

Chapter 2

# Prevalence of Gambling in Illinois

# Chapter 2

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# Chapter 2 Highlights

## Prevalence of Gambling in Illinois

**Gambling behaviors**—According to survey responses, 41.9% of adult Illinoisans reported participating in any form of gambling in the past month, 68.4% had gambled in the past year, and 90.3% had gambled ever in their life.

**Gambling activities**—In the past year, the most popular form of gambling that adult Illinoisans participated in was the state lottery (reported by 54.2% of survey respondents), followed by gambling with friends (33.0%), and organized sports and fights betting (15.3%).

**Lottery** sales per capita for adults aged 18 or older, indicating the average amount a person spends on the lottery, was \$275 for FY 2020. Total lottery revenue for FY 2020 was \$2.80 billion. Lottery gambling was more prevalent among middle-aged (45–64), and less educated adults in Illinois.

Admissions and revenue data indicate a prevalent but decreasing trend in **casino and riverboat** gambling in Illinois, with a striking decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Only 15.1% of Illinoisans reported that they had gambled at a casino or riverboat in the past year. Black/African American (18.1%) and less educated (22.4%), Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of gambling at a casino in the past year, relative to their counterparts. However, Whites (70.7%), and college graduates (70.9%) had the highest prevalence of casino gambling ever in their lives.

**Video gaming** terminals (VGTs) have continued to grow from FY 2013 (7,920) to FY 2020 (36,145) and total tax revenues from terminals similarly increased over 10-fold from FY 2013 (\$36.3 million) to FY 2020 (\$403.5 million). Springfield, Rockford, and Decatur are the municipalities with the highest number of terminals and net terminal incomes, while Cook County

had the total most VGTs (6,613) and Washington County had the highest number of VGTs per 100,000 population (1,202.16 per 100,000). Approximately 14% of Illinoisans reported that they had gambled at a VGT in the past year. Men, people of other race/ethnicity, less educated, and rural populations had the highest prevalence of video gambling in the past year.

**Online gambling** was reported by 12.6% of Illinoisans over the past year. Illinoisans aged 18–24 were more likely to have gambled online in the past year and in their lives, relative to older adults. Assessment participants perceived that online gambling has significantly increased due to COVID-19.

**Organized sports and fights betting** became legal in March 2020, though activity has been limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. Approximately 15% of Illinoisans reported that they gambled on organized sports and fights in the past year. Past-year prevalence was higher in men (23.6%) than women (7.5%). Younger Illinoisans and college graduates were also more likely to have bet on sports or fights in the past year and ever, compared to their counterparts.

**Gambling with friends** or in the community was the second most common form of gambling in the past year (33.0%). Men, Whites, and college graduates had the highest prevalence of gambling with friends ever in their lives, relative to their counterparts.

Illinoisans indicated that **COVID-19** affected their gambling behaviors in a number of ways, though nearly two-thirds reported that they gambled the same amount of time as they did before the pandemic. More than one-third of Asian and Black/African American Illinoisans as well as Chicago and Cook County populations said they gamble less than they did before the pandemic.

# Gambling in Illinois

As noted in the Introduction to this report, there has been substantial growth in commercial gambling in Illinois in recent years. The following section describes the current state of gambling participation by Illinois residents. This includes descriptions of gambling in the state from residents, secondary data from gambling industry reports about revenues and participation over time, and findings from the statewide Illinois Gambling Prevalence Survey. First, data about the popularity of various types of gambling are presented and compared. Following sections provide additional detail on these different types of gambling and the characteristics of Illinoisans who participate in them.

Throughout this section it is noted that prevalence estimates for past-year gambling participation are likely very unique due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparisons to estimates from other years or other states should take the COVID-19 pandemic into consideration.

## Perceived Definition and Activities Related to Gambling

When asked to describe what gambling means to them, interview and community discussion participants shared a wide range of definitions and sentiments. Participants generally defined gambling broadly perceiving it to be all *“betting”* or *“literally anything”* in terms of what has the potential to be considered gambling. Some participants in community discussions named specific activities or places such as Las Vegas, casinos, corner stores and bars in the community, state lotteries, playing cards (including poker), mahjong, dice games, sports betting, slot machines, phone/tablet applications, and animal racing (e.g., horses and dogs). While many of these participants named specific places

and activities, others described gambling as it relates to the thoughts, emotions, and personal memories it elicits. Several interviewees described gambling as seeking a *“high”* through betting, similar to taking a hit of drugs or alcohol. Additionally, one participant defined gambling as *“false hope,”* another said, *“it makes me cringe – it scares me.”* Among organization leaders and service providers, similar definitions of gambling were provided. For example, one organization leader defined gambling as *“lottery tickets, playing cards, and going to the boat,”* while a service provider specifically noted the *“wagering aspect”* of gambling when describing the behavior.

## Prevalence of Gambling in Illinois

Figure 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the representative sample of the adult population of Illinois who participated in the Illinois Gambling Prevalence Survey (n=2,029), compared to the Illinois population overall (including Illinois residents under age 18). Column *“N”* indicates the actual number of people in the population, *“n”* indicates the number of people in the survey sample, and sample percentages are weighted to represent the Illinois population (as described in Chapter 1).

In the years 2015–2019 Illinois had 12,770,631 residents, with the vast majority (84.3%), living in urban areas [1]. Illinois residents were relatively evenly distributed through age groups under 65 years old. The majority of residents identified as White (61.2%), followed by Hispanic/Latinx (16.2%), Black/African American (13.6%), Asian (6.0%), then other races/ethnicities (3.0%), (Figure 1). About one third of residents had a bachelor’s degree or higher (34.7%), and a household income of \$100,000 or more (31.8%).

For comparison, the sociodemographic characteristics of survey respondents (n=655) who gambled on average monthly or more in the past year (“frequent gamblers”) are also shown in Figure 1. These respondents represent the population of frequent gamblers in Illinois. Compared to the full adult

population of Illinois, frequent gamblers were more commonly men and had somewhat higher education levels. Otherwise, frequent gamblers were quite representative of the population overall, indicating that frequent gambling is quite evenly spread among varied demographic groups in Illinois.

**Figure 1. Selected Sociodemographic Characteristics, Illinois Population 2019 and Illinois Problem Gambling Assessment (Adults only), 2021**

	Illinois Population		Representative Population Sample		Representative Sample of Frequent Gamblers in IL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Gender+</b>						
Men	4,796,286	48.6%	878	48.4%	370	62.9%
Women	5,082,819	51.5%	1,132	51.6%	279	37.1%
<b>Race/Ethnicity*</b>						
Asian	596,814	6.0%	51	2.3%	-	-
Black/African American	1,356,415	13.6%	334	11.9%	132	14.5%
Hispanic/Latinx	1,620,312	16.2%	414	17.8%	129	18.2%
Other Race/Ethnicity	302,380	3.0%	102	4.3%	38	5.5%
White	6,123,548	61.2%	1,114	64.2%	345	60.9%
<b>Age in Years+</b>						
18–24	1,192,806	12.1%	201	11.8%	51	9.7%
25–44	3,414,821	34.6%	607	34.8%	207	38.0%
45–64	3,328,944	33.7%	825	36.5%	277	37.5%
65+	1,942,534	19.7%	396	16.8%	120	14.8%
<b>Educational Attainment+</b>						
Less than high school diploma	937,042	10.8%	64	2.9%	27	4.0%
High school graduate	2,254,524	26.0%	317	15.3%	110	16.6%
Some college/associate's degree	2,484,708	28.6%	630	30.8%	237	35.9%
College graduate or higher	3,010,025	34.7%	1,008	51.1%	278	43.5%
<b>Employment Status</b>						
Employed (full-time)	-	-	1,024	52.2%	368	57.8%
Employed (part-time)	-	-	196	10.2%	58	9.3%
Out of work for 1 year or more, and looking for work	-	-	84	4.0%	30	6.1%
Out of work for less than 1 year, and looking for work	-	-	72	3.8%	35	4.8%
Not employed outside the home (homemaker)	-	-	85	4.1%	14	1.9%

	IL Population+		Representative Population Sample		Representative Sample of Frequent Gamblers in IL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Employment Status</b>						
Student	-	-	104	6.0%	18	3.3%
Retired	-	-	364	15.8%	104	13.5%
Unable to work	-	-	88	4.0%	25	3.4%
<b>Household Income+</b>						
Less than \$25,000	905,144	18.7%	365	18.0%	101	15.8%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	969,261	20.0%	396	18.7%	138	20.3%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	809,343	16.7%	358	18.6%	126	19.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	622,330	12.8%	260	13.6%	75	11.9%
\$100,000 or more	1,540,056	31.8%	581	31.2%	196	32.5%
<b>Marital Status+</b>						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Cohabitation (living together)	-	-	43	8.3%	40	7.8%
Married	4,871,241	47.6%	263	46.6%	261	47.3%
Partnered (not living together or married)	-	-	35	6.3%	34	6.2%
Separated/divorced	1,188,026	11.3%	42	6.7%	41	6.7%
Single (living in a household without a partner)	-	-	146	28.3%	143	28.3%
Widowed	593,844	5.8%	25	3.8%	24	3.7%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Bisexual	-	-	21	3.7%	20	3.7%
Gay or lesbian	-	-	15	3.0%	14	2.6%
Prefer to self-describe	-	-	-	-	-	-
Straight/heterosexual	-	-	513	92.5%	504	92.3%
<b>Geography</b>						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Chicago	2,143,207	21.7%	402	17.8%	136	20.9%
Cook County (excl. Chicago)	1,909,961	19.3%	450	21.2%	154	23.6%
Collar Counties (around Cook)	2,389,522	24.2%	533	27.4%	159	24.4%
Urban Counties	1,775,629	18.0%	364	18.9%	125	19.2%
Rural Counties	1,660,786	16.8%	273	14.8%	78	12.0%

**Data Sources:** For IL Population: +U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015–2019; \*U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020; IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021; IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Frequent Gambler Sample, 2021

**Note:** Values where n<10 are not presented. Marital status and sexual orientation were asked of a subset of survey respondents. Census categories for employment not presented due to categorical differences.

Illinois population data for gender, race/ethnicity and geography represents only those aged 18 years and over; educational attainment represents only those 25 years and over; marital status represents only those aged 15 years and over.



Illinois residents who participated in the statewide survey were asked when the last time was that they participated in various forms of gambling (never, within the past 30 days, within the past 12 months, or more than 12 months ago). Notably, surveys were completed in Spring 2021, so past-month or past-year activities would have been severely restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please see the survey instrument in **Appendix D** for how different types of gambling were categorized. Over 40% of adult Illinoisans reported participating in any form of gambling in the past month, 68.4% had gambled in the past year, and 90.3% had gambled ever in their life (Figure 2).

41.9% of adult Illinoisans reported participating in any form of gambling in the past month, 68.4% had gambled in the past year, and 90.3% had gambled ever in their life.

