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Effectiveness of Online Gambling Law Enforcement in Indonesia Under the National Criminal Code: A Sociology of Law Perspective

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Abstract

Online gambling remains a significant legal and social challenge in Indonesia despite criminal prohibitions, digital-content restrictions, and investigative interventions. This study examined online gambling law enforcement following the implementation of Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code and Law Number 1 of 2026 concerning Criminal Adjustment. A normative juridical design integrated statutory interpretation, conceptual analysis, and a sociology-of-law approach using legislation, scholarly literature, and official institutional publications. The analysis applied Soerjono Soekanto's five factors: legal substance, enforcement personnel, supporting facilities, society, and legal culture. Articles 426 and 427 provide differentiated legal grounds for prosecuting unauthorized gambling organizers and participants. Documentary evidence showed financial transaction monitoring, digital-content restrictions, and case processing across the observation period. However, these activities did not establish sustained reductions in gambling participation or demonstrate a causal effect of the legislative transition. Cross-border networks, adaptable digital infrastructure, financial intermediaries, institutional constraints, limited legal awareness, and gambling normalization complicate implementation. Effective enforcement requires coordinated investigations targeting operators and financial flows, stronger digital forensic capacity, interagency cooperation, and accessible legal and financial education. Community-based prevention should complement criminal sanctions. The findings support an integrated enforcement framework while emphasizing the need for empirical assessments of compliance and long-term outcomes.

Keywords: *Digital Gambling, Law Enforcement, Legal Awareness, National Criminal Code, Sociology of Law.*

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INTRODUCTION

The expansion of digital communication and financial technology has transformed gambling from an activity associated with identifiable physical locations into a digitally mediated practice that can operate across geographical and institutional boundaries. Online gambling platforms enable continuous access through internet-connected devices, while electronic payment systems and digital promotional channels facilitate participation beyond conventional gambling environments. International evidence identifies the expansion of commercial gambling opportunities and their associated public health consequences as matters requiring coordinated regulatory, institutional, and social responses rather than exclusively individual behavioral interventions (Wardle et al., 2024). A systematic review of online gambling identifies accessibility, anonymity, and individual risk characteristics as factors relevant to understanding participation and developing preventive interventions (Ghelfi et al., 2024). In Indonesia, the proliferation of gambling through digital platforms raises questions concerning the practical capacity of criminal law to regulate activities characterized by technological accessibility, changing participation patterns, and potentially dispersed actors. Research on university students indicates that knowledge of gambling prohibitions and awareness of digital ethics do not eliminate the need for institutional education and prevention mechanisms, particularly where information and support remain insufficient (Hanum et al., 2025). These conditions make online gambling enforcement a significant legal and sociological problem because the existence of criminal prohibitions does not independently establish effective compliance, prevention, or institutional control.

Contemporary research on online gambling enforcement in Indonesia has developed through criminal law analysis, institutional assessment, and criminological examination, although these approaches emphasize different dimensions of legal effectiveness. Normative studies concerning cybercrime enforcement examine criminal provisions, investigative obstacles, and regulatory strategies, identifying the limitations of relying exclusively on punishment and conventional legal instruments when addressing technologically mediated gambling activities (Haribowo et al., 2025). Empirical research conducted within the jurisdiction of the Medan Police demonstrates the relevance of examining enforcement performance at the institutional level, particularly through recorded criminal cases and the application of gambling-related legal provisions (Hafizullah & Medaline, 2026). Institutional analysis further identifies digital intelligence, forensic capabilities, interagency coordination, public reporting, and adaptive investigative capacity as components of strategic capability within Indonesian police enforcement activities (Prasetia & Dirgantari, 2026). Criminological analysis approaches the same phenomenon through technological opportunity, economic motivations, institutional limitations, and the difficulties associated with identifying offenders operating through digital networks (Kuswardani & Sukoco, 2026). These approaches collectively establish that legal effectiveness involves more than the formal availability of criminal sanctions, encompassing the institutional ability to implement legal norms and the social conditions influencing prohibited conduct.

A significant regulatory development occurred on 2 January 2026 when Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code entered into force, introducing a renewed national framework for gambling offences under Articles 426 and 427. The distinction between organizing or facilitating unauthorized gambling and participating in unauthorized gambling must also be considered alongside Law Number 1 of 2026 concerning Criminal Adjustment and the relevant provisions governing electronic information and transactions. Recent legal scholarship has identified interpretive difficulties surrounding the relationship between gambling prohibitions, electronic information legislation, and changes to criminal sanctions, indicating that regulatory transitions require careful examination rather than assumptions of automatic legal consistency (Astriana et al., 2026). Normative analysis concerning rehabilitation as a penal response similarly demonstrates that the treatment of online gambling offenders involves questions extending beyond conventional imprisonment and monetary penalties (Setiawati & Pinandito, 2026). Existing institutional research provides evidence concerning police enforcement under the Criminal Code and electronic information legislation, but its regional focus and reliance on enforcement data from earlier periods limit conclusions specifically attributable to the newly effective national criminal framework (Hafizullah & Medaline, 2026). Empirical investigations involving perpetrators and police investigators have also identified economic motivations, personal circumstances, legal awareness, and preventive policing practices, although their findings were generated before the implementation of the National Criminal Code in 2026 (Subhan & Sukardi, 2024). The research gap consequently concerns the insufficiently integrated assessment of how the revised criminal law framework interacts with institutional enforcement capacity and socially embedded gambling behavior, rather than an absence of prior research on online gambling or criminal law enforcement.

