

# Responsible Gambling Strategies for Internet Gambling: An Empirical Investigation into the Italian Gambling Market

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyse, in the Italian sports betting sector, the impact of Internet gambling on the level of consumption of gambling products and the responsible gambling strategies adopted by the on line gambling operators. From the methodological viewpoint the research work has been organised into two phases. In the first phase, an empirical investigation has been carried out on a sample of Italian consumers directed towards measuring the impact that the use of the Internet has on the volume of bets made on sports events. In the second phase, an analytical work has been performed on the on line gambling websites of the main operators of the Italian sports betting market, directed towards examining the measures adopted for promoting responsible gambling. The results of the empirical research indicate, on the one hand, that in the Italian market, as has happened in other national gambling markets, the legalization of on line sports betting may determine an increase in the level of consumption of gambling products and, thus, in the potential risks of excessive gambling; and, on the other hand, that the normative approach adopted in the Italian gambling market, based on a 'concession model' which provides for a strong public control of the gambling operators, has favoured a widespread adoption by the on line betting companies of an articulated series of measures aimed towards harm minimisation in Internet gambling. Thus, the findings of this study contribute towards the economic-managerial literature on the theme of firms' social responsibility by providing important insights for gambling firms and public policy makers regarding the responsible gambling strategies for Internet gambling adoptable in the markets, such as the Italian one, in which on line gambling is fully regulated.

**Keywords:** gambling regulation, harm minimisation, Internet gambling, Italy, responsible gambling, firm's social responsibility, sports betting sector

## 1. Introduction

Beginning from the early years of the new millennium the gambling industry in Italy has been affected by a series of normative interventions aiming to implement a 'regulated opening' strategy of the market which has brought about the legalisation of new previously unregulated forms of betting.

The regulation change in the gambling industry in Italy has led to a rapid growth in business sales. The data provided by the 'Agency of Customs and Monopoly' (Agenzia delle Dogane e dei Monopoli), the regulating body of the Italian gambling sector, show that the total amount wagered in gambling in 2015 exceeded 88.2 billion euro, while the gross gambling revenue amounted to 7.1 billion euro (Agency of Customs and Monopoly, 2016). These data make the Italian market the main regulated gambling market in Europe and the fourth in the world in terms of gross gambling revenue. More specifically, certain legislative regulations have brought about a development in the modalities for accessing the betting services. The norms which, starting from the Bersani Decree of 2006, legalized on line gambling, have in fact led all gambling typologies distributed through the land-based venues to being now legally suppliable through the Internet. This has brought it about that the total amount wagered in gambling by means of the digital channel in Italy grew from 1.48 billion euro in 2008 to 16.9 billion in 2015, while the on line gross gambling revenue in 2015 reached a value of 821 million euro (Agency of Customs and Monopoly, 2016). The Italian legislator's decision to regulate on line gambling was guided by his objective of reducing the risks the consumers might run by having recourse to an illegal gambling industry, by the need to monitor the phenomenon of gambling addiction, as well as by the desire to exploit the possible

returns in terms of taxing gambling sales. It is however difficult to achieve such aims at one and the same time. If, in fact, it is true that, as observed (Gainsbury, Parke, & Suhonen, 2013, p. 236), “unregulated sites may not offer strong consumer protection or responsible gambling features by posing a potential risk to players”, it is also true that the legalization of Internet gambling may represent the premise for an increase in the consumption of betting products and services. This increase runs the risk of facilitating the development of problematic gambling behaviour, that is to say “behaviour characterised by difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling, leading to adverse consequences for the gambler, or for the community, such as health and psychological disorders, family breakdown, employment disruptions, bankruptcy, or crime” (Gainsbury et al., 2013, p. 236). As subsequently described, in fact, the easy and simple access to gambling ensured by the digital distribution channel appears to facilitate the increase in time and financial resources set aside for gambling.

The theme is most relevant if you consider that according to the Italian Ministry of Health the number of gamblers in Italy has been growing steadily in the last few years. The relevant estimates show that more than half the Italian population bet money at least once a year and that the players defined as ‘problematic’ vary from 1.3 to 3.8 per cent of the population, while the percentage of those who are pathologically addicted varies from between 0.5 and 2.2 (Italian Ministry of Health, 2012; Serpelloni, 2013) (Note 1). The size of the phenomenon has forced the Italian public authorities to adopt strategies aimed at opposing its further growth. More especially the initiatives are to be pointed out to be taken for preventing pathological gambling addiction as defined in the National Plan of Action on Drugs 2010-2013 (Dipartimento Politiche Antidroga, 2013 - Italian Department Antidrug Policies), for the implementation of which the Balduzzi Decree was emanated that has made provision for a series of preventive measures to combat gambling addiction in Italy. In line with this State approach to gambling, the Italian Agency of Customs and Monopoly has through time adopted several regulated interventions in defence of the players, some of which are specifically dedicated to the on line gambling segment. In particular, a ‘Service charter for remote gambling’ has been outlined which informs the players and the gambling operators about the characteristics of Internet gambling and about “legal and responsible gambling”. This service charter attributes considerable relevance to the initiatives aimed at minimising gambling harm, and therefore makes provision for a series of specific actions directed towards the development of responsible gaming which the gambling licensees must adopt in order to operate in the Italian on line regulated gambling market (Agency of Customs and Monopoly, 2015).

In this regard it is expedient to say that if it is true that “it is unrealistic to expect the on line gambling industry to prioritise harm prevention over revenue maximisation” (Yani-de-Soriano, Javed, & Yousafzai, 2012, p. 481), it is also true that Internet gambling firms operating in Italy are adopting certain measures in order to fall in line with the legal provisions regarding the prevention of problem gambling, which have gone on to support another series of initiatives adopted voluntarily through gambling websites directed towards promoting responsible gambling. All this opens up to the theme of actions of ‘responsible marketing’ which the firms operating in the on line gambling sector adopt in order to ensure, together with reaching the profit goals, also the long-term well-being of the consumer and of the public at large. It is a relevant theme – which hitherto does not appear to have been adequately investigated in the sphere of the Italian market – in that only through an activity of the consumer’s education and support does it appear possible to reduce and prevent the risks of developing gambling addiction, thus avoiding intervening on pathological gambling behaviour which is normally deep-rooted and less susceptible to change.