Figure 2 presents these data by type of gambling. The categories in this table are cumulative. In other words, those who reported past month gambling are also included in past year gambling alongside those reporting gambling between 30 days and 12 months; both of these groups are included in lifetime gambling in addition to those reporting gambling more than 12 months ago.

The most common form of gambling in which adult Illinoisans reported participating in over their lives was the state lottery (81.4%), followed by gambling with friends or in the community (67.7%), and gambling

at casinos or riverboats (66.3%). In the past year, the most popular form of gambling in which adult Illinoisans reported participating was the state lottery (54.2%), followed by gambling with friends (33.0%), and organized sports and fights betting (15.3%). In the past month (which was Spring 2021 when respondents completed the survey), the most popular forms of gambling were the state lottery (25.4%), gambling with friends (14.2%), and organized sports and fights betting (8.7%). Again, these prevalence data are likely highly influenced by restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and may not be the same in either previous or future years.

**Figure 2. Gambling Prevalence in the Past Month, Past Year, and Lifetime Among Illinois Residents, by Type, 2021 (n=2,029)**

	Past Month Gambling		Past Year Gambling		Lifetime Gambling	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
State lottery	524	25.4%	1,100	54.2%	1,645	81.4%
Racetracks	40	2.2%	90	4.8%	668	34.4%
Video gaming machines	137	7.1%	265	13.8%	646	33.2%
Casinos and riverboats	129	6.6%	297	15.1%	1,339	66.3%
Organized sports and fights betting	154	8.7%	270	15.3%	440	24.1%
Gambling with your friends or in the community	274	14.2%	636	33.0%	1,331	67.7%

	Past Month Gambling		Past Year Gambling		Lifetime Gambling	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Online gambling	131	6.6%	240	12.6%	468	24.1%
Other	151	8.3%	268	14.5%	423	22.7%
<b>Any type of gambling</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>68.4%</b>	<b>1,819</b>	<b>90.3%</b>

**Data Sources:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

Illinois residents were also asked about more specific types of gambling within these broader categories and Figure 3 presents these more granular prevalence data. This table also presents more detailed frequency data than above, showing those who never gambled and reports gambling in the past month, past 30 days to 12 months, and more than 12 months ago.

Responses indicating gambling within the past month and the past 30 days to 12 months were merged to gain insight into gambling trends over the past year. The most common forms of gambling in which Illinois residents had reported participating during the past year (and coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic) were Powerball, Mega Millions, and daily numbers (40.8%); instant win or scratch lottery tickets (45.0%); and betting on office or friend pools (27.7%). No other forms of gambling reached over 10% in the past year.

In the survey, respondents were asked about gambling participation within the past 30 days. By far the most common reported forms of gambling in the past month were instant wins or scratch lottery tickets (20.4%), and Powerball, Mega Millions, and daily numbers (16.4%). Other types of more common gambling in the past

month included activities requiring little to no in-person interaction, such as high-risk trading of stocks, commodities, futures, or virtual currencies (8.2%); video gaming machines outside of casinos (7.1%); office or friend pools (7.1%); sports betting online (7.0%); and video lottery terminals (6.5%).

In contrast, when asked about gambling activities prior to the past year (and coinciding with prior to the COVID-19 pandemic), the most common forms of gambling in which Illinois residents reported participating were visiting casinos or other gambling venues outside of Illinois (48.4%); electronic gambling machines at Illinois casinos (32.8%); instant win or scratch lottery tickets (31.1%); playing table games at Illinois casinos (29.5%); betting on horse or dog races at the track (28.9%); playing bingo, Lotería, or other games with friends (28.2%); Powerball, Mega Millions, and daily numbers (28.0%); betting on office or friend pools (27.7%); and betting on games with friends or family (27.1%). Less than 20% of Illinois respondents reported engaging in other forms of gambling (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Gambling Prevalence, among Illinois Residents, by Type, 2021**

	Never		Ever		Within Past 30 Days		Between 30 Days and 12 Months		More Than 12 Months Ago	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>State Lottery</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>1,645</b>	<b>81.4%</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>27.2%</b>
Instant win or scratch lottery tickets	486	23.9%	1,543	76.1%	424	20.4%	491	24.6%	628	31.1%
Powerball, Mega Millions, and daily numbers	627	31.2%	1,401	68.8%	344	16.4%	502	24.4%	555	28.0%
Video lottery terminals	1,439	70.1%	589	29.9%	129	6.5%	141	7.1%	319	16.4%
<b>Racetracks</b>	<b>1,361</b>	<b>65.6%</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>34.4%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>29.6%</b>
Horse or dog races at the track	1,389	67.2%	638	32.8%	33	1.8%	40	2.1%	565	28.9%
Horse or dog races off track betting (OTB)	1,657	80.7%	372	19.3%	30	1.7%	43	2.2%	299	15.4%
<b>Video Gaming Machines</b>	<b>1,383</b>	<b>66.8%</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>33.2%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
Video gaming machines not at a casino	1,383	66.8%	646	33.2%	137	7.1%	128	6.6%	381	19.5%
<b>Casinos and Riverboats</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>66.3%</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>1,042</b>	<b>51.1%</b>
Table games at Illinois casinos or riverboats	1,299	62.6%	729	37.4%	50	2.7%	99	5.2%	580	29.5%
Electronic gambling machines at Illinois casinos or riverboats	1,153	56.9%	875	43.1%	88	4.5%	116	5.9%	671	32.8%
Casino or other gambling venue outside of Illinois	863	42.1%	1,161	57.9%	66	3.3%	121	6.2%	974	48.4%
<b>Organized Sports and Fights Betting</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>75.9%</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>24.1%</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>8.9%</b>
Sports betting with a bookie	1,814	88.2%	214	11.8%	40	2.1%	53	3.2%	121	6.5%
Sports betting online	1,748	84.5%	278	15.5%	124	7.0%	80	4.5%	74	4.0%
Fantasy sports leagues or games	1,722	82.6%	306	17.4%	99	5.7%	100	5.9%	107	5.8%
Dog fights, cock fights, or street fights	1,974	97.0%	53	3.0%	11	0.6%	15	1.0%	27	1.4%

	Never		Ever		Within Past 30 days		Between 30 Days and 12 Months		More Than 12 Months Ago	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Gambling with Your Friends or in The Community</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>1,331</b>	<b>67.7%</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>34.8%</b>
Bingo, Lotería, raffles	1,251	61.6%	778	38.4%	64	3.1%	144	7.2%	570	28.2%
Office/friend pools such as college basketball tournaments or “delivery dates” for babies	1,086	51.2%	942	48.8%	131	7.1%	265	14.0%	546	27.7%
Other sports betting with friends	1,403	66.9%	624	33.1%	99	5.5%	159	8.6%	366	19.1%
Card games, dice games, board games, video games, or other types of games with friends, family, or others	1,216	57.7%	812	42.3%	100	5.4%	185	9.8%	527	27.1%
Numbers game or daily numbers	1,841	91.1%	184	8.9%	26	1.2%	44	2.2%	114	5.5%
<b>Online Gambling</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>76.0%</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>24.1%</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>11.5%</b>
Online gambling using the Internet	1,785	87.5%	242	12.6%	57	2.9%	46	2.5%	139	7.2%
Online social games with purchase of virtual currency	1,669	81.8%	354	18.2%	96	4.8%	94	5.2%	164	8.2%
<b>Other Types of Gambling</b>	<b>1,606</b>	<b>77.3%</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
High-risk trading of stocks, commodities, futures, or virtual currencies	1,643	79.3%	383	20.7%	149	8.2%	111	6.0%	123	6.6%
Other	1,853	95.8%	75	4.2%	10	0.6%	13	0.7%	52	2.9%

**Data Sources:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %, 2021

Illinoisans who reported participating in a type of gambling within the past 12 months were then asked how frequently they bet or made wagers in the past 12 months (Figure 4). In 2020–2021, the most common types of gambling in which respondents reported participating weekly or more often were organized sports and fights betting (26.4%), video gaming machines (23.5%), and online gambling (21.0%). Video gaming machines (36.6%), racetracks (28.4%), and organized sports and fights betting (22.0%), were the most common types of gambling done 1–3 times per month. Among Illinoisans who reported gambling in

the past year at a frequency of less than once per month, the most common types of gambling were gambling with friends or in the community (76.6%), casinos and riverboats (67.7%), state lottery (64.6%), online gambling (57.2%), and racetracks (52.9%). Video gaming machines (39.9%) was a less common form of gambling reported among respondents who frequently gambled, but reported gambling less than once per month in the past year. These findings are likely strongly influenced by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and are expected to be different in different years.

**Figure 4. Frequency of Gambling in the Past 12 Months, Among Illinois Residents Reporting Gambling in the Past 12 Months, by Type, 2021**

	Weekly or More		1–3 Times Per Month		Less Than Once Per Month	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
State lottery	171	14.6%	230	20.8%	698	64.6%
Racetracks	15	18.7%	25	28.4%	49	52.9%
Video gaming machines	62	23.5%	97	36.6%	105	39.9%
Casinos and riverboats	31	11.6%	64	20.7%	200	67.7%
Organized sports and fights betting	67	26.4%	60	22.0%	141	51.6%
Gambling with friends or in your community	45	7.6%	94	15.8%	483	76.6%
Online gambling	51	21.0%	50	21.9%	136	57.2%
Other types of gambling	34	15.5%	22	10.8%	177	73.6%

**Data Sources:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

Adult Illinois residents were asked about the time spent gambling when participating in three types of gambling: video gaming machines, casinos and riverboats, and online gambling (Figure 5). Of respondents who reported use of video gaming machines in the past 12 months, almost half indicated it was for less than an hour (48.9%). For Illinoisans who visited casinos

or riverboats in the past 12 months, most reported spending 1–2 hours (38.5%) or 3–5 hours (28.3%) at these venues. For those reporting online gambling in the last 12 months, the majority reported spending no more than 2 hours gambling in one sitting (80.1%).

**Figure 5. Time Spent Gambling, Among Illinois Residents Reporting Gambling via Video Gaming Machines, Casinos and Riverboats, or Online Gambling in the Past 12 Months, by Type, 2021**

	Video Gaming Machines (n=265)	Casinos and Riverboats (n=295)	Online Gambling (n=237)
Less than 1 hour	48.9%	20.9%	56.0%
1–2 hours	33.9%	38.5%	24.1%
3–5 hours	9.0%	28.3%	13.0%
6+ hours	8.2%	12.4%	7.0%

**Data Sources:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

To add further context to these prevalence data, qualitative data regarding the prevalence of gambling were also collected. When thinking about how common gambling is in their community, all community discussion participants agreed that gambling is “*very common*” in their community, and it has become a problem that “*keeps growing*.” Numerous comments were made in community discussions that slot machines now were in restaurants, corner stores, laundromats — everyday establishments that previously had no betting on the premises. One community discussion participant described gambling in their community as “*fairly common especially [because] you see a lot of these little slot cafes opening up locally*.”

