



The Gambling Research Center of the University of Hohenheim

Newsletter February (1/2019)

Sign up for the 16th Symposium on Gambling

Next March (12 and 13 March 2019), the Gambling Research Center of the University of Hohenheim is organising the 16th Symposium on Gambling. Next to many different research talks regarding, among other things, regulation, technical developments in the gambling sector, or issues on addiction, two panel discussions with top-class speakers will take place. The speakers will discuss current regulatory necessities and prevention of gambling addiction as remit of the state. Please bear in mind that registration to the symposium is only possible until 25 February 2019.

Please also note the new venue (Audimax, Garbenstraße 30, 70593 Stuttgart).

Agenda and Registration

Current Developments in Europe

Since 1 January, the Swedish online gambling market has been open. In total, 60 companies (some of them with multiple websites) are now holding a licence for the Swedish online market offering their products legally. As already reported, by opening the market, financial flows to illegal providers can be blocked, illegal gambling advertising is criminalised, warnings can be placed on illegal online casino websites by online providers, and various gambler protection mechanisms were established. It remains to be seen whether liberalising the Swedish market can build on Denmark's success story, which has often been mentioned. The Swedish regulatory authority Spelinspektionen already issued a warning to providers which have not connected their system to the obligatory state exclusion scheme. In the event of violations, the supervisory authority can impose heavy fines or even a licence withdrawal.

Currently, there are some developments in the UK. In December 2018, British gambling firms voluntarily agreed to stop airing advertisements during live sports events on TV. The extent of gambling advertising on TV has recently irritated the British public. Self-commitment is to enter into force in summer 2019. The British government is also discussing a ban on payments for



gambling services by means of credit or debit cards. The Gambling Commission will first tackle this issue before taking further measures. Several English banks allowed consumers to limit or restrict payments via online banking to gambling providers. Research by the BBC in recent weeks has revealed inconsistencies in the data of the British self-exclusion platform “GAMSTOP”. More than 50,000 people have already excluded themselves via this platform. Already in November 2018, the supervisory authority imposed fines totaling 14 million pounds on companies that contravened licence terms (e.g. counter-terrorism, prevention of money laundering, and gambler protection).

The nearly total ban on gambling advertising in Italy will unfold its full force not before July. With the intervention of the Italian professional football league Serie A shortly before Christmas, a grace period could be negotiated with the government. Other advertising for gambling has been prohibited since 1 January 2019. A number of tax increases came into force on the same date.

In Switzerland, too, a new Federal Gambling Act has been in force since 1 January. The new law enables legal online casino games in Switzerland. However, this only applies to providers who already have a terrestrial casino licence in Switzerland. Thus, foreign providers are de facto excluded. As a result, some well-known providers have already voluntarily withdrawn from the Swiss market in order to not fall victim to Internet censorship. However, some domestic providers holding licences cooperate with foreign companies that have the respective know-how for online business. Until 1 July 2019, a transitional regulation will still apply, as only then will the regular online licenses be issued. As of then, foreign (illegal) providers without a licence are to be rigorously censored.



Newsflash

Ruling on Illegal Gambling

Already on 18 October 2018, the 15th Civil Chamber of the State Court of Koblenz prohibited a Gibraltar-based provider to offer their products to people located in Germany (Az. 15 O 184/17). The defendant company mediated betting online on the outcome of state lotteries. One of the state lottery companies has filed a competitive action for an injunction. The Court affirmed that view and granted the plaintiff damages. The ruling is not yet final.

Further details:

Lenné Law Firm

State Court Koblenz

Sanctions Against Betway

The Belgian gambling supervisory authority has initiated sanction proceedings against the provider betway. The allegations against the company relate to the lack of transparency regarding the ownership structure and the accumulation of licences. The company could face a heavy fine or loss of license due to the misconduct.

