



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

Baroness Twycross
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8 April 2026

Tonia Antoniazzi MP
Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

INT2026/03208/DC

Dear Tonia,

Thank you for your letter on 24 March regarding your concerns about the regulatory position of UK-wide gambling companies operating in Northern Ireland, following our previous exchange of letters.

As I set out in my previous correspondence with the Committee, operators wishing to offer gambling services in Great Britain are required to obtain a licence from the Gambling Commission. It holds regulatory responsibility in Great Britain only (England, Wales and Scotland), aside from the National Lottery.

It is for commercial operators to decide how they set up their business to comply with the relevant gambling regulations in the respective jurisdictions. We note that many gambling operators chose to offer gambling services in Great Britain and, separately, Northern Ireland.

As you reference, operators wishing to advertise remote gambling in Northern Ireland must hold a Gambling Commission licence, as per the UK's Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014. Operators must also abide by the UK Advertising Codes, which are enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) independently of the government. The ASA cooperates with relevant authorities to address any complaints relating to advertising of remote gambling in Northern Ireland.

However, gambling has long been a substantially transferred subject-matter. The Gambling Act 2005 extends almost exclusively only to England and Wales and Scotland. As such, the protection of consumers in Northern Ireland generally falls outside the remit of the Gambling Commission. In this context, the Northern Ireland Executive is principally responsible for the protection of consumers in Northern Ireland.

My officials stand ready to support the Social Policy Unit within the Department for Communities in their plans to strengthen gambling regulations in Northern Ireland. This will help improve consumer protections through regulation.



Thank you for your continued communications on these matters and I hope this information is helpful. I am copying this letter to the Northern Ireland Minister for Communities, Gordon Lyons MLA and to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Baroness Twycross', written in a cursive style.

Baroness Twycross
Minister for Museums, Heritage and Gambling



Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

Baroness Twycross,
Minister for Museums, Heritage and Gambling

By email only

From the Chair, Tonia Antoniazzi MP

24 March 2026

Dear Fiona,

Gambling and Northern Ireland

Thank you for your response of 10 March 2026 to my letter of 20 February regarding gambling and Northern Ireland, both of which we have published on our [website](#).

My Committee considered this response on 18 March. While we are grateful for the information provided, we would welcome further detail on one specific issue: the regulatory position of UK-wide gambling companies operating in Northern Ireland.

As noted, UK-wide gambling companies are licensed to operate and advertise across all parts of the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland. However, the Gambling Commission has no regulatory authority in Northern Ireland beyond the National Lottery, and this creates an imbalance: operators benefit from access to NI, yet the Commission does not regulate their activities there.¹

What assessment has the Government made of the implications for its policies of the current gap in gambling regulation in Northern Ireland?

I am copying this letter to the NI Minister for Communities, Gordon Lyons MLA.

Yours sincerely

¹ The Gambling Commission does not regulate the provision of remote gambling in Northern Ireland, but it is an offence under the Gambling Act 2005 to advertise remote gambling to consumers in Northern Ireland unless the business holds a Gambling Commission licence. See: [What we regulate](#)



Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "TONIA ANTONIAZZI".

Tonia Antoniazzi MP
Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee