



Gambling in children and young people in the UK - an overview of the evidence

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Children and young people

Child: age 11-15 years

Young person: age 16-24 years

Adolescent:

- transition stage from childhood to adulthood
- biological, psychological and social changes
- typical age 13-19 years

Vulnerability of children and young people

- cognitive immaturities: illusions of control over outcomes
- lack of development of executive function
- increased impulsivity and risk-taking behaviours

- susceptibility to family and peer influences
- messages from marketing campaigns
- exposure to videogames and internet from an early age

Gambling in children and young people: Recent evidence from the UK



- Young people and gambling: Gambling Commission October 2019
- Health Survey for England 2018: NHS Digital December 2019
- Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) June 2019

Prevalence of gambling in British children 2019

- Gambling in last year: 36%
- Gambling in last 7 days: 11% (13% boys 7% girls)



Gambling Commission 2019

Prevalence of gambling in children across Europe

Gambling in last year-

- Range 35% (Italy) to 79% (Iceland)

Problem and at risk gambling-

- Range 0.2% - 12%

Calado et al 2017

Patterns of gambling in British children

- Private bet for money 5%
- Fruit slot machines 4%
- Lottery/scratchcards 3%
- Online 3%

Gaming:

- 44% have paid money to open loot boxes
- 6% have bet with in-game items on websites outside of the game or privately (e.g. with friends).

Gambling Commission 2019

Problem gambling in children

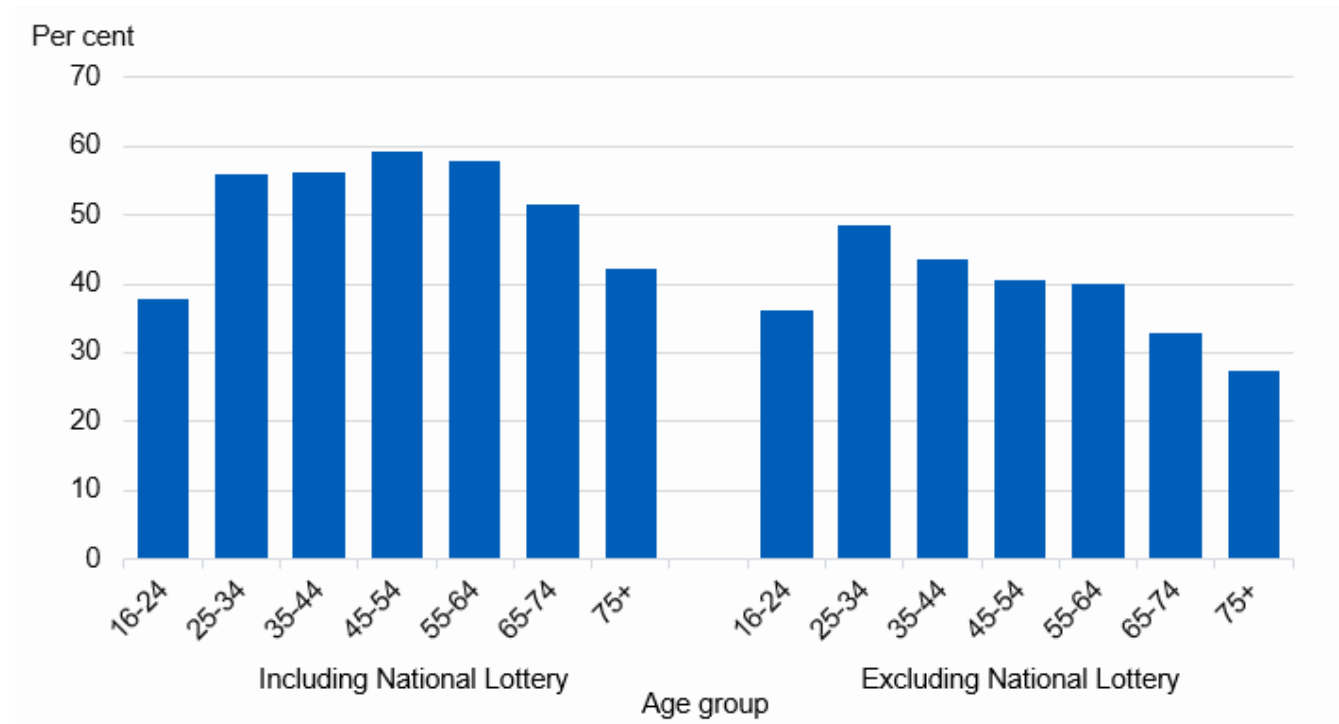
- 1.7% classified as problem gamblers (DSM IV)
(boys 2%; girls 0.7%)
- 2.7% as 'at risk' gamblers

