Global Self-Exclusion System (GSES) Blue Paper

Document outlining technical specifications and implementation of a global gambling self-exclusion system, as well as the reasoning behind the proposed implementation and its benefits for players.

Executive summary

The goal of this document is to describe the vision of **what a functioning Global Self-Exclusion System (GSES) could look like and how it could function** in the global gambling industry.

Based on the identified functional and non-functional requirements and the team's solutions to the discovered problematic areas, which are described in-depth in the blue paper document, **the proposed functionality can be summarized by these core characteristics:**

- Players who wish to block their access to online gambling register in the GSES and configure their self-exclusion period.

- Participating operators are connected to the system using an API connection.

- The system checks whether an individual is registered in the system only during the registration process at a participating operator.

- The system relies on the combination of full name and date of birth when checking whether an individual is registered in the system.

- To protect the privacy of self-excluded players, the GSES's database will also contain individuals who joined it for other reasons, apart from individuals who used it to block their access to gambling.

This document contains the reasoning behind these characteristics, **a detailed description of the interactions between the system and individual stakeholders,** the system's organizational and technical characteristics, and example use cases that illustrate how the system will be used by players and operators.

Table of concents

Introduction

The goal of the Global Self-Exclusion Initiative is to create a Global Self-Exclusion System (GSES), which will **allow individuals to block their access to virtually all legitimate online gambling opportunities** worldwide.

The proposed technical solution will be outlined later in this document. This introductory section contains the reasoning behind the Initiative's decision to work towards such system.

What is self-exclusion?

Self-exclusion is a responsible gambling tool offered by gambling operators, **which allows players to block themselves from gambling** for a set amount of time or indefinitely.

Certain self-exclusion solutions are available at land-based gambling operators, but the proposed Global Self-Exclusion System described in this document **focuses on self-exclusion in online gambling.**

Currently available online gambling self-exclusion or blocking solutions include:

- **Self-exclusion at a single operator –** When a player self-excludes at one gambling operator, they should not be allowed to gamble there but are free to use the services of any other gambling operator, subject to local rules and regulations. Some groups of related operators apply self-exclusion over the entire group, which means that players who self-excluded at one operator cannot gamble at any operators that are part of the group.

- **National or license-wide self-exclusion systems –** Some countries or licensing authorities operate self-exclusion systems with a wider scope. These allow players to self-exclude from all gambling operators with the given license. Examples of these systems include UK's GAMSTOP or Sweden's Spelpaus.

- **Blocking software –** Although not a type of self-exclusion per se, there are software solutions designed to block access to gambling operators on the user's devices, such as Gamban or Betblocker.

After self-excluding, players should not be allowed to gamble at the operators they self-excluded from until the predetermined period of time passes. However, in some cases, players may be allowed to end self-exclusion prematurely.

Why is there a need for a global self-exclusion system?

Self-exclusion is used for many reasons by players, but the most crucial use case from the perspective of responsible gambling consists in vulnerable or addicted players using self-exclusion to stop themselves from gambling and **create a barrier that helps them minimize further gambling-related harm.**

Because of their limited scope, **currently available self-exclusion solutions do not create an effective barrier that sufficiently blocks vulnerable or addicted players from continuing to gamble:**

- Players who self-exclude at a single operator can easily create an account with another gambling operator.

- National or license-wide self-exclusion systems can be circumvented by gambling at foreign operators that are not part of the specific self-exclusion system and generally cannot participate in it even if they wanted to.

The Global Self-Exclusion System discussed in this document is the proposed solution to this issue. Such system could help problem gamblers block themselves from gambling at virtually all legitimate gambling operators and therefore **help minimize further gambling harm done to themselves or affected others.**

How can such system function in a global gambling environment?

The global reach of the proposed self-exclusion system poses **challenges related to the disjointed nature of the global gambling market.** With thousands of gambling operators licensed by tens of different regulators and offering services to customers from most of the world's countries, getting a self-exclusion system to work on a global level represents a range of complex challenges.

Most gambling regulators have certain rules governing self-exclusion and other responsible gambling tools offered by their licensees, and many also operate multi-operator self-exclusion schemes that include all license holders. However, **authorities tend to focus solely on their jurisdictions** and do not put sufficient emphasis on protecting players who play at foreign operators.

Therefore, **there is no single global authority that could force operators to join an international self-exclusion system,** while local authorities are hesitant to work with third party organizations or systems.

