

Gaming in Macau: overview

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LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK OF GAMBLING REGULATION

Overview

1. What legislation applies to gambling?

The main legislation regulating gambling in Macau is the Macau Gaming Law (Law 16/2001). The Macau Gaming Law sets out the legal framework for the commercial operation of different gambling products, with a particular focus on the commercial operation of casino games of chance.

Other relevant legislation applicable to gambling include the:

- Instant Lottery Law (Law 12/87/M), which governs the concession and operation of instant lotteries.
- Illegal Gaming Law (Law 8/96/M), which covers the unlicensed supply of games.
- International Gaming Tender Regulation (Regulation 26/2001) (subsequently amended by Regulations 34/2001 and 4/2002), which sets out the rules applicable to the international public tender procedure that the Macau government followed to award the existing concessions for the operation of casino games of chance.
- Gaming Promoters' Regulation (Regulation 6/2002) (subsequently amended by Regulation 27/2009), which governs the licensing and activities of gaming promoters, also known as "junkets".
- Bye-laws of the Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (*Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos*) (DICJ) (Regulation 34/2003), which is Macau's gaming regulator.
- Gaming Credit Law (Law 5/2004), which regulates the granting of gaming credit by casino operators and gaming promoters.
- Junket Commissions Regulation (Regulation 27/2009), which imposes certain limitations on the commissions paid to gaming promoters.
- Gaming Participation Law (Law 10/2012), which regulates gaming participation and the right to enter casinos.
- Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) Regulation (Regulation 16/2012), which regulates electronic gaming machines and systems and other gaming equipment, and sets out the licensing procedures for EGM manufacturers and suppliers.

Additionally, the DICJ issues instructions that are binding on the entities that it supervises, including:

- Casino concessionaires.
- Sports betting concessionaires.
- Horse and greyhound racing concessionaires.
- Lottery concessionaires.

- Gaming promoters.
- Casino service providers.
- EGM manufacturers and suppliers.

Relevant instructions of the DICJ include those addressing:

- Smoking control in casino areas (Instruction No. 1/2014).
- Technical standards for EGMs and electronic table games (Instruction No. 2/2014).
- Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing (Instruction No. 1/2016).
- Macau Jackpot Technical Standards (Instruction No. 2/2016).
- Dealer-operated electronic table game technical standards version 1.0 (Instruction No.1/2017)

The commercial operation of gambling in Macau is statutorily reserved to the Macau Government and can only be pursued by privately owned entities that have been granted a concession to that effect, by entering into a concession contract with the government. Therefore, the relationship between the Macau Government and the various gambling concessionaires is also governed by the terms of their respective concession contracts, which represent a key element of Macau's legal gaming framework. Following some modifications to the concession contracts, the Macau Government has authorised the gaming concessionaires to enter into one sub-concession contract each.

Definitions of gambling

2. What is the legal definition of gambling in your jurisdiction and what falls within this definition?

General definition

There is no general statutory definition of gambling in Macau. However, the Macau Gaming Law (Law 16/2001) defines games of chance as those in which the outcome is contingent, as it depends exclusively or predominantly on a player's luck.

The Macau Gaming Law also defines pari-mutuel betting as a form of betting on animal races or sports competitions in which the winners divide the pool of bet among themselves (minus commissions, fees and taxes) in proportion to the amount individually bet. The Macau Gaming Law generally refers to other gambling products as "operations offered to the public", which are defined as those in which the expectation of winning lies exclusively on chance (for example, lotteries, raffles and lucky draws).

Online gambling

Interactive games are games of chance that meet the following criteria (*Macau Gaming Law*):

- They are offered in Macau casinos in the form of table games or gaming machines.

- They offer a prize in cash or in kind that can be won in accordance to their respective rules.
- Players participate by means of telecommunications (including telephone, fax, internet, data networks and video or digital data transmission).
- Players make or agree to make payments in cash or in kind to play the game.

