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## REGULATION OF GAMBLING IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

10 March 2026

The Ministry of Finance, based on information from various media, has proposed legalizing online casinos in the Russian Federation<sup>1</sup>. This could be a significant change in the field of gambling regulation in Russia. If the idea gains support, budget revenues could amount to RUB 100 billion annually. The turnover of the illegal online gambling segment is estimated at over RUB 3 trillion per year. It is proposed that the administration of the tax on online casinos be carried out through the public-law company "Unified Gambling Regulator" (UGR).

It should be noted that according to a study by Data Bridge Market Research,<sup>2</sup> the online casino market was worth US\$98.47 billion in 2025, with growth projected to reach US\$275.03 billion by 2033.

It should be noted that the regulatory framework for this market varies significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In many jurisdictions, such activities are permitted and subject to strict legal regulation, ranging from licensing and taxation to measures to protect players and prevent money laundering.

The White Square team will examine key aspects of online casino regulation around the world and in Russia in a series of articles. The first review focuses on the current state of gambling in the Russian Federation.

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*This material is based on information from public sources and is for reference purposes only. It does not constitute advice or a legal opinion. If you have any questions regarding this alert, please contact us at: [info@whitesquarepartners.com](mailto:info@whitesquarepartners.com).*

<sup>1</sup> [Reference](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Reference](#)

## 1. The current state of gambling regulation in Russia

Russian legislation maintains a strict ban on online gambling. Russian legislation establishes a **general ban** on the organization and conduct of online gambling activities<sup>3</sup>: websites containing such information are entered into a special register, after which access to them is blocked on the territory of the Russian Federation<sup>4</sup>.

The Russian Federation permits casinos and slot machines only within specially designated **gambling zones**. The law defines a gambling zone as a part of the territory of the Russian Federation intended for the organization and conduct of gambling, the boundaries of which are established in accordance with Federal Law<sup>5</sup>; these zones have been operational since July 1, 2009. Any gambling activity outside such zones, with the exception of bookmakers, totalizators (betting pools), and state lotteries, is prohibited.

The main legal requirements:

- **Location.** Gambling zones must be located outside populated areas; the creation of permanent settlements within their territory is not permitted. Article 5 of Federal Law No. 244-FZ prohibits the organization of gambling via information and telecommunication networks (the Internet), with the exception of accepting interactive bets by bookmakers and totalizators.
- **Quantity Limitations.** No more than one gambling zone may exist within a single constituent entity of the Russian Federation<sup>6</sup>. The procedure for creating or liquidating zones, as well as their names and boundaries, is established by the Government of the Russian Federation.
- **Permission to operate.** A gambling organizer may only operate after obtaining a permit to conduct activities in a specific

zone. Casinos are obliged to comply with requirements regarding the number of gaming tables and slot machines, formulate game rules, and pay the gambling tax.

### Gambling zones<sup>7</sup>

Gambling zone	Key Information and Revenue (2024)*
"Sibirskaya Moneta" Altai Krai (20 km from Gorno-Altaysk airport)	Operating since 2014. In 2024, the zone transferred approximately 122.8 million roubles in taxes to the budget, showing a 34% increase compared to 2023.
"Primorye" Primorsky Krai (50 km from Vladivostok)	The first phase of the complex opened in 2015. In 2024, tax deductions amounted to approximately 626 million roubles.
"Yantarnaya" Kaliningrad Oblast (40 km from Kaliningrad)	The zone began operating in 2016. In 2024, the zone contributed approximately 284 million roubles in taxes to the budget.
«Krasnaya Polyana» Krasnodar Krai (Sochi)	Opened in 2017 in the Olympic cluster. In 2024, it contributed approximately 1.369 billion roubles in taxes to the budget, making it the largest zone. The complex

<sup>3</sup> Art. 5 of the Federal Law 244-FZ

<sup>4</sup> Based on subparagraph d) of paragraph 1 of part 5 of Article 15.1 of Federal Law No. 149-FZ of 27 July 2006 "On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection".

<sup>5</sup> Article 4 of Federal Law No. 244-FZ of 29 December 2006 (as amended on 29 December 2025) "On State Regulation of Activities

Related to the Organisation and Conduct of Gambling and on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation" ("Federal Law No. 244-FZ") ([Reference](#))

<sup>6</sup> Article 9 of Federal Law No. 244-FZ

<sup>7</sup> [Reference](#); [Reference](#)

includes the Sochi and Boomerang casinos and the Bonus Slots Hall.

"Zolotoy Bereg" Project  
Republic of Crimea (Yalta)

In 2019, the Russian government approved the "Zolotoy Bereg" gambling zone in Yalta; the opening was planned for 2024, but the casinos are not yet operational. The zone has been created, but there are no functioning slot machine halls yet; the launch was planned for 2024.

\* Tax contribution data are based on the results of 2024, according to the report of the Association of Entertainment Industry and Event Tourism Operators (AIRIS).

## 2. Revenue from Gambling Zones

Based on the results of 2024, Russian gambling zones transferred **approximately 2.673 billion roubles** to budgets at all levels, which is 16% more than the result for 2023. The distribution of tax contributions by zone is shown in the table above: the leader was "Krasnaya Polyana" (≈1.369 billion rubles), followed by "Primorye" (≈626 million rubles), SOBRANIE in Kaliningrad (≈284 million rubles), the Shambala casinos (≈271 million ₺ in total), and "Siberian Coin" (≈122.8 million ₺). The report notes an increase in the share of non-gaming revenue (restaurants, festivals, hotels) to 30%, what indicates the transformation of the zones into tourist clusters.

In the first half of 2025, tax deductions from legal casinos exceeded **1.5 billion ₺**<sup>8</sup>, which reflects the continued growth of the industry.

<sup>8</sup> Reference; Reference

<sup>9</sup> Articles 2 and 3 of Federal Law No. 493-FZ of 30 December 2020 (as amended on 24 June 2025) "On the public-law company

## 3. Exception for interactive bets

As an exception, the law allows the acceptance of interactive bets on the Internet if the bets are accepted by specialized organizers – interactive betting translation processing centers for bookmakers and totalizators. These operators are obliged to comply with strict requirements: using a single payment processing center, player identification, age restriction of 18+, displaying warnings about risks, and transferring a portion of revenues to sports federations and charities. In all other respects, online casinos and games involving material winnings remain prohibited; violators face administrative or criminal liability.

## 4. What is the Public-Law Company "Unified Gambling Regulator" (UGR)?

The public-law company "Unified Gambling Regulator" (UGR) is a state organization established to supervise and regulate gambling in Russia<sup>9</sup>. Its primary role includes:

- 1) **Monitoring and combating illegal gambling**, including oversight of activities on the internet.
- 2) **Collecting and distributing targeted contributions** from gambling stakes (e.g., from bookmakers) to sports federations and leagues.
- 3) **Development and maintenance of information systems** that help track bets and ensure compliance with legislation.
- 4) **Law-making activities** – UGR proposes improvements to gambling legislation.

The company plays a key role in ensuring the transparency and legality of the gambling market, as well as in supporting sports through funding from these contributions. The UGR development strategy for 2022-2026 (updated December 4, 2025) confirms that the company's main mission is to prevent, detect, and suppress violations of gambling legislation<sup>10</sup>.

"Unified Gambling Regulator" and on amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation" (Reference)

<sup>10</sup> Reference

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The White Square team has extensive experience advising companies in the iGaming sector worldwide, covering issues from regulatory and IP matters to corporate and tax structuring.

In the world of iGaming — we ensure your game is played by the rules!



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