

IN-DEPTH

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In-Depth: Gambling Law (formerly The Gambling Law Review) is designed for practitioners across the world who want to find a way quickly to digest and understand the framework of gambling legislation in key jurisdictions. It analyses the most consequential new legislation and case law, with a focus on key events of the past 12 months and the things to look out for in the next.

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Romania

Ana Maria Baci, Andrei Cosma and Adela Nuță

BACIU PARTNERS

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Introduction

Definitions

The Romanian primary gambling legislation (Government Emergency Ordinance No. 77/2009 on the organisation and operation of games of chance, as subsequently amended and supplemented (GEO 77/2009)) provides the following definitions for gambling products.

1. Lottery a game of chance that depends on the random outcome of events consisting of the drawing of numbers, letters, tickets or symbols, regardless of the procedure used and characteristics of the means used to make the draw (drums, wheels, cups and other similar equipment), and which can be organised (in the case of land-based activity) with or without the players being physically present. This category includes lotteries, including instant lotteries and any game of chance that is organised exclusively by the Romanian state company, the Romanian Lottery, holds the monopoly for organising lottery games both land-based and online.
2. Betting – a game of chance where the participant must indicate the results of future events or where the results are randomly generated by an independent information technology (IT) system. The legislation expressly regulates three categories of betting: (1) fixed-odds betting (eg, sports betting); (2) pari-mutuel betting; and (3) exchange betting, which can be licensed and authorised as land-based or online gambling.
3. Casino games – games of chance that make use of specific gaming equipment such as cards, roulette, dice and gaming tables. A particularity of online casino games is that this category also includes online poker games and online slot machine games, thus permitting gambling operators licensed for online casino also to offer poker and slot machine gaming on their gaming platform.
4. Poker – a game of chance using poker playing cards and, in the case of land-based activities, performed exclusively between the participants in specialised locations.
5. Land-based slot machine gaming – defined by reference to one of the following two categories:
 - slot machine games with unlimited stakes and winnings played via specific machines or equipment, with the players being physically present, operated in specialised premises where gambling takes place; and
 - video lottery games, where the players are physically present and for which the gaming equipment must be connected to a central server that runs the gaming programme and validates the win.

In relation to games played via electronic devices that offer limited-risk winnings (known in the industry as “amusement with price” (AWP) machines), these were previously regulated as a standalone category of land-based slot machine gaming, but as part of certain

legislative amendments made to the Romanian primary gambling legislation that entered into force on 6 October 2023, the AWP category has been removed from the law.

1. Bingo games – games of chance defined by reference to the means used in performing the activity:
 - bingo games played in gaming rooms with the winnings generated by random elements that use lottery-type draw equipment and with the players physically present on the premises;
 - bingo games organised via television networks, with the players not being physically present at the time of the draw; and
 - online bingo games, which are played entirely without the players being physically present and are organised and transmitted via any kind of communication system
2. Keno games – games of chance regulated only as online gambling activities, and which are included in the category of online bingo and keno games.
3. Tombola – the activity of drawing numbers, letters or other symbols, regardless of the characteristics of the mechanical, electronic, digital or video devices used to generate these or to make the draw, whereby players (a predetermined number of participants) may win prizes only in kind, where the value of the prizes must have a minimum value of no lower than 50% of the total value of the stakes paid to participate in the game. Tombola games may be organised as both a land-based activity (with players being physically present) and an online activity.
4. Temporary games – land-based casino games, slot machine games with unlimited winnings and traditional bingo games that take place in tourist resorts or on leisure craft, and which qualify as temporary games of chance and are subject to a special temporary licence and authorisation valid for a period of three months.

A distinct category of temporary games exists for poker festivals, which are defined by the law as temporary events organised in tourist resorts or other locations and which consist of poker tournaments performed exclusively between the participants. Poker festivals may be organised only by operators that hold a valid licence and authorisation in this respect.

In addition to the above categories expressly defined by the legislation, any other unregulated product that fulfils the conditions of a game of chance (public offering of the game, participation fee, chance and prize) is also subject to the licensing requirement, since the Romanian gambling regulator, the National Gambling Office (ONJN) is legally competent to analyse any such product and determine the category in which the product should be included. This analysis is performed based on a request filed with the ONJN by the operator of the unregulated gambling product, and the game rules and a description of the product must be attached to the request.

The legislation does not make any reference to products such as fantasy league, pool betting or spread betting. It is, however, expressly provided that "fun games that do not imply winnings based on random elements but have the purpose to test the force, intelligence or skills of the participant" as well as "sport games that are not mainly based on hazard, and imply skills and knowledge" are not considered to be gambling products and are permitted without a licence and authorisation.

Although the current gambling legislation makes no reference to derivative financial products, the ONJN stated in an official letter issued several years ago that binary options, as well as other types of secondary financial instruments expressly provided for within the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive,^[1] cannot be included on gambling platforms. Further, at the end of 2025, ONJN has decided to blacklist the prediction market Polymarket.com by arguing that it offers unlicensed games of chance in Romania.

Gambling policy

Gambling is generally permitted in Romania, provided that the required licences and authorisations are obtained (including local authorisations for land-based activities) and the applicable legal provisions are observed in the course of business. Gambling is legally allowed in Romania in both its land-based and its online forms.