Land-based gambling

There is no statutory definition of land-based gaming. However, land-based gaming generally refers to the commercial operation of casino games of chance, (either in the form of table games or gaming machines), or to other legal forms of gambling, where players physically place their bets or wagers in locations previously authorised for this purpose by the Government of Macau.

Regulatory authorities

3. What are the regulatory or governmental bodies that are responsible for supervising gambling?

The Macau Chief Executive is the government authority that is ultimately responsible for:

- Determining the gambling policy.
- Licensing and regulating the operation of casino games of chance and other gambling activities in Macau.

In exercising these powers, the Macau Chief Executive is assisted by the Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (*Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos*) (DICJ). In its role as a policy advisory body, the DICJ is responsible for assisting the Macau Chief Executive in defining, co-ordinating and executing economic policies for the gaming industry.

Additionally, the DICJ has licensing powers and is responsible for licensing:

- Gaming promoters.
- Gaming equipment manufacturers.
- Gaming machines, systems and other gaming equipment.

The DICJ also advises the government in authorising and classifying premises as casino venues.

In its supervisory role, the DICJ is responsible for:

- Overseeing the activities of gaming concessionaires, gaming promoters and gaming equipment manufacturers.
- Monitoring their suitability and financial capacity, and the suitability of their qualified shareholders, directors and key employees and agents.

The DICJ can impose sanctions for breach of the regulatory requirements.

See box, *The regulatory authority*.

Gambling products

4. What gambling products have been specifically identified by legislation, and what different requirements have been established for each?

The Macau Gaming Law (Law 16/2001) identifies the following types of gaming products:

- Games of chance (including casino table games and electronic gaming machines).

- Interactive games.
- Betting (on sports competitions and animal races).
- Operations offered to the public (such as lotteries, raffles and lucky draws).

Poker

Poker qualifies as a casino game of chance (see below, *Casino games*). The authorised games of poker are:

- Three-card poker.
- Five-card poker.
- Football poker.
- Q poker.
- Stud poker.
- Texas Hold'em poker.
- Fortune 3-Card Poker.
- Omaha poker.

Betting

Macau allows betting on animal races, namely horse races and greyhound races. These activities can only be operated by entities that have been previously granted a concession to that effect. Their licensing and operations are governed by several executive orders issued by the Macau Chief Executive and by the relevant concession contracts. Each of these activities has been historically pursued on an exclusive basis by a single operator, respectively the Macau Horse Racing Company Limited and Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Co. Ltd. The concession contracts of Macau Horse Racing Company Limited and Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Co. Ltd end on 28 February 2018 and 20 July 2018 respectively.

Sports betting

Macau also allows the placing of bets in sports competitions, namely soccer and basketball. Sports betting is also pursued on an exclusive basis by one single operator, Sociedade de Lotarias e Apostas Mútuas de Macau (SLOT). The concession contract of SLOT was renewed in 2016 for a period of five years, ending on 5 June 2021. SLOT is authorised to accept wagers over the counter, through telephone and online through its website.

Casino games

Casino games qualify as games of chance. Games of chance are defined as those in which the outcome is contingent, as it depends exclusively or predominantly on the player's luck. A casino concessionaire can only offer games of chance that are listed in the Macau Gaming Law or that have been approved by the government. The following is the complete list of pre-approved table games that can be offered in Macau casinos:

- 3-card baccarat.
- Baccarat.
- Black jack.
- Boule.
- Craps.
- Cussec.
- Casino war.
- Dozen numbers.
- Fantan.
- Sap I chi or 12-card game.
- 13-card game.

- Mahjong.
- Mahjong baccarat.
- Mahjong paikao.
- Mini paikao.
- Paikao.
- Fish-prawn-crab.
- Three-card poker.
- Five-card poker.
- Football poker.
- Q poker.
- Lucky wheel.
- Roulette.
- Stud poker.
- Super pan 9.
- Taiwan paikao.
- Makccarat.
- Texas Hold'em poker.
- Fortune three-card poker.
- Fortune 8 dragon/phoenix.
- Omaha poker.