The distinction between formal criminalization and effective legal enforcement has substantial implications for criminal justice administration, public confidence, and the prevention of gambling-related social harm. Institutional strategies may generate measurable enforcement outputs through investigations, digital intelligence, and interagency coordination, yet these activities require separate evaluation to determine whether they support broader public protection and sustainable regulatory objectives (Prasetia & Dirgantari, 2026). Social dimensions are equally consequential because public understanding of legal prohibitions, attitudes toward online gambling, and the availability of educational support influence the conditions under which legal norms are interpreted and followed (Hanum et al., 2025). Research identifying individual and contextual risk factors further indicates that gambling prevention cannot be reduced to the threat of punishment without considering the circumstances facilitating participation and repeated exposure (Ghelfi et al., 2024). An assessment centered exclusively on prosecution statistics or the number of restricted digital platforms would therefore provide an incomplete account of effectiveness unless the relationship between enforcement activity, behavioral compliance, and preventive outcomes were also examined. The scientific and practical urgency lies in establishing analytical criteria capable of distinguishing the implementation of

criminal sanctions from the broader capacity of law to influence conduct, strengthen institutional accountability, and address the social conditions sustaining online gambling.

A sociology-of-law approach offers a basis for examining online gambling enforcement through the interaction of legal substance, institutional structures, and legal culture under the National Criminal Code. Earlier normative research has clarified legal instruments and enforcement strategies, but its emphasis on regulatory interpretation provides limited grounds for evaluating how changing criminal provisions acquire practical meaning through social and institutional processes (Haribowo et al., 2025). Criminological research has addressed opportunity structures, economic motivations, and enforcement constraints, establishing relevant explanatory dimensions without necessarily integrating them into an assessment specifically organized around the implementation of the 2026 criminal framework (Kuswardani & Sukoco, 2026). International gambling research contributes a broader understanding of commercial exposure, social harm, and the limitations of individual-centered interventions, although its public health orientation does not directly resolve questions concerning Indonesia's criminal law implementation (Wardle et al., 2024). Legal debates surrounding the reconstruction of online gambling regulation further demonstrate the importance of distinguishing statutory transitions from changes in criminal policy, including the interpretation of sanctions and alternative responses to offenders (Astriana et al., 2026). The proposed analytical contribution is to connect these previously differentiated areas through an examination of statutory coherence, law enforcement capacity, public legal awareness, and the social conditions influencing compliance. Its novelty resides in evaluating the effectiveness of Indonesia's newly applicable gambling provisions through their relationship with institutional implementation and legal culture, while distinguishing normative expectations from demonstrated enforcement outcomes.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of online gambling law enforcement in Indonesia following the implementation of Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code, taking account of the adjustments introduced through Law Number 1 of 2026 concerning Criminal Adjustment. The analysis examines the substantive legal framework governing gambling offences and its relationship with relevant electronic information regulations to identify issues affecting the consistency and applicability of criminal prohibitions. It further assesses the institutional dimensions of enforcement, including investigative capacity, coordination, implementation constraints, and the distinction between enforcement activities and evidence of regulatory effectiveness. From a sociology-of-law perspective, the investigation considers legal awareness, social attitudes, economic motivations, and digitally mediated behavior as factors that may influence compliance and the practical operation of criminal law. The theoretical contribution consists of an integrated analytical framework connecting legal substance, enforcement structures, and legal culture while maintaining a distinction between formal legal validity and actual regulatory effectiveness. The practical contribution lies in identifying considerations for improving legal coordination, institutional responses, public legal education, and preventive strategies without presuming that the existence of criminal sanctions alone establishes successful suppression of online gambling.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employed a normative juridical design supported by a sociology-of-law approach to examine the implementation of criminal prohibitions on online gambling in Indonesia and the social conditions influencing their enforcement. The statutory approach examined Articles 426 and 427 of Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code as the principal legal provisions governing gambling offences under the national criminal law framework (Republic of Indonesia, 2023). Law Number 1 of 2026 concerning Criminal Adjustment was examined alongside these provisions to account for legislative adjustments relevant to the interpretation and application of criminal sanctions (Republic of Indonesia, 2026). The conceptual approach addressed legal enforcement, legal effectiveness, legal consciousness, and the distinction between formal legal provisions and their practical implementation, consistent with normative legal examinations of digital gambling regulation (Arganesya & Rijadi, 2025). Primary legal materials comprised the relevant Indonesian legislation, while secondary materials consisted of scholarly books, journal articles, and published research addressing online gambling, criminal law enforcement, and its social implications. The units of analysis were the applicable legal provisions, documented institutional enforcement activities, and social

patterns associated with online gambling, allowing the relationship between normative requirements and their practical operation to be examined without introducing unverified empirical observations.

Documentary materials included official publications from the Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center, the Indonesian National Police, the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs, and the Purwokerto District Prosecutor's Office, alongside relevant scholarly literature. These sources provided contextual information concerning gambling-related financial transactions, digital content enforcement, institutional responses, and documented social behavior, with legal provisions and institutional information examined according to their respective evidentiary functions. Qualitative analysis was conducted through descriptive legal interpretation and thematic comparison using five factors influencing law enforcement effectiveness: the law, law enforcement personnel, supporting facilities, society, and culture (Soekanto, 2022). Published empirical research concerning online gambling and criminal law enforcement was used to interpret documented behavioral motivations and implementation constraints without treating findings from individual research locations as nationally representative evidence (Subhan & Sukardi, 2024). Institutional evidence was examined in relation to enforcement capacity, coordination, and implementation challenges, while distinguishing documented enforcement activities from independently established reductions in gambling participation (Prasetia & Dirgantari, 2026). No field interviews, surveys, or independent causal impact evaluations were conducted; consequently, the findings represent a documentary and interpretive assessment of legal effectiveness rather than a quantitative measurement of the causal impact of the National Criminal Code.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The National Criminal Code and Legal Regulation of Online Gambling in Indonesia

