling¹ on 12 foreign television channels². Of these twelve channels, eight were under British jurisdiction³. The Norwegian Media Authority conducted a similar review of five channels under British jurisdiction⁴ in May 2016 with the primary objective of being able to follow the development in the scope of gambling advertising⁵.

Brief explanation of method

Like the 2015 study, this study consists of six randomly selected four-hour programme blocks per channel over six different days in a week. In the 2016 study, the Norwegian Gaming Authority did not verify that the advertisement findings are unlicensed, as they did in the 2015 study. The channel Eurosport Norge is new to the 2016 study compared with the 2015 study. This channel was included to review how British watershed rules for gambling are practiced with regard to selected exclusionary provisions for sports broadcasts. For the other channels in the 2016 study, the exclusionary provisions for sports broadcasts were not included for the purpose of comparison with the 2015 study. The number of sports broadcasts for the other channels is still limited to one broadcast on Viasat4 with nine gambling advertisements, of which six were found not to fulfil the conditions of the exclusionary provisions.

¹ Gambling games that are marketed in Norway must be licensed for such marketing. In this context, unlicensed gambling refers to gambling that does not have this licence.

² Discovery, FEM, MAX, TLC, VOX, TV3, Viasat4, TV6, FOX, MTV, Eurosport 2 and NatGeo.

³ Discovery, FEM, MAX, TLC, VOX, TV3, Viasat4 and TV6

⁴ FEM, MAX, TV3, Viasat4 and Eurosport Norge.

⁵ Hereinafter used to refer to both advertising and sponsorship.

Finding 1: Development in gambling advertising on four selected channels from 2015 to 2016

	Advert			Sponsorship			Total		
	2015	2016	Diff.	2015	2016	Diff.	2015	2016	Diff.
FEM	53	63	10	36	121	85	89	184	95
MAX	107	73	-34	96	137	41	203	210	7
TV3	99	138	39	64	66	2	163	204	41
Viasat4	84	109	25	73	46	-27	157	155	-2
Total	343	383	40	269	370	101	612	753	141

Overall, the number of gambling advertisements has grown by a total of 141 commercials, which represents a 23 % increase from 2015. Sponsorship banners are responsible for the largest increase (38 %), but the number of commercials is also increasing (12 %). As regards channel distribution, the increase is clearly highest on FEM, followed by TV3. MAX and Viasat4 remain at a relatively stable level compared with 2015. The increase for the two Discovery channels, FEM and MAX, is a total of 35 %, while the comparable increase for the two MTG channels, TV3 and Viasat4, is 12 %.

Finding 2: Broadcasting hours and British watershed rules for gambling

	Advert			Sponsorship			Total		
	Tot	Day	Night	Tot	Day	Night	Tot	Day	Night
FEM	63	46	17	121	86	35	184	132	52
MAX	73	53	20	137	93	44	210	146	64
TV3	138	104	34	66	46	20	204	150	54
Viasat4	109	70	39	46	36	10	155	106	49
Total	383	273	110	370	261	109	753	534	219

The percentage of gambling advertisements that are broadcast during the day⁶ is 71 % for all four channels overall. The percentage varies from 68 % to 74 % for the individual channels. In other words, the channels have a relatively even distribution of gambling advertising outside the watershed. If the advertisements were evenly distributed over the entire 24-hour period, 65 % of the gambling advertisements would be aired outside the watershed. As a broadcasting day has uneven ratings, the majority of advertisements would naturally also not be evenly distributed. A deviation of 6 % is therefore not enough to ascertain that there is a trend. The conclusion is therefore that the gambling advertising appears to be distributed according to ratings and that the channels do not take the watershed for gambling advertisements into account.

⁶ Currently the hours between 05.30 and 21.00, corresponding to the watershed restrictions.

Finding 3: Sports and exclusionary provisions in British watershed rules

In total, Eurosport Norge aired 33 gambling advertisements during the study period – all of which are commercials. Of these, 23 (70 %) were advertisements, during the day, in other words corresponding to the other channels in the study.

In order to be eligible for an exception from the British watershed regulations, the gambling advertisement must be an advertisement for either bingo products or in connection with broadcast sporting events. Of the 23 gambling advertisements that were aired during the day, all were in connection with a sporting event.

Eleven of the 23 advertisements contained both references to sports betting services and casino services. All of these (11 were from the same advertiser) also contained signup offers⁷ that are not permitted in any British gambling advertisement. Of the other 12 advertisements, eight were pure sports betting advertisements without signup offers, while four were pure casino advertisements without signup offers.

It is hard to judge whether the casino advertisements are considered to qualify under the exception for bingo products in the regulations. However, it is clear that the 11 advertisements with signup offers are not in line with the regulations. This means that, of the 33 gambling advertisements, 11 do not comply with the regulations, while 22 are most likely in accordance with the regulations.

⁷ Signup offers targeted at new customers.