In relationship to the aspects mentioned, the general aim of this study is to analyse with regard to the Italian regulated gambling market – in an exploratory way and from an economic-business perspective – the impact of Internet gambling on the level of consumption of gambling products and the responsible gambling strategies adopted by the on line gambling operators.

The study of the Italian market is especially significant in that it permits examining the theme within a geographical context in which the legislator has fully regulated on line gambling, thus legalising sales via Internet of all gambling typologies already distributed throughout the land-based venues. The analysis is carried out in the sphere of a specific segment of on line gambling, namely that of sports betting. In this segment the use of the Internet for accessing gambling is especially pervasive. In 2015 the total amount wagered in the on line sports betting market in Italy grew by 80 per cent from 2014, reaching 2.8 billion euro, which led for the first time to the digital distribution channel surpassing the physical one in terms of sales (Note 2).

## **2. Social Responsibility in Online Gambling: A Literature Review**

In the last few years, *pari passu* with the growth in on line gambling, several scholars have examined the theme of the effect of Internet gambling on gambling problems. From the studies carried out there emerge several

important considerations. In the first place, they have shown that players who bet through the Internet have a greater probability of adopting problematic gambling behaviour compared with players who use physical betting shops (Griffith, 1999, 2003; LaBrie, LaPlante, Nelson, Schumann, & Shaffer, 2007; Gainsbury, Russell, Hing, Wood, & Blaszczynski, 2013; Gainsbury, Wood, Russell, Hing, & Blaszczynski, 2012; Yani-de-Soriano, Javed, & Yousafzai, 2012; Wood & Williams, 2007, 2009, 2011).

The main reason for which the use of the Internet appears to facilitate excessive gambling and gambling problems is linked to the distinctive characteristics of on line gaming. Internet gambling is, in fact, both easy to access – the gambling websites operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can be reached through various typologies of digital devices – and very convenient. The utilization of the digital channel also brings about a lowering in one's perception of the loss of money compared with that which normally one has when utilizing cash payments. When one bets on line with electronic cash, in fact, the perception of the value of money decreases and with it the capacity to evaluate how much is invested in the game. Furthermore, Internet gambling “could shift gambling from a social activity into a more asocial one, which could lead to a greater risk of problem gambling” (Griffith, 1999, p. 50).

Some research works, moreover, have shown that younger people, and more particularly adolescents, are especially exposed to the risks of an excessive use of gambling websites (Griffith, 1999; Griffiths & Parke, 2010; Kairouz, Paradis, & Nadeau, 2012; King, Delfabbro, & Griffiths, 2010; Tsitsika, Critselis, Janikian, Kormas, & Kafetzis, 2001). In fact, these subjects are more open to remote gaming opportunities, which makes Internet gambling more accessible and attractive compared with adults.

Finally, the investigations have showed that the players who use the Internet to access games appear to have a lower capacity to recognise their potential gambling problems as well as a reduced predisposition to search for information that may help them to modify their behaviour in the event of gambling addiction (Blaszczynski, Parke, Parke, & Rigbye, 2014).

The realisation that Internet gambling can cause considerable harm to players has caused a series of stakeholders in the field of gambling – consumers, gambling industry operators, health services, interested community groups, governments – to define several strategies for moderating the on line gambling activity. Around these attempts, there has developed through time a series of research contributions which have analysed what the most effective responsible gambling initiatives are which can be adopted and implemented in the Internet gambling industry.

In this regard it is to be pointed out that the initiatives directed towards minimising the harm connected with on line gambling are of various types and also derive from the most varied fields of application, as they are implemented by stakeholders who are bearers of different interests and perspectives. In keeping with the indications of Blaszczynski, Parke, Parke and Rigbye (2014), it is possible to classify the different approaches towards minimising Internet gambling-related harm according to their domain, i.e. the product, the community and the operations.

The product-based approaches include the choices linked to the patterning of the properties of Internet gambling directed towards the reduction in gambling addiction, like restrictions on game parameters such as stake, prize, speed, payment methods, payback percentage, etc.

The community-based approaches, in contrast, include education and prevention initiatives, such as the promotion of a better understanding of the probability of winning, of the modalities of on line betting, of the risks associated with excessive gambling as well as, more generally, the measures related to therapeutic support.

Finally, the operator-based approaches include harm minimisation strategies which are brought about by the game operators through their websites. This is the kind of strategies that is the specific research objective of the present study. The analysis perspective adopted is, in fact, that of the business firm, while the contribution that this investigation aims to make falls into the sphere of the research works which have examined the difficult relationship between ethical and management theories. These works, more especially, have analysed the concept of responsible or social marketing, which places the accent in implementing firms' business strategies on the long-term well being of the consumer and of the general public (amongst others: Andreasen, 1994; Donovan & Henley, 2010; Kotler, Roberto, & Lee, 2002; Sciarelli, 2007).

In particular, in adapting Andreasen's definition (1994) of social marketing to the context of the harm minimisation initiatives in Internet gambling, in this study are examined the strategies brought about by the operators through their websites which are designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of Internet gamblers in order to reduce on line gambling-related problems, by improving their own personal welfare and that of the society of which they are part. In this regard it is useful to specify that the initiatives of social or responsible

gambling analysed in this work do not include the actions of rehabilitation and of treatment of gamblers who already have developed pathological problems. These initiatives are object of study mainly of the medico-psychiatric disciplines and remain the domain of specialists of public health programmes. Relevant to this, Blaszczynski, Ladouceur and Shaffer (2004, p. 309) observe that “the majority of the adult population gambles responsibly. Only a small minority of the population develops gambling-related risks. Therefore, a responsible gambling strategy locates the entire population along a continuum of gambling involvement; this continuum permits the identification of members likely to be at various levels of risk” (i.e. low risk, medium risk and high risk). The responsible gambling measures brought into being by the gambling operators could therefore help people reduce their risk level, in order to prevent them in time from becoming gamblers who develop forms of pathological or problematic gambling.

As an introduction, it is useful to emphasize that if it true that utilising the Internet for accessing bets may potentially increase the risks of the player developing problematic gambling, it is also true that the Internet-based technologies can be used to facilitate and improve responsible gambling measures (Wiebe & Philander, 2012; Wood & Williams, 2009). The ‘one-to-one’ communication characteristics of the Internet allow the creation, in fact, of a series of initiatives which cannot be adopted in the traditional land-based venues. And that especially in the cases in which the norms – as happens in Italy – make provision for the obligation of disposing of a nominative gaming account for accessing Internet gambling, a requirement which allows the operators to get to know in detail the gaming profile of the player and to potentially adopt measures for reducing gambling risks more in keeping with the characteristics of the individual gambler.