The entry into force of Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code on 2 January 2026 marked a significant transition in Indonesia's criminal law framework governing gambling offences. This legislative development established a renewed statutory basis for distinguishing the organization of gambling activities from participation in gambling conducted without authorization. Articles 426 and 427 regulate these forms of conduct through different offence classifications and criminal sanctions, reflecting distinctions in the roles performed by individuals within gambling activities (Republic of Indonesia, 2023). The relevance of these provisions extends to online gambling because the criminalized conduct concerns gambling activities rather than requiring a particular physical location or technological medium. Digital gambling nevertheless presents distinct legal challenges involving electronic transactions, dispersed operational networks, intermediary actors, and the identification of individuals responsible for providing gambling opportunities. Research examining regulatory challenges in digital gambling identifies technological adaptation and the complexity of online operations as considerations affecting the application of conventional criminal law instruments (Darman & Putri, 2025). The central legal issue concerns whether the revised criminal framework provides sufficiently identifiable offence elements for addressing digitally mediated gambling while maintaining legal certainty and consistency in enforcement.

Article 426 paragraph (1) of the National Criminal Code establishes criminal liability for persons who, without authorization, offer or provide gambling opportunities as a livelihood, participate in gambling enterprises, provide gambling opportunities to the public, or make participation in gambling their livelihood. The provision prescribes imprisonment for a maximum of nine years or a fine not exceeding Category VI, indicating the criminal consequences attached to conduct involving the provision, organization, or commercialization of gambling opportunities (Republic of Indonesia, 2023). Article 426 paragraph (2) further permits an additional penalty involving the revocation of specified rights where the offence is committed in the exercise of a profession, subject to the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code. In digitally mediated gambling, establishing liability under these provisions requires attention to the functions performed by website operators, administrators, financial intermediaries, and persons responsible for providing access to unlawful gambling services. Normative research addressing social media influencers who promote online gambling demonstrates the relevance of examining promotional conduct within the applicable criminal framework rather than automatically equating every form of digital communication with the operation of a gambling enterprise (Arganesya & Rijadi, 2025). The legal characterization of individual conduct must be supported by evidence establishing the relevant statutory elements, including the accused person's involvement, the nature of

the gambling activity, and the connection between the alleged conduct and the prohibited provision of gambling opportunities.

Article 427 regulates persons who use opportunities to participate in gambling organized without authorization, providing a separate criminal basis for conduct associated with gambling participation. The maximum penalty under this provision is imprisonment for three years or a Category III fine, distinguishing the statutory treatment of participants from the more extensively regulated activities described in Article 426 (Republic of Indonesia, 2023). This distinction is particularly relevant to online gambling networks because individuals may occupy different positions as operators, administrators, promoters, payment facilitators, or participants accessing gambling platforms. Criminal liability cannot be determined solely from the presence of an electronic account or a financial transaction without establishing the conduct and legal elements attributable to the person concerned. Legal research examining online gambling offences in Indonesia emphasizes the importance of identifying the relevant criminal conduct and its relationship with applicable statutory provisions when determining the appropriate basis for prosecution (Purba et al., 2025). Contemporary discussions concerning rehabilitation and penal policy also raise questions about differentiated responses to gambling offenders, although such proposals must be distinguished from sanctions and measures expressly authorized by positive law (Setiawati & Pinandito, 2026). The distinction between Article 426 and Article 427 provides a basis for evaluating the proportional application of criminal law without assuming that all participants within an online gambling network possess equivalent responsibility or perform identical criminal acts.

The implementation of the National Criminal Code must also be examined alongside Law Number 1 of 2026 concerning Criminal Adjustment, which addresses the harmonization of criminal provisions and adjustments to the broader national penal framework. Article 622 paragraph (1) letter r, as amended through the 2026 legislation, is particularly relevant because it revokes the criminal penalty provision previously contained in Article 45 paragraph (3) of the legislation concerning electronic information and transactions (Republic of Indonesia, 2026). The removal of that penalty provision requires a distinction between earlier enforcement arrangements and the criminal provisions applicable after the legislative transition, particularly when evaluating electronic gambling conduct. Research on the harmonization of gambling-related criminal regulations identifies legal consistency and the relationship between different statutory instruments as significant issues in the administration of criminal justice (Nasution, 2026). Debates concerning the reconstruction of gambling enforcement and alternative penal responses further indicate that revisions to criminal legislation should not automatically be interpreted as the decriminalization of conduct that remains expressly prohibited (Astriana et al., 2026). The relevant legislative provisions and their implications for distinguishing gambling organizers from participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Legal Framework Governing Online Gambling under the National Criminal Code

Legal Instrument and Provision	Regulated Conduct or Legal Function	Criminal Sanction or Legal Implication
Law No. 1 of 2023, Article 426(1)(a)–(c)	Unauthorized offering or provision of gambling opportunities, participation in gambling enterprises, and gambling-related activities carried out as a livelihood.	Imprisonment for up to nine years or a fine not exceeding Category VI.
Law No. 1 of 2023, Article 426(2)	Gambling offences referred to in paragraph (1) committed in the exercise of a profession.	Potential additional punishment in the form of revocation of specific rights under Article 86(f).
Law No. 1 of 2023, Article 427	Participation in gambling opportunities organized without authorization.	Imprisonment for up to three years or a fine not exceeding Category III.
Law No. 1 of 2026, Article 622(1)(r), as amended	Adjustment of the legal relationship between the National Criminal Code and specified provisions of	Revocation of the former criminal penalty provision under Article 45(3) of the Electronic

	electronic information and transactions legislation.	Information and Transactions Law. Gambling offences remain subject to the applicable provisions of the National Criminal Code.

