The joint press conference of the **Minister of Finance Alena Schillerová**, the Minister of Health Adam Vojtěch, the National Anti-Drug Policy Coordinator Jarmila Vedralová and other addictology experts was held yesterday at the Clinic of Addictology in Prague 2.

The Ministry of Finance introduced a **rate package** that, with effect from 1 January 2020, **will regulate the new taxation of gambling**, tobacco products and spirits.

Here is the link to the press conference recording: https://www.mfcr.cz/cs/aktualne/v-mediich/2019/tiskova-konference-35176 .

Main points discussed were:

- Comparison of the number of game establishments and technical facilities in 2012 and 2019, stating several times that the Czech Republic is no longer the casino of Europe
- State spending on drug policy is gradually increasing year after year
- The reasons for the increase in the gambling tax; according to the Minister, this is well thought-out proposal from 2015, which was backed by number of analyses at that time.
- It will lead to better differentiation according to the harmfulness of gambling – it was stated that internet instant lottery is close to technical game in terms of addictiveness.
- The Minister assured her that it would not lead to the liquidation of gambling operators and would not have the detrimental effect.
- More than 500,000 Czechs are at risk of problem gambling.
- The social cost of gambling, according to the minister, is CZK 15 billion, which is 4 times less than that of alcohol (approx. CZK 60 billion) and almost 7 times less than that of tobacco (approx. CZK 100 million).

In many of the above points to the amendment to the Tax Act, the Minister responded to the comments we sent through the IFGR to the MoF, **but without any explanation**. Therefore, we still **lack the analysis showing that the rate increase will not have the detrimental effect** or an explanation of **how the impact analyses of 2015 can be used now** when the market has undergone a great transformation since then. Furthermore, it is clear from the figures in the presentation in the section of “profitability” of individual games that these numbers are repeatedly distorted by comparing the incomparable IN and BET quantities together in one category.