Further details:

The Brussels Times

Report on Illegal Gambling in Denmark

On 30 December 2018, the Danish gambling supervisory authority “Spillemyndigheden” published a report on its efforts in the fight against illegal gambling. In its report, the authority focusses on the online market, which is surveilled by means of permanent web searches. Websites without a Danish licence and in Danish are first warned and then blocked by the Danish telecommunications providers if necessary. From the decreasing number of illegal gambling websites combined with consistent market surveillance, the authority concludes that liberalisation has been a success.

Further details:

Spillemyndigheden

Greens and Christian Democrats Find Coalition Agreement in Hesse



The Hessian coalition partners included some statements of intent into their recently published coalition agreement (p. 86). The regional government aims for a qualitative approach when granting concessions on sports betting. In addition, it commits to generally more coherent and thus legally safer gambling regulation in Germany.

Further details:

Coalition Agreement

Non-regulated Market in Germany Grows Steadily

According to the annual report of the gambling supervisory authorities of the federal states for 2017, the illegal market grew between 2016 and 2017 by further three percentage points to a current 22% share of the total market. During the same period, the German gambling market grew overall by 6% to 14,173 million euros in gross gaming earnings. However, a large proportion of this growth is accounted for by the non-regulated market, in particular, casino games and sports betting.

Further details:

Gambling Supervisory Authorities of the Federal States



Research

Publications presented in this section merely represent the views of their respective authors. Publications were chosen to provide recipients with insights into the current scientific discourse. We intend to neutrally summarise current scientific publications.

Review of the Study “Expertise on the Scientific Evidence of Gambler and Youth Protection Measures in the Second Amendment of the German Interstate Treaty on Gambling (2012): A Systematic Review”

The literature overview by Jens Kalke and Tobias Hayer on measures for gambler protection is now available. Only quantitative primary studies published in peer-reviewed journals in English or German by the end of 2016 were considered. Many studies come from Canada. Only five primary studies from Germany were added to the overview. Based on the 115 studies included in the study, 15 recommendations for action were formulated.

These recommendations for action can certainly be accepted without reservation. However, not only the social benefits but also the social costs of the respective measures should be taken into account. This aspect is missing.

The recommendations for action on advertising restrictions, availability restrictions, and technical gambler protection are absent or very poor and do not reflect the current state of scientific discussion. This clearly shows the limitations of the approach chosen in the study.

However, if there are no quantitative primary studies in peer-reviewed journals on specific measures, this does not mean that scientific statements cannot be made.

Based on the experiences with tobacco and alcohol advertising, it is possible to draw scientifically sound conclusions for the regulation of gambling advertising (see Becker, T.: Werbung für Produkte mit einem Suchtgefährdungspotenzial: Tabak-, Alkohol und Glücksspielwerbung aus rechtlichen, ökonomischer und psychologischer Sicht. Series of Publications on Gambling Research Volume 5 Frankfurt: Peter Lang 2010). Also here, the rich marketing literature serves as a basis, which deals comprehensively with advertising effectiveness and advertising success. Recent neurobiological studies complement this.

Based on the available scientific literature, deeper conclusions can also be drawn regarding the relationship between availability and pathological gambling behaviour (see Becker, T.: Verfügbarkeit und Sucht beim Automatenenspiel. Series of Publications on Gambling Research Volume 15 Frankfurt: Peter Lang 2015).

The recommendations for action are also very cautious with regard to recommendations for action on technical gambler protection, although there is also a broad consensus among researchers on the significance of individual features, such as event frequency (see Meyer, G., Fiebig, M., Häfeli, J. & Mörsen, C. (2011). Development of an assessment tool to evaluate the risk potential of different gambling types. International Gambling Studies, 11(2), 221-236).

On the other hand, the approach chosen by the authors largely ensures that no “fact-based evaluation of the German Interstate Treaty on Gambling” or statement saying “there is no alternative to facts” is portrayed, which in reality is a statement in the interest of the respective client. In this regard, we fully agree with the authors. Ultimately, in our opinion, the scientific discourse shows whether the scientific pursuit of truth is in the foreground, or whether the



interests of clients are catered for without reflection. However, it is understandable that this discourse is often incomprehensible to non-researchers and that opinions can hardly be distinguished from scientific statements. This is the merit of the present study, which clearly shows the aspects that quantitative primary-studies have examined and not examined so far.

