

Press release: Government to cut Fixed Odds Betting Terminals maximum stake from £100 to £2

The maximum stakes on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) are to be reduced from £100 to £2 to reduce the risk of gambling-related harm, Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch announced today.

The move comes off the back of a [consultation](#) with the public and the industry to ensure that we have the right balance between a sector that can grow and contribute to the economy and one that is socially responsible and doing all it should to protect consumers and communities.

The government wants to reduce the potential for large losses on FOBT ([category B2](#)) machines and the risk of harm to both the player and wider communities. Following analysis of consultation responses and advice from the Gambling Commission, the government believes that a cut to £2 will best achieve this.

The [Gambling Commission](#) has also been tasked to take forward discussions with the industry to improve player protection measures on B1 and B3 category machines, looking at spend and time limits.

DCMS Secretary of State Matt Hancock said:

When faced with the choice of halfway measures or doing everything we can to protect vulnerable people, we have chosen to take a stand. These machines are a social blight and prey on some of the most vulnerable in society, and we are determined to put a stop to it and build a fairer society for all.

Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch said:

Problem gambling can devastate individuals' lives, families and communities. It is right that we take decisive action now to ensure a responsible gambling industry that protects the most vulnerable in our society. By reducing FOBT stakes to £2 we can help stop extreme losses by those who can least afford it.

While we want a healthy gambling industry that contributes to the economy, we also need one that does all it can to protect players. We are increasing protections around online gambling, doing more on research, education and treatment of problem gambling and ensuring tighter rules around gambling advertising. We will work with the industry on the impact of these changes and are confident that this innovative sector will step up and help achieve this balance.

In addition to the reduction to FOBT stakes the government has today confirmed:

- The Gambling Commission will toughen up protections around online gambling including stronger age verification rules and proposals to require operators to set limits on consumers' spending until affordability checks have been conducted.
- A major multi-million pound advertising campaign promoting responsible gambling, supported by industry and GambleAware, will be launched later this year.
- The Industry Group for Responsible Gambling (IGRG) has amended its code to ensure that a responsible gambling message will appear for the duration of all TV adverts.
- Public Health England will carry out a review of the evidence relating to the public health harms of gambling.
- As part of the next licence competition the age limit for playing National Lottery games will be reviewed, to take into account developments in the market and the risk of harm to young people.

In order to cover any negative impact on the public finances, and to protect funding for vital public services, this change will be linked to an increase in Remote Gaming Duty, paid by online gaming operators, at the relevant Budget.

Changes to the stake will be through secondary legislation. The move will need parliamentary approval and we will also engage with the gambling industry to ensure it is given sufficient time to implement and complete the technological changes.

Notes to Editors

For further information please contact: DCMS Press Office on: 020 7211 6276 / 6971

- Gambling is devolved in Northern Ireland, but substantially reserved in Scotland and Wales. However, as of 23 May 2016, the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Ministers have the executive and legislative competence to vary the number of high-staking gaming machines authorised by a new betting premises licence in Scotland. Under the Wales Act 2017, identical powers were transferred to the Welsh Ministers and the National Assembly for Wales.
- We are committed to working constructively with devolved administrations as we move towards implementation of the £2 stake limit on B2 gaming

machines.

- B1 machines are in casinos with a maximum stake of £5 with a maximum pay-out of £10,000 (or progressive jackpot of £20,000)
- B3 machines are located in casino, betting, arcade and bingo venues with a maximum stake of £2 and a maximum pay-out of £500.
- Remote Gaming Duty is paid by all companies who earn revenue through offering online gaming to British residents. It is currently set at 15% of operator's profits.

[Press release: PM pledges ongoing UK support for building stability and prosperity in the Western Balkans](#)

Prime Minister Theresa May will underline the UK's unconditional commitment to maintaining Europe's security and upholding European values on her visit to Macedonia today (17 May 2018) – the first visit to the Western Balkans by a serving UK Prime Minister for almost 20 years.

