



Online gambling and associated harms during the COVID-19 pandemic: A population study




LISBON
ADDICTIONS
2022

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Fonds de recherche
Société et culture

Québec 

Team members



Study objectives

Provide a comprehensive picture of the online gambling habits among the adult population and various subgroups in the province of Québec (Canada)

Assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on online gambling practices



COVID-19 and gambling habits

Increase in online gambling across majority of studies (Bellringer et al., 2021; Emond et al., 2021; Fluharty et al., 2021; Håkansson et al., 2020; Lischer et al., 2021; Xuereb et al., 2021)

Lockdowns increased depression, stress, anxiety, boredom, financial distress and decreased well-being (Aslan et al., 2020; Close et al., 2022; Gainsbury et al., 2021; Håkansson et al., 2021; Lugo et al., 2021; Price et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2021)

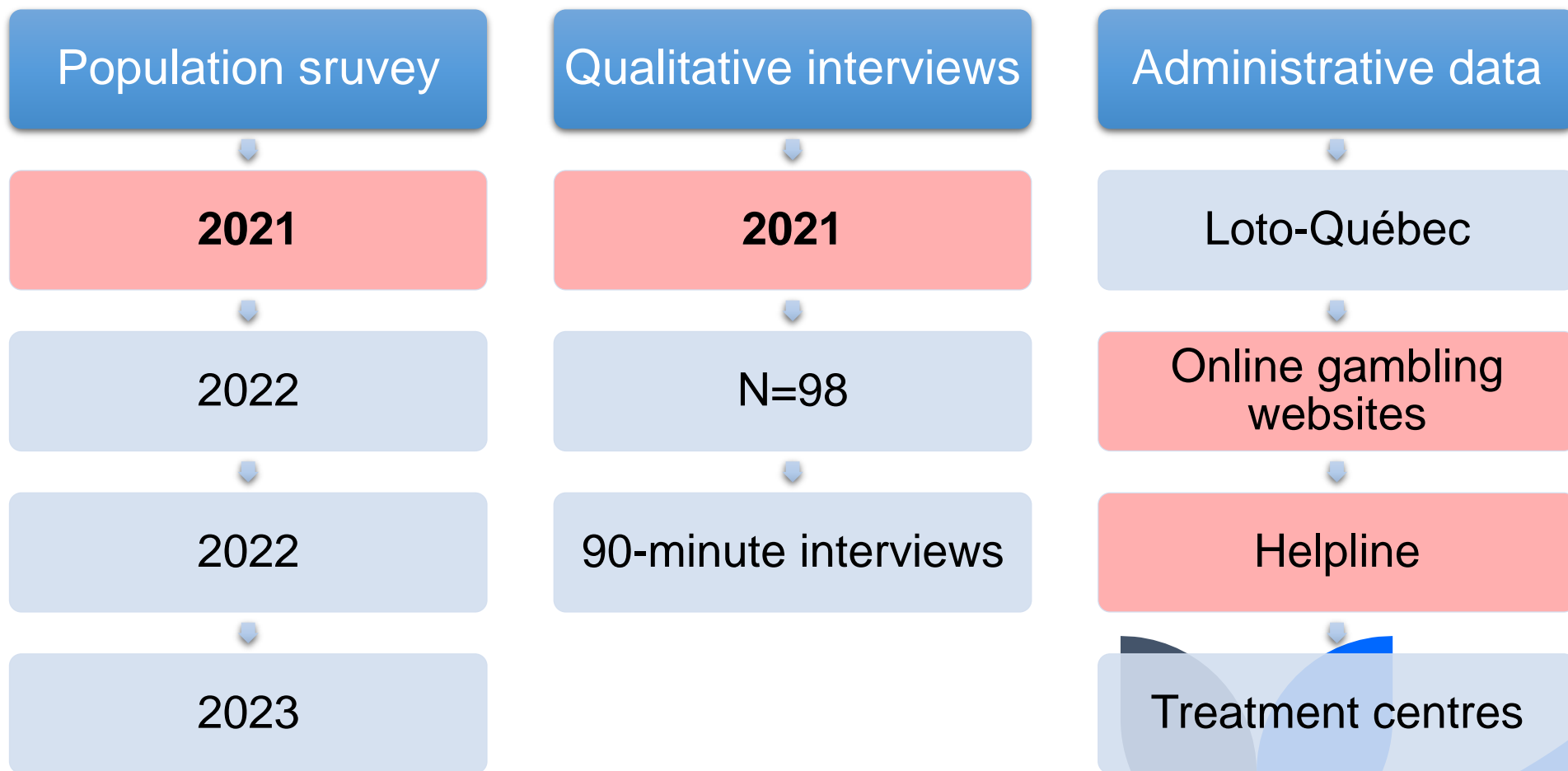
Migration from offline to online gambling due to closures (Auer et al., 2021; Brodeur et al., 2021; Håkansson, 2020; Jenkinson et al., 2021; Machado et al., 2021; Sachdeva et al., 2021)

Increase in groups identified as new gamblers (Georgiadou et al., 2021; Salerno et al., 2021; Sharman et al., 2021; Shaw et al., 2021)





ENHJEU.COM project design (2021-2024)



Methodology

Target population

Past-year gamblers and people who gambled online 12 months prior to the pandemic, 18 and over, speak French or English and live in private households in the province of Québec (Canada)

Final sample size

N=4,637

Mixed-mode

Telephone (CATI) and web panel

Time frame

April 28 to November 2, 2021



Random digit dialing (landlines & cellphones)

- 15,889 completed inclusion screen (4.55%)
- 1,422 recent online gamblers



Survey panelist

- 8,596 completed the inclusion screen (23%)
- 3,315 recent online gamblers

Methodology

Measures

Socio-demographic

- Sex, gender, age, education,
- Income, employment status, marital status

Past-year gambling participation

- Lotteries, bingo, slot machines, poker
- Table games, sports bettings, E-Sports, day trading

Gambling participation year prior to the pandemic

- Lotteries, bingo, slot machines, poker
- Table games, sports bettings, E-Sports, day trading

Methodology

Gambling patterns

Frequency

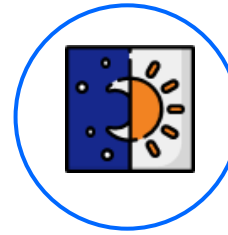
1. Every day
2. Several times a week
3. Once a week
4. Two or three times a month
5. Once a month
6. Less than once a month

Spending

1. \$5 or less
2. \$6 to \$10
3. \$11 to \$20
4. \$21 to 50
5. \$51 to \$100
6. \$101 to \$199
7. \$200 to \$299
8. \$300 to \$399
9. \$400 to \$499
10. \$500 or more
12. Prefer not to answer

Time

1. Less than 15 minutes
2. 15 to 30 minutes
3. 30 minutes to 1 hour
4. 1 to 2 hours
5. 2 to 3 hours
6. 3 to 6 hours
7. 6 to 9 hours
8. 10 hours or more



For each of the three measures per activity, we asked participants to compare with before the pandemic

1. **Increased** due to the COVID-19 pandemic
2. **Decreased** due to the COVID-19 pandemic
3. **Been unaffected** by the COVID-19 pandemic