NHS Digital- Gambling in last year

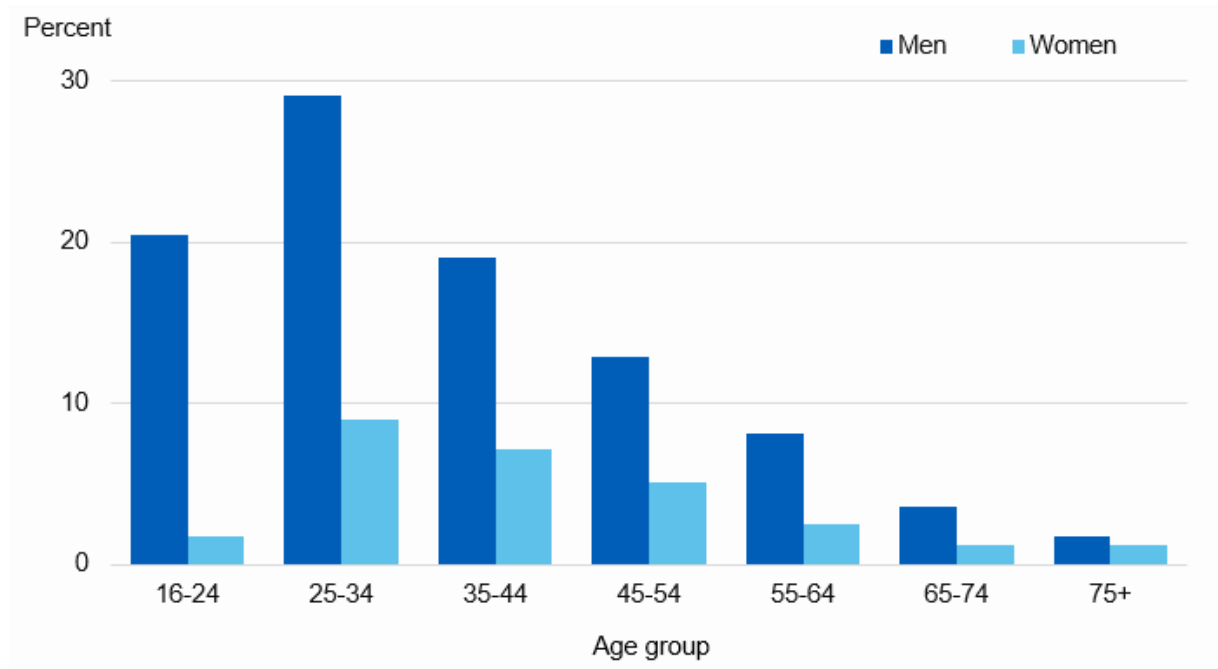
All respondents aged 16-24y: 39%

Males 16-24y: 45%

Females 16-24y: 33%



NHS Digital- Gambling online



NHS Digital- Problem Gambling

Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) scores for aged 16-24y:

Moderate risk (> 3 on PGSI) All: 1.2% Males 1.9%

Problem gambling (>8 on PGSI): All: 1.0% Males 1.9%

AVON LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN (ALSPAC)



Young adult participants completed computer-administered gambling surveys in research clinics, online, and on paper.

Sample sizes were 3757 at age 17 years, 4340 at 20 years, and 4345 at 24 years.