The PM will begin the day in Sofia at the EU's Western Balkans Summit, where she will restate the UK's desire to work with European allies to promote greater stability, security and prosperity across the region.

Travelling on to Macedonia, Theresa May will be the first British Prime Minister to set foot in the Western Balkans since Tony Blair visited in 1999. Here she will meet with Prime Minister Zaev to discuss the programme of reforms his government is undertaking to strengthen democracy, uphold the rule of law, and reach out to its neighbours, as well as progress on negotiations with Greece on the Name Issue.

On International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, the Prime Minister will also meet with LGBT activists to discuss their experiences and the shifting culture in Macedonia.

The Prime Minister will end her trip by speaking at a reception in Parliament, which will be attended by politicians, officials, military personnel and future leaders from across Macedonian society.

Prime Minister, Theresa May said:

This year, as we mark the 25th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Macedonia and the UK, the ties between our countries are stronger than ever.

Next year the UK is leaving the European Union, but we are not

leaving Europe – and we will continue to work with our allies to protect our collective security and champion the European values that so many in Macedonia and the wider Western Balkans share.

I'm looking forward to hearing from Prime Minister Zaev and others about the progress the country is making towards a more progressive, prosperous and democratic Macedonia.

At the EU's Western Balkans summit in Sofia, the 28 leaders in the EU and the 6 leaders in the Western Balkans will discuss the next steps in helping the Western Balkans continue on its path to stability, free from conflict and malign influence, and able to tackle its own problems.

The UK will host a Western Balkans Summit on 10 July in London, focussing on strengthening regional security cooperation; increasing economic stability; and fostering greater political cooperation. This will be the fifth annual Summit as part of the Berlin Process that Chancellor Merkel launched in 2014.

Speech: Continued progress in Guinea-Bissau

Thank you very much Madame President and may I also thank Ambassador Zerihoun and Ambassador Mauro Vieira for their briefings and although he's left us for technical difficulties I'd like to thank Executive Director Fedadov. It was important to hear from him given the specific threat of organised crime in Guinea-Bissau.

Madame President, like others who have spoken so far, the UK welcomes the recent progress that we have seen in Guinea-Bissau and that progress is considerable. A consensus Prime Minister after some months of difficulty, a date for legislative elections, and the formation of an inclusive government are all signs that good sense and consideration for Guinea-Bissau's stability have trumped narrow political interest.

But I think we would all need to witness continued progress before we are all able to be convinced that this really is a new reality. We need Guinea-Bissau's leaders stick to their political agreement: it is an agreement for the country's future and their people's future and it must not be held hostage to personal disputes. We need unity behind preparations for elections, now only six months away. And we need unified steps towards political and constitutional reform in line with the concrete commitments made in Conakry.

We have already seen how civil society – whether religious leaders or women's mediators – have acted in the country's long-term interest. We would urge

Guinea-Bissau's leaders to create opportunities for their meaningful participation in political processes. We know in this Council that political settlements which are inclusive are political settlements which last.

It is clear that we would not be discussing progress in Guinea-Bissau without the patient leadership shown by ECOWAS. We urge ECOWAS to continue its engagement to see the political crisis through, and in return we in this Security Council to remain united in our support for ECOWAS and all the very impressive things that they have been doing.

Madame President, in February the Security Council renewed the mandate for UNIOGBIS with a narrower focus on good offices. While the situation on the ground has changed, the mandate remains just as, if not more, relevant.

In the short-term, the priorities must be consolidating the political settlement and delivering the elections. Continued good office support will be required in the medium term to see through political reforms. We also welcome the deepening focus on transnational organised crime and illicit drugs, which are security threats not only for the country but for the region and the international community at large.

Madame President, we welcome warmly the briefing of Ambassador Vieira and agree with him on the importance of the sustaining peace approach. Given a changed political environment on the ground and a refreshed mandate, the appointment of the new SRSG José Viegas Filho is timely and welcome. He has an opportunity to bring renewed direction and drive to refocusing and slimming down UNIOGBIS as per the February mandate and delivering the priority tasks at hand.