Table 1 demonstrates that the National Criminal Code establishes differentiated criminal consequences for the organization of unauthorized gambling activities and the use of opportunities to gamble without authorization. Article 426 provides a higher maximum imprisonment penalty than Article 427, reflecting the statutory distinction between activities involving the provision or commercialization of gambling opportunities and participation in unauthorized gambling. The possibility of additional penalties for offences committed in the exercise of a profession introduces another legal consideration requiring examination of the offender's occupational activities and the circumstances of the alleged conduct. The changes introduced through Law Number 1 of 2026 also affect the relationship between gambling offences under the Criminal Code and the former electronic information legislation, requiring enforcement authorities to apply the criminal provisions effective at the relevant time (Republic of Indonesia, 2026). This adjustment does not eliminate the criminal prohibition of online gambling, but it changes the legal basis through which relevant conduct must be classified and sanctioned following the legislative transition. Research discussing the criminal law implications of online gambling in Indonesia emphasizes the relationship between offence classification and the practical application of criminal sanctions, although the existence of differentiated penalties does not establish their effectiveness in preventing future violations (Kawi Arta et al., 2025). The statutory comparison identifies legal coherence and appropriate offender classification as necessary dimensions of enforcement, while questions of deterrence, consistency, and institutional performance require evidence extending beyond the wording of criminal provisions.

Documentary evidence of the National Criminal Code's implementation appears in a publication issued by the Purwokerto District Prosecutor's Office on 21 April 2026 concerning the transfer of a suspect and evidence from investigators to public prosecutors. The publication refers to the application of Article 426 paragraph (1) of Law Number 1 of 2023 in gambling-related criminal case processing, providing an example of the revised statutory provision being used within the criminal justice system (Purwokerto District Prosecutor's Office, 2026). This procedural development is relevant because it illustrates how criminal justice institutions began referring to the National Criminal Code following its entry into force. However, the documented information does not independently establish whether the activity involved an online gambling platform, nor does it provide sufficient evidence concerning final judicial outcomes or subsequent changes in gambling participation. Research concerning criminal enforcement against online gambling indicates that investigative and prosecutorial procedures constitute components of law enforcement implementation, but they should not be treated as conclusive measures of preventive or deterrent effectiveness (Mida & Sudjiono, 2025). The documented case supports the narrower conclusion that Article 426 was being applied within criminal proceedings during 2026, while broader assessments of enforcement outcomes require additional evidence concerning investigations, adjudication, compliance, and subsequent offending.

The application of gambling provisions to digital activities introduces evidentiary and jurisdictional challenges that cannot be resolved exclusively through statutory definitions of prohibited conduct. Online gambling services may operate through changing domain names, remotely managed infrastructure, electronic payment channels, intermediary accounts, and promotional activities conducted across different digital platforms. Research examining technological developments and online gambling crime identifies the changing characteristics of digital offending as an important consideration in applying criminal law to technologically mediated activities (Gandi, 2025). These characteristics require investigators to establish relationships among electronic records, financial transactions, operational control, and the individuals responsible for organizing or facilitating gambling opportunities. Criminal law strategies addressing gambling-related cybercrime emphasize the relevance of adapting enforcement procedures to digital evidence and complex operating arrangements rather than relying solely on conventional investigative methods (Haribowo et al., 2025). The involvement of actors operating across national boundaries also creates potential difficulties concerning jurisdiction, access to digital records, attribution of responsibility, and cooperation with institutions controlling financial or

technological infrastructure. Criminological examinations of online gambling enforcement identify technological opportunity and investigative limitations as relevant constraints, although their existence cannot independently establish that a particular prosecution failed or that the revised criminal provisions are legally inadequate (Kuswardani & Sukoco, 2026).

The National Criminal Code establishes identifiable legal grounds for responding to unauthorized gambling, but statutory clarity and the practical effectiveness of criminal enforcement remain analytically distinct questions. Articles 426 and 427 differentiate gambling organization from participation, while Law Number 1 of 2026 introduces adjustments requiring careful interpretation of the relationship between the Criminal Code and previously applicable criminal provisions. Research addressing cybercrime enforcement and justice-based criminal regulation emphasizes the importance of consistent legal application and institutional accountability when translating statutory rules into enforcement practices (Silaban & Laksana, 2026). From a sociology-of-law perspective, effective enforcement also depends on the interaction between applicable legislation, law enforcement personnel, supporting facilities, social conditions, and prevailing legal culture rather than the existence of prohibitions alone (Soekanto, 2022). The documentary evidence examined establishes the relevant normative framework and illustrates its application in an identifiable criminal proceeding, but it does not provide sufficient grounds for attributing changes in gambling activity directly to the legislative reform. These limitations establish the need to examine institutional enforcement capacity and documented implementation outcomes before assessing the extent to which the National Criminal Code has strengthened the practical control of online gambling in Indonesia.

