

Gaming in Germany Newsletter: Gauselmann acquires WestSpiel casinos in Nordrhein- Westfalen

GAMING GERMANY

h3. Transitional period continues in all but name after entry into force of GlüStV 2021

Despite the entry into force of the new German State Gambling Treaty (GlüStV 2021) on July 1, 2021, not much has changed in practice.

Sports betting operators are awaiting further announcements regarding the expected process and timeline for the implementation of additional regulatory requirements as stipulated in the new GlüStV 2021.

Although the first applications for virtual slots licenses have reportedly been submitted to the new regulator in Halle (Sachsen-Anhalt), most prospective license applicants appear to be waiting on further guidance on technical requirements.

We expect more clarity in the next few months regarding the application procedure for virtual slots and online poker licenses.

Meanwhile, the State of Sachsen-Anhalt has finally announced the identity of the head of Germany's new national gambling regulator: Anne Poggemann has been appointed as the

regulator's Chair of the Board.

Poggemann is a member of the CDU, was trained as a lawyer and most recently served as State Secretary in the Ministry of the Interior and Sport of the State of Sachsen-Anhalt.

h3. European online gambling operators step up responsible gambling efforts

Members of the European Gaming and Betting Association (EGBA) „report“:<https://www.egba.eu/news-post/new-report-europes-leading-online-gambling-operators-step-up-safer-gambling-efforts/> that in 2020 75% of their customers made use of the safer gambling tools they offer – up from 61% in 2019.

Additionally, 2.8 million personalized communications were sent to customers about their individual gambling behavior with the aim of promoting safer gambling – a 133% increase compared to 1.2 million personalized communications in 2019.

These and other data are included in EGBA's "Sustainability Report 2020/21," which outlines the joint efforts and progress made by its member companies in 2020 to promote safer gambling, protect their players and to contribute positively to society.

“EGBA and its members are committed to lead from the front on safer gambling and our yearly sustainability report is part of our commitment to be accountable and transparent about our activities,” said Maarten Haijer, Secretary General, EGBA.

In related news, EGBA also „welcomed“:<https://www.egba.eu/news-post/egba-welcomes-proposal-for-a-new-eu-anti-money-laundering-rules/> the latest proposals for new EU anti-money laundering rules. German banks, however, „warned“:<https://www.faz.net/aktuell/finanzen/finanzmarkt/deutsche-banken-fordern-klare-regeln-fuer-neue-eu-behoerde-17446020.html> of a potential duplication of

responsibilities and efforts between national and EU authorities.

h3. Register now | 2021 Gaming in Germany Conference

As more will become clear in the coming months about the direction of travel of the regulated German online gambling market, we have decided to schedule the „2021 Gaming in Germany

Conference“:<https://www.gamingingermany.com/conference-2021> for *October 25, 2021.*

The conference will take place at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Berlin, which is located directly at the iconic Potsdamer Platz.

Our first confirmed speaker is Germany’s leading gambling lawyer Jörg Hofmann, Past President of the International Masters of Gaming Law (IMGL) and Head of the Gaming & Betting Law Practice Group of Melchers Law Firm.

Due to quickly rising vaccination rates across Germany and Europe, we expect that the event will be subject to minimal (if any) Covid-related restrictions. After many months of restricted travel, we hope to be finally able to meet each other in person!

„Register now!“:<https://registration.gamingingermany.com>

h3. Upcoming Events

The following events may be of interest to the Gaming in Germany community.

* Don’t miss the *2021 Gaming in Holland Conference* on „28 September,

2021“:<https://www.gaminginholland.com/conference-2021> just days before the official opening of the regulated Dutch online market. René Jansen, Chair of the Netherlands Gambling Authority, will deliver the conference keynote speech.

* *SiGMA Europe* has been rescheduled to „16 – 18 November, 2021“:<https://www.sigma.com.mt/news/sigma-show-moves-to-april-following-early-roll-out-of-vaccine.>□

* The *Betting on Sports America* conference and expo has been scheduled for „30 November – 2 December, 2021“:<https://sbcevents.com/betting-on-sports-america/> and will bring together all the major players in the fast-growing North American sports betting industry.□

* The *World Gaming Executive Summit* is returning live on „6 – 8 December, 2021“:<https://www.terrapinn.com/conference/world-gaming-executive-summit/> at the W Hotel, Barcelona.□

* *ICE London* and *iGB Affiliate London* have been postponed to „1 – 3 February, 2022“:<https://www.icelondon.uk.com/>.

h3. Gauselmann acquires WestSpiel casinos in Nordrhein-Westfalen

German gaming giant Gauselmann Group has „won the bidding“:<https://www.isa-guide.de/isa-gaming/articles/215067.html> to acquire WestSpiel, formerly owned by the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen (NRW) and holder of the land-based casino monopoly in Germany’s largest federal state. WestSpiel currently operates four casinos in Aachen, Bad Oeynhausen, Dortmund-Hohensyburg, and Duisburg. WestSpiel already owns a concession to build and operate two additional land-based casinos in NRW.

The acquisition is particularly noteworthy because, according to Germany’s new State Gambling treaty, only the holders of the casino licenses in Germany’s federal states will be allowed to offer online bankholder games, such as roulette, blackjack, and baccarat. Other online casino operators will be limited to offering virtual slot machine games.

Through the acquisition of WestSpiel, Gauselmann has secured itself a position as one of the foremost online operators in what is potentially Europe’s largest gambling market.