Prevention of Gambling Disorders:
Implications for Consumer Protection from ALICE RAP

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Terminology

- Gambling Disorder (GD; DSM-5),

  previously Pathological Gambling (DSM-IV-TR)
  - Persistent gambling behaviour leading to clinically significant impairment or distress
  - Clinical diagnosis (9 criteria)
  - Mild, moderate or severe form
- No agreed definition of "problem gambling"
  - Figures difficult to compare
- Epidemiological screening instruments are less accurate than clinical diagnoses (over- or under-reporting)

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1.1. Scope and Purpose

ALICE RAP *(Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe - Reframing Addictions Project)* is a five year European research project:
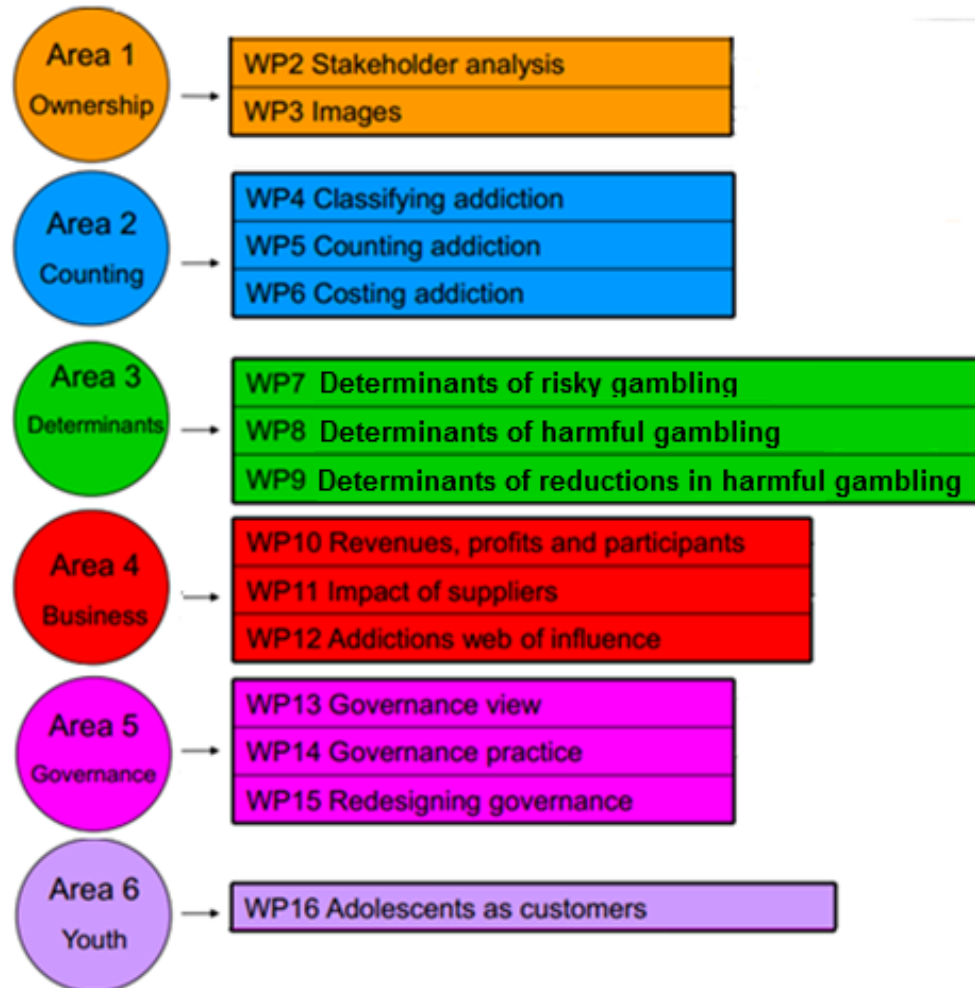
- Co-financed by the European Commission
- Brings together around 200 scientists
- More than 25 countries
- 29 different disciplines

Aims

- Strengthen scientific evidence to inform the public and political dialogue
- Stimulate debate on approaches to addictions