Data collected 2009-2018

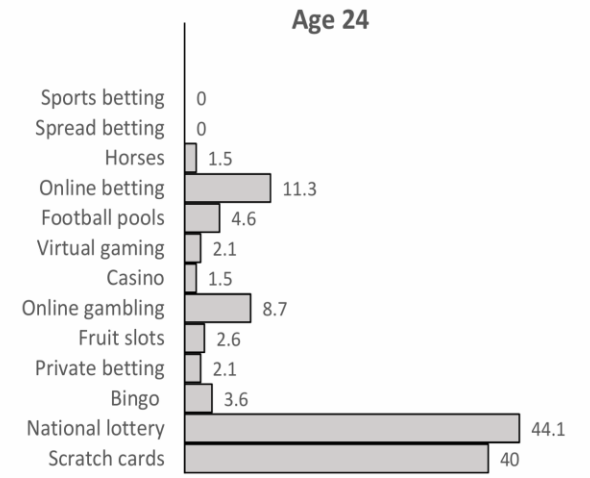
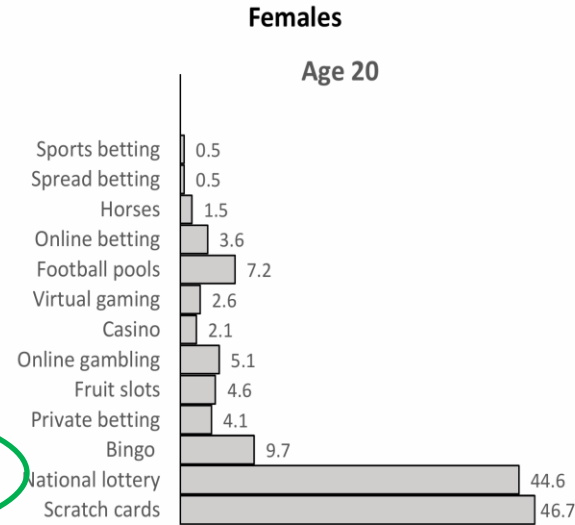
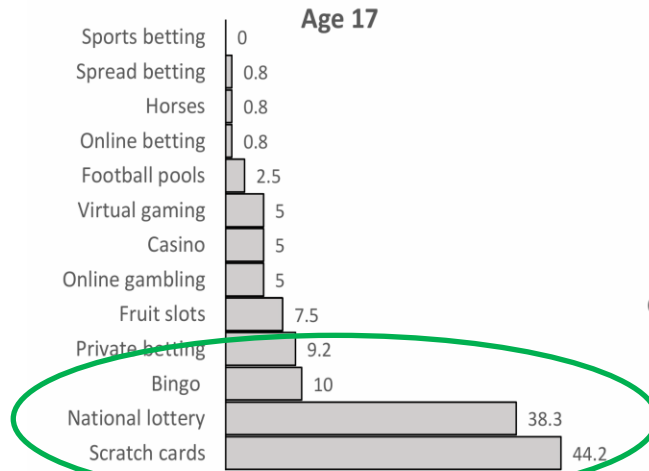
