

Counting the costs of gambling to Victoria

Overview

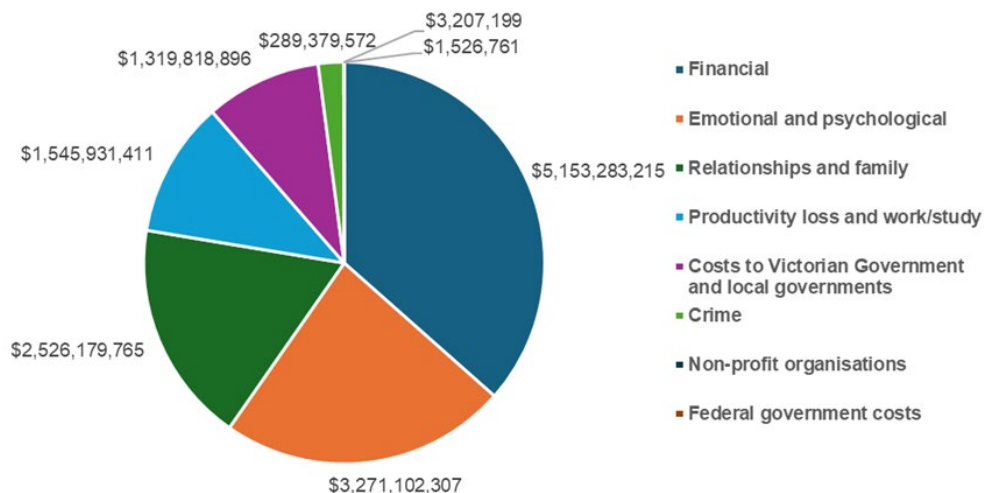
- The total cost of gambling to Victoria in 2022-23 was estimated to be \$14.1 billion.
- This cost was mostly attributable to financial, emotional and psychological harm, and impacts on relationships and family.

The cost of gambling to Victoria in 2022-23 was estimated to be \$14.1 billion

The researchers calculated lower and upper amounts for this total. The total cost was estimated to range from \$12.7 billion to \$17.0 billion.

The costs were measured across 8 domains, with the financial impacts of gambling the largest category.

Figure 1: Cost of gambling to Victoria 2022-23 by cost category



Each of the domains comprise the following costs:

- **Financial:** Excess spending,² costs associated with bankruptcy and illegal offshore wagering.
- **Emotional and psychological:** Depression, impact of suicide attempts on people who gamble, health-related quality of life,³ and impacts of gambling harm on people who gamble.
- **Relationships and family:** Costs associated with divorce and separation, experiences of violence, impact of suicide attempts and fatalities on affected others, and HRQoL impact of gambling harm on affected others.

¹ Browne M, Tulloch C, Rawat V, Dellosa G, Russell AMT, Hing N, Rockloff M and Doran C (2025), *The social costs of gambling to Victoria, 2023*, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne.

² Excess spending refers to the amount of spending by those classified at any level of risk of problem gambling (low- and moderate-risk and problem gambling) by the Problem Gambling Severity Index, relative to those who gamble but are not considered at any level of risk.

³ Intangible impacts of gambling harm like stress or reduced wellbeing are measured using health-related quality of life (HRQoL) scores. These scores are then converted into dollar amounts using established social costing methods to put a price on the non-financial costs of gambling.

- **Productivity and work or study:** Reduced performance, costs associated with job loss and absenteeism, cost of crime to businesses, and cost of suicide fatalities to the community and government.
- **Victorian Government and local governments:** Policy, regulation and research, direct costs to local governments in responding to electronic gaming machine applications, and costs to the health and human services systems, mental health sector and homelessness services.
- **Crime:** Costs to the police, court and corrections systems.
- **Non-profit organisations:** Provision of services related to gambling addiction.
- **Federal Government costs:** Services associated with online gambling.

