

How to assess the harmfulness of various forms of gambling

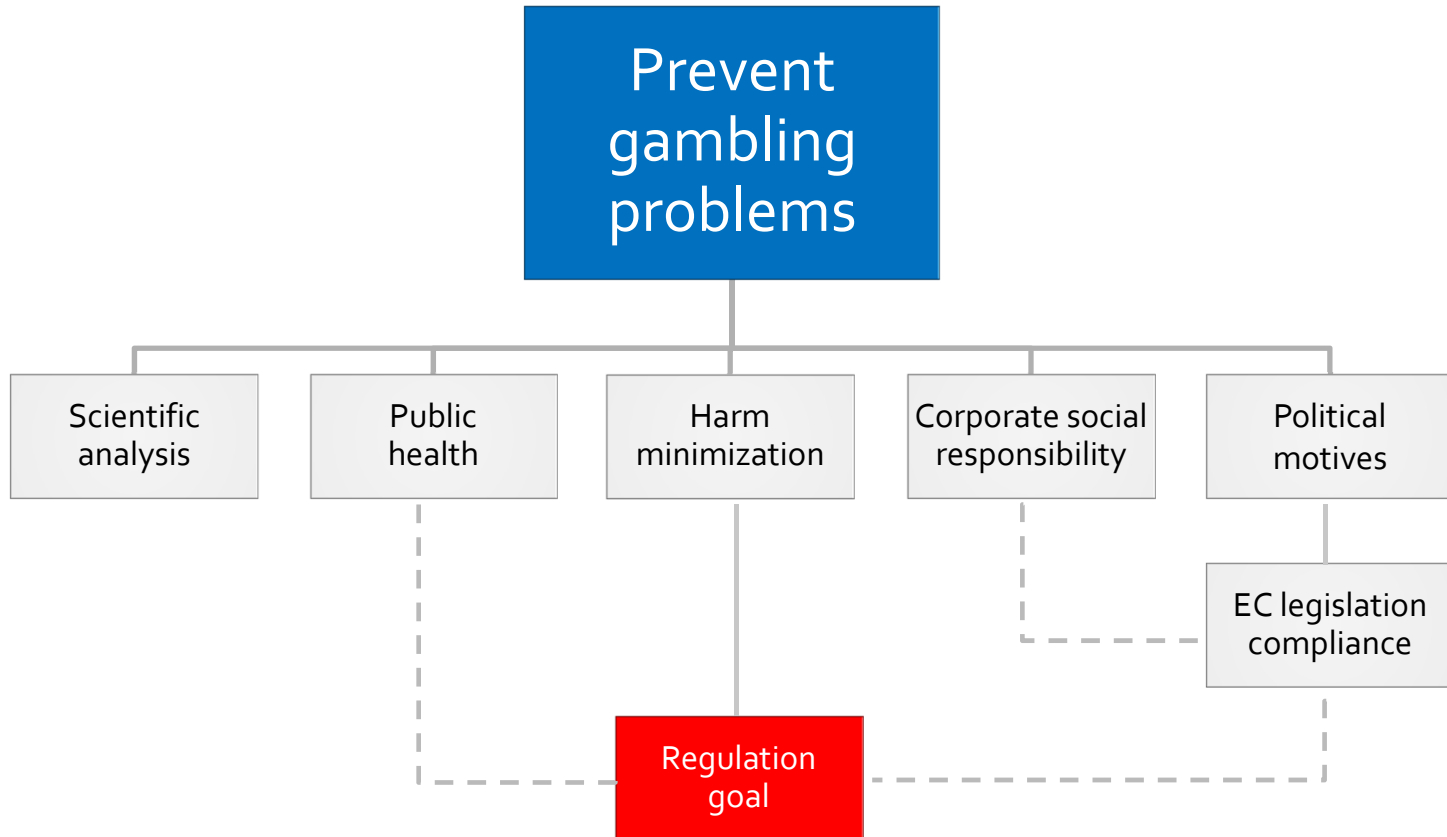
- A methodological discussion from a regulatory perspective

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Why assess harmfulness?



