

The availability of offline gambling premises in Catalonia and its relationship with socioeconomic determinants

Puigcorbé, S.; Muñoz-Galán, R.; Rovira, P; Segura, L; Colom, J.



Introduction

The prevalence increase of gambling and the impact of its harms on the population is a major current public health concern¹.

Prevalence of offline gambling (>60%) is high and also the main reason for treatment demand (within the behavioral addictions) in Catalonia²:

Factors influencing gambling and related harms:

- Personal characteristics
- Social determinants of health
- Commercial determinants of health (ads., tech., availability...)

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- Tourism³
 - Inhabitants
 - Socioeconomic level
 - Regulations
 - ...

1-Wardle, H., et al. Gambling and public health: we need policy action to prevent harm. BMJ, 8(365:l1807); 2019.

2- Subdirecció General de Drogodependències. Informe addiccions comportamentals. Any 2021. Barcelona: ASPCAT; 2022.

3-Fiedor, D., et al. The spatial distribution of gambling and its economic benefits to municipalities in the Czech Republic. Moravian Geographical Reports, 25(2), 104-117; 2017.

Introduction

In Spain, the regulations governing the availability of offline gambling vary in every region (type of gambling, number of licenses, promotion...).

In Catalonia, the types of offline gambling permitted are:

Bars/rest. with slot machines



Lottery retailers



Betting shops



Objectives

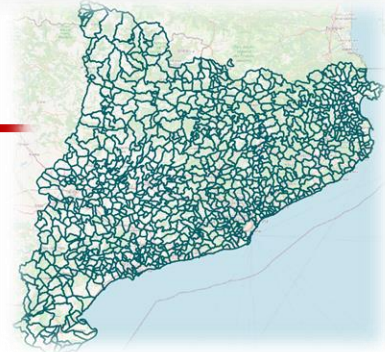
To describe the distribution of offline gambling in Catalonia, by type of premises

To evaluate the contextual variables that influence the distribution of each type of offline gambling premises

Methods

Design: Observational ecological study

Sample: 947 municipalities



Bars with slot m.

Lottery retailers

Betting shops

Analysis

DV



Distribution maps
and Spearman
correlation

VI

Socioeconomic level (SEL)

