



NEW ZEALAND 2012 NATIONAL GAMBLING STUDY: GAMBLING HARM AND PROBLEM GAMBLING - REPORT NUMBER 2

Summary

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Background

The last national gambling studies in New Zealand were conducted in 1991 and 1999. Since then, there has been substantial growth in gambling availability and expenditure. Report number 2 of the National Gambling Study (NGS) focused on gambling-related harm and problem gambling findings.

Aim

A major purpose of the 2012 NGS was to assess changes since the previous national gambling and problem gambling surveys were conducted. The main aims of Report number 2 were to: Provide information on the prevalence (frequency) of problem gambling, and to provide information about risk and protective factors for problem gambling

Method

A randomly selected national sample of 6,251 people aged 18 years and older living in private households was interviewed face-to-face from March to October 2012. The response rate was 64% and the sample was weighted to enable generalisation of the survey findings to the general adult population. The survey questionnaire included questions on: leisure activities and gambling participation, past gambling and recent gambling behaviour change, problem gambling, life events, attitudes towards gambling, mental health, substance use/misuse, health conditions, social connectedness, level of deprivation, and demographics.

Summary of key findings

Problem gambling

- 0.7% of adults (23,504 people) are current (past 12 months) problem gamblers experiencing significant problems, and a further 1.8% (60,440) are moderate-risk gamblers, experiencing some gambling-related harms and at risk for the development of more serious problems.
- Five percent (167,888) are estimated to be low-risk gamblers, mostly experiencing a few gambling-related harms.
- The prevalence of problematic gambling reduced significantly during the 1990s and has since stayed at about the same level.

Gambling-related risk factors

- Statistical analyses identified preferences for non-casino electronic gaming machines (EGMs), casino gambling and betting with friends and workmates, past year overseas internet gambling and at least monthly participation in card games and pub EGMs as strong independent risk factors for problem gambling.
- The largest amount of money lost in a day gambling, having felt nervous about the amount gambled and believing a spouse or sister to have a gambling problem were also identified as important predictors of problem gambling.
- Apart from believing a sister had a gambling problem, the above risk factors also predicted combined problem and moderate-risk gambling. Additional risk factors were spending three



or more hours playing pub or casino EGMs in an average day and more often being with one other person when taking part in a most preferred gambling activity.

Socio-demographic factors

- 6.2% of Māori are current problem or moderate-risk gamblers compared to 8% of Pacific Islanders, 3% of Asians and 1.8% of European/Other.
- Approximately 1 in 8 Pacific males and 1 in 16 Māori males are current problem or moderate-risk gamblers compared to 1 in 48 European/Other males and 1 in 22 Asian males.
- Approximately 1 in 20 Pacific females, 1 in 15 Māori females, 1 in 71 European/Other females and 1 in 67 Asian females are current problem or moderate-risk gamblers.
- Statistical analyses (controlling for confounding factors) identified Māori and Pacific Island ethnicity as the major risk factors for current problem gambling, followed by being male.
- The above risk factors were also found for combined problem and moderate-risk gambling. Additional risk factors for problem/moderate-risk gambling are younger age, lack of formal qualifications, unemployment and living in the most deprived deprivation quintile. Anglicans were at low-risk and Other Christians and Other religions were at somewhat higher risk.

Help-seeking

- Over half (52%) of problem gamblers and a quarter (28%) of moderate-risk gamblers said they wanted help to stop or reduce gambling at some time. These rates are much higher than for adults generally (2%), non-problem (1%) and low-risk (5%) gamblers.
- One in a hundred adults said they had tried to get help to stop or reduce gambling at some time and 42% of these people had tried to do so in the past 12 months.

Impacts of other people's gambling

- A third of adults said they know at least one person that they think currently has, or had, a problem with gambling.
- Around 8% of adults (about 258,500 adults) reported that it affected them personally.
- Adverse financial impacts (21%) were mentioned most often, followed by loss of relationships (9.5%), stress to family (8%), loss or lack of trust (7%), felt anger, frustration or resentment (6.5%).
- Around one in ten adults (11.5%, about 386,000 adults) said there had been an argument in their household about gambling and just over a quarter of these people said there had been an argument in the past 12 months. Most (88%) said it was mainly about someone else's gambling rather than their gambling (8%).
- About one in twelve adults (8%) said they had to go without something they needed or bills weren't paid because too much was spent on gambling. A third of these people said it had happened in the past 12 months. Most (92%) said it was mainly about someone else's gambling rather than theirs (5%).