State control and private enterprise

As a matter of principle, the very first article of GEO 77/2009 stipulates that the organisation and operation of gambling in Romania is a state monopoly and may be performed only within the specific legal parameters imposed by the gambling regime. However, the legislation creates a legal framework whereby any private operator that fulfils the requirements provided by the law is able to apply for a licence and authorisation to conduct gambling activities in Romania. Currently, the criteria and conditions according to which the licences are granted could not be considered as leading to an oligopoly or monopoly situation.

An exception exists in relation to lottery games. The legislation in force establishes that as a matter of principle both land-based and online lottery games can be organised only by the Romanian Lottery; therefore, this represents a state monopoly.

Territorial issues

Following a legislative amendment enacted in February 2026, local councils have the prerogative to determine whether or not land-based gambling is allowed in their municipality. In those situations where the local authorities decide to permit land-based activities, an additional local authorisation must be obtained in each municipality (besides the licence and authorisations to be obtained from ONJN) and this local authorisation entails also the payment of a local tax established by each local authority.

Besides complying with these new requirements enacted in February 2026, the installation and operation of slot-machine type gaming devices continues to be strictly confined to administrative-territorial units, whether communes, towns, or municipalities, where the resident population exceeds 15,000 inhabitants. ONJN bears the obligation to consult and verify this demographic criterion by referring to official statistical databases, including TEMPO online and data furnished by the National Institute of Statistics, at the time of processing the authorisation application.

Moreover, the legislation clearly prohibits the establishment of gambling premises within or in the immediate vicinity of sensitive sites such as educational institutions and their campuses, cultural, social, health, and religious establishments, as well as other similar

facilities. It further forbids the operation of gambling venues in locations where their presence would obstruct traffic flow or limit free access to public areas, including building entrances, pedestrian pathways, and public transportation stops.

Offshore gambling

In accordance with the legislation in force, only operators based in the EU, European Economic Area (EEA) or Swiss Confederation may apply for and obtain the necessary licence and authorisation to provide gambling services in Romania. In addition, following the amendments made to the Romanian primary gambling legislation that entered into force on 6 October 2023, operators based outside Romania (but nonetheless located in the EU, EEA or Swiss Confederation) need to register a permanent establishment for tax purposes in Romania in order to be able to obtain (or maintain, where applicable) the necessary licences and authorisations from the ONJN.

A situation in which a foreign economic operator provides gambling services in Romania without holding the relevant licence and authorisation issued by the ONJN is explicitly regulated by the legislation as a criminal offence sanctioned by imprisonment for a period of one month up to one year, or by a fine (this sanction may be significantly increased following a proposed draft bill published in March 2026). Additional legislative sanctions are also expressly provided for a legal entity that offers unlicensed gambling services in Romania: the entity shall be dissolved and the amounts derived from the unlawful activity shall be confiscated.

As a separate tool to control and prevent unlicensed activities, the ONJN manages a blacklist, which encompasses all unlicensed gambling websites, platforms, brands, applications and websites that promote unlicensed gambling activities in Romania. This list currently comprises over 1,800 internet domain names. In this regard, the legislation also sets out that internet service providers (ISPs) as well as all service suppliers for the gambling industry, including payment service providers, are bound to comply with decisions taken by the ONJN. Specific reference is made to ISPs, which are required to ban access to blacklisted websites (as well as to those websites promoting unlicensed gambling) under sanction of a fine ranging from 50,000 lei to 100,000 lei.

Legal and regulatory framework

Legislation and jurisprudence

The conditions under which the organisation and operation of games of chance are permitted in Romania are outlined in the following main legislative acts:

1. Government Emergency Ordinance No. 77/2009 on the organisation and operation of games of chance (GEO 77/2009);
2. Government Decision No. 111/2016 for the approval of the methodological norms for implementation of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 77/2009 on the organisation and operation of games of chance (GD 111/2016);

3. Government Emergency Ordinance No. 20/2013 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of the ONJN; and
4. Government Decision No. 298/2013 on the organisation and functioning of the ONJN.

In addition to the above-mentioned legislation, gambling activities are also regulated by means of instructions, orders or decisions issued by the ONJN in relation to various aspects of gambling activity. The ONJN is a specialised body of the central public administration subordinated to the Ministry of Finance. One of the orders issued by the ONJN in the past year that regulates an important matter in the context of the recently amended legislation is Order No. 33/2025, which regulates the significant changes to the initial licensing data that must be notified by both B2C and B2B licensees, within a very short timeframe of five business days.

Moreover, certain specific requirements regarding anti-money laundering and prevention of terrorism are also applicable to gambling activities, and these are generally contained in the following legislative acts:

1. Law No. 129/2019 on the prevention and combating of money laundering and financing of terrorism;
2. Order No. 37/2021 issued by the President of the National Office for Prevention and Control of Money Laundering for the approval of the regulation implementing Law No. 129/2019; and
3. Order No. 370/2021 issued by the President of the ONJN for the approval of the instructions on the prevention and combating of money laundering and financing of terrorism in the gambling sector.