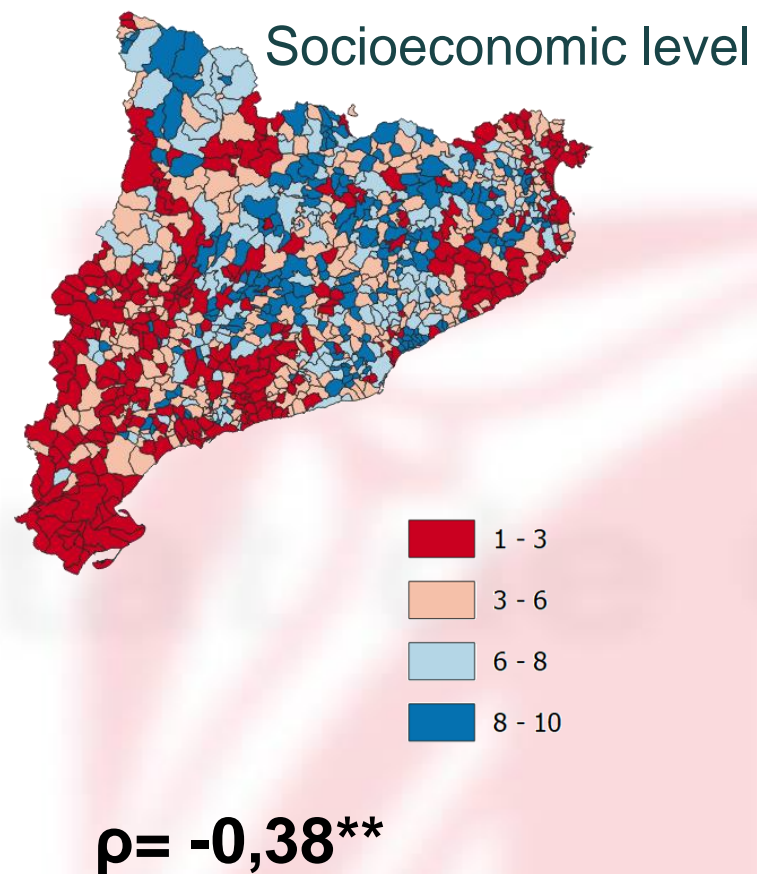
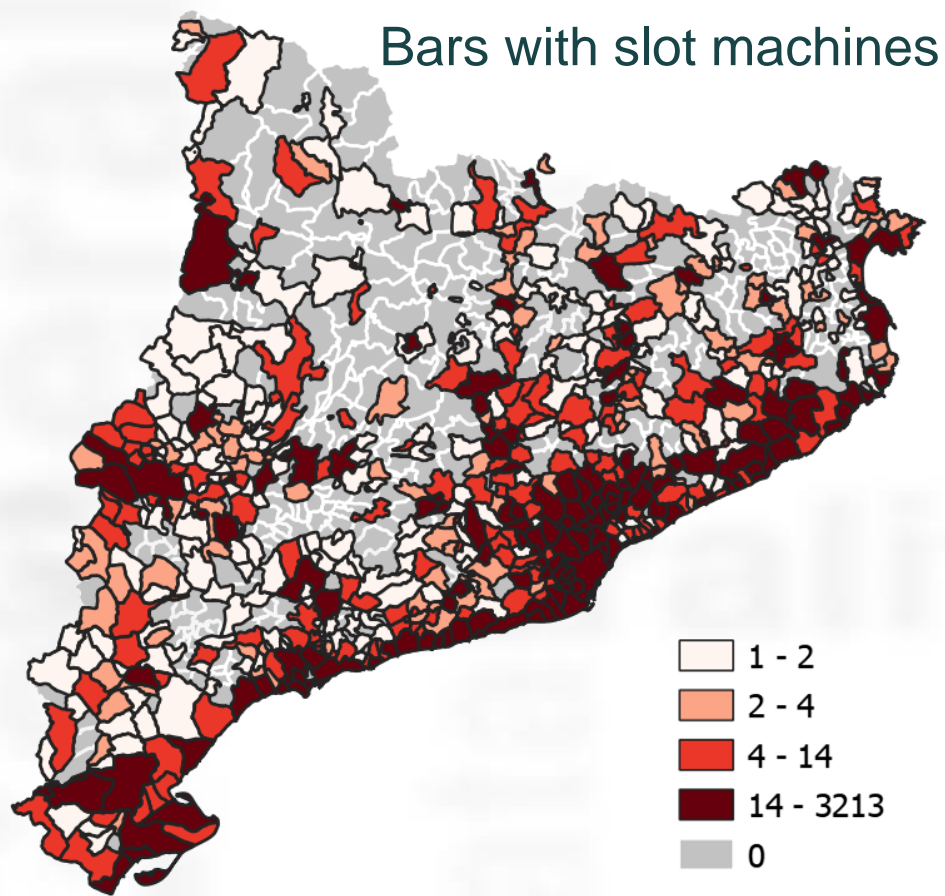
Linear regression
models with robust
variance

VI

Socioeconomic level (SEL)
Number of inhabitants
Number of hotel beds (tourism)
Border municipality