That said, the team behind the Initiative believes that it is viable to **gradually push such a system through via self-regulation** – not by persuading the regulators to require it, but by getting enough operators to understand the benefits of a functional Global Self-Exclusion System and become part of it, which will persuade others to join as well. Once the "critical mass" is achieved, operators not participating in the system could risk damaging their reputation by doing so, motivating them to join. Thanks to this, **being part of a global self-exclusion system could become an industry standard** adhered to by the majority of operators globally.

Additionally, the system should be **operated and managed by an independent organization** to ensure its impartialness. This fact will also increase the trust of operators, regulators, and players toward the system, as direct operational ties to specific operators or other entities in the gambling market could discourage some people from implementing the GSES or using it.

Functional and non-functional requirements

Before describing the specifics of the proposed implementation of the global self-exclusion system, **necessary qualities and features ensuring the system's effectiveness and efficiency** need to be discussed. This part of the document describes the system's basic functional and non-functional requirements.

Requirements from the side of players

The proposed global self-exclusion system should first and foremost serve people participating in online gambling or wishing to block their access to it. To be as helpful for them as possible, it should meet these requirements:

- **Effective blocking of online gambling opportunities –** The system's core functional requirement has to do with its main objective. The system should create an effective barrier that prevents players from creating an account with gambling operators.

- **Exceptional user experience –** The registration and verification process must be user-friendly and simple enough for any individual to be able to complete it without significant issues. Also, the registered person must be sufficiently informed about the consequences of self-excluding on a global level.

- **Well-designed self-exclusion options –** The system should offer a variety of self-exclusion plans and durations for players to choose from, ranging from self-exclusion for a set period of time to permanent self-exclusion. The implemented procedures should reflect the international self-exclusion standards, development of which is also a part of the Global Self-Exclusion Initiative's agenda and described later in this document.

- **Strong connection to problem gambling help organizations –** According to most experts, self-exclusion by itself is not a cure for problem gambling. It does help by limiting access to gambling and minimizing further harm, but it does not address the underlying causes that may be behind a player's problematic gambling habits, which may lead to relapses once the self-exclusion period is over. Therefore, the GSES must facilitate a connection between vulnerable players and problem gambling help organizations that can help them get back on the right track.

- **Helpful and available customer support –** Regardless of how well-designed the GSES is, individuals interacting with it are bound to run into issues that require help from customer support representatives. Therefore, the system must offer skilled multilingual support agents who can effectively deal with registration difficulties, false positive identification, KYC procedures, etc.

- **Privacy –** There should not be an easy way for third parties to find out whether any specific person is self-excluded using the system. Therefore, the system should be configured in a way that does not allow for this to happen.

Requirements from the side of gambling operators

To maximize its effectiveness, the global self-exclusion system must be joined by as many gambling operators as possible. To make sure operators are not discouraged from becoming part of the system, it should meet these requirements:

- **Easy to implement –** Like most online businesses, online gambling operators have notoriously overloaded software development departments. Therefore, the software development effort needed from the side of operators should be as low as possible. The GSES should offer integration options sufficient to cover all common systems and scenarios.

- **Non-intrusive –** Operating a gambling business includes a number of standardized processes, like player registrations and logins, verification checks, and many others. The GSES should not disrupt these processes. For example, if operators perform verification KYC checks whenever a player requests their first withdrawal, the system cannot force operators to do these checks immediately after registration.

- **High availability and low response times –** The proposed solution relies on participating gambling operators connecting to the system during certain actions that are critical to their business model, most importantly the registration process. Any downtime or excessive delays may cause significant financial losses to them. Consequently, technical issues of this nature may significantly decrease the acceptance of the system and give operators a reason not to participate. Therefore, the GSES should be reliable and not disrupt any of operators' critical processes.

Other requirements

There are also other functional requirements, which cannot be attributed to either operators or players:

- **Independent organization –** The GSES will contain sensitive information and, once it becomes widely used, it will become a vital part of the global gambling ecosystem. Therefore, it must be operated and governed by a reliable independent organization, which will ensure that no single entity operating in the gambling industry has a strong influence over it.

- **Security and data protection –** The system will deal with private information of registered individuals, so it must be secure and protected against data leaks and attacks. A database of self-excluded individuals may be an attractive target for hackers and other bad actors, which further emphasizes the importance of adhering to strongest security standards and best practices.

