

Methodology:

Results are based on an online survey conducted from May 12 to May 14, 2026, among a representative sample of 1,002 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in Canada. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.1 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

As you may know, single-game sports betting is legal throughout Canada. From what you have seen, heard, read or experienced, do you think each of the following issues associated with sports betting is a problem or not a problem? – “Definitely a problem” or “Probably a problem” listed

Increased risk of gambling addiction for bettors – 76%
Normalization of gambling among children and teens – 72%
Amount of ads for betting websites on televised sporting events – 64%
Harassment and abuse of athletes and coaches – 58%
Normalization of gambling as a way to enjoy sporting events – 55%

Most Canadians Worry About the Negative Effects of Sports Betting

More than half (56%) believe gambling is bad for sports, and two thirds (66%) think is detrimental to society.

Vancouver, BC [May 25, 2026] – The advent of single-game sports betting has become a troubling scenario for many Canadians, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, just over three-in-four Canadians (76%) think the increased risk of gambling addiction by bettors is a problem, while more than seven-in-ten (72%) feel the same way about the normalization of gambling among children and teens.

Majorities of Canadians also consider three issues related to sports betting as problems: the amount of ads for betting websites on televised sporting events (64%), the harassment and abuse of athletes and coaches (58%) and the normalization of gambling as a way to enjoy sporting events (55%).

Respondents to this survey were offered four pairs of contrasting opinions that could be used to describe a person’s position on gambling.

Two thirds of Canadians (66%) consider gambling “detrimental to society”, while just over a third (34%) deem it “beneficial to society”.

Three-in-five Canadians (60%) say gambling should be “legal”, while two-in-five (40%) believe it should be “illegal”.

Canadians were more likely to describe gambling as “morally acceptable” (58%) than as “morally wrong” and are also more likely to think it is “bad for sports” (56%) than “good for sports” (44%).

“Just over half of Canadians who are Christian (51%) or who profess other religions (also 51%) say gambling is morally acceptable,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “Seven-in-ten Canadians who are atheist, agnostic or have no religion (70%) share this view.”

More than half of Albertans (52%) say gambling is “morally wrong”. The proportions are lower in British Columbia (45%), Quebec (44%), Ontario (43%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (35%) and Atlantic Canada (30%).



More than seven-in-ten Canadians (72%) think people will continue to find ways to gamble even if it was made illegal, while a slightly smaller proportion (69%) believe the government should do more to deal with the negative effects of gambling.

Support for enhanced government action to deal with the negative effects of gambling is highest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (78%), followed by British Columbia (70%), Quebec (69%), Ontario (68%), Atlantic Canada (67%) and Alberta (62%).

Just under two thirds of Canadians (65%) think it is the right of the individual to gamble, regardless of the consequences.

More than half of Canadians (54%) bought a lottery ticket in the past year, while more than a third (38%) purchased a Scratch & Win ticket.

Over the past 12 months, at least one-in-ten Canadians attended a casino (24%), played poker (or other card games) online (14%), placed a bet on a sporting event (with a friend or relative) (12%), or placed a bet on a sporting event (through a licensed operator, such as DraftKings, Betway or FanDuel) (10%),

Fewer Canadians placed a bet on a sporting event (through their provincial lottery corporation) (9%) or bought or sold shares in a prediction market platform, such as Polymarket or Kalshi (1%).

Canadians who bought a lottery ticket in the past year were asked about their expectations. Just under half (49%) say they do not foresee winning any prize, while 31% anticipate winning a small prize and 20% believe they will win a big prize.

Expectations of a big prize after purchasing a lottery ticket are smallest among Canadians who are atheist, agnostic or have no religion (17%). The proportions climb to 21% among Christians and to 24% among those who profess other religions.

Majorities of lottery ticket purchasers in Atlantic Canada (59%), British Columbia (57%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (55%) and Alberta (54%) say they do not expect to win any prize. The proportions drop to 47% in Ontario and to 34% in Quebec.

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it





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polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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