However, non-researchers and regulators should not conclude that scientific statements beyond the authors' recommendations are not possible.

Sources:

[Link to the Study](#)

A Meta-analysis of Brief Personalized Feedback Interventions for Problematic Gambling

In their meta-analysis, Peter et al. investigate the extent to which personalised feedback on personal gambling behaviour as an easy-to-implement intervention, e.g. on slot machines or in online gambling, affects the time and money invested in gambling. These reports often compare individual gambling behavior with a standard group ("You have spent X % more money than...").

The study contains 16 interventions of such kind from 11 different studies, each of which examined such an intervention in relation to a control group. There is a weak positive effect for these interventions. These interventions seem to be particularly effective for individuals with more intensive gambling behaviour and in connection with further information such as the probability of winning and losing, etc. Feedback in the context of psychological test scores, on the other hand, seems to mitigate the effectiveness of the interventions.

The authors recommend to use these simple gambler protection interventions. However, they also point to a potential boomerang effect, meaning that some gamblers would intensify their gambling behaviour on the basis of the comparison. For this reason, feedback for different groups of gamblers should be individualised.

Sources:

[Journal of Gambling Studies](#)

Transformation of Sports Betting into a Rapid and Continuous Gambling Activity: a Grounded Theoretical Investigation of Problem Sports Betting in Online Settings

Parke and Parke argue in their article that online sports betting is increasingly developing into a pure game of chance due to technical developments. They underline this by observing that an increasing number of gamblers with sports betting problems are entering therapy. This is attributed to developments such as the introduction of live betting, cash out options, newer fast deposit options, payout retrieval options, betting on half-time scores or on unknown amateur competitions, and the constant availability of betting apps.

The authors use behavioural data and in-depth interviews of 19 subjects, which can be classified as problematic gamblers and sports betting users. From their data, they conclude



that the increasing event frequency also boosted the damage potential of sports betting. The authors recommend to provide better gambler protection by means of more game interruptions in the sense of pauses, e.g. when placing stakes, etc. This can be implemented both by legal requirements obligatory for the provider and by gamblers themselves (Responsible Gambling).

Sources:

[Journal of Gambling Studies](#)

Social Influences Normalize Gambling-related Harm Among Higher Risk Gamblers

In their study, Russel et al. examine, how direct social contacts influence gambling behaviour. The authors compare non-gamblers with different groups of gamblers showcasing different levels of problematic gambling behavior. They use the data from 784 Australian respondents on their social networks as a basis for this. For the analysis, they use the egocentric network analysis and compare the different groups by means of variance analysis. According to their analysis, problematic gamblers have an above-average number of gamblers and problematic gamblers in their network. The authors conclude from their analyses that social relationships normalise gambling use in general, but also problematic gambling behaviour. They therefore recommend focussing not only on individual interventions to limit damage, but also increasingly on the social norms that become entrenched in such networks.

Sources:

[Journal of Behavioral Addictions](#)

Factors Associated with Social Casino Gaming Among Adolescents Across Game Types

In their study, Veselka et al. investigate adolescents' use of "social casinos", i.e. free offers similar to games of chance. The authors distinguish between different types of games (poker, slot machines, and Facebook games) and examine ways in which young people use these services. In three Canadian provinces, 10,035 students aged 13 to 19 were interviewed.

The results of the study show that 12.4% of this cohort have already taken advantage of such offers during the last three months. Compared to those who do not use "social casinos", the users of these offers also gamble more frequently in monetary terms and can be classified more frequently as problematic gamblers. Smokers, men, and teenagers with peers or parents who gamble are particularly frequent users of these simulated gambling offers.