But let me in the same token, in the same vein offer the sincere thanks of the United Kingdom to former-SRSG Modibo Touré. Despite the obstacles UNIOGBIS has faced, he demonstrated genuine commitment to Guinea-Bissau through to the end of his term and helped deliver the positive progress we are discussing today.

Press release: Bluestone makes Anglesey prime destination for second Welsh holiday resort

- Welsh Secretary to attend third Board of Trade meeting in Stirling as Bluestone confirms its aim to create a world class tourism destination on Anglesey
- UK Government launches a new drive to attract more than £30 billion of investment to 68 projects across the UK.
- Online one stop shop invest.great.gov.uk launched to help global

investors find UK projects.

- High Potential Opportunities scheme to be extended across more than 20 new sectors and areas of the UK

Leading Welsh tourism destination Bluestone will look to capitalise on UK Government trade and investment support as it makes plans to extend Welsh footprint with the development of a new luxury 5-star resort on Anglesey.

The announcement comes as the Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns attends the third Board of Trade meeting in Stirling on Thursday (17 May), convened to help boost exports, attract inward investors and ensure the benefits of free trade are spread equally across the country.

At the meeting, the UK Government's International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox will launch a new drive to attract foreign investment into the UK at a meeting of the Board of Trade in Stirling.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is promoting 68 UK investment projects worth more than £30 billion to overseas investors. With more to be added over the coming months, the projects will also be promoted through a revamped online one stop shop for potential investors: invest.great.gov.uk.

One of the projects being promoted is Bluestone Holy Island Resort Ynys Môn on Anglesey. Bluestone has struck a deal with property development firm Land and Lakes to acquire 200 acres of land on the Penrhos Estate.,

The project that is expected to attract around 200,000 visitors a year, has a GDV of £105m and will create 900 jobs once operational and an estimated 600 during its construction.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Bluestone's venture in North Wales is just one of the many projects being primed for international investment here in Wales. And the UK Government is wholly committed to creating the conditions to make these deals happen.

The initiatives we are launching today show how we will continue to work on behalf of every hardworking business in the UK to drum up trade, encourage international investment and pave the way for growth which generates jobs, security and a more prosperous Wales in the future.

William McNamara, CEO of Bluestone National Park Resort said:

We are delighted to announce that Bluestone will create another unique short break destination bringing millions of pounds of investment and hundreds of jobs to Holy Island, Ynys Môn. Our outward looking ethos will prevail and that means we will be working with local contractors, suppliers and the people of north

Wales to deliver another world class destination. The resort will be sensitively developed, respecting and protecting the language, culture and environment of this beautiful coastal location.

We can give hundreds of young people a start in their working lives and for older people, a new challenge or a change of career and bring success and prosperity to this special part of North Wales.

We have a wealth of experience working with local suppliers and have helped build a huge variety of businesses in Pembrokeshire over the past decade. We believe we can replicate the same in the community of Ynys Môn.

It will be a significant deal for Wales and give a huge boost to Welsh businesses. We will attract thousands of families from around the UK and Ireland to visit our beautiful country, spend their holidays here and be part of our Bluestone story.

Anglesey Council's Economic Development and Major Projects portfolio holder, Councillor Carwyn Jones, said:

This is very welcome news. Bluestone is already an established and respected name in the leisure sector and bringing them to Anglesey would be extremely positive in terms of investment, jobs and supply chain.

Attracting the Bluestone brand to the Penrhos site would undoubtedly also provide a huge boost for the tourism sector in Holyhead, on Anglesey and in North Wales, whilst also raising the Island's profile internationally.

I am now hopeful that through the support provide by UK Government's Department for International Trade and the Welsh Government, a suitable financial package can be secured in order to bring Bluestone to Anglesey.

Richard Sidi, Chief Executive for Land & Lakes said:

We are delighted that Bluestone appreciates the unique setting at Penrhos and shares our vision for its sensitive development.

Penrhos is a world-class coastal landscape on an island that has been a much-loved family holiday destination for generations. We believe that the landmark nature of this development coupled with its excellent transport links to the UK mainland will drive Anglesey's tourism economy to the next level.

