

Indian Online Gaming Sector Waits for Government to Make its Move



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Despite the recent positive wave of news stories surrounding the possibility of gambling regulation across India, [there continues to be nervousness within a conservative national government](#) to take the step and liberalise the iGaming sector.

Psychological harm and increases in crime rates are often reasons not to regulate or legalise. Still, this approach ignores evidence that hundreds of thousands of consumers turn to illegal bookmakers for [live cricket satta rates](#) whenever there is an Indian cricket game. [According to statistics compiled in 2016](#), around \$200 million changes hands illegally when the national team takes to the wicket.

If one can accept that gambling will always have a significant role in society - as it has since the dawn of time - then we can mobilise to ensure it's done as safely and responsibly as possible.

What are the positives in regulation?

There are numerous benefits to regulating gambling in India, from preventing match-fixing to creating stable consumer betting conditions.

Examples include:

- Taxation revenue. The ability to impose levies on betting companies can drive substantial revenue streams to help fund grassroots projects.
- Crime-fighting resource reallocation. Currently, the Indian government and authorities spend vast amounts of money chasing, monitoring, and processing illegal betting rings. By legalising betting in India, the government will remove the ability for black market betting sites to flourish. Many will shut down instantly, and those remaining will be easier to pinpoint.
- Player safety. Regulations will mean Indian betting sites need to meet the responsible gaming guidelines meted out by national and international regulatory bodies. These include implementing tools

such as deposit limits, loss limits, and take-a-break facilities. Customers will also need to pass Know Your Customer (KYC) protocols, which require them to prove their identity and source of income to help eliminate money laundering and the illicit funding of terrorism - a process not needed in illegal bookmaking circles.

Why technological advancements play a role

A leading industry body believes advancements in technology will play a crucial part in the safe incorporation of gambling in India.

The paper from ENV Media, titled [Off Shore Gambling Licenses and Regulated Markets](#), suggests there needs to be a pragmatic approach from both the iGaming sector and government officials:

"With technological evolution in mind, gambling standards need to allow for **certain flexibility** and regulatory upgrades. However, initiating reform to adopt a **central policy** will allow for timely **capacity-building** in national and state authorities in terms of knowledge, assets, technology, trans-border, and inter-industry cooperation."

"In the end, the fundamental (and initial) regulatory needs are similar for all jurisdictions:

- Transparent ownership and **funding**;
- Clear **licencing** and subsequent **standard compliance**;
- **Cyber expertise** to monitor, test conformity, control or block;
- **Legal grounds** to investigate and prosecute illegal operations.

The **goal** of growing yet unregulated markets should be to achieve high **consumer and public interest protection** levels through modern legislation. Local jurisdiction **licensing** and legal **channelling** has proven the most efficient means of attaining ambitious long-term benefits."

What Examples Are There Of Industry Regulation In Other Markets?

If government officials were to worry about the impact of legalising gambling from a societal standpoint, they need only look at other markets worldwide.

Take Sweden as an example. Initially, gambling was under the control of the government - resulting in a monopolised, unhealthy market landscape.

In 2019, national authorities transitioned to a regulated market under the guidance of the Swedish Gaming Authority. Licencing conditions include:

- A limit to licences extending up to five years.
- These licences are subject to review at any given point.
- Taxes worth up to €100,000.

Despite being one of the stricter licence authorities, Sweden's [online betting](#) sector flourishes and offers an exciting glimpse of what may be possible for Indian regulators.

The United Kingdom has also established a national gambling commission that works to ensure players are protected. The United Kingdom Gambling Commission is one of the most stringent!

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BY SUHAIL TAK

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