In order to identify the responsible gambling strategies which may be implemented by on line gambling operators, it is possible to refer to the research contributions which, in the last few years, have studied the most effective approaches adopted by gambling firms for harm minimisation in Internet gambling.

One of the first studies to have examined, in an exploratory way, the initiatives of social responsibility brought into being by the on line gambling operators was carried out by Smeaton and Griffiths (2004). Through the analysis of a representative selection of 30 U.K.-owned Internet gambling sites these scholars show that only in few cases do the companies analysed adopt efficacious responsible gambling practices, and therefore demonstrate the need for the operators to rethink their approach to the protection of the more vulnerable on line gamblers. For this purpose, on the basis of the outcomes of the empirical analysis, the authors outline a list of recommendations on the main responsible gambling measures – age check of the player, credit check on the player, credit limits for the player, link to helping organisations, self-exclusion from gambling, easy access for the player to his account balance, etc. – which the online gambling operators should further develop for minimising harm in Internet gambling, measures which have been subsequently taken up by research on the theme.

Some scholars, in contrast, have focused their attention on the analysis of a specific measure aiming at reducing gambling risks, relative to the limits on the money deposits that players may put into their online gambling accounts. In this regard, Broda et al. (2008) examined the effects on gambling behaviour of deposit limits by analysing 2 years of the gambling behaviour records of the subscribers to an Internet sports betting operator, namely Bwin Interactive Entertainment. From the analysis it results first of all that very few people – 0.3% of the sample analysed – have ever tried to exceed the company-imposed or self-imposed deposit limits. In this regard the researchers show that this finding must not make one think of a limited usefulness of this measure. With the players being obliged to define their deposit limits when opening an account with the gambling operator, the knowledge of the deposit limits appears to help prevent many players from exceeding these limits. Secondly, the data presented comparing the gambling behaviour before and after exceeding limits, show that “exceeding the limits did not have a diminishing effect on gambling behavior”. More specifically “the number of days of play and the percentage of losses did not change”, while “the number of bets was the only measure of gambling behavior that evidenced a minor decrease after exceeding limits” (Broda et al., 2008, p. 7). On the same research theme, Nelson et al. (2008), while studying a sample of subscribers of the on line gambling operator Bwin, show that only a limited number of the subscribers examined (about 1.2%) chose to utilise the self-limit program, and that these gamblers placed more bets than others prior to imposing limits. The findings from the study show, furthermore, that the possibility of self-determining the limits for the deposits for on line gambling “appears to help subscribers to reduce their betting activity (i.e., frequency of betting, bets per day, and total wagered) and in some cases possibly cease their gambling behavior” (Nelson et al., 2008, p. 467).

Another important measure analysed in the literature directed towards preventing gambling problems relates to the possibility of the player being able to decide on self-exclusion over time from the possibility of making bets. Hayer and Meyer (2011), when examining a sample of 259 Internet gamblers who self-excluded themselves

from the online gambling platform win2day.at, study closely the benefits of this relevant measure. The results of the study generally show that “there is an indication that the temporary restriction of access to an individual online gambling site has indeed favorable effects” of a psycho-social type on the players, favouring the adoption of a more responsible form of gambling behaviour (Hayer & Meyer, 2011, p. 305).

Other studies, moreover, have granted the emerging through empirical investigations of the perception of the usefulness on the part of the players of the different measures of responsible gambling to be adopted by the on line gambling operators.

Gainsbury, Parke and Suhonen (2013), through an online survey involving 10,838 online casino and poker players from 96 countries, examined consumer attitudes towards online gambling, in particular by analysing the perception of the importance of state regularization of on line gambling and of initiatives for responsible gambling. The results of the analysis “suggest that responsible gambling features [...] should be implemented on Internet gambling sites to increase consumer trust and favorable attitudes towards online gambling operators, and reduce disputes associated with excessive gambling” (Gainsbury, Parke, & Suhonen, 2013, p. 235). More specifically, as results from Table 1 in which are reported the data relating to the perception of usefulness of a series of responsible gambling measures by the players interviewed, it turns out from the investigation that such measures are perceived generally as significant, having been judged by more than 50 per cent of the respondents as being at least “quite useful”. More especially the ‘Regular financial statements’ and the ‘Self-set spending limits’ prove to be the most efficacious instruments for facilitating the development of responsible gambling, having been assessed as at least “quite useful” by 75 per cent and by 70 per cent, respectively, of those interviewed.

Table 1. Percentage of players according to perceived usefulness of Responsible Gambling Features

Features	<i>N</i>	<i>Not at all useful</i>	<i>Not very useful</i>	<i>Quite useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	<i>Extremely useful</i>
Self-set spending limits	8587	11.2	18.4	40.1	18.1	12.2
Self-set time limits	8463	18.9	30.9	32.0	11.7	6.6
Self-exclusion	8200	16.4	26.2	34.8	12.7	9.9
Regular financial statements	8391	9.1	15.7	42.0	20.2	12.9
Self-assessment test	8272	14.3	23.3	38.2	15.4	8.8

Source: Gainsbury, Parke, & Suhonen, 2013.

Griffith, Wood and Parke (2009), through a questionnaire study which involved 2,348 on line players of the Swedish gaming company Svenska Spe, examined players’ behaviour towards using PlayScan, a software allowing the gamblers to utilize various social responsibility control tools. The results showed that just over a quarter of players (26%) had used this software. These players – as it emerges from Table 2 in which are reported the relative utility judgments perceived by the different social responsibility tools offered by the Playscan software – evaluate the setting of spending limit as being especially beneficial (70% of the respondents consider it ‘quite’ or ‘very’ useful). The other features examined – viewing their gambling profile, self-exclusion facilities, self-diagnostic problem gambling tests, information and support for gambling issues, and gambling profile predictions – are however assessed as ‘quite’ or ‘very’ useful for reducing the risks associated with gambling by a relevant part of on line gamblers who have used the PlayScan software (between 36 and 49 per cent of the interviewees).