Sources:

[BMC Public Health](#)

Effects of Gambling Diagnostic Criteria Changes from DSM-IV to DSM-5 on Mental Disorder Comorbidity Across Younger, Middle-Aged, and Older Adults in a Nationally Representative Sample



In their article, Nicholson et al. analyse changes that the diagnostic tool DSM-5 produces compared to DSM-IV for the diagnosis of pathological gambling. The number of criteria to be met for such a diagnosis has been reduced when the version was changed (at least 4 out of 9 criteria in DSM-5 instead of 5 out of 10 criteria in DSM-IV). As a result, people are now being diagnosed as pathological gamblers who had previously been below the critical level. The authors were particularly interested in whether this change would also change the share of people with comorbid disease in addition to their gambling problems, and how this change would affect different age groups. To this end, the authors evaluated survey data from the American National Epidemiological Survey for Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC). The data used were already generated in 2001 and 2002.

Among the nearly 42,000 people who had provided information on all relevant questions, 77 were pathological gamblers according to DSM-IV; where the criteria of DSM-5 were applied, the number increased to 135 people. Contrary to the authors' original assumptions, the pathological gamblers diagnosed with DSM-5 did not differ significantly from the pathological gamblers under DSM-4 with respect to their comorbid diseases. However, when the different age groups were analysed in more detail, differences emerged. Pathological gamblers, who were at least 55 years old and were considered pathological gamblers according to DSM-5, were more likely to display anxiety disorders than the same age group of pathological gamblers as defined by DSM-IV. In general, the number of individuals with comorbid mental disorders among pathological gamblers diagnosed with DSM-5 in this age group was higher than among pathological gamblers of the same age group under DSM-IV.

The authors conclude that the therapeutic offer for pathological gamblers over 55 years of age should be reconsidered and adapted for increased mental comorbidities.

Further details:

Journal of Gambling Studies

Discussing the “Focus Study on the Experience of the Danish Liberalisation of the Gambling Market”.

On behalf of Deutsche Lotto- und Totoblick, Ramboll Management Consulting compiled experiences regarding the Danish liberalisation of the gambling market.

Four topics were examined: regulatory framework conditions, government income, market structure and development as well as social consequences. Much information can be found in the publication.

The study shows what Germany can learn from Denmark's example.

Firstly, a gambling commission must be provided with the necessary resources. In 2016, the Danish Gaming Authority had 79 employees. It also underlines the importance of cooperation with other institutions and explains the remit of a gambling supervisory authority.

The data in the study indicate that since liberalisation, illegal supply has been significantly reduced to about 20 per cent. Websites are blocked. Webcrawlers are used. Payment blocks have not yet been applied. The study points out that even with liberalisation, constant supervision of the gambling market and an active fight against illegal gambling are required.



A side effect of liberalisation in Denmark is the significant increase in the expenditure of gambling providers on advertising. The study clearly shows that liberalisation of advertising entails considerable negative effects. Here, too, Germany can learn something. If the market is liberalised, it should be ensured that the legal requirements for advertising continue to serve primarily the protection of gamblers and not the interests of providers.

The study does not mention that the Danish gambling commission was established in 2000 and that licences were not granted before 2012. First, Denmark established a supervisory authority and opened the market years later. The experience with the liberalisation of sports betting in Germany illustrates the mistakes made in Germany. In conclusion, it is important to establish a functioning gambling supervisory authority before a liberalisation takes place.

The study provides a comprehensive overview of the Danish gambling market. We recommend the study to any reader who is interested in the Danish model.



New Publication in the Series on Gambling Research

The latest volume in Dr. Sven Buth's series on gambling research is titled "Subtypes of Pathological Gamblers - Results of a Latent Class Analysis". The study gives a comprehensive overview of differentiations within the group of pathological gamblers. The path model of Blaszczynski and Nower is at the centre of the analysis. This model understands the gambling addiction genesis as a temporal sequence of cognitive and psychological developmental processes.

