

## Prevalence of Problem Gambling in the Czech Republic



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**Citation:** Mravčík, V., Chomynová, P., Roznerová, T., Drbohlavová, B., Černý, J., Tion Leštinová, Z. (2015). Prevalence problémového hráčství v České republice. *Adiktologie*, 15(4), 310–319.

**BACKGROUND:** Excessive gambling can lead to the development of gambling disorder (problem gambling). **AIMS:** To estimate the prevalence and describe patterns of problem gambling in the Czech Republic. **METHODS:** (1) National Survey 2012, a cross-sectional questionnaire survey on the general population aged 15–64 (N=2,134), which included the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI), (2) omnibus questionnaire survey on population aged 15+ sampled using quotas in 2013 and 2014 (N=1,797 and 1,810 respectively), which included the Lie/Bet test, and (3) omnibus questionnaire survey on general practitioners and paediatricians in 2012 and 2014, which included question on the prevalence of problem (pathological) gamblers (N=551 and 550 respectively). **RESULTS:** According to PGSI, the prevalence of problem gambling in the adult population in 2012 was estimated as 5.1% (7.4% of males and 2.8% of females), about 2.3% were in moderate and high risk, of which 0.6% were in high risk (1.2% of males and 0.0% of females). The results of the Lie/Bet test (score of at least one point) in

2014 showed that 4.9% of the adult population were at risk (7.4% of males and 2.6% of females). According to PGSI, 6.2% of young adults aged 15–34 in 2012, and 5.3% according to the Lie/Bet in 2014 were at risk. The survey among GPs estimated 80–90 thousand problem (pathological) gamblers (0.9–1.0% of the adult population) in 2012 and 90–110 thousand (1.0–1.2%) in 2014. The youngest age group 15–24, had the highest proportion of persons at risk, but those aged 35–44 had the highest proportion of the high-risk category. Playing on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) represents the highest risk of gambling disorder – at least 1/3 of gamblers on EGMs were at risk of problem gambling; for fixed odds betting and on-line gambling it was at least 1/4 of the gamblers. **CONCLUSION:** About 5% of adult Czech population are in risk of a gambling disorder. Of those, 1.5–2.3% are problem gamblers, among those 0.6–1.2% are pathological gamblers. Problem gambling is mostly associated with EGMs, an increase in problem gambling related to fixed odds, live betting and on-line gambling can be expected.

**KEY WORDS:** PROBLEM GAMBLING – PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING – GAMBLING DISORDER – PREVALENCE – ESTIMATES

**Submitted:** 1 / SEPTEMBER / 2015

**Accepted:** 21 / OCTOBER / 2015

**Grant support:** The preparation of this article was supported by PRVOUK-P03/LF1/9, an institutional research support programme, and by the project “National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH-CZ)”, grant number CZ.1.05/2.1.00/03.0078, and the European Regional Development Fund.

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