
PRESS STATEMENT

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Responsible Gambling Trust publishes gambling-related advertising research review

The Responsible Gambling Trust has today published a report reviewing the international research on gambling-related advertising.

The report by Dr Per Binde of the University of Gothenburg pays particular attention to studies that concern the impact of such advertising on participation in gambling and the prevalence of problem gambling. A key aim of the report is to provide useful recommendations about the potential of research approaches in producing reliable and meaningful results.

Dr Binde says:

“It is very difficult, if not impossible, to assess how many people gamble excessively because of direct or indirect influence from advertising. Part of the difficulty of measuring the impact of advertising on problem gambling is that it is, in general, most probably relatively small.

“However, the nature and mechanisms of the impact of gambling advertising, as well as other aspects of it – such as its volume and the ethical questions that it raises – are possible to study in a variety of ways. Thus while *absolute* extent of impact is difficult to assess, it is possible to study the *relative* impact on various groups of people by different forms of advertising. Such research results are valuable for harm prevention and responsible marketing as they differentiate between relatively harmless and relatively risky advertising.”

The Responsible Gambling Strategy Board, the Gambling Commission’s independent adviser on responsible gambling matters, has identified the current effectiveness of rules and controls on marketing and advertising of commercial gambling as an area where further research and evaluation of the evidence is needed in relation to harm prevention.

Commenting Marc Etches, the Chief Executive of the Responsible Gambling Trust, said:

“There has been a marked increase in the amount of gambling advertising on our televisions since a change to the law came into force in 2007. People are understandably concerned that this increased prominence might lead to an increase in problem gambling and the harms associated with it.

“In order to understand the impact of advertising on problem gambling we first need to assess what evidence is available and how best to conduct research that will deliver reliable and meaningful results. This report is a necessary and very useful first step as we consider how to best shape our future research programme in this area. In the meantime, we are pleased to share this work with the government and the advertising authorities so they can consider future regulatory implications.”

The Responsible Gambling Trust will now provide a copy of this report to the Committee of Advertising Practice and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice who have been asked by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to evaluate its findings.

-ENDS-

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Responsible Gambling Trust is the leading charity in the UK committed to minimising gambling-related harm. As an independent national charity funded by donations from the gambling industry, the Responsible Gambling Trust funds education, prevention and treatment services and commissions research to broaden public understanding of gambling-related harm. The aim is to stop people getting into problems with their gambling, and ensure that those that do develop problems receive fast and effective treatment and support. (www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk).
- The Responsible Gambling Trust raises a minimum of £5million each year from the gambling industry operating in Britain within a voluntary (donation based) system and funds research, education, prevention and treatment services. Funding priorities are guided by the national strategy advised by the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The latest strategy was published in December 2012.
- Dr Per Binde is an Associate Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Dr Binde’s interest in gambling is broad, including regulation issues and problem gambling, with a focus on the cultural roots of gambling and its social contexts. Dr Binde has conducted studies based on participant observation among gamblers, in-depth interviews with problem gamblers, examination of prevalence survey data, and the comparative analysis of gambling in cultures of the past and present. His writings on gambling have appeared in journals such as International Gambling Studies, Journal of Gambling Studies, Gaming Law Review and Journal of Gambling Issues, as well as in reports, book chapters and books. Dr Binde is member of the international advisory board of the Swedish Longitudinal Gambling Studies (Swelogs) and since 2007 member of the board of directors of the Swedish Gambling Authority.
- Dr Binde’s report, ‘Gambling advertising: A critical research review’, was published by the Responsible Gambling Trust on 3 April 2014 and is available online at <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/Research-Publications>.