The regulator

The ONJN is the public authority competent to supervise and control the Romanian gambling market and to grant licences and authorisations to gambling operators.

Remote and land-based gambling

The gambling legislation distinguishes between online and land-based gambling, with both categories being separately defined in the legislation, as follows:

1. land-based gambling activities are defined as all games of chance that fulfil the legal conditions related to a game of chance irrespective of whether they are expressly regulated by GEO 77/2009 and that are performed through gaming means installed in Romania and are not transmitted or performed through any kind of communication system (internet, landline or mobile telephone, or any other transmission systems); and
2. online gambling activities are defined as comprising all the games of chance that fulfil the legal conditions applicable for a game of chance irrespective of whether they are expressly regulated by GEO 77/2009 and that are performed through

communication systems of any kind (internet, landline or mobile telephone, or any other transmission system).

Land-based gambling

Pursuant to GEO 77/2009 and GD 111/2016, land-based gambling activities may be only operated in specialised locations, which are outlined below. As explained above, following a legislative amendment from February 2026, land-based operators are required to obtain, besides the necessary licence and authorisations from ONJN, also a local authorisation where they intend to conduct their operations (where such activities continue to be permitted by local authorities).

Casinos

Casinos are the specialised locations used for the operation of games of chance characteristic to casinos. The surface area and structure of casinos must enable the installation of gaming equipment and other technical devices needed to carry out the specific activity and must be located in buildings intended for use as business premises or in hotels.

Casinos are subject to minimum legal requirements regarding the location of the premises, minimum surface area and safety equipment.

Betting agencies

Betting agencies are specialised locations for betting activities in which at least one dependent betting terminal is operated and which collectively meet several specific conditions in terms of minimum surface area, mandatory equipment, etc.

Locations for the operation of slot machines

All premises used for the operation of slot machine gaming activities, irrespective of the type of slot machine, are subject to the following restrictions in relation to advertising for the premises:

1. organisers will prevent viewing of the activities carried out within the premises; and
2. organisers will not suggest gambling activities by using images, text or other symbols.

Besides holding the new local authorisation, the installation and operation of slot-machine type gaming devices are strictly confined to administrative-territorial units, whether communes, towns, or municipalities, where the resident population exceeds 15,000 inhabitants, a provision introduced by GEO 80/2024, which amended and supplemented GEO 77/2009. ONJN bears the obligation to consult and verify this demographic criterion by referring to official statistical databases, including but not limited to TEMPO online

and data furnished by the National Institute of Statistics, at the time of processing the authorisation application.

Locations for operation of bingo games

Pursuant to GD 111/2016, bingo games performed in specialised gaming halls may only take place in locations that will be placed in specialised premises or business premises that are registered as the operator's main or secondary office and that meet a set of mandatory conditions in terms of logistical organisation – sufficient electrical lighting system, air-conditioning system, sound system, safety-related requirements, back-up electrical circuit, etc.

Remote gambling

Offering remote gambling products in Romania is subject to a licensing and authorisation procedure. To apply for an online licence and authorisation, several technical and operational requirements must be met. The following requirements are of particular importance:

1. Localisation requirements – if the operator is a Romanian entity, the main server must be located in Romania. If the operator is located in another Member State of the EU or EEA, or in the Swiss Confederation, the main server can be located in another Member State of the EU or EEA, in which case safe and mirror servers must be established in Romania.
2. Use of Class II licensees – remote gambling operators may carry out their activities in Romania by relying only on the products and services offered by business-to-business (B2B) suppliers that hold a Class II licence issued by the ONJN. Activities that entail the obligation to obtain a Class II licence include software development, platform management, payment processing, marketing affiliation and audit and certification activities.
3. Certification requirements – any operator applying for an online licence must hold a certification for the gambling system (both software and platform are included in the scope of certification) issued by a specialised testing lab that holds a Class II licence issued by the ONJN.

Ancillary matters

Pursuant to GEO 77/2009 and GD 111/2016, the gaming equipment or components used by land-based gambling operators to conduct their activity (eg, roulette, slot machines, slot management systems) will be acquired only from an entity that holds a specific Class II licence issued by the ONJN.

Regarding the online gambling sector, as mentioned above, B2B suppliers are also subject to the Class II licensing requirement.

The legislation does not provide for a personal licence requirement for individuals holding specific positions within a gambling operator. There are, however, certain requirements

for the licensing process that refer, in particular, to the directors and shareholders of the applying entity (eg, criminal record checks, affidavits disclosing, among other things, the ultimate beneficial owners).

Remote gambling operators incorporated outside Romania need to register a permanent establishment for tax purposes registered in Romania and appoint an authorised representative in Romania to liaise with the ONJN, the tax authorities and any other relevant public or private institution. The authorised representative can be a legal or physical person. No specific training is required, other than a representation having been made under an affidavit that the person is knowledgeable about Romanian gambling legislation and gambling matters.

Financial payment mechanisms

Under current gambling legislation, the payment methods allowed in the operation of gambling activities are only the payment instruments used in the financial banking system and monetary means, including bank cards, provided that all payment and monetary means used (including bank cards) contain information about the natural person carrying out the activity by means of that payment instrument. As regards online gambling activities, the means of payment and the monetary means used, including cards, must be operated through a payment processor licensed by the ONJN and the online gambling operator must deposit the players' funds only in bank accounts opened at banks on the Romanian national territory. Considering the above, use of cryptocurrencies as a payment method in gambling activities is not currently allowed.