Millions of pounds of investment and hundreds of new jobs with careers in hospitality will mean exciting times for the local

community. We are committed to ensuring that the people of Anglesey and local businesses benefit as much as possible from this legacy driven project.

The Trade Secretary will also extend the highly successful High Potential Opportunities scheme, piloted in Doncaster's rail industry, Telford's agri-tech sector, and Greater Manchester's innovative Graphene-based lightweight materials sector to new industries and parts of the UK.

Dr Liam Fox, International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade said:

This is a bold and ambitious programme, building on the UK's position as the leading destination for foreign investment in Europe through the government's Modern Industrial Strategy, helping to build a Britain fit for the future.

The High Potential Opportunities scheme will deliver growth where it is most needed, ensuring that the benefits of global investment are felt in every part of the country.

And with more than £30 billion worth of new opportunities, my international economic department's overseas network is working hard to attract top investors to the UK.

DIT works directly with companies in 177 cities in 108 countries around the world. Last year, DIT helped attract 2,265 investment projects which created or safeguarded 108,000 jobs in the UK.

The extended High Potential Opportunities scheme is now taking applications from business organisations, Local Enterprise Partnerships and councils from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the first phase, more than 20 new sectors and areas of the UK will benefit from a boost in investment – creating new jobs and securing the UK's prosperity.

Through the modern Industrial Strategy, the Government is setting out a long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how the Government is building a Britain fit for the future – helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

Whilst in Scotland, Dr Fox will also announce the winners of the BOFTAs – Board of Trade Awards. Six Scottish companies are being recognised for their excellence in international trade, demonstrating innovation, creativity and entrepreneurialism.

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For further information

- Contact the DIT Media Team on 020 7215 2000 or email baylee.turner@trade.gov.uk
- Follow us: [@tradegovuk](https://twitter.com/tradegovuk) : [gov.uk/dit](https://www.gov.uk/dit)

Notes to editors

1) The Department for International Trade (DIT) secures UK and global prosperity by promoting and financing international trade and investment, and championing free trade. We are an international economic department, responsible for:

- Bringing together policy, promotion and financial expertise to break down barriers to trade and investment, and help businesses succeed
- Delivering a new trade policy framework for the UK as we leave the EU
- Promoting British trade and investment across the world
- Building the global appetite for British goods and services

2) Details of the 68 projects being promoted by DIT, by location and value:

East Midlands

- Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, £625m
- Island Site, Nottingham, £500m
- Ashton Green, Leicester, £480m
- Drakelow Park, Derbyshire, £360m
- Waterside, Nottingham, £340m
- Grantham Southern Quadrant, Lincolnshire, £200m
- Tudor Cross, Bolsover, £175m
- Heart of the City, Derby, £165m
- Space Park Leicester, Leicester, £100m
- Boots Enterprise Zone, Nottingham, £100m

East of England

- Wisbech Garden Town, Cambridgeshire, £2,500m
- CAMRO, Ely, £800m
- Nelson Quay, King's Lynn, £120m

Northern Ireland

- Sirocco Quays, Belfast, £465m
- Titanic Quarter, Belfast, £365m
- Weavers Cross, Belfast, £250m
- McAleer & Rushe, Belfast, £175m
- One Bankmore Square, Belfast, £100m
- 21-29 Corporation St, Belfast, £92m
- Norwich Union House, Belfast, £54m
- Baptist Church, Belfast, £30m

Northern Powerhouse

- Wirral Waters, Wirral, Merseyside, £4,000m
- Trafford Waters, Manchester, £1,000m
- Kirkstall Forge, Leeds, £400m
- Protos, Cheshire, £300m
- MediaCityUK, Manchester, £300m
- Property Alliance Group Portfolio, Manchester, £300m
- Pall Mall Exchange, Liverpool, £150m
- Stockport Exchange, Stockport, £140m
- Future Carrington, Manchester, £100m
- Liverpool Waters, Liverpool, £100m