Similarly, another participant referred to gambling in their community as “*ubiquitous*.” Both community residents and service providers attributed the perceived increase in gambling directly to the passage of legislation that vastly expanded gambling across the state. For example, one community member perceived gambling to be “*more common than it used to be since Illinois opened it up legislatively*.” An organization leader commented that “*for a long time [gambling] was illegal, so people didn’t do it*.” This person continued by explaining that more individuals are gambling since the change to legislation implied that “*because it is legal, it is okay*” in regard to risk.

# Types and Frequency of Gambling in Illinois by Sociodemographic Characteristics

To gain a deeper understanding of gambling among adult residents of Illinois, it is important to examine gambling behavior by different sociodemographic factors, including by gender, race/ethnicity, age, and educational attainment. As it is clear that gambling behavior can vary across the different types of gambling, this section presents frequency data, stratified by demographics, for each type of gambling.

## State Lottery

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, Illinois had the 11th largest lottery in the U.S., based on total traditional lottery sales [2]. As of May 2021, approximately 7,150 retail locations offered lottery products in Illinois, down from about 7,400 at the end of FY 2019 [3]. This is equivalent to each lottery retailer serving 1,782 Illinois residents, which ranks Illinois 40th out of 45 U.S. lotteries assessed using FY 2018 data [3].

In FY 2020, instant games made up about 65% of the total lottery revenue (\$1,848 million) and draw games made up the remaining revenue (\$957 million) (Figure 6) [4]. Of the draw games, the Pick 3 and Pick 4 games were the largest contributors to sales of draw games. Mega Millions and Powerball games are multi-state games that offer jackpots starting at \$20 million, and made up around 8% of the revenue in FY 2020.

**Figure 6. Lottery Revenue (\$ in millions) by Game, Illinois, FY 2020**

Game	Revenue	% of Lottery Revenue
Instant Games	\$1,848.40	65.9%
Pick 3	\$278.00	9.9%
Pick 4	\$261.60	9.3%
Lucky Day Lotto	\$120.20	4.3%
Mega Millions	\$110.40	3.9%
Powerball	\$94.60	3.4%
Lotto	\$91.70	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,804.90</b>	<b>–</b>

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Illinois Lottery, 2020

Figure 7 depicts how \$3.01 billion was distributed out for operating expenses and fund transfers for the Illinois Lottery in FY 2019. The fund transfers are the net proceeds or profits of the lottery after operating expenses are paid. More than 60% of the distributions went towards winner prizes. Almost a quarter of

distributions went to the Common School Fund — which provides funding for elementary and secondary education including payment for General State Aid, contributions to Teacher’s Retirement Systems, and salaries of regional superintendents and assistants. The remaining lottery fund transfers can be found in Figure 7.

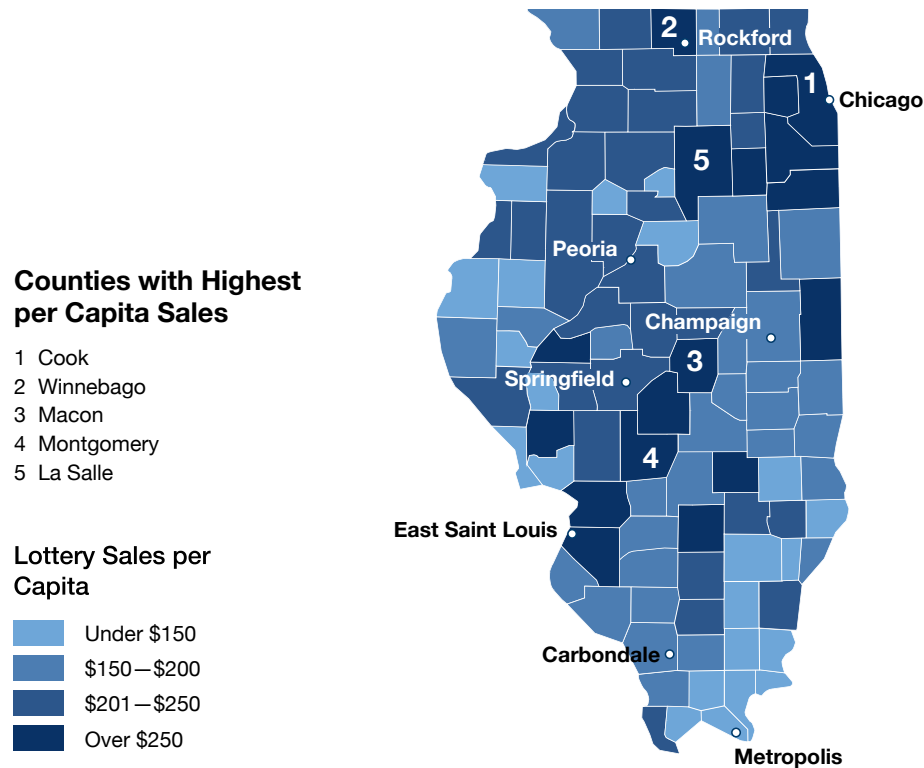
**Figure 7. Lottery Distributions (\$ in millions), Illinois, FY 2019**

Distributions	Amount	% of Distributions
Prizes Awarded to Winners	\$1,908.10	63%
Transfers to Common School Fund	\$731.10	24%
General and Administrative Expenses	\$182.40	6%
Commissions and Bonuses	\$165.30	5%
Employee Service Payments	\$18.60	1%
Transfers to Special Funds	\$3.40	0%
Transfers to Capital Projects Fund	\$0.00	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,008.80</b>	<b>--</b>

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Illinois Lottery, 2020

In Illinois, lottery sales per capita for adults aged 18 or older (indicating the average amount a person spends on the lottery) was \$275 for FY 2020. There is regional variation in lottery spending, with the highest per capita sales for adults aged 18 or older in the following counties: Cook (\$340), Winnebago (\$325), Macon (\$302), Montgomery (\$301), and La Salle (\$293) (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Lottery Sales per Capita for Adults Aged 18 or Older, by County, FY 2020**



**Data Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015–2019; Illinois Lottery, Camelot, FY 2020

**Note:** Per capita rates were calculated by aggregating Camelot sales per zip code into counties and using 2019 American Community Survey county population estimates for population over 18 years of age.



With this broad range and availability of options under the lottery umbrella and the amount of funds going into and coming out of lottery gambling, the Illinois Gambling Prevalence Survey sought to understand more about how adult Illinois residents report their participation in lottery gambling. As noted earlier in this section, 54.2% of survey respondents reported that they have gambled via the lottery in the past year.

Figure 9 presents the participation of adult Illinois residents in the lottery by different sociodemographic factors. Among adult Illinoisans, men had a higher prevalence of lottery gambling than women for all time frames. White adult Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of ever lottery gambling (86.6%) and past year lottery gambling (55.7%). The proportion of Black/African American adult Illinoisans reporting lottery gambling (32.0%) in the past month was greater than any other race/ethnicity group. Asian adult Illinoisans

had the lowest prevalence of ever lottery gambling and past year lottery gambling.

Middle-aged adults, 45 to 64 year olds, were the age group most commonly reporting ever lottery gambling (87.3%), past year lottery gambling (61.8%), and past month lottery gambling (30.2%). The youngest age group, 18 to 24 years, made up one of the smallest proportions of those reporting lottery gambling across time points.

Adult Illinoisans with some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school had the highest prevalence of ever lottery gambling (83.2%). In the past month and past year, adult Illinoisans with less than a high school completion or GED most commonly reported lottery gambling (38.1% and 62.9% respectively).

**Figure 9. Lottery Gambling Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Past Month</b>	<b>Past Year</b>	<b>Ever</b>
Women (n=1,132)	22.4%	52.1%	81.1%
Men (n=878)	28.6%	56.4%	84.4%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Past Month</b>	<b>Past Year</b>	<b>Ever</b>
Asian (n=51)	-	32.9%	68.2%
Black/African American (n=334)	32.0%	52.8%	78.6%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=414)	26.6%	53.8%	77.2%
White (n=1,116)	24.1%	55.7%	86.6%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	26.6%	48.9%	76.3%
<b>Age in Years</b>	<b>Past Month</b>	<b>Past Year</b>	<b>Ever</b>
18 to 24 (n=201)	14.9%	39.9%	60.8%
25 to 44 (n=607)	24.7%	53.9%	80.9%
45 to 64 (n=825)	30.2%	61.8%	87.3%
65+ (n=396)	23.8%	48.7%	84.3%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Past Month</b>	<b>Past Year</b>	<b>Ever</b>
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	38.1%	62.9%	71.7%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	33.8%	57.5%	76.1%

Educational Attainment	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=630)	31.0%	61.1%	83.2%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	18.8%	48.7%	82.6%
Geography	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
Chicago (n=402)	22.4%	50.2%	78.3%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	25.4%	51.9%	79.8%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=533)	23.8%	53.6%	84.3%
Urban Counties (n=364)	30.4%	57.5%	81.1%
Rural Counties (n=273)	25.6%	59.3%	83.0%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %, 2021

The prevalence of lottery gambling was also reflected in interviews and community discussions. In conversations with community members and service providers, participants named the lottery as one of the most common forms of gambling and/or one of the first activities that comes to mind when asked about gambling. While the lottery was seen as a common type of gambling, community residents typically perceived casinos and video gambling to be the most pervasive and dangerous forms of gambling. As one resident said, “Lottery seems [to be] most prevalent but [the] most problematic is probably sports betting or online [gambling].” Casino and video gambling are discussed in the next sections.

## Casinos and Riverboats

As shown earlier in this report, as of 2021, there are currently 10 permitted casinos in Illinois (Figure 10).