Results

Distribution maps and Spearman correlations



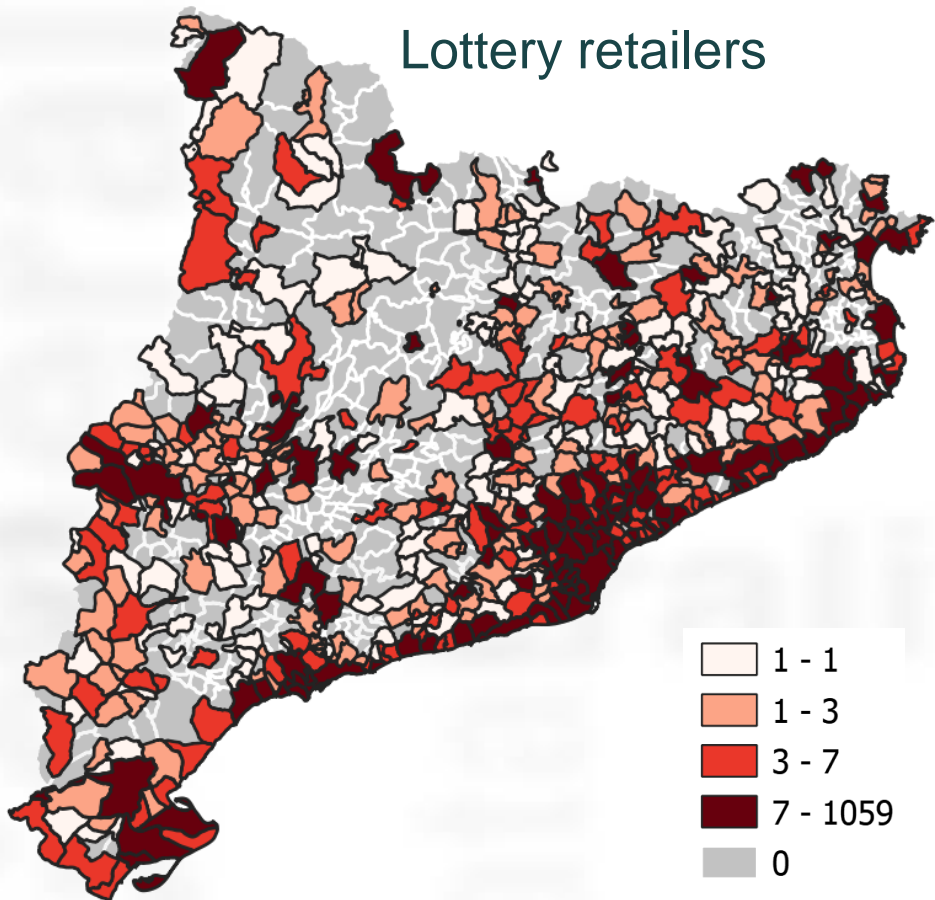
N=16,858 (N/10,000inh=21.67)



Results

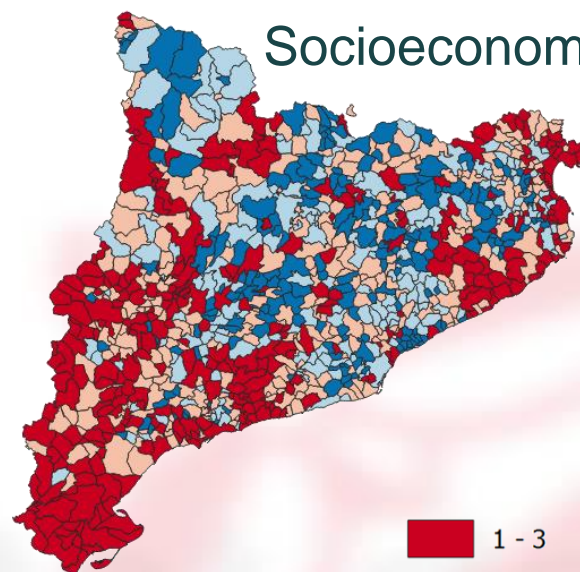
Distribution maps and Spearman correlations

Lottery retailers



N=4,993 (N/10,000inh=6.42)

