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# Self-exclusion in Malta

## Tool reaches new milestone with introduction of Maltese language version



In recent years, the Maltese gambling industry has taken decisive steps to ensure that player protection remains a priority. One of the most significant tools in this endeavour is self-exclusion, a system designed to empower individuals to take control of their gambling habits.

Now, with a new collaboration between the Responsible Gaming Foundation, Everymatrix and BetBlocker, this tool has reached a new milestone: introducing a Maltese language version. This achievement highlights not just the growing importance of self-exclusion but also the incredible potential of collaboration to drive innovation and positive change.

For those who may not be familiar, self-exclusion is a voluntary measure that allows individuals to block themselves from accessing gambling services, whether online or land-based. It's a lifeline for many who feel their gambling habits are likely to spiral out of control.

In Malta, self-exclusion options are widely available. Players can exclude themselves from physical gambling establishments such as casinos and gambling parlours. For online gambling, Malta's licence holders are required to provide self-exclusion tools, ensuring that players have a way to step back when necessary.

But self-exclusion isn't just about closing doors. It's about creating opportunities for reflection, regaining control and cultivating a healthier relationship with gambling or, for some, stepping away from it altogether.

During this year's European Safer Gambling Week 2024, the RGF partnered with the UK-registered charity BetBlocker to launch a Maltese language version of its software.

BetBlocker is widely known for its ability to restrict access



We must ensure that no one is left behind in the effort to promote safe and responsible gambling. PHOTO: FREEPIK

to over 100,000 gambling sites and apps globally, giving users the power to block themselves with just a few clicks. The service is completely anonymous.

The introduction of a Maltese version marks a significant step forward. Language is more than just words; it's a connection to culture, identity and understanding. Offering the software in Maltese ensures that local users can navigate and use the tool comfortably, making it more widely accessible to those who need it most.

It's also a recognition of Malta's unique linguistic and cultural context. By addressing players in their native tongue, this collaboration reinforces the message that support is available and that no one has to navigate the challenges of problem gambling alone. The success of this initiative underscores an important truth: collaboration is a powerful force for change.

In the gaming industry, challenges like problem gambling diminish the positive economic benefits derived from it. No single organisation has all the

answers. But when regulators, NGOs, operators and technology providers come together, they can achieve remarkable things.

The partnership between the RGF and BetBlocker is a perfect example. The RGF brought its local expertise, understanding of the Maltese context and connections to key stakeholders. BetBlocker, on the other hand, provided the technology and global reach needed to expand self-exclusion efforts. Together, they created something greater than either could have achieved alone.

This collaboration also sets a strong example for the wider industry. It shows how different players in the gaming world can work together, not as competitors, but as partners in promoting safer gambling.

Problem gambling doesn't just affect individuals; it impacts families, workplaces and communities. For those who struggle with gambling addiction, self-exclusion tools can be an inflection point, a moment where they take a stand for their well-being and future. But tools like BetBlocker only work when

they're accessible, user-friendly and strongly supported by the industry itself. That's why the Maltese language version is so important. It's a step towards inclusivity, ensuring that no one is left behind in the effort to promote safe and responsible gambling.

While the launch of BetBlocker's Maltese language version is a landmark in itself, it's just the start. There's still work to be done to ensure that self-exclusion tools are widely known, easily accessible, and supported by adequate education and outreach.

Ultimately, the success of self-exclusion and other responsible gaming measures depends on everyone: regulators, operators, NGOs and players themselves. It's a shared responsibility and the rewards of a safer, more sustainable gaming environment benefit us all.

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