



Gambling in Canada

Indigenous peoples have been gambling in what is now Canada for thousands of years. Explorers and settlers also brought their gambling games and traditions. However, in 1892, the Canadian government banned all forms of gambling. But, as times changed, so did perceptions on gambling. In 1900, bingo and raffles were permitted for charitable purposes. Ten years later, horse racing was added to the list of acceptable forms of gambling. And in 1925, fairs and exhibitions were granted the right to hold gambling events. In 1969, the Canadian government amended the Criminal Code to allow both the federal and provincial governments to run lotteries to fund special projects. Today, there are casinos in almost every province in Canada, but the lottery remains the most popular gambling activity across the country.

The table below provides data on the percentage of Canadians who gambled in 2009 and their average spending in different parts of the country and by gender, age and income. Examine the table and look for interesting patterns or anomalies in the data. Think about what this data might tell us about ourselves.

	At least one gambling activity		Government lotteries		Casinos, slot machines and video lottery terminals (VLTs)		Bingos	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
All households	495	67	265	58	710	17	530	6
Newfoundland and Labrador	425	68	290	55	310	6	575	13
Prince Edward Island	530	67	290	49	485	14	1,160	9
Nova Scotia	495	75	250	65	660	13	895	9
New Brunswick	440	70	260	60	535	9	780	9
Quebec	375	67	250	61	425	12	495	7
Ontario	490	66	280	59	595	19	370	5
Manitoba	540	75	255	61	610	25	735	8
Saskatchewan	735	76	250	62	1,315	23	720	5
Alberta	785	67	285	53	1,535	19	705	4
British Columbia	450	63	240	54	660	17	445	3
Gender and age								
Men	615	59	270	53	1,430	14	315	3
18 to 44	740	52	160	44	1,915	16	N/A	N/A
45 to 64	525	68	295	62	915	16	N/A	N/A
65 and over	570	57	375	55	1,165	7	N/A	N/A
Women	335	56	160	46	440	13	570	8
18 to 44	160	46	95	37	175	13	N/A	N/A
45 to 64	270	64	155	56	355	12	295	8
65 and over	475	57	200	45	670	13	715	12
Income after tax								
Less than \$20,000	390	46	170	39	845	8	625	7
\$20,000 to \$39,999	415	62	255	54	435	14	600	7
\$40,000 to \$59,999	495	70	295	60	655	17	515	6
\$60,000 to \$79,999	465	76	265	69	535	21	465	4
\$80,000 and over	620	75	280	65	1,025	21	340	4

Extracted from Statistics Canada data for 2009: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2011004/tables-tableaux/11551/tbl04-eng.htm>