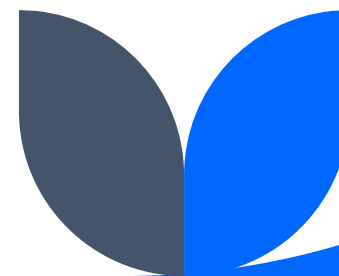
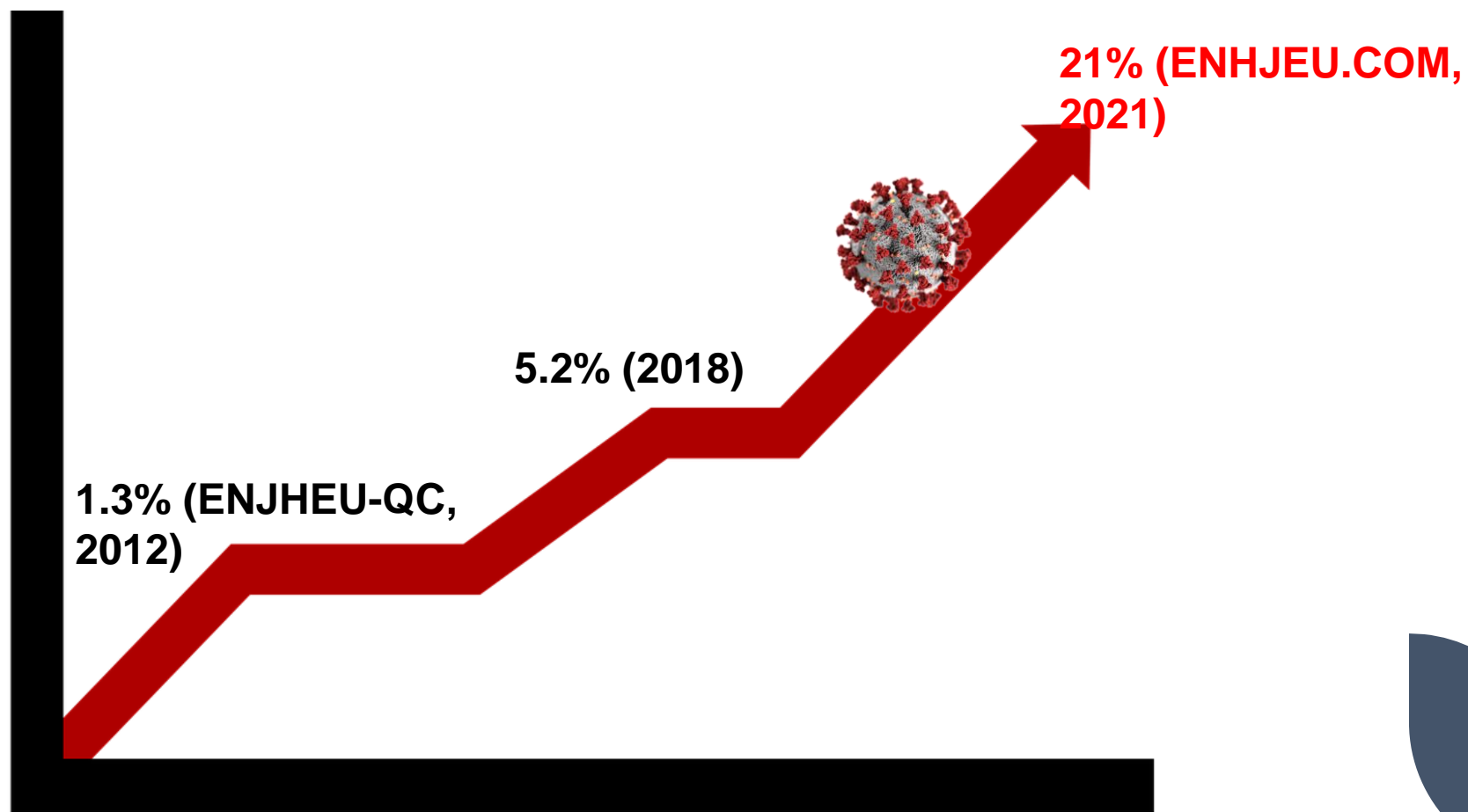
Other variables

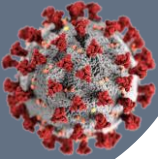
Problem
gambling
severity index
(Ferris & Wynne,
2001)

Service use (in
the past 12
months and
lifetime)

Advertisement &
promotion

Portrait of population 2020-2021



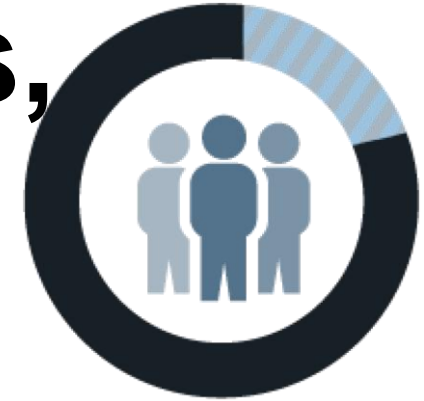


Portrait of population 2020-2021

	TEL survey		TEL + Web (TEL anchoring)		TEL + Web (Web anchoring)		Web survey
Online gamblers (past 12 months)	11.0	10.3 – 11.7	15.6	15.0 – 16.3	20.3	19.7 – 21.0	37.6
New online gamblers	4.6	4.16 – 5.09	5.1	4.7 – 5.5	5.6	5.2 – 5.96	7.9
New online gamblers	2.0	1.71 – 2.35	2.1	1.9 – 2.4	2.3	2.0 – 2.6	2.8
Migrators	2.5	2.14 – 2.81	2.8	2.5 – 3.1	3.1	2.9 – 3.4	4.4
Continuing online gamblers	6.3	5.82 – 6.92	10.5	10.0 – 11.0	14.7	14.2 – 15.3	29.7
Online gambling only	2.3	1.98 – 2.63	3.7	3.4 – 4.0	5.0	4.7 – 5.4	10.2
Online & offline gambling	3.8	3.34 – 4.21	6.6	6.2 – 6.98	9.4	8.9 – 9.9	19.8



Demographic characteristics of continuing online gamblers, migrators and uptakers

