NSW community attitudes to poker machines and gambling reform

Research report
September 2026



wesley mission

THE INSIGHT CENTRE
RESEARCH WITH IMPACT.

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PART 01

Executive summary

Wesley Mission's five gambling reform asks, at a glance

Wesley Mission's advocacy for poker machine reform is based around five key regulatory changes.

All five of these measures have broad support among NSW adults.

Reform	Overall support	Strong support	Oppose	Net	Priority
Statewide self-exclusion register	78%	52%	3%	+75	2
Publish venue losses every three months	76%	50%	7%	+69	4
Midnight to 10am shutdown	72%	53%	11%	+61	1
Account-based gaming with loss limits	66%	41%	15%	+52	3
Council right to object to new machines	55%	30%	16%	+39	5

Net = support minus oppose.

Key insights

1	**All five of Wesley Mission's gambling reform asks have majority support**. From 55% for giving councils a say on new machines to 78% for a statewide self-exclusion register, all are supported by a clear majority of NSW adults, with no more than 16% of adults oppose any of them.
2	**Two in five know someone harmed by gambling**. 42% of NSW adults know a colleague, family member or friend who has been harmed by gambling: 38% by poker machines and 25% by sports or online gambling.
3	**Only one in six trust the government to stand up to the gambling industry**. Just 16% of NSW adults trust the government to stand up to the gambling industry, 50% think the lobby has too much influence on NSW politics and 48% say the state government should have done more on gambling reform before the election.
4	**Four in five want a ban on gambling advertising**. 78% of NSW adults support banning gambling advertising completely – the way tobacco advertising is banned – and 50% say the current rules on advertising do not go far enough. Even among people who bet online, 71% back a total ban.

Key insights

5	**Even people who regularly gamble on poker machines want them turned off after midnight.** 54% of people who use poker machines at least monthly support switching them off from midnight to 10am, compared to 72% of all adults. Regular users also support the self-exclusion register (67%) and transparent publishing of venue losses (72%).
6	**Support is strong across demographics.** Support for reform is as strong in the parts of the state that lose the most to poker machines as anywhere else, and it barely shifts by age, gender or region. The people who oppose reform are a small group – predominantly those who use poker machines often and prefer their venue to keep its machines.
7	**Gambling reform wins votes and loses almost none.** 32% say a party's position on poker machine reform would be one of the main things or one of several things they consider at the next state election. A party promising to shut poker machines from midnight to 10am makes 52% of NSW adults more likely to vote for it and 7% less likely. The promise gains more than it loses among supporters of every party, from a net +55 among Greens to +37 among One Nation.
8	**People want a self-exclusion register but fewer support facial recognition**. 78% support a single statewide self-exclusion register run independently of the industry. The government's alternative – facial recognition cameras at venue doors – draws 61% support and 20% opposition. Given the choice, the public prefers that this reform is implemented without surveillance.

PART 02

Gambling in NSW life

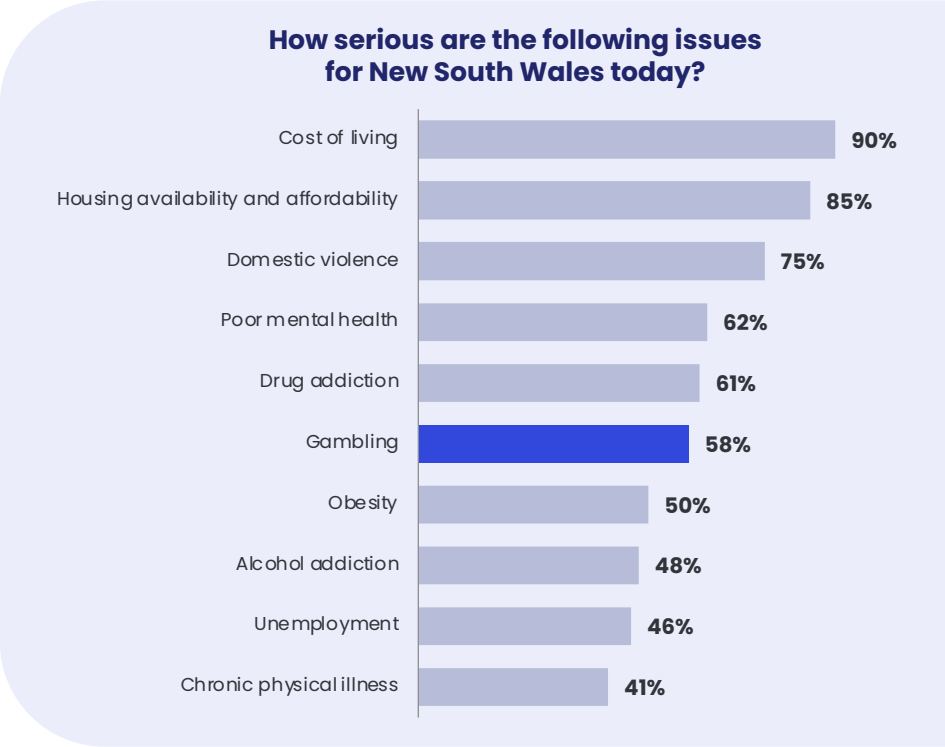
Where gambling sits among community concerns, who gambles and on what and people's experience of gambling harm

