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## Press kit

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### **Gambling: context and addiction** ***A collective assessment by Inserm***

In 2006, according to Insee (the French national statistics institute), nearly 30 million people in France tried their luck at gambling at least once during the year. Since 1975 the amount of stakes has doubled and the turnover for authorised gambling has risen from €98 million in 1960 to €37 billion in 2006. At the same time, video games and games on the Internet have developed considerably over the last few years.

With certain players, this type of game can become harmful, generating damage to them as individuals, their families, their social relationships or professional lives, and even taking on the aspect of genuine addictive behaviour. The prevalence of problem gambling and pathological gambling in France is not known. However, there is reason to think that it is no different from the rate estimated in other countries (1% to 2% of the population), i.e. between 400,000 and 800,000 people in France.

Problematic and pathological gambling have now become more visible because of the increased offer, and are a matter of concern for the public authorities. The Ministry of Health's plan for the handling and prevention of addictions (2007-2011) integrates the problem of gambling.

With this in view, the DGS (General Health Department) asked Inserm to carry out a collective assessment in view of obtaining validated scientific facts in the disciplines that are interested in gambling, so as to define the various aspects of the problem more clearly, and be able to adopt a preventive and treatment policy appropriate to the situation in France.

In response, Inserm gathered together a multidisciplinary group of specialists in history, sociology, health economics, epidemiology, psychology, neurobiology, psychiatry and addictology. This group of experts analysed around 1,250 articles containing the data available at a national, European and international level on gambling, its context, and people's addiction to it. It also consulted several reports and interviewed eight well-known figures with a committed approach to these problems. The public health issues arising from problematic and pathological gambling cannot be isolated from the economic, political, social and ethical questions raised by gambling. The search for coherence in public policies needs an approach combining medical and social action with individual and collective intervention.

Access the summary of the work online at:

[http://www.inserm.fr/fr/questionsdesante/mediatheque/expertises/att00001953/synthese\\_jeux\\_220708.pdf](http://www.inserm.fr/fr/questionsdesante/mediatheque/expertises/att00001953/synthese_jeux_220708.pdf)

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