As mandated by the Riverboat Gambling Act (Public Act 86-1029), the state of Illinois receives revenue from licensed riverboat gambling through a variety of sources including: license fees, wagering taxes, and admissions taxes. Wagering tax is based on the adjusted gross receipts (AGR) of a casino, while the admission tax is based on the number of patrons visiting the facility. In

FY 2015, AGR from casinos totaled to \$1,459 million; this number decreased slowly through FY 2019 to \$1,347 million (Figure 11). From FY 2019 to FY 2020, AGR decreased by 30.0% (to \$943 million), in large part due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

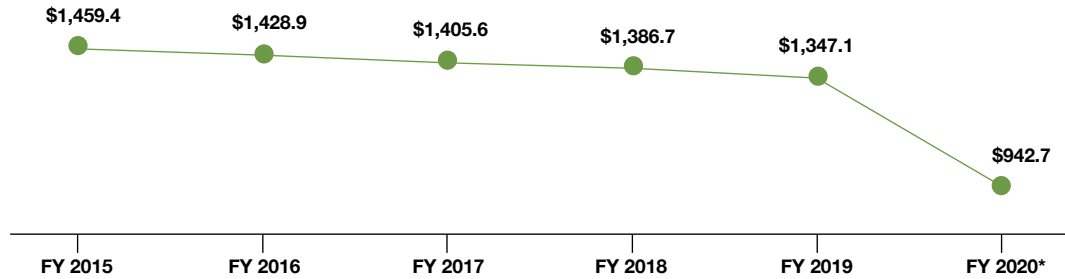
**Figure 10. Casino Locations, Illinois, 2021**



**Data Source:** Illinois Gaming Board (IGB), 2021

**Figure 11. Casino Adjusted Gross Receipts (AGR) (\$ in millions), Illinois, FY 2015 – FY 2020**

	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020*
Total	\$1,459.4	\$1,428.9	\$1,405.6	\$1,386.7	\$1,347.1	\$942.7
% Change	-1.9%	-2.1%	-1.6%	-1.3%	-2.9%	-30.0%



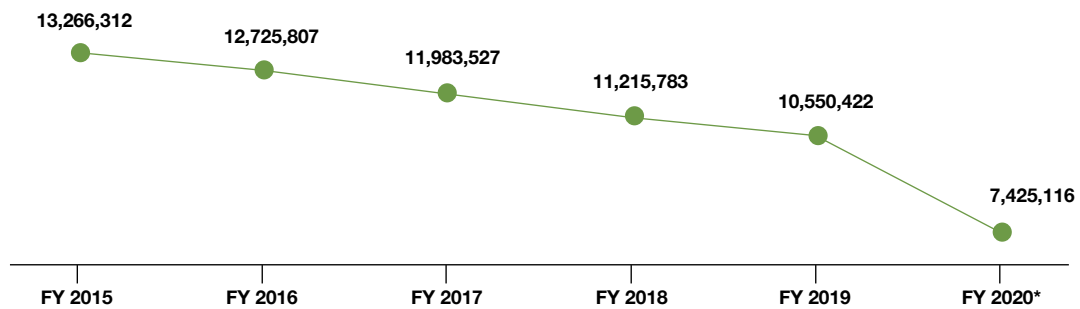
**Data Sources:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Monthly Riverboat Casino Report, 2020

**Note:** Asterisk indicates (\*) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, gaming operations were suspended from March 16, 2020, through June 30, 2020.

Similar to casino AGRs, the number of visits to casinos has decreased slowly from FY 2015 (~13 million) to FY 2019 (~10.5 million), with a sharp COVID-19-related decline in FY 2020 (~7.4 million) (Figure 12).

**Figure 12. Number of Visits to Casinos, Illinois, FY 2015 – FY 2020**

	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020*
Total	13,266,312	12,725,807	11,983,527	11,215,783	10,550,422	7,425,116
% Change	-5.3%	-4.1%	-5.8%	-6.4%	-5.9%	-29.6%



**Data Sources:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Monthly Riverboat Casino Report, 2020

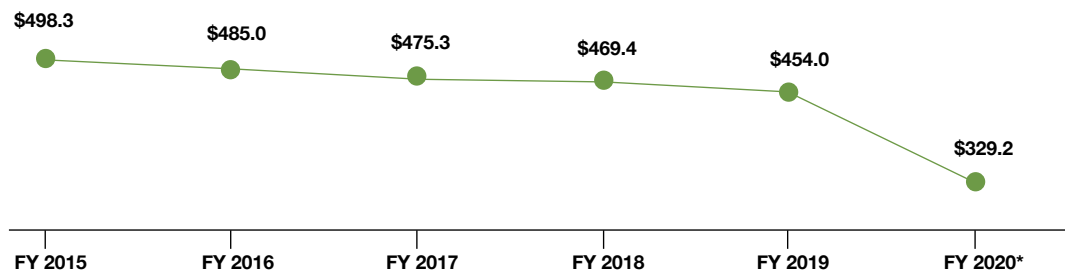
**Note:** Asterisk indicates (\*) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, gaming operations were suspended from March 16, 2020, through June 30, 2020.

Total revenue generated from casinos follows a similar pattern to AGRs and number of people who go to casinos; revenue decreased from \$498 million in FY 2015 to \$329 million in FY 2020 (Figure 13). In FY 2020, of the total revenue generated, state revenue

totaled to \$215 million (with \$59 million distributed by Des Plaines to Chicago State University, School Infrastructure Fund, and Cook County Criminal Justice System) and local revenue totaled \$54.6 million (data not shown).

**Figure 13. Total Revenue Generated from Casinos (\$ in millions), Illinois, FY 2015 – FY 2020**

	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020*
Total	\$498.3	\$485.0	\$475.3	\$469.4	\$454.0	\$329.2
% Change	-3.5%	-2.7%	-2.0%	-1.2%	-3.3%	-27.5%



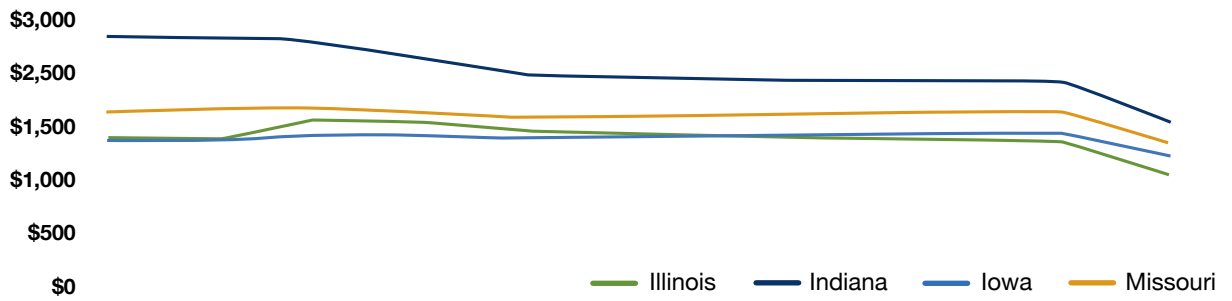
**Data Sources:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Monthly Riverboat Casino Report, 2020

**Note:** Asterisk indicates (\*) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, gaming operations were suspended from March 16, 2020, through June 30, 2020.

Among states bordering Illinois, Indiana casinos consistently had the highest AGRs (\$1,603 million in FY 2020), followed by Missouri (\$1,352 in FY 2020) (Figure 14). Illinois and Iowa had similar AGRs between FY 2010–FY 2011, and since then, AGRs between the two states have slightly fluctuated, with Iowa having a

higher AGR in FY 2020 (\$1,163 million), compared to \$943 million in Illinois. The impact of COVID-19 was notable among all states' data, however, Illinois' decline of 30% was more severe than Indiana (-24.3%), Iowa (-20.2%), and Missouri (-22.1%).

**Figure 14. Adjusted Gross Receipts (AGR) of Casinos, Illinois and Bordering States (\$ in millions), FY 2010 – FY 2020**



	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Illinois	\$1,405	\$1,351	\$1,641	\$1,595	\$1,488	\$1,459	\$1,429	\$1,406	\$1,387	\$1,347	\$943
Indiana	\$2,784	\$2,772	\$2,676	\$2,496	\$2,233	\$2,157	\$2,140	\$2,130	\$2,153	\$2,118	\$1,603
Iowa	\$1,364	\$1,379	\$1,466	\$1,447	\$1,383	\$1,416	\$1,437	\$1,453	\$1,464	\$1,457	\$1,163
Missouri	\$1,748	\$1,806	\$1,796	\$1,745	\$1,662	\$1,682	\$1,713	\$1,719	\$1,746	\$1,736	\$1,352

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, 2020

These admissions and revenue data indicate a prevalent but decreasing trend in casino and riverboat gambling. As noted earlier in this section, 15.1% of Illinoisans reported that they have gambled at a casino or riverboat in the past year; 9.5% reported gambling at a casino outside of Illinois in the past year. Given the in-person nature of this type of gambling, it is important to consider how the COVID-19 pandemic could have impacted behaviors. More than half of adult Illinois residents (53.6%) reported ever gambling at a casino or other gambling venue outside Illinois.

Figure 15 shows casino gambling among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Among adult Illinoisans, men had a higher prevalence of ever gambling at a casino (69.3%) than women (63.4%). Past year prevalence of casino gambling was similar among women (15.0%) and men (15.2%). In contrast, a greater proportion of adult women Illinoisans reported casino gambling in the past month (7.5%) compared to men (5.5%). By race/ethnicity, White Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of ever gambling at a casino (70.7%), while Black/African

American Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of casino gambling in the past year (18.1%) and the past month (10.0%) (Figure 15). Adult Illinoisans aged 45 to 64 years old (75.0%) and 65+ years of age (74.2%) had the highest prevalence of ever gambling at a casino. Younger age groups, 25 to 44 year-olds (17.0%) and 18 to 24 year-olds (16.4%) had the greatest proportion of adult Illinoisans reporting gambling at a casino in the past year and about 7% of adults younger than 65 years of age reported gambling in the past month, compared to only 3.3% of respondents 65+ years of age, which could reflect differences in COVID-19 risk perceptions among different age groups.

Adult Illinoisans with a college degree or higher had the greatest proportion who reported ever casino gambling (70.9%), while those with less than a high school completion or GED had the greatest proportion who reported casino gambling in the past year (22.4%), and those with a high school degree or GED had the greatest reported proportion of casino gambling in the past month (8.5%) (Figure 15). By region, adult Illinoisans in the Collar Counties had the highest

prevalence of ever casino gambling (68.2%), though the prevalence ranged from a low of 63.5% to a high of 68.2% across geographies. Adults in urban counties had the highest past year (17.3%), and past month (7.5%) prevalence of casino gambling.

**Figure 15. Casino Gambling Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,131)	7.5%	15.0%	63.4%
Men (n=878)	5.5%	15.2%	69.3%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	-	-	59.4%
Black/African American (n=334)	10.0%	18.1%	63.2%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=413)	5.4%	15.1%	55.1%
White (n=1,116)	6.5%	14.8%	70.7%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	-	13.8%	56.8%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	7.5%	16.4%	28.9%
25 to 44 (n=607)	7.1%	17.0%	65.9%
45 to 64 (n=825)	7.2%	14.7%	75.0%
65+ (n=395)	3.3%	11.2%	74.2%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	-	22.4%	40.4%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	9.2%	18.8%	55.2%
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=629)	8.5%	21.5%	66.7%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	4.2%	9.8%	70.9%
<b>Geography</b>			
Chicago (n=402)	6.8%	16.9%	66.9%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	6.2%	14.9%	64.5%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=532)	6.2%	12.9%	68.2%
Urban Counties (n=364)	7.5%	17.3%	66.7%
Rural Counties (n=273)	5.6%	13.9%	63.5%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %, 2021

**Note:** Values n<10 are not presented.

Qualitative results contributed important context to prevalence data for casino gambling. When discussing casino gambling, interview and community discussion participants expressed a range of sentiments and perceptions. One gaming industry professional perceived video gaming terminals in casinos to be particularly problematic and highlighted the staff training, education, and helpline advertisements provided by casinos to help address the issue. Some community members noted that the pervasive ways

in which casinos are marketed make them difficult to exclude from communities. One person perceived that this marketing stems from casinos being tied to job creation, the hospitality industry (e.g., hotels, dining), and family-centered events such as concerts. Several other community members shared similar sentiments specific to community benefits, noting that when casinos are built, developers indicate that a portion of revenue will be contributed to education and schools.