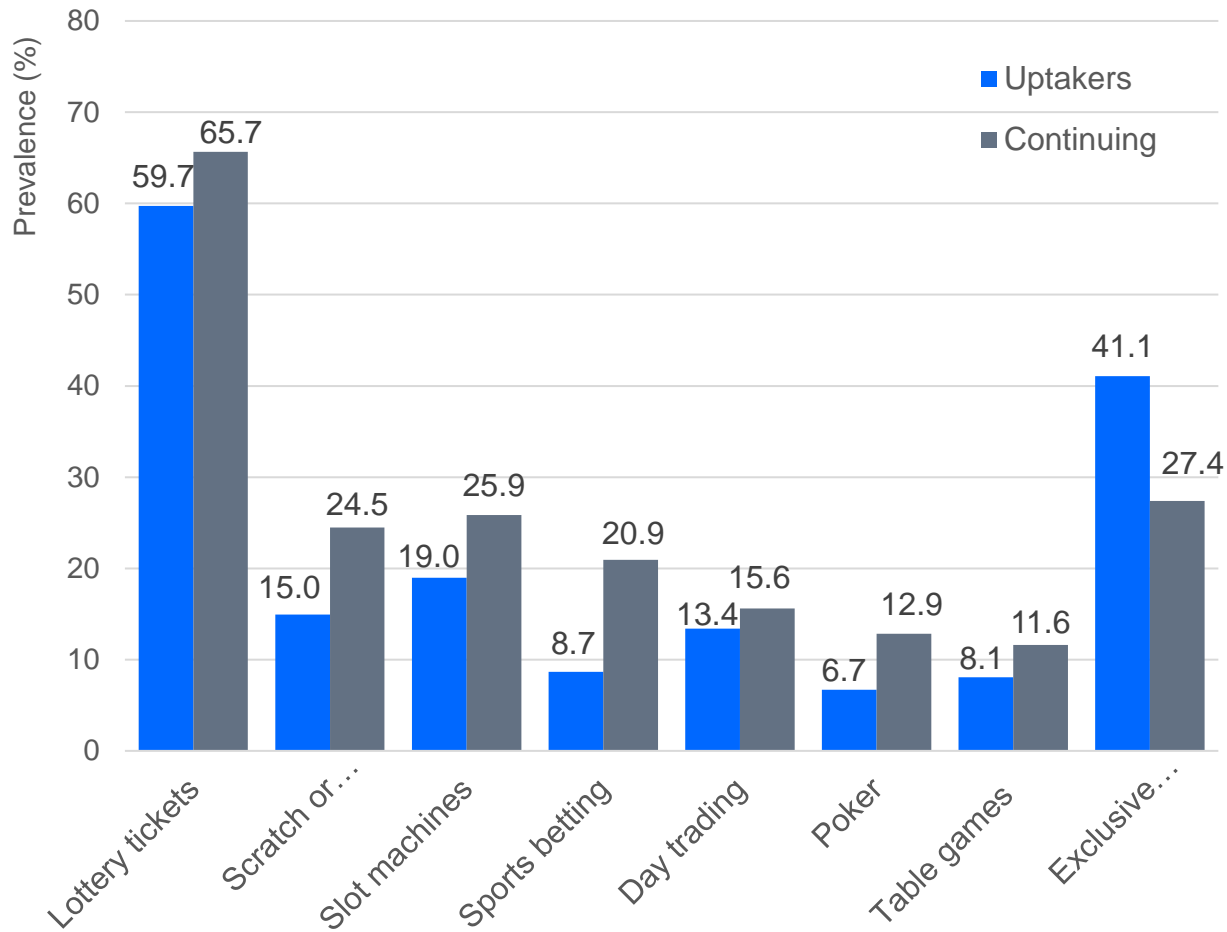


Sex	Men > Women
Age	25-64 most prevalent age group among online gamblers
Education	Almost 25% with a university degree
Employment status	Majority of participants are full/part-time workers
Income	Almost 50% of respondents report income of 75,000+

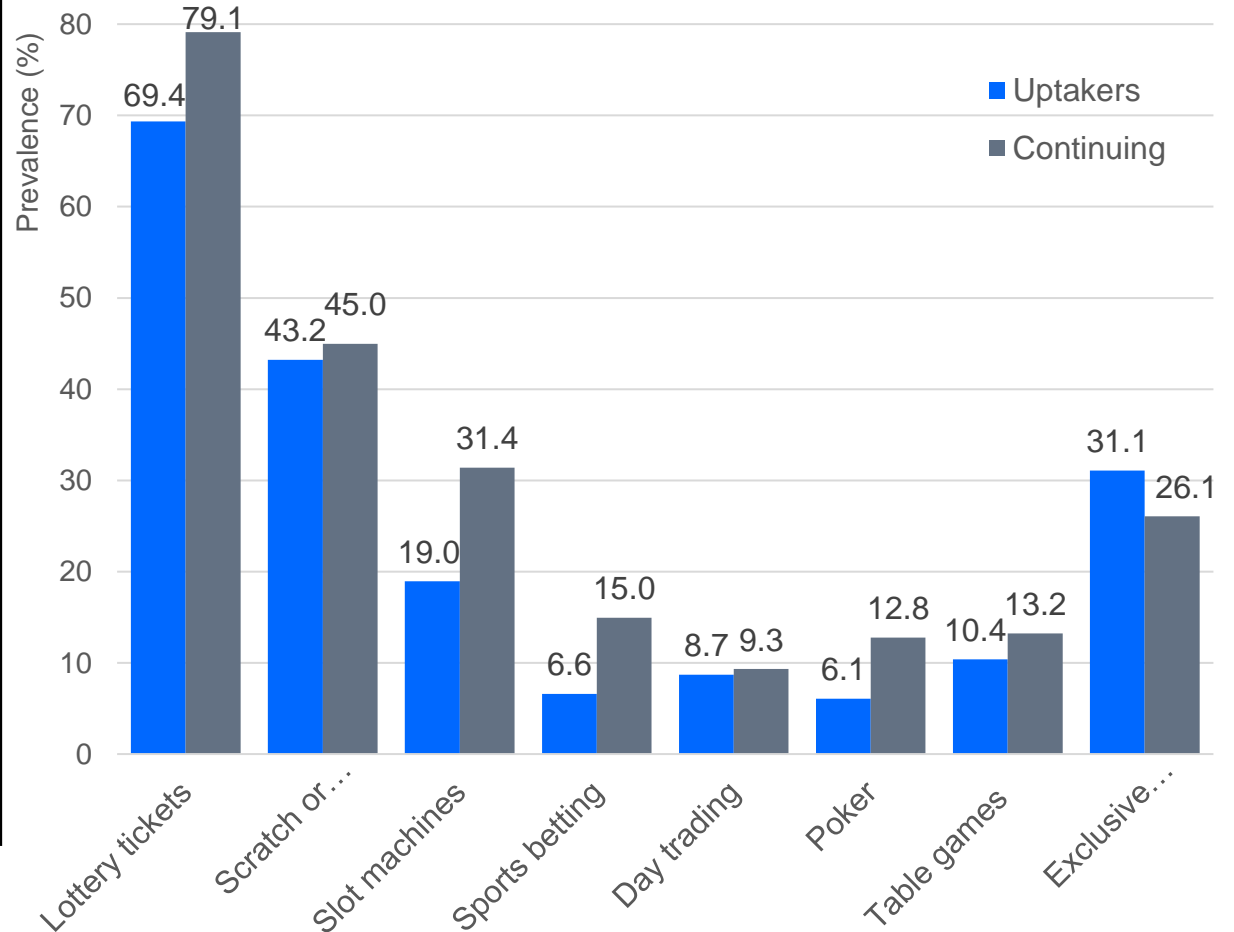


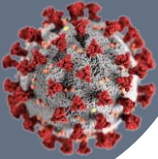
Prevalence of online gambling activities, past 12 months

