

French casinos face stand-off

Casino owners and employees in France are facing a stand-off after unions called the country's croupiers out on strike on New Year's Eve in an unresolved dispute over pay and new regulations which will allow casinos to develop electronic versions of poker and roulette games.

Unions fear that as many as 3,500 jobs could be lost if owners are allowed to install more electronic machines in proportion to traditional games.

The government, and owners, are arguing that the rule changes were designed to ensure the survival of smaller establishments, and that there was no chance of turning casinos into 'hangars' for slot machines.

Patrick Partouche, president of the Groupe Partouche responded to the unions strike by stating „Either we adapt or we die,“ and pointed out that the new rule changes were a concession in return for a new obligation which sees casinos checking the identity of all customers.