

BULGARIA COUNTRY REPORT

General overview

The Bulgarian Trade Association of the Manufacturers and Operators in the Gaming Industry (BTA MOGI/ BTA POII) was established in 1992 as an independent, voluntary non-profit organization that comprises individuals and companies, producing gaming equipment or operating gambling facilities, and related activities and in 2007 was re-registered under the new law regulations. BTA MOGI is the main representative body of those involved in the gaming industry in Bulgaria and protects their interests. It unites 19 members – major operators and gaming equipment manufacturers. BTA MOGI's membership includes individuals who have experience in managing gaming locations and casinos for over 15 years.

The Association was closely involved in discussions about Bulgarian Gaming Law, which has been adopted since June 4th, 1999. Many of the proposals made by the Association has been incorporated into Bulgarian Gaming Law and the preceding Decree for the terms and procedures for the issue of permits for organizing gambling games. The association has set a broad range of goals, related to raising the profile and prestige of the gaming industry, protecting the interests of its members and protecting the public interest. Some of the main goals of the Association include: working towards the implementation of unified standards in the gaming industry and their harmonization with international standards; providing assistance with improving the legal framework in Bulgaria and abroad, regulating public relations related to the gaming industry; providing support to the gambling addicts and help fight their addiction and taking part in organizing and sponsoring educational and medical programs, special courses and other suitable initiatives.

Size of Industry

- Total number of gambling machines (2006): 15 000 units
- Total number of gaming arcades: 800
- Private and public gaming operators:
 - Casino operators (private) – 12
 - Gaming locations operators (private) – 500
 - Bingo operators (private) – 20
 - Lottery (public) – 1
 - Toto (public) – 1
 - Toto (private) - 1
 - Bookmakers (private) – 1

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- Gross gaming revenue for gambling machines

There is no official statistics for the gross revenue for gambling machines, but the analysis of information, provided by the gaming operators show that the average gross revenue of a gambling machine is 20 (twenty) EURO per day or 600 (six hundred) EURO per month.

- Gaming equipment manufacturing in Bulgaria

Currently an average of 4 000 (four thousand) gaming devices are manufactured annually in Bulgaria, destined for the Bulgarian and international gaming market. Bulgarian gaming equipment is well known and highly estimated among operators and by other manufacturers all over the world, where it is shown in all major international exhibitions shows.

Legislation

The gambling business in Bulgaria is regulated by Bulgarian Gaming Law, which was adopted by Bulgarian Parliament in 1999 and subsequently amended and supplemented in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006. The Amusement sector, however, is not regulated by any specific law.

The Law stipulates that in the Gaming sector:

- A minimum number of machines required per site:

In population centres with more than 50,000 residents there shall be at least 20 units per gaming location;

In any other population centres, and in tourist resorts, a minimum of 10 units.

The minimum floor space per gambling slot machine shall be 2 square metres.

- There is no any restriction on maximum number of machines allowed per site
- There is no limit on maximum bets
- There is no limit on maximum wins.
- Currently, there are no changes in legislation pending.

- How illegal gaming is dealt with by the authorities

Problem gaming/illegal gaming – The state, through the authority of the Bulgarian Gaming Board, imposes administrative sanctions on operators who breach the

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provisions of the Law. These sanctions may include temporary suspension of operating license – for up to 12 months, and also depriving the issued operating license or imposing fines of between 1 000 and 20 000 lv depending on the severity of the infringement of the Law. Organizing gambling games without a license is a criminal offence under the Criminal Law and it is covered by the Gaming Act with a fine of between 20 000 and 50 000 lv.

- Advertising restrictions

It is prohibited to directly advertise games of chance through any mass communication media. It is permitted to announce the procedure and manner for participation and the terms for the conduct of bingo and keno lotteries, Toto and lotto games, as well as betting on the outcome of sports events, the betting on uncertain events and the guessing of facts and events and their results, as well as to televise the holding of drawings.

- Taxation

The monthly tax is 100 (one hundred) BGN per gambling machine, paid quarterly, within 15th day of the month following the expired quarter.

Industry News

- As required by its constitution, the Association devotes a part of its incomes as donations and sponsorships to:

- The Bulgarian Union of Blind and Deaf people as well as other handicapped people

- Bulgarian artists, musicians, other cultural figures and young talents

- Since 2005 there has been organized twice per year (Spring and Autumn edition) a seminar, attended by casino and gaming site operators from all over the country, where the latest innovations within the different aspects of the gaming industries have been introduced and discussed, including: new technologies in gaming equipment and management, legislative issues relevant to gaming business and protection of intellectual property.

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