



## **Gambling, health and economic regeneration A literature review**

Report prepared by:  
Barbara Rimmington  
Research Officer  
East End Quality of Life Initiative  
10 Montgomery Terrace Road  
Sheffield S6 3BU  
Tel: 0114 285 9931  
Fax: 0114 278 7173  
Email: [barbara@sheffielddct.co.uk](mailto:barbara@sheffielddct.co.uk)

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## **Gambling, health and economic regeneration - executive summary**

Most studies have looked at the negative impacts of gambling on health, particularly of problem or pathological gambling:

- Mental health problems/mood swings/suicidal tendencies (leading to increased healthcare costs)
- Absenteeism/unemployability (leading to costs in loss of production)
- Family breakdown (leading to increased welfare costs)
- Criminal behaviour such as theft, fraud, embezzlement (leading to increases in policing costs)
- Bankruptcy
- Domestic violence
- Substance abuse (drugs, alcohol)

One study (Korn & Shaffer) looked at the positive impacts of gambling on health:

- Socialisation and connectedness, especially for older gamblers
- Play for adults, improving memory, problem solving, mathematical ability, concentration and physical co-ordination
- Stress management
- Catalyst for economic development within the community

Particularly vulnerable communities have been identified:

- Young/underage gamblers
- Poor communities
- Ethnic minorities
- Women (Surveys have shown women tend to prefer gaming machines, video lottery terminals, and bingo, and tend to play to as a form of escapism, to reduce boredom and relieve loneliness, whereas men prefer table games and horse race betting, and play for excitement, financial gain and pleasure)

## **Experiences from around the world**

### **Economic**

- New casinos with little competition bring short-term economic gains in construction, infrastructure, etc (USA)
- Casinos can be a catalyst for tourist development (USA)
- Opening of casinos in Atlantic City revitalised hotel industry and reduced unemployment by about one-seventh, but unemployment rates remained consistently higher than state and national rates (USA)
- Increased business and employment opportunities in casinos, but closure and losses in existing restaurants and bars (with employees transferring to casino employment) and less spending in retail (USA)
- Money spent on gambling would otherwise have been spent elsewhere, e.g. retail, entertainment and hospitality industries (Australia)
- Net outcome of gambling costs ranged from a net social cost of Aus\$1.2 billion to a new benefit of Aus\$4.3 billion for 1997-98, where lotteries showed a clear net profit, but gaming machines showed a possible net loss (Australia)
- Regeneration opportunities could create rivalry between failing local economies, e.g. Blackpool and east Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds, etc. (UK)

## **Employment**

- Casinos are the only employment opportunity in some areas (USA)
- Employment tends to be low paid, low skilled, service industry (USA)
- Ethnic minorities are unlikely to be in higher paid, profit sharing jobs in casinos (USA)
- Adverse health impacts of working long hours at night (Scotland)

## **Crime**

- Community perception of increased indebtedness, crime, domestic violence, alcohol and drug offences, although inconsistent changes in rates of incidence of actual crime (USA)

## **Poverty**

- Spend on gambling ranges from 0.8% of monthly disposable income of those on higher incomes, to 8% of those on low incomes (South Africa)
- Siting of gaming machines in poor areas where they were most likely to maximise profits could *"concentrate the social costs in communities that are less able to bear them"* (Australia - Banks & Fitzgerald)
- *"Gaming machines are disproportionately sited in the most deprived areas of New Zealand, potentially influencing or at least facilitating the development of problem gambling habits in those who can least afford them"* (New Zealand - Wheeler, Rigby & Huriwai)

## **Incidence of problem gambling**

- Incidence of problem gambling is of similar proportions to problem drinking, but is slower to develop so likely to grow in the future (South Africa)
- Incidence of problem gambling doubled within a 50-mile radius of a casino (USA)
- Incidence of problem gambling closely related to gaming machines, which are fast, exciting, innovative (Australia)
- Increased demand for treatment for problem gambling followed increased availability of gaming machines (Netherlands)

