

# Changes in Gambling Phenotypes and Associated Characteristics in a Swiss Treatment-Seeking Sample from 2018 to 2024

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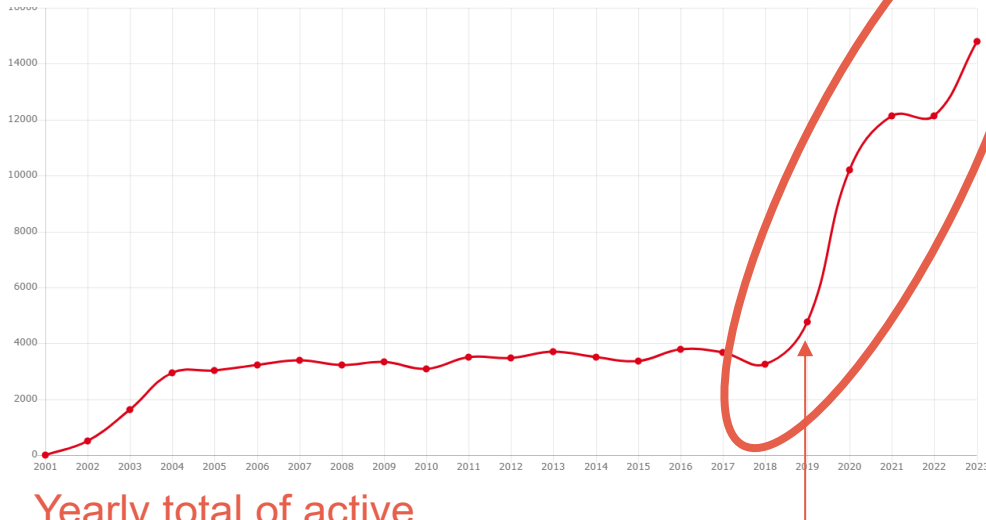
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I have **no** financial interests or relationships to disclose regarding the subject matter of this presentation.

# Background:



Yearly total of active gambling bans in Swiss Casinos reported by the "Eidgenössische Spielbankenkommission (ESBK)"<sup>1</sup>

Switzerland goes online: gambling & sports betting.



U.S. data<sup>2</sup>: Legalization (2018) linked to

- › lower creditworthiness
- › reduced quality of life
- › increased risk for vulnerable groups

**Aim:** To examine the impact of legal changes on gambling behavior in a clinical population in Switzerland.

1. Eidgenössische Spielbankenkommission (ESBK). Spielsperre – ESBK – Eidgenössische Spielbankenkommission. Accessed April 10, 2025. <https://www.esbk.admin.ch/de/spielsperre>

2. Hollenbeck B, Larsen P, Proserpio D. The Financial Consequences of Legalized Sports Gambling. Published online July 23, 2024. Accessed March 14, 2025. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=4903302>

# Hypotheses:

- (1) a shift in problematic gambling in this population toward newly legalized forms such as online gambling and sports betting,
- (2) individuals with problematic sports betting exhibit fewer psychiatric comorbidities than others, and
- (3) there are differences in payment arrears between individuals with problematic sports betting compared to individuals with other gambling behaviors.

## Hypothesis 1

### **Conventional (n = 32)**

- terrestrial casino (n=25)
- financial betting (n=3)
- lottery tickets (n=1)
- terrestrial casino & financial betting (n=1)
- terrestrial casino & lottery tickets (n=2)

### **Combination (n = 22)**

- online casino & terrestrial casino

### **Novel (n = 66)**

- online casino (n=13)
- online casino & lottery tickets (n=1)
- online casino & financial betting (n=2)
- sports betting & financial betting (n=2)
- sports betting & lottery tickets (n=2)
- sports betting (n=46)

## Hypotheses 2 & 3

### **Sports betting (n = 50)**

- sports betting (n=46)
- sports betting & lottery tickets (n=2)
- sports betting & financial betting (n=2)