## Spotlight

### Older Populations

Older adults are also impacted by problem gambling. While on average, older adults have similar lifetime and current prevalence of problem gambling compared to younger adults, estimates range from 0.2% to 12.9% [5]. Higher rates of problem gambling were also not apparent in the representative sample of adult Illinoisans in the Illinois Gambling Prevalence Survey.

Illinoisans aged 65 or over had a similar prevalence of ever gambling (92.2%) to those under age 65 (89.9%), and a lower prevalence of gambling in the past year or past month (Figure 16). However, recent gambling may have been lower in this older age group due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately affected older adults at the time of the survey. Assessing the prevalence of gambling among older Illinoisans post-pandemic will be important to further explore whether this population is more vulnerable to developing a gambling problem.

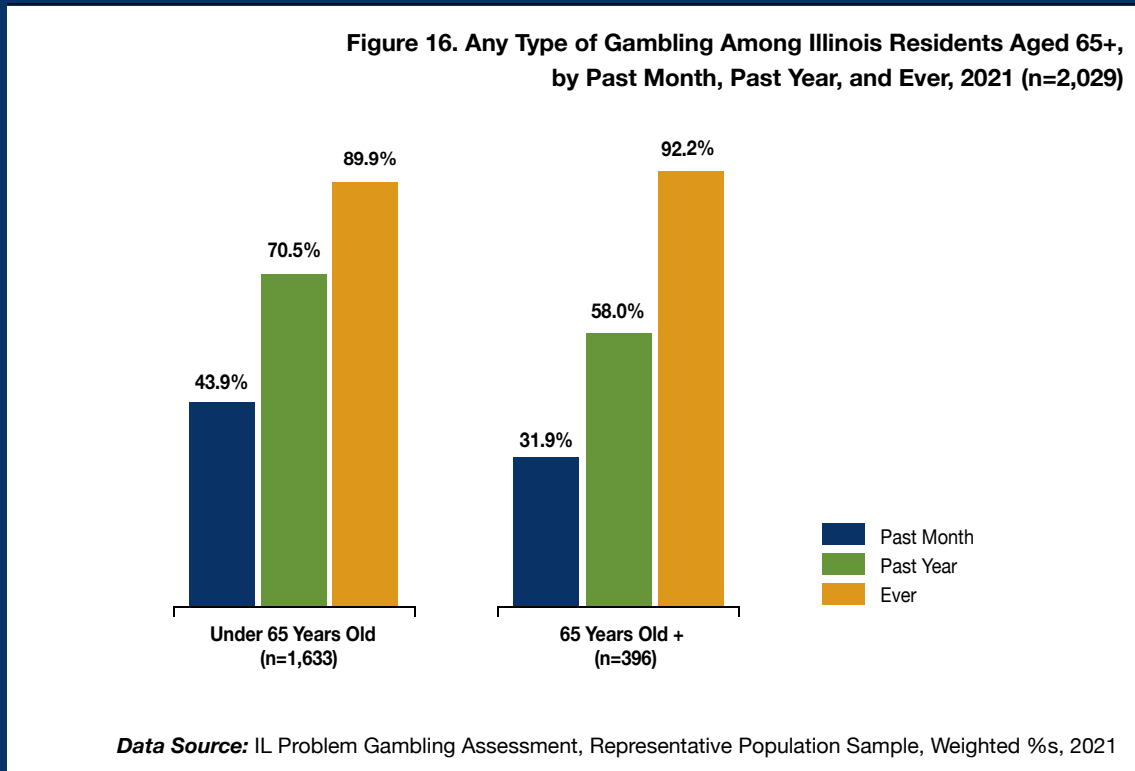
However, factors such as fixed income, limited social support, and comorbid health problems may increase risk of developing problem gambling among some older adults [5-7]. Community members noted that gambling

may be appealing to fixed income groups due to the perception that it can change their life circumstances.

For some older adults, gambling is one of the few opportunities for excitement, socialization, and escape. Some participants in community discussions noted that older adults appear to prefer casino gambling and that they are often picked up by casino shuttle buses. *“Seniors who lack mobility gladly participate because they view this as an outing, but this convenient arrangement is predatory.”* While lifetime casino gambling prevalence among Illinoisans aged 65 and over was similar to younger groups, increased casino visitation may be associated with increased risk of problem gambling [6].

Many older adults also experience loneliness and struggle to find social support. Older adults that use gambling as a way to escape anxiety and depression can contribute to problem gambling [7]. Some of this distress may also emerge due to physical health issues and limited mobility [5, 8]. While some of these factors are unique to the experience as an older adult, data from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions on U.S. older adults with

lifetime problem gambling underscored that many experienced other mental health issues across their lifetime [9]. Older adults are a heterogeneous group and more attention is required to understand the unique factors that make them vulnerable to problem gambling.



## Video Gaming Machines & Online Gambling

There were 61 video gaming terminals in operation in Illinois during its opening month in September 2012 (data not shown). By FY 2020 this number had risen to 36,145 terminals at 7,641 locations (Figure 17). On July 1, 2019, the terminal limit increased from five to six terminals at regular establishments and from five to ten terminals at qualifying truck stops. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, many locations were transitioning to more terminals; therefore, establishments with more terminals are expected to grow.

Though Illinois does not limit the number of establishments that can offer video gaming, some municipalities (including Chicago) may have their own limitations for the number of video gaming terminals. Municipalities may be excluded from video gaming if they use the opt-out provisions listed in the Video Gaming Act or if they have an ordinance that prohibits gambling and does not make an exception for video gaming. A current list of ordinances is available from the Illinois Gaming Board [10]. Overall, the number of terminals has continued to grow from FY 2013 (7,920) to FY 2020 (36,145). Total revenues from terminals has also continued to increase (Figure 17).



**Figure 17. Video Gaming Statistics (\$ in millions), Illinois, FY 2013 – FY 2020**

Fiscal Year	Terminals in Operation	Net Terminal Income (NTI) (\$)	NTI per Terminal per Day (\$)	Total Tax Revenue (\$)	State Share (\$)	Local Share (\$)
2013	7,920	121.1	41.9	36.3	30.3	6.1
2014	17,467	485.4	76.1	145.6	121.4	24.3
2015	20,730	804.8	106.4	241.4	201.2	40.2
2016	23,891	1,020.8	117.1	306.2	255.2	51.0
2017	26,873	1,202.0	122.6	360.6	300.5	60.1
2018	29,283	1,406.5	131.6	421.9	351.6	70.3
2019	32,033	1,592.5	136.2	477.8	398.1	79.6
2020*	36,145	1,222.6	130.6	403.5	342.3	61.1

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, 2020

**Note:** Terminals in operation represents number at the end of each FY; the last month of data for FY 2020 was in March due to suspension of video gaming operations caused by COVID-19.

Among Illinois municipalities, Springfield had the highest number of terminals in Illinois in FY 2020 at 701 terminals, as well as the highest amount of net terminal income with \$24.6 million collected. The top 10 municipalities with video gaming in Illinois in FY 2020 are depicted below, ranked according to terminals (Figure 18) and according to net terminal income (Figure 19).

**Figure 18. Top Municipalities with Video Gaming Totals, Ranked by Number of Terminals Illinois, FY 2020**

Rank	Municipality*	Terminals
1	Springfield	701
2	Rockford	517
3	Decatur	492
4	Joliet	413
5	Loves Park	324
6	Lake County	317
7	Champaign	303
8	Peoria	292
9	Berwyn	276
10	Waukegan	269

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, 2020

**Note:** Asterisk (\*) indicates that when a “county” is listed above, it is referring to the unincorporated totals of that particular county; in FY 2020, the tax rate on video gaming net terminal income increased from 30% to 33%. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, video gaming operations were suspended from March 16, 2020, through June 30, 2020.

**Figure 19. Top Municipalities with Video Gaming Totals (\$ in millions), Ranked by Net Terminal Income (NTI), Illinois, FY 2020**

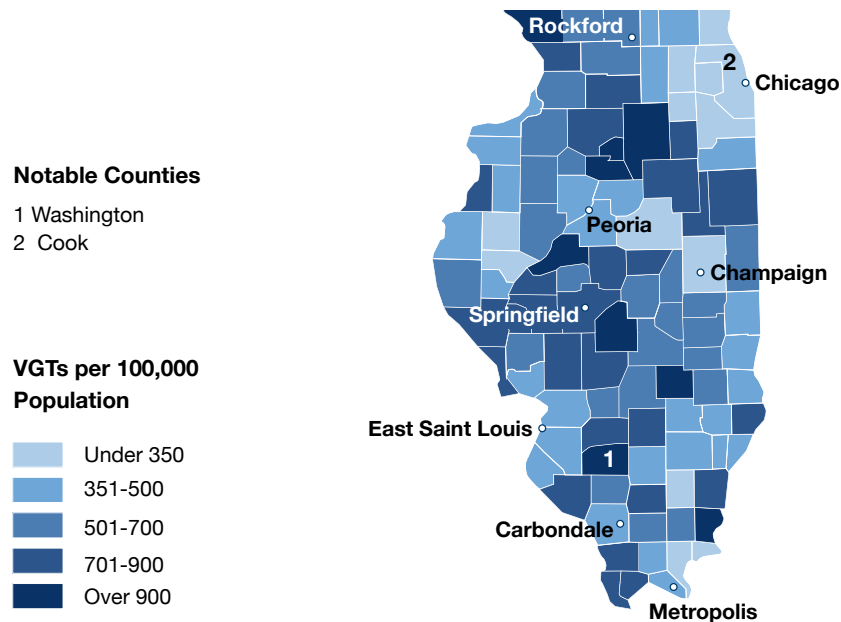
Rank	Municipality*	NTI (Taxable Base)	Tax Revenue	State Tax Share	Local Tax Share
1	Springfield	\$24.6	\$7.4	\$6.2	\$1.2
2	Rockford	\$24.4	\$7.3	\$6.1	\$1.2
3	Decatur	\$23.2	\$7.0	\$5.8	\$1.2
4	Waukegan	\$16.5	\$4.9	\$4.1	\$0.8
5	Loves Park	\$14.1	\$4.2	\$3.5	\$0.7
6	Cicero	\$13.1	\$3.9	\$3.3	\$0.7
7	Champaign	\$12.9	\$3.9	\$3.2	\$0.6
8	Joliet	\$12.8	\$3.8	\$3.2	\$0.6
9	Bloomington	\$12.0	\$3.6	\$3.0	\$0.6
10	Oak Lawn	\$10.8	\$3.2	\$2.7	\$0.5

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, 2020

**Note:** Asterisk (\*) indicates that when a “county” is listed above, it is referring to the unincorporated totals of that particular county; in FY 2020, the tax rate on video gaming net terminal income increased from 30% to 33%. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, video gaming operations were suspended from March 16, 2020, through June 30, 2020.