## **Gambling in the UK**

- Participation in gambling 1999-2004 has been falling, e.g. lottery, football pools (UK)

## Introduction

This report briefly summarises the rapidly growing body of research on the impacts of gambling on health, and on economic regeneration, in the light of the passage of the Gambling Bill through the UK Parliament. It looks at reports from other countries (South Africa, the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia) as well as developments in the UK. The passage of the gambling bill is not tracked through Parliament, although a wealth of information can be found on the web site of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport ([www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)). Instead, some idea of public reaction to the bill is given in the chronological summary of some of the reports that have appeared in the UK press over the last 4 years.

## Impacts of gambling on health

Most studies on the impacts of gambling on health have focused on the negative aspects of problem and pathological gambling<sup>1</sup>. Shaffer & Korn (2002) reviewed 200 studies on gambling behaviour from a public health perspective. They summarised the negative health impacts as including mental health problems, mood swings, and suicidal tendencies. Other symptoms of problem gambling included absenteeism from work, and unemployability, resulting in loss of production and contributing to increased welfare costs. Problem gambling has been linked to increased substance abuse (such as drugs and alcohol) and domestic violence, leading to family breakdown, with its associated social and economic costs. Less conclusive evidence has linked increased opportunities for gambling with increased rates of bankruptcy rates and criminal behaviour such as theft, fraud, and embezzlement.

Korn & Shaffer (1999) looked at the possible positive health benefits of gambling. These included opportunities for socialisation, and "*a sense of connectedness*" in a similar way to other leisure activities, such as going to a cinema or a bar. Some individuals might find gambling as a way of managing stress, in a similar way that physical activity (cycling, jogging, yoga, etc.) can help to reduce stress, anxiety and depression. They suggested that "casinos ... can act as a community catalyst for economic development in economically deprived areas", where job creation could stimulate further developments in tourism and hospitality.

Studies have identified particularly vulnerable groups, such as young and underage gamblers, poor communities, and ethnic minorities (particularly North American Native Indians, and Maoris in New Zealand). Different behaviours and attitudes between men and women suggest that women may become a more vulnerable group with easier access to gaming machines. Research (Korn et al, 2003) suggests that women prefer gambling on gaming machines, video lottery terminals and bingo, and tend to play as a form of escapism, to reduce boredom and relieve loneliness. Men, on the other hand, prefer table games and horse race betting, and play for excitement, financial gain and pleasure.

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<sup>1</sup> Blume SB (1995) examined pathological gambling in an editorial in the BMJ, which described pathological gambling as "*the altered psychological state experienced while the gambler is in action*" and likened its effects to a stimulant drug or a feeling of dissociation and escape from worries. The pathological gambler typically gambles increasing amounts to try and win back losses. Treatment is normally long-term, through outpatient departments and self help groups.

Shaffer & Korn (2002) tried to estimate the balance of costs and benefits of gambling. They estimated direct and indirect costs, such as healthcare costs in the treatment of mental health problems, and welfare costs due to family breakdown, balanced by economic benefits due to employment and regeneration. They also highlighted the problem of identifying cause and effect: *"Do criminals gamble, or do gamblers become criminals?"* They recommended a public health approach to gambling, by promoting informed behaviour and protecting vulnerable groups, and allocating resources to identify and treat problem gamblers.

Single (2003) examined guidelines for estimating the economic costs of substance abuse in Canada, to see whether they might be adapted for estimating the economic costs of gambling.

