

# Youth gambling: Insights from the ESPAD<sup>®</sup> Italia study

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**Promoting the Mental Health of Children and Youth  
by Addressing the Risks of Online Gambling and Gaming**

LAUNCH CONFERENCE

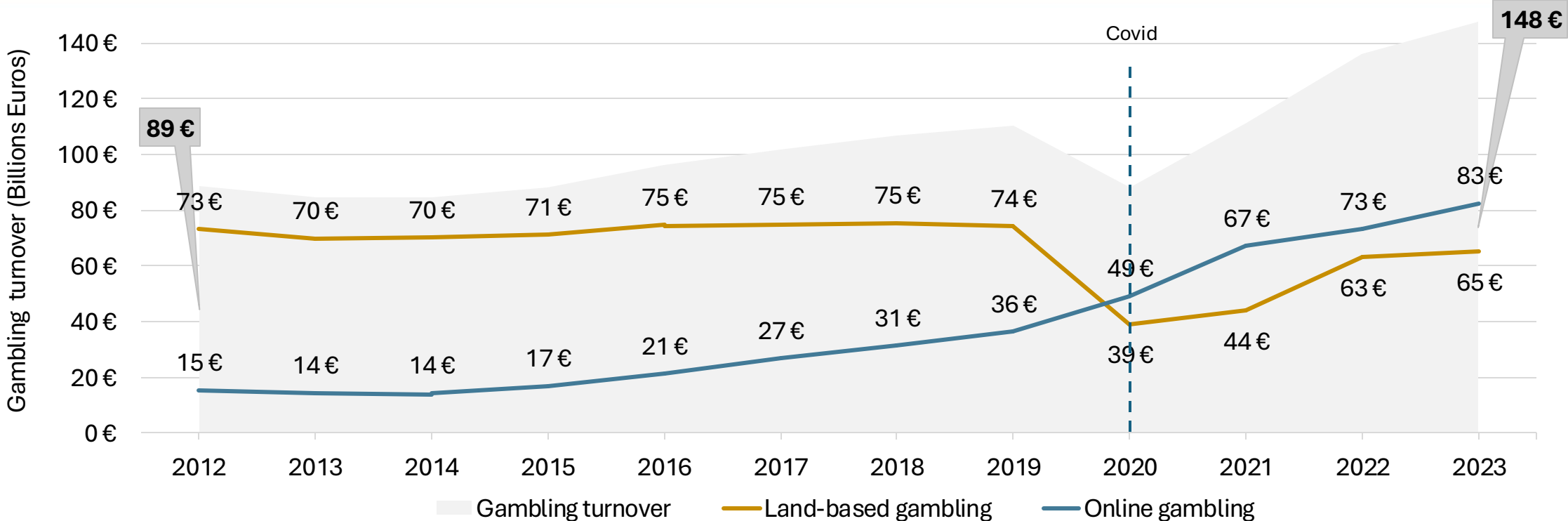
PROGRAMME

28 – 29 January 2025  
HOTEL QUIRINALE  
(Via Nazionale, 7 - 00184 Rome)  
Rome, Italy