1.2. Work Areas and Work Packages (WPs):

Area	Work Packages
Area 1 Ownership	WP2 Stakeholder analysis WP3 Images
Area 2 Counting	WP4 Classifying addiction WP5 Counting addiction WP6 Costing addiction
Area 3 Determinants	WP7 Determinants of risky gambling WP8 Determinants of harmful gambling WP9 Determinants of reductions in harmful gambling
Area 4 Business	WP10 Revenues, profits and participants WP11 Impact of suppliers WP12 Addictions web of influence
Area 5 Governance	WP13 Governance view WP14 Governance practice WP15 Redesigning governance
Area 6 Youth	WP16 Adolescents as customers

1.3. Gambling-Related Work Packages (WPs)

Epidemiology

Area 2 — Counting
- WP4 Classifying addiction
- WP5 Counting addiction

Aetiology

Area 3 — Determinants
- WP7 Determinants of risky gambling
- WP8 Determinants of harmful gambling
- WP9 Determinants of reductions in harmful gambling

Framework

- Area 1 Ownership
- Area 5 Governance
- Area 4 Business
- Area 6 Youth

- WP2 Stakeholder analysis
- WP3 Images
- WP12 Addictions web of influence
- WP13 Governance view
- WP14 Governance practice
- WP15 Redesigning governance
- WP16 Adolescents as customers

Economy

- Area 4 Business
- Area 2 Counting

- WP10 Revenues, profits and participants
- WP11 Impact of suppliers
- WP6 Costing addiction

1.4. Challenges for effective consumer protection

(1) Gambling – two sides of the same coin
        recreational activity vs. public health problem
        individual freedom vs. social control

(2) "All operators – public or private – deal with competing interests in their marketing and business activities, between maximising profit and protecting gamblers from harm", (AR Policy Paper on gambling*).

(3) Growing transnational gambling market and fast developing technologies for interactive/online gambling

*Available on the project website home page: www.alicerap.eu

2. Lessons from Etiology and Epidemiology

(1) By using evidence from several scientific disciplines

(2) To differentiate between stages of gambling:
- **Risky use**
- **Harmful use**
- **Reduction/ cessation** or
- **Chronic relapses**

(3) To differentiate between three areas of determinants:
- **Environmental determinants**
- **Individual vulnerability determinants**
- **Gambling determinants**