Institutional Capacity and the Effectiveness of Online Gambling Law Enforcement

Online gambling law enforcement in Indonesia involves several institutional mechanisms that operate through criminal investigation, digital-content restriction, financial transaction monitoring, and the prosecution of suspected offenders. These mechanisms reflect the division of responsibilities among law enforcement authorities, financial intelligence institutions, and government agencies responsible for digital communications. The Indonesian National Police conduct criminal investigations into suspected gambling activities, while financial intelligence and digital oversight institutions provide information and interventions relevant to identifying unlawful operations. Enforcement activities may involve identifying gambling operators, examining electronic evidence, tracing financial transactions, restricting access to prohibited content, and processing cases through the criminal justice system. Research concerning police enforcement of online gambling identifies investigative procedures and institutional coordination as relevant elements of the response to digitally mediated gambling offences (Mida & Sudjiono, 2025). However, the existence of multiple enforcement mechanisms does not independently establish their effectiveness, because institutional activities must be distinguished from demonstrable changes in offending, public compliance, and the operational continuity of gambling networks.

Criminal enforcement against online gambling requires identifying the different functions performed by individuals participating in the operation and maintenance of gambling services. Relevant actors may include gambling organizers, platform administrators, digital promoters, payment intermediaries, and individuals who use gambling services, although their criminal responsibility must be determined according to the applicable statutory elements. Research examining Indonesian police policies emphasizes the importance of institutional strategies for addressing online gambling activities that extend beyond the direct participation of individual gamblers (Tanuwijaya & Hutabarat, 2025). Investigations targeting organizers and intermediaries may address activities that facilitate repeated gambling transactions, whereas proceedings against individual participants concern a different category of prohibited conduct. Institutional integrity also represents an important enforcement consideration because allegations involving police personnel require the application of criminal law and professional accountability without preferential treatment (Pane et al., 2024). The effectiveness of criminal enforcement consequently depends not only on the number of individuals subjected to legal proceedings but also on whether investigative decisions adequately identify responsible actors, establish their respective roles, and address the operational arrangements supporting prohibited gambling.

Institutional capacity constitutes another determinant of whether criminal prohibitions can be translated into consistent enforcement practices. Digital gambling investigations require technical competence in preserving electronic records, examining digital communications, identifying account

ownership, and connecting financial transactions with individuals suspected of unlawful conduct. Financial intelligence is particularly relevant because transaction records may provide information concerning payment channels, the movement of gambling funds, and potentially connected financial accounts. Publications from the Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center demonstrate the institutional relevance of financial transaction analysis to government responses against online gambling activities (Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center [PPATK], 2025). Strategic assessments of Indonesian police enforcement similarly identify organizational capability and the creation of public value as relevant considerations when examining responses to online gambling offences (Prasetia & Dirgantari, 2026). Coordination among investigative authorities, financial institutions, and digital regulatory bodies is consequently necessary to address activities that cannot be adequately examined through one institutional function alone. Research concerning legal protection from online gambling exploitation further situates enforcement within broader governmental responsibilities for protecting individuals against unlawful digital activities (Abdullah et al., 2025).

Official publications provide evidence of the scale of government responses to online gambling, although the reported indicators measure different institutional activities. The Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center reported that the circulation of funds associated with online gambling decreased from IDR 174.57 trillion during the first semester of 2024 to IDR 99.67 trillion during the corresponding period of 2025 (PPATK, 2025). The Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs subsequently reported on 1 October 2026 that approximately 4.1 million gambling-related digital content items had been handled, including approximately 3.6 million websites and internet protocol addresses (Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). These figures concern financial transaction monitoring and digital-content enforcement rather than directly comparable measurements of criminal prosecution or gambling participation. A separate publication from the Purwokerto District Prosecutor's Office documented the transfer of suspects and evidence in a gambling-related criminal proceeding involving Article 426 paragraph (1) of the National Criminal Code on 21 April 2026 (Purwokerto District Prosecutor's Office, 2026). The available documentary evidence and the limitations associated with interpreting each indicator are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Documented Online Gambling Enforcement Activities and Their Evidentiary Limitations

Documentary Source	Reported Information	Evidentiary Significance	Interpretation Limitation
Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center, first semester of 2024	Online gambling fund circulation of IDR 174.57 trillion	Financial intelligence evidence concerning the scale of identified gambling-related transactions	Does not independently establish the number of active gamblers or the effectiveness of a particular enforcement measure
Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center, first semester of 2025	Online gambling fund circulation of IDR 99.67 trillion	Evidence of a decrease in reported financial circulation compared with the corresponding period of 2024	Cannot establish that the reduction resulted from enforcement interventions without additional causal evidence
Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs, 1 October 2026	Approximately 4.1 million gambling-related digital content items handled, including approximately 3.6 million websites and internet protocol addresses	Evidence of the scale of governmental digital-content intervention	Does not establish the number of unique gambling operators permanently eliminated or the prevention of repeated access
Purwokerto District Prosecutor's Office, 21 April 2026	Transfer of suspects and evidence in a gambling-related proceeding involving Article 426	Documentary evidence of the application of the National Criminal	Does not establish a final conviction, an online-gambling-specific factual

	paragraph (1) of Law Number 1 of 2023	Code during criminal case processing	setting, or nationwide enforcement effectiveness

Table 2 distinguishes four forms of documentary evidence that contribute to understanding the implementation of online gambling enforcement without measuring identical institutional outcomes. The reported decrease in gambling-related fund circulation between the first semesters of 2024 and 2025 indicates a substantial difference in identified financial activity, but it does not demonstrate that criminal enforcement independently caused that change. Changes in financial reporting practices, transaction detection, payment channels, and gambling behavior may influence the amounts identified through financial intelligence, making causal interpretation inappropriate without a comparative research design. The reported handling of approximately 4.1 million digital content items demonstrates extensive government intervention, although repeated appearances of websites, accounts, and promotional materials prevent the aggregate figure from being interpreted as an equivalent number of permanently disrupted gambling enterprises. The prosecutorial documentation demonstrates the procedural application of the National Criminal Code in an identifiable criminal case but does not provide information sufficient to evaluate conviction rates or national changes in compliance. Research concerning online gambling enforcement in the jurisdiction of the Medan Police supports the relevance of institution-specific implementation evidence while illustrating why findings from a particular enforcement setting require careful interpretation before being extended to the national level (Hafizullah & Medaline, 2026). The available indicators consequently establish that enforcement activities were undertaken, whereas their contribution to sustained deterrence, reduced participation, and long-term disruption remains a separate empirical question.