## Evidence from other countries

### South Africa

The National Gambling Board of South Africa commissioned a national survey of 2,050 respondents aged over 18, April-June 2002. 19.3% had participated in casino gambling in the preceding 12 months. Poorer people make up a high percentage of casino patronage (unemployed 22.1%, no formal schooling 3%, <R6,000 income/annum 21.2%). They calculated the economic impact of the gambling sector on the South African economy during the years 1994-2000. In 2000 the initial impact (direct spending of gambling institutions was R3bn (0.38% of South Africa's GDP as a whole), with an additional spillover effect (indirect and induced impact) of R6.1bn. The gambling sector represented 1.1% of total South African employment in the formal non-agricultural sectors in 2000. They compared the propensity to gamble in South Africa with other countries, and changes over time:

	Propensity	Per capita income
South Africa (2001)	1.30%	US\$3,020
South Africa (2002)	1.90%	n/a
USA (2000)	0.6%	US\$34,100
New Zealand (1997)	1.04%	US\$12,990
Australia (1997/98)	3.10%	US\$20,240

They concluded that, within 5 years, South Africa's gambling industry had grown rapidly, particularly in those provinces which had previously been excluded from gambling activities. In the North West, where a well developed casino already existed, there was a decline, particularly from 1999.

The National Centre for the Study of Gambling reported on a survey of 5,816 adults carried out by a market research company in 2003, and compared the results with those from a similar study of 5,800 adults in 2001. They also compared 3 regular gambling types: lottery, slot and horse players. They found lottery players were evenly spread demographically, with an average spend of R33.40/month. However, this represented 8.4% of monthly disposable income for those on incomes of less than R800, but only 0.8% for those with disposable incomes in excess of R12,000. They concluded that *"a large proportion of the poor ... are spending a significant proportion of their disposable income on the lottery"*. Regular slot players were generally from middle to higher income groups. The average monthly spend on slots was R124, or 31% of disposable income for the lower income group, whilst for the higher income group the average spend was R1,006, or 6.7% of disposable

income. Gambling on horse racing was fairly evenly spread over the demographic profiles, but favoured by the lower middle class, and expenditure averaged 3.2%-7.2% of disposable income. They compared their study with studies of problem gambling in the USA, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, and reproduced a table from Budd et al, 2001:

Country	Population (approx)	SOGS <sup>2</sup> Prevalence %	No. of problem gamblers (estimated)
USA	280 m	1.1%	3,000,000
Canada	31 m	1.6%	500,000
Australia	18 m	2.3%	430,000
New Zealand	2.8 m	1.3%	36,000
Sweden	9 m	0.6%	54,000
UK	50 m	0.8%	370,000

The study concluded that the incidence of problem gambling in South Africa was similar to the incidence of problem drinking, but that the incidence of problem gambling would be likely to grow as *"problem gambling is a condition which develops over a fairly long period of time. This means that the incidence of problem gambling is likely to grow over the coming years as people who have started gambling in the past 2 or 3 years develop the problem behaviours which may be expected to show up in future surveys"*.

## U.S.A.

Harrah's compiled a profile of the American casino gambler based on 3 national studies (2,000 face-to-face interviews of people aged 18 and over, a postal survey of 100,000 adults aged 21 and over, and another postal survey of 3,300 adults aged 21 and over, conducted by 3 different organisations). They looked lifestyle and consumer spending of gamblers compared to non-gamblers. About 26% of the US adult population participated in casino gambling, with an average 5.8 trips/year. Casino gambling appealed more to the older age groups (51-65 made up 30%, 66 and over 27% of those surveyed). People on higher incomes participated more. Participation rates were higher in the West. Slot machines were the most popular game in all regions, and in every age group.

Rose (1998) conducted a study for the National Gambling Impact Study Commission to assess previous studies on the economic impacts of casino gambling. The report looked at the broad direct and indirect economic positive impacts (construction, operation and taxation) compared to negative impacts (drain on public services, crime prevention, education). The study did not include the social costs of gambling. Most jobs were relatively low paid, low skilled service jobs, but unionised casino workers were more likely to benefit from health and pensions provision. In some areas, casinos were the only employment opportunity. Ethnic minorities were less likely to be sharing in the profits from casinos. Taxes generally more than paid for the casino's impact on expenditure on roads, policing and fire protection, although were not always sufficient to cover "boomtown effects" (which needed better planning). He concludes: *"a new casino, of even limited*