Gambling is regarded as a serious issue facing NSW

- **58% of NSW adults rate gambling as an *extremely* or *very serious* issue for the state**, placing it sixth out of ten issues tested.
- Gambling ranks higher than other community concerns such as alcohol addiction (48%) and unemployment (46%).
- The high public support for gambling reform demonstrated in this report is sustained without gambling being top of mind for the community.

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG NSW ADULTS

- Gambling is more likely to be rated as very or extremely serious by people who know someone harmed by poker machines (70%, compared to 51% for others).
- People who politically identify with the Coalition are less likely to regard gambling as a serious issue (45%) than people who identify with other political parties (61%).



How serious an issue is each of the following for New South Wales today?
% rating each issue Extremely or Very serious.

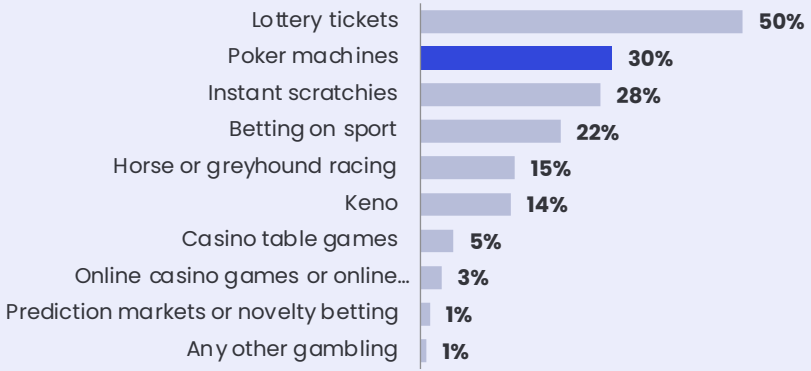
Who gambles, and on what?

- **72% of NSW adults spent money on some form of gambling in the last 12 months.**
- Lottery tickets (50%) and poker machines (30%) are the most common gambling activities.
- Most gambling is limited to a few types: 46% of adults used one or two product types, and 26% use three or more.
- Among people who did not gamble in the last year, 58% have gambled at some point in their lives.
- The median age of first gambling for money is 18.

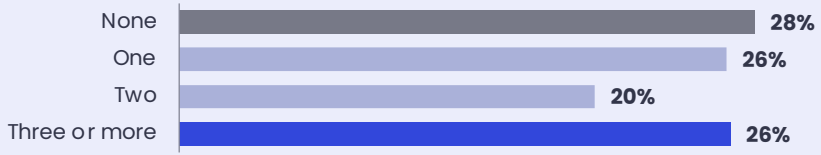
Significant differences among NSW adults

- Younger adults aged 18 to 34 are less likely to have gambled for money in the last year (62%, compared to 77% for older adults).
- University educated adults are less likely to have gambled for money in the last year (64%, compared to 76% for those without a university degree).

Gambling activities in the last 12 months



Number of gambling products used



Which of the following have you spent money on during the last 12 months? · Have you ever gambled for money in your lifetime? [Base: Did not gamble in the last 12 months, n=201] · Approximately how old were you when you first gambled for money? [Base: Ever gambled, n=613]

How people gamble

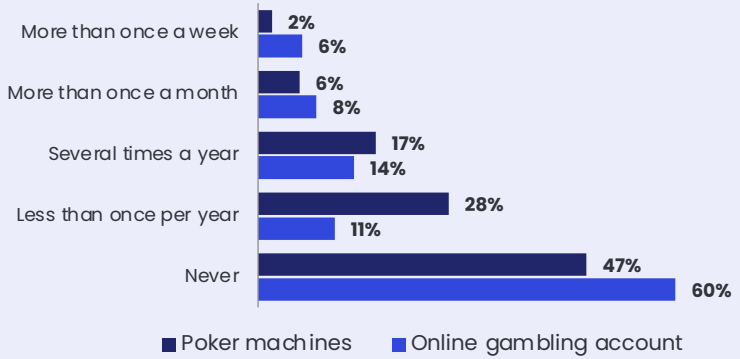
- **8% of NSW adults use poker machines more than once a month and 40% used an online gambling account in the last year**, over a third of them (37%) more than once a month.
- Online accounts or apps are used by 91% of those who gamble on sport and 77% of those who bet on racing.

