

CASE STUDY:

HOW RESALE PRICE CAPS HURT FANS IN IRELAND

In 2021, Ireland passed the Sale of Tickets Act which effectively capped ticketing prices by making it illegal to resell tickets for designated events or venues for more than their original face value.

What Happens When You Push Ticket Sales Underground

1. Price Caps Don't Eliminate Demand—They Push It Underground

- When resale was capped in Ireland, sellers didn't disappear—they just left the regulated market and shifted behavior.
- Instead of selling through safe platforms like StubHub, listings flooded Facebook Groups, Instagram, and TikTok—channels ripe with scams because they lack consumer protections, oversight, or traceability.

2. The Fraud Model: Sophisticated, Cheap, and Widespread

- Scammers buy fake or old Facebook accounts (as cheap as **\$10**) to pose as fans.
- These accounts look legitimate—6+ months old, real profile photos, casual posts.
- They post in "fan-to-fan" ticket groups (e.g. "Taylor Swift 2025 Ireland") or reply to buyer comments: "DM me, I have tickets."
- The tickets are fake—or more often, **phantom tickets**. The scammer might have one real ticket and "sells" it 10–100 times.

3. Victims Don't Realize It's a Scam—Because the Price Looks Reasonable

- Scammers price just under market—e.g. 120% of face value—undercutting legitimate sellers while still making a profit.
- Buyers feel safe because the price isn't suspiciously low—*it feels "just right."*
- Platforms like PayPal, Revolut, and CashApp provide a false sense of security. But in most cases, funds can't be recovered.

4. Scams Are Hard to Prosecute—And Often Too Late to Catch

- Accounts are deleted within 2–3 weeks, long before victims realize they've been duped.
- **One recent case:** a scammer resold a single Electric Picnic ticket over 100 times using Instagram and TikTok. He's now headed to prison—but only after dozens of fans were left ticketless.
- Fan forums have had to shut down new memberships entirely to avoid being exploited.

5. Money Muling & Criminal Networks

- Scammers often don't use their own bank accounts.
- They recruit vulnerable people—first-generation immigrants or students—to "lend" them payment accounts in exchange for small compensation.
- In some cases, these recruiters have ties to **criminal enterprises or drug networks**.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Price caps don't help fans—they hurt them. They create the illusion of affordability while driving real consumers to unprotected social media channels. If you want to protect fans, you need regulated, transparent marketplaces—not policies that hand more power to monopolies and scammers.