

The Czech Population's Participation in Gambling



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BACKGROUND: Gambling can lead to the development of a gambling disorder, referred to as problem or pathological gambling. Research shows a relationship between the level of the general population's participation in gambling (gambling participation) and the extent of problem gambling.

AIMS: The aim of the article is to summarise the results of (adult) population surveys focusing on the gambling participation carried out in the Czech Republic.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY: Analysis of data from questionnaire survey on a randomly selected sample of the general population and several omnibus studies of quota samples of the Czech population aged 15–64. **SAMPLE:** General population surveys carried out by the Czech National Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Addiction in 2012–2014: National Survey on Substance Use 2012 (N=2,134), Prevalence of Drug Use among the Czech Population 2012, 2013, and 2014 (N=854, N=868, and N=870 respectively), and Citizen Survey on Attitudes Towards Health and Healthy Lifestyles 2012, 2013, and 2014

(N=1,466, N=1,456, and N=1,466 respectively). **RESULTS:** Participation in gambling activities at least once in their lifetime was reported by about one half of the Czech population (over 60% of the men and 40% of the women), with one third engaging in gambling in the last 12 months. Gambling experience mostly involves lotteries and scratch cards (16–17% in the last 12 months). Gambling activities other than lotteries in the last 12 months were reported by 21–22% of the population (about 30% of the men and 10% of the women). Playing on electronic gaming machines (slot machines) in the last 12 months was reported by about 6–8%, participation in fixed-odds betting and online gambling by 10–15%. **CONCLUSIONS:** Recent trends show an increasing prevalence of current gambling in the general population across all age groups. This significant increase involves especially online gambling among young males, which implies that further research is necessary with respect to the potential risk related to online gambling.

KEY WORDS: GAMBLING – PREVALENCE – GAMBLING PARTICIPATION – GENERAL POPULATION SURVEYS

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