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG NSW ADULTS

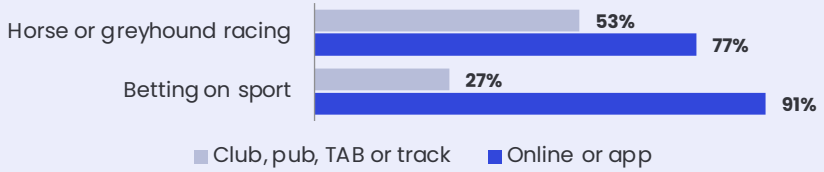
- University educated people are more likely to never use poker machines (56%) than those without a university degree (43%).
- Men are more likely than women to use an online gambling account (49% vs 31%).
- People aged under 55 are more likely than older adults to use an online gambling account (44% vs 33%).

How often do you gamble on poker machines? · How often do you gamble using an online gambling account? · In the last 12 months, where did you place bets on horse or greyhound racing? [Base: Bet on racing in the last 12 months, n=100] · In the last 12 months, where did you place bets on sport? [Base: Bet on sport in the last 12 months, n=144]

Frequency of gambling on poker machines and through an online account



Where sport and racing gambling occurs



Who the regular poker machine users are

- **Regular poker machine users gamble across multiple products**. Among the 8% of adults who gamble on poker machines more than once a month, 77% use three or more gambling products (compared to just 22% of all other adults).
- 68% of regular poker machine users also buy lottery tickets and 55% instant scratchies.
- 69% of regular poker machine users also use an online gambling account, compared to 37% of other adults.
- The median age of first using a poker machine, among everyone who has ever used one, is 18.

Significant differences among NSW adults

- Men are twice as likely as women to use poker machines more than once a month (11% vs 5%).

How often do you gamble on poker machines? · Which of the following have you spent money on during the last 12 months? · Are you currently a member of a registered club? · How often do you gamble using an online gambling account? · Do you ever worry about your own gambling, or the amount you spend on it? [Base: Gambled in the last 12 months, n=499] · Approximately how old were you when you first played a poker machine? [Base: Ever played poker machines, n=361]