The licensing process

A core rule is that only operators based in the EU, EEA or the Swiss Confederation may apply for a licence and authorisation.

Licensing process for land-based gambling

To carry out land-based gambling activities, any gambling operator must obtain a Class I licence and one or several authorisations. While the licensing procedure is not product-specific, the authorisation must be obtained for each type of gambling activity to be performed.

To obtain the licence, the operator must submit an application request along with several corporate and operational documents related to the legal entity itself, its directors, shareholders and associates.

The authorisation can be obtained by an operator that has previously been granted a Class I licence. However, the regulations allow an operator to submit licence and authorisation applications at the same time, provided that the necessary conditions are fulfilled for each of these. The conditions for obtaining the authorisation vary in accordance with the type of gambling activity to be performed and refer to operational aspects (such as the game rules for each game offered to the players and the configuration of the gambling premises) or technical requirements (such as certification of the gambling equipment or development

of the solution for reporting the aggregated financial and operational data of the operator to the ONJN).

Further on, in order to obtain new authorisation(s) from ONJN, the operators must obtain in the advance the new local authorisation introduced based on the legislative amendment from February 2026.

From a procedural perspective, the complete documentation must be submitted to the ONJN registry at least nine working days in advance of the Supervisory Committee's meeting. Pursuant to GEO 77/2009, "requests to be granted a licence to organise or authorisations to operate shall be resolved within 30 days of the date of submission of the complete documentation". However, considering that the ONJN has the competence to request any additional documents or information deemed necessary, the licensing and authorisation procedure may, in practice, exceed the initial maximum 30-day time frame provided by the law.

The Class I licence is valid for 10 years, with the exception of temporary games of chance for which the licence is valid for three months. The authorisation is valid for one year, with the same exception – for temporary games of chance, the validity of the authorisation is also three months.

Although the licence is valid for 10 years, fees are owed annually to maintain this licence. GEO 77/2009 provides the value of the licence and authorisation fees (as such licence and authorisation fees were significantly raised through the amendments of GEO 77/2009), values that differ according to each type of game of chance. For example, for land-based fixed-odds betting, the annual licence fee amounts to €200,000; for poker clubs, the licence fee is €25,000, etc. The authorisation fees are set differently; for instance, for fixed-odds betting, the authorisation fee amounts to 25% of the revenues obtained by the operator but not less than €240,000 per year; for casino games, the authorisation fee is levied on a per gaming table basis of €70,000 per table for Bucharest and €40,000 per table for any other city in Romania.

In addition to the licence and authorisation fees, land-based gambling operators are also required to pay an annual contribution towards the public-interest activity undertaken by the ONJN for the prevention of gambling addiction. Before 6 October 2023, this annual contribution amounted to €1,000. From this date, the annual contribution differs according to each type of game of chance. For example, for fixed-odds betting, the annual contribution amounts to €200,000, while for exchange betting the annual contribution amounts to €100,000. Moreover, for land-based casinos, this annual contribution amounts to €4,000 per table. The annual contribution must be paid within 10 days of the approval of the licensing documentation for the first year of the licence and by 25 January of each year thereafter.

Certain administrative fees must also be paid by the operators when applying for a licence for land-based gambling activities, namely:

1. a documentation analysis fee of €600 paid on submission of the land-based licence application file to the ONJN; and
2. a fee of €10,500 per licence for the issuance of the licence.

As far as extension of the licence is concerned (with the exception of temporary games of chance, in respect of which prolongation may be requested only once), both the licence and the authorisation for organising and operating land-based games of chance may be extended, upon request, for validity periods identical to the initial period, provided that the operator fulfils the conditions for their extension prior to the initial expiry date, pursuant to the provisions of the law.

Licensing process for online gambling

To a certain extent, the licensing and authorisation requirements for land-based gambling also apply for online activities. As a preliminary observation, while in the case of land-based gambling activities the authorisation must be obtained for each type of activity (or machine, as the case may be), only one online gambling authorisation has to be obtained for all the activities conducted on the same gambling platform (which can be connected to one or several internet domain names).

Other particular conditions that are applicable for an operator applying for a licence and authorisation to perform online gambling mainly concern technical and operational requirements.

Thus, the applicant is required to have its entire IT system audited by a specialised testing laboratory that holds a Class II licence, while the gambling software, as well as the random number generator and return-to-player parameter of each game, must also be certified by a Class II licensed certifier. In terms of the necessary infrastructure, if the main gaming server is not located in Romania, the operator must establish safe and mirror servers in Romania for the ONJN to be able to monitor the activity related to the Romanian market and verify any incidents that occur. In brief, while the safe server stores rough replica data of the information from the gaming server, the mirror server must contain centralised reports summarising the daily activity and financial results obtained by the operator.

On the operational side, among other requirements, operators that are not Romanian-based companies need to have a permanent establishment for tax purposes registered in Romania and are required to appoint an authorised representative (a Romanian legal or natural person) to act as the representative of the operator in relation to the Romanian state authorities.