- **Reliability of self-exclusion –** Self-excluded players must not be able to create an account at participating operators using their own and truthful personal details. The system must recognize that these players are self-excluded and deny their access to gambling opportunities offered by online casinos and bookmakers that are part of the system.

Discovered problematic areas and proposed solutions

After considering the functional and non-functional requirements and analyzing other self-exclusion solutions offered by operators and regulators, some problematic areas were discovered. This section of the document discusses these areas, introduces the proposed solutions to the issues at hand and explains the reasoning

Checking for matches with the GSES

The core functionality of the GSES is to check whether a player attempting to play at a participating operator is registered in the system. These checks can happen each time a player attempts to log in to their account at a participating gambling operator and/or each time a new player attempts to create an account.

Each of these options has its benefits and drawbacks:

- **Checks during login –** Checking whether a player is self-excluded during every login at participating casinos has the advantage that it can exclude players from their existing accounts as well. However, it is much more demanding, as checks need to be performed at every login and many edge cases need to be considered. Also, possible availability issues could have significant financial consequences on operators, as any downtime of the system could cause all players to be unable to play, including those that have not self-excluded.

- **Checks during registration –** This approach has the downside of not being able to exclude players from their existing accounts. However, it is easier to implement, and checks need to be performed much less often – only once per player account, when it is being created. Also, any possible downtimes of the system would have far less significant consequences on the business of participating operators.

Proposed solution: Checks during registration

After considering these options, **the team behind the Initiative believes that checking the self-exclusion status of players only during the registration process is the better option.** The team considers checks during login suboptimal, because operators may not be willing to join a system whose possible technical issues can cause them huge financial losses because of their customers not being able to access their services.

Therefore, **the GSES will not prevent players who use it to self-exclude from using their existing gambling accounts.** However, it will block them from creating new accounts at participating operators, as long as they use their own and correct personal information when creating these accounts, which is already required by the vast majority of operators in order for players to be able to withdraw any funds from their accounts.

Using this approach, **players who wish to block their access to all gambling opportunities will have to self-exclude from their existing accounts separately.** However, there will be a separate system that will help them with this task. This system will be described later in this document.

Identifying personal details and handling false positives

When individuals register in the system and when operators use the system to check whether any individual is listed in the system, these actions should be **based on personal information that does not tend to change over time, nor cannot easily be changed on purpose to circumvent self-exclusion.**

For example, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, or physical addresses are often used in this context. However, a new e-mail address can be created in a matter of seconds, people can easily change their phone number, and they also often move to different streets, regions, or even countries.

That is why the proposed solution relies on a person's **full name and date of birth** in these operations. These pieces of information rarely change (except for marriage-associated name changes), and most online gambling operators already require players to provide them during the registration process and verify them during KYC processes.

However, that creates a potential problem, at least in some countries. Considering that there are more than 49,000 US citizens called James Smith, many of them definitely share the same date of birth. Therefore, **the GSES must be able to deal with collisions involving individuals with the same full name and date of birth.**

Proposed solution: Full name, date of birth, and a password-driven system

The proposed solution of this issue relies on a **password-driven system.** Whenever a new person is creating an account with a participating gambling operator and there is an individual with the same or very similar identifying information in the database of the GSES, the new person also needs to register in the GSES to get their password. They will then use the password for any new registration at participating operators. This situation is described in more detail as one of the example use-cases listed later in this document.

Despite these small complications caused to few unlucky people that share the full name and date of birth with somebody else registered in the system, the overall negative impact on user experience will be relatively low.

Privacy – Ensuring third parties cannot confirm individuals are self-excluded

Ensuring the privacy of individuals who use the system is one of the core requirements, but it creates a **fundamental problem that has to do with somewhat contradictory requirements:**

- The fact that any individual has self-excluded using the system should be kept private.

- Any participating operator should have the possibility to use the system to check whether an individual creating an account has self-excluded using the system.

- Whenever an individual is mistakenly identified as self-excluded because of having identical personal information as another player registered in the GSES, they should be able to figure out why the system is blocking their access to gambling and what to do about it.

If all participating operators can use the system to check the self-exclusion status of an individual, **there is always a possibility of someone abusing this access,** especially when dealing with high-profile individuals. The more widespread GSES becomes, the higher the chance that somebody abuses their access to the system in some way.