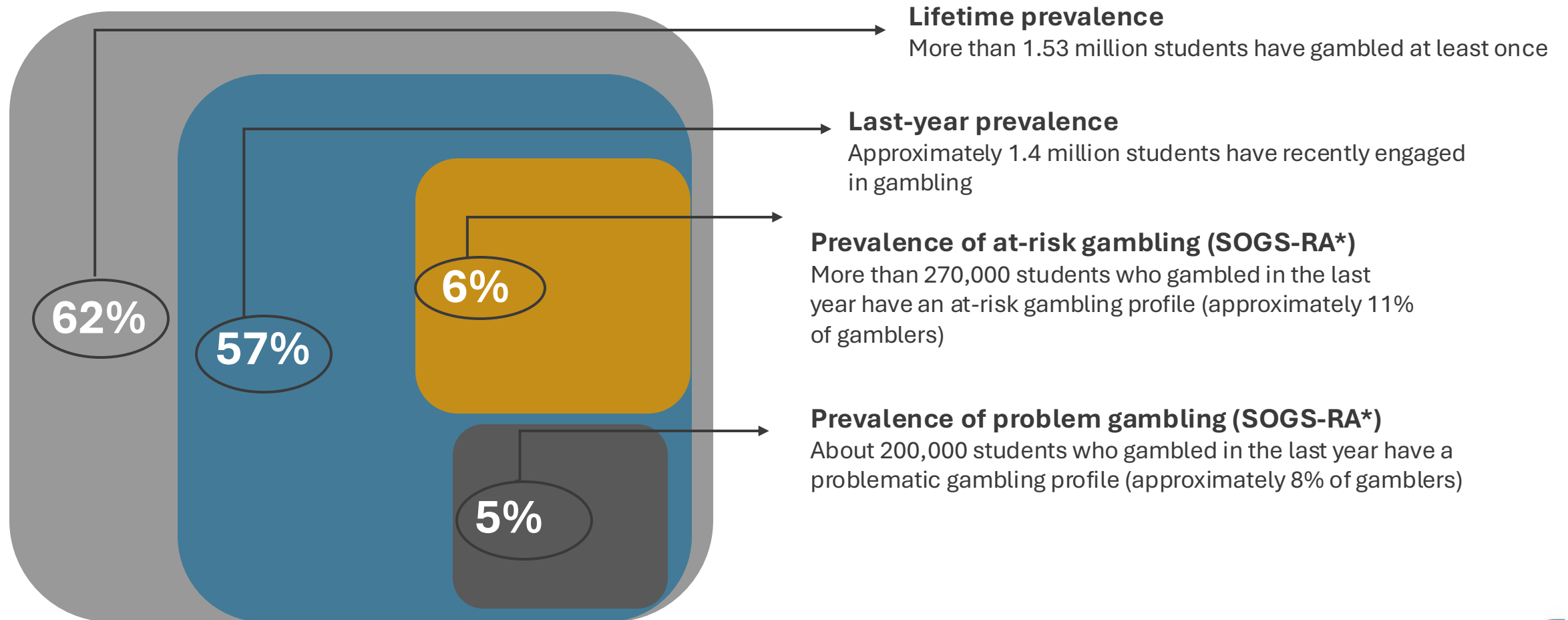
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# How much do we gamble? Gambling market and reforms in Italy