From 2023, if the online gambling operator is not established as a Romanian company, such operator must register a permanent establishment for tax purposes in Romania. Online gambling operators who held a licence valid at the time on the enacting of this requirement benefit from a six-month period in which they need to align with the new regime (either by registering a permanent establishment for tax purposes of the currently held company, by conducting a transfer of business to a Romanian entity or to an entity that has registered a permanent establishment for tax purposes in Romania, or by obtaining a new licence).

In terms of costs, following the amendments that entered into force on 6 October 2023, the licence fee is set at €300,000 per year, irrespective of the operator's turnover. Previously the fee was calculated by reference to the operator's turnover. GEO 77/2009 provided for several turnover thresholds to determine the applicable licence fee (eg, the minimum fee

was €15,600 per year for a turnover of less than €500,000 per year while the maximum was €312,000 per year for a turnover exceeding €10 million per year).

The amount of the authorisation fee for remote games of chance has been also changed. From July 2025, the amount of the authorisation fee for remote games of chance is 30% of the operator's revenue but not less than €480,000 per year.

In addition to the licence and authorisation fees, online operators are also bound to contribute to the public-interest activity undertaken by the ONJN for the prevention of gambling addiction with a contribution of €500,000 per year.

The regulation also sets out certain administrative fees to be paid by the online gambling operator when applying for a licence, namely:

1. a documentation analysis fee of €3,500 paid on submission of the licence application file to the ONJN; and
2. a fee of €10,500 per licence for the issuance of the licence.

Sanctions for non-compliance

In principle, failure to observe the legal requirements in the field of gambling may lead to civil, administrative or criminal sanctions.

By way of example, administrative liability may be triggered when:

1. the operator of land-based gambling activities allows individuals to participate in games of chance without having valid identity documents in their possession;
2. the gambling operator, without distinction between land-based or online activities, does not pay the participants the winnings obtained in the activity of gambling in three working days, provided that the conditions imposed on the participant in relation to the proof of winnings are fulfilled; or
3. the gambling operator, without distinction between land-based or online activities, fails to notify the ONJN within a certain time frame of any modifications that have occurred to the initial data on the basis of which the licence and the authorisation were issued by the ONJN.

The failure of the gambling operator to comply with legal requirements can also lead to the suspension or revocation of the licence by the Supervisory Committee of the ONJN.

The operation of games of chance without the required licence and authorisation constitutes a criminal offence punishable with imprisonment for a period of one month to one year, or with a fine. Additional sanctions for the criminal offence of unlicensed gambling include dissolution of the gambling operator and confiscation of the amounts derived from the unlawful activity.

Criminal liability may be also triggered when the following gaming products are offered to the players:

1. fraudulent games of chance;

2. games of chance through radio channels or through other assimilated transmission means;
3. games of chance based on the results of clandestine competitions (such as dog fighting, which is expressly forbidden by Romanian legislation, illegal car racing, etc);
4. clandestine games of chance, the results of which are influenced by the skill of the person handling the game for the purpose of obtaining revenues, rather than being random; and
5. competition games with winnings of any type through telephone lines or other communication systems, television or radio where the obtaining of prizes is based solely on the accuracy of the answers provided to general questions, which involve a participation fee.

The criminal liability of those involved in money transfers for gambling is not subject to gambling-specific legislation and is to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, as a situation of this kind also has potential implications related to anti-money laundering regulations.

In accordance with the provisions of GEO 77/2009, ISPs are obliged to observe ONJN decisions and ban access to unlicensed gambling websites included on the ONJN's blacklist. Non-observance of this obligation triggers administrative liability for the ISP and can result in a fine ranging from 50,000 lei to 100,000 lei.

With respect to participants in games of chance, according to GEO 77/2009 any individual who participates in Romania in the activity of remote games of chance operated by an unlicensed or unauthorised operator shall face administrative fines ranging from 5,000 lei to 10,000 lei, thus triggering the administrative liability of the player (but not criminal liability).

Wrongdoing

One of the main principles governing gambling activity consists of permanently ensuring the prevention and control of criminal activities that may be performed by accessing gambling services.

In January 2022, the ONJN issued instructions for the application of anti-money laundering (AML) legislation in the gambling sector. The AML instructions brought clarification regarding the subjects caught by the AML regime, which applies to all operators licensed in Romania, irrespective of their country of incorporation.

Furthermore, the AML instructions provide particular obligations for licensed operators in the gambling sector, as well as extensive requirements on conducting risk management, performing standard or enhanced know-your-customer checks in certain scenarios, implementing data retention obligations, setting up reporting mechanisms within the AML authority and appointing and training personnel qualified as money laundering reporting officers.

Taxation

From a fiscal point of view, land-based gambling operations entail a physical presence in Romania. Therefore, operators holding a land-based licence must be established as Romanian companies and, as a result, are subject to a 16% profit tax (applicable for all types of businesses and not specifically to gambling), in addition to any other fiscal obligations imposed under the Fiscal Code. The Fiscal Code provides for an exception regarding land-based casinos, whereby this category may be subject to a 5% turnover tax if the profit tax is less than 5% of their revenues (turnover, not gross gaming revenue (GGR)).