The Secretary of Economy and Finance must approve the rules of each game of chance following a recommendation by the Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (*Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos*) (DICJ), at the request of at least one casino concessionaire.

Slot and other machine gaming

A gaming machine is statutorily defined as a device (including the gaming programs and associated software, the memory compartment, the random generator and any means of gaming software storage) that is both:

- Fully or partially operated by electric, electronic or mechanical means.
- Conceived, adapted or programmed to operate a game of chance and to pay prizes (in cash, gaming chips, redeemable tickets or other values) resulting from the placement of wagers in the games that it offers.

The operation of gaming machines, including electronic table games, is only allowed within the gaming areas of casinos and other authorised premises operated under a casino concession. The operation of gaming machines can also be authorised in the international departures area of the Macau International Airport and in Macau registered vessel and aircraft when operating tourist routes outside Macau. All gaming machines and electronic table games must be authorised by the DICJ. They must also comply with the Macau Electronic Gaming Machines and Electronic Table Games Technical Standards, and compliance must be certified by a recognised gaming testing laboratory. Only manufacturers or distributors previously licensed by DICJ can supply or distribute gaming machines in Macau.

Terminal-based gaming

Terminal-based devices qualify as gaming machines, as they require prior approval from the DICJ, and can only be supplied by licensed manufacturers or distributors (see above, *Slot and other machine gaming*). Fully automated table games can be offered at

the same locations as gaming machines, while semi-automated table games are only allowed in casinos.

For the purposes of calculating a casino concessionaire's annual concession premium (see *Question 14*), the DICJ has discretionary powers to determine if a gaming machine that replicates a game traditionally played as a table game should qualify as one or the other. If the DICJ qualifies a terminal-based electronic table game as a gaming machine, each terminal is equivalent to one gaming machine when calculating a casino concessionaire's annual premium.

Bingo

Bingo is not currently approved as a game of chance and cannot be offered in Macau casinos or other gambling venues.

Lottery

The operation of lotteries in Macau is allowed both in the form of instant lottery and in the form of Chinese lottery (popularly known as *Pacapio*).

Instant lotteries are operated on an exclusive basis by SLOT under the same concession contract that grants SLOT the exclusive right to operate sports betting.

The Chinese lottery is also operated on an exclusive basis by one single operator, Sociedade de Lotarias Wing Hing, Limitada. The concession contract for the operation of the Chinese lottery has been renewed on an annual basis since 2010, with the current term ending on 31 December 2018.

LAND-BASED GAMBLING

Regulation/licensing

5. What is the licensing regime (if any) for land-based gambling?

Available licences

The commercial operation of gambling in Macau is statutorily reserved to the Macau Government and can only be pursued by privately owned entities that have been granted a concession to that effect, by entering into a concession contract with the government.

The commercial operation of casino games of chance (either in the form of table games or gaming machines) can only be pursued by one of the three operators that were granted a gaming concession following an international public tender launched in 2001 and governed by International Gaming Tender Regulation (Regulation 26/2001). Subsequently, the Macau Government authorised these concessionaires to enter into one sub-concession agreement each, therefore raising the total number of casino operators to six.

All concession and sub-concession contracts are due to expire between 2020 and 2022. Until then, the casino market is closed to new concessionaires.

Eligibility

Only joint stock companies (*sociedades anónimas*) incorporated under the laws of Macau, which have the operation of games of chance as their exclusive scope of business, can bid for a casino concession. At least 10% of the registered share capital of a casino concessionaire and of a casino sub-concessionaire must be held by its managing director (*administrador-delegado*), who must be a permanent resident of Macau.