The effective application of criminal provisions depends on investigative competence and the availability of technical facilities capable of supporting evidence collection and offender identification. Digital forensic examination may be required to preserve electronic records, reconstruct account activity, analyze communication histories, and establish connections between gambling platforms and persons suspected of operating them. Financial investigations may require the identification of transaction patterns, the tracing of funds through multiple accounts, and the examination of payment arrangements connecting participants with gambling organizers. Research addressing law enforcement strategies against gambling-related cybercrime identifies the adaptation of investigative methods to digital operations as a relevant component of criminal justice responses (Haribowo et al., 2025). Institutional capability also depends on personnel training, access to appropriate analytical resources, procedures for preserving electronic evidence, and cooperation among agencies with different investigative responsibilities. A study of strategic capability within the Indonesian National Police provides a relevant basis for examining whether organizational arrangements support the translation of enforcement priorities into coordinated institutional action (Prasetia & Dirgantari, 2026). These requirements cannot be assessed adequately through arrest totals alone because investigative quality also concerns evidentiary sufficiency, lawful procedures, identification of responsible actors, and the capacity to establish the elements of criminal offences.

Technological adaptation creates continuing difficulties for enforcement authorities because online gambling services may reappear through new domains, substitute accounts, alternative communication channels, and infrastructure located outside Indonesian jurisdiction. The Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs has acknowledged that gambling-related content can reappear after access restrictions are implemented, indicating the operational limitations of treating digital blocking as a final enforcement outcome (Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). Digital-content intervention must consequently be distinguished from identifying the individuals responsible for operating gambling networks and addressing the financial arrangements that sustain their activities. Research examining police approaches to online gambling emphasizes the need for enforcement policies capable of responding to technologically mediated offences and their associated investigative challenges (Tanuwijaya & Hutabarat, 2025). Public reporting mechanisms may provide additional information concerning suspected gambling websites, promotional accounts, and related digital activities, although such reports require verification before they can support lawful enforcement measures. Institutional effectiveness depends on whether technological detection, public reporting, financial intelligence, and criminal investigation operate as complementary processes rather than isolated activities measured solely through administrative outputs.

The relationship between legal authority and institutional performance is central to determining whether Indonesia's revised gambling provisions can produce practical changes beyond formal criminalization. The National Criminal Code establishes the substantive basis for identifying prohibited gambling conduct, but its implementation depends on investigative decisions, evidentiary procedures, prosecution practices, and the institutional capacity to address digitally organized criminal activity. Research examining online gambling enforcement through criminal law and criminological approaches recognizes that the practical application of prohibitions involves both legal provisions and operational constraints affecting enforcement institutions (Kuswardani & Sukoco, 2026). From the standpoint of legal effectiveness, successful case processing, financial disruption, and digital-content restriction represent relevant institutional outputs, but none independently establishes a sustained reduction in gambling participation or repeated offending. Evaluating long-term effectiveness would require comparable evidence concerning the continuation of gambling networks, changes in participant behavior, recurrence of prohibited content, and outcomes of criminal proceedings. Research on law enforcement and legal protection in the digital environment supports considering public protection and institutional accountability alongside the implementation of criminal sanctions when evaluating governmental responses (Abdullah et al., 2025). The documentary findings support a conclusion of identifiable institutional enforcement activity accompanied by substantial evidentiary limitations, while a more complete assessment of effectiveness requires attention to the social conditions, legal consciousness, and cultural practices influencing continued participation in online gambling.

Legal Consciousness, Social Behavior, and Cultural Factors Affecting Enforcement Effectiveness

The effectiveness of online gambling law enforcement cannot be assessed exclusively through the existence of criminal prohibitions, institutional activities, or the imposition of sanctions because legal compliance also depends on the social conditions influencing individual behavior. A legally prohibited activity may persist when participation is supported by economic expectations, established social relationships, limited understanding of criminal consequences, or the normalization of particular practices within everyday interactions. Sociology-of-law scholarship emphasizes examining the social processes through which legal norms acquire practical meaning and influence conduct rather than treating written legislation as an independent determinant of social order (Rahardjo, n.d.). Soekanto's framework identifies five factors affecting law enforcement, comprising the law itself, law enforcement personnel, supporting facilities, society, and culture, which provide complementary dimensions for assessing the implementation of criminal prohibitions (Soekanto, 2022). The distinction between societal and cultural factors is particularly relevant to online gambling because individual awareness of legal restrictions may coexist with social environments that tolerate or encourage participation. Empirical research on online gambling in Indonesia identifies behavioral motivations and enforcement challenges that require consideration alongside the formal application of criminal sanctions (Subhan & Sukardi, 2024). The documentary evidence consequently supports an assessment of the social conditions associated with continued gambling participation, although it cannot establish the prevalence of particular attitudes or the direct behavioral effects of the National Criminal Code across the Indonesian population.