Use three or more gambling products

77%

All other adults: 22%

Registered club members

83%

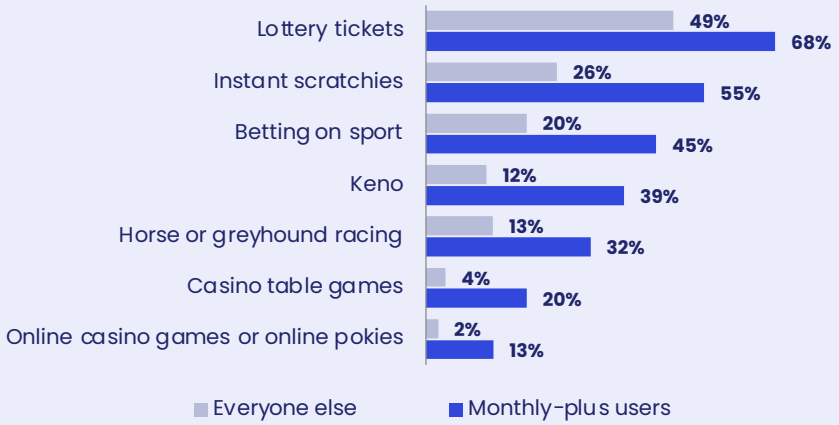
All other adults: 44%

Worry about their own gambling

73%

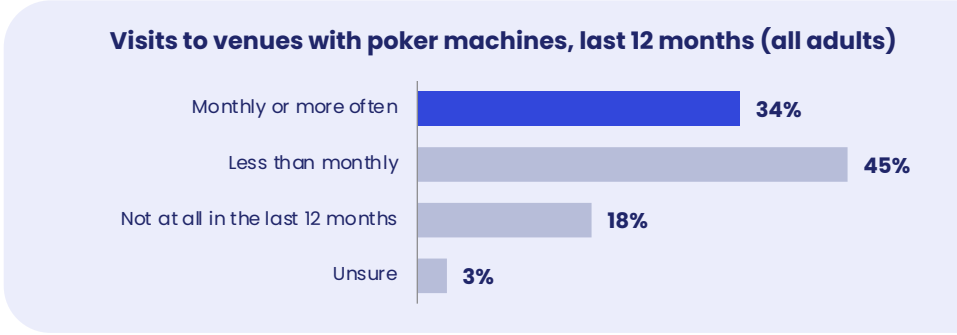
All other adults: 17%

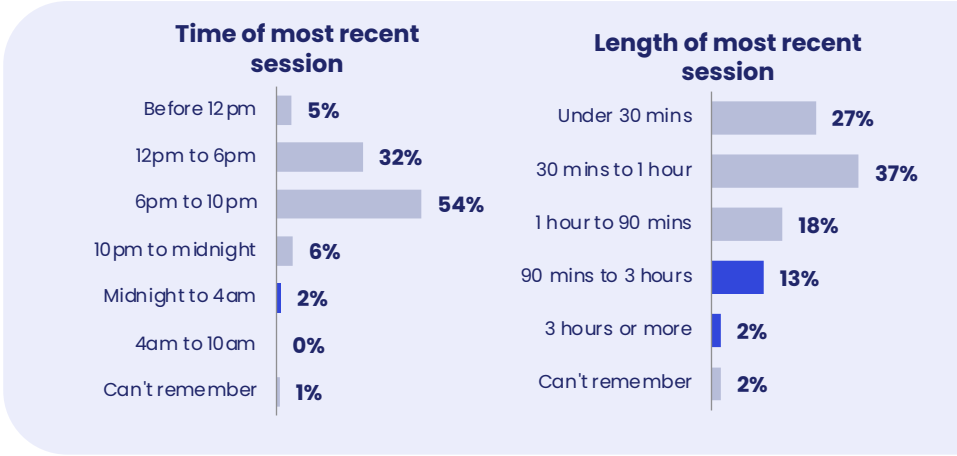
Other gambling products used by regular users



Venues and the nature of gambling sessions

- **34% of NSW adults visit a club or hotel with poker machines at least monthly**, for any reason, and 79% have been in the last year.
- **2% of poker machine users say their most recent session took place mainly between midnight and 10am** – the window a shutdown would close. Most sessions are in the afternoon or evening, and 16% lasted 90 minutes or more.
- The median maximum loaded into a machine at one time was $50.

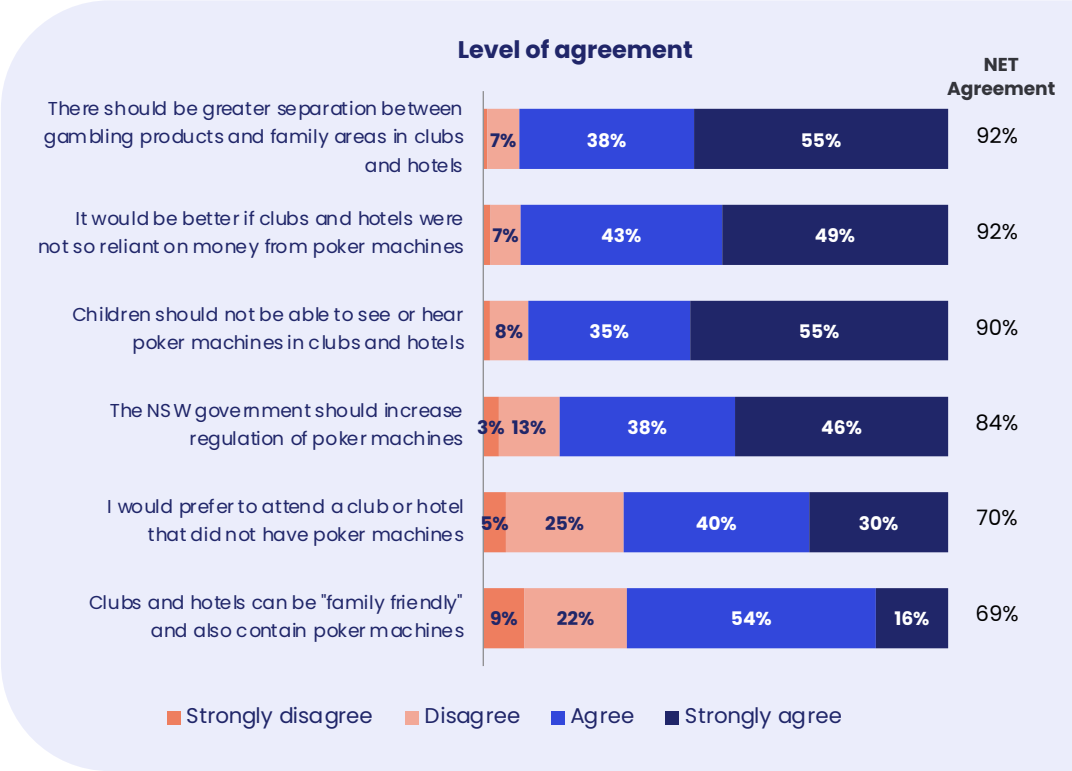




In the last 12 months, how often have you been to a club or hotel that has poker machines for any reason at all? · Thinking about the most recent time you played poker machines, what time of day did that session mainly take place? [Base: Played poker machines in the last 12 months, n=166] · Approximately how long did that session last? [Base: Played poker machines in the last 12 months, n=166] · What was the most money you loaded into the poker machine at any single time that day? [Base: Played poker machines in the last 12 months, n=166]

What people think should happen in venues

- **90% agree children should not be able to see or hear poker machines in clubs and hotels,** and 92% agree it would be better if venues were not so reliant on machine revenue.
- 84% agree the government should increase regulation.
- Over two-thirds (69%) agree that venues can be family friendly and contain poker machines, however 70% would still prefer to attend a venue that did not have them.