<sup>2</sup> The South Oaks Gambling Screen: this test poses questions about a gambler's behaviour, such as whether they chase losses, have problems controlling their gambling, gamble more than intended, feel guilty about gambling and believe they have a problem (Banks & Fitzgerald, 1999, p20).  
*GamblingHealth&EconomicRegeneration*

*attractiveness and placed in a market that is not already saturated, will yield positive economic benefits on net to its host economy".*

Nichols et al (2002) used survey data from 1999 to examine peoples' perceptions about whether the development of a casino in their community had revitalised the local economy, attracted new industries and increased tourism, or whether it had a negative effect, in business closures and taking out from the community more than it put in. They found that casinos were generally seen as a catalyst for tourism development.

Stitt et al (2003) compared the incidence of crime in 6 casino communities with 6 non-casino communities. The data were not consistent, with crime rates rising in some casino communities, remaining steady or declining in others.

The American Gaming Association's 2004 survey found there had been modest growth of the casino industry in 2003. 443 casinos in 11 states generated \$27 billion in gross gaming revenue in 2003, an increase of nearly 2% on the previous year. The number of visitors to casinos increased, and casino gambling was second only to lottery gambling in popularity. In terms of other leisure activities, cinema, theatres and museums are more popular than casino gambling, but baseball games are less popular. It reported on 2 public opinion polls, which found most Americans thought that casinos were generally doing a good job in eliminating illegal and underage gambling. The data indicate a general recognition of the benefits of casinos, in terms of entertainment, tourism, impact on local business, and taxes which contribute to state and municipal revenue.

Hoffmann et al (1999) analysed a postal survey conducted with 544 licensed casinos (nontribal revenue casinos, other nontribal casinos, and tribal casinos). They found that, in the largest casinos, average salaries were higher, gambling revenue was higher, and 90% of customers travelled more than 50 miles.

The U.S. G.A.O. conducted a study in 1999 of the effects of gambling in Atlantic City, NJ. Almost 50,000 employees worked in Atlantic City casinos in 1999. The bankruptcy rate had increased, but there were no data about the causes. In 1998, Atlantic City casinos paid \$319 m in gambling taxes to New Jersey, and \$86 m in property taxes to Atlantic City. In addition, community reinvestment funds went into the city's housing, roads and hotel room expansion programmes. They estimated 1.2% of NJ residents were pathological gamblers, compared to the national average of 1.2%-1.6%. Casino gambling in Atlantic City was legalised in 1977, before which the city's economy was in decline. In the first half of the 20th Century, Atlantic City was a major conference centre and seaside resort. The ease and affordability of air travel drew tourists and conventioners to more diverse destinations. Almost 6,000 hotel rooms closed between 1966-76, the population declined by 20% between 1960-70, and employment opportunities diminished. The city's unemployment rate rose from 10.6% in 1972 to 18.1% in 1977 (compared to the national unemployment average of 5.6% in 1972 and 7.1% in 1977). The Casino Control Act in 1977 authorised casino gambling in hotels in an attempt to revitalise the economy. The first casino opened in 1978, with 12 in 2000. Despite the fact that casinos now employ about 50,000 people in the city, the unemployment rate has remained higher than the state and national rates (up to double at times). Some crime rates (property crime, embezzlement and prostitution) increased immediately after casinos began operating in the city. There was some perception that casinos had

contributed to increases in some social problems. Although state and local governments did not provide incentives to attract casino investment, some revenues initially intended for community investment had been used to finance casino expansion, and to pay for a tunnel connecting a residential area with a casino area of the city. The increase in employment in Atlantic City coincided with a decrease in welfare caseloads. However, unemployment there was still a problem. Local government officials attributed this to a range of factors: the more prosperous moved out, leaving a younger, poorer population with problem work habits and substance abuse; the city is still to some extent reliant on seasonal work. Local businesses most likely to suffer from new casinos were restaurants and bars. In 1977 there were 242 eating and drinking establishments, which had declined to 160 in 1981, and 142 in 1996. However, the employees had generally transferred to casino in-house restaurants.

