

Exposure to gambling advertising and gambling behaviour in Belgium after the 2023 advertising ban

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Background

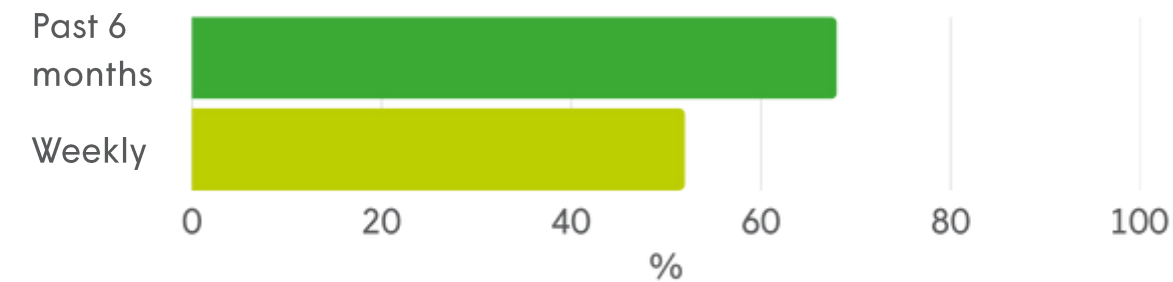
-  Gambling dependency can cause severe psychological, financial, and social harm.
-  Gambling advertising has been shown to contribute to the normalisation of gambling.
-  July 2023: national ban on (nearly all) gambling advertising in Belgium.
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 - Does the Belgian population continue to report exposure to gambling advertising after the ban?
 - Is this exposure associated with more frequent gambling?

Methods

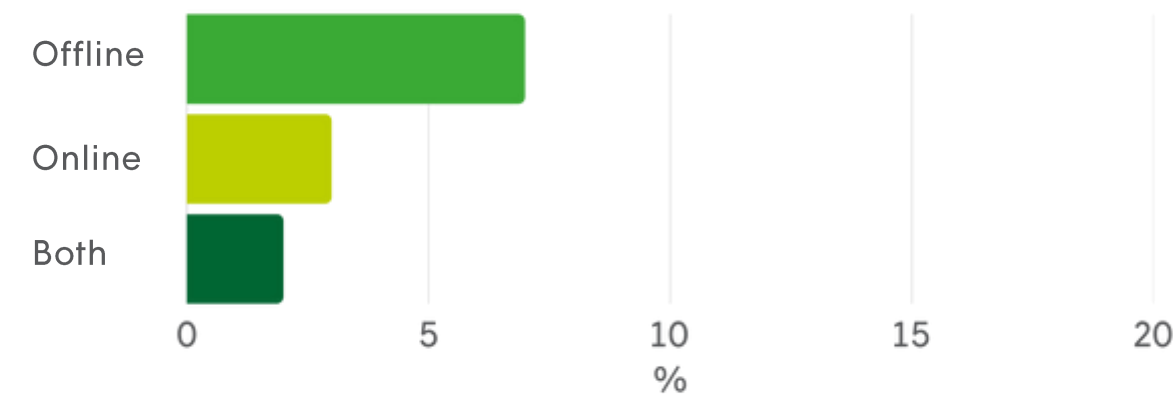
- Health Interview Survey 2023-2024: cross-sectional population survey.
- Face-to-face interview + paper questionnaire for sensitive topics (e.g., gambling) intended for people aged 15 and over (n=4926).
- For this study, only data collected after the advertising ban was used (n=3085).
- Logistic regression analyses → examine associations between gambling advertising and gambling behaviour.

Results

Percentage of the population (15+) that was exposed at least once in the past 6 months or weekly to gambling advertising after the advertising ban, Belgium, HIS 2023-2024



Percentage of the population (15+) that gambled weekly offline, online, and both after the advertising ban, HIS 2023-2024



Association between weekly gambling advertising exposure and the likelihood of having gambled weekly offline or online after the advertising ban, HIS 2023-2024

Weekly gambling advertising exposure	OR	95%-CI	P-value
Weekly offline gambling	1.94	1.27-2.96	< 0.002
Weekly online gambling	2.03	1.13-3.66	< 0.018

Main messages

- After the Belgian advertising ban, over 50% of people still saw gambling advertisements weekly.
- Frequent exposure to gambling advertisements doubles the odds of frequent offline and online gambling.

Discussion & conclusion

- Potential explanations of the continued exposure to gambling advertising:
 - International channels
 - The industry:
 - Non-compliance
 - Exploitation of regulatory loopholes
- The findings underscore the importance of continued enforcement and ongoing monitoring of the legal restrictions on gambling advertising in Belgium.



Project webpage - Sciensano

