

Behind the game: the association between gambling sponsorship exposure and gambling behaviour in the Belgian general population

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Unit Health Interview Survey

Service Health information

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Conflict of interest: None

Intro: The GAMSPON Project

“To what extent and how does gambling sponsorship affect the prevalence of gambling?”



Home News Politics

Ban on advertising for most forms of gambling from July 2023

Methodology

The Belgian health interview survey (HIS):

Study design	Cross-sectional study
Study population	All residents of Belgium – no age restrictions, including institutionalised persons
Commissioner	Federal and regional authorities
Data collection period	One calendar year
Sampling frame	National register (3-monthly update)
Sampling unit	Reference persons (and the (maximum 4) members of their households)
Sampling procedure	Random sampling of reference persons Ordering and selection criteria: statistical sector, age group of the reference person, household size - after selecting municipalities and cities in each of the 3 regions
Substitution mechanism	For each selected reference person, 3 'matched' substitutes are selected (and together form a cluster). 'Matching' criteria are: statistical sector, age group of the reference person, household size. For each cluster, an 'unmatched' substitution cluster is selected
Mode of data collection	Face-to-face interview + paper questionnaire of household members aged at least 15 years



Sociodemographic characteristics

4926 participants in the paper questionnaire

Gender	%
♂	47,5
♀	52,5

Education level	%
No secondary degree	14,4
Secondary	30,2
Higher	55,4

Region	%
Flemish Region	57,3
Brussels Region	14,1
Walloon Region	28,6

Age	%
15-24	7,6
25-34	12,9
35-44	15,2
45-54	15,0
55-64	18,6
65-74	16,8
75+	13,9

Question on gambling sponsorship

Prevalence of gambling sponsorship exposure:

GS.02 How often do you come across gambling brands (e.g. logos on shirts, billboards or flags) during the following activities:

*Tick "non applicable" if you don't participate in these activities.
Tick one reply per line*

	Very often	Often	Some-times	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
01. During sports matches	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
02. In the news coverage of sports matches	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
03. In TV shows	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
04. During festivals, concerts and theatre	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
05. During charity events and fundraisers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
06. In the posts of social media influencers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐

Frequent exposure: mean score ≥ 4

Medium exposure: $2 < \text{mean score} < 4$

Low or no exposure: mean score ≤ 2



Questions on gambling behaviour

Prevalence of gambling:

GA.01 In the past 12 months, have you spent any money on games such as lottery (lotto, keno, scratchcards,...), casino games (slot machines, roulette, dice or card games, ...), Bingo, betting on sport events or races... ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

⇒ Go to ST.01 page 24

% of the population that
gambled in the past 12
months

Prevalence of experiencing “problem gambling” according to the PGSI Short-Form:

The following questions are about problematic situations that can stem from gambling activities...

GA.05 Thinking about your gambling activities in the past 12 months, how often....

Tick one reply per line

Almost always	Most of the time	Some- times	Never
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01. Have you bet more than you could really afford to lose?	☐	☐	☐	☐
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02. Have people criticized your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was	☐	☐	☐	☐
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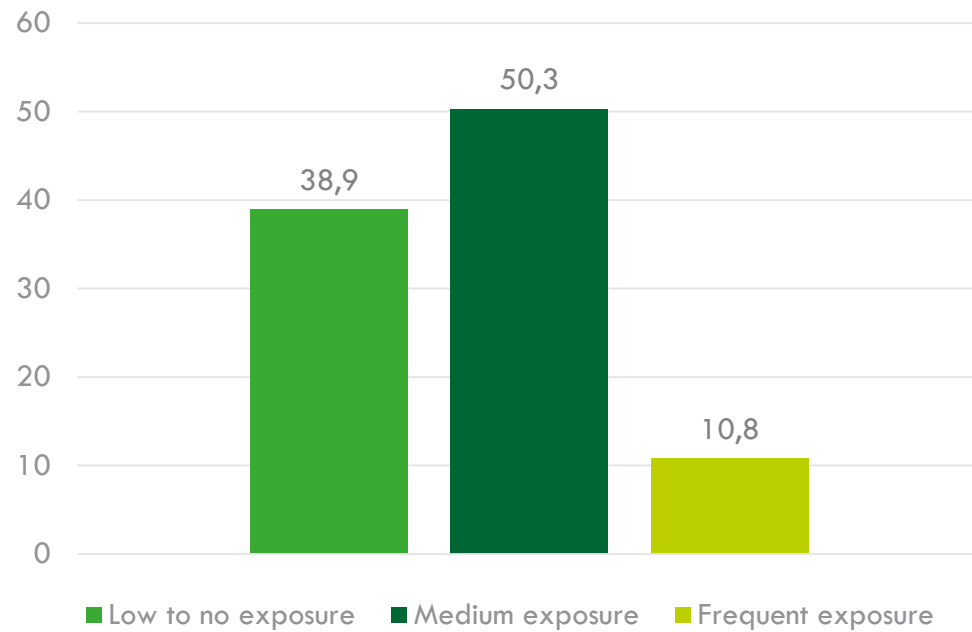
03. Have you felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble?	☐	☐	☐	☐
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% of the population that is **at risk** of experiencing “problem gambling”