2. Lessons from Etiology and Epidemiology
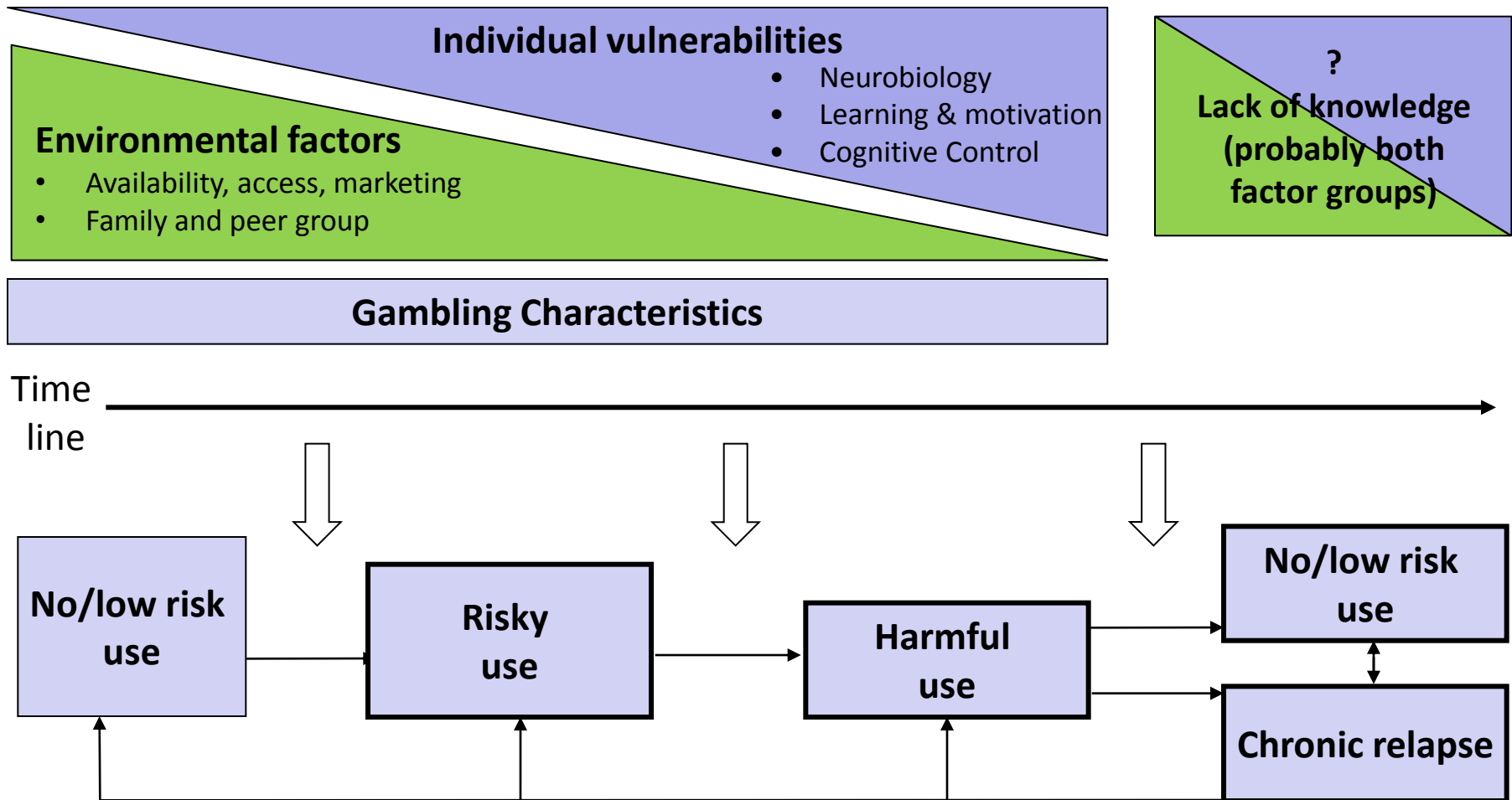
(4) Proportion of use disorders among users [1]
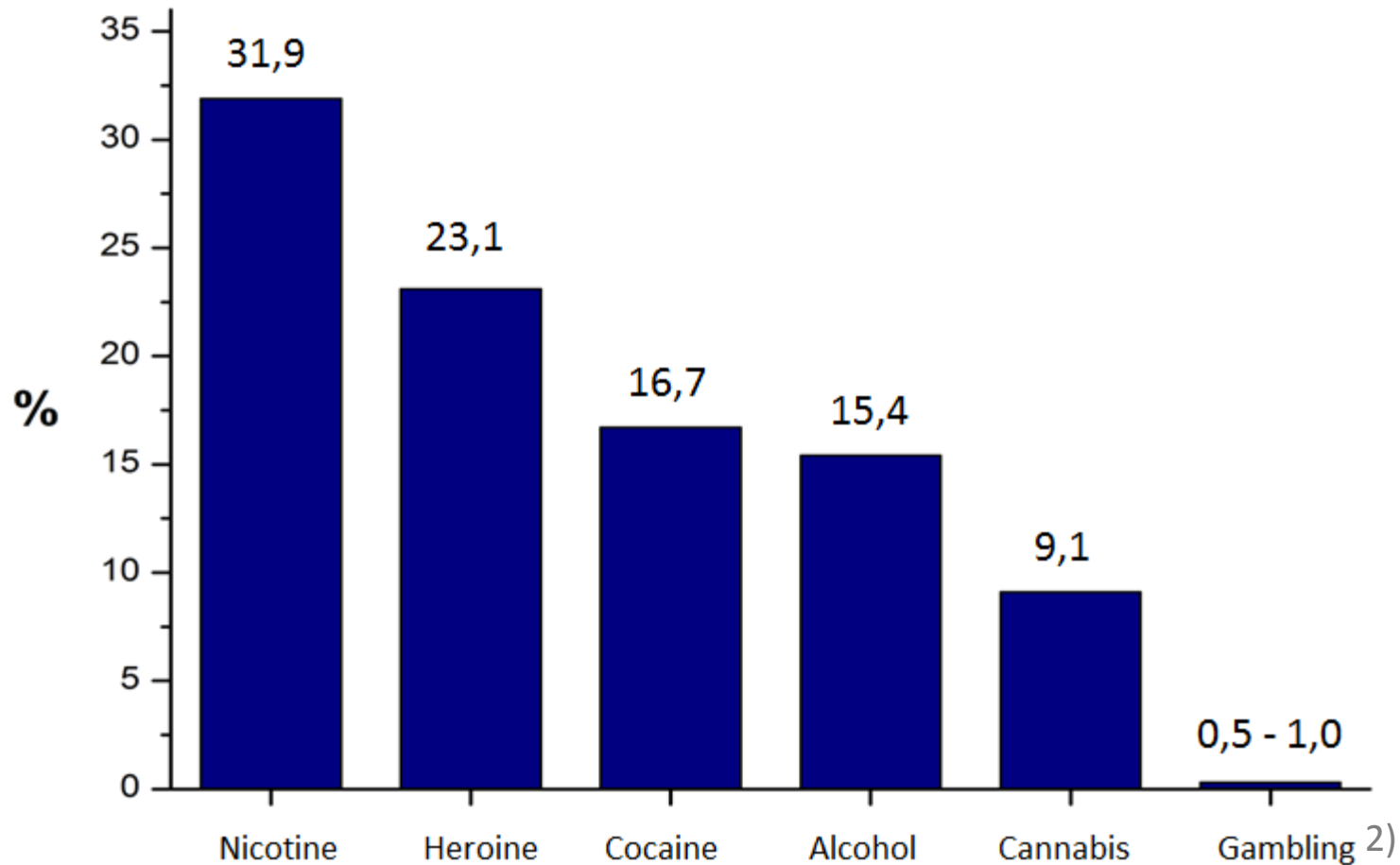
1)   National Addiction Centre, 2003
2)   ALICE RAP Gambling Policy Brief, 2013

