

Study of gambling and health in Victoria

Gambling problems in Victoria



What is the study?

The Victorian prevalence study 2014 is a telephone survey of 13,554 Victorian adults who were selected randomly from the general population. There were 12,551 surveys using landlines and 1003 using mobile telephones. The study aimed to explore gambling and problem gambling in the Victorian population.

Risk for problem gambling in 2014*

The study found:

- 0.81 per cent of Victorian adults were problem gamblers (an estimated 35,600 Victorian adults)
- 2.79 per cent were moderate risk gamblers (an estimated 122,500 Victorian adults)
- 8.91 per cent were low-risk gamblers (an estimated 391,200 Victorian adults)
- 57.59 per cent were non-problem gamblers (an estimated 2.5 million Victorian adults)
- 29.90 per cent of Victorian adults did not gamble in the past 12 months (an estimated 1.3 million Victorian adults).

The 2014 prevalence of problem gambling excluding mobile-only respondents was 0.72 per cent and the prevalence rate for mobile-only respondents was 1.07 per cent.

Harms associated with gambling

An estimated 2.79 per cent of Victorian adults (approximately 122,500 Victorian adults) reported experiencing problems because of someone else's gambling in the 12 months prior to the study. The question did not cover harm to children nor harm experienced more than one year ago.

In addition, 41.59 per cent of problem gamblers (an estimated 14,790 Victorian adults), 3.13 per cent of moderate-risk gamblers (an estimated 3834 Victorian adults) and 0.46 per cent of low-risk gamblers (an estimated 1800 Victorian adults) reported experiencing problems because of their own gambling.

Changes since 2008

Problem and moderate-risk gambling prevalence did not change from 2008 to 2014. However:

- non-problem gamblers decreased from 64.31 per cent in 2008 to 59.47 per cent in 2014
- low-risk gamblers increased from 5.70 per cent in 2008 to 7.34 per cent in 2014
- non-gamblers increased from 26.93 per cent in 2008 to 30.14 per cent in 2014.

The above comparisons were made with mobile-only respondents excluded. This was important, as the study in 2008 did not include mobile-only respondents.

* The categories for risk of gambling harm used in this study are based on the Problem Gambling Severity Index. They are:

- Non-problem gambler – gambles with no negative consequences.
- Low-risk gambler – experiences a low level of problems with few or no identified negative consequences.
- Moderate-risk gambler – experiences a moderate level of problems leading to some negative consequences.
- Problem gambler – gambles with negative consequences and a possible loss of control.

For more information about what these categories mean, see fact sheet 2: Categories for risk of gambling harm.