In the case of online gambling operations, the fiscal regime may differ depending on the jurisdiction of incorporation. Following the recent legislative amendments, online gambling operators who operate through a Romanian company or who register a permanent establishment for tax purposes in Romania are now subject to profit tax in Romania (for those online gambling operators who will operate via a Romanian-based company, it may be deemed that the corporate tax is due for all operations performed both in Romania and in other jurisdictions).

As of 1 August 2025, the authorisation tax for online gambling operations is levied at 30% of GGR and the legislation also provides for a minimum annual authorisation tax of €480,000. In contrast to the online sector, the authorisation tax for land-based fixed-odds betting is levied at 25% of the revenues obtained by the operator but not less than €240,000 per year.

Moreover, the annual licence fee for online gambling is set at €300,000.

Remote gambling operators must also pay a 2% tax applied on players' deposits.

In addition, as part of certain general changes to the Fiscal Code introduced in 2023, any economic operator that has a turnover exceeding €50 million might be required, in certain circumstances, to pay 1% corporate tax at the level of the turnover. It is still to be determined if this general fiscal change will also affect gambling operators (especially those online operators with a significant market presence and revenues).

In Romania, revenues obtained by players are subject to tax charges. In the case of online gambling, the Fiscal Code imposes a withholding tax mechanism applicable whenever the player makes a transfer from their game account to their bank account (or other withdrawal method). Hence, at each withdrawal from the online platform, operators must apply the taxation thresholds, as follows:

1. for revenues up to 10,000 lei, the applicable tax is 4%;
2. for revenues ranging from 10,000 lei to 66,750 lei, the applicable tax is 20% (in accordance with the current regime, in this case, a player must pay tax of 400 lei plus 20% on the amount that exceeds 10,000 lei); and
3. for revenues exceeding 66,750 lei, the applicable tax is 40% (in accordance with the current regime, in this case, a player must pay tax of 11.750 lei plus 40% on the amount that exceeds 66,750 lei).

For certain categories of land-based gambling (ie, casinos, slot machine halls, scratch cards organised by the Romanian Lottery and poker clubs), players still benefit from a tax exemption that is applicable for revenues that do not exceed 66,750 lei.

Amendments to the gambling legislation in 2022 introduced a tax of 5% of the value of advertising contracts for gambling operators, payable by the 25th day of the month following the one in which the contract is concluded. In the case of contracts that entail recurring payments or instalments, the tax is due on the last day of the month in which the instalment is due. The tax authority has issued an order regulating how this new tax needs to be reported. According to an official clarification issued by the ONJN, the payment and reporting obligations are incumbent on the gambling operators when the advertising contract is concluded directly by the operators with the advertising service provider. If the advertising agreement is concluded by the gambling operator with a media agency and the agency subcontracts the advertising activity to another entity (a third party), the payment and reporting obligation is incumbent upon the third party – the actual advertising service.

Additionally, another payment obligation in the form of a contribution to the National Cultural Fund is imposed. This contribution amounts to 0.5% of the income earned during one month from land-based and online gambling activities, calculated on the basis of GGR obtained by those economic operators "that carry out traditional and remote gambling activities" as defined by the law.

The legislation also imposes certain special taxes for certain categories of land-based gambling – ie, for video-lottery machines (VLT): 4.5% applied to the gambling revenue of the licensed operator; vice tax for unlimited-winnings slot machines and VLT of €1,000 per post (terminal) per year.

Advertising and marketing

The advertising of gambling activities performed in Romania by licensed gambling operators is permitted, provided that the principles regarding protection of minors and responsible gambling are observed. Advertising materials cannot be placed within or on the boundaries of educational, religious or social-cultural premises and must depict the following in a visible manner:

1. minors' interdiction from participating in gambling, shown through visual signs;
2. the series and number of the relevant gambling licence; and
3. the ONJN logo.

Outdoor advertising is limited to a maximum dimension of 35 square metres of billboard/advertising material.

The advertising of bonuses offered by online operators may be shown only on limited channels; namely, on the operator's website, on the websites of its licensed affiliates or via e-messages sent to active players who have opted in to receiving this type of commercial communication.

The National Audiovisual Council has issued a generic decision in which television advertising for gambling should be broadcast only during restricted time slots to observe the principle of protecting minors in the audiovisual sector.

Further, in October 2025, the National Audiovisual Council has issued a new restriction whereby sports, cultural or public personalities, including online influencers, are prohibited to appear in gambling commercials.

The gambling legislation imposes an obligation for gambling operators to notify the ONJN of advertising contracts for the promotion of gambling brands, platforms, applications or activities through the placement of advertising messages in localities and on public roads or using a television service, within five working days of the date of signing the contract. Contracts concluded with sports entities or federations for advertising in stadiums or sports halls are not subject to this requirement.

The sanctions for infringing the advertising regime for gambling activities start with administrative fines and can theoretically lead to the suspension or revocation of the licence.

Finally, as mentioned above, there is a 5% advertising fee to be paid on all audiovisual and outdoor advertising.