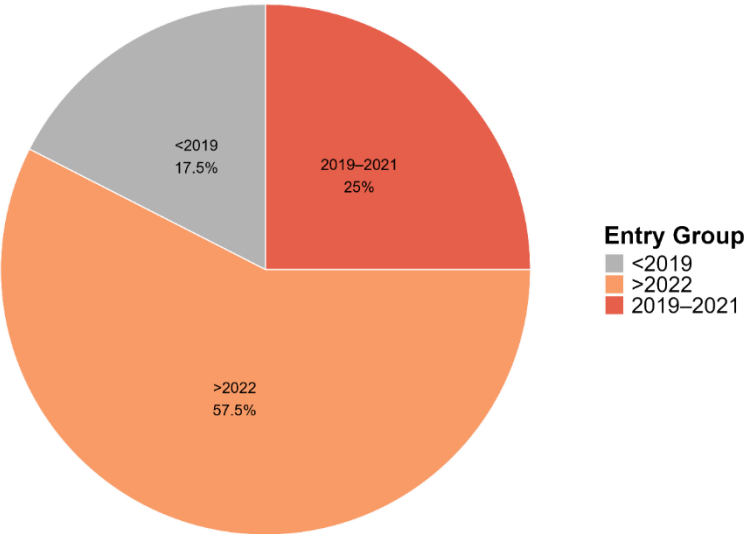
### **Others (n = 70)**

- terrestrial casino (n=25)
- financial betting (n=3)
- lottery tickets (n=1)
- terrestrial casino & financial betting (n=1)
- terrestrial casino & lottery tickets (n=2)
- online casino & terrestrial casino (n=22)
- online casino (n=13)
- online casino & lottery tickets (n=1)
- online casino & financial betting (n=2)

# Methods:

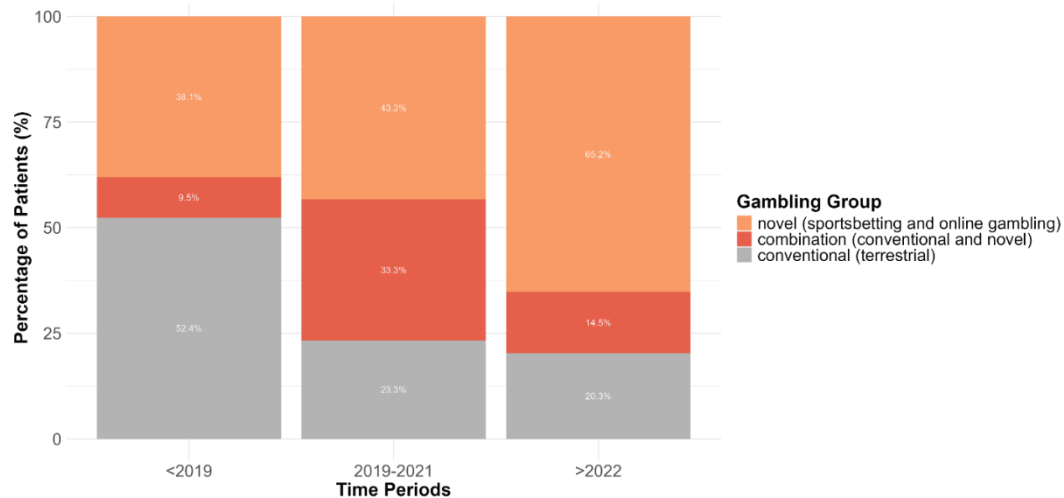
- › Retrospective data from 120 patients treated for gambling disorders between 2018 and 2024
- › Information from the patient management system on:
  - › gambling type
  - › debts
  - › age
  - › comorbidities
- › Analysis:
  - › Chi-square test
  - › Ordinal logistic regression
  - › Mann-Whitney U test

Increase in treatment-seeking individuals after 2022



	Hypothese 1			Hypothese 2 & 3		Total
	Conventional	Combination	Novel	sportsbetting	others	N = 120
Mean Age yr. (SD)	43.8 (8.98)	36.3 (8.39)	38.0 (9.59)	38.3 (9.63)	39.8 (9.55)	39.21 (9.57)
[min; max]	[32.3; 60.6]	[24.3; 58.6]	[22.1; 62.1]	[23.4; 62.1]	[22.1; 60.6]	[22.12; 62.05]
Treatment						
Outpatient (n)	25	13	48	34	52	86
Inpatient (n)	7	9	18	16	18	34
Mean psych. Comorb. (SD)	1.69 (1.42)	2.41 (1.89)	1.48 (1.24)	1.40 (1.28)	1.93 (1.54)	1.71 (1.46)
[min; max]	[0; 5]	[0; 7]	[0; 5]	[0; 5]	[0; 7]	[0; 7]
Mean Debts in CHF (SD)	108'687 (244'679)	95'212 (123'057)	166'357 (421'013)	152'255 (367'433)	127'365 (318'948)	136'661 (335'870)
[min; max]	[0; 1'200'000]	[300; 500'000]	[0; 2'000'000]	[0; 2'000'000]	[0; 2'000'000]	[0; 2'000'000]