TEL survey



Web survey





Portrait of population 2020-2021

1

Slot machines/Table games



2

Slot machines/Table games

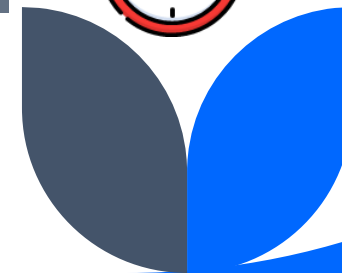


+42%

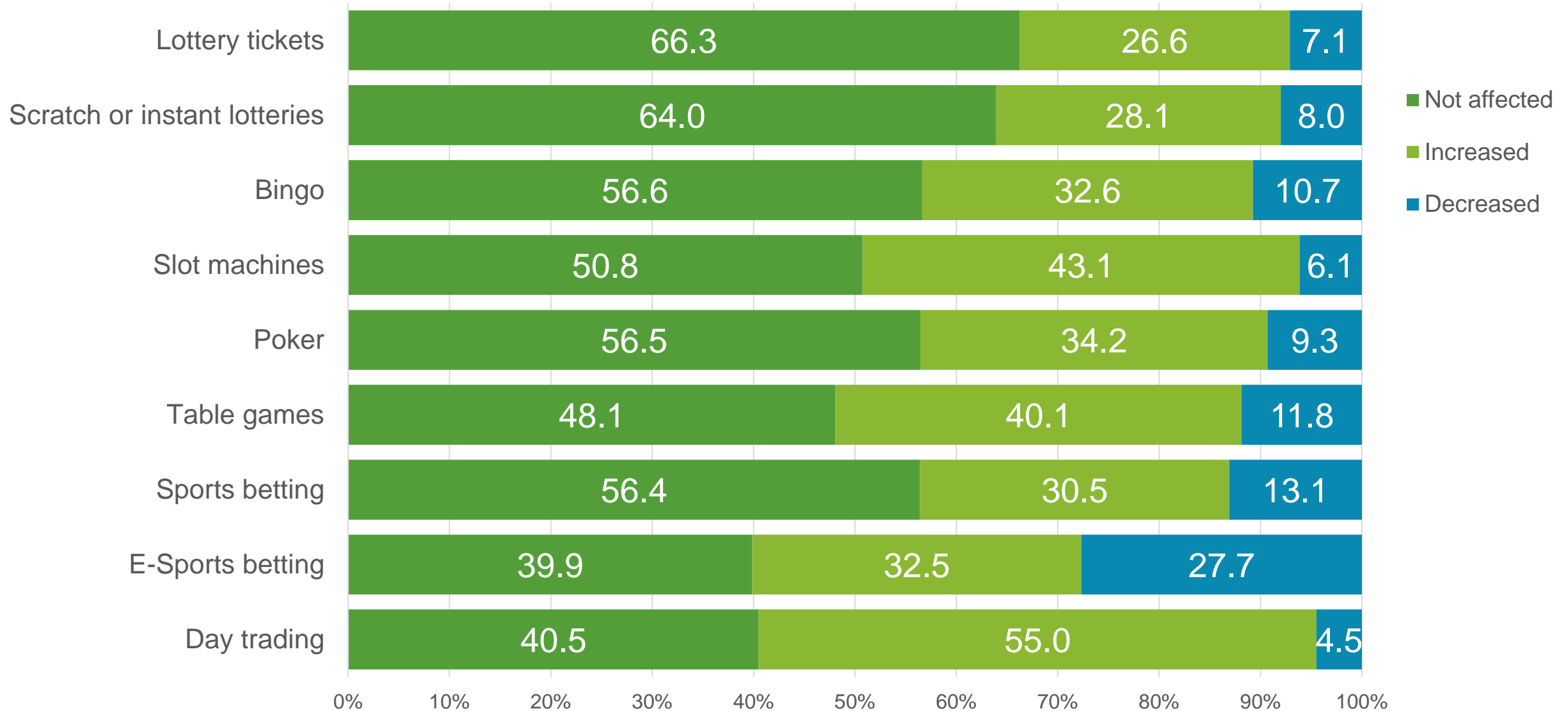


3

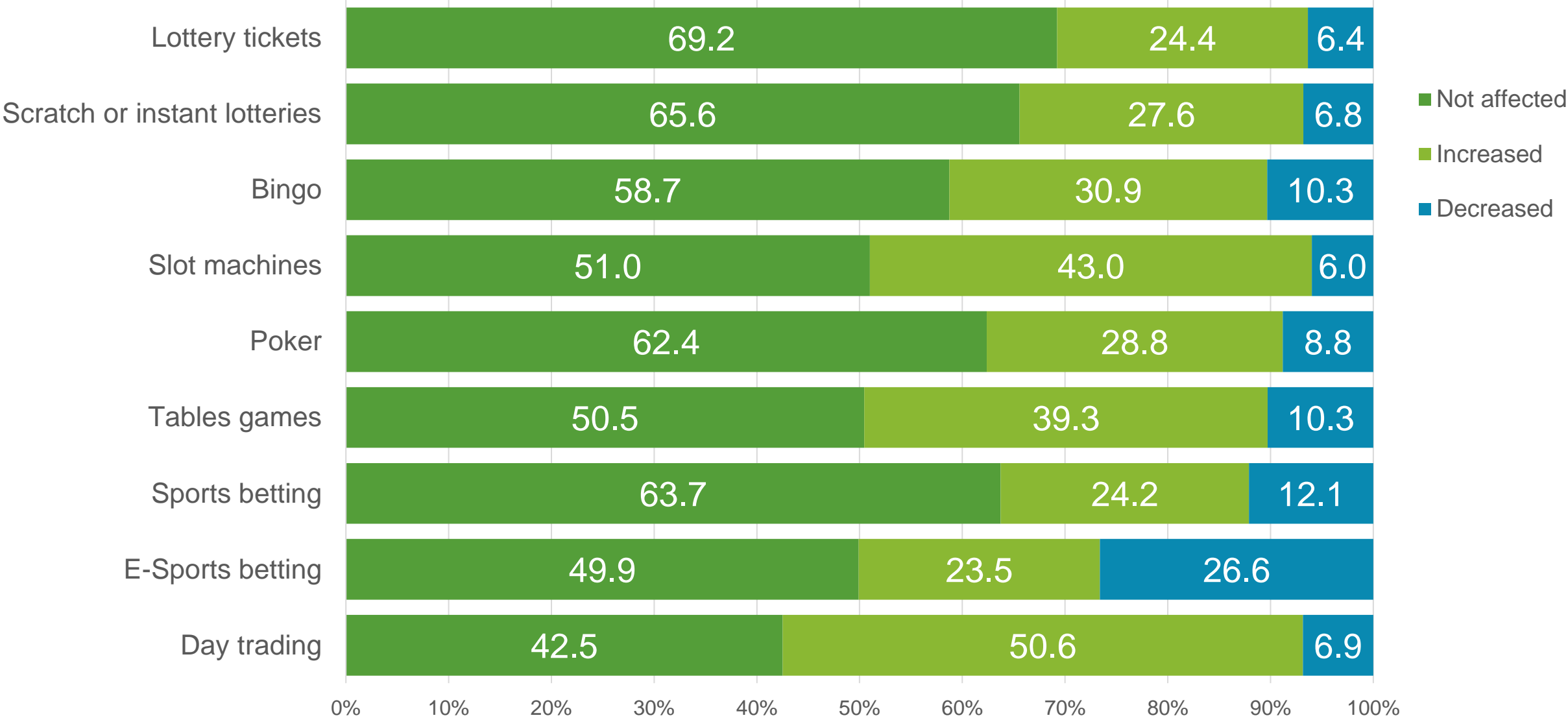
Slot machines/Table games



