



Behavioural Addictions Report 2020

Gambling, video game use and compulsive internet use in the surveys on drugs and other addictions in Spain

Summary Report

This 2020 edition is the 3rd annual report and contains updated information on the Spanish population 15-64 years old. Its main objective is to contribute to the knowledge of the current situation of behavioural addictions and, specifically, on gambling, compulsive Internet use and possible video game use disorder in Spain. In this way, the aim is to help in the prevention of misuse and possible problems associated with these activities.

Methodology

The two main population surveys of the Spanish Observatory on Drugs and Addictions (EDADES, on general population aged 15-64, and ESTUDES, on students aged 14-18) are part of the National Statistical Plan and promoted by the Government Delegation for the National Plan on Drugs, with the collaboration of the Autonomous Communities and Cities. Both surveys are conducted every other year since 1994.

From 2014 to present, the EDADES and ESTUDES surveys have included questions related to behavioural addictions, which are analysed in the successive annual editions of the Report on Behavioural Addictions: Gambling, video game use and compulsive internet use in the EDADES and ESTUDES surveys on drugs and other addictions in Spain.

This 2020 edition contains updated information from the XIII edition of the Survey on Alcohol and Other Drugs in Spain (EDADES 2019/2020). This survey was based on 17,899 valid questionnaires answered by the general population between 15 and 64 years of age living in households in Spain. The sample is collected throughout Spain and is nationally representative. The fieldwork was conducted between February and March 2020, prior to the declaration of the State of Alarm for the COVID-19 pandemic.

This edition of the EDADES survey has included a module on gambling (including Internet and non-internet gambling, types of gambling, the largest amount of money spent in a day and the



DSM-V scale to assess gambling disorder and problematic gambling) and a module on Internet use (CIUS scale to assess compulsive Internet use "Compulsive Internet Use Scale").

Main updated results. EDADES 2019/20 survey.

The reports highlights that gambling is a widespread activity in our society. In 2019/20, 64.2% of the population aged 15 to 64 has used gambling (non-internet, internet or both) in the last year (66.8% in men and 61.5% in women). As in previous years, there continues to be a large difference between the prevalence of online gambling (6.7%) and non-internet gambling (63.6%).

Regarding internet gambling activities, 6.7% of the population aged 15 to 64 reports internet gambling in the last year, a figure that shows a clear upward trend (3.5% in 2017). The percentage is higher in men (9.1%) than in women (4.2%) and among the youngest, decreasing in prevalence as age increases.

In the population that has used internet gambling, the predominant game among men is sports betting (58.8%), while among women, lottery-type games, including "primitiva" or "bonoloto", predominate (45.5%). The maximum amount played in a single day among most players is between 6 and 30 euros.

In relation to non-internet gambling activities, the report reveals that 63.6% of the population aged 15 to 64 years say they have used non-internet gambling in the last year, a slightly higher figure among men (65.9%) than among women (61.2%). This figure also seems to confirm an upward trend since the beginning of the series (59.5% in 2017).

As age increases, the percentage of people with last year non-internet gambling also increases. In 2019/20, this figure ranges from 31.4% among the youngest to 77.1% among the population aged 55 to 64.

The most common games used were lotteries (94.4%), followed by instant lotteries ("scratch cards") with 24.9% and "quinielas" and/or "quinigol" (14.6%). Among men, "quinielas" are the third choice for non-internet gambling, while among women, this position is for bingo games.

As is the case with internet gambling, the largest amount of money spent in a single day on non-internet gambling activities is in the range of 6 to 30 euros.



Possible problematic gambling or gambling disorder

The report states that gambling activities are very popular among the Spanish population, but the most part cannot be considered problematic. In the EDADES 2019/20 survey, for second time in the series, a specific scale based on DSM-V diagnostic criteria has been used to obtain estimation on the prevalence of possible pathological or problematic gambling at the population level. With this tool, it is estimated that, in 2019/20, 1.6% of the Spanish population aged 15 to 64 would suffer a possible problematic gambling (DSM-V ≥ 1 and < 4) and 0.6% would present a possible gambling disorder (DSM-V ≥ 4). These figures are lower than the previous ones seen in the 2017 survey, when prevalence estimations were 2.0% for possible problematic gambling and a 0.5% for possible gambling disorder.

When comparing the way of gambling of the general population with the individuals who show a possible problematic gambling, the latter present a higher frequency of gambling and a higher average amount of money spent in a single gambling day. It is also observed that potential problematic gamblers present a higher prevalence of risky behaviours, such as: alcohol intoxication, binge drinking, at-risk alcohol consumption and daily tobacco use.

Possible compulsive internet use

The report shows that internet use is a widespread activity among the Spanish population. According to the EDADES 2019/20 survey, almost the entire population has used Internet for recreational purposes at some time in their lives (95.3%), in the last year (94.5%) or in the last month (93.8%). By age, the highest prevalence (around 98%) is observed among individuals aged 15 to 44, while prevalence drops to 85% among those over 55 years old, with hardly any differences between men and women.

The CIUS (Compulsive Internet Use Scale) was used as a tool to estimate possible compulsive Internet use in the EDADES survey series since the 2015 edition. Its analysis indicates that, in 2019/20, 3.7% of the population aged 15 to 64 suffers a possible compulsive Internet use. This figure has no real differences by sex, with 3.9% prevalence in men and 3.5% in women. This estimation represents an increase compared to what was detected in 2015 and 2017 (2.9% global population estimate on both editions).

The highest prevalence of possible compulsive Internet use is found among the youngest age group, reaching 11.3% in the 15-24 years old, a pattern that is seen across the entire series.



The prevalence of alcohol intoxication and binge drinking in the last 30 days, as well as cannabis use in the last 30 days, among the population aged 15 to 64 presenting a possible compulsive internet use is higher than the one seen in the general population of the same age.

Conclusions

This report shows that gambling and the use of the Internet for recreational purposes are widespread activities in our society. In 2019/20, 64.2% of the population from 15 to 64 years old declares the use of gambling activities (internet, non-internet or both), while 94.5% of them have used internet for recreational purposes.

The study points to a rising prevalence of gambling, especially among younger age groups in the case of online gambling. This is not the case for the estimates of possible problematic gambling or gambling disorder prevalence, which shows a small decrease comparing with 2017 data.

Nonetheless, the figures shown, in special those for online gambling among young people, shows the importance to intensify prevention activities from different spheres, with a focus on environmental prevention measures.