

2023-04-11



Diary number: Fi2023/00003

Referral response: Proposals for new fees for applications for licenses or permits according to the Gambling Act, etc.

The Swedish Trade Association for Online Gambling - BOS - approves the proposals for new fees and other adjustments included in the memorandum.

BOS agrees with the Swedish Gambling Authority's reasoning that the fees charged should cover the authority's costs for licensing and supervision. We agree that the cost coverage should be on an aggregated level within different license verticals. This means that cost coverage must be achieved within, for example, the licensing vertical of commercial online gambling. This license vertical must either be "subsidized" by other license verticals (through excessively low license fees), or "subsidize" other license verticals (through excessively high fees).

Having said this, however, we believe that exceptions to the above principle can and should be made for public good lotteries and bingo, as these serve a public interest whose contribution to society should be protected. We therefore have nothing to object to if this particular part of the gambling market on an aggregated level does not fully cover its own costs.

BOS would like to stress that we believe it is of great importance that the Gambling Authority is sufficiently funded to live up to its overall commitment. It is of greater importance than keeping the license fees paid by our members as low as possible. We note with satisfaction an increase in resources in the spring amendment budget of SEK 2.4 million, but we believe that more than that is needed.

We believe that the Swedish Gambling Authority is underfunded, at least in terms of maintaining an acceptable dialogue with the industry the authority is set to monitor. More precisely, this lack of dialogue does not apply to the Spelinspektionen's dialogue with BOS - it now works well - but the lack concerns the difficulty for an individual license holder to establish a functioning dialogue with the authority. Our members have gambling licenses in many jurisdictions and the members testify that Sweden deviates negatively with regard to the possibility of having a functioning dialogue between individual gambling operators and the Gambling Authority. To the extent that the explanation for this unfortunate circumstance lies in a lack of funding, we believe that is a more important issue to address than keeping the license fee as low as possible.

We would like to see the Swedish Gambling Authority offer a so-called *one-stop shop* where license holders can turn to with questions of, for example, but not exclusively, the nature of compliance. We are aware that a hesitation on the part of the Swedish Gambling Authority regarding the introduction of such a service is the concern that a reply from the authority could be considered binding in the event of a possible dispute between the authority and the license holder, for example in the event of a court review. However, we do not believe that sufficient efforts have been made to eliminate this risk and thus be able to set up said one-stop shop. Furthermore, we believe that certain disputes and court trials arise despite the best intentions due to the aforementioned lack of dialogue with the Swedish Gambling Authority. If the license holder is given better conditions to do the right thing from the beginning, we believe that it is an arrangement that all parties have to gain from.

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