Even without operators' access to the system's API, **anyone who knows the personal information of a person may try to check whether the person has self-excluded** in the system by using their personal data to create an account at participating operators. This can theoretically be done by future employers, journalists, relatives, financial institutions, etc.

When it comes to existing self-exclusion solutions, in most markets with a national self-exclusion scheme, operators check whether a registering individual is self-excluded before they check their identity through a KYC process. These conditions create an opportunity for this kind of social engineering, as potential bad actors are able to find out about a person's self-exclusion status before having to prove their identity in the registration process.

This kind of social engineering can be done with existing self-exclusion tools because the registration of self-excluded individuals is handled differently:

- When bad actors attempt to create an account using the data of a person who has not self-excluded, the operator will most likely allow them to finish the registration, make a deposit, and gamble.

- When they attempt to do the same using the data of a person self-excluded using a national scheme, the operators will not allow them to proceed. They may directly display that the person is self-excluded and cannot be allowed to gamble, ask them to complete a KYC process, or trigger other processes that are not standard for players who are not self-excluded.

Observing how operators handle the individual's registration process **allows bad actors who know the personal information of a person to reveal** – with a relatively high level of confidence – **whether that person has self-excluded** using a national self-exclusion scheme or the specific operator's responsible gambling tools.

Proposed solution: Lost in the crowd

Because it is not possible to effectively hide whether or not an individual is registered in the GSES, the proposed solution relies on **extending what it means to be registered in the system** instead.

The system will contain a mix of self-excluded players and other individuals. Then, even if bad actors manage to figure out that a person is registered in the system as described above, they will not be able to conclusively say that the person has used the system to block their access to gambling.

This solution relies on the presence of people other than those that wish to block their access to gambling in the system. Therefore, **the organization running the GSES will need to motivate these people to join the system,** so that they outnumber the self-excluded individuals.

Individuals who join the system for other reasons will also make use of the password-driven system mentioned earlier. They will create a password, which will allow them to gamble at participating gambling operators despite being registered in the system. Then, whenever someone registered in the system tries to create an account with a participating operator, **the system will ask for the password to proceed, instead of stating that the individual is self-excluded.** Self-excluded individuals will not have that password, so they will not be allowed to register and play, but people who joined the system for other reasons will be able to proceed.

In the ideal case, the number of people who joined the system for other reasons should be at least 5-times higher than the number of individuals who used it to self-exclude. Potential incentives to join the system include a lottery with non-monetary wins or the desire to protect the privacy of individuals who used the system to self-exclude.

Also, while the system is referred to as the Global Self-Exclusion System in this document and when communicating the Initiative to the world, the final system may have a different name, for example "Global Player Protection System". This way, it will not be immediately obvious that the system is used for self-excluding.

Proposed implementation

With the abovementioned functional and non-functional requirements, as well as the discovered problematic areas and their proposed solutions in mind, the following section of this document contains a proposed implementation of the system.

Brief description of functionality and core characteristics of the system

The proposed functionality of the GSES can be described by three core characteristics:

- The system checks whether an individual is registered in the system only during the registration process at a participating operator.

- The system relies on the combination of full name and date of birth when checking whether an individual is registered in the system.

- Apart from individuals who use the system to block their access to gambling, the system's database will also contain individuals who joined it for other reasons.

Checking the system's database for matches during the registration process at participating operators

To protect the privacy of self-excluded players, the GSES will not proactively share information about them with participating operators. Instead, **participating operators will be connected to the system using an API, which will be used to check whether a player is registered in the system.**

These checks will happen whenever a player attempts to create an account at participating operators.

Identification using the combination of full name and date of birth

These characteristics have been selected because of their mostly unchanging nature. Because the date of birth of an individual always remains the same and their name changes only in limited instances, the team behind the Initiative considers them to be the best option to reliably identify self-excluded players with an acceptable rate of false positives.

As explained in the section of this document discussing discovered problematic areas and their proposed solutions, the **GSES will be joined not only by players who wish to block their access to online gambling opportunities, but also by other individuals.**

Individuals who register in the system but do not wish to self-exclude from gambling will create a password, which can be used to circumvent the blocking introduced by the global self-exclusion system during registration at participating gambling operators. Individuals who use the system to block their access to gambling will not receive such password, therefore they will not be able to gamble.