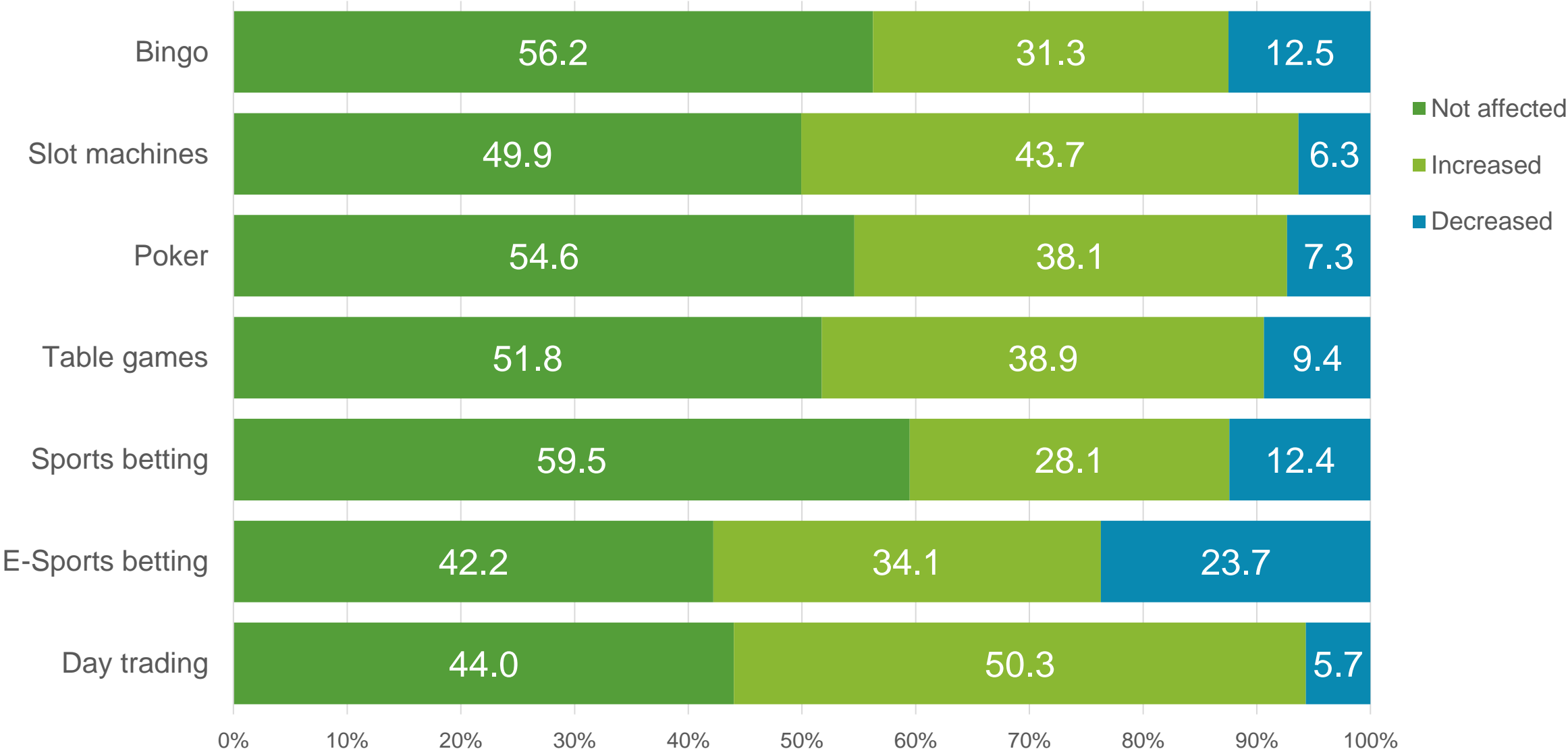
Impact of pandemic: frequency



Impact of pandemic: spending



Impact of pandemic: time



Moderate or problem gambling



PGSI 0-2



90.1%

PGSI 3-7



7.9%

PGSI 8+



2.0%

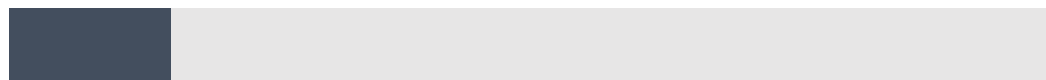


PGSI 0-2



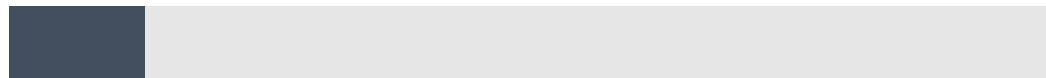
77.9%