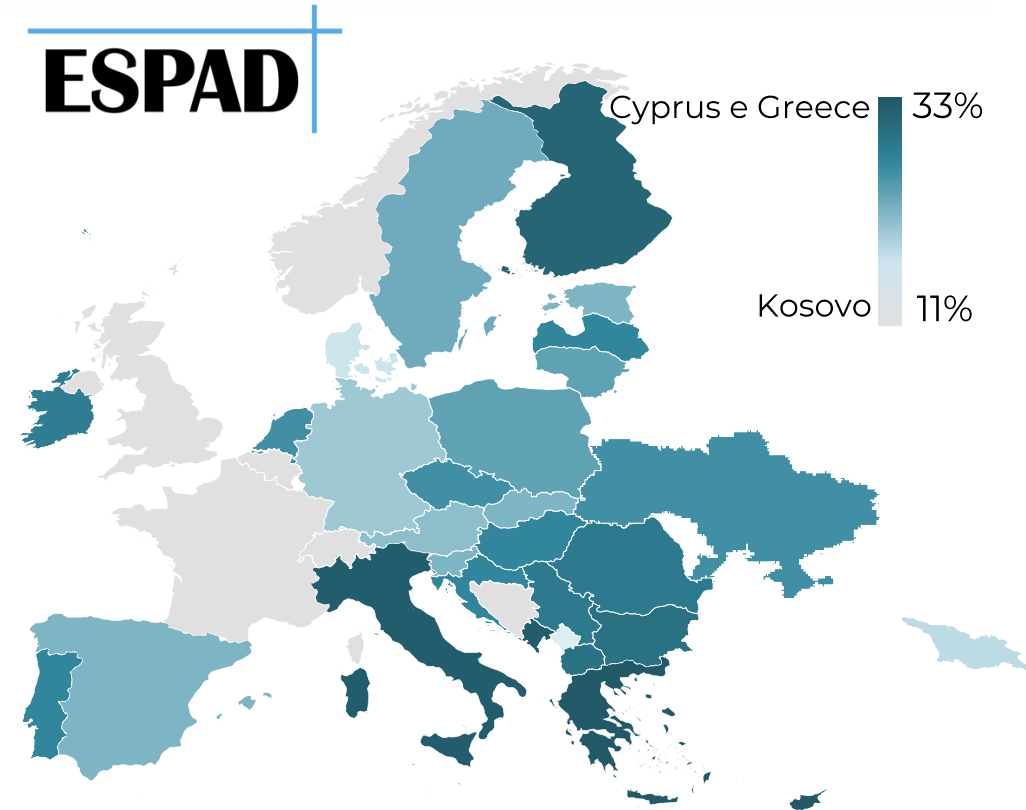
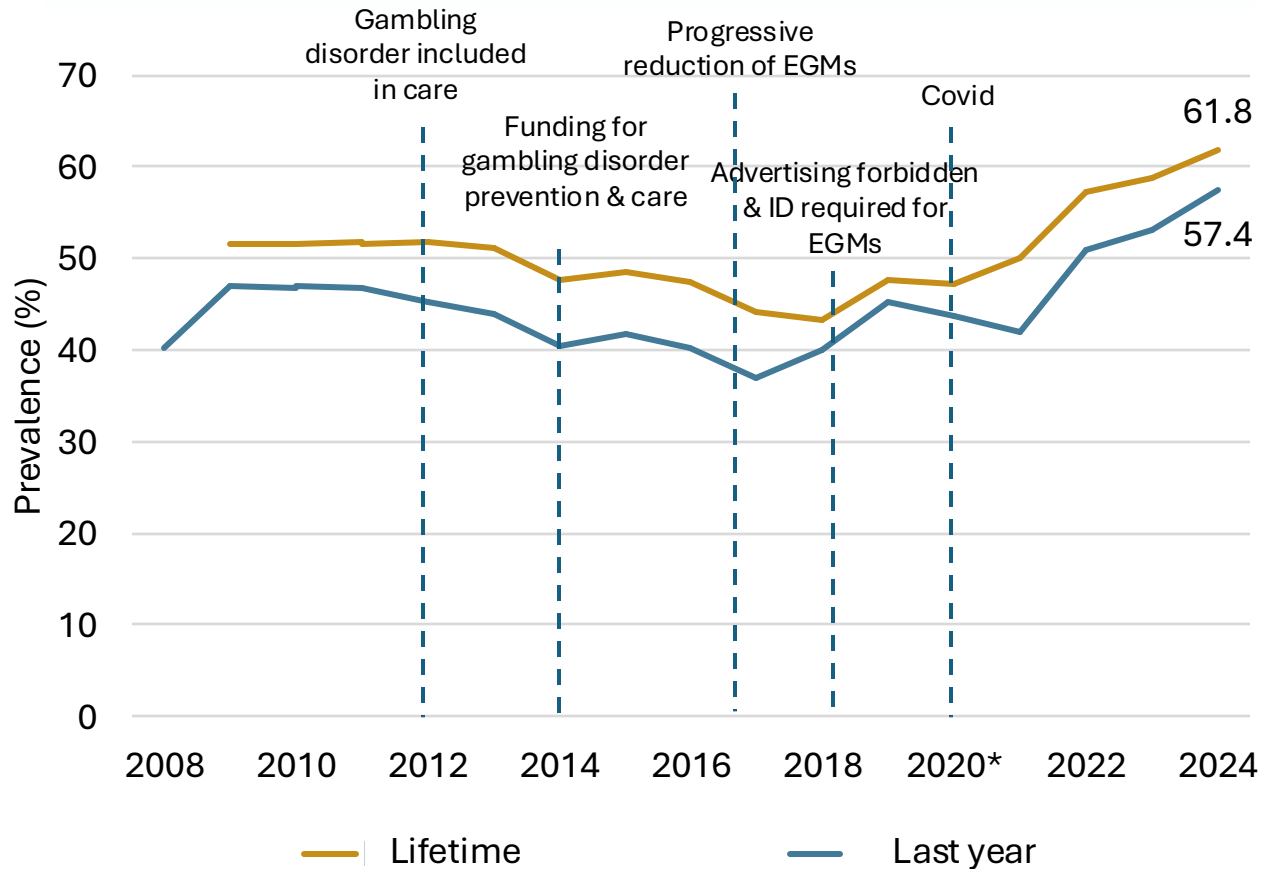