Table 2. Ratings of useful features of Play Scan as rated by respondents (N = 570)

PlayScan feature	<i>Completely useless</i>	<i>Quite useless</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Quite useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>
To view my current gambling profile	12.8%	12.7%	25.5%	37.8%	11.2%
Getting information about my predicted future gambling profile	13.7%	16.1%	34.4%	27.4%	8.4%
Setting a spending limit	8.2%	10.5%	11.2%	33.2%	36.8%
Performing a self-test of my gambling behavior	11.8%	12.6%	29.3%	32.3%	14%
Excluding myself for a specific period of time	16.7%	15.1%	26%	24.6%	17.7%
Getting information about support for gambling issues	17.4%	11.8%	31.2%	24%	15.6%

Source: Griffith, Wood, & Parke (2009).

The various findings of the research on the theme of responsible gambling measures have recently been systematized by several scholars.

More specifically, Wiebe and Philander (2012, p. 1), thorough examination of the research literature and the analysis of Internet gambling sites and of Internet gambling player discussion forums, “provide a comprehensive review of tools that are available to assist Internet gamblers in setting appropriate monetary limits” and of “available evidence of the effectiveness of these tools in helping Internet gamblers stay within their monetary limits”.

Blaszczynski, Parke, Parke and Rigbye (2014, p. 14) carried out a review of the theoretical and empirical contributions for understanding the operator-based approaches to harm minimisation in gambling (Note 3). In their report they classified forms of harm minimisation by specifically analysing the actions to be performed “to facilitating awareness and control among consumers engaging in gambling; to restricting access to gambling products; and to ensuring that marketing functions operate in a transparent and responsible way”. In keeping with this classification, some systematization research works have been realized by these scholars with regard to the responsible gambling measures specifically directed towards: 1) facilitating awareness and informed choice in gambling (Parke, Harris, Parke, Rigbye, & Blaszczynski, 2014a); 2) facilitating player control in gambling (Blaszczynski, Parke, Harris, Parkes, & Rigbye, 2014); 3) restricting access to gambling (Parke, Parke, Harris, Rigbye, & Blaszczynski, 2014); 4) favouring responsible marketing and advertising in gambling (Parke, Harris, Parke, Rigbye, & Blaszczynski, 2014b) (Note 4).

On the basis of the findings of the research contributions described, and in keeping with the indications of the works just mentioned of systematization of the literature relating to the approaches adopted by the firms to facilitate responsible gambling, it is possible – coherently with the aims of this study – to single out the macro-categories of actions which the on line gambling operators may bring into being in order to minimise harm in Internet gambling.

Table 3. Operator-based approaches to harm minimisation in Internet gambling. The categories of responsible gambling measures: a synthesis scheme

1. <i>Measures facilitating awareness and informed choice of the players</i>
1.1. Game transparency and behavioural gambling information
1.2. Problem gambling information and support
2. <i>Measures facilitating control of the players</i>
2.1. Deposit limits
2.2. Play limits
2.3. Bet limits
2.4. Loss limits
2.5. Time limits
2.6. Changing limits
3. <i>Measures restricting access to gambling</i>
3.1. Self-exclusion from on line gambling
3.2. Age restriction and other access limits

As results from Table 3, three macro-categories of measures (which can in turn be declined in numerous specific intervention actions) there have been singled out:

1. Measures facilitating awareness and informed choice of the players. These measures include both the initiatives to provide the players with information regarding characteristics of gambling and their betting behaviour – Game transparency and behavioural gambling information –, as well as those aiming specifically towards increasing the awareness of the risks of gambling addiction – Problem gambling information and support –;
2. Measures facilitating control of the players. These measures are directed towards facilitating the gamblers’ control over time and money spent in gambling, through the arrangement of monetary and time gambling limits;
3. Measures restricting access to gambling. These measures include the initiatives directed towards removing the players from the gambling situation through voluntary self-exclusion and those finalized for guaranteeing the exclusion from gambling of under aged people and players’ relatives.

The singling out of these macro-categories of responsible gambling measures is preparatory for the development of the empirical analysis directed towards examining the actions for promoting responsible gambling brought about by the business firms operating in the on line sports betting sector in Italy, the results of which are described in the following paragraphs.

### **3. Aims of the Study and Methodology**

The general aim of this study, described in the introduction, has been articulated into two specific aims presented as follows:

1. To analyse the impact that the use of the Internet has on the number and the amount of bets made by Italian players on sports events in order to verify whether also in the Italian regulated market the possibility of purchasing betting products through the Internet may cause an increase in the level of consumption of gambling products and, thus, in the risk of excessive gambling;
2. To examine in an exploratory way the responsible gambling measures adopted by the gambling operators in the regulated on line sports betting sector in Italy.

From the methodological viewpoint the research work has been organised into two phases, in relationship with the aims just described.

In relation to the first aim, an empirical investigation has been carried out on a sample of Italian consumers directed towards measuring the impact the use of the Internet has on the number and amount of bets made on sports events. The investigation was realised through the administration of a questionnaire addressed to the universe of clients who make sports bets on legal gambling websites in Italy (Note 5). The questionnaire was administered through the CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing) method, by using Survio software. The administration of the questionnaire took place during an 8-month period (from 30 August 2014 to 30 April 2015). The questionnaire was accessible on the Internet by connecting with an ad hoc link and was transmitted through various on line information forums specialised in sports bets. The users were interviewed, aged 18 and above, who had made at least one sports bet through on line legal gambling sites in Italy in 2014 or at any rate during the 12 months preceding the interview. At the end of the survey period 270 people completed the questionnaire, and the questionnaires compiled correctly numbered 263.

Relative to the second aim of the study, following the example of what had been performed in other national gambling markets (Wiebe, Philander, 2012; Smeaton, Griffiths, 2004), an analytical work of the on line gambling sites of the main operators of the Italian regulated sports betting market has been carried out directed towards examining the measures adopted for promoting responsible gambling. More specifically, in the May to August period 2016, ten Internet gambling sites were examined – referring to eight operators – who control almost 90 per cent of the total amount wagered in the on line sports betting sector in Italy (Note 6). The results of the analysis are therefore sufficiently representative of the behaviour of the firms operating in the market examined. The empirical analysis has been carried out by taking into consideration the measures explicitly offered by the selected operators through their gambling websites. The categories of measures analysed are those identified in the second paragraph on the basis of the review of the literature on the theme, summarised in Table 3. The in depth examination of the websites has thus allowed us to reveal the degree and specific modalities of use of the responsible gambling measures adopted by the gambling operators in the Italian on line sports betting market.

