

## SPORTS BETTING ADVERTISING AND ITS EFFECTS ON VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

### *Overview of the Track Theme*

*Problem Statement.* Americans wagered a record \$119.84 billion on sports betting in 2023, up 27.5% from 2022, according to the American Gaming Association's Commercial Gaming Revenue Tracker. Worldwide, sports betting is today ubiquitous on all continents. Vying for new and repeat customers, top-grossing sportsbooks such as FanDuel, DraftKings, and Bet365 each spend around \$500 million annually on advertising, including TV & radio, online ads, sponsorship, and promotions and bonuses. The exposure of such advertisement might be especially harmful to vulnerable populations, such as males, underage betters, and people experiencing gambling problems (Vander Linden et al. 2022). The rapid development of the sports betting industry and its potential harm on the vulnerable populations call for both regulative prevention and intervention and academic attention from multiple disciplines.

*Track Focus.* There is a need to balance the overwhelmingly positive image of wagering, such as being seen as fun and normal (Bouguettaya et al. 2020; Deans et al. 2017; Killick & Griffiths 2023; Pitt et al. 2017), with “more accurate information on the low probability of winning and the risk of harm associated with gambling” (Vander Linden et al., 2022). There is a wide variety of regulations around the world when it comes to sports betting advertising. For instance, in Germany the advertising of sports betting before or during live TV broadcasts of sporting events is prohibited<sup>1</sup>. We propose to conceptually explore the key elements that influence the benefit/risk perceptions of sports betting for customers of certain vulnerabilities by bridging extant literature and global regulations. In so doing, we aim to provide a framework that could answer research questions such as the following:

- (1) “What impacts do various targeting, message (i.e., content), and execution strategies (e.g., media, timing, frequency) of sports betting advertisements have on vulnerable populations?”
- (2) “What preventive or interventional measures can be taken to protect these vulnerable groups from the adverse effects of sports betting advertising?”

*Key Track Goals.* By bridging extant literature and global regulations, we aim to provide a systematic overview of sports betting advertising's impact on vulnerable populations and the protective measures that can be taken thereagainst. For this goal, we would like to include a mix of academic and non-academic stakeholders internationally with an interest in gambling advertising and/or vulnerable populations, particularly in the sports betting context, to produce impact-specific outcomes. The track co-chairs are a testament to this mix. Furthermore, the academic co-chairs have expertise in a variety of methodological approaches. We also target an interdisciplinary composition of track members. Finally, we welcome junior scholars, including doctoral and post-doctoral students. In total, we are planning to have 8-10 track participants, including the track co-chairs.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://lawstrust.com/en/autor/klymenko/regulation-gambling-advertising-europe>

### ***Plans for Post-Conference Write-Up***

We will be utilizing MacInnis' (2011) integrative framework guidelines where we will work on (1) accommodating extant knowledge, (2) explaining puzzling or inconsistent findings, (3) revealing novel insights, and (4) creating parsimony for guiding research on sports gambling advertising that can have impact on regulatory and practical interventions. For this, each track participant will review a list of key references related to the topic before the conference. They will also prepare a summary of advertising practices in sports betting, local or national regulations, and remaining challenges in their own region or country. A broad guide will be circulated to the track team to assist with this pre-work. During the seminar, we will work as a team to de-brief on the pre-work, based on which specific elements of the framework will emerge. We will work on refining these elements and decide on a division of work for post-conference write-up and coordination. The track co-chairs will take the lead on this coordination. One of our co-chairs, Mujde Yuksel, has experience chairing a TCR track.

### ***References***

- Bouguettaya, A., Lynott, D., Carter, A., Zerhouni, O., Meyer, S., Ladegaard, I., & O'Brien, K. S. (2020). The relationship between gambling advertising and gambling attitudes, intentions and behaviors: a critical and meta-analytic review. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 89-101.
- Deans, E. G., Thomas, S. L., Derevensky, J., & Daube, M. (2017). The influence of marketing on the sports betting attitudes and consumption behaviors of young men: implications for harm reduction and prevention strategies. *Harm reduction journal*, 14(1), 1-12.
- Killick, E. A., & Griffiths, M. D. (2023). Sports betting advertising: A systematic review of content analysis studies. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 21(5), 3076-3102.
- MacInnis, D. J. (2011). A framework for conceptual contributions in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(4), 136-154.
- Pitt, H., Thomas, S. L., Bestman, A., Daube, M., & Derevensky, J. (2017). What do children observe and learn from televised sports betting advertisements? A qualitative study among Australian children. *Australian and New Zealand journal of public health*, 41(6), 604-610.
- Vander Linden, M., Banh, L., Flores-Pajot, M. C. (2022). *Responsible Gaming Considerations Gambling Advertising*. Boston, MA: Massachusetts Gaming Commission.