Application procedure

The granting of gaming concessions is made through a public tender launched by the Macau Government. The rules of the first (and only) public tender launched since the approval of the Macau Gaming Law were set out in Regulation 26/2001 and in the Chief Executive's decision No. 217/2001, which officially opened the

tender. In this tender, the bidders, their qualified shareholders (that is, shareholders holding, directly or indirectly, 5% or more of the company's share capital), and their directors and key employees, were subject to a suitability investigation conducted by the DICJ, which verified their experience, reputation and probity. The bidders and their qualified shareholders also had to demonstrate an adequate financial capacity and were subject to investigations into their financial background. The bidders covered all costs incurred for the suitability and financial investigations, which were deducted from their bidding bonds (set at about US\$125,000).

A special committee appointed by the Macau Chief Executive conducted the public tender. A tender programme defined the minimum requirements of qualification, the information the bidders were expected to disclose and the mandatory elements of the proposals to be submitted.

The 2001 tender (for which a total of 18 bidders qualified) led to the award of the three casino concessions that are currently in force. The awarding criteria were the following:

- Total concession premium amount offered.
- Amount offered as contribution to a public foundation for the promotion of the cultural, scientific, social, economic and educational development of Macau.
- Amount offered as contribution to the urban development, tourism promotion and social security of Macau.
- Operational experience.
- Investment project.
- Development of casino premises and contribution to tourism diversification.
- Contribution to the creation of jobs in the gaming industry and to the training of its professionals.

Duration of licence and cost

A casino concession or sub-concession has a maximum initial duration of 20 years. If it was granted for a lesser period, it can be extended, one or more times, up to a maximum of 20 years. The maximum duration of a concession or sub-concession can be extended beyond the 20-year term, one or more times, for a maximum of five years. This extension can only be granted on an exceptional basis under a justified decision of the Macau Chief Executive.

The government can unilaterally terminate a casino concession on two main grounds:

- Concessionaire's breach of a material statutory or contractual obligation.
- Reasons of public interest.

For example, a concessionaire is deemed to have breached a material obligation when it has:

- Suspended or abandoned its operations without due justification.
- Wholly or partially assigned its operations (either permanently or temporarily) in breach of the applicable laws and regulations, or in breach of its concession contract.
- Failed to pay taxes, annual concession premiums or any other consideration owed to the government under the terms of its concession contract.

In the event of termination, the ownership of the concessionaire's casinos will revert to the government, together with their equipment and all rights and assets as determined by the concession contract. No compensation will be due to the concessionaire in the case of termination for breach of contract. In

the event of termination for reasons of public interest, fair compensation is calculated based on the outstanding concession period and on the concessionaire's investments up to the time of reversion.

6. What are the limitations or requirements imposed on land-based gambling operators?

Prohibitions

A casino concessionaire can only offer the games of chance that are listed as such in the Macau Gaming Law (Law 16/2001) or that have been approved by the government. Approved games can be offered in the form of table games or of gaming machines. A casino concessionaire cannot operate or offer:

- Interactive games, sports betting and wagering in animal races.
- Lotteries, raffles, lucky draws and similar operations, unless specifically authorised to do so on a case-by-case basis.

No operator can offer the above gambling products within the designated gaming areas of casinos.

Restrictions

There is no general limitation to local participation in gaming, but entrance in casinos is restricted to individuals who are 21 years or older. Subject to certain exceptions, local civil servants are also restricted from entering casinos. When off-duty, the employees of a casino concessionaire cannot enter casinos that are operated by their employers.

Macau does not impose on operators the level of social responsibility requirements seen in other matured gaming markets. However, following the enactment of Law 10/2012 (which determines the restrictions to participation), the Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (*Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos*) (DICJ) has implemented "self-exclusion" and "third-party exclusion" procedures. Casino concessionaires must set up adequate control procedures to ensure compliance with the statutory restrictions to participation.