### **4. The Results of the Empirical Investigation**

#### *4.1 Internet Gambling and Risk of Excessive Gambling*

As already shown, a first objective of this study is to analyse the impact that the use of the Internet has on the volume of bets made by Italian players on sports events in order to verify whether on line gambling may cause an increase in the level of consumption of gambling products and, thus, in the risk of excessive gambling.

The empirical investigation, as described in the previous paragraph, has allowed measuring the perception of the impact that Internet gambling has had on the number and amount of sporting bets carried out in one year from a sample of Italian players. More specifically, the players interviewed have expressed their perception of impact by choosing one of the four options reported in Table 4.

Table 4. The perceived impact of Internet gambling on the number and amount of sports bets carried out in one year (n = 263). Italian regulated on line sports betting market.

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
The number and amount of sports bets has not increased	56	21.3
The number and amount of sports bets has slightly increased	53	20.2
The number and amount of sports bets has increased considerably	129	49.0
Before beginning to gamble on line I didn't make any sports bets in physical betting shops	25	9.5
Total	263	100.0

From the table it results that only one player out of five (21.3 per cent of the interviewees) declared he had not increased the volume of gambling following the using of the Internet as a purchasing channel for sports bets.

The remaining part of the sample examined, in contrast, declared to have increased the level of bets following access to gambling through the digital channel.

More specifically, about 20 per cent of the sample admitted that they had slightly increased the number and amount of bets, evidencing a reduced influence, but in the direction of growth, of Internet gambling on the volume of sports bets.

About half the players interviewed (49 per cent), in contrast, claimed that the possibility of betting on line has caused the number and the amount of bets to increase considerably. Hence it emerges that one player out of two has observed a strong growth in the volumes of gambling as a result of having access to sports bets via the Internet.

Finally, almost one player out of ten (9.5 per cent of the interviewees) admitted to have started betting on sports events precisely through access to on line gambling. This indicates that for several players, probably well exposed to Internet opportunities, the digital purchase channel has represented a means of approaching the world of sporting bets, not previously considered.

The data just described appear to suggest that, in keeping with the findings of the empirical investigations carried out in other national gambling markets, in Italy too the use of the Internet for making sports bets may increase the level of consumption of gambling products and, thus, the potential risks of excessive gambling. These results, therefore, indirectly attribute a particularly significant value to the strategies designed to reduce the risks of Internet gambling.

#### *4.2 Responsible Gambling Measures in the Italian On Line Gambling Market*

Relating to the second aim of this study – namely to analyse the responsible gambling strategies adopted by the gambling operators in the regulated on line sports betting sector in Italy – the empirical investigation carried out by examining the gambling websites managed by the main market operators (ten Internet sites, which control almost 90 per cent of the total on line amount wagered in the Italian sports betting market), has granted showing the degree and specific use modalities of the measures adopted by these operators aimed at harm minimisation in Internet gambling.

As specified in the description of the research methodology, the macro-categories of responsible gambling measures examined are those identified in the second paragraph, on the basis of the review of the literature on social responsibility in on line gambling.

The first macro-category of measures analysed is the one including the initiatives adopted by on line gambling operators 'facilitating awareness and informed choice of the players'.



Table 5. Responsible gambling measures facilitating awareness and informed choice of the players in the on line sports betting sector in Italy. The results of the empirical investigation

Measures	Number of gambling websites
<i>1.1. Game transparency and behavioural gambling information</i>	
1.1.1. Game transparency information	
Explanation of the rules of the game	All (10/10)
Contractual conditions and codes of conduct	All (10/10)
Link/logo on the home page which redirects one towards the ‘Agency of Customs and Monopoly’ website	All (10/10)
Link on the home page for the explanation of the probabilities of winning, (of which):	All (10/10)
• link to the web page created specifically by the gambling operator	Many (7/10)
• link to the Agency of Customs and Monopoly website	Few (3/10)
1.1.2. Personal behavioural gambling information	
Withdrawals and deposits information	All (10/10)
Betting information	All (10/10)
Software for monitoring time and money spent on gambling	One (1/10)
<i>1.2. Problem gambling information and support</i>	
1.2.1. General information on gambling risks and responsible gambling	
Presence on the home page of the words “Gambling is forbidden to minors and may cause pathological dependence”	All (10/10)
Link/logo on the home page which redirects one towards an area dedicated to responsible gambling	All (10/10)
Suggestions for the development of responsible gambling	All (10/10)
Certification/participation in associations for responsible gambling	Many (7/10)
1.2.2. Gambling addiction support	
Problem gambling self-assessment test	All (10/10)
Reference to specialised support agencies for gambling addiction	All (10/10)
Customer service operators specifically trained for managing gambling problems	Few (3/10)
Support for family members and friends with gambling problems	Some (4/10)

As emerges from Table 5, in which the findings of the analysis are summarised, these measures include both the initiatives to provide the players with information regarding characteristics of gambling and their betting behaviour – Game transparency and behavioural gambling information –, as well as those aiming specifically towards increasing the awareness of the risks of gambling addiction – Problem gambling information and support –.

In reference to the ‘Game transparency and behavioural gambling information’, two different subcategory measures have been analysed.

Regarding the first subcategory – Game transparency information –, as emerges from Table 5, from the investigation it results that:

- all the gambling websites provide information about the rules of Internet sports gambling, thus supporting the player in understanding how the game operates. Most operators, moreover, refer through the links present on the site to the regulations enacted for remote gambling by the Italian Ministry of Economics and Finance and by the Agency of Customs and Monopoly;
- all the gambling websites provide information about the contractual conditions regulating the on line gambling account and give indications on the codes of conduct adopted. In particular it is to be pointed out that most operators investigated provide the player with access, normally through a link indicated in the site, to the ‘Service charter for remote gambling’ realized by the Agency of Customs and Monopoly. This document represents, as already shown, an instrument of information and communication explaining the criteria relating to the relationships between player and website gambling in Italy, on the basis of which the Agency of Customs and Monopoly controls the activities carried out and the commitment undertaken by the on line gambling operators, also with regard to responsible gambling;

- all the gambling websites include a logo/link in the home page which redirects one to the site of the Agency of Customs and Monopoly, which contains all the information about the norms and conditions of gambling in Italy;
- all the gambling websites include on their home page a link in order to connect one with a web area in which the probabilities of winning in gambling are described. More specifically, in most websites (7) the link refers to an Internet page deliberately created by the gambling operator in which the mechanisms are explained in great detail and very clearly which determine the probabilities of winning, while the other remaining operators (3) refer more generically to the site of the Agency of Customs and Monopoly, which provides the information in question, but at more superficial levels.