Socioeconomic level



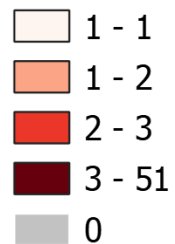
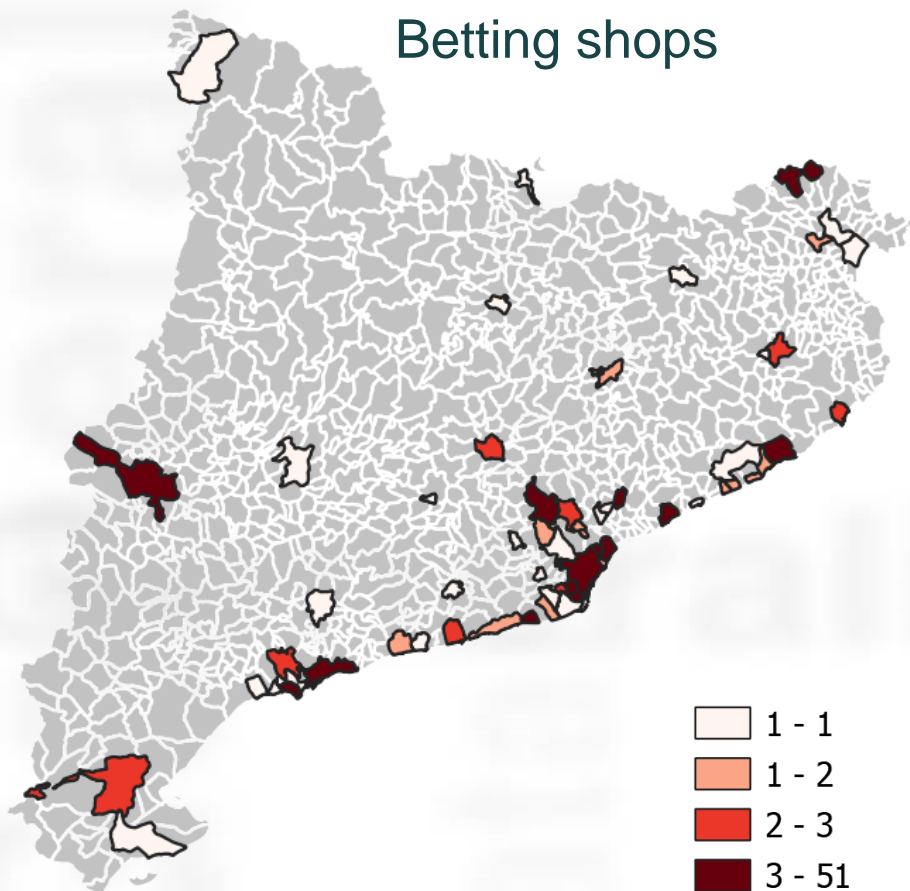
$\rho = -0,31^{**}$



Results

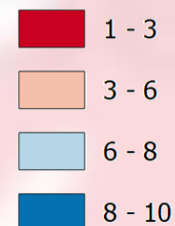
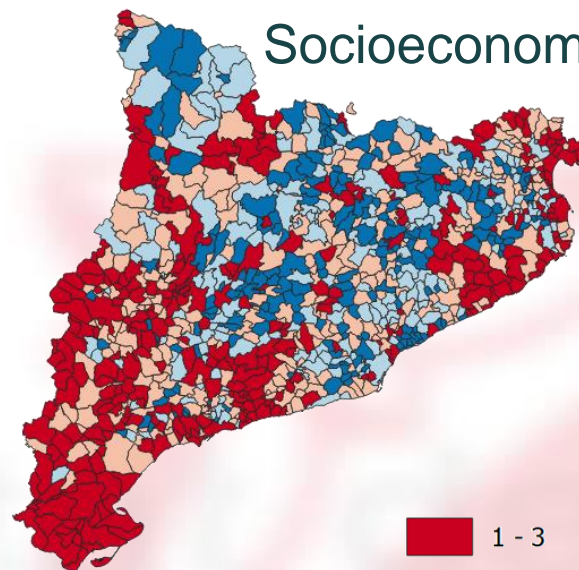
Distribution maps and Spearman correlations

Betting shops



N=188 (N/10,000inh=0.24)