PGSI 3-7



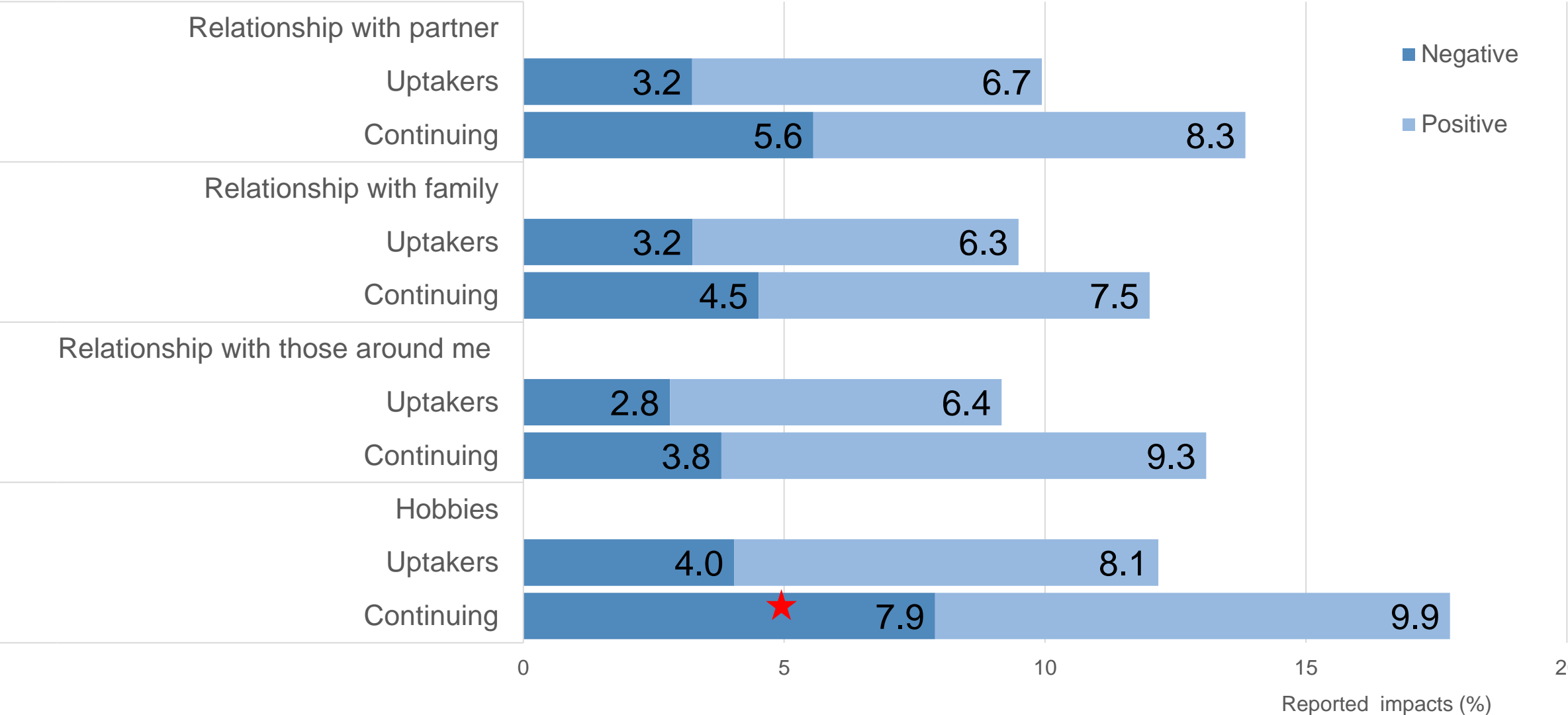
12.1%

PGSI 8+

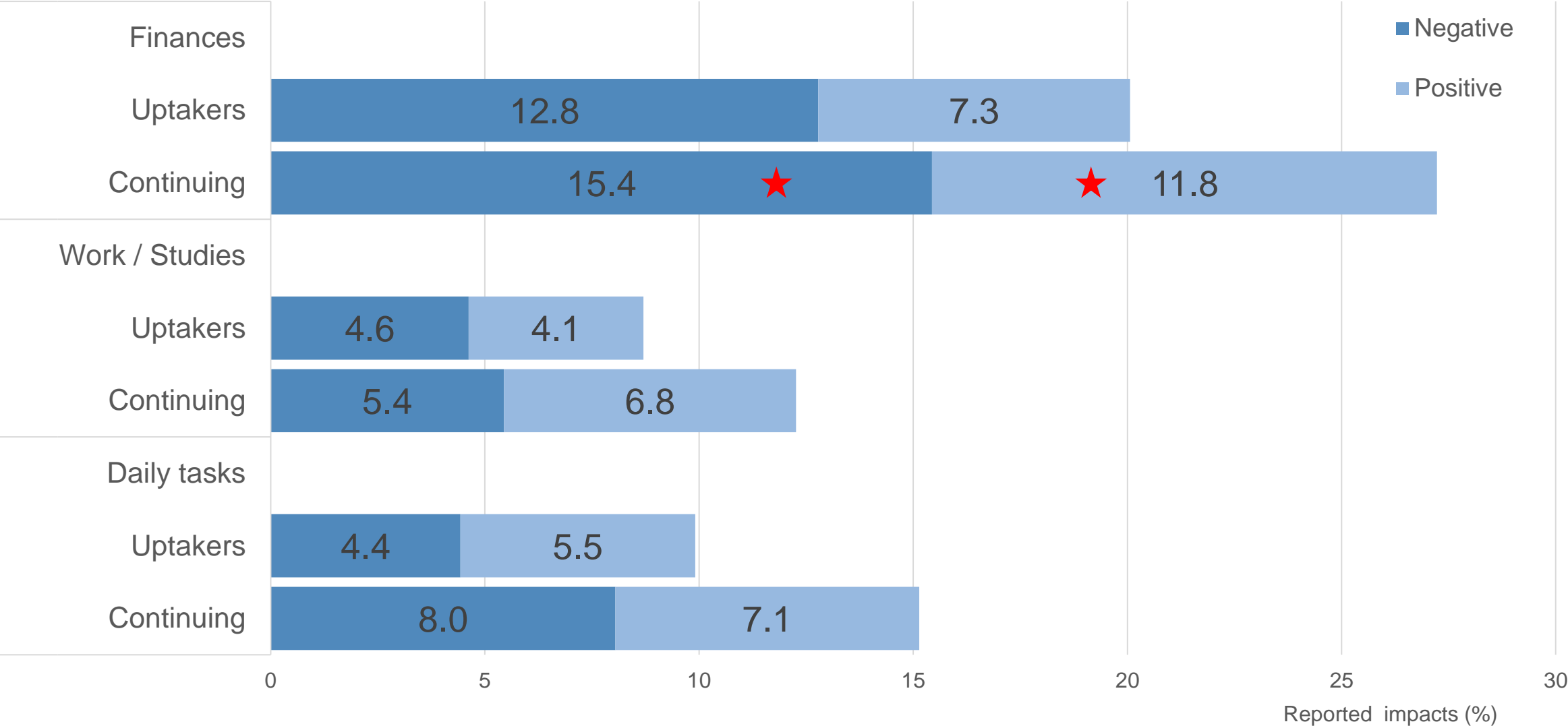


10.1%

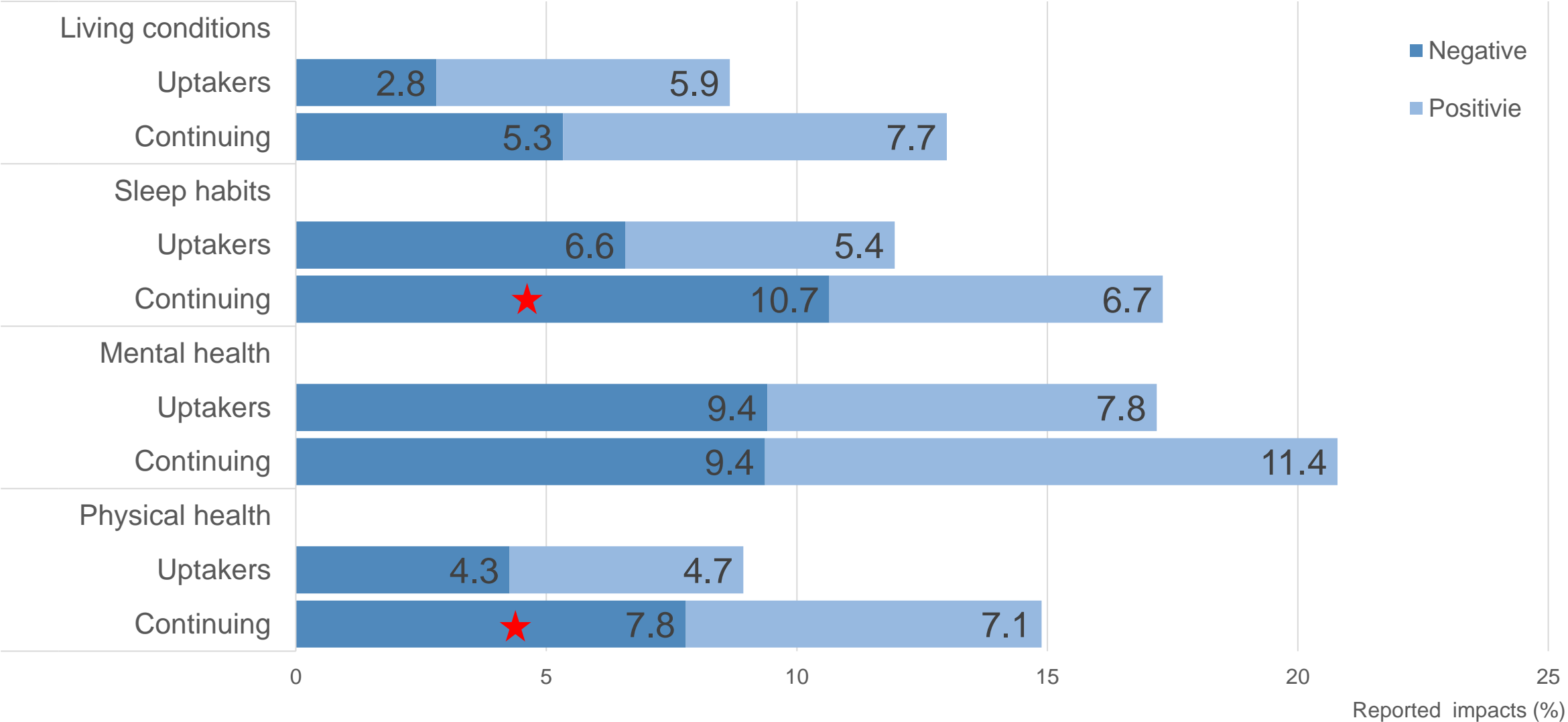
Impacts of gambling habits



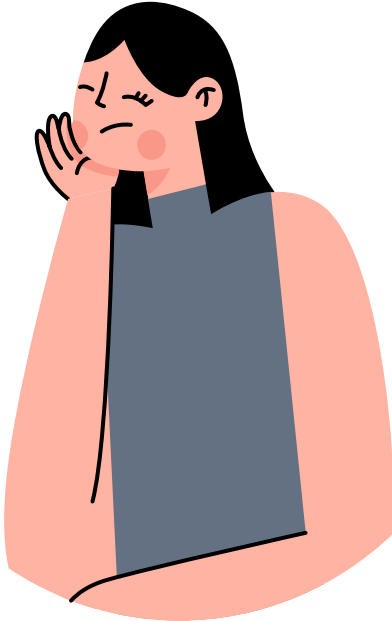
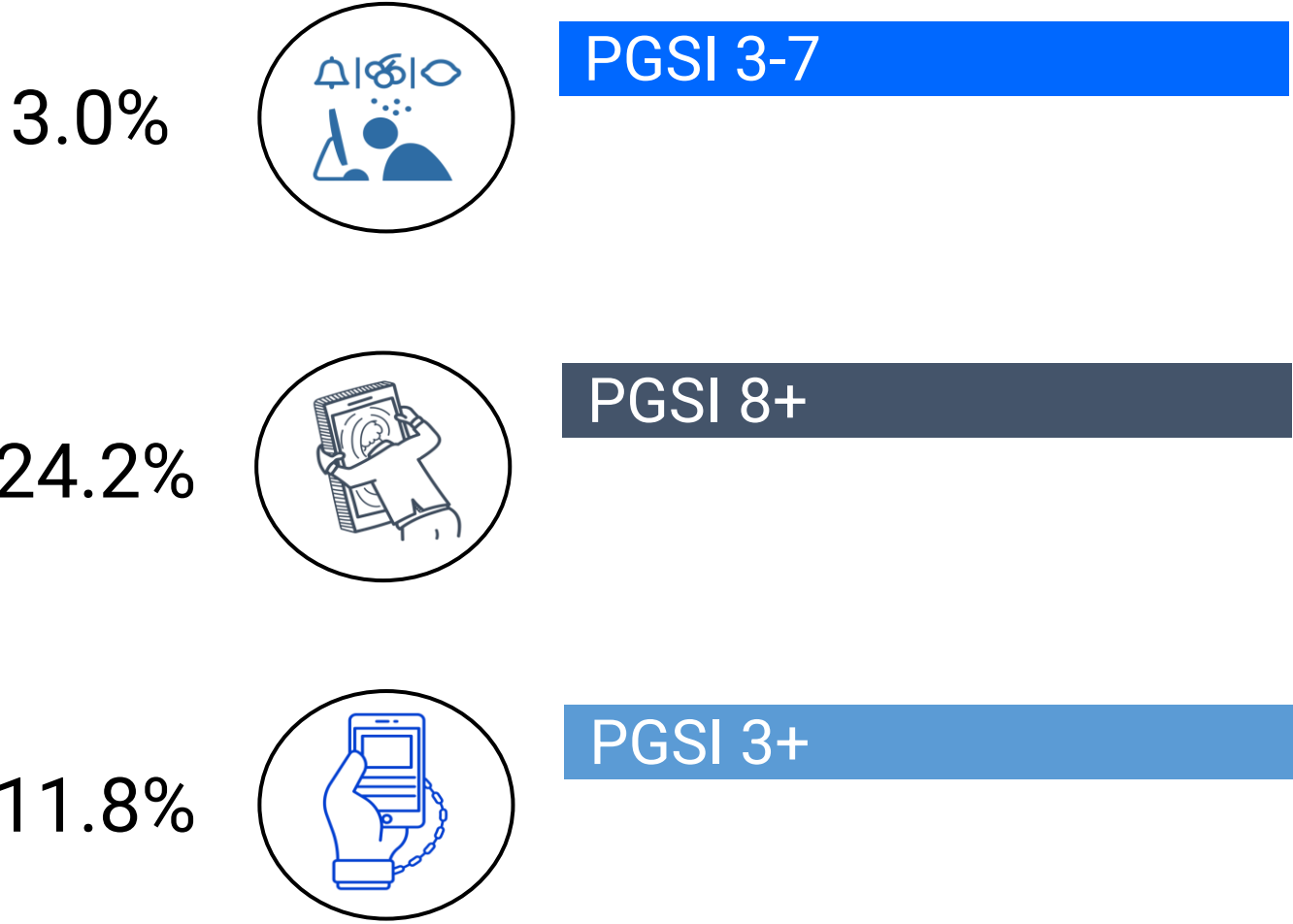
Impacts of gambling habits