- Decree 248/2006: Market open to Foreign Operators;
- Decree 39/2009: Liberalization of Video Lottery Terminals (VLT);
- Law 98 and 220/ 2010: Introduction concept of addiction and ban on underage gambling;
- Decree 138/2011: Liberalization of Online Gambling;
- Decree 158/2012: Gambling disorder included in the Essential Levels of Health Service (LEA);
- Law 190/2014: Funding for prevention and treatment;
- Law 208/2015: As of 2017 progressive reduction of EGMs and local authorities to rule sale points location and timing

# Youth Gambling in Italy: prevalence and risk profiles in 2024



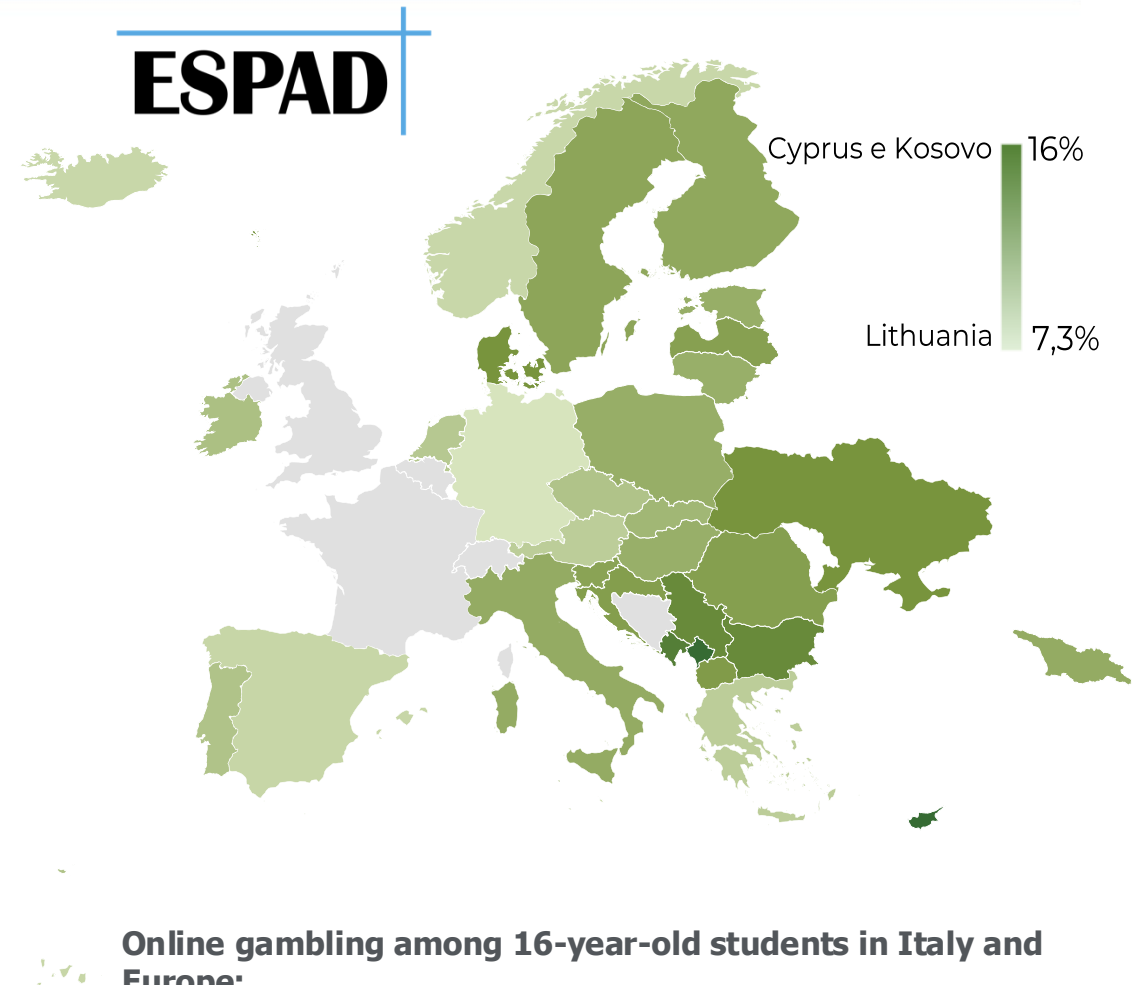
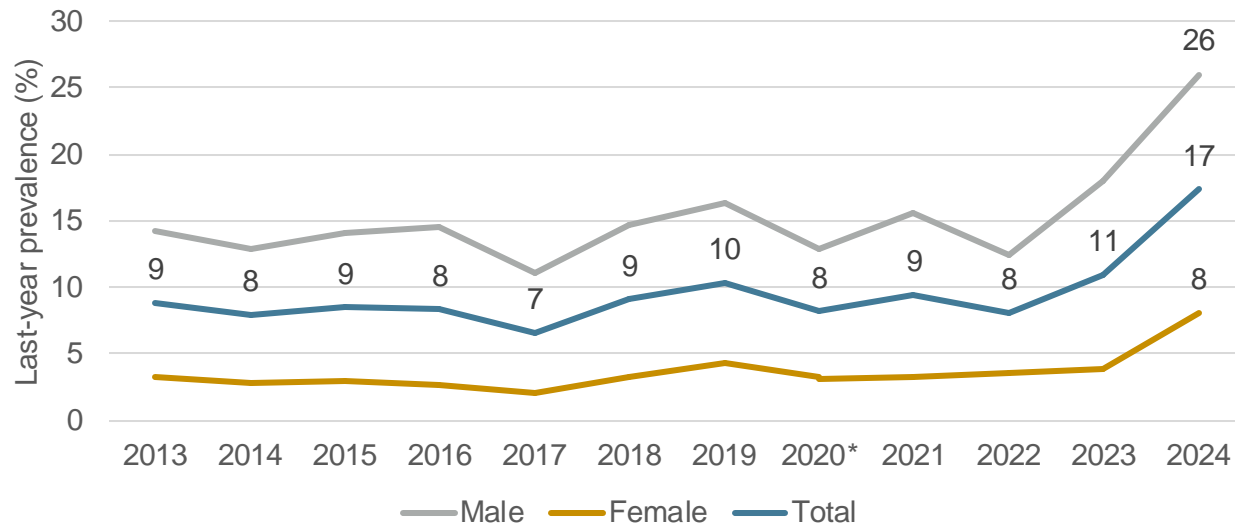
# How has youth gambling in Italy evolved, and what can we expect?



