

# Games of chance could be allowed in Brazil

Banned since 1946, the games of chance could be approved again in Brazil. The bill, that plans the return of casinos, bingo halls and video lotteries to the country, has been treated in the Chamber of Representatives and was already approved in the Commission of Economic, Industry and Commercial Development. Before being voted, it must also be approved in the Commissions of Constitution and Justice as well as Finance and Tax.

The aim is to release bingo halls in the country and limit casinos to six gambling venues in the regions North, North-East and Central-West, as a way to boost economy. Two casinos will be authorized in each region and, in case there is a higher number of a request, the preference would be put in the council with less Human Development Rate. Videolotteries will also be approved, but machines might also be installed in bingo halls or casinos. The bill was initially presented in 2003.

The Trade Union of Minas Gerais workers say that 200,000 direct and indirect employments would be generated in the country. The Brazilian Bingo Association (Abrabin) calculates around 220,000 potential jobs for the sector. Tax collection would be around USD 2,5 billion a year.

According to the bill, the 15% of the casino collection would be paid as royalty to the Union and the States, which would have to allocate the money in projects related to health.

According to Abrabin, in the whole America, not just Brazil and Cuba, the gambling business is not legalized. Bets are released in developed countries.

The President of the Council of the entity, Olavo Sales da

Silveira said that gambling in Brazil has a negative image because there was not an adequate legislation for the bingo operation, which created the myth that the bingo halls were places to launder money.

The bill plans that gambling venues will be authorized and controlled by the Ministry of Economy and stipulates punishments in case of infringements to the law.