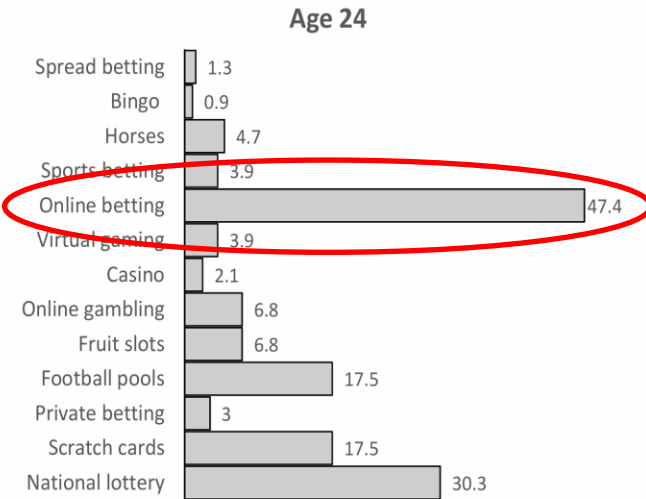
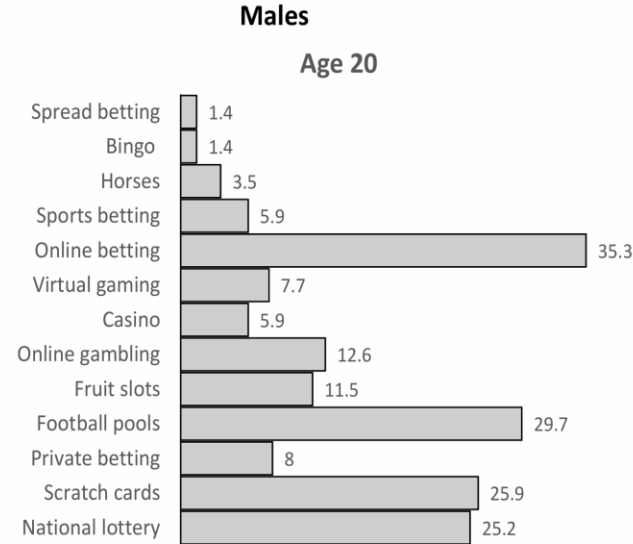
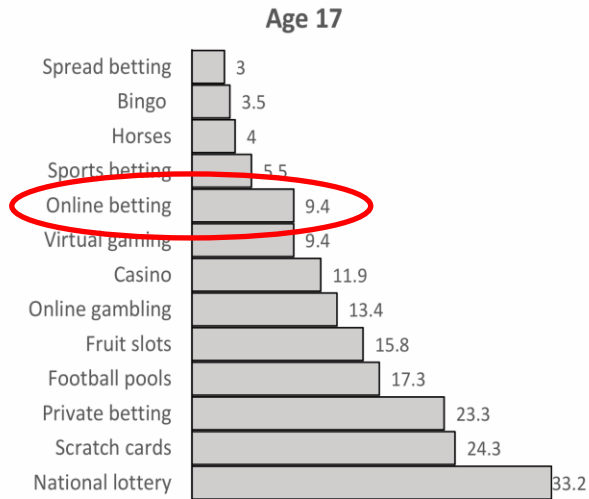