Gertein et al (1999) analysed a variety of surveys to investigate the social and economic impacts of gambling. They found lotteries and casinos to be the most common forms of gambling, with 1 in 2 adults playing the lottery, and 29% of adults playing in casinos. Bingo and horserace betting declined in the 20 years since the previous survey. Proportionately more older people (aged 45 and over) were likely to gamble. The availability of a casino within 50 miles was associated with double the prevalence of problem gamblers. Problem gamblers were more likely to have been on welfare, been declared bankrupt, or have been arrested or in prison. They were more likely to gamble for excitement, to have had mental or emotional problems. Not counting the costs of family breakdown, problem gamblers were estimated to cost U.S. society around \$5 billion/year, plus \$40 billion in lost productivity, social services and creditor losses. In communities close to newly opened casinos, per capita rates of bankruptcy, health indicators and violent crimes were not significantly changed. Unemployment rates and welfare outlay decreased by about one-seventh. Earnings in construction, hospitality, transport, recreation and amusement sectors rose, but fell in bars, restaurants and general merchandising. Per capita income stayed the same, indicating that there may be more jobs, but not necessarily better jobs. The perception amongst community leaders was that indebtedness, youth crime, forgery, credit card theft, domestic violence, child neglect, problem gambling, alcohol and drug offences rose.

Stitt (2000) studied the impact of gambling in 8 new casino jurisdictions, in terms of crime rates and community perceptions about problem gambling, suicide, divorce, bankruptcy, social capital, quality of life and community satisfaction. However, the findings were not consistent over all 8 communities.

## **Canada**

Korn et al (2003) looked at the public health perspective about whether the possible positive impacts of gambling (individual freedom, recreation, a source of public revenue, economic regeneration through tourism and employment, etc.) were balanced out by its social and economic impacts. They looked at 35 studies of gambling in Canada (and over 100 in the USA), most of which had been released since 1992. These showed that the incidence of problem gambling was low but rising, and the people at greater risk were young males with substance abuse or mental health problems. They showed how research and debate had shifted public views on issues such as addiction, AIDS, domestic violence and genome research, and how research into gambling behaviour might influence the public debate.

## New Zealand

Abbott & Volberg (1999) reviewed studies and surveys of gambling participation, attitudes to gambling, and problem gambling, to inform the New Zealand Gaming Survey. Whilst there is a substantial body of literature about gambling, they cite Wildman (1998): *"The literature on gambling is the most disconnected, confused mass of materials that I have ever come across ... The literature on gambling is a true scientific mess"*. They highlight *"the politically and emotionally charged context within which gambling research occurs"* and ethical and methodological problems.

Wheeler et al (forthcoming) examined the geographical siting of gaming machines. They plotted the location of non-casino gaming machines (NCGMs) against Census Area Units with a mean population of around 2,000 from the 2001 Census, and deprivation data from the 2001 NZDep deprivation index (constructed from census-based measures such as income, unemployment, amenity access and education). They found that *"gaming machines are disproportionately sited in the most deprived areas of New Zealand, potentially influencing or at least facilitating the development of problem gambling habits in those who can least afford them"*.

## Australia

Banks & Fitzgerald conducted a public inquiry into Australia's gambling industry for the national government in 1999. They found that over 80% of Australians gambled in the previous 12 months, spending \$11 billion; 40% gambled regularly. 10% of gamblers accounted for about 70% of total gambling expenditure in 1997-98. Gambling accounted for approximately 1.5% of GDP, and employed 100,000 people in 7,000 businesses. About 130,000 were thought to have severe problems with gambling, and a further 160,000 moderate problems, a total of 2.1% of the adult population. Problem gamblers lost an average of \$12,000/year, compared to \$650 for other gamblers. The prevalence of problem gambling was related to the degree of accessibility of gambling, in particular gaming machines ("pokies"). Despite its widespread appeal, Australians had an ambivalent attitude to gambling, with 70% believing it did more harm than good, and 92% saying they did not want further expansion of gaming machines.