How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

Experience of gambling harm

- **More than one in three (38%) NSW adults know a colleague, family member or friend who has been harmed by poker machines** and 25% know someone harmed by sports or online gambling.
- Both figures are significantly higher than in May 2025 (29% and 19% respectively) – pointing to higher rates of exposure to gambling harms.

Know someone harmed by poker machines, sports or online gambling

42%

Gamblers who often or sometimes worry about their own gambling

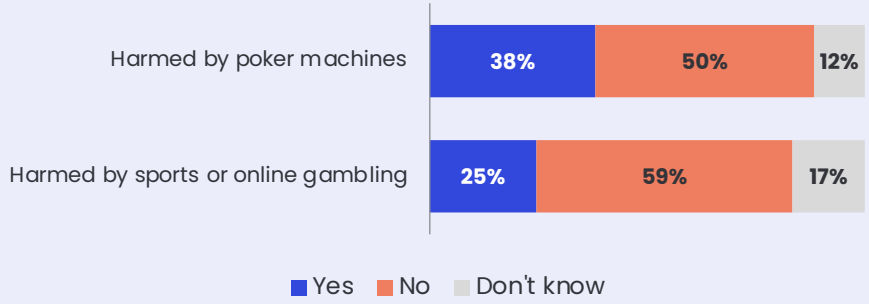
23%

Our definition of gambling harm, shown to research participants, is taken from the Australian Institute of Family Studies:

Gambling harm is any negative consequence experienced by an individual or members of their social network because of participation in gambling. This can be experienced on a spectrum, ranging from minor negative experiences to crises, and is not always proportionate to the amount of gambling participation. Gambling harms can include:

- relationship harm (e.g. conflict within relationships, neglect of responsibilities)
- health harm (e.g. stress, depression, reduced sleep)
- emotional/psychological harm (e.g. feelings of regret, worthlessness, failure)
- financial harm (e.g. credit card debt, reduced spending on essentials)
- work/study harm (e.g. reduced performance due to tiredness, absenteeism)

Knowing someone harmed by gambling



Do you ever worry about your own gambling, or the amount you spend on it? [Base: Gambled in the last 12 months, n=499] · Do you have a colleague, family member or friend who has been harmed by gambling on poker machines? · Do you have a colleague, family member or friend who has been harmed by sports gambling or online gambling?