West Midlands

- UK Central Hub and HS2 Interchange, Solihull, £2,000m
- Birmingham International Station, Birmingham, £1,400m
- Birmingham Curzon, Birmingham, £1,000m
- Friargate Coventry, Coventry, £700m
- i54 Western Extension, Wolverhampton, £600m
- Paradise, Birmingham, £550m
- Stafford Gateway North, Stafford, £381m
- Stoke-on-Trent City Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, £310m
- Worcester Growth Corridor, Worcester, £300m
- MIRA Technology Park Southern Manufacturing Sector, Nuneaton, £150m
- Interchange Commercial District, Wolverhampton, £150m
- Skylon Park, Hereford, £105m
- Telford Investment Cluster, Telford, £105m
- Redditch Gateway, Redditch, £100m

Scotland

- Dundee Waterfront, Dundee, £500m
- Buchanan Wharf, Glasgow, £350m
- Magenta, Glasgow, £280m
- AMIDS, Renfrewshire, £244m
- Edinburgh International Business Gateway, Edinburgh, £185m
- Queen's Square, Aberdeen, £150m
- Bothwell Street, Glasgow, £140m
- George Street Complex, Glasgow, £100m
- Perth West, Perth, £100m

South East

- Otterpool Park, Folkestone, £2,000m
- Fawley Waterside, Hampshire, £1,000m
- Hickstead Science & Technology Park, Sussex, £350m
- Bexhill Enterprise Park, Sussex, £150m
- Bargate Quarter, Southampton, £150m

South West

- UK Cyber Park, Cheltenham, £600m
- West Carclaze, Cornwall, £400m
- Gateway Development, Plymouth, £100m

Yorkshire & Humber

- Sirius Minerals Polyhalite Project, North Yorkshire & Teeside, £2,900m
- York Central, York, £750m
- Axiom Regional Shopping Centre, Wakefield, £400m
- Aero Centre Yorkshire, Doncaster, £100m
- Unity Doncaster, Doncaster, £100m

Wales

- Penrhos Coastal Holiday Resort, Anglesey, North Wales, £105m

68 projects worth £33,791,000,000

3) The Government's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Strategy consists of operational changes which will:

- Improve the effectiveness of our work and help teams to focus on the projects which contribute most to the UK economy.
- Clearly define DIT's priorities for promoting investment opportunities.
- DIT has been working closely with colleagues across government to ensure the closest possible alignment of activity to support the Industrial Strategy's initiatives around supporting the business environment, growing clusters and sectors, and the promotion of FDI through DIT's FDI strategy.
- This will deliver a more targeted approach to promotion and investor support, and better address market failures to maximise wealth creation across the UK.
- From next financial year, we will change our measure of performance from the volume of projects landed to a comprehensive measure of economic impact.
- Alongside this, we will work with local partners to build a portfolio of 'High Potential Opportunities' across the UK to promote investment opportunities showcasing UK sector strengths, skills bases, cost bases and infrastructure programmes that are not readily referenced by current market information and have a high potential to deliver economic benefits.
- This will enable us to be more responsive to the needs of foreign investors and better match investor requirements with opportunities across the UK that have the capacity to drive high value growth and jobs.

Details of the existing High Potential

Opportunities (HPO) pilot schemes:

HPO commercialising new technologies for high productivity food production (Telford)

- High productivity food production is set to disrupt agriculture markets due to growing demand for food and scarce land resource. Innovation breakthroughs in satellite imaging, remote sensing and precision farming are ready for commercialisation.
- Telford is home to Harper Adams University, a world-leader in agri-tech research and home of the National Centre for Precision Farming – developing automation, drones, autonomous systems, with strong links to and appetite to work with business. The area has an advanced engineering cluster with crossover technologies, e.g. remote sensors, and availability of development-ready land with pro-active planning and landing support from council.