However, in reference to the second subcategory of measures analysed – Personal behavioural gambling information – it was examined in what way the gambling websites which are object of investigation allows the player to get to know his own playing activity, by giving the possibility of accessing to an on line archive of the handlings carried out. From the investigation, as summarised in Table 5, it results that:

- at the player's request all the gambling websites provide information on the withdrawals and deposits made on his gambling account. This helps the player to monitor the total amount of money he has spent, a relevant aspect in that the bettors are often not fully aware of their own net expenditure in gambling, since the deposits and withdrawals are normally distributed over time;
- all the gambling websites provide information on the single bets carried out over time. Also this piece of information increases the player's awareness, both on the amount of his individual bets as well as on the times and frequency of his betting;
- a single gambling website places at the gamblers' disposal certain software programmes created to allow checking the time and budget destined for the bets. These programmes permit monitoring time and money spent weekly on gambling, and establishing the budget to be earmarked for gambling on the basis of the player's monthly income and expenditure.

With regard to the initiatives aimed at increasing the awareness of the risks of gambling addiction – Problem gambling information and support – two different measuring subcategories have been analysed.

As results from Table 5, relating to the first subcategory of measures – General information on gambling risks and responsible gambling –, from the investigation it emerges that:

- all the gambling websites show on the home page the wording “gambling is forbidden to minors and may cause pathological dependence”;
- all the gambling websites include a logo/link on the home page which redirects one to an area dedicated to responsible gambling. In this area are concentrated, organized and described all the responsible gambling initiatives created by the on line gambling operators, allowing the player to have a single area of reference of the website to be consulted in order to get information about the risks of gambling;
- all the gambling websites provide the players with a detailed series of suggestions on the behaviour to be adopted in order to approach gambling in a safe and protected way, in order to prevent them from becoming game-dependent;
- most gambling websites analysed (7) have obtained a certification regarding the implementation of adequate strategies to minimize gambling addiction or participate in international associations of game operators who have among their objectives the development of responsible gambling. More specifically, some gambling operators have received from the Global Gambling Guidance Group (G4), an international organization aiming to minimise the impact of problem gambling, a certification of the website that testifies its conformity to the international standards regarding responsible gambling. Others on line operators have received certifications from the European Lotteries and from the World Lottery Association for the adherence to the international responsible gaming standards. Finally, other operators take part in the European Gaming and Betting Association (EGBA) and hence necessarily adhere to the ‘Responsible remote gambling measures’ published by the European Committee for Standardization.

The final series of initiatives designed towards facilitating players' awareness – Gambling addiction support – includes the measures for supporting players against the risk and effects of problematic gambling. These measures normally require proactive behaviour of the player in order to carry out their action. From the investigation it emerges, as results from Table 5, that:

- all the gambling websites provide a self-assessment test to help the players assess their own game profile,

permitting them to recognise a possible gambling addiction;

- all the gambling websites invite the players who believe they have gambling problems to refer themselves to support agencies specialized in treating gambling addiction. These organizations mainly support the players in: facilitating the knowledge of gambling risk factors; managing the need to play; controlling the financial aspects connected to gambling; resolving family problems connected with gambling; avoiding relapsing into compulsive gambling. All the gambling websites also provide references for contacting these support services, both via Internet, as well as through telephone contacts. Some websites analysed contribute moreover with finances to supporting these organizations. The main national and international support organisations towards which the Italian gambling websites direct the players are the following: ‘Società Italiana di Intervento sulle Patologie Compulsive – SIIPAC’ (Italian association for the treatment of compulsive disorders), ‘Associazione per lo studio del gioco di azzardo e dei comportamenti a rischio – ALEA’ (Association for the study of gambling and of risk behaviour); ‘Servizio Giocaresponsabile della Federazione italiana degli Operatori dei Dipartimenti e dei Servizi per le Dipendenze – FeDerSerD’ (Italian federation of the operators of the departments and services for addictions); ‘Servizi pubblici per le Dipendenze patologiche – SerD’ (Public Services for pathological addiction); Gambling therapy;
- there are rather few gambling websites (3) which provide the possibility of contacting firms’ customer service operators specifically trained for managing gambling problems. Two of these websites, in particular, make provision that the team occupied with helping the players, if it reveals forms of pathological gaming, may decide to prevent the player’s further participation in making bets;
- some of the gambling websites (4) explain the importance and possibility of supporting family members and friends who have gambling problems, by inviting them to contact the specialised support services, wherever necessary. One of these websites, moreover, provides precise indications for recognising gambling problems among friends and relatives.

A second macro-category of responsible gambling measures examined is the one including the actions ‘facilitating control of the players’, through the setting of monetary and time gambling limits.

Table 6. Responsible gambling measures facilitating control of the players in the on line sports betting sector in Italy. The results of the empirical investigation

Measures	Number of gambling websites
<i>2.1. Deposit limits</i>	
Mandatory, set by player	All (10/10)
Duration of deposit limits	
• daily	1/10
• weekly	7/10
• monthly	3/10
<i>2.2. Play limits</i>	
Mandatory	None (0/10)
Voluntary	Few (3/10)
<i>2.3. Bet limits</i>	
Mandatory	None (0/10)
Voluntary	One (1/10)
<i>2.4. Loss limits</i>	
Mandatory	None (0/10)
Voluntary	None (0/10)
<i>2.5. Time limits</i>	
Mandatory	None (0/10)
Voluntary	One (1/10)
<i>2.6. Changing limits</i>	
Immediate decrease	All (10/10)
Delay on increase	All (10/10)

From the empirical analysis, as summed up in Table 6, it emerges that:

- all the gambling websites mandatorily require the players to set a deposit limit as part of the registration process or prior to their play session after creating an account. The function of the site relating to the on line bets are therefore not accessible until the player has established these parameters of self-limitation. Some of the sites, moreover, make provision that the definition of the deposit limits occurs regarding a maximum amount set by site;
- all the gambling websites analysed make provision for several time durations of deposit limits. Most of them (7) require setting a weekly deposit limit. The others (3), instead, provide for a monthly deposit limit. Only one site makes provision that the player should choose between daily or weekly limits, or allows him to fix both these limits;
- none of the gambling websites provides for mandatory play limits. Few gambling websites (3), on the other hand, make provision for the possibility of the players to set play limits voluntarily, either daily or monthly;
- none of the gambling websites provides for mandatory bets limits. Only one gambling website, in contrast, makes provision for the possibility of the player being able to establish a voluntary limit to the amount of his individual bet;
- none of the gambling websites provides for mandatory or voluntary loss limits;
- none of the gambling websites provides for mandatory time limits. Only one gambling website makes provision for the player – in order to help him manage the amount of time spent playing on the website – to impose a time limit which allows receiving a warning by means of a pop-up message which signals his going beyond the time predefined;
- all the gambling websites provide for the possibility of changing their pre-set limits, through the player account or by contacting customer service. For all the websites analysed, the limits may be decreased immediately, while if the player wishes to raise them, he must wait 7 days from his request in order to utilize the new increased limits. These “cooling-off periods” are useful in allowing gamblers to reconsider decisions made to increase expenditure limits. Some sites, in the case of player’s choice of increasing the monetary limits, explicitly suggest that he should carefully consider whether the new limits are coherent with his expense capacity or not, and advise against this decision, where it is directed towards increasing the volume of bets in order to recover the moneys lost.

A third and last macro-category of measures examined is that including the initiatives directed towards ‘restricting access to gambling’ (Table 7).

Table 7. Responsible gambling measures restricting access to gambling in the on line sports betting sector in Italy. The results of the empirical investigation

Measures	Number of gambling websites
<i>3.1. Self-exclusion from on line gambling</i>	
Voluntary self-exclusion, (of which):	All (10/10)
• temporary self-exclusion	All (10/10)
• permanent self-exclusion	All (10/10)
Possibility of revoking temporary self-exclusion	None (0/10)
Possibility of revoking permanent self-exclusion	All (10/10)
Minimum waiting period for revoking permanent self-exclusion	All (10/10)
Selective blocking of specific gambling typologies	Few (3/10)
<i>3.2. Age restriction and other access limits</i>	
Exclusion from gambling for people below 18 years of age	All (10/10)
Periodical verification of customer’s age	Few (3/10)
Software programmes to limit the access to Internet gambling sites to family members	Some (5/10)

More specifically, two different measuring typologies have been analysed.

The first typology is the one directed towards voluntary 'self-exclusion from on line gambling'. Hence it has been examined whether and in what way the gambling websites allow the players to remove themselves from the gambling situation. From the investigation, as summarised in Table 7, it turns out that:

- All the gambling websites allow the player, on request on line or through the assistance of a customer care operator, to self-exclude himself temporarily or permanently. Where the player decides to self-exclude himself from playing temporarily, he may choose among various time periods, different for each gambling operator, which can vary from a minimum of a week to a maximum of five years. During the self-exclusion period the player does not receive any promotional communication and he is not allowed to play or deposit money. His account is in fact suspended and the player may withdraw all or part of the balance remaining. Some websites furthermore explicitly invite the players who believe they have developed a gambling addiction to use this self-exclusive measure and they suggest, once having proceeded to self-exclusion, that they should arrange to do the same also with the open accounts with other on line gambling operators;
- All the gambling websites do not allow the players to revoke temporary self-exclusion, while the permanent one is revocable through a special deactivation procedure which provides for the sending of specific documentation to the customer service department. In each case, in order to carry out the cancellation of the permanent self-exclusion, all the gambling website require that a minimum period of six months passes prior to its implementation;
- There are rather few gambling websites (3) that give the player the possibility of blocking certain types of game selectively. This measure in contrast may be relevant, in that, as observed on the theme in the literature, self-exclusion should not be promoted for supporting abstinence from gambling only, but rather it should evolve as a tool to support control.

The second series of measures directed towards restricting access to gambling analysed is, finally, the one relating to age and other restrictions for accessing bets. These measures are especially important for minimising gambling risks, since, as has been previously emphasized, younger consumers are particularly exposed to the harm of an excessive use of gambling websites. From the investigation it emerges, as summarised in Table 7, that:

- All gambling websites explicitly exclude from gambling people below the age of 18 years. In order to guarantee this prohibition, the player on registration must include all his personal data, including his age, which are then subsequently checked through the compulsory forwarding of a copy of a document of identity;
- There are few gambling websites (3) which, for best guaranteeing respect for the 18-year limit, reserve the right to request further proof of the age of majority, and carry out periodical checks, normally through third parties, on the customers' ages. The accounts of the customers subject to checking may be suspended and the relative funds withheld until the player provides clear proof of his age of majority;
- Some gambling websites (5) invite the players to utilize specific software programmes to limit the access to Internet gambling sites to family members, especially those under age. They also provide Internet links to download these programmes free of charge (for example: Gamblock, Betfilter).

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study makes a contribution towards the economic-managerial literature on the theme of firms' social responsibility. More specifically, the results of the empirical investigation provide important insights for gambling firms and public policy makers regarding the operator-based approaches to harm minimisation in Internet gambling adopted in the markets, such as the Italian one, in which the legislator has intervened by regulating fully and organically on line gambling. The strategy of 'regulated opening' of the gambling market implemented in Italy in the last few years has in fact, as already observed, legalized sales through the Internet of all typologies of betting distributed through the land-based venues.

From the study it emerges, first of all, that the choice of the Italian legislator to legalise gambling via the Internet has represented the premise for an increase in buying betting services. In particular, the results of the empirical research, that has permitted measuring the perception for the Italian players of the impact that Internet gambling has had on the volume of sports bets carried out, show that 70 per cent of the sample of players interviewed has increased the number and the amount of sports bets following the access to gambling through the digital channel, and that one player in ten has begun to bet on sports events precisely following the introduction of on line gambling. This suggests that in the Italian market, as has happened in other national gambling markets, the utilization of the Internet for betting on sports may increase the level of consumption of gambling products and,

thus, the potential risks of excessive gambling.