How to assess the harmfulness of various forms of gambling

1) Analysis of data from population studies

E.g. Binde, 2011

2) Help seeking statistics

Help lines, treatment centers, mutual support groups

3) Risk assessment instruments

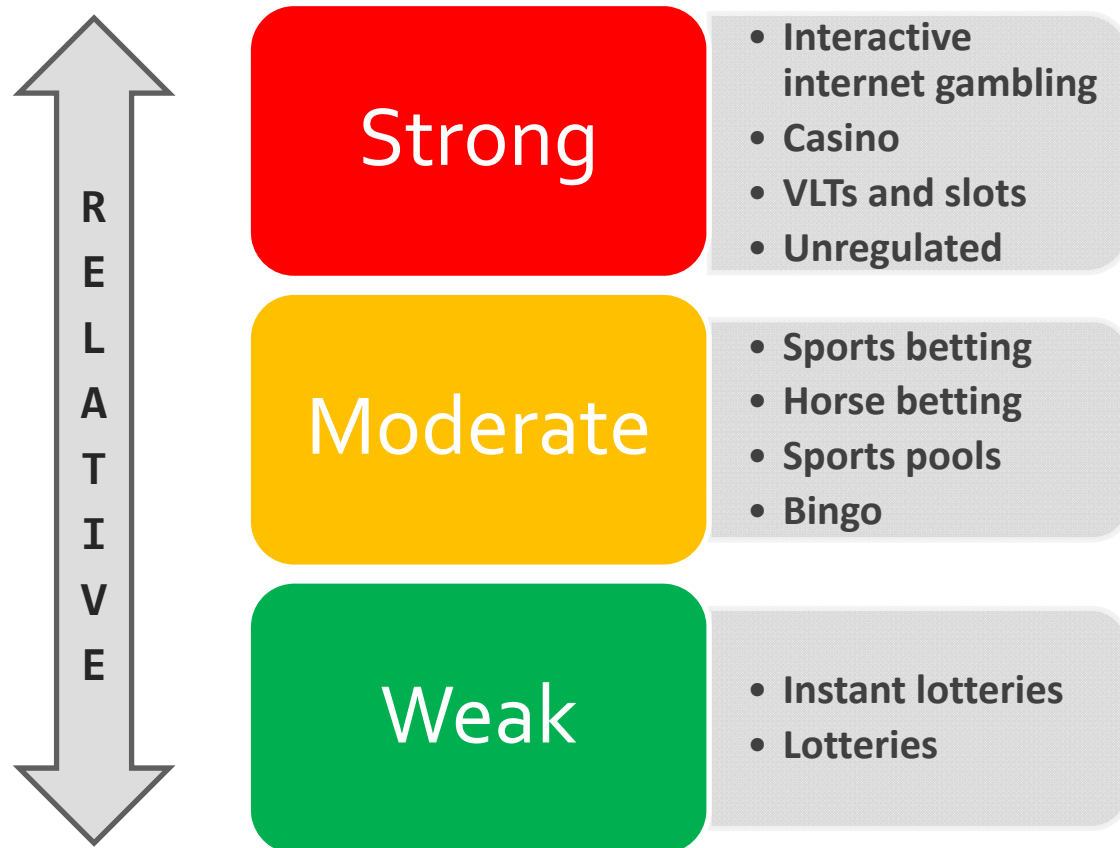
GAM-GaRD, “Tool to evaluate the risk potential of different gambling types” (Meyer et al., 2011) & Tools for Responsible Games (Airas, 2011)

(Other ways)

Example – analysis of prevalence data





association between forms of gambling and problem gambling

(Binde, 2011)



Analysis of prevalence data

– strengths and weaknesses –

-  **Representative population level data**
-  **Based on validated PG instrument**
-  **Problem gamblers are typically few in the sample**
When divided between specific types of games
-  **Often out-of-date data**
Harmfulness may change rapidly
-  **Methodological problems**
E.g. which specific forms of gambling cause problems for an individual?




Help seeking statistics

– strengths and weaknesses –

- 👍 **Close to the reality of gambling problems**
- 👍 **Based on people who undoubtedly have problems**
- 👍 **Reliable self-report of types of games causing problems**
- 👍 **Can give strong signals of increased harm**
- 👎 **Less severe problems are not visible**
- 👎 **Lag between onset of problem and seeking help**
- 👎 **Not representative of the population**
Self-selected, asymmetries in information about available help, influence of social and cultural factors

Risk assessment instruments

– strengths and weaknesses –

-  **Pro-active**
-  **Directly useful for prevention**
-  **Based on knowledge from problem gambling research**

 **Artificial**

 **Incomplete**

No instrument include all possible factors but instead a selection; this is a feature that makes them practical to use but also a limitation that should be considered

Other methods

Quantitative studies focused on specific forms of gambling

Qualitative studies

Player tracking

General complications

in assessing harmfulness

Harmfulness is relative and depends on the mix of games on the market

Harmfulness may change rapidly

New modes of availability, altered regulation, change in game features

Problem gamblers are attracted to new games

Players adapt to risk

Learning from experience

Number of players harmed vs. percentage of the general population harmed

Small games vs. big games

Conclusion

– from a regulatory perspective –

There is no perfect method to assess the relative harmfulness of various forms of gambling

Therefore, it is advantageous to use information gathered by all available methods

This requires an active commitment to constantly monitor harmfulness – there is no “quick fix”

More research is needed on problem gambling in relation to specific forms of gambling

More research is needed on the effectiveness of various regulatory actions and approaches

The background of the slide is a blue-tinted image. On the left, there is a close-up of a roulette table with various betting numbers and symbols. On the right, there is a close-up of a roulette wheel with a ball in motion.

The anthropology of gambling

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