



European land-based casino sector hardest hit

ECA poll reveals the scale of the challenge its members are facing

Brussels, 26 April 2021 - Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on the European gambling industry, with the land-based casino sector taking the brunt of the impact. European casinos were closed for an average of 136 days in 2020, and the vast majority of operators have been unable to welcome guests in 2021.

The latest ECA members' poll reveals that 70% of casinos in Europe remain closed. Exceptions such as Luxembourg, Spain and Monaco have reopened in 2021 under Covid-specific restrictions, while the worst affected casinos, such as in Sweden, have been closed for an entire year.

The facts:

- Land-based casinos lost an average of over 37% of normal operating days throughout 2020 due to mandated COVID-19 closures.
- 70% of all European land-based casinos remain closed.
- European land-based operators have seen revenues fall by over 50% in the last year.
- The majority of ECA members do not have a clear schedule for the official reopening of their businesses in 2021.
- Pre-pandemic, ECA members' 900 European casinos employed 70,000+ staff. Post-pandemic employment is estimated to fall to 50,000.

"This is the deepest trough the European land-based casino industry has ever experienced. The financial impact of the pandemic on the land-based casino sector has been extreme, and these numbers show the economic realities of COVID-19 on the European land-based casino sector," states ECA Chairman Per Jaldung. "Some casinos have closed permanently, and many casino employees have lost their jobs. We are under no illusion that the industry can return to 'business as usual' any time soon. We are, as a matter of fact, very far from business as usual".

Restricted opening hours, maximum occupancy and amenity limitations, social distancing protocols, restricted gaming offers, protective measures including plexiglass, masks and on-site testing are just some of the hurdles that the land-based casino business is currently facing. Country to country variations in the restrictions and mandates have also been compounded by regional variations within national borders. These restrictions are the next major challenge for a sector that the pandemic has hit the hardest.

"Guests want to visit casinos again," adds ECA Secretary General Hermann Pamminger. "The relaxation and tightening of numerous lockdowns in 2020 demonstrated the ability of the land-based sector to safely and responsibly return to business. Guest registration has enabled quick and practical social distancing measures, and casinos have implemented comprehensive hygiene initiatives, far exceeding local requirements, ensuring that our guests feel comfortable and safe. Our industry is part of the service and tourism sector in which we employ a large number of highly trained and motivated people. The closures affected 130,000 direct and indirect employees not only across our gambling facilities but also in our restaurant and entertainment areas. Our employees

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cannot wait for the day business is back to normal, and they can once again welcome guests to their casino and entertainment venues, but our industry continues to need support to achieve this during an extraordinarily challenging period."

About the European Casino Association:

The European Casino Association (ECA) represents licensed land-based casinos in Europe, with its 30 members and their 70,000+ direct employees supporting local economies across the continent. The ECA members stem from virtually all EU Member States as well as a number of non-EU countries. The ECA's main purpose and objective is to address and promote issues related to casinos and promote the positive contribution of the industry to the economy and society as a whole.

To find out more about the ECA, please click [here](#).

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