With this addition to the system, third parties may be able to figure out that a specific person is registered in the system, but they will **not be able to conclusively say that the person used the system to self-exclude from gambling.**

Brief description of the self-exclusion process system

Individuals who wish to block their access to gambling using the GSES can do so by completing these steps:

1. A person who wishes to self-exclude from all gambling opportunities registers in the system and enters their personal information, which includes their full name, date of birth, and contact information.

2. The person chooses from the selection of self-exclusion measures, specifying the duration and other important characteristics of their self-exclusion.

3. The person goes through verification procedures (KYC) to confirm their identity and finalize the registration process.

Participating online gambling operators are connected to the system through an API, which is used to check whether any individual signing up for an account with them is registered in the GSES.

Whenever the information entered during registration at participating gambling operators matches personal details of a person registered in the GSES, the person creating an account is displayed a message and asked to enter a password. The system allows the person to complete the registration at the gambling operator only if they enter the correct password of a person registered in the GSES for other reasons. Because individuals self-excluded using the system do not have a password, they will not be allowed to proceed.

This functionality is **supplemented by a separate tool, which helps players self-exclude from their existing accounts at gambling websites and apps.** This tool works with a database of online gambling operators and guides individuals through the process of self-excluding at operators at which they previously created an account and gambled.

Detailed processes and interactions on the side of players and other individuals

There are two types of individuals interacting with the system – players who wish to block their access to gambling and individuals who register in the system for other reasons. Because these two use-cases are completely different, they need to be discussed separately.

Players who wish to self-exclude

The core functionality of the system is to allow gamblers to block themselves from playing at participating gambling operators. **Here is a detailed proposal of what the process of self-excluding may look like:**

1. An individual who wishes to self-exclude from gambling using the GSES visits a dedicated website and initiates the process.

2. They are guided by the system through the registration process, during which they enter their personal information, including their full name, date of birth, and contact information, such as e-mail address and phone number.

3. After providing all the required information, the next step consists in specifying the duration and other characteristics of self-exclusion. The individual is thoroughly explained what the options mean, as well as the consequences of self-excluding on a global level.

4. The registration cannot be fully completed without a KYC procedure handled by the organization operating the GSES. Each self-excluding individual needs to prove their identity for the self-exclusion to take place.

5. Once the KYC procedure is over, the player is not able to create an account with any gambling operator participating in the system.

6. On top of that, they can use a separate tool, which will guide them through self-excluding from their existing online gambling accounts.

Throughout the entire process, players who wish to self-exclude will be provided helpful information clarifying what self-exclusion is, why it is helpful, and how to self-exclude using the system. Additionally, they will also have **access to customer support representatives** that can provide further assistance if needed.

Besides self-exclusion itself, players are also given **access to educational content and sources of additional help,** such as helplines, support groups, or specialized problem gambling help organizations.

Individuals who register for other reasons

Because of the different nature of this use-case, individuals who are registering in the GSES for reasons other than self-exclusion itself will **access the system using a dedicated website separate from the one used by self-excluding players.**

The registration process of these individuals will involve entering their personal information, going through a KYC procedure, and configuring a password which can then be used to circumvent the protection introduced by the global self-exclusion system at participating gambling operators.

Detailed processes and interactions on the side of operators

To ensure easy execution for operators and minimize possible friction, the information system of participating operators will only **check whether any player is self-excluded using the GSES during the registration process.**

Participating in the system requires operators to implement an **API connection,** which is used to check whether any individual creating their account is registered in GSES. The registration process cannot be completed without performing this check, which can be integrated in one of two ways:

1. **Simple web-based integration –** This implementation relies on a background JavaScript verification check. The registration form of participating operators will contain a JavaScript code provided by the GSES, which will handle the check and all possible edge cases in the registration form (such as the popup that prompts password entry). After a successful frontend check, the script will generate a unique verification code and add it as a hidden field to registration form. The backend system will subsequently only have to do a simple API call to check that the verification code is valid. This is the easiest option to implement for participating operators because it requires very little effort from their side.

2. **Custom integration –** If simple web-based integration is not possible or preferred, participating operators will have to develop their own connection to the system, including its backend and frontend. They will need to handle all possible outcomes and edge cases in registration form themselves, resulting in more complex implementation efforts from the side of operators.

If the system finds a match, it stops the registration process and prompts the person creating their account to enter a password. The interface of the system includes instructions, which will guide individuals through the possible following steps of the process. These are described in more detail in a section with example use-cases later in this document.