Socioeconomic level

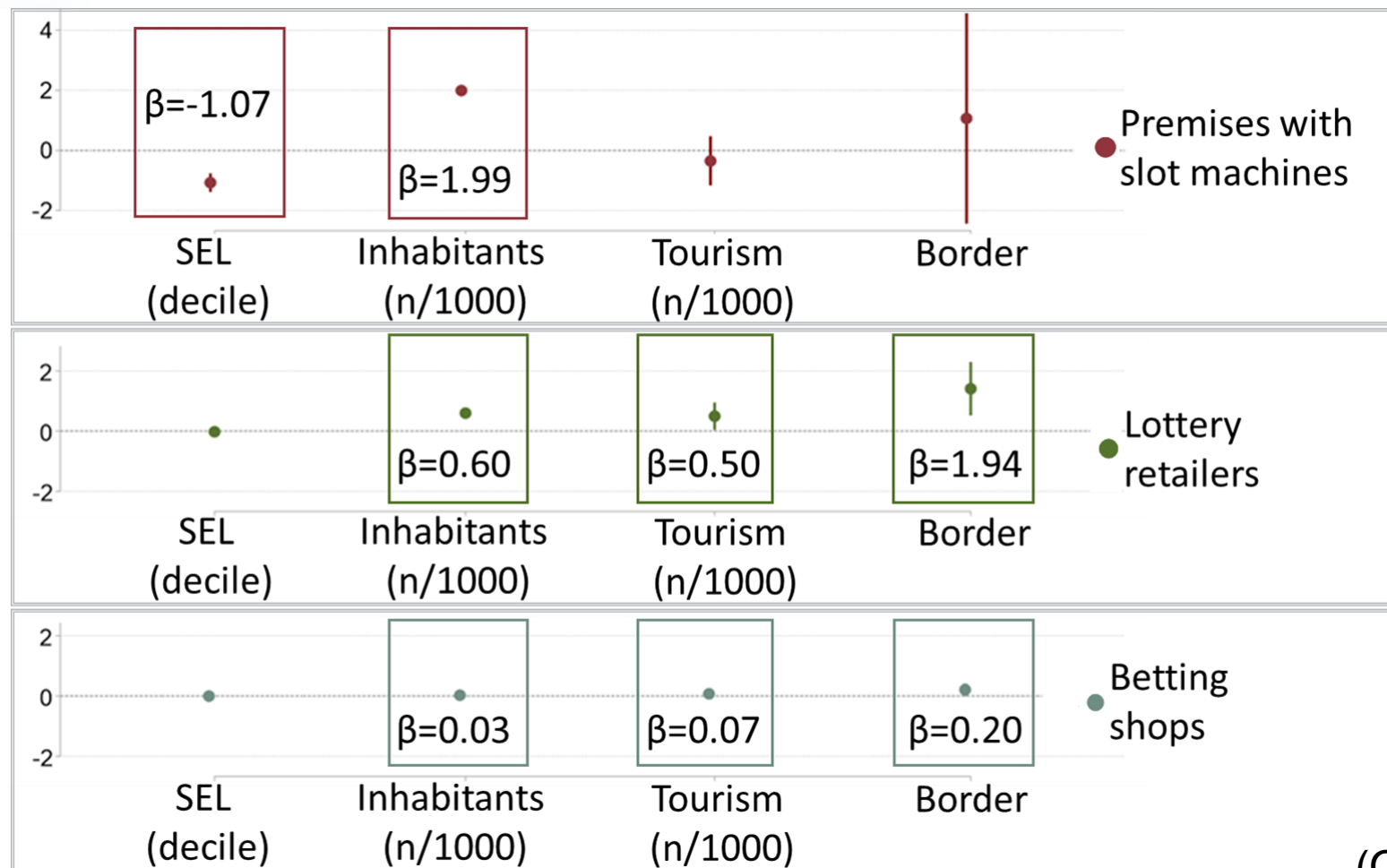


$\rho = -0,19^{**}$



Results

Linear regression coefficients with robust variance



(Only significant results are highlighted)

Conclusions

The availability of offline gambling in Catalonia is high and takes place mainly in bars and restaurants with slot machines.

The availability is concentrated in 70% of municipalities and is negatively associated with SEL, increasing vulnerability in already vulnerable areas.

Tourism-related factors influence the other types of offline gambling: lottery retailers and betting shops.

The distributions and associations of the availability of offline gambling have to be taken into account when planning new measures, and also for future studies to assess the effect of gambling exposure on gambling harms.