Gambling activity in last year

54% of 17-year-olds

68% at 20 years

66% at 24 years



Regular and Problem gambling in young people



Regular gambling (weekly or more) - male bias

- 13% at 17 years → 18% at 20 years → 17% at 24 years

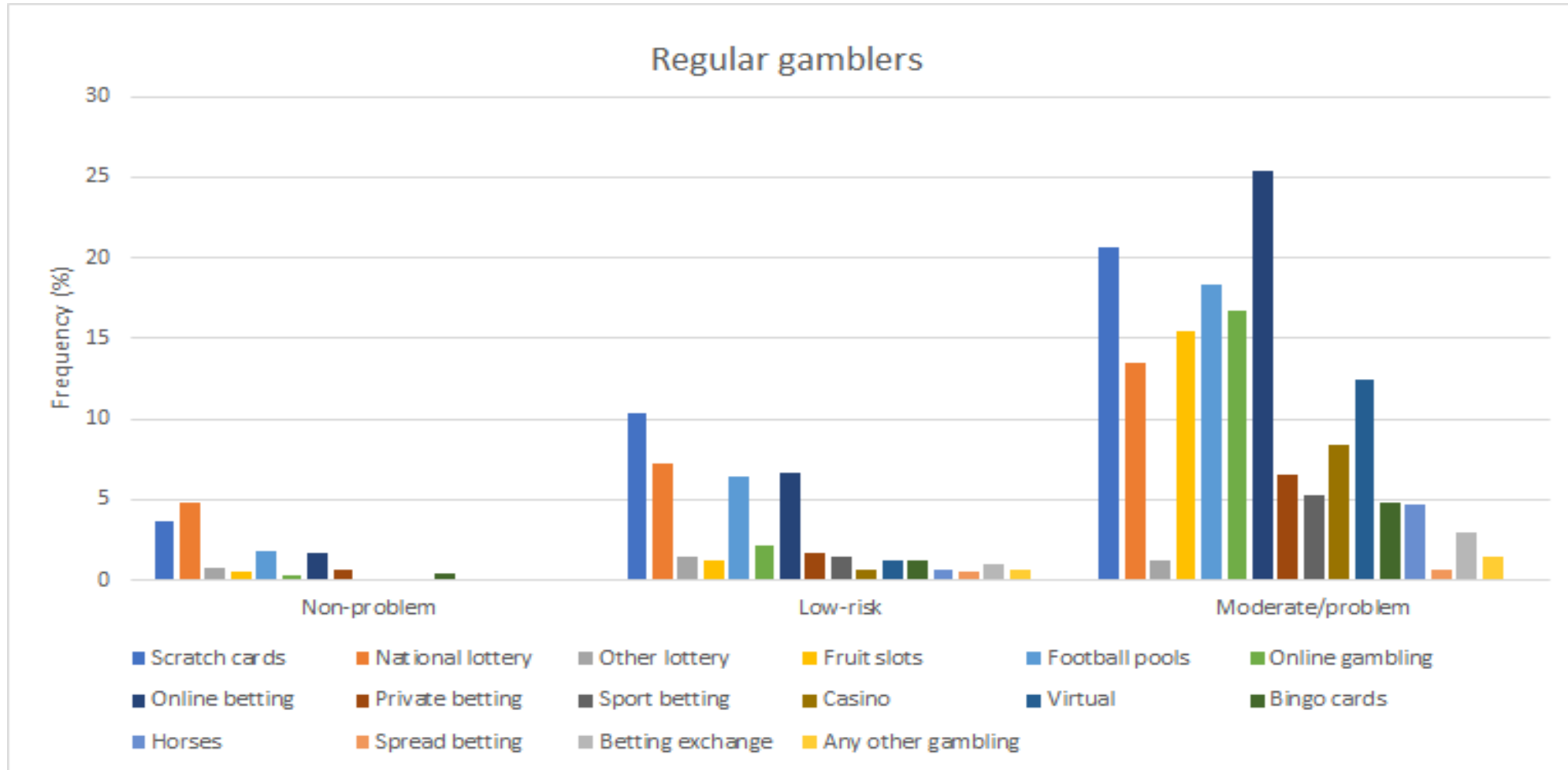
Problem/moderate risk gambling (> 3 on PGSI)

- 5.9% at 17 years → 6.5% at 20 years → 6.0% at 24 years

↑ OR= 7 (3-21)

↑ OR= 43 (16-96)

Patterns of regular gambling in young people



Family associations of problem gambling in children and young people



- Parents with lower educational attainment
- Families with lower SES/previous financial difficulties
- Regular gambling by parents Forrest & McHale 2018; Vachon et al 2004
- Less monitoring by parents Lee et al 2014
- Present when their children are gambling Gambling Commission 2019; Vachon et al 2004



Individual associations of problem gambling in children and young people



- Lower IQ at 8y
- Preferred playing videogames at 13y
- High hyperactivity scores on SDQ at 16y Breyer 2009
- External locus of control at 16y Lloyd et al 2019
- High sensation seeking scores at 15y Nower et al 2004
- Lower well-being scores at 17y Report on ALSPAC Gambling Study 2019



Correlations of problem gambling in young people: mental health and well being

	aOR (95%CI)
• Depression at 24y	1.41 (0.75, 2.63)
• High social media use at 24y	4.28 (1.81, 10.13)
• Involvement in crime at 24y	2.47 (1.54, 3.97)
• Living independently at 24y	0.59 (0.38, 0.92)

Correlations of problem gambling in young people: other addictions



	aOR (95%CI)
• Smoking tobacco daily at 24y	2.76 (1.71, 4.44)
• Problematic use of alcohol at 24y	2.51 (1.56, 4.03)
• Use of illicit (hard) drugs at 24y	6.64 (3.44, 12.84)

Conclusions 1



- Gambling is prevalent in young people - most gamble without any problem
- Internet gambling and in-game betting increasing, esp in males
- Gambling rates stable during childhood, but increase after age 16
- Regular gambling patterns established by age 20: 17% young adult males

Conclusions 2



- Problem/moderate risk gambling in 4-6% young adult males
- Problematic usage of drugs and alcohol
- Weak associations with low well being, depression, criminal behaviour
- Education, regulation, and treatment approaches are needed to protect vulnerable children and young people