Other specifications of the system important for operators include:

- Personal information used to perform the check consists of the individual's full name and date of birth, as these are difficult to officially change.

- Automatic verification checks performed during the registration process are conducted almost immediately to ensure quick and frictionless operation.

- If the system stops a player from creating an account with a participating gambling operator, the following options and actions of the player are taken care of by the GSES.

- Participating in the system does not require operators to perform KYC checks during the registration process or before players' first deposits. The system is designed in this way to make sure it does not overly burden participating operators, nor create obstacles that negatively influence their business.

Other organizational and technical characteristics

The GSES will be run by an independent organization with a committee of reputable industry professionals. This organization oversees all aspects of the system and ensures its integrity and reliable operation.

Responsibilities of the independent organization running the system include:

- Ensuring accessibility of the system and its database for new registrations, changes to existing registrations, and providing support to registering players and participating operators.

- Safeguarding the database of self-excluded players using reliable data protection technologies and following high security standards.

- Conducting KYC checks to verify the identity of registering players and the truthfulness of all entered information.

- Ensuring availability of customer support in various languages.

- Actively working on increasing the number of participating gambling operators and making participation in the system an industry standard.

- Creating and maintaining a database of problem gambling help organization and making it available to self-excluded players, as well as establishing relationships with these organizations and allowing them to provide support and professional help to self-excluded players.

- Creating, maintaining, and operating a separate tool, which guides players through the process of self-excluding from their existing online gambling accounts.

The organization should also ensure the reliability of GSES, i.e., making sure that players cannot register at participating gambling operators. However, this **requires cooperation from the side of operators and players:**

- The organization cannot force operators to participate in the system. Therefore, they need to do their part, join the system, and take care of the required implementation steps.

- Players need to use their own, truthful, and correct personal information when creating accounts with gambling operators. Most of these only run KYC processes when players request their first withdrawal, so, until that point, individuals can gamble even if they entered incorrect information during registration (although they will not be allowed to withdraw their funds).

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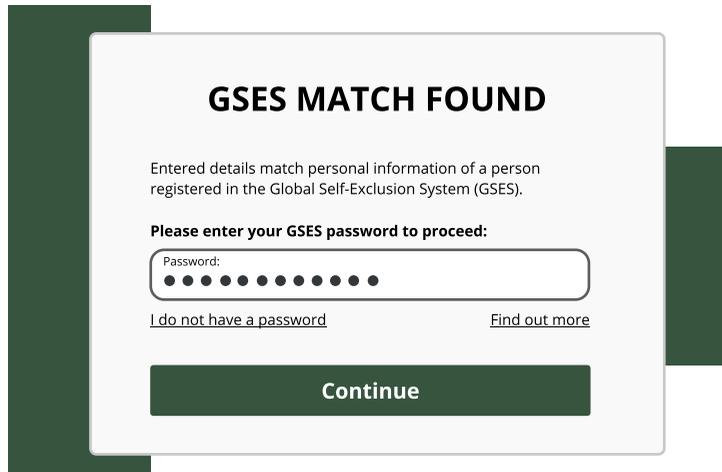
Example use-cases

Example #1: James Smith, who is not registered in the system, attempts to open an account at a participating operator

In this case, James will be able to go through the registration process at a participating operator without any interruptions. During the process, his personal details will be used to check for matches in the system's database. As long as his details do not match any individual registered in the system, he will be able to successfully complete the r egistration without any direct interactions with the system.

Example #2: James Smith, who has used the system to block his access to gambling, attempts to open an account at a participating operator

In this case, James attempts to open an account and start playing at a participating gambling website at some point after using the global self-exclusion system to block his access to gambling.

During the registration process, his personal details will be used to check for matches in the system's database. As long as he used his own and exact personal details during the registration, the system's database will find a match and not let James proceed with the registration. The following pop-up window will appear:

GSES MATCH FOUND

Entered details match personal information of a person registered in the Global Self-Exclusion System (GSES).

Please enter your GSES password to proceed:

Password:
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

I do not have a password   Find out more

Continue

James does not have a password, as he used the system to block his access to gambling. Therefore, he will not be allowed to proceed.

Example #3: James Smith, who is registered in the system for other reasons and has a password, attempts to open an account at a participating operator

In this case, James has previously registered in the system because he wanted to support the Initiative and help minimize overall gambling harm. He has not used it to block his access to gambling. Therefore, he has a password he can use to circumvent the blocking introduced by the system when registering at a participating gambling operator.