In Illinois, there were a total of 36,145 video gaming terminals at the end of FY 2020. While Cook County had the most VGTs (6,613), Washington County had the highest number of VGTs per 100,000 population (1,202.16 per 100,000) (Figure 20).

**Figure 20. Video Gaming Terminals (VGT), per 100,000 Population, by County, FY 2020**



**Data Source:** IL Wagering Report, 2020; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015–2019

**Note:** Population counts were based on 2015–2019 Census American Community Survey estimates.

As noted earlier in this section, 13.8% of Illinoisans reported that they have gambled at video gaming machines in the past year.

Figure 21 shows video gambling among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Among adult Illinoisans, men had a higher prevalence of reporting video gambling than women for all time frames. White Illinoisans were the racial/ethnic group who most commonly reported ever video gambling (35.4%), while those who identify as other race/ethnicity had the highest prevalence of video gambling in the past year (16.7%), and Black/African

American Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of video gambling in the past month (8.7%). Adult Illinoisans with some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school had the highest prevalence of ever video gambling (42.3%). Illinoisans with less than a high school completion or GED were the education group most commonly reporting video gambling in the past year (25.5%) and past month (18.0%). Adult Illinoisans in rural counties had the highest prevalence of video gambling across all time frames, and adult respondents in urban counties also had a high prevalence of ever video gambling (38.2%).

**Figure 21. Video Gambling Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,132)	6.5%	11.8%	30.8%
Men (n=878)	7.8%	15.8%	35.8%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	-	-	-
Black/African American (n=334)	8.7%	12.3%	28.8%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=414)	6.0%	14.3%	29.3%
White (n=1,116)	7.5%	14.0%	35.4%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	-	16.7%	35.1%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	6.1%	15.9%	24.5%
25 to 44 (n=607)	9.0%	16.2%	37.8%
45 to 64 (n=825)	7.2%	12.9%	34.1%
65+ (n=396)	4.0%	9.1%	28.0%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	18.0%	25.5%	36.3%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	11.3%	17.8%	34.7%
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=630)	9.4%	20.3%	42.3%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	3.9%	8.0%	27.2%

Geography			
Chicago (n=402)	5.0%	13.4%	29.9%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	4.9%	9.9%	29.2%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=533)	6.5%	10.8%	31.8%
Urban Counties (n=364)	9.4%	17.4%	38.2%
Rural Counties (n=273)	11.3%	19.8%	38.7%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

As noted earlier in this section, 12.6% of Illinoisans reported that they have gambled online in the past year. Figure 22 shows online gambling among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Among adult Illinoisans, men had a higher prevalence of online gambling ever (26.8%) and in the past year (13.7%), while women had a higher prevalence of online gambling in the past month (6.7%). Adult Illinoisans who identify as other race/ethnicity were the racial/ethnic group most commonly reporting ever online gambling (29.5%) and Black/African American Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of online gambling in the past year (13.8%) and the past month (7.8%). Illinoisans of other race/ethnicity also reported a high prevalence of online gambling in the past year (13.7%).

Adult Illinoisans 18 to 24 years of age had the highest prevalence of ever online gambling (33.4%) and online gambling in the past year (19.2%), while those aged 25 to 44 years old, had the highest prevalence of online gambling in the past month (8.6%) (Figure 22). Adult Illinoisans with some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school had the highest prevalence of online gambling within each time frame. Additionally, more than one in seven respondents with less than a high school education or GED (16.2%) and those who completed a high school education or GED (15.6%) reported online gambling in the past year. By region, adult Chicago residents had the highest prevalence of ever online gambling (27.7%) and past month online gambling (8.2%). Adult residents in urban counties had the highest prevalence of past year online gambling (15.1%).

**Figure 22. Online Gambling Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,132)	6.7%	11.5%	21.5%
Men (n=876)	6.4%	13.7%	26.8%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	-	10.8%	22.8%
Black/African American (n=334)	7.8%	13.8%	25.5%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=413)	7.1%	12.8%	24.3%
White (n=1,116)	6.3%	12.3%	23.4%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=99)	-	13.7%	29.5%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	7.8%	19.2%	33.4%
25 to 44 (n=606)	8.6%	16.0%	28.2%
45 to 64 (n=825)	5.7%	10.5%	22.2%
65+ (n=395)	3.3%	5.4%	13.0%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=63)	-	16.2%	20.0%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	6.4%	15.6%	26.4%
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=629)	9.3%	16.4%	29.3%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	4.8%	9.2%	20.5%
<b>Geography</b>			
Chicago (n=401)	8.2%	14.6%	27.7%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	6.8%	12.4%	25.8%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=532)	6.3%	11.6%	21.9%
Urban Counties (n=364)	5.9%	15.1%	23.8%
Rural Counties (n=273)	5.1%	8.1%	20.7%

**Data Source:** IIL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

**Note:** Values where n<10 are not presented.

For further context, qualitative data were collected related to video and online gambling. When discussing video/electronic gambling, almost all participants (in community discussions and conversations with service providers/organization leaders in Illinois) perceived video and online gambling to be an increasing issue. One community member whose relative experienced problem gambling remarked, “...you can walk in a restaurant and there’s gambling machines.” Another participant – who was an organization leader said, “It is everywhere. You cannot walk into any store or restaurant [and not see video gambling] – we all know how pervasive it is with our smart phones, computers, iPads. Access has increased, so a lot of people are doing it.” Several participants echoed this statement and named video game parlors, gas stations, restaurants, and truck stops as some of the places where video gambling is available. Along those lines, two service provider participants suggested that disorders specific to video gambling tend to co-occur with alcohol use disorder because of the machine placement in bars and restaurants.

Community members also noted that spending a large amount of money is easier to do with video gambling and shared anecdotes of community members spending their entire paycheck in one sitting or gambling with their monthly rent to use video gambling machines.

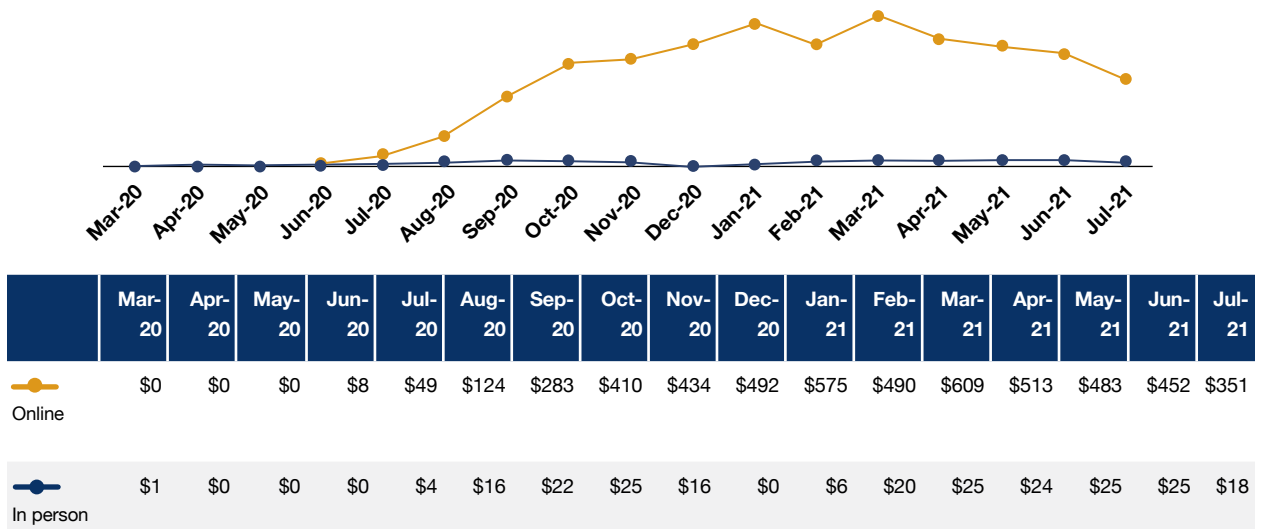
Though video and online gambling experiences are discussed in this report, it is important to note that technological advances have and will continue to advance and present more gambling experiences, including mobile gaming, virtual and augmented reality, and others. Youth assessment participants highlighted these technologies and the fine line between video gaming and gambling. However, quantitative data for such technologies were not explored in this report.

## **Organized Sports & Fights Betting**

Sports betting in Illinois became legal in March 2020, but operations were quickly suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic; online wagering resumed on June 18, 2020, and in-person wagering resumed on July 1, 2020.

The total handle from sports wagering after it became legalized through July 2021 amounted to \$5.5 billion; the majority of the handle was through online wagering (\$5.3 billion). Figure 23 indicates wagering increasing steadily beginning in June 2020, peaking in January and March 2021 for online and in March 2021 for in-person sports wagering.

Figure 23. Sports Wagering Total Handle by Method (\$ in millions), Illinois, March 2020 – July 2021

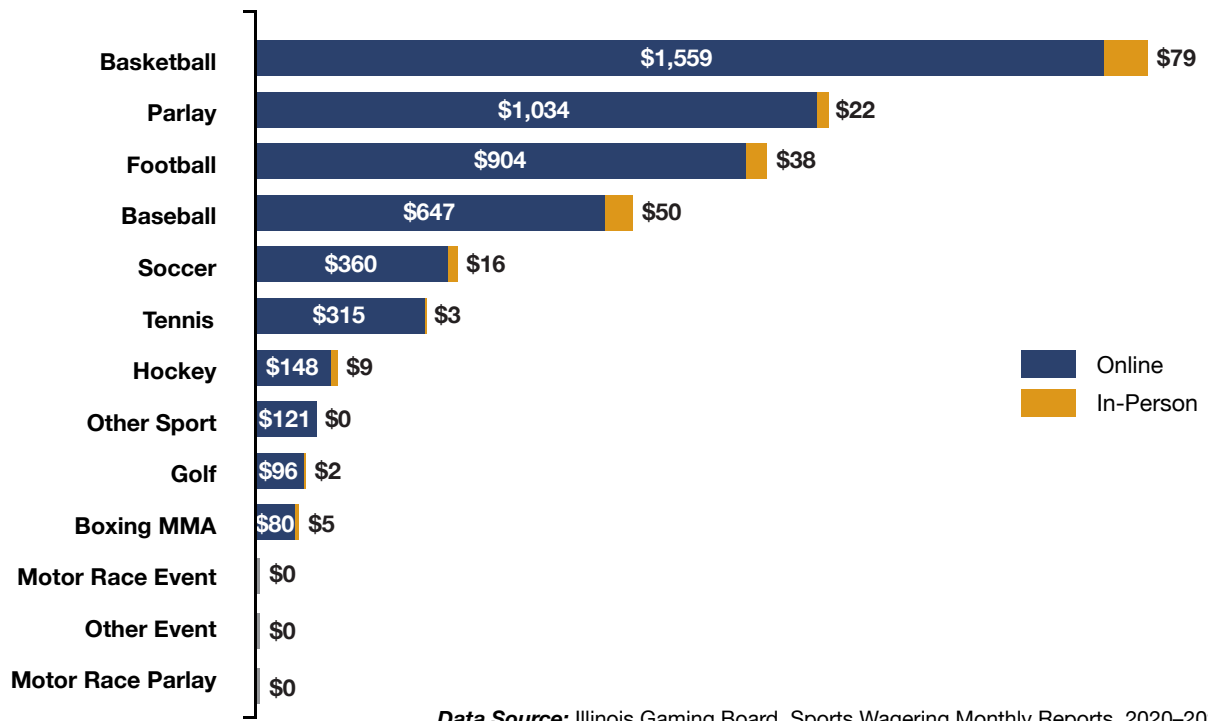


**Data Source:** Illinois Gaming Board, Sports Wagering Monthly Reports, 2020–2021

**Note:** Due to the COVID-19 crisis, sports wagering operations were suspended on March 16, 2020. Online wagering began on June 18, 2020, and in-person wagering resumed on July 1, 2020.

