

In a glimpse

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Gambling at the age of 17: results of the 2022 survey on health and behaviour during the call to prepare for defence (ESCAPAD)

At a time when the gambling industry has expanded considerably since the online gambling market was opened up to competition in 2010, the French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT) is publishing the latest data on gambling practices at the age of 17, exploring the major changes that have taken place over the decade from 2011-2022. These results come from the ESCAPAD survey which, in conjunction with the Ministry of Defence's Youth and National Service Directorate (DSNJ), questioned more than 23 700 17-year-olds taking part in the Defence and Citizenship Day (JDC) in March 2022 about their state of health, their use of psychoactive substances, and their addictive behaviour. A total of 7 532 of them were questioned about their gambling practices.

Tendances No 157 therefore enables us to measure changes in gambling practices among 17-year-olds between 2011 and 2022, in a context where it is legally forbidden for minors to play all types of gambling. In 2022, more than a quarter of 17-year-olds gambled during the year, and 4% played on a weekly basis. These practices are down compared with 2017. However, internet use has almost doubled since 2011. In addition, 22% of gamblers aged 17 declared they tried to play again to recover their losses, and around 1 in 10 gamblers show characteristics of a gambling problem that may require clinical assessment.

An overall drop in gambling at age 17 masking contrasting situations

27.5% of 17-year-olds surveyed in 2022 said they have played a gambling game in the previous twelve months, compared with 39% in 2017 and 2011.

4.0% said they had played at least once a week, compared with 7.5% in 2017. Among these gambling activities, lottery are among the main category of games played by 17-year-olds (20.2%), ahead of sports betting (11.9%) and casino games (5.1%).

However, as with the use of psychoactive substances, boys are more likely than girls to be involved in gambling at the age of 17, particularly sports betting. Young people in apprenticeships and school-dropouts are also more affected than those still in education.

In additions, the proportion of gamblers who generally play on the internet almost doubled between 2011 and 2022, rising from 14.7% to 27.9%.

Stable prevalence of problem gambling among 17-year-olds

Among 17-year-old gamblers (i.e. those who have gambled at least once in the last 12 months), almost 1 in 10 (8.8%) have a score suggestive of a gambling problem, including 7.5% at moderate risk and 1.3% at excessive risk. This distribution of gamblers according to the intensity of their gambling problem appears stable between 2017 and 2022. Among the risk behaviours explored through the 9 dimensions of the Canadian Problem Gambling Index, replaying to cover losses is the risk criterion most frequently reported by gamblers (21.9% of gamblers in 2022).

Gambling problems affect boys significantly more than girls: 59.4% of boys are classified as not-at-risk, compared with 86.5% of girls. The frequency of gambling clearly increases the risk of a gambling problem: one in five daily gamblers (21%) is at high risk, compared with less than 2% of those who gamble once a week.

Further reading (in French)

Tendances n°157, [Les jeux d'argent et de hasard à 17 ans, analyse de l'enquête ESCAPAD 2022](#), 4 p.

The memo [Les jeux d'argent et de hasard en France en 2022](#), 9 p. and its summary in English: [Gambling in France in 2022](#).