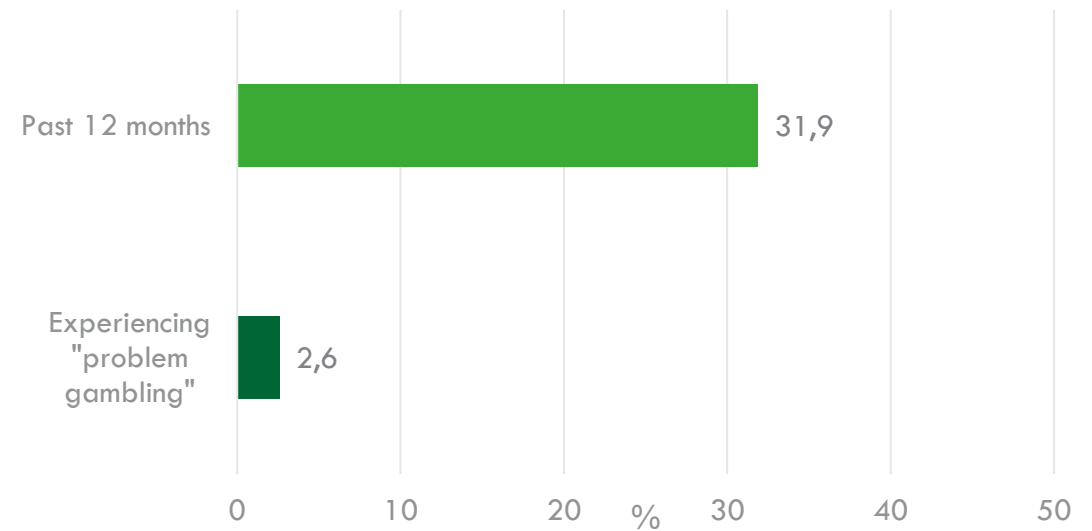


Results

Gambling sponsorship exposure



Prevalence of gambling & experiencing "problem gambling"



Results (1)

Association between average gambling sponsorship exposure and the likelihood of having spent money on games of chance in the past 12 months:

Gambling sponsorship exposure	OR	95%-CI	P-value
Low to no exposure	Ref.	-	-
Medium exposure	1.68	1.26 – 2.24	< 0.001
Frequent exposure	1.84	1.13 – 2.98	< 0.014

*Estimates adjusted for age & gender

Those who report on average a medium and frequent exposure had 68% and 84% higher odds of having spent money on games of chance in the past 12 months.

- No significant interactions with age group ($p = 0.60$) or education level ($p = 0.22$).



Conclusion

- Medium and frequent exposure to gambling sponsorship are significantly associated with higher odds of gambling.
- Associations persist after adjusting for sociodemographic variables.
- Empirical support for previous research suggesting an association between people's exposure to gambling sponsorship and their gambling behaviour.
- Further research: explore causality, subgroups, and the impact of existing restrictions on gambling and gambling marketing.

Contact

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