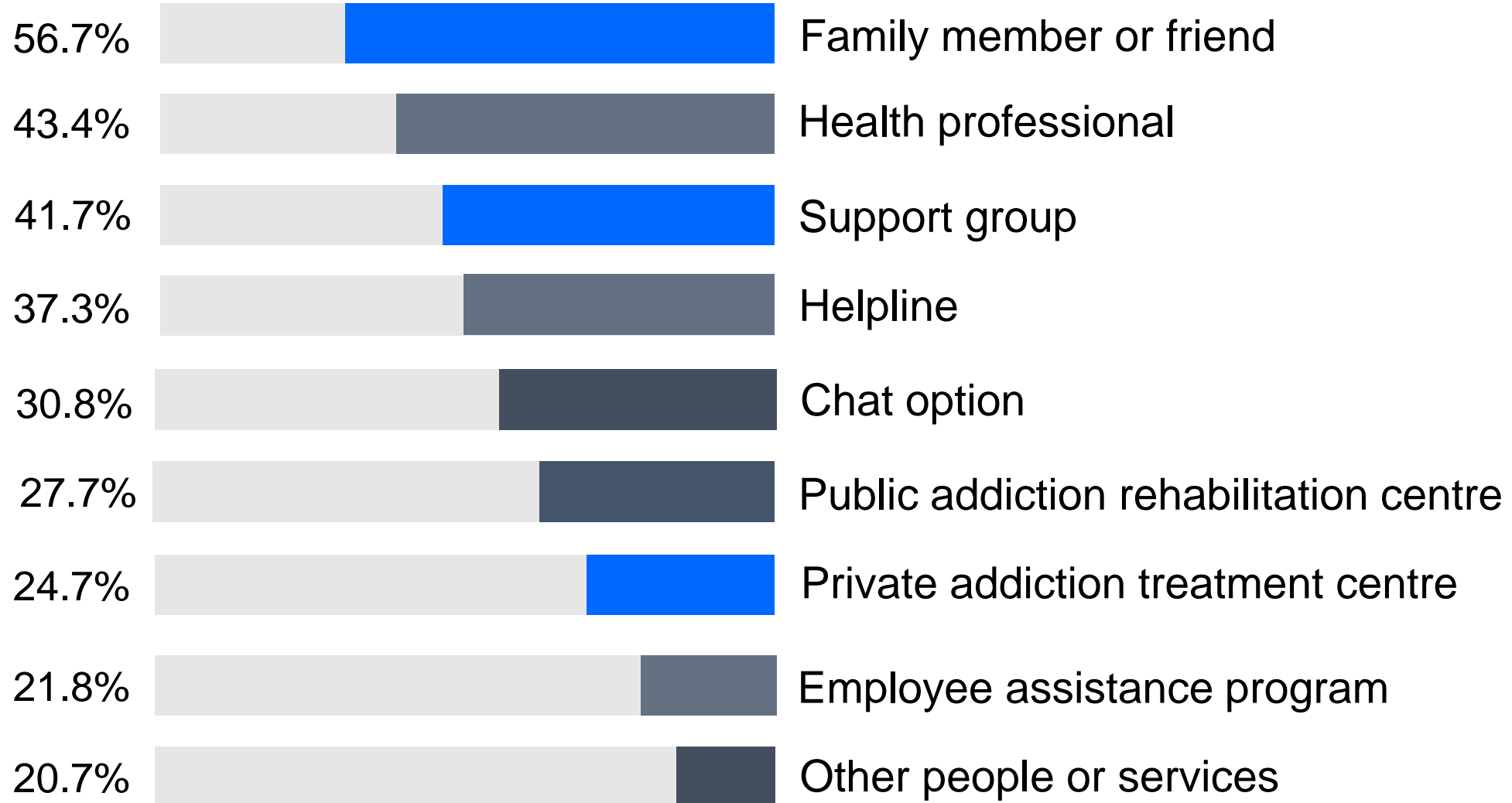
Impacts of gambling habits



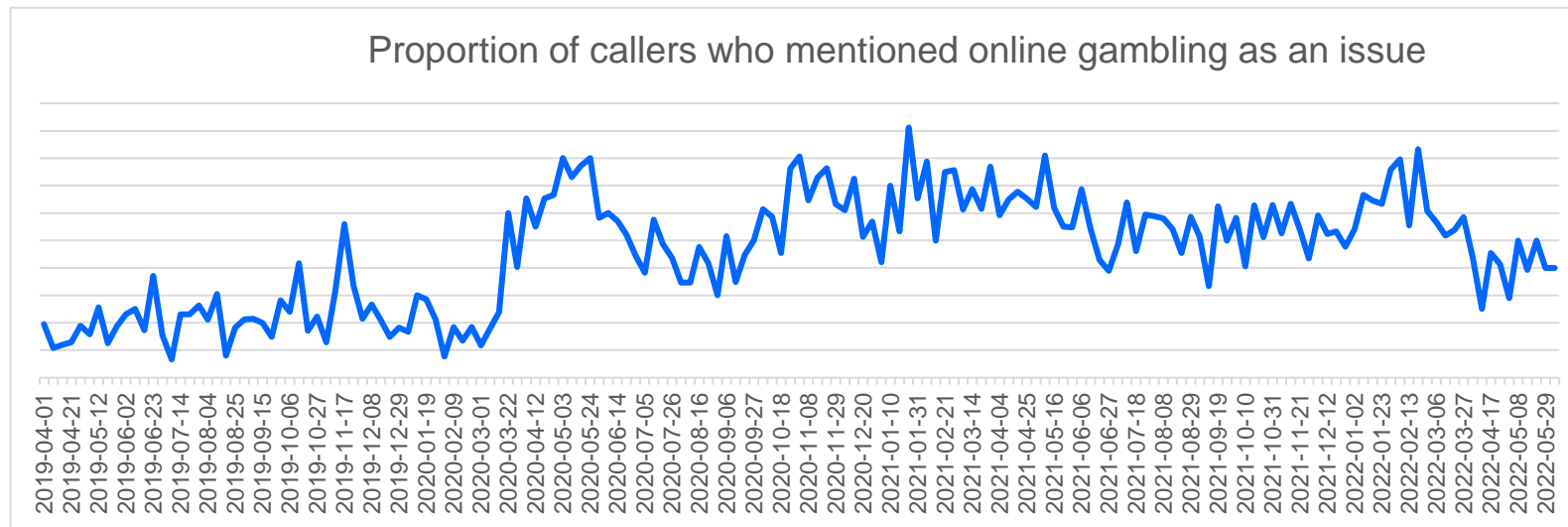
Seeking support, past 12 months



Type of resource

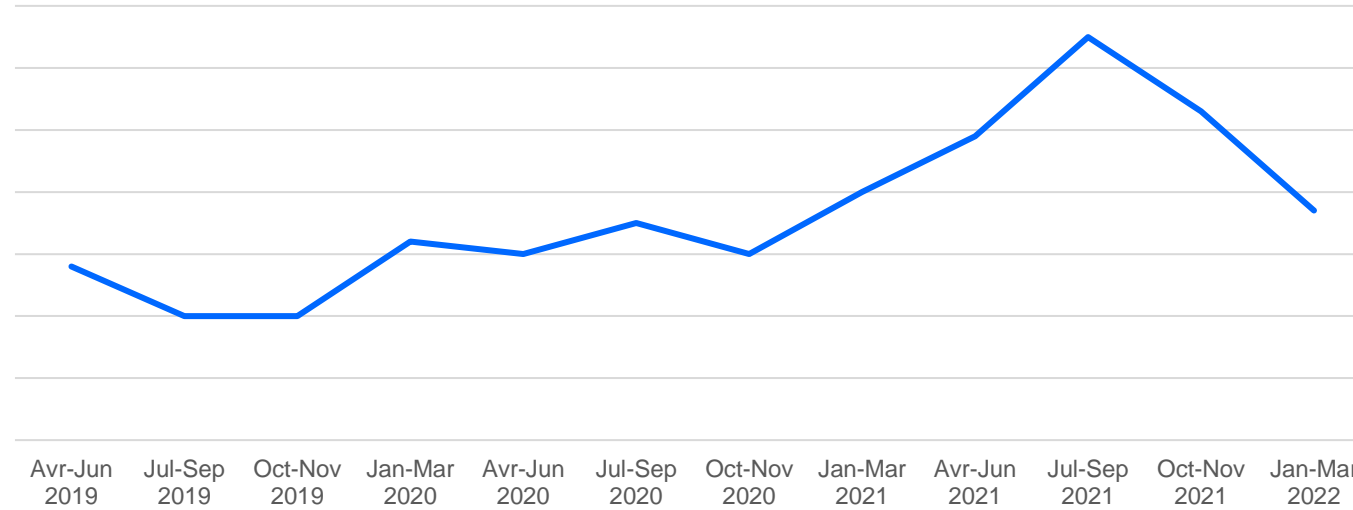


Use of helpline

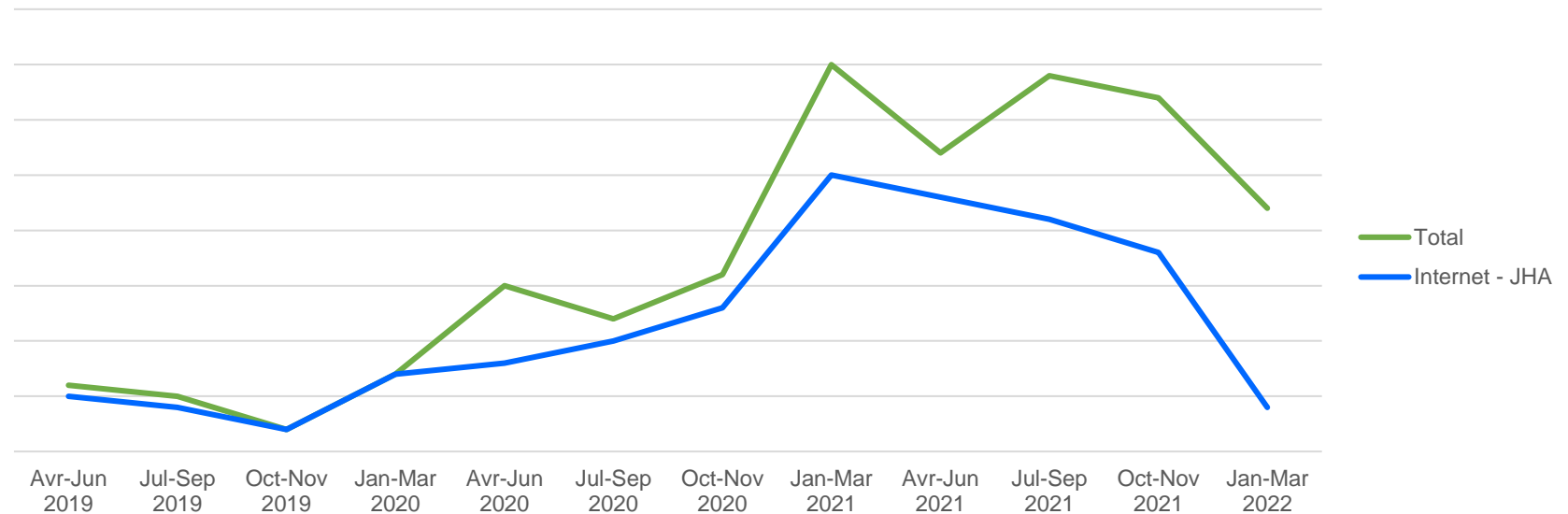


Use of TéléCounselling service

New files opened



Online gambling mentions



Online gambling advertisement and the pandemic

How often have you seen or heard advertisements for online gambling?	Tel %	Web %
Never/Does not apply	11.0	12.5
Sometimes	30.7	37.9
Often	26.4	25.5
Very often	15.6	14.7
Extremely often	16.3	9.4

58.3 % (sum of Often, Very often, and Extremely often for Tel)

49.6 % (sum of Often, Very often, and Extremely often for Web)

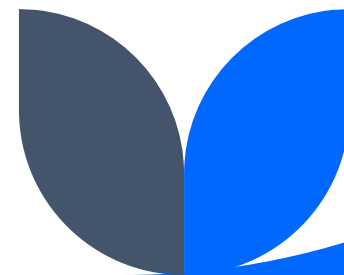
Compared to before the pandemic Have you seen or heard ...	Tel %	Web %
More advertisements	56.2	44.4
Less advertisements	4.2	9.1
Same amount of ads	39.5	46.5



Intensification of practices during the pandemic

The online gambling environment/ operators' practices

- Customer loyalty and retention
- Accessibility and ease
- Diversification
- Advertisement and promotion



- Customer loyalty and retention
- Accessibility and ease
- Diversification
- Advertisement and promotion

Yes, I would say it's not the same dynamic. Because there's the sneaky side online that you don't realise because you're in the comfort of your home. It's like: "Just a little bit more". I'm referring to the time when I played a little bit more. And then it's true that you don't realise it: "just a little bit more". It goes quickly, but when you're at the casino in person, often you'll have the strategy of putting so much money in your pocket and that's what you spend for the evening. When you're at home, it's all by credit card. So it's very easy to go over your self-imposed budget.

Francis, Slot machines, Lottery, Roulette.

A decorative graphic consisting of two overlapping leaf-like shapes, one in a dark grey color and one in a bright blue color, positioned at the bottom right of the page.

- Customer loyalty and retention
- Accessibility and ease
- Diversification
- Advertisement and promotion

I uninstalled the applications, now I'm freaking out because I keep getting emails and text messages from online casino companies, and no matter how many times I block the numbers, they call back.

Anthony – Slot machines, BlackJack, Scratch tickets and Instant lottery



Summary of results

Online gambling has increased significantly between 2018 and 2021

Post-pandemic (new) online gamblers are estimated at 4.6% - 7.9%

Post-pandemic online gamblers participate in a variety of activities

Advertisement has been perceived as increasing during the first year of the pandemic



Continuing online gamblers (pre-post pandemic) are more intense gamblers and report higher proportion of at-risk gambling

Day trading and gambling on slot machine and table games have increased the most during the pandemic

Online gambling is associated with negative and positive impacts (social, professional and health-related)

Conclusion

Importance to track changes in online gambling migration and practices over time

The regulation of online gambling offering is still an ongoing debate

Need for prevention strategies adapted to online gambling

The regulation of promotion and advertisement is needed





**Thank
you!**