Heuristic Model

Individual vulnerabilities
- Neurobiology
- Learning & motivation
- Cognitive Control

Environmental factors
- Availability, access, marketing
- Family and peer group

?
Lack of knowledge (probably both factor groups)

Gambling Characteristics

Time line

No/low risk use	Risky use	Harmful use	No/low risk use
			Chronic relapse

2. Lessons from Etiology and Epidemiology

(1) Summary
- Transition to risky gambling: mainly environmental determinants
- Transition to harmful gambling: mainly individual vulnerability determinants
- Causal role of gambling determinants unclear
  ☐Relevant in interaction with individual vulnerability determinants

(2) Impact on consumer protection
- Prevent transition to risky gambling
- Prevent transition to harmful gambling
- Support self-change and professional help for subjects with harmful gambling

3. Consumer Protection

3.1. Areas and Target Groups

(1) Prevention of criminal gambling business (e.g. fraud)

(2) Prevention of severe financial losses

(3) Prevention of underage gambling

(4) Prevention of gambling disorders

(5) Protection of subjects with gambling disorders

3. Consumer Protection

3.1. Areas and Target Groups

| High consensus | (1) Prevention of criminal gambling business (e.g. fraud) |

| Low consensus? | (2) Prevention of severe financial losses |

| High consensus | (3) Prevention of underage gambling |

| High consensus | (4) Prevention of gambling disorders |

| High consensus | (5) Protection of subjects with gambling disorders |

3. Consumer Protection

3.1. Areas and Target Groups

High consensus	(1) Prevention of criminal gambling business (e.g. fraud)
Low consensus?	(2) Prevention of severe financial losses
High consensus	(3) Prevention of underage gambling
High consensus	(4) Prevention of gambling disorders
High consensus	(5) Protection of subjects with gambling disorders

3. Consumer Protection

3.2. Aims

(1) Minors

- Gambling ban
- Prevention of exposures to gambling (distance regulations, marketing)