Year in review

Updated Review – 2025–2026 Legislative and Regulatory Developments in Romania's Gambling Sector

The legislative momentum that intensified in previous years persisted throughout 2025, marked by continued regulatory refinement and tightening of compliance obligations within Romania's gambling sector. Following substantial amendments enacted in late 2023 and 2024, 2025 brought an equally active regulatory cycle, one increasingly focused on implementing critical reforms designed to enhance player protection, improve market transparency and directly address the structural drivers of unlicensed activity. The transition from legislative design to actual enforcement became the defining theme of 2025, with operators facing heightened expectations both in the technical compliance domain and in fiscal matters.

In this context, Romania's gambling framework continued its evolution toward a more prescriptive and enforcement-driven architecture. Notably, efforts centred on establishing a centralised national self-exclusion register and on imposing stricter conduct and infrastructure-based restrictions on Class II (B2B) licensees that may facilitate access to black market operators. These developments have significantly shaped the operational landscape for both land-based and online gambling providers, setting the stage for further regulatory consolidation in the years ahead.

The key developments and legislative changes from 2025 and beginning of 2026 are summarised below, highlighting the most impactful reforms.

Centralised national self-exclusion register

The most significant reform in player protection, refers to a centralised national self-exclusion register, the implementation of which continues even at this date. In the past, operators maintained individual exclusion lists, leading to inconsistent enforcement and allowing self-excluded players to migrate between platforms or between gambling halls. To address this, GEO 82/2023 amended GEO 77/2009, mandating ONJN to manage a unified Register of Self-Excluded Persons.

In continuation of the developments initiated in 2024, when the transition from operator-maintained exclusion lists to a unified national self-exclusion register was launched, though still relying on provisional enforcement measures and remaining applicable only to land-based operators, 2025 marks a significant step forward in formalising and operationalising this system.

ONJN Order No. 79/2025, published in the Official Gazette on 13 June 2025, establishes the procedural framework for the submission, processing and enforcement of self-exclusion requests. Requests may be filed physically or electronically with ONJN or operators, who must forward original requests accompanied by identification documents to ONJN. Physical submissions are processed immediately, whereas electronic submissions or those transmitted by operators are processed upon registration, with operators required to submit verified requests within one working day. Withdrawal of consent for personal-data processing must be addressed to ONJN and results in the termination of self-exclusion. Operators must appoint a responsible person for accessing the self-exclusion database and notify ONJN of this designation within two working days, and they are required to verify the database before each gaming session and deny access to excluded persons. Both submissions and withdrawals take effect one calendar day after their registration or removal.

Expanded obligations for Class II (B2B) licensees

Building on the amendments introduced in 2024 through Law No. 107/2024, which added article 1(5²) to GEO 77/2009, the regulatory framework applicable to Class II (B2B) licensees was substantially expanded in 2025 through Law No. 141/2025 on fiscal-budgetary measures. This law introduced and modified paragraphs (5²)–(5¹⁰) of article 1, which are now fully in force and represent one of the most comprehensive regulatory interventions targeting B2B involvement in the black market.

Under these newly enacted provisions, Class II licensees are expressly prohibited from providing any ancillary gambling-related services to operators that display content fully or partially in Romanian, accept deposits or withdrawals in RON or other currencies (including cryptoassets), or allow access from Romania or by Romanian citizens who do not have fiscal residence abroad, unless the operator holds a valid Romanian Class I licence. The law also prohibits Class II licensees from providing any services to entities or domains listed on ONJN's "blacklist", as well as to remote-gambling platforms accessible from Romanian IP addresses without proper Class I authorisation.

Law No. 141/2025 further imposed direct technical and reporting obligations on Class II providers involved in software development, hosting, management and payment processing. These operators must implement independent technical solutions enabling them to determine the actual location of players within their own systems and must prepare, upon ONJN's request, detailed reports identifying the jurisdictions from which

their systems are accessed and the entities granting gambling access to players located in Romania or to Romanian citizens lacking fiscal residency abroad. Where an operator identifies that an unlicensed platform permits such access, it must immediately block the player, request remediation and report the incident through the mandatory monthly reporting mechanism due by the 10th of each month. Based on these reports, ONJN may decide to include domains, platforms or applications on the national blacklist, with removal possible only through a formal decision of the Supervisory Committee.

Higher gambling taxes and fees

The fiscal amendments introduced under Law No. 141/2025 on certain fiscal-budgetary measures, which entered into force on 1 August 2025, implemented significant increases across multiple gambling-related taxes. For online gambling, the authorisation tax was raised from 21% of GGR to 30% of revenues, accompanied by an increase of the minimum annual authorisation tax from €400,000 to €480,000. In the land-based sector, the authorisation tax for fixed-odds betting increased from 21% to 25% of revenues, with the corresponding minimum threshold rising from €200,000 to €240,000.

The annual licence fee for Class II B2B providers remains €20,000, supplemented by a €10,500 administrative licensing fee payable once at the issuance stage. For slot-machine operations, the annual authorisation tax increased from €5,300 to €6,000 per machine, while operators continue to be required to maintain at least 75 authorised machines to preserve licence validity. The €250 administrative fee for the assessment of documentation relating to the integration or recertification of new online games also remains applicable per approval request, which may cover numerous games. Finally, for lotteries (excluding VLTs), the annual authorisation tax has been set at 8% of revenues.