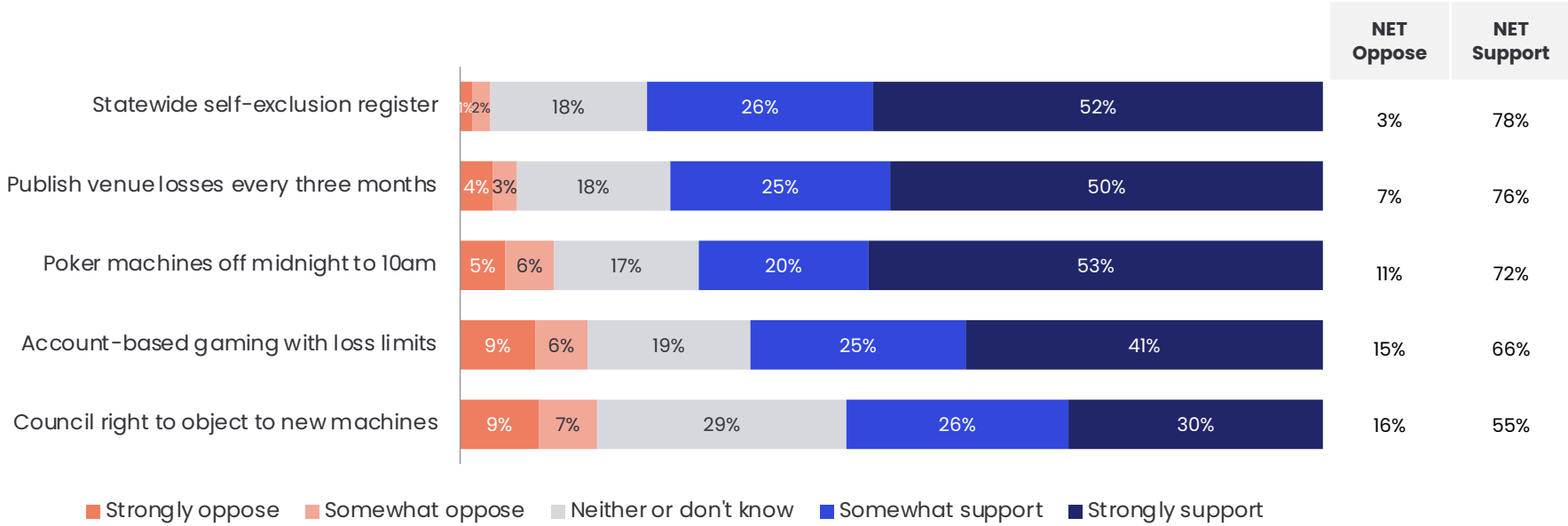
PART 03

Support for reform

Community attitudes to Wesley Mission's five calls for regulatory reform

Community support for gambling reform

- Wesley Mission's advocacy on gambling reform includes five key regulatory changes. **All five of Wesley Mission's asks have majority community support with few opponents.**
- A statewide self-exclusion register (78% support) and requiring venues to publish losses every three months (76%) draw the broadest support.



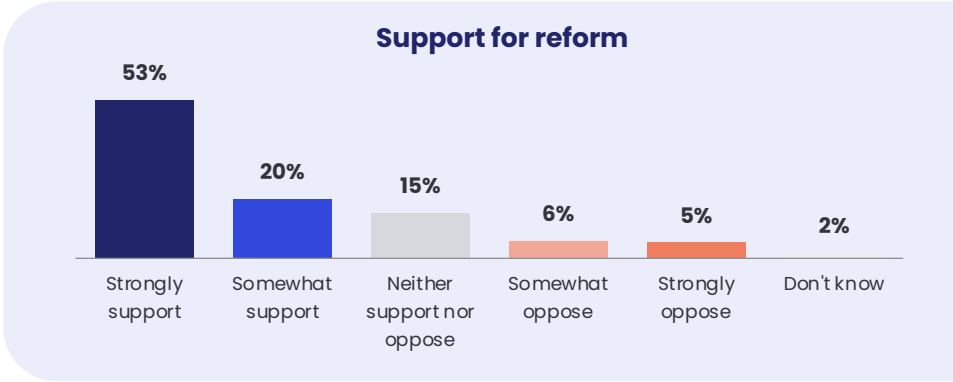
Midnight to 10am shutdown

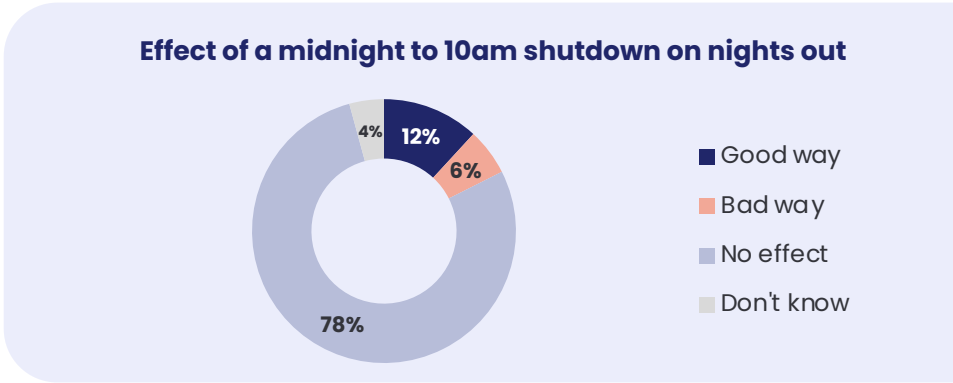
Wesley Mission is calling for the current poker machine shutdown between 4am-10am to be extended to start at midnight – closing the hours in which the most harmful gambling occurs.

- **72% of NSW adults support a midnight to 10am shutdown, 53% strongly.** 11% oppose and 15% neither support nor oppose.
- Among people who go out after midnight (47% of adults), 90% say a shutdown would either not affect their nights out (78%) or it would have a positive effect (12%). Just 6% said it would affect the things they like to do when they go out in a negative way.

Significant differences among NSW adults

- Support is higher among those with a university degree (80%, compared to 69% for those without).