It shows that the motivation for gambling varies depending on mental and emotional health, personality traits, and the presence of other problematic behaviour patterns (e.g. substance abuse). The path model distinguishes three subtypes: behaviorally conditioned problem gamblers, emotionally susceptible problem gamblers, and antisocial impulsive problem gamblers. Buth's great achievement is not only to provide a comprehensive overview of the literature on the subtypes of pathological gamblers, but also to discuss the various development paths to pathological gambling behavior in a differentiated manner. In addition, the study gives a comprehensive overview of empirical investigations on subtypes or the path model. The main thesis of Buth's empirical research is the classification of pathological gamblers into three groups: emotionally (psychologically) healthy gamblers, emotionally-vulnerable gamblers, and emotionally-vulnerable-impulsive gamblers.

The evaluated data are based on a sample collected within the framework of a project of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Addiction and Drug Research (ISD-Hamburg). The results of the study point out that the success of efforts to overcome gambling addiction depends to a large extent on the degree of psychological stress to which those affected are exposed. Using a latent class analysis, three subgroups of pathological gamblers are identified that differ in their levels of existing emotional and psychological stress. The characteristics of these three groups of gamblers are as different as their need for support. Thus, this volume illustrates the necessity of a problem-group-specific diversification of the support system while concurrently intensifying prevention and post-treatment support. Differentiating into different subtypes provides an explanation as to why about 80% of pathological gamblers overcome their problems without using any formal therapy worth mentioning. It becomes clear, moreover, that not only the care of pathological gamblers can improve if subtypes are taken into account in a



differentiated manner. Measures to protect gamblers could also be improved. For the different subtypes, different measures in gambler protection are also sensible.

Link:

[Peter Lang Publisher](#)

Participation in Expert Survey

Prof. Tilman Becker, Managing Director of the Gambling Research Center, was interviewed last year in an expert survey on the study “CONSUMER PROTECTION IN EU ONLINE GAMBLING REGULATION” by the “European Gaming and Betting Association”. The study examines the implementation of the recommendations of the European Commission regarding consumer protection in online games of chance. The results of this study are now available and can partly be viewed online.

Link:

[European Gaming and Betting Association](#)



Dates

21.02.2019

Blockchain Future Festival

Organisers: 0711 Büro GmbH

Event location: Stuttgart (Perkins Park)

With a lecture by Prof. Dr. Tilman Becker and Dennis Schlegel (blockLAB Stuttgart) on the topic "Blockchain for the Gambling and Sports Betting Market".

22.2.2019

Gambler Protection in Baden-Württemberg - An Interim Report on the Implementation of the State Gaming Act.

Organisers: Gambling Research Center at the University of Hohenheim, Baden-Württembergischer Landesverband für Prävention und Rehabilitation gGmbH, Evangelische Gesellschaft Stuttgart e.V., Die Zieglerschen e.V.

Event location: Stuttgart

from 12. to 13.3.2019

16th Symposium on Gambling

Organisers: Gambling Research Center
Stuttgart

from 3. until 5.4.2019

24th Addiction Treatment Forum in Tübingen

Organisers: University Hospital Tübingen Department of Addiction Medicine and Addiction Research, Landesverband für Prävention und Rehabilitation (BWL), Tübinger Förderverein für abstinente Alkoholabhängige e.V.



Legal notice

Thank you for your interest.

We look forward to recommendations regarding current publications and events.

The Gambling Research Center Team

Visit us online, contact us directly, or visit us on social media.

Web: gluecksspiel.uni-hohenheim.de
E-mail: gluecksspiel@uni-hohenheim.de

Follow us on Facebook.

Follow us on Twitter.

Postal address:

University of Hohenheim
Gambling Research Center (502)
Schwerzstraße 46
70593 Stuttgart

Phone:

+49 (0)711 459 - 23898 / 459 - 22122

Editors:

Tilman Becker, Marius Wuketich, and Andrea Wöhr

If you want to support our work, you can become a member of our sponsorship association or make a donation. For more information, please see the following website:

Sponsorship Association
