

Traditional gambling levels off to make way for online boom

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Online gaming up by 46%

Despite a steady decline in gambling over recent years, ORC GamblerTrack – an annual study carried out by research consultancy ORC International – shows that 60% of the UK population still participates in some form of gambling, contributing to an annual sales figure of ?42 billion.

Online gambling is now a competitive business and companies are increasing their marketing investment in advertising, brand building and customer loyalty schemes, to attract higher income groups. It is thought that deregulation is likely to encourage even faster growth in this area. Last year's ORC GamblerTrack research showed that online gambling increased by 46%. However, online gambling remains small overall in comparison to traditional methods, and clearly has a long way to go to seriously rival the popular National Lottery.

Conversely, most likely due to increased Internet access and the rise of online gambling, all forms of traditional betting – telephone, shops, casinos, on-course – have seen a sharp decline in 2004. However, bingo participation has risen slightly and predictably remains heavily dominated by females over the age of 55, although new players are coming from across the age spectrum.

The ORC GamblerTrack study shows that the vast majority – 95% - of those who gamble in any way take part in the National Lottery, representing more than half of all adults in Britain. With its ever-expanding portfolio, which now includes Instants, Thunderball, Hotpicks, and Euromillions, 35-64 year olds form the core group of National Lottery players.

The recently passed Gambling Bill has caused many to predict a greater consumer spend on gambling. However, the facts show that gambling participation has declined consistently since 1996 – down from 37.5 million adults playing to 28 million in 2004. Despite the UK National Lottery being one of the most successful lotteries worldwide, participation levels have been declining steadily since its initial boom. However, ORC GamblerTrack findings suggest this decline is now levelling off with more respondents starting to play the lottery than stopping.

Nearly 4,000 adults are interviewed each year about all forms of gambling – including the National Lottery, bingo, online gambling, and the football pools. The resulting data is used by Camelot, Gala Group, Rank Leisure and the National Lottery Commission.

Further Details About Survey

1. GamblerTrack is an annual report – which has been conducted for the past nine years.
 2. Produced by ORC International, the survey monitors trends in the UK's gaming market in terms of numbers of players and playing frequencies for many different forms of gambling activity. For more information about GamblerTrack 2002 please contact Melody Mackeown on 020 7675 1102 or melody.mackeown@orc.co.uk

3. Established in 1938, ORC International is an international market research agency with offices in the UK, North America, Latin America and Asia. In the UK, the company undertakes market research for public and private sector organisations at both a local and global level. <http://www.orc.co.uk/>