Anti-money laundering legislation

The current anti-money laundering regime was introduced by Law 2/2006 (amended by Law 3/2017) and further complemented by Regulation 7/2006 (amended by Regulation 17/2017). The application of this legislation to the gaming industry is set out in the DICJ Instructions No.1/2016, which came into force in May 2016. Under the applicable anti-money laundering regulations, casino concessionaires, gaming promoters and other gaming concessionaires must comply with a comprehensive set of obligations aimed at curbing money laundering activities in the gaming industry. These obligations include:

- Customer due diligence obligations.
- Enhanced monitoring of play by politically exposed persons.
- Identification and reporting of suspicious transactions.
- The obligation to refuse to carry out transactions when mandatory information is not provided.
- Record-keeping obligations.

The Macau Financial Intelligence Office is the entity responsible for receiving and processing reports on cash transactions and suspicious transactions. The DICJ is responsible for supervising and enforcing the gaming industry's compliance with its anti-money laundering obligations.

ONLINE GAMBLING

Regulation/licensing

7. What is the licensing regime (if any) for online gambling?

The commercial operation of online gambling can only be pursued by privately owned entities that have been granted a concession to that effect, through entering into a concession contract with the government.

However, unlike for land-based games of chance, the Macau Government has not issued regulations governing the concession and operation of online gambling (defined in the Macau Gaming Law (Law 16/2001) as interactive gaming (see *Question 2, Online gambling*) and has not launched a tender to grant these concessions. Additionally, concessionaires of casino games of chance cannot operate interactive games.

The exclusive operators of horse racing (Macau Horse Racing Company Limited), greyhound racing (Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Co. Ltd) and sports betting (*Sociedade de Lotarias e Apostas Mútuas de Macau*(SLOT)) can offer online wagering limited to the competitions they offer.

8. What are the limitations or requirements imposed on online gambling operators?

Not applicable (see *Question 7*).

B2B and B2C

9. Is there a distinction between the law applicable between B2B operations and B2C operations in online gambling?

There is no statutory distinction between B2B and B2C online gambling operations in Macau. Under the current definition of interactive games (see *Question 2, Online gambling*), it is safe to conclude that a B2B business model under which an online provider of gambling services licences its products to a Macau gambling operator (authorised to accept online wagers, such as SLOT) without directly contracting with customers in Macau, does not qualify as operating online gaming in Macau. However, the licensing of certain online gambling software to Macau gaming operators requires prior technical approval from the Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau.

Technical measures

10. What technical measures are in place (if any) to protect consumers from unlicensed operators, such as ISP blocking and payment blocking?

Macau does not restrict access to overseas gaming or wagering websites and does not impose any blocking obligations on internet service providers.

MOBILE GAMBLING AND INTERACTIVE GAMBLING

11. What differences (if any) are there between the regulation of mobile gambling and interactive gambling on television?

There are currently no legal differences between mobile gambling and interactive gambling on television. If the relevant requirements are fulfilled, the operation of casino games of chance on both platforms can qualify as interactive gaming when conducted in Macau (see *Question 2, Online gambling*).

SOCIAL GAMING

12. How is social gaming regulated in your jurisdiction?

There is no statutory definition of social gaming in Macau and social gaming per se is not a regulated activity. However, social gaming offered through the web or through online mobile platforms may qualify as interactive gaming (see *Question 2, Online gambling*). Therefore, the definition of interactive gaming effectively places limitations on how social casino games can be legally operated in Macau through those platforms.

An online casino game that is free to play and does not award players the possibility of winning prizes or tokens exchangeable for real-world rewards does not qualify as an interactive game and can be freely offered in Macau.

GAMBLING DEBTS

13. Are gambling debts enforceable in your jurisdiction?

Gambling debts are only enforceable in Macau if the credit is granted by a casino concessionaire or a licensed gaming promoter.