Secondly, from the analysis it emerges that the process of regulating of on line sports betting sector in Italy has not only brought about potentially negative effects on gambling behaviour. The norms adopted in the Internet gambling segment has in fact been guided also by the objective of reducing the risks that consumers can run in referring to the illegal gambling industry and by the need for offering players instruments for minimizing the harm of gambling better than those offered by the unregulated gaming websites. The Italian legislator has, therefore, disciplined most clearly and completely the relationships, regarding responsible gambling, among the players, the public administration and the betting companies. All this thanks to the definition of a 'concession model' based on strong public control of the on line gambling operators, both in the phase prior to their entry into the market – for the issue of a gambling license –, as well as in the subsequent phase (Fidone, Linguiti, 2013). The control of the actions aimed at reducing gambling risks in the on line segment is more especially carried out by the Agency of Customs and Monopoly. This government agency, by means of the definition of the 'Service charter for remote gambling', has identified the quality standards associated with respect to the fundamental principles of "legal and responsible gambling" which must be guaranteed by the gambling operators. The failure to respect these principles makes provision for assigning penalties and sanctions, which can arrive at withdrawing the gambling license. Furthermore, the Italian norms have deliberately made provision for the obligation for on line gambling operators for the identification of the player, who in order to play is obliged to open a personal playing account by exhibiting identity documents (Sbordoni, 2010). This on line account is managed by the gambling licensee and on it are registered and monitored all the movements carried out through time (Note 7). This allows the on line gambling operators to use the Internet based technologies to facilitate and improve the responsible gambling measures. They, in fact, know the betting profile of the players and, also thanks to the 'one to one' communication characteristics of the Internet, can activate more personalised initiatives aimed at reducing gambling risks compared with those which may be adopted in the traditional land-based venues.

The normative approach undertaken has therefore favoured a widespread adoption by the on line gambling operators in the Italian market of a series of important responsible gambling measures. In this regard, the results of the empirical investigation of the main gambling websites active in the regulated sports betting sector in Italy have shown that the on line gambling operators implement a full articulated series of actions aimed towards harm minimisation in Internet gambling, both in compliance with the law as well as on the basis of voluntary choice.

More specifically, in relation to the measures directed towards 'facilitating awareness and informed choice of the players', it emerged that all the gambling websites analysed are in keeping with providing detailed information to the players regarding their past gambling behaviour, as well as describing adequately characteristics and regulations of the gambling and probabilities of winning, specifying the contractual conditions and the codes of conduct governing the relationship between player and on line gambling operator. From the analysis, moreover, it emerged that all the gambling websites analysed provide in-depth information relating to gambling risks and set instruments at the players' disposal for facilitating the adoption of responsible gambling behaviour, also by putting them in contact with support agencies for gambling addiction. It is important to underline, moreover, that all the measures specifically directed towards supporting the players regarding gambling problems are clearly organised into specific areas of the websites dedicated towards responsible gambling, thus allowing the players to have a single area of reference to consult in order to have information on the risks of gambling. The examination of the gambling websites has, however, also allowed revealing that on other specific measures – the possibility of contacting customer service operators trained for managing gambling problems, the support for family members and friends with gambling problems, the tools for monitoring time and money spent on gambling – only few gambling websites have operated adequately, thus still evidencing margins for improvement in this typology of responsible gambling policies.

In relationship to the 'measures facilitating control of the players', through the setting of monetary and time gambling limits, from the investigation it emerged that all the gambling websites analysed required the players necessarily to set a deposit limit as a part of the registration process or prior to their first play session. With regard to the other gambling limits, in contrast, from the analysis many margins of improvement emerge. No gambling websites, in fact, permits fixing limits to the on line gambling losses, and there are indeed very few websites which make provision for the possibility of the player to define his limits of money spent on a single sports bet or of time spent gambling.

Finally, with reference to the 'measures restricting access to gambling', it results from the empirical research that all the sports betting sites examined provide for the possibility of self exclusion from gambling, temporarily or

permanently, while there are only few sites allowing a 'selective' type of self-exclusion from certain gambling typologies which may be perceived to be 'more at risk' by the consumer. In addition, the investigation has shown that all the websites provide for access to betting procedures which guarantee the exclusion from gambling of under aged people and that a relevant part of gambling sites put specific software programmes at the disposal of the players to limit the access to Internet gambling to family members.

## 6. Future Research Directions

The results of this research work, in keeping with its explorative nature, are preliminary to a further in-depth analysis designed to examine the efficacy of digital strategies for promoting responsible gambling brought about by the gambling websites operating in the Italian regulated market. In fact, an empirical investigation is currently being defined directed towards measuring the impact that these strategies have on the gambling behaviour in the on line sports betting sector in Italy. More specifically the investigation aims at analysing: 1) the cognitive response of the player, by measuring the level of awareness of the on line initiatives directed towards responsible gambling adopted by Italian gambling website; 2) the affective and behavioural response of the player, by measuring the level of use of the on line tools for responsible gambling, the perception regarding the usefulness of the specific responsible gambling measures, and, more generally, the impact on the reputation of the gambling websites of the responsible gambling initiatives adopted.

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### Sitography

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[www.world-lotteries.org](http://www.world-lotteries.org)

## Notes

Note 1. In the literature there is a tendency to make a distinction between pathological and problematic gambling. As observed (Blaszczynski, Ladouceur, & Shaffer, 2004, p. 305) “pathological gambling is the technical term currently used by the American Psychiatric Association for identifying a gambling disorder. Problematic gambling is a lay term that refers to a broader category of individuals exhibiting patterns of excessive gambling behavior that is associated with harmful effects”.

Note 2. Our processing of the ‘Agency of Customs and Monopoly’ data.

Note 3. Blaszczynski, Parke, Parke and Rigbye (2014, p. 14) wrote their research work “with the British context in mind”, but they “consider that most issues will have some relevance at an international level also”.

Note 4. These contributions have been published in a special issue edited in 2014 by ‘The Journal of Gambling Business and Economics’ (Vol. 8, No. 3), directed towards systematizing existing knowledge regarding harm minimisation in gambling.

Note 5. The investigation was directed towards analysing in depth consumer behaviour of Italian gamblers in the on line sports betting sector in Italy. Questions were included in the questionnaire directed towards examining on line gambling features which are not described in this work.

Note 6. Our elaboration of the ‘Agency of Customs and Monopoly’ and of the ‘Agenzia Giornalistica sul Mercato del Gioco’ (Press Agency on the Gambling Market) data.

Note 7. These movements are also transmitted in real time by the gambling operators to a national server managed and controlled by Sogei, an IT company 100% controlled by the Italian Ministry of Economics and Finance, to allow it to monitor the gambling fluxes.

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