Introduction

The increasing prevalence of pathological gambling and the impact of gambling harms on the population is a major current public health concern worldwide. Research on online gambling and betting is increasing tremendously due to its appeal and impact among young people. However, offline gambling remains by far the most prevalent practice and the leading cause of addiction-related treatment demand in many countries and regions, such as in Catalonia.

There are many factors that can increase gambling and its related harms: advertising and promotion, socioeconomic status, individual interests and beliefs, as well as the availability of gambling venues. The presence of gambling premises in an area can normalize gambling and influence the population's attitude towards it, perceiving it as more accepted and less risky.

At the same time, gambling premises are not uniform between areas and their distribution may be associated with other contextual factors, such as socioeconomic level or tourism.

Justification

Due to the impact that offline gambling has on the population, there is a need to analyze the situation of gambling premises in Catalonia, how they are distributed and the influence that this distribution may have on their impact. On the other hand, the analysis is focused on Catalonia since each region of Spain has its own jurisdiction over offline gambling, and therefore, a very heterogeneous offer that makes it difficult to analyze the country as a whole.

Objectives

- To describe the distribution of offline gambling in Catalonia, by type of premises
- To evaluate the contextual variables that influence the distribution of each type of offline gambling premises

Methods

Design: Observational ecological study

Sample: 947 municipalities

Dependent variables (DV)

- Number of premises with slot machines
- Number of betting shops
- Number of lottery retailers

Independent variables

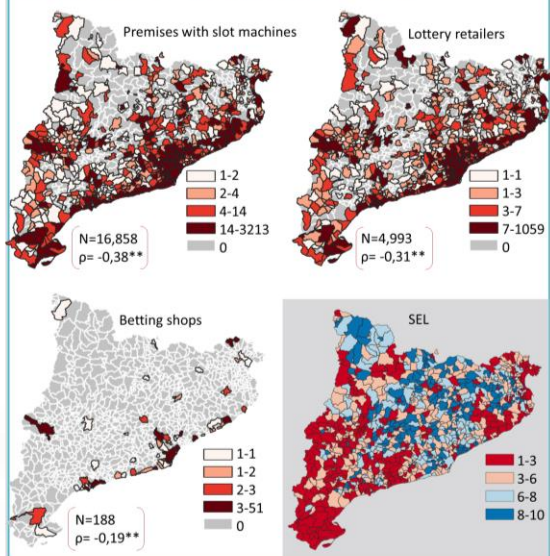
- Number of inhabitants
- Socioeconomic level (SEL)
- Number of hotel beds
- Border municipality

Analysis

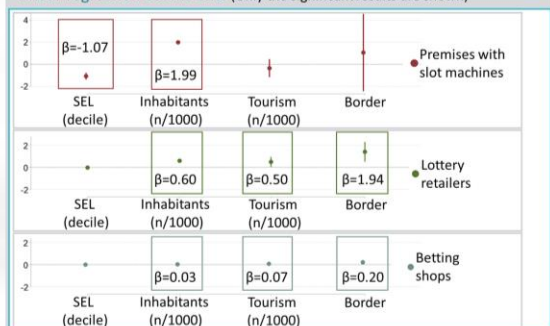
- Univariate analysis and geographic representation
- Spearman correlations between DV and SEL
- Linear regression models with robust variance

Results

Descriptives and correlations with socioeconomic level



Linear regression coefficients (Only the significant results are shown)



Conclusions

Catalonia has one of the highest offers of offline gambling premises studied so far, mainly due to the high presence of bars and restaurants with slot machines. However, 30% of the municipalities (mainly with high SEL) doesn't have any gambling premises. When adjusting for the inhabitants, the premises with slot machines is influenced by the SEL, while the lottery retailers and betting shops is majorly influenced with factors related to tourism. The different associations have to be taken in account when planning new regulations.

Thank you!

**Puigcorbé, S.; Muñoz-Galán, R.; Rovira, P;
Segura, L; Colom, J.**

susanna.puigcorbe@gencat.cat