TAX

14. What are the applicable tax regimes for land-based and online gambling?

The special gaming tax is the largest source of gaming tax revenues. This tax applies to casino concessionaires and is levied on their gross gaming revenue at a rate of 35%. Casino concessionaires must also pay a:

- Contribution to the Macau Foundation, a public foundation responsible for promoting the cultural, scientific, social, economic and educational development of Macau (1.6% of gross gaming revenue).
- Special contribution for urban development, tourism promotion and social security (2.4% of gross gaming revenue for all casino concessionaires except one that, for historical reasons, is subject to a 1.4% rate).

Although casino concessionaires are legally subject to profit tax (locally named complementary tax), they have been historically exempt from paying profit tax under an order of the Chief Executive issued under the provisions of the Gaming Law (Law 16/2001).

Casino concessionaires must also pay an annual concession premium comprising a:

- Fixed amount of about US\$3.8 million.
- Variable amount levied on the number of table games and gaming machines at the following approximate rates:
 - for each VIP table game: US\$37,500;
 - for each mass-market table game: US\$18,800; and
 - for each gaming machine: US\$125.

ADVERTISING

15. To what extent is the advertising of gambling permitted in your jurisdiction? To the extent that advertising is permitted, how is it regulated?

The advertising of gambling is regulated by the 1989 Advertising Law (Law 7/89/M), which prohibits any type of marketing activity

that depicts games of chance or their play as the essential element of the advertisement.

The prohibition of gambling advertising is complemented by a set of instructions issued by the Macau Economic Services (MES), which is the government department generally responsible for the supervision and enforcement of the Advertising Law. The MES issued these instructions with the aim of facilitating the interpretation of the prohibition. The instructions detail the types of advertising activities that are considered illegal by the MES and give practical examples of illegal activities. The prohibition applies to all types of marketing conducted in Macau and encompasses games of chance played offline and online. However, the prohibition does not appear to cover the types of gambling that do not qualify as games of chance, such as sports betting, horse or greyhound races and lotteries.

DEVELOPMENTS AND REFORM

Legal development

16. Has the legal status of land-based and online gambling changed significantly in recent years, and if so how?

The legal status of land-based and online gambling has not changed significantly in recent years.

Reform

17. What, if any, are the likely short-term and long-term developments/legislative amendments concerning gambling in your jurisdiction? Are there any proposals for reform?

The renewal of the current gaming concessions (one of which is set to expire in 2020) is a current hot topic and possible developments

are likely to be up for discussion by the Macau SAR Government in 2018.

Short-term developments may include the extension of existing concession contracts for a limited period of time as admissible under Law 16/2001. As regards long-term developments, the government may decide on the possibility of renewal of current concession contracts and on the launch of a new public tender and respective conditions, in particular the number of concessions to be granted.

The Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (*Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos*) (DICJ) has announced the revision of the gaming promoters' licensing rules (currently governed by Regulation 6/2002) to improve the suitability and financial soundness of operators. It is widely expected that these changes will be enacted in the short term.

The DICJ has also announced its intention to promote the revision of the rules on participation in gaming (currently governed by the Gaming Participation Law (Law 10/2012)) to address concerns over the high rates of problem gambling among casino employees, especially dealers.

Revision of the Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) Regulation (Regulation 16/2012), which regulates electronic gaming machines and systems and other gaming equipment, is also underway, in particular with regards to the licensing procedures for EGM manufacturers and suppliers.

THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Macau Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (*Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos*) (DICJ)

W www.dicj.gov.mo/web/en

Description. The main duties of the DICJ are to:

- Co-operate in defining, co-ordinating and executing economic policies relating to the commercial operation of casino games of chance, wagering and other gaming products offered to the public.
- Supervise and monitor the activity of gaming concessionaires, particularly regarding compliance with their legal, regulatory and contractual obligations.
- Supervise and monitor the suitability and the financial soundness of gaming concessionaires and of other entities or individuals as determined by law.
- Assist the government in classifying premises as casino venues.
- Authorise and certify all gaming equipment allocated by gaming concessionaires for the operation of their respective concessions.
- License gaming promoters and supervise and monitor their activity, particularly regarding compliance with their legal, regulatory and contractual obligations.
- Supervise and monitor the suitability of gaming promoters and their collaborators and key employees.
- Determine breaches of the applicable laws and apply the relevant penalties.
- Ensure that the relationships between the government and the gaming concessionaires, and between the concessionaires and the general public, develop in an appropriate manner and in consistency with the best interests of Macau.
- Perform, as determined by the Chief Executive or under the applicable laws, any other duties not included in the preceding paragraphs, which by their nature fall within the general scope of its responsibilities.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Macau Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau (Direcção de Inspeção e Coordenação de Jogos) (DICJ)

