

## WOMEN & GAMBLING DISORDER

There is not a lot of literature and studies available in Italy, in Europe and in fact all over the world related to women and problem gambling. The few data and research that is there is not very specific but extrapolated from in general/mostly male population research studies. Nevertheless, female access to gambling is increasing, and consequently, more and more women are involved in (pathological) gambling problems.

Recent studies (Ulla Romild 2019) in Sweden tell us that for the first time, the majority of Swedes with a gambling problem are women, as the health authority's latest survey figures suggest. This seems to be a tendency in USA too. The increasing amount of gambling by women is done online, and the "new game forms" on the internet which are changing gaming patterns, and aggressive advertising targeting women could be one explanation for the rise in women gambling and experiencing problems.

We know how women are crucial in family and society, and how their gambling problems, often underestimated, can have a deep impact on social and personal life. We are particularly aware, after our recent investigations, about how many problems women have to face while seeking for treatment and how difficult it is to find a specific women oriented treatment.

Nevertheless worldwide, only a few but interesting experimental studies or specific treatment approaches have been realized. But they remain unknown to most of the other clinicians, instead of giving their contribution to a common patrimony. Well, that is the wish and aim of our group: **to gather all our efforts, to share and discuss and improve research and treatment on this topic.**

I (Fulvia Prever), together with many other colleagues tried to converge on this idea and gave birth to an international transcultural network. *Women and Gambling Disorder. An international female perspective on clinic and research* \* brought together a wide selection of female professionals with expertise in Problem Gambling&Women, reflecting ongoing international research and clinical work across the world.

During last 10 years, thanks to EASG association we had in all of the conferences a Women Session, and **since two years there was a new improvement: a dedicated slot on EASG website**, where you will find a place to connect with me and all of us, to share your ideas. This will be helpful to invite you as speaker in next Women Session and to find interested partners for further research.

In this times of coronavirus, lockdown, anxiety and depression, women are special burden in family; they are smart working while handling children care, elderly care, and often facing difficult relationship with no way out. This is leading to an increase of domestic violence in a lot of countries, and could provoke a urge to escape from tough reality: the momentaneous closure of gambling casinos and other venues could lead to a dangerous shift to online gambling and opening new forms of problems connected with it.

**Our network is here, alive and connected, sharing observations and ideas from each country and continent.** We are trying to find new ways, from a female perspective to support and deal with women and their gambling experience and improve research to be able to give them the best form of treatment.

**In Covid-19 times, when international meetings and conferences will not be easy to organize, definitely not in near future, we would like to find new ways to keep in touch and promote our studies.**

**Please use the following link / email address: [fulvia.prever@gmail.com](mailto:fulvia.prever@gmail.com) to join the network and get updated with all our proposals and activities.** We could think to organize a Women virtual session in next conference, where all of you can send your presentation on the topic and video and other interesting material; a project which involves you all in such an important international gambling conference event as the EASG meetings are. I am looking forward to your questions and comments.

*Dott.ssa Fulvia Prever, Psychologist, Psychotherapist, NHS Addiction Clinic -Milan  
Scientific Director of Women & Gambling Project SUN(N)NCOOP  
ALEA (Association of Studies on Gambling and Risky Behaviour)  
AISDiCo (Italian Academy of Studies on Behavioural Addictions) Board member  
Women & Gambling Referral for EASG  
Women and Behavioural Addiction Referral for ISSBA*