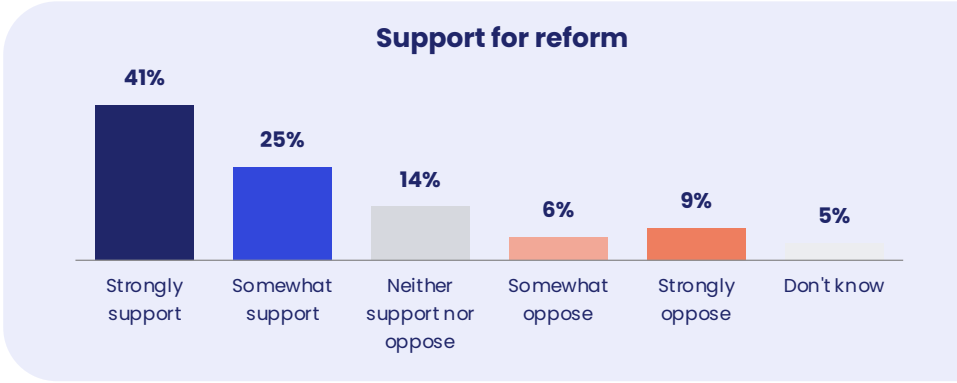


At present, poker machines in NSW pubs and clubs must be switched off between 4am and 10am. Some groups have proposed extending this so that machines are switched off from midnight to 10am. Would you support or oppose this? · If poker machines were shut down from midnight to 10am, would this affect the things you like to do when you go out in the evenings? [Base: Go out after midnight at least rarely, n=328]

Account-based gambling with loss limits

Wesley Mission is calling for a mandatory statewide account-based system, replacing cash, with default loss limits, time limits and enforced breaks between top-ups.

- **66% of NSW adults support mandatory account-based gambling with limits, 41% strongly.** 15% oppose and 14% neither support nor oppose.
- When asked which limit design they would prefer, 41% choose default limits that cannot be increased. Just 8% support people setting their own limits with no cap.
- Among opponents of account-based gambling, the most common reasons given are personal freedom (36%) and privacy/surveillance (31%).





A mandatory account-based gaming system would require people to use a card or app linked to their identity to play poker machines, instead of cash. Would you support or oppose this? · If a mandatory account-based system were introduced, which of these designs would you prefer? · What is the main reason you oppose a mandatory account-based payment system? [Base: Oppose account-based gambling, n=98]

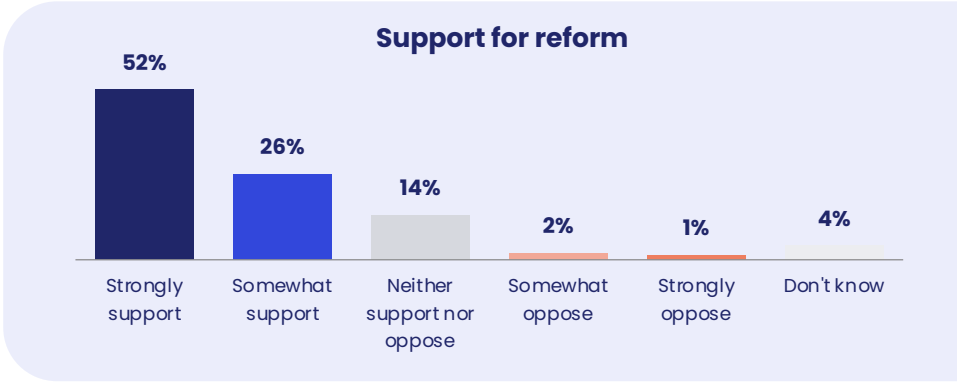
Statewide self-exclusion register

Wesley Mission is calling for a single statewide self-exclusion register run by an independent statutory body and funded from gambling tax revenue, replacing venue-by-venue exclusion.

- **78% of NSW adults support a statewide self-exclusion register, 52% strongly.** 3% oppose and 14% neither support nor oppose.

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG NSW ADULTS

- Support is higher among those who know someone harmed by poker machines (85% support, compared to 74% among those who don't know someone harmed).



Would you support or oppose a single statewide self-exclusion register?

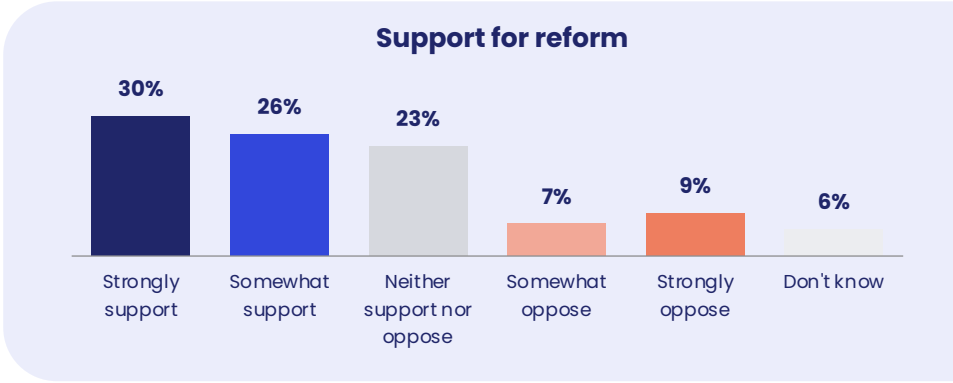
Council right to object to new machines

Wesley Mission is calling for statutory rights for local councils to make submissions on every poker machine application in their area and to appeal decisions.