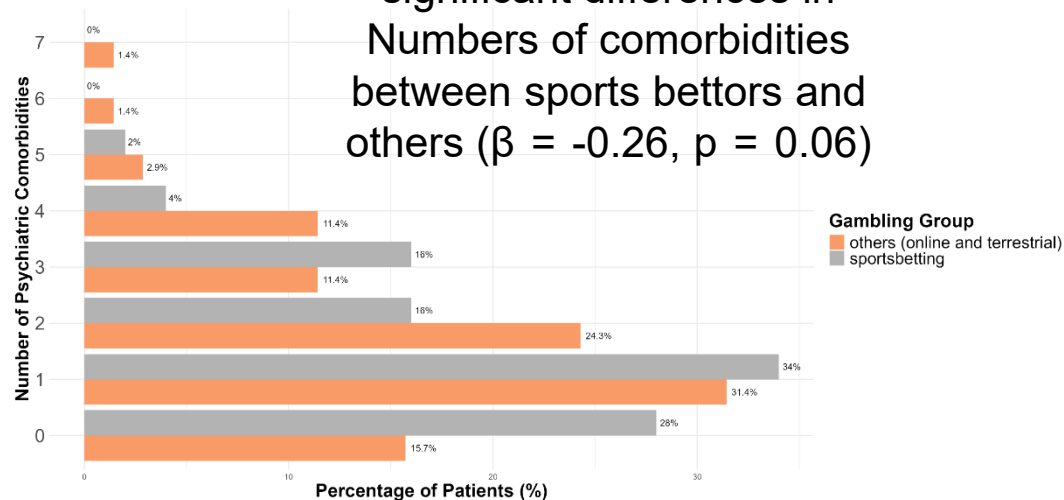
# Results: Hypothesis 1 supported; Hypotheses 2 & 3 not supported



**Hypothesis 3:** Differences in payment arrears between sports betting and other behaviors were not significant ( $W = 757.5$ ,  $p = 0.65$ )

**Hypothesis 1:** There is change in Patterns of problematic gambling ( $\chi^2 = 14.65$ ,  $p = 0.01$ )

**Hypothesis 2:** There are no significant differences in Numbers of comorbidities between sports bettors and others ( $\beta = -0.26$ ,  $p = 0.06$ )



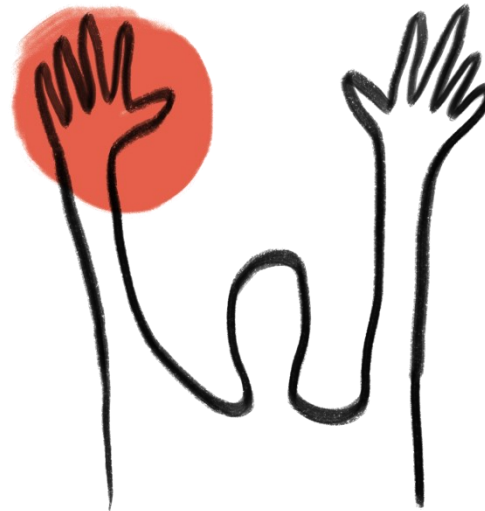
# Key Findings & Implications:

- › **Legalization led to a shift in gambling behavior in our sample**
  - › Decline in conventional gambling
  - › Rise in online gambling & sports betting
- › **No significant clinical differences observed in our sample**
  - › Sports betting vs. other forms:
    - › Comparable levels of comorbidities and indebtedness

## Implications:

- Monitor gambling trends over time
- Regulate gambling-related advertising
- Strengthen early detection and intervention
- Apply harm reduction strategies across all gambling types

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