## Gambling among 16-year-old students in Italy and Europe:

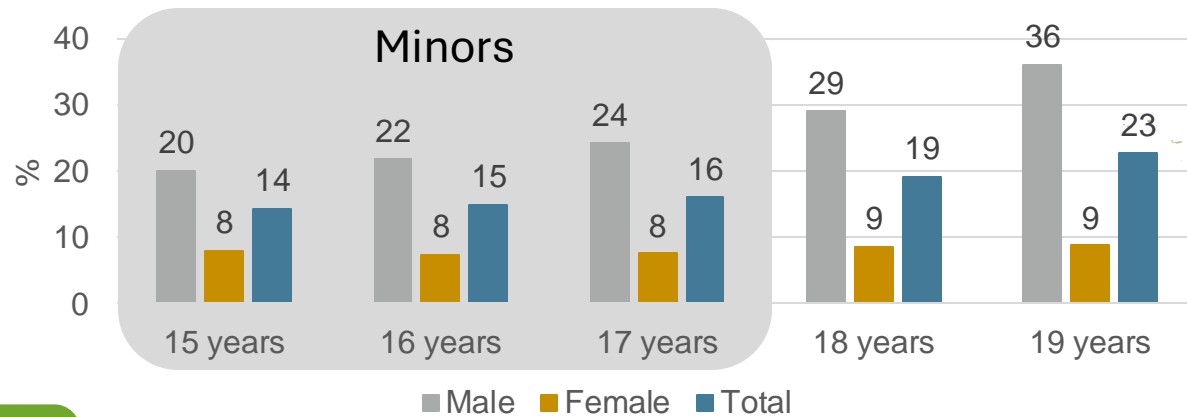
In 2019, 32% of Italian 16-year-olds engaged in gambling, one of the highest prevalence rates in Europe (22%).

# What about ONLINE gambling in our country? Prevalence and gender differences

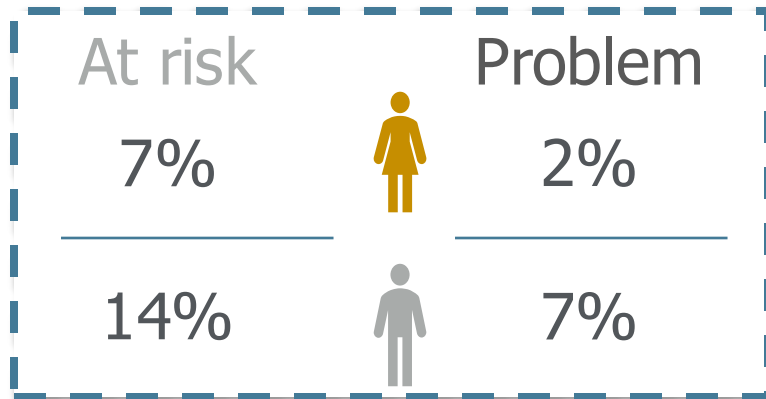
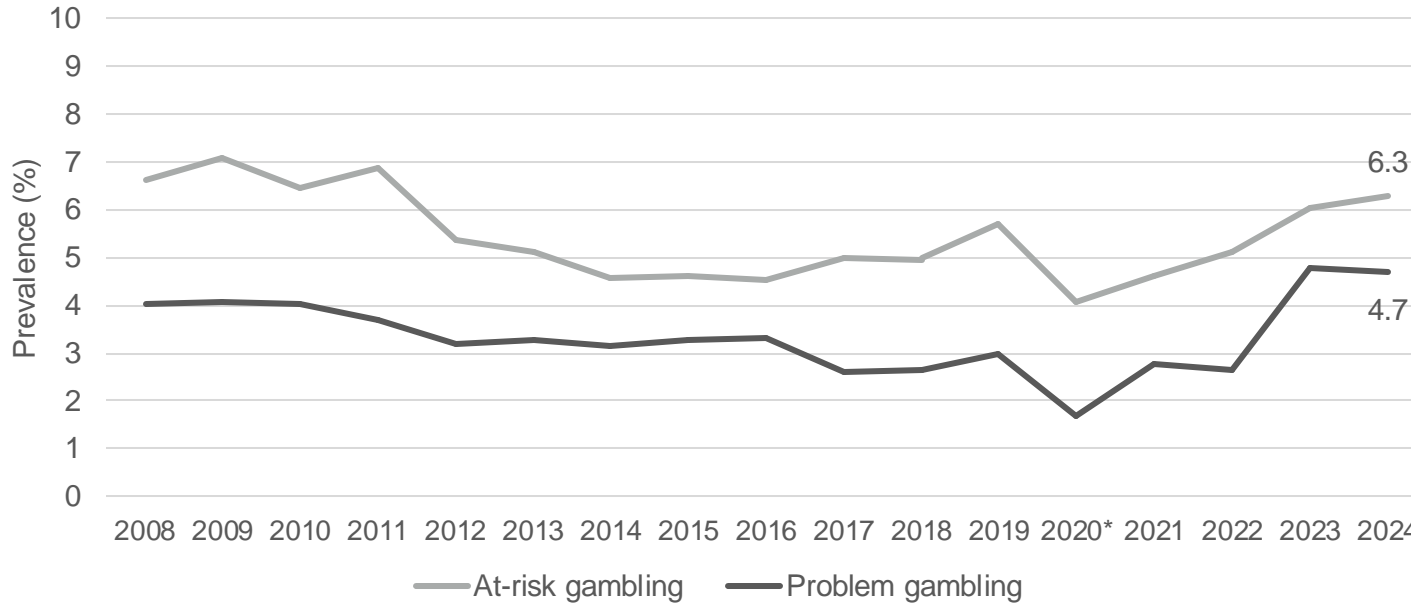