During the registration process, his personal details will be used to check for matches in the system's database. As long as he used his own and exact personal details during the registration, the system's database will find a match and not let James proceed with the registration. The same pop-up window will appear.

In this case, James has a password he can use to proceed, because he is not registered in the system for the purpose of blocking his access to gambling. Therefore, he will enter the password and continue with the registration.

Example #4: James Smith is not registered in the system, but the system finds a match when he attempts to open an account at a participating operator

In this case, James has never registered in the global self-exclusion system and wants to create an account at a participating gambling website. During the registration process, his personal details are used to check for matches in the system's database. The system finds another James Smith with the same date of birth in its database, so it stops the registration process and displays the same pop-up window.

To proceed, James will have to register in GSES, go through its KYC procedures, and set up a password, which will differentiate him from other James Smiths in the system's database and therefore allow him to create an account with any participating gambling operator. He can access the registration by clicking the 'I do not have a password' link in the pop-up window.

Example #5: A bad actor, who knows James Smith's personal information, attempts to figure out whether he has used the system to block his access to gambling

In this case, somebody who has access to James Smith's personal information tries to use it to create an account at a participating gambling website in James's name. During the registration process, his personal details will be used to check for matches in the system's database. One of two things can happen:

1. If James Smith is not registered in the system, the bad actor is allowed to proceed with the registration.

2. If James Smith is registered in the system, the bad actor sees the same pop-up window as in the previous use-cases.

This means the bad actor will find out that James Smith is registered in the system, but they will not know whether he used the system to block his access to gambling or not.

Additional tools and help for vulnerable players

On top of blocking self-excluded players' access to registering at new gambling websites and apps, **the Initiative also aims to help vulnerable players in other ways.** This section of the document describes three ways of helping vulnerable players, minimizing gambling harm, and making online gambling more fair, safe, and sustainable.

International self-exclusion standards

Self-exclusion tools offered by operators and regulators vary greatly around the world when it comes to the duration of self-exclusion, ways of self-excluding, ability to cancel self-exclusion prematurely, blocking marketing communication, and other related processes or conditions. These differences are caused by differing views of self-exclusions from the side of individual regulators, as well as cultural differences and customs in individual countries.

Taking all of this into account and considering the scope of the proposed GSES, it probably will not be possible to configure its processes in a way that makes them ideal for everyone. However, **we strongly assume that methodologies and processes can be developed that will be applicable to most situations and acceptable for most users.**

The GSES and its self-exclusion processes should be **based on industry best practices and research conducted by professionals.** We plan to work with experts to figure out how to configure self-exclusion options for them to be as effective as possible. Additionally, to further help the global gambling market, this may lead to the **creation of international self-exclusion standards** that can also be used by operators and regulators to improve their self-exclusion tools and better protect vulnerable players.

Global Self-Exclusion Assistance Tool (GSEAT)

As described throughout this document, the proposed solution is based on not allowing self-excluded players to create accounts with participating gambling operators. This approach means **that individuals who wish to block their access to all gambling opportunities need to self-exclude from their existing gambling accounts separately.**

For this reason, we will launch a separate tool, the Global Self-exclusion Assistance Tool, which will **guide players through the process of self-excluding and make it as easy for them as possible.** This tool can work completely separately; therefore, it can be launched even before the GSES.

This tool will work with the biggest database of online gambling operators that covers information about responsible gambling tools, including available ways of self-excluding. Additionally, it will include educational content, best practices for successful self-exclusion, and ways of improving one's gambling habits or overcoming gambling addiction.

Connection to problem gambling help organizations

According to scientific research, **self-exclusion by itself is often not sufficient to completely stop problematic gambling habits.** Untreated problem gambling tends to cause relapses after the self-exclusion period is over. Because of this, a strong connection to problem gambling help organizations is a vital part of a functional and effective global self-exclusion scheme that aims to reduce gambling harm as much as possible.

We aim to **connect self-excluded problem gamblers with one of the dedicated organizations that can help them overcome their addiction.** We believe this is best done right at the moment of self-excluding, as that is likely to be the moment at which the player realizes that their habits are problematic and are more likely to take action.

We are currently working on creating and making available **a comprehensive global database of problem gambling help organizations** to provide anyone who seeks help with locally appropriate sources of help. This database will then be used to connect self-excluded players to the most suitable additional help options.