W www.dicj.gov.mo/web/en

Description. This is the official website of the DICJ. It provides access to the relevant legislation applicable to gambling, including instructions issued by DICJ, concession contracts of gaming operators, rules of approved games of chance and technical standards of electronic gaming machines and electronic table games. The website also contains the lists of licensed manufacturers and distributors of gaming machines and of licensed gaming promoters, as well as downloadable forms for licence applications. In addition, the website provides useful statistical information relating to the overall performance of Macau's gaming industry and to responsible gaming, including downloadable application forms for exclusion and self-exclusion from gaming. Although the website is maintained in Chinese, Portuguese and English, most of the available official documents (such as legislation and instructions) are provided in Chinese and Portuguese only (the two official languages of Macau). English-language versions are provided for guidance only.

Practical Law Contributor profile



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Practice Areas

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Professional Experience

Rui is a partner at the MdME, where he heads the firm's Corporate/Gaming practice. He has been based in Macau for the past ten years, where he is recognised as one of the leading gaming lawyers. Rui regularly acts for industry investors, casino operators, equipment manufacturers and gaming promoters in key regional projects. He also advises in relation to listings of Macau gaming interests with overseas capital markets. Rui has been particularly active assisting sector players and governments in emerging gaming jurisdictions across the Asia-Pacific region. Rui has been distinguished as "Emerging Leader of the Year" in the Asia Gaming Awards 2017 and has been successively recognised as a leading gaming lawyer in the Asia-Pacific region by Chamber and Partners.

Professional Qualifications

Admitted to practice in Portugal and Macau

Awards and Recognitions

- Ranked as leading lawyer by IFLR and by Chambers and Partners in the categories of "General Business Law – Macau" and "Gaming and Gambling – Asia Pacific"
- Rui is also a member of the International Association of Gaming Advisors Board of Trustees
- Awarded "M&A Deal of the Year" in the "IFLR Asia Awards 2015"; Distinguished as "Emerging Leader of the Year" in the Asia Gaming Awards 2017

Recent transactions

- Regularly acting for industry investors, casino operators, equipment manufacturers and gaming promoters.
- Assisting issuers, sponsors and underwriters in relation to listings of Macau gaming interests with overseas capital markets.
- Actively advising sector players in emerging gaming jurisdictions across the Asia-Pacific region, including operators in Vietnam and the Philippines and government agencies in Cambodia and Laos.



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Practice Areas

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Professional Experience

Carlos joined MdME after working in another leading law firm in Macau. Carlos is focused in corporate law and mergers & acquisitions.

Carlos is a key contact at our gaming practice, where he has extensive experience advising equipment manufacturers and other sector players in regulatory, commercial and IP matters. He has assisted gaming operators and investors in all matters regarding their corporate, financial and operational restructurings, as well as in providing regulatory and compliance advice. Carlos has been very active in providing advice to gaming companies in intellectual property matters, including in legal patent and product clearances. He is ranked as a rising star by IFLR and as Leading Lawyer by Asia Law Profiles.

Professional Qualifications

- Macau Bar Association
- Portuguese Bar Association
- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (MCIArb) – Member

Awards and Recognitions

- Rising Star - M&A at IFLR's 2017 Asia-Pacific Guide Portuguese Bar Association
- Leading Lawyer Corporate / M&A at Asia Law Profiles 2017