

Gambling Policy

Vision

The Green Party supports taking action to end harmful problem gambling in Aotearoa New Zealand. Strong measures, including regulation, are needed to prevent and minimise the significant community harm caused by high-risk¹ gambling. We also believe that the use of gambling proceeds to fund community and sports groups needs to be reduced.

Key Principles

1. Public policy will operate to reduce the harm caused by gambling and to protect our communities and public services from gambling harm.
2. The most harmful forms of gambling should be regulated.

Specific Policy Points

1. Governance and Oversight

Policy Positions

- 1.1 Amend all gambling legislation to ensure the primary focus is the elimination of gambling harm.
- 1.2 Require Parliament, as the regulator of gambling, to:

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- 1 *Classes of Gambling:* The Gambling Act 2003 classifies gambling based on the amount of money spent and the risk of problem gambling associated with an activity.
- Classes 1 & 2: A gambling license is not required. Prizes cannot exceed \$500 for Class 1 or \$5000 for Class 2. Lowest risk forms.
 - Class 3: A gambling license is required and prizes offered exceed \$5000. Activities include larger-scale lotteries, instant games and other forms of gambling such as 'gaming sessions'.
 - Class 4: Any activity that involves the use of a gambling machine outside a casino (e.g. in bars and clubs). Highest risk form.

- a) Ensure gambling policy decisions are based on robust evidence.
 - b) Enable communities to make decisions about gambling;
 - c) Continue to allow forms of gambling that research shows cause little harm;
 - d) Prevent new forms of gambling that are associated with harm; and
 - e) Regulate all existing forms of gambling to prevent or minimise harm.
- 1.3 Disestablish the role of Minister of Racing and place responsibility for all forms of gambling with the Minister of Internal Affairs.
 - 1.4 Ensure that gambling representatives and bodies that rely on funding from gambling cannot unduly influence decisions about regulation of gambling harm.

2. Research and informed decision-making

Policy Positions

- 2.1 Conduct a full social, economic and environmental impact study on the effect of gambling in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 2.2 Conduct ongoing research to monitor the social, economic and environmental impacts of gambling in Aotearoa New Zealand and evaluate harm elimination strategies and progress, with particular emphasis on Māori and Pasifika.
- 2.3 Before the introduction of substantially new forms of gambling into Aotearoa New Zealand, or significant amendments to existing forms of gambling:
 - a) Ensure the potential impacts are comprehensively researched and understood; and
 - b) Require a legislated amendment to the Gambling Act.
- 2.4 Implement strategies to raise awareness about the risks of gambling harm.

3. Minimising harm from casino and high-risk gambling

Machine-based or remote interactive gambling, which is conducted for profit, is highly risky, known to cause significant community harm, and unlikely to deliver net community benefit. The social costs include crime, addiction, poor health, economic deprivation, and family stress. Strong measures, including regulation, are needed to prevent and minimise the harm caused by high-risk gambling.

Policy Positions

- 3.1 Support the moratorium on issuing any new casino venue licences in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 3.2 When existing casino venue licences come up for renewal, support the right of the local community to vote in a binding referendum on the future of the casino.
- 3.3 Phase out licensing of non-casino gambling machines.
- 3.4 Before the introduction of substantially new forms of gambling into New Zealand, or significant amendments to existing forms of gambling:
 - a) Ensure the potential impacts are comprehensively researched and understood; and
 - b) Require a legislated amendment to the Gambling Act.
- 3.5 Facilitate the speedy adoption of gambling harm minimisation measures, with an emphasis on pre-harm prevention and public health approaches.
- 3.6 Ensure gambling operators pay the costs of mitigating gambling harm by imposing a levy on gambling turnover that is to be forwarded in full to problem gambling support services and social health services run independently of gambling operators.

4. Gambling Proceeds

The use of gambling proceeds to fund community and sports groups need to be reduced. The link between gambling and funding of community activities provides a 'moral' justification for gambling harm, and creates a pro-gambling constituency of community organisations that are dependent on grants funding.

Policy Positions

- 4.1 Before prohibiting non-casino gambling machines, ensure community and voluntary sector organisations currently funded by their proceeds are able to access equivalent funding from elsewhere (see our [Community and Voluntary Sector](#) policy).
- 4.2 Prohibit political parties from benefiting from the profits of the most addictive forms of gambling, including gambling machines and casinos.
- 4.3 Require casinos and, until phased out, other gambling machine venues to distribute a percentage of their profits to the wider community through transparent and publicly accountable funding distribution processes.

- 4.4 Place limits on the amount of non-casino gambling machine proceeds which can go to racing purposes, and replace racing stakes with racing infrastructure as a legitimate purpose.

5. Advertising and Promotion

Policy Positions

- 5.1 Raise awareness about the risks of gambling harm.
- 5.2 Review gambling advertising standards, particularly in terms of their impact on children, and establish a fund from the gambling levy to match all gambling advertising with gambling harm prevention public health messages.
- 5.3 Prohibit the advertising and promotion of harmful forms of gambling and gambling products.