## Online gambling among 16-year-old students in Italy and Europe:

In 2019, 7.6% of Italian 16-year-olds gambled online, a figure consistent with the European average (7.9%).



# Youth problem gambling: risk profiles and trends



Country	Non-problematic gambler (%)	Problematic gambler (%)	Total (%)
Greece	31	3	34
Cyprus	28	4	32
Montenegro	21	11	32
Italy	27	5	32
Finland	27	3	30
Bulgaria	21	5	26
North Macedonia	23	3	26
Monaco	21	4	25
Romania	20	5	25
Faroes	20	4	24
Serbia	20	4	24
Ireland	21	2	23
Latvia	19	3	22
Portugal	19	3	22
Croatia	18	4	22
Hungary	18	3	21
Netherlands	19	2	21
Czechia	19	2	21
AVERAGE	18	3	21
Ukraine	17	4	21
Poland	17	2	19
Lithuania	15	4	19
Iceland	16	1	17
Slovakia	15	2	17
Sweden	15	2	17
Slovenia	14	2	16
Spain	15	2	17
Estonia	14	2	16
Austria	13	2	15
Germany (Bavari)	11	2	13
Malta	12	1	13
Georgia	10	3	13
Denmark	10	3	13
Kosovo	9	3	12

**Problem gambling among 16-year-old students in Italy and Europe**

■ Non-problematic gambler ■ Problematic gambler

# Profile of adolescent problem gamblers

## Risk behaviours

They are more frequently involved in trouble with the police, fights or brawls, and other behaviors



## Social relationships

Slighter lower levels of satisfaction are observed regarding being satisfied with the relationship with one's parents and friends



## Gaming

They are more frequently involved in gaming and tend to display a problematic relationship with gaming



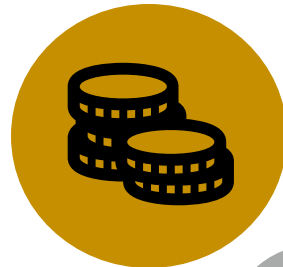
## Substance use

They use the Internet, alcohol, cigarettes, energy drinks, and illegal substances much more than students who do not gamble



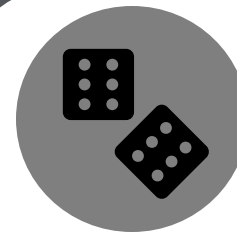
## Gambling balance

They report more often having gone into debt or into profit after gambling.