Legal consciousness constitutes a central consideration because knowledge of criminal prohibitions does not necessarily correspond to the willingness or ability to comply with them. Research examining university students' perspectives on online gambling addresses the relationship between legal awareness, digital ethics, and the responsibilities associated with participation in digital environments (Hanum et al., 2025). Community-based research in Dusun Dlopo, Kediri, identifies limited understanding of the criminal implications of online slot gambling, including perceptions that digitally mediated gambling constitutes ordinary recreational activity rather than prohibited conduct (Atiana & Rifa'i, 2025). These findings suggest that public understanding of gambling offences may vary according to educational experiences, access to legal information, and the social environments in which gambling activities are encountered. Awareness of a prohibition also differs from awareness of the specific conduct regulated by criminal law, particularly when digital services are presented through terminology associated with entertainment or online games. The available studies indicate the relevance of legal education to prevention, but their geographically and demographically limited observations do not establish the extent of legal consciousness throughout Indonesia or demonstrate that educational interventions independently reduce gambling participation.

Participation in online gambling is associated with behavioral motivations that extend beyond deliberate rejection of criminal law and include experimentation, entertainment, financial expectations, and social influence. Survey research involving university students identifies curiosity and recreational motivations among participants while documenting concerns about the financial, educational, psychological, and social consequences of gambling involvement (Hardimansyah et al., 2025). Research conducted among adolescents in Pematang Kandis identifies situational, socioeconomic, family, and perceived-winning factors associated with gambling behavior and limited awareness of its legal consequences (Rizal et al., 2024). Empirical investigation of online gambling and criminal law enforcement further supports examining the interaction between individual circumstances, opportunities for participation, and the practical difficulties of implementing criminal prohibitions (Subhan & Sukardi, 2024). International research synthesizing risk and protective factors in adult online gambling demonstrates that participation cannot be adequately explained through a single personal characteristic or environmental condition (Ghelfi et al., 2024). These findings indicate that criminal sanctions operate within social environments shaped by competing motivations and varying perceptions of risk, making the translation of legal prohibitions into actual compliance a complex process. Their explanatory relevance must nevertheless be distinguished from national empirical evidence because the studies involve different populations and research designs, and none directly measures the behavioral consequences of implementing Articles 426 and 427 of the National Criminal Code.

Cultural acceptance of online gambling introduces a further distinction between formal legal restrictions and the informal expectations governing everyday social behavior. Research examining media dependency among university students identifies the normalization of online slot gambling within social interactions, where participation may be interpreted as entertainment and reinforced through digital communication and promotional exposure (Sutrisna & Utari, 2025). Gambling platforms may present participation through language associated with games, bonuses, deposits, and rewards, potentially reducing the perceived distinction between ordinary digital entertainment and prohibited gambling activities. When such representations circulate repeatedly within peer networks, social acceptance may develop independently of whether the underlying conduct is legally permitted. Sociology-of-law analysis directs attention to these processes because legal norms operate alongside informal social expectations that influence how individuals interpret obligations and respond to institutional authority (Rahardjo, n.d.). The relationship between statutory provisions, enforcement institutions, technological resources, community behavior, and cultural practices is organized through Soekanto's five-factor framework in Table 3.

Table 3. Sociological Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Online Gambling Law Enforcement

Factors Influencing Law Enforcement	Documented Issues and Analytical Considerations	Implications for Legal Effectiveness
Legal substance	Articles 426 and 427 of Law No. 1 of 2023; amendments introduced by Law No. 1 of 2026; and the legal classification of gambling organizers and participants.	Effective enforcement requires legal certainty, appropriate classification of offences, and consistency in the application of criminal provisions.
Law enforcement personnel	Criminal investigations, electronic evidence examination, financial tracing, interagency coordination, and institutional accountability.	Enforcement effectiveness depends on professional competence, procedural consistency, and the ability to identify and establish the responsibility of relevant actors.
Supporting facilities	Digital forensic resources, electronic transaction data, content-monitoring systems, reporting mechanisms, and financial intelligence.	Technological and organizational resources influence the capacity of law enforcement agencies to investigate and respond to digitally mediated gambling activities.
Society	Legal awareness, understanding of gambling prohibitions,	Public knowledge and behavioral motivations may influence legal

	economic motivations, recreational expectations, and willingness to comply with the law.	compliance independently of the existence of criminal sanctions.
Legal culture	Social acceptance of gambling, peer influence, promotional representations, digital media dependence, and the normalization of gambling-related practices.	Informal social norms and expectations may reinforce or weaken the practical effectiveness of legal prohibitions.

Table 3 demonstrates that the effectiveness of online gambling enforcement must be interpreted through interacting legal, institutional, technological, societal, and cultural dimensions rather than a single measure of regulatory activity. The legal-substance dimension concerns the applicability and consistency of criminal provisions, while the institutional dimension addresses the capacity of authorized personnel to investigate offences and implement legal procedures. Supporting facilities influence the ability of enforcement institutions to identify electronic evidence, examine digital transactions, and respond to changing operational arrangements within gambling networks. At the societal level, differences in knowledge, attitudes, and interpretations of prohibited gambling behavior indicate that formal legal restrictions do not automatically produce equivalent levels of legal consciousness among different population groups (Hanum et al., 2025). The cultural dimension concerns the informal acceptance of gambling within particular social interactions, as illustrated by research examining how online slot gambling becomes incorporated into university students' digital routines (Sutrisna & Utari, 2025). These dimensions are analytically distinguishable but practically interconnected because the influence of criminal sanctions may depend on institutional legitimacy, accessible enforcement mechanisms, and prevailing social expectations. Soekanto's framework consequently provides a structured basis for interpreting documented conditions affecting law enforcement without representing those conditions as statistically measured determinants of the National Criminal Code's effectiveness (Soekanto, 2022).