Figure 24 indicates that basketball, parlay (for any sport), football, and baseball have contributed the most to the total sports wagering handle.

Figure 24. Sports Wagering Total Handle by Type of Sport (\$ in millions), Illinois, March 2020 – July 2021



**Data Source:** Illinois Gaming Board, Sports Wagering Monthly Reports, 2020–2021

**Note:** Due to the COVID-19 crisis, sports wagering operations were suspended on March 16, 2020. Online wagering began on June 18, 2020, and in-person wagering resumed on July 1, 2020.

Parlay is a type of sports wagering where initial winnings are used in a subsequent bet.

As noted earlier in this section, 15.3% of Illinoisans reported that they have gambled on organized sports and fights in the past year. Figure 25 shows sports and fights betting among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Within each time frame, men had a higher prevalence of sports and fights betting than women. Asian adult Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of ever betting on sports and fights (30.3%), though the number of survey respondents who were Asian was low, so this finding should be interpreted with caution. Illinoisans who identify as other race/ethnicity had the highest

prevalence in the past year (16.9%) and White Illinoisans had the highest prevalence in the past month (9.3%). Adult Illinoisans aged 25 to 44 years old had the highest prevalence of ever betting on sports and fights (33.1%). Adults 18 to 24 years old had the highest proportion of sports betting in the past month (13.2%) and past year (23.9%). Adult Illinoisans with a college degree or more had the highest prevalence of betting on sports and fights within each time frame. By region, Chicago, Cook County, and Collar Counties had a higher prevalence of sports and fight betting in all time periods, compared to other parts of the state.

**Figure 25. Sports and Fights Betting Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,132)	3.4%	7.5%	13.3%
Men (n=878)	14.4%	23.6%	35.7%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	-	-	30.3%
Black/African American (n=334)	6.9%	10.5%	19.7%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=414)	7.2%	15.5%	25.4%
White (n=1,116)	9.3%	16.0%	24.4%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	-	16.9%	24.0%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	13.2%	23.9%	29.4%
25 to 44 (n=607)	12.7%	22.6%	33.1%
45 to 64 (n=825)	7.2%	11.1%	21.0%
65+ (n=396)	-	3.0%	8.8%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	-	11.7%	20.4%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	5.2%	10.6%	18.4%
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=630)	8.5%	15.6%	23.4%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	9.9%	16.7%	26.6%



	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Geography</b>			
Chicago (n=402)	11.1%	17.5%	30.1%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	10.0%	17.7%	27.3%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=533)	9.3%	17.0%	24.6%
Urban Counties (n=364)	6.0%	13.0%	20.7%
Rural Counties (n=273)	5.7%	8.6%	15.5%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

**Note:** Values where n<10 are not presented.

Qualitative data collected added helpful context to these prevalence data. When discussing sports-related gambling, e-sports was consistently mentioned. Participants perceived an increase in e-sports betting due to increased exposure to advertisements and mobile access. One community member compared current visibility to visibility in the past saying, “*ten years ago, you never saw anything. [Now], almost every other commercial is sports betting.*” Another community member described Illinois as being “*inundated*” with television and radio advertisements. When speculating who is participating in sports betting, community members typically agreed that younger populations (high school and college aged youth) are the target demographic. In one interview, a youth participant echoed this sentiment saying, “*a lot of people my age*

*are betting on fantasy drafts.*” Across discussions, youth indicated that online sports betting was the most prevalent among their friends and peers. This is consistent with the Illinois Gambling Prevalence Survey data, showing the highest prevalence of sports betting among younger age groups.

## Racetracks

In 2019, Illinois horse racing wagering, the oldest legalized form of gambling in the state, generated \$11.7 million in total revenues, with the State receiving \$7.0 million and local governments receiving \$4.7 million in revenues (Figure 26). There were 232 live race dates in 2019, down from 518 dates in 2013, signaling a decline in the horse racing industry.

**Figure 26. Horse Racing Revenues (\$ in millions), Illinois, 2009 – 2019**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State Revenue	\$7.1	\$7.4	\$7.8	\$7.5	\$6.4	\$7.5	\$6.8	\$6.8	\$7.1	\$7.0	\$7.0
Local Revenue	\$9.1	\$7.8	\$7.2	\$6.8	\$6.7	\$6.2	\$5.8	\$5.5	\$5.5	\$5.1	\$4.7
<b>Total Revenues*</b>	<b>\$16.2</b>	<b>\$15.3</b>	<b>\$15.0</b>	<b>\$14.2</b>	<b>\$13.1</b>	<b>\$13.7</b>	<b>\$12.7</b>	<b>\$12.3</b>	<b>\$12.6</b>	<b>\$12.2</b>	<b>\$11.7</b>

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Illinois Racing Board, 2020

**Note:** Asterisk indicates (\*) on January 29, 2014, advance deposit wagering was re-authorized for three years and included an additional .2% surcharge on winning wagers to help fund the Racing Board.

The 2019 total handle (amount bet by all gamblers) for racing in Illinois was \$556.6 million, composed of the following proportions of sources of wagering: on track (13.1%), intertrack (8.3%), off-track betting (OTBs) (39.6%) and advanced deposit wagering (ADW) (39.0%) (Figure 27).

**Figure 27. Racing Statistics (\$ in millions), Illinois, 2018–2019**

	2018 Handle	2019 Handle	% Change
Thoroughbred	\$288.40	\$268.10	-7.1%
Standardbred	\$79.00	\$71.40	-9.7%
Advanced Deposit Wagering (ADW)	\$206.00	\$217.10	5.4%
<b>Total Illinois Handle</b>	<b>\$573.50</b>	<b>\$556.60</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>

**Data Source:** Wagering in Illinois, Illinois Gaming Board, Illinois Racing Board, 2020

As noted earlier in this section, 4.8% of survey respondents reported that they had gambled at racetracks in the past year. This lower prevalence is consistent with the presented lower revenue data, comparing racetracks to both lottery and casinos.

Figure 29 shows racetrack gambling among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Among adult Illinoisans, men had a higher prevalence of racetrack gambling within each time frame, compared to women. White Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of ever racetrack gambling (40.8%), while Hispanics/Latinxs (5.7%), and Blacks/African Americans (5.5%) had a higher prevalence of

racetrack gambling in the past year. Illinoisans aged 44 to 64 years had the highest prevalence of ever racetrack gambling (44.0%). A younger age group, 18 to 24 year-olds, had the highest prevalence of racetrack gambling in the past year (6.6%). Adult Illinoisans with a college degree or more had the highest prevalence of ever racetrack gambling (40.9%). For racetrack gambling in the past year and past month, adult Illinoisans with some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school had the highest prevalence (2.9%, and 5.2%, respectively). By region, adult Cook County residents had the highest prevalence of ever (42.2%) and past year (5.8%) racetrack gambling.

**Figure 28. Racetrack Gambling Among Illinois Residents, Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,132)	1.0%	2.7%	30.3%
Men (n=878)	3.4%	7.1%	38.8%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	-	-	-
Black/African American (n=334)	-	5.5%	21.8%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=414)	-	5.7%	22.9%
White (n=1,116)	1.6%	4.4%	40.8%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	-	-	28.7%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	-	6.6%	17.3%
25 to 44 (n=607)	2.8%	5.2%	28.5%

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Age in Years</b>			
45 to 64 (n=825)	1.7%	5.1%	44.0%
65+ (n=396)	-	-	37.9%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	-	-	22.7%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	-	5.0%	25.7%
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=630)	2.9%	5.2%	29.2%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	1.2%	4.2%	40.9%
<b>Geography</b>			
Chicago (n=402)	-	5.4%	31.5%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	-	5.8%	42.2%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=533)	2.3%	5.7%	40.5%
Urban Counties (n=364)	-	4.7%	31.4%
Rural Counties (n=273)	-	-	19.4%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %, 2021

**Note:** Values where n<10 are not presented.

Interview and community discussion participants did not discuss dog or horse racing. While qualitative data collection did not generate further context for this type of gambling, the lack of data parallels the prevalence data. As noted earlier in this section, a small proportion of adult Illinois residents have ever gambled on a horse or dog race on the track (28.9%) or through off-track betting (15.4%).

## Gambling with Friends or in the Community

Secondary data about revenues from and participation in gambling with friends/community are limited, as would be expected. However, the Illinois Gaming Commission does receive some tax and license revenues from bingo, charitable games, and pull-tabs and jar games. In total, approximately \$4.1 million in revenue was generated from this miscellaneous gambling in Illinois in FY 2020. This was 9.7% less than the \$4.6 million generated in FY 2019.

As noted earlier in this section, 33.0% of Illinoisans reported that they have gambled with their friends or in the community in the past year. Figure 29 shows gambling with friends or in the community among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Within each time frame, men had a higher prevalence of gambling with friends or in the community than women. White Illinoisans had the highest prevalence of ever gambling with friends or in the community (73.0%), while those who identify as other race/ethnicity most commonly reported gambling with friends or in the community in the past month (18.8%) and past year (35.8%).

