

## **At-risk and problem gambling in families - Finnish population-based study with register-linkage**

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### **Brief author bios**

**Tiina Latvala** is PhD in the field of public health. She works as a senior researcher at the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki, Finland. Her research interests include societal costs of gambling, gambling, inequality, well-being, and health. She is familiar with quantitative methods.

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**Anne H. Salonen**, RN, is a Doctor of Health Sciences. She is working as a Research Manager at the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland, and serving as an Associate Professor (Public Health) at the University of Eastern Finland. Her research interests include quantitative studies monitoring health and well-being. She is a principal investigator of the Finnish Gambling population study. Furthermore, her research group evaluates harmful gambling using register-based data sets.

Families of problem gamblers experience harms, however, there are no population level estimates as to how many families in Finland are exposed to at-risk and problem gambling (ARPG) of a family member. The study analyzed data from Finnish Gambling 2019, a nationally representative study with register linkage, to derive how many families are exposed to ARPG of a family member. It also examined whether the exposing to ARPG of a family member would be more common among low-income families or in families that had received social assistance.

The results showed that 9% of families were exposed to at-risk gambling (ARG) and 3% of families were exposed to moderate risk or problem gambling (MRPG) due to gambling of family member. These figures correspond to 176 084 families. Low-income families were not exposed more often to MRPG or ARG of a family member compared to families with higher income. However, families that had received social assistance were exposed more often to MRPG or ARG of a family member.

The results showed that many people were exposed to gambling of a family member, especially among families who were experiencing financial distress. This should be acknowledged when implementing preventive actions and gambling policies.

### **Implications of the material to be presented**

The findings expand the knowledge about the affected others. The large number of families exposed to gambling of a family member justify that gambling harm reduction should be implicated at the population level.