

❑ VR project for Tokyo Plaza

BANDAI NAMCO opened a virtual reality experience area called VR Zone: Project i Can in Tokyo Plaza, Japan, on April 15.

The 5,870sq.ft VR Zone will act as a research facility for the company to gain feedback from users on further possibilities in virtual reality. It will include six playable scenarios; Fear of Heights Show, Ski Rodeo, Real Drive, Escape Ward Omega, Train Master and Argyle Shift.

The VR project will be only be open for a limited time, until mid-October.

❑ Law changes in Andalucia

CHANGES are coming in the gaming regulations for the Spanish province of Andalucia, which includes major cities such as Malaga and is one of the biggest jurisdictions for gaming in the country.

Fresh regulations covering sports betting have been published which will bring Andalucia into line with most of the other 17 Spanish territories. The draft regulation will take most of the rest of this year to go through the processes before becoming law. When it does, however, it will permit the largest retail sports betting market in the country.

The regulation also provides for sports betting online and on mobile devices within Andalucia. Gaming will be enabled in betting "corners" in casinos, bingo halls and in arcades, as well as some betting offices and in some bars and cafes. The latter category will not be comprehensive but will depend upon other criteria, and the industry expects around 20 per cent of the current bars with AWP machines will be able to carry sports betting.

It is expected, however, that around 5,000 betting terminals could go into the current bars and cafes AWP market.

Electronic bingo is also featured in the Andalucia proposals. It is expected that electronic bingo will be able to be played in bingo halls through terminals or tablets within the clubs or connected with other halls through a network.



❑ India's largest waterpark

THE largest waterpark in India opened its doors to a specially invited guest list of 2,000 people on March 18.

The new Wet 'n' Joy waterpark is at Lonavala, in the state of Maharashtra, a region of considerable tourist activity.

The location is owned by the Malpani Group, which is involved in several different industries, including education, health, finance, hospitality and tourism. The attractions in the park were supplied and installed by WhiteWater.

The location has India's first Master Blaster and the country's largest wave pool, covering 60,000sq.ft. The park has a cashless system using RFID wristbands; it has four restaurants and a number of concession stands.

Gambling still a priority in Europe

The EU may be in a permanent state of crisis but gambling is still on the agenda in Brussels, writes Euromat secretary general **Kieran O'Keeffe**

PICK up the papers these days and it seems that Europe lurches from one crisis to the next.

Recent years have seen the EU struggle with geopolitical, financial, economic and now migratory crises. You'd be forgiven for thinking that the European institutions rarely have the time to deal with anything else. However, while the EU may face big challenges this doesn't mean that gambling has fallen off the agenda.

Of course, for most operators it's national decisions - often justified on the basis of social and player protection and evolved quickly with minimal consultation - that have an immediate impact. Anybody regularly monitoring the commission's Technical Regulation Information System (Euromat does) will see a steady flow of national and local legislation over the course of each year all pursuing similar objectives.

Although it might be member states holding the pen on new rules, Europe's institutions still have the capacity to shape gambling policy and legislation. There is no prospect of European sectoral legislation on gambling in the near future. However, Europe remains relevant as the guardian of the treaties that underpin the European Union.

The commission is working on new infringement proceedings; Germany is thought to be a likely target. Jurisprudence from the Court of Justice of the European Union, of which there has been a steady flow as a result of national court proceedings, also continues to impact national regulatory outcomes in European countries.

Understanding both levels of regulation is a full time job for operators but an important one - legislation makes and also breaks markets in Europe.

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This is why Euromat will be welcoming the European Commission and several national regulators to its Gaming Summit in Barcelona on May 26 (www.euromat.org/euromat-gaming-summit-2016). A chance for operators to understand how both layers of regulation will impact them now and in the future.