Until the mid 1980s, legal gambling in Australia was confined to lotteries and racing in most states, the exception being New South Wales, where gaming machines were allowed in clubs. Since then different forms of gambling have become very accessible, the tempo has increased, with faster electronic machines, more frequent race meetings and lottery draws, and pervasive advertising and promotion of gambling, with gambling used as a marketing tool for other products. Australian "pokies" were regarded as the most exciting and innovative gaming machines in the world, allowing for intensive play. There were about 185,000 pokies in Australia, half of them in New South Wales. Per capita, Australia had about 5 times as many gaming machines as the U.S., where their availability was more limited. Banks & Fitzgerald felt that the economic benefits of gambling (in terms of jobs, trades and incomes) have been exaggerated. They suggested that, in the absence of the gambling industry, money spent on gambling (by consumers) would have been spent elsewhere, and that similar jobs and skills would have been created in other entertainment and hospitality industries. In areas of low employment, additional jobs and income had been generated, but otherwise resources had been diverted

from other industries (e.g. the retail trade). Despite general public concern about crime, they found that street crime near casinos was no worse than in general. Levels of petty crime within casinos were similar to other places with large numbers of people carrying money and valuables. Loan sharking was a serious issue, but its links with gambling (legal and illegal) are not clear. There was potential for money laundering, but organised crime has little opportunity to influence legal gambling, due to strict regulation. In some states, gaming machines were more densely located in lower income areas. This was not necessarily associated with nearby hotels.

The authors felt gaming machines were most likely to be located in areas where they would be used most intensively, to maximise returns. However, this could "*concentrate the social costs in communities that are less able to bear them*". They judged the net outcome (deducting estimated costs of gambling from consumer benefit numbers) ranged from a net social cost of \$1.2 billion to a net benefit of \$4.3 billion for 1997-98, where lotteries showed a clear net benefit, whereas gaming machines showed a possible net loss.

Collins & Lapsley (2003) looked at the range of economic issues which would need to be taken into account in order to evaluate the costs and benefits of gambling in Australia. They suggested that tangible social costs included productivity, health, counselling, crime, regulation, research, welfare and prevention programmes, and intangible social costs included loss of life, suffering, bereavement, quality of life, cultural impacts, stress to crime victims, and stress to gamblers and others. They looked at the similarities and differences between on the social costs of alcohol to those of gambling, and found many similarities both in terms of effects (with the exception that gambling seems to cause very little mortality) and treatment. They highlight the current disparity in the analysis of the costs of gambling ("*from 'gambling is an insignificant problem' to 'gambling imposes massive social costs'*") depending on which study is used, and the need therefore for clarity and comparability between studies.

## **UK developments**

Arnold et al (2003) reported to the Gambling Industry Charitable Trust and looked at ways to address problem gambling in the UK. The world-wide expansion of commercial gambling, and particularly gaming machines, in the 1990s raised awareness of problem gambling and public concerns about its social costs. They suggested the provision of help to problem gamblers would best be addressed through a public private partnership, such as those in South Africa, New Zealand, and parts of Australia. They pointed out the contradictory evidence about incidence of problem gambling and gambling opportunities. Studies in New Zealand (Abbott & Volberg) and South Africa (Barr & Collins) suggested that, if increased availability was accompanied by new strategies to address problem gambling where none previously existed, the prevalence of problem gambling would be less likely to increase. Studies in the USA suggested that the prevalence of problem gambling was relatively constant and did not grow with proximity to opportunity. Dutch studies indicated a surge in demand for problem gambling treatment following increased availability of gaming machines outside casinos.