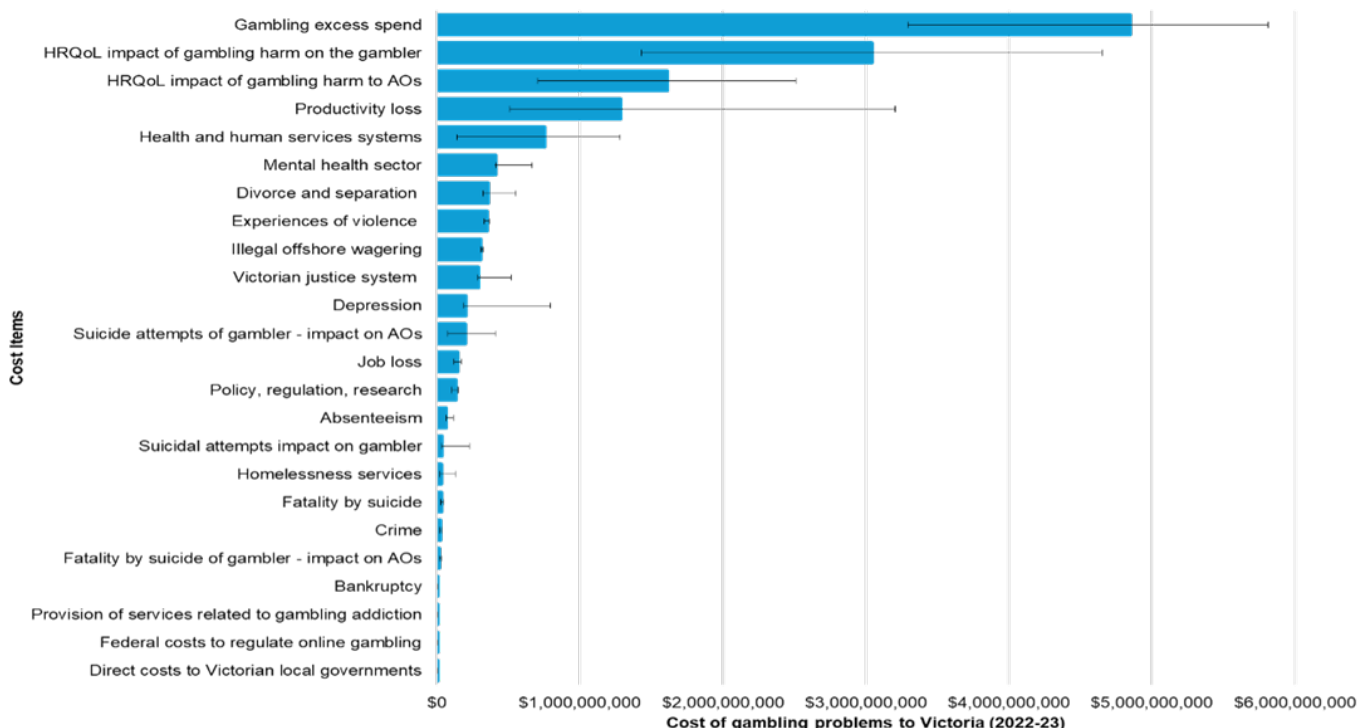
Excess spending, health-related quality of life impact and productivity loss accounted for three-quarters of the cost of gambling to Victoria

Specific cost items that make up the 8 major categories identified within the report are shown in Figure 2.

Approximately three-quarters of the total cost was attributable to the following 4 items:

- excess spending by people who gamble \$4.8 billion (\$3.3 billion to \$5.8 billion)
- health-related quality of life impacts to people who gamble \$3.0 billion (\$1.4 billion to \$4.7 billion)
- health-related quality of life impacts to affected others \$1.6 billion (\$708 million to \$2.5 billion)
- productivity loss \$1.3 billion (\$506 million to \$3.2 billion).

Figure 2: Detailed breakdown of gambling-related costs in Victoria 2022-23



* black bars represent confidence intervals for the estimated cost - the range within which the true cost will fall.