

# FACT SHEET:

## GAMBLING AND CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) COMMUNITIES

### OVERVIEW

The 2021 census reported that 34.6% of people living in NSW were born overseas, and that 29.5% of households use a non-English language<sup>1</sup>. Although individuals in CALD communities participate less in gambling, they are more likely to experience gambling problems.<sup>2</sup> Research shows that there are several factors that specifically contribute to CALD communities experiencing gambling problems:

- Beliefs about luck and chance, and what is considered gambling
- Factors relating to the migration experience, which increase vulnerability
- Increased access to gambling in NSW compared to many countries of origin, so that migrants and refugees have fewer cultural defences against gambling harm
- Shame and stigma are barriers to seeking help<sup>3,4</sup>

### RISK FACTORS

#### 1 Beliefs around gambling.

Beliefs vary between different community groups. For example, in Chinese, Aboriginal and Greek communities gaming such as card games or mah-jong are considered to be games not gambling and are seen as a social activity.<sup>5</sup>

In East Asian communities, gambling is directly linked to positive beliefs in luck. East Asian gamblers may be more culturally prone to superstitious thinking that can lead to distorted perceptions of luck and illusion over the control had in gambling.<sup>6</sup>

#### 2 Responses to migration.

Gambling is seen as a part of “Aussie” culture and migrants may believe that it’s a way to integrate into Australian life.

Migrants may gamble to relieve stress from the migration process, including loss of access to family and friends, reasons for migration (safety from conflict) and the difficulties communicating in a foreign language.

#### 3 Access to gambling.

Increased access to gambling venues in lieu of culturally appropriate activities. People from countries with limited gambling exposure may also lack knowledge about risks associated with gambling.<sup>7</sup>

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### CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Current models of support are heavily based on Western ideas and can be a barrier for CALD communities to seek help. Stigma can also prevent people from seeking help, and counselling may be perceived as something bringing shame. It is also important not to assume what a person's support needs are based on their cultural identity. All care must be culturally responsive, meaning taking cultural factors into consideration when offering support.<sup>8</sup> Some people prefer mainstream services, others prefer services in their own languages, and people from collectivistic cultures often involve their families in the process.

The NSW GambleAware Guide to supporting clients from culturally diverse backgrounds is available.

#### Advocating for reform

Wesley Mission has put this fact sheet together as part of our advocacy for reform to minimise gambling harm. Our current campaign goals are to:

- implement universal cashless gambling with harm reduction measures built-in
- power-down poker machines after midnight
- fund an independent state-wide self-exclusion register
- let communities have a say
- have greater transparency in NSW – publish venue data.



Contact us: [gambling.reform@wesleymission.org.au](mailto:gambling.reform@wesleymission.org.au)

For more information: <https://tinyurl.com/PutPokiesInTheirPlace>

Free, confidential support for people experiencing gambling harm is available 24/7, online and on the phone. Access can be arranged for counsellors who speak community languages, or for interpreters to assist.

GambleAware Helpline **1800 858**

[gamblinghelponline.org.au](https://gamblinghelponline.org.au)

In crisis? **Call Lifeline 13 11 14**

<sup>1</sup> 2021 New South Wales, Census All persons QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics. (n.d.). Australian Bureau of Statistics.

<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/1>

<sup>2</sup> Dickins, & Thomas. (2016, October). Gambling in culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia. In *Australian Gambling Research Centre*. Retrieved May 2, 2024, from <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-snapshots/gambling-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-communities-australia>

<sup>3</sup> Dickins, & Thomas (2016, October)

<sup>4</sup> Rowlatt, V., Wraith, D., Doan, T. V. M., & Malatzky, C. (2023, March 28). Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Gamblers of East Asian Descent in Australia: A Comprehensive Review of Current Evidence. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 39(2), 947–969.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-023-10202-5>

<sup>5</sup> Dickins, & Thomas (2016, October)

<sup>6</sup> Rowlatt, V., Wraith, D., Doan, T. V. M., & Malatzky, C. (2023, March 28)

<sup>7</sup> Dickins, & Thomas (2016, October)

<sup>8</sup> Supporting clients from culturally diverse backgrounds. (2020). *Office of Responsible Gambling GambleAware website*. Retrieved 2/5/2024