The Gambling Review Report (2001), undertaken by the Gambling Review Body chaired by Sir Alan Budd, looked at ways to simplify gambling regulation and extend

choice to adult gamblers in the UK, whilst protecting children and vulnerable adults and taking into account the wider social implications, both for individuals and communities.

Sproston & Orford, in a letter to *BMJ* (2000) drew attention to Volberg's work, which pointed out the lack of baseline information in Britain about gambling habits before the introduction of the National Lottery in 1994. Volberg (2000), based on the experience of other countries, suggested that increased frequency and availability of gambling (daily lotteries, video poker with a new game every 15 seconds, online and interactive games) would lead to increased prevalence of problem gambling, and women's participation in gambling was likely to grow with the availability of gaming machines and casinos. The lack of information in the UK about gambling behaviour before the National Lottery makes it impossible to know how that behaviour has changed, and how it might change with the introduction of the new gambling bill.

A short article in the TUC's *Risks* journal (May 2004) reported on a GMB survey of workers in 12 Scottish casinos, which found the workers were suffering adverse health effects due to long hours, night working and poorly designed workstations.

Creigh-Tyte & Lepper (2004) reported on a National Opinion Poll commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which looked at gambling participation and attitudes to gambling. A quota sample of 2,945 adults aged over 18 took part in the survey in February 2004. The questions replicated as closely as possible those asked in the British Gambling Prevalence Survey of 1999. In the past 5 years, participation in most forms of gambling had fallen, with the exceptions of playing bingo and betting on non-race events with bookmakers (both of which rose). Noticeable falls in participation included National Lottery, scratchcards, fruit machines, football pools, and betting with friends. Attitudes were neither favourable nor unfavourable towards gambling, although, on balance, attitudes were generally favourable for lotteries and bingo, with negative opinions about internet gambling, casinos, fruit machines and betting exchanges. Most respondents felt that current levels of regulation were about right, with stricter controls needed on fruit machines and internet gambling. Less than 5% favoured a less strict regime towards gambling.

Various press releases highlighted Blackpool's regeneration strategy based on the development of a casino complex (Blackpool Challenge Partnership, 2001; Hall, 2001; UK Parliament, 2004). Hall highlighted the possible challenge from East Manchester, another area in need of regeneration, and whether the relaxation of the UK's gambling laws would allow both Manchester and Blackpool to develop large casinos. The UK Parliament memorandum from Blackpool highlights concerns about the lack of clarity in defining regional and large casinos.

### **A selection of UK press reports (chronologically)**

Cunningham J (2001) Turning the tables: Blackpool's bid to prosper as an American-style casino resort, in *The Guardian* Feb 21

- Casino with 2,500 slot machines, 70 gaming tables, 500-bed hotel planned in 4-5 years time - idea based on Atlantic City, where 45,000 jobs created, hotel staff earn £10-£12/hour.

- Blackpool has 2 of Britain's 120 casinos.
- Blackpool is top seaside resort (12m visitors/year); drop of 30% since 90s; 12th lowest GDP in UK; out of season unemployment up to 50%.

Cassy J (2001) Blackpool's towering gamble: the tycoon planning a Las Vegas-style makeover to revitalise the Golden Mile is meeting opposition, in *The Guardian* April 10

- as Cunningham, but also says Pharaoh's Palace resort will be £130m complex, open 24-hr/day, 100,000 sq ft gaming floors, 100,000 sq ft conference/exhibition space, 3,000 sq ft auditorium, retail space.
- Unemployment 10-12% in 4 most central wards, 3rd most deprived area in country, 6,000 homes have more than 1 family living in them.
- Fear from small hotels, gift shops, etc about competition.
- Leisure Parcs claim introduction of 6 resort casino hotels would offer 6,000 rooms, create 15,000 direct jobs, 10,000 ancillary jobs, gross revenues over £500m (from 30m visitors year-round).
- Needs review of gambling laws.