## Gambling patterns

They play to a greater extent all types of gambling games, with a high tendency towards betting. Online gambling is a key component

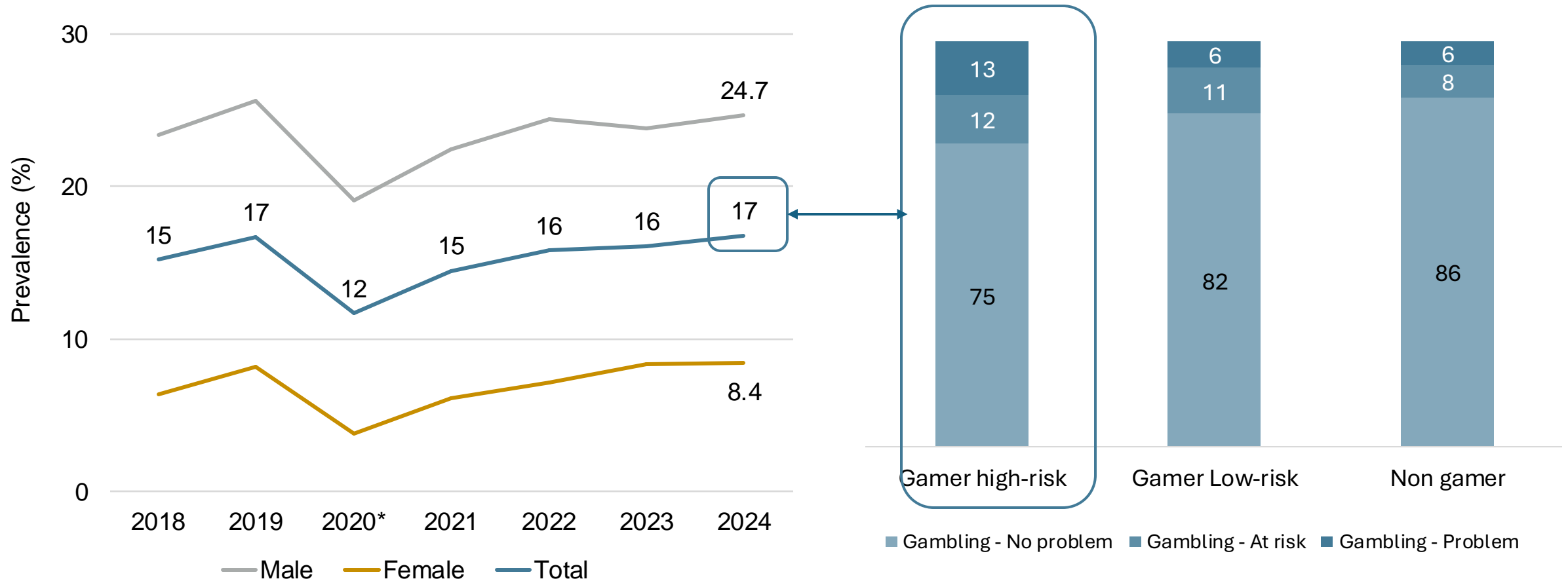


## Expenditure

Most at-risk/problematic gamblers report spending 90€ or more three times as often as non-gamblers.



# Gaming: risk profiles and relationship with gambling





## Take-home message

THE USE OF POPULATION SURVEYS GUARANTEES THE MONITORING OF GAMBLING AND GAMING PATTERNS IN THE YOUTH POPULATION, OTHERWISE NOT REACHABLE

ESPAD, THANKS TO THE LONG-TERM MONITORING, USING STANDARDISED METHODOLOGIES, ENABLES POLICY ASSESSMENTS FOR THE PLANNING OF LOCAL, NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN INTERVENTIONS

ENCOURAGING THE USE OF THIS ENORMOUS TREASURE BY SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY, STAKEHOLDERS AND POLICY MAKERS REPRESENTS A CONSTANT AND NECESSARY COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRESS OF EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES.



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Thank you!

Elisa Benedetti

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