

Regulator of the National Lottery: Underage Mystery Shopping 2024 (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/112639>)

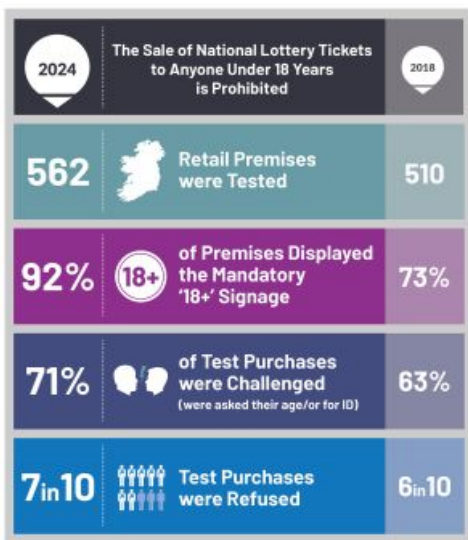


In 2024, the Regulator commissioned its second major independent research to examine the Irish retail sector’s compliance with rules governing the sale of National Lottery products to under 18's.

The purpose of this research exercise is to test whether the measures taken by the Operator are sufficient to prevent children purchasing National Lottery products.

The findings provide the Regulator with an important comparative measure from 2018 to 2024 to assess the impact taken by the Operator to date to improve compliance by retailers in this important area and future actions to be taken.

While the majority of retailers were fully compliant, the percentage not implementing the rules properly remains and unacceptable. The Regulator required the Operator to take tougher actions to drive an increase in compliance with the law by its retailers.



The National Lottery Act 2013 prohibits the sale of National Lottery products to anyone under the age of 18. The Codes of Practice under the licence mandate that all retailers display signage indicating players have to be '18+' to purchase National Lottery games, in a location visible from the point of sale. In addition, all retail staff are to observe a 'Think 21' practice and request photo identification from all persons who appear under the age of 21.

Commenting on the findings, Regulator of the National Lottery, Carol Boate, said:

"Our mystery shop clearly shows there is still significant room for improvement in terms of age challenge and sale refusal to under-18s. It is concerning to me that, despite progress, nearly three in 10 shops visited were still prepared to sell products to minors which can only legally be sold to people aged 18 and over.

"Retailers need to adopt a zero-tolerance attitude towards the sale of age-restricted products to children, and this needs to be the attitude of all National Lottery retailers.

"However, I am encouraged to see progress since our last mystery shop in 2018, with the vast majority of retail staff proactively requesting ID from our underage test-purchasers.

"I will be engaging with the National Lottery operator, PLI, about additional measures they might take to increase awareness and compliance amongst their retailers with all options on the table to help us towards a position where no child in Ireland can buy a National Lottery product."

In support of this work, the Regulator has also published [advice to parents and guardians \(https://www.rnl.ie/player-protection/advice-for-parents-and-guardians/\)](https://www.rnl.ie/player-protection/advice-for-parents-and-guardians/) on how to talk to their children about National Lottery products and why they are only suitable for over-18s.

Full details of the research and findings can be found in the link below.

[Underage Mystery Shopping 2024 \(https://www.rnl.ie/assets/PDFs/independent-research/24-017329-RNL-Underage-Test-Purchasing-Research-Report-Client-FINAL-26th-Nov.pdf\)](https://www.rnl.ie/assets/PDFs/independent-research/24-017329-RNL-Underage-Test-Purchasing-Research-Report-Client-FINAL-26th-Nov.pdf)

Region

Nationwide

[Underage Mystery Shopping 2024 \(https://www.rnl.ie/data-publications/mystery-shopping/underage-mystery-shopping-2024/\)](https://www.rnl.ie/data-publications/mystery-shopping/underage-mystery-shopping-2024/)

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