Ward L (2002) Government deals resorts a winning hand: relaxation of laws could create 50% growth in gaming industry, in *The Guardian* March 27

- Plans 50% growth in gambling industry; revised gaming laws (White Paper - A Safe Bet for Success, Sir Alan Budd)
- Proposals welcomed by big gaming groups, but "reservations that casino complexes owned by national companies will not fulfil promises of local economic regeneration".

Daly M (2003) Crackpot jackpots? The government could be taking a huge gamble if it fails to heed warnings from Australi about the dangers of 'pokie disease' in *the Guardian* Feb 12

- slot machines (unlimited jackpot poker machines) most addictive form of gambling - would appeal to bingo players, betting shop users, national lottery players, and non-gamblers.
- New law - casinos would rise from 123 to 500-1500 in Britain; min 100,000 poker machines

Travis A (2003) Gambling draft bill goes for broke with supercasino plan, in *The Guardian* Aug 8

- 5,000 sq ft (464.5 sq m) minimum size for new casinos (so not on every street corner) - leading to 450 small new casinos, or 250 larger ones in England & Wales
- limit of 3 gaming machines for each table (up to 40 tables)

Kettle M (2003) Union jackpot: the government's gambling bill is a licence to steal money - so where is the public debate? in *The Guardian* Aug 21

- ICM poll - 65% played lottery, 17% bet on horses, 14% bet in bookmaker's in last year.
- Blackpool plans; Harrah's Entertainment plans for Sheffield

Muir H (2003) 'If people lose their money, they will rob' in *The Guardian* Nov 20

- Northampton - 2 casinos, plus plans for another (from Kerzner International, like Sun City in SA)

Travis A (2003) Gambling shake-up delayed for a year, in *The Guardian* Nov 20

- Draft Gambling bill will have to wait a year before having chance to reach statute book

Mathiason N (2004) The big casino gamble: don't bet on easing gambling laws to regenerate towns, in *The Guardian* Jan 7

- Examples of local authorities looking to regenerate run down areas (Newcastle, Wolverhampton, London Earl's Court, Holyhead) based on Atlantic City model
- Social problems followed new casinos in Australia; sex trade in Las Vegas; more bankruptcies

Kaszubowski A (2004) Measured approach needed to maximise dereg opportunity, in *European News* February

- Liberalisation of UK gambling market could create 117,000 new jobs, attract £5bn inward investment, and boost public finances by £3.1bn/year
- Could also lead to cut-throat competition, price wars and problem gambling
- Need clear centralised planning policies and procedures
- Construction underway of Coventry's £113m Arena and Isle of Capri casino (regeneration of area including new public infrastructure, regeneration of brownfield site)

White M (2004) Jowell seeks to pacify casino bill critics, in *The Guardian* March 2

Engel M (2004) What odds would you give against Blackpool being turned into a giant gambling den? in *The Guardian* March 15

- Leisure Parcs (2,500 slot machines, 70 gaming tables, 1,000 bedrooms) to be 1 of 5 casinos on sea front.
- Britain relaxed about gambling (horses, dogs, etc) but restrictive about casinos.

Press Association (2004) Gambling plans raise health concerns, in *The Guardian* April 20

- Liberalised gambling could double number of people addicted to gambling in Britain to 750,000

Toynbee P (2004) 700,000 reasons to ditch these Las Vegas dreams: are increased revenues worth a huge increase in gambling addicts? in *The Guardian* April 21

- MGM Mirage plans for Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Salford (worth £650m); Blackpool, Sheffield, Newcastle, London Olympia also in market.
- Henley Centre study (for BACTA) predicts virtually no net job growth, with closure of clubs, bingo halls, and 1,000 pubs; increase spending on gambling from £8.5bn to £10.6bn, with increased revenue to Treasury of £400m. Addicts predicted to rise from 300,000 to 700,000.

Barkham P (2004) Coming soon: £1m fruit machines, in *The Guardian* June 15

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