The social consequences of online gambling extend beyond individual financial losses because gambling-related behavior may affect family responsibilities, interpersonal relationships, and the capacity of households to maintain stable economic and social functions. Qualitative research examining families affected by online gambling identifies difficulties in meeting essential needs, resolving household problems, and fulfilling family roles when financial resources and attention are diverted toward gambling activities (Fatimah et al., 2025). Research addressing the social, economic, and psychological consequences of online gambling similarly identifies financial instability, interpersonal conflict, social isolation, and psychological distress among individuals experiencing gambling-related difficulties (Sriyana, 2025). International public health scholarship treats gambling-related harm as a multidimensional problem involving individuals, families, communities, and broader institutional arrangements rather than limiting its consequences to criminal responsibility (Wardle et al., 2024). These findings indicate that the practical significance of gambling regulation extends to the protection of social relationships and economic well-being, although the available studies do not establish the national prevalence or severity of these consequences. Criminal enforcement may address prohibited conduct, but the documented social harms provide grounds for considering complementary preventive and supportive responses without assuming that penal interventions alone can resolve the underlying behavioral and family-related difficulties.

Preventive responses to online gambling require attention to how legal information is communicated, how gambling-related risks are understood, and how individuals encounter promotional or recreational representations of unlawful activities. Community research concerning online gambling awareness indicates that legal education can address misunderstandings about the criminal status of online gambling, particularly where electronic games are not readily recognized as gambling activities (Atiana & Rifa'i, 2025). Research involving university students also establishes the relevance of digital ethics and legal consciousness to understanding how digitally connected individuals interpret gambling restrictions and their responsibilities as citizens (Hanum et al., 2025). Evidence concerning online gambling risk and protective factors supports examining preventive strategies that address behavioral

vulnerability and environmental exposure rather than relying exclusively on information about criminal penalties (Ghelfi et al., 2024). Families, educational institutions, community organizations, and digital communication channels may contribute to prevention by communicating financial risks, clarifying legal consequences, and challenging representations of gambling as a reliable source of income. Institutional prevention also requires consistency between legal education and enforcement practices because public messages concerning prohibited conduct may carry limited practical authority when the application of legal rules is perceived as uncertain or selective. International public health analysis supports coordinating regulatory and preventive responses to gambling-related harm, although the effectiveness of specific educational or community interventions in Indonesia would require evaluation beyond the documentary evidence available here (Wardle et al., 2024).

The relationship between the National Criminal Code and the social persistence of online gambling illustrates the analytical distinction between legally binding prohibitions and their practical influence on individual and collective conduct. Articles 426 and 427 establish the relevant criminal prohibitions, but the documentary materials indicate that enforcement effectiveness must also be considered through institutional capacity, supporting facilities, legal consciousness, and cultural expectations. The five-factor framework provides a means of organizing these interrelated considerations without presuming that the existence of enforcement activities or criminal sanctions establishes sustained behavioral compliance (Soekanto, 2022). The present assessment is limited by its normative juridical design and reliance on published documents because no primary interviews, nationally representative surveys, or causal evaluations were conducted to measure the impact of the criminal law transition. Future research could examine case-level implementation of the revised gambling provisions, repeated access to restricted platforms, changes in transaction patterns, and the relationship between targeted legal education and subsequent gambling behavior. The contribution of the sociological analysis lies in identifying the legal and social conditions that require consideration when evaluating online gambling enforcement, while maintaining a distinction between documented institutional responses, contextual behavioral evidence, and outcomes that remain empirically unverified.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia's response to online gambling entered a revised legal framework following the commencement of Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code and the adoption of Law Number 1 of 2026 concerning Criminal Adjustment. Articles 426 and 427 establish differentiated criminal liability for unauthorized gambling organizers and individuals participating in unlawful gambling activities. The documentary analysis identified the application of revised criminal provisions alongside digital-content restrictions and financial monitoring activities, although these measures do not independently demonstrate sustained reductions in gambling participation. The continued adaptability of digital infrastructure, cross-border operations, and electronic payment networks presents enforcement challenges that cannot be resolved through criminal prohibitions alone. Applying Soerjono Soekanto's framework indicates that enforcement effectiveness depends on the interaction of legal substance, law enforcement personnel, supporting facilities, society, and legal culture. Economic motivations, uneven legal consciousness, and the normalization of gambling as entertainment further constrain the practical influence of criminal sanctions on individual behavior and public compliance.

Effective enforcement requires coordinated action against gambling organizers, operational networks, and illicit financial transactions, supported by digital forensic capabilities and consistent cooperation among relevant institutions. Criminal investigations and technological restrictions should be complemented by legal education, financial literacy, and community-based prevention addressing the social conditions associated with gambling participation. Enforcement outcomes should be evaluated through sustained changes in gambling-related financial activity, repeated access to prohibited platforms, criminal case outcomes, and public compliance rather than relying exclusively on arrest statistics or the number of restricted digital content items. The integration of legal, institutional, and sociocultural considerations provides an analytical foundation for assessing the implementation of the National Criminal Code beyond its formal criminal provisions. However, the normative juridical design and reliance on documentary evidence prevent causal conclusions regarding the effectiveness of individual enforcement measures or the direct impact of the 2026 legal transition. Future research should incorporate case-level enforcement records, comparative institutional assessments, and

empirical evidence of gambling behavior to evaluate whether coordinated legal and preventive interventions produce measurable improvements in compliance and sustained reductions in unlawful gambling activities.

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