Tighter advertising restrictions and influencer ban

Following the entry into force of the new Audiovisual Content Regulation Code adopted through CNA Decision No. 573 of 25 June 2025, the prohibition on the use of public personalities and influencers in gambling advertising is now fully applicable, having taken effect on 6 October 2025. This restriction is already shaping the enforcement landscape, as CNA has begun to apply the new rules across both traditional and online audiovisual environments, signalling a clear tightening of the regulatory regime for gambling-related commercial communication. In practice, CNA interprets the notions of “public personality” and “influencer” very broadly and at its full discretion, relying on common-language definitions and presuming notoriety whenever an operator has chosen to collaborate with an individual.

In parallel with the entry into force of the new Code, the broader regulatory landscape continues to evolve through several draft legislative initiatives currently under debate. These include proposals at municipal and national level, such as phased restrictions on outdoor gambling advertising in Bucharest, time-based limitations on online audiovisual gambling content, a potential increase of the minimum gambling age to 21, and amendments seeking a general prohibition of outdoor gambling advertising at national scale. CNA has likewise intensified its monitoring of online audiovisual content involving public figures, now routinely ordering the removal of materials deemed to fall under the

new prohibition. As these initiatives progress through the legislative process, it remains to be seen how the final regulatory framework will develop.

Local authorisation regime for land-based gambling

Following the enactment of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 7/2026 on February 2026, local authorities now have the prerogative to determine whether or not land-based gambling is permitted in their area. The decision in this regard should have been issued by each local authority until 27 April 2026, but in many cases, the decisions have so far not been finalised. However, a recurrent trend may be identified in the sense that all forms of land-based gambling are prohibited, with the exception of lottery games (and, in some cases, sports betting).

Outlook and conclusions

Throughout 2025, Romania's gambling regulation continued its shift toward a more structured and enforcement-driven model. The ongoing implementation of the national self-exclusion register remained a central policy pillar, with the new procedural framework introduced by ONJN enabling, for the first time, a unified and verifiable system across operators. Although refinement is ongoing, the consolidation of self-exclusion mechanisms represents one of the most concrete advances in player-protection policy.

In parallel, the 2025 legislative cycle significantly expanded the obligations applicable to Class II (B2B) licensees. Rather than isolated changes, the measures introduced through Law No. 141/2025 created an integrated compliance regime aimed at restricting the technical and infrastructural pathways through which unlicensed activity can occur. The framework now includes broad prohibitions on servicing operators that do not meet Romanian licensing requirements, mandatory geolocation and reporting duties, and new forms of liability for non-compliance. Taken together, these reforms indicate a strategic focus on regulating intermediaries with increasing precision.

On the fiscal side, 2025 brought some of the most substantial tax increases in recent years, with Law No. 141/2025 recalibrating authorisation fees across both online and land-based sectors. The authorisation tax for remote gambling was raised to 30% of revenues, while fixed-odds, exchange and mutual betting increased to 25%, each subject to higher minimum thresholds. Land-based operations were also affected, with the fee for each slot machine rising to €6,000, a €1,000 vice tax introduced per authorised device and an 8% tax applied to lottery-type games. For players, winnings up to €2,000 are now taxed at 4%. These adjustments significantly elevate the financial burden on operators and underscore a deliberate fiscal tightening aligned with compliance expectations.

Advertising regulation followed a similar trajectory of tightening. With the entry into force of the new Audiovisual Content Regulation Code, the prohibition on using public personalities and influencers in gambling advertising became fully applicable as of 6 October 2025. CNA has already begun applying this restriction across traditional and online media, relying on a broad and discretionary interpretation of "notoriety", which has resulted in increased monitoring and removal orders.

Alongside these implemented reforms, 2025 also witnessed a notable increase in legislative activity, with numerous draft initiatives targeting issues such as local-level licensing powers, stricter zoning restrictions for gambling venues, proximity limitations around educational and cultural institutions, restrictions on outdoor advertising and population-based thresholds for licensing. While their outcomes remain uncertain, these initiatives demonstrate sustained political momentum toward tightening both operational and territorial controls. As these proposals progress, their final form will determine the extent to which Romania's regulatory landscape will continue to shift in 2026 and beyond.

Overall, 2025 has marked a decisive turn toward a more interventionist, compliance-intensive and structurally consolidated regulatory environment, setting the parameters for an increasingly rigorous framework in the years ahead.

2026 continues in the same trend, with the new legislation imposing local authorisations for land-based gambling representing one of the most significant reforms in the regulatory logic where ONJN does not continue to be the only authority involved in regulating the land-based gambling field.

Endnotes

- 1 Directive 2014/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on markets in financial instruments and amending Directive 2002/92/EC and Directive 2011/61/EU (recast). The current iteration of this Directive is commonly known as MiFID II. [^ Back to section](#)



Ana Maria Baciu
Andrei Cosma
Adela Nuță

ana-maria.baciu@simionbaciu.ro
 andrei.cosma@baciupartners.ro
 adela.nuta@baciupartners.ro

BACIU PARTNERS

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