(2) Adults

- Prevention of risky and disordered gambling
- Early recognition of risky gambling and disordered gambling
- Support of self-change
- Professional advice and treatment

4. Consumer Protection: Minors

4.1. Environment-related Measures

(1) Gambling ban (age-control, age verification)

(2) Regulations for marketing

- Clear "no underage gambling" message
- No youth-related contents, motivations, images and campaigns
- Ban in places and situations with minors (e.g. schools, sport activities with minors)
- Ban in youth related publications and websites

4.1. Environment-related Measures

(3) **Distance regulations** for land-based gambling (e.g. schools, youth centres)

(4) Clear **"no underage gambling" messages** on interactive/ online gambling websites

(5) **School-based education**/ information on gambling

5.1. Environment-related Measures

(1) **Marketing**

- Objective information: chances for winning and losses, (predominantly) not skills-based
- Objective information: risks, possible negative consequences, support options
- No unrealisitic promises for winnings or as alternative to earned income
- No images, messages and campaigns associating gambling with social prestige, personal success or attractiveness
- No comparisons between competing gambling services

5.1. Environment-related Measures

(2) Sponsoring

- Transparency

(3) Player registration/ information

- Information on gambling procedures, stakes, changes for winnings and losses
- Information on risks, risk signs, possible negative consequences, links to self-tests, support options

(4) Age control

(5) Person verification

- Except low-frequency gambling (e.g. street lottery) and low stakes (e.g. 50€)

5. Consumer Protection: Adults

5.2. Gambling-related Measures

(1) **Player account** (online gambling),

   Player card (land-based gambling)

(2) **Money deposit** with deposit limits

(3) Increase of **deposit limits** after waiting period

(4) Regular visual **feedback** information on: stakes, winnings, losses, gambling time

5. Consumer Protection: Adults

5.2. Gambling-related Measures

(5) Time-out and **self-exclusion** options as preventive measures

(6) **Forced – at random - breaks** for fast games
   (online, slot machines)

(7) **No credits**

(8) **No advertising** or pressure to continue gambling

5.1. and 5.2.: Prevention of transitions to risky and harmful gambling

5.3. Individual vulnerability-based Measures

(1) **Training of staff**
- Information: responsibilities, risks, risk indicators
- Training: conversation skills

(2) **Monitoring and analyses** of gambling behaviour
- Early problem indicators
- Provider-based actions: information, warnings, reduction of deposits, suggestions for self-exclusion

(3) **Provision of material for self-change** (self-tests, manuals) and support options

(4) **Provider-/ regulatory authority-based exclusions**

(5) **Regulations for exclusion removals** after professional certificate

> **5.3.: Early recognition of disordered gambling,**
> **support for self-change/ professional help**

(1) Regulation authority
- To define and control of protection measures
- To monitor core gambling parameters (stakes, wins, losses, complaints, self- and provider-based exclusion, hotlines, treatment, prevalence figures)
- To test gambling and marketing regulations

(2) Gambling providers
- To implement protection measures
- To provide statistical figures
- To provide gambling related facts

(3) Consumer
- To become "Informed Consumers" (procedures, risks, help lines, treatment opportunities)

7. Research Needs

1. Comparable epidemiological prevalence studies

2. Longitudinal studies

3. Risk of specific gambling characteristic for vulnerable subjects

4. Marketing and its effects on potential and current users

5. Impact of saturation/ maturity of markets

6. High risk groups and individual vulnerability characteristics

7. Impact and effectiveness of different policies

8. Early recognition of problem gamblers

9. Efficacy of prevention and treatment

8. Summary: Basic Principles

1. Early and long-term consumer protection: environmental, gambling and individual vulnerability determinants
2. Least possible restrictions for players
3. Scientific basis, monitoring, evaluation and adaption of regulations ("adaptive learning system")
4. Easy access to support options
5. Independent Regulatory Authority for all gambling services
6. Effective system of controls and sanctions
7. Common frame of regulations for all gambling services
8. Basic European common regulations

Declaration of interests

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- Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG; German Research Foundation)
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