

# German states set to ban Internet gambling – paper

Berlin (Reuters) – Germany's federal states plan to ban Internet gambling, according to draft documents to be discussed by the country's state premiers on Wednesday, a newspaper reported on Tuesday.

Despite pressure from the European Commission to open up Europe's gambling market to competition, ministers from most states want to sign off on new rules aimed at protecting their lucrative monopoly as lottery operators, said Handelsblatt.

It also reported that the mainly private firms, such as Tipp24 and Fluxx, would be granted a one-year transition period.

The ministers will meet in Berlin on Wednesday morning.

The state of Saxony and two other states imposed a ban earlier this year on commercial betting. That was directed mainly at Austrian Internet betting firm bwin.com whose German unit is the country's biggest commercial bookmaker.

Bwin and its peers are facing increasingly stringent regulations in the United States and Europe, where governments are curbing Internet gambling to protect customers and state-run lotteries.