HPO rail rolling stock supply chain (Doncaster)

- An ageing fleet with passenger and freight numbers that are increasing, the size of UK rolling stock growing faster than at any time in decades, combined with government commitments on rail projects, the arrival of HS2, and a significant level of imports ripe for substitution, creates a pipeline of UK demand offering a multitude of supply chain opportunities in procurement.
- Rail has been a major part of Doncaster's economy for over 150 years: strong infrastructure includes iPortrail, at the heart of the UK's intermodal transport network. The region offers a rail cluster of 50 companies and 8,000 rail employees, and a pool of talent to provide the employees of today. This is future proofed by the National College for High Speed Rail, developing a pipeline of work ready talent for tomorrow.

HPO lightweight and specialist materials for the transport sector (Greater Manchester: Rochdale, Bury, Oldham)

There is a global opportunity in lightweight materials for transport applications:

- Light alloys
- Technical textiles
- Coatings
- Graphene & 2D materials
- Materials for demanding environments

Greater Manchester offers a gateway to opportunities in lightweight structures throughout the North West, the rest of the UK, and across Europe. The unique ecosystem offers the ability to move from research and testing, to commencing small scale production, and includes scaling up in the UK (rather than abroad) with the benefits of retaining your people, networks and importantly links to world class research.

Speech: Onus on Syria to allow the UN to do its work

Thank you very much Madame President. I hadn't intended to speak today in the chamber but I wanted to respond to some of the things we've just heard. So I'll take the opportunity to thank Staffan de Mistura and his team for all their work, which is not proving as fast or as productive as all of us would like, but I think we're very grateful to you Staffan for all your efforts. And I was interested to hear the Chinese account of the work of their Envoy.

Madame President, I think we all know what needs to be done. We've had very many discussions in this chamber and in the consultations room about Syria. I think what we struggle with is how to get it done and how to take the next step so I hope that when we leave this chamber and we go next door into closed consultations we can actually have a proper discussion, without polemics, about what it takes to get the Constitutional Committee up and running. What are the concrete steps that need to be taken and how we as the Council can best facilitate and support that. And what it takes to get Idlib protected. Lots of speakers today have referred to Idlib. I think we all know the importance and the scale and the significance of Idlib. I would urge those Astana progenitors to do what they can to ensure that on the ground the people in Idlib are safe and that we avert a humanitarian catastrophe there. But I'd like to have a proper discussion next door about how the Council can actually support that.

I wanted to turn to this issue of the Syrian government engaging with the UN. The Russian Representative referred to backsliding from a political settlement and entrenching Syrian unwillingness for a negotiated solution. I think those two statements are very damning but they are not damning about us, they are damning about the Syrian regime. We really need all those with influence on Syria, and that includes Russia and Iran, to encourage them to set aside a military strategy to resolve this conflict and to engage with the United Nations across the board so that we can get back to Geneva and we can get back to a political settlement. It is not us in the West who are stopping that happening, Madame President. The onus really is on Syria to follow the will of the Council and the Security Council resolutions and allow the UN to do its work to help the people of Syria.

Those were the main things I wanted to say but I'd like to touch on three more points, if I may. We support what the Special Envoy said about bringing women in, I think that's long overdue and he can count on the UK's full support for that. I also wanted to reference Iran and the strikes on Israel from Syrian territory, and we very much agree with what the American representative said on that and we have been very vocal about that in public. But I also wanted to refer to what the Russian representative said about the airstrikes. And I won't rehearse why we took the action, why France, the US

and the UK, took the action we did, except to say that we did so to avert a humanitarian catastrophe, and in taking that action we helped to protect civilians on the ground, we deterred and degraded Syria's ability to use chemical weapons, and in doing that we upheld the global WMD prohibition. And I think those things remain very important but they shouldn't be used by anyone in this Council as a reason to let the Syrian government off the hook for engaging with the UN on the political process. The political process has been necessary since 2012 when Geneva was started. It's been necessary in increasing tenor every year since that point. And it remains necessary now, Madame President.

So I hope when we go next door we can have a really detailed discussion about how we as the Council can get back to the spirit of Sweden and actually help Staffan de Mistura and his team do something concrete to achieve this and not have any more mudslinging.

Thank you.