Illinoisans aged 45 to 64 years old had the highest prevalence of ever gambling with friends or in the community (74.0%) (Figure 29). A younger age group, 18 to 24 year-olds, had the highest prevalence of gambling with friends or in the community in the past year (36.8%), and the past month (17.7%). Adult Illinoisans with a college degree or more had the

highest prevalence of ever gambling with friends or in the community (72.7%). Approximately one in three Illinoisans with a high school degree or equivalent or higher reported gambling with friends or in the community in the past year (32.8%-34.1%), and about one in seven reported this form of gambling in the past

month (14.2%-14.8%). Across Illinois, the prevalence of gambling with friends or in the community within the past year (37.3%), and past month (17.9%) was highest among adult Chicago residents. Adult residents of rural counties had the lowest prevalence of ever gambling with friends or in the community (59.9%).

**Figure 29. Gambling with Friends or in the Community Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,132)	10.5%	27.4%	61.2%
Men (n=878)	18.1%	38.9%	74.6%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	-	22.4%	44.5%
Black/African American (n=334)	14.4%	25.7%	55.0%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=414)	13.3%	33.0%	63.3%
White (n=1,116)	14.4%	34.5%	73.0%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	18.8%	35.8%	53.7%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	17.7%	36.8%	53.3%
25 to 44 (n=607)	16.2%	35.2%	65.7%
45 to 64 (n=825)	14.7%	35.3%	74.0%
65+ (n=396)	6.6%	20.4%	68.5%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	-	22.8%	42.0%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	14.8%	34.1%	57.7%
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=630)	14.6%	33.6%	66.9%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	14.2%	32.8%	72.7%
<b>Geography</b>			
Chicago (n=402)	17.9%	37.3%	66.6%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	14.2%	33.2%	68.9%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=533)	14.0%	34.8%	71.6%
Urban Counties (n=364)	14.1%	29.4%	68.2%
Rural Counties (n=273)	10.6%	28.8%	59.9%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %, 2021

**Note:** Values where n<10 are not presented.

## Other Types of Gambling

As noted earlier in this section, 14.5% of survey respondents reported that they have participated in other types of gambling in the past year, including high-risk trading of stocks, commodities, futures, or virtual currencies. Figure 30 shows other types of gambling among adult Illinoisans in the past month, past year, and ever by demographic factors. Among adult Illinoisans, men had a higher prevalence of other types of gambling within each time frame, compared to women. Asian Illinoisans have the highest prevalence of adults reporting other types of gambling in the past year (25.8%), and ever (31.4%), however Hispanic/Latinx Illinoisans had the highest prevalence in the past month (9.2%). Illinoisans 18 to 24 years old had the highest prevalence of other types of gambling in the past month

(12.1%), and ever (28.1%), followed closely by adults 25–44 years of age (11.9%, and 27.7%, respectively). Respondents 25–44 years of age had the highest proportion of those reporting past year gambling of other types (21.2%). Adult Illinoisans with less than a high school degree had the highest prevalence of other types of gambling in the past month (15.1%), and past year (20.0%), while Illinoisans with a college degree or higher had the highest prevalence of ever participating in other forms of gambling (25.6%). Adult Chicago residents had the highest prevalence of other gambling types within the past month (10.5%) and past year (16.9%), while adults in Cook County (excl. Chicago) had the highest prevalence of ever participating in other gambling types (23.3%).

**Figure 30. Other Gambling Among Illinois Residents, by Past Month, Past Year, and Ever, 2021**

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Gender</b>			
Women (n=1,132)	4.7%	8.4%	14.0%
Men (n=878)	12.2%	21.0%	31.9%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian (n=51)	6.3%	25.8%	31.4%
Black/African American (n=334)	8.6%	13.0%	19.6%
Hispanic/Latinx (n=414)	9.2%	15.8%	23.6%
White (n=1,116)	8.3%	14.2%	22.4%
Other Race/Ethnicity (n=100)	3.9%	12.5%	26.5%
<b>Age in Years</b>			
18 to 24 (n=201)	12.1%	19.1%	28.1%
25 to 44 (n=607)	11.9%	21.2%	27.7%
45 to 64 (n=825)	6.0%	10.7%	19.9%
65+ (n=396)	3.1%	5.6%	14.5%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Less than high school completion or GED (n=64)	15.1%	20.0%	21.8%
High school or secondary school graduate or GED (n=317)	4.9%	6.1%	10.4%

	Past Month	Past Year	Ever
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Some college, 2-year degree, certification program, or trade school (n=630)	8.6%	15.4%	24.1%
College graduate or higher (n=1,008)	8.7%	16.2%	25.6%
<b>Geography</b>			
Chicago (n=402)	10.5%	16.9%	22.4%
Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=450)	7.8%	12.9%	23.3%
Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=533)	6.8%	13.7%	22.7%
Urban Counties (n=364)	5.2%	9.3%	17.0%
Rural Counties (n=273)	6.2%	11.7%	15.4%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

**Note:** Values where n<10 are not presented.

Neither survey data nor qualitative data provided much detailed insight about the prevalence of illegal gambling in Illinois. Of the few participants who mentioned illegal gambling, most were in reference to gambling occurring prior to it being legalized. One service provider noted that illegal gambling has continued in the state, with much of this type of gambling occurring through a bookie.

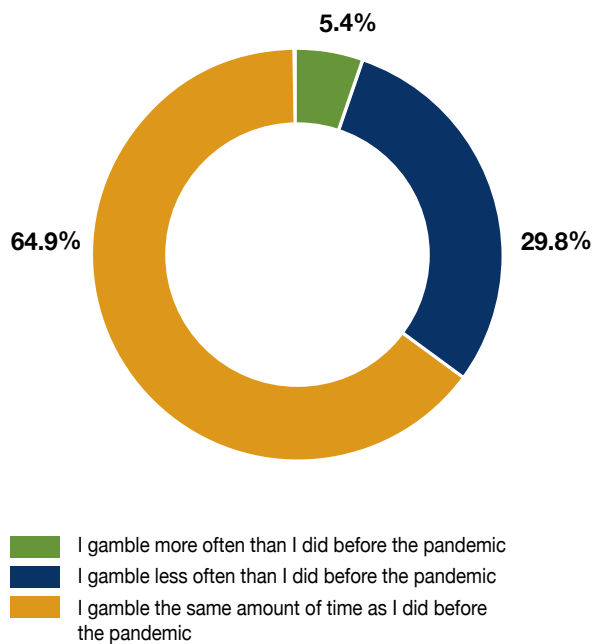
## Effect of COVID-19

The potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on behaviors and related survey data has been discussed, but qualitative data were also collected on this topic. When discussing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, most interview and community discussion participants speculated that gambling had increased online due to casinos being closed. For example, one organization leader commented that *“since COVID, the shift has been to sports betting and online gambling in general.”* A youth participant commented that poker is now played primarily online because it has been *“more accessible at home”* and a service provider commented that gambling decreased in the community because casino shuttle service was temporarily halted due to COVID-19. While many participants perceived a decrease in casino patronage since the start of the pandemic, a small group of participants noted that the

decrease did not necessarily decrease casino gambling due to patrons being allowed to continue registering to participate and gamble through the casinos online. A service provider attributed this to the continued advertisements for casinos: *“Even while the casinos were closed, there was a lot of advertising for how people can still participate.”*

Adult residents of Illinois were asked in the Illinois Gambling Prevalence Survey how the COVID-19 pandemic affected their gambling (Figure 31). The majority reported that their gambling stayed the same as before the pandemic (64.9%). The next largest group reported that they gambled less during the pandemic (29.8%) which provides additional evidence that the prevalence of more frequent gambling in the past year could be underreported due to the effects of COVID-19.

**Figure 31. COVID-19 Impact on Gambling Behavior, Among Illinois Residents, 2021 (n=1,961)**



**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

When asked about how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected their gambling behavior, many survey respondents noted that they had lost their job and no longer had extra money with which to gamble. One respondent wrote in *“I reduced my investment in this area because the pandemic made my job unstable and my husband lost his job because of this [gambling]. We have to face the pressure of parenting, so I temporarily reduced my gambling behavior.”* In contrast, another respondent explained why they were gambling more often during the pandemic: *“Money is tight. Jobs are hard to find. I need money and gambling seems to be an easy way to make more.”*

For all racial/ethnic groups, the majority of Illinoisans reported that they gamble the same as they did before the pandemic (Figure 32). More than one-third of Asian and Black/African American Illinoisans said they gamble less than they did before the pandemic (35.1%, and 35.7%, respectively). Illinoisans identifying as other race/ethnicity had the highest proportions of adults reporting gambling more often than before the pandemic, 7.1%.

**Figure 32. COVID-19 Impact on Gambling Behavior, Among Illinois Residents, by Race/Ethnicity, 2021 (n=1,949)**

	Asian (n=48)	Black/African American (n=312)	Hispanic/Latinx (n=390)	White (n=1,102)	Other Race/Ethnicity (n=97)
I gamble more often than I did before the pandemic	5.8%	6.2%	6.2%	4.9%	7.1%
I gamble less often than I did before the pandemic	35.1%	35.7%	32.8%	28.4%	20.2%
I gamble the same amount as I did before the pandemic	59.2%	58.2%	61.1%	66.7%	72.7%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

Greater than half of Illinois residents across the state reported gambling the same amount as they did before the pandemic (Figure 33). Those in Cook County (excluding Chicago) had the highest proportion reporting gambling less than they did before the pandemic (33.6%). In contrast, Chicago adults were the most likely to report that they gambled more often than before the pandemic (8.4%).

**Figure 33. COVID-19 Impact on Gambling Behavior, Among Illinois Residents, by Region, 2021 (n=1,955)**

	Chicago (n=382)	Cook County (excl. Chicago) (n=433)	Collar Counties (around Cook) (n=522)	Urban Counties (n=358)	Rural Counties (n=260)
I gamble more often than I did before the pandemic	8.4%	4.9%	5.2%	4.0%	4.1%
I gamble less often than I did before the pandemic	33.2%	33.6%	28.3%	28.0%	25.6%
I gamble the same amount as I did before the pandemic	58.4%	61.5%	66.6%	68.0%	70.3%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

For most educational attainment groups, the majority of Illinoisans reported that they gamble the same amount as they did before the pandemic (Figure 34). The exception is adult Illinoisans with less than high school completion or GED for which just under half reported the same amount (48.2%) or less often (39.5%) than before the pandemic.

**Figure 34. COVID-19 Impact on Gambling Behavior, Among Illinois Residents, by Educational Attainment, 2021 (n=1,953)**

	Less Than High School Completion or GED (n=58)	High School or Secondary School Graduate or GED (n=301)	Some College, 2-Year Degree, Certification Program, or Trade School (n=608)	College Graduate or Beyond (n=986)
I gamble more often than I did before the pandemic	*12.3%	4.3%	4.9%	5.6%
I gamble less often than I did before the pandemic	39.5%	34.9%	30.6%	27.3%
I gamble the same amount as I did before the pandemic	48.2%	60.8%	64.4%	67.2%

**Data Source:** IL Problem Gambling Assessment, Representative Population Sample, Weighted %s, 2021

**Note:** \* n<10 interpret with caution.



# Chapter 2: References

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