- **55% of NSW adults support a council right to object to new machines, 30% strongly**. 16% oppose and 23% neither support nor oppose.
- Local councils currently have no formal right to object when a venue applies to add machines.

Significant differences among NSW adults

- Support is higher among people who politically identify with the Greens (68% support, compared to 53% for those who identify with different parties).
- Support is higher among people who live in Sydney (59% support, compared to 48% for those who live in the rest of NSW).



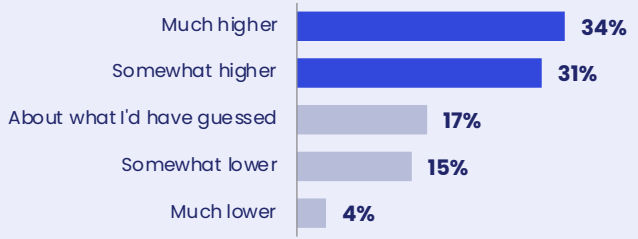
Would you support or oppose giving your council a formal right to object when a pub or club applies to add poker machines?

Publishing venue losses

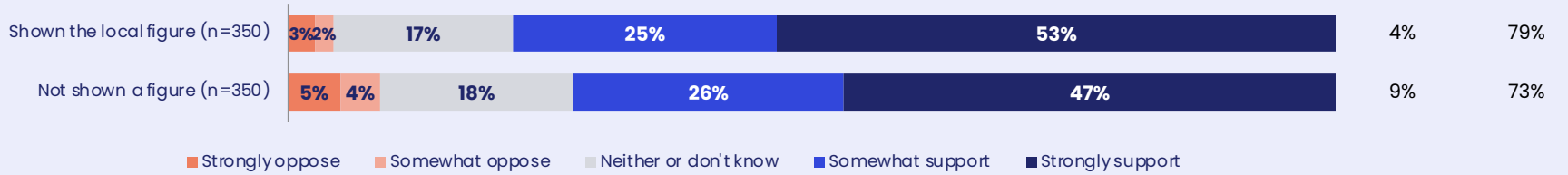
Wesley Mission is calling venue-level poker machine loss data published every three months. Current data is only published by local government area and not by venue.

- 73% of adults support requiring individual venues to publish how much money they take from poker machines.
- When shown how much poker machines in their local area took in the previous year, support increased by 6 percentage points to 79%. Opposition to reform halved in this scenario, from 9% to 4%.
- **65% of those shown average adult poker machine losses in their area said it was higher than they would have guessed**; 34% said much higher.
- Across both versions of the question, support for reform is 76%.

When shown average adult poker machine losses in their area, is the figure higher or lower than you would have guessed?



Support for reform



	NET Oppose	NET Support
Shown the local figure (n=350)	4%	79%
Not shown a figure (n=350)	9%	73%

Would you support or oppose requiring every pub and club to publish how much money it takes from poker machines, updated every three months? [Base: 50% shown no local figure, n=350] · In the last year, poker machines in [your area] took $[X] million, about $[Y] for every adult. Would you support or oppose requiring every pub and club to publish how much money it takes from poker machines? [Base: 50% shown local figure, n=350] · Was that figure per adult higher or lower than you would have guessed? [Base: Shown the local figure, n=350]

PART 04

Gambling reform support, by groups

Understanding how support for reform varies among the NSW population

Support is consistent across community groups

- **Across all five areas of reform, support is strong across ages, gender, gambling behaviour, exposure to gambling harm and political identification.**
- Account-based gambling with limits is the only reform where one group – those who regularly gamble on poker machines – is more likely to respond with opposition.

Net support for each reform, by group

		Age			Gender		Gambling			Harm exposure		Party identification			
	Total	18 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Women	Men	Monthly pokies	Other	None	Knows harmed	Does not	Labor	Lib/Nat	Greens	One Nation
Publish venue losses	+69	+72	+69	+66	+72	+66	+64	+67	+74	+79	+62	+70	+66	**+82**	+68
Self-exclusion register	+75	+74	+73	+77	+76	+74	+59	+76	+77	+82	+70	+74	+80	**+85**	+69
Council right to object	+39	+39	+41	+38	+43	+35	+11	+36	+55	+46	+36	+44	+42	**+58**	+26
Midnight to 10am shutdown	+61	+53	+63	+67	+62	+61	+30	+62	**+69**	+64	+59	+63	+67	+67	+56
Account-based with limits	+52	+55	+53	+48	+55	+49	-4	+51	**+70**	+59	+46	+58	+57	+58	+38
n	*700*	*206*	*232*	*262*	*381*	*308*	*52*	*447*	*201*	*266*	*354*	*224*	*133*	*99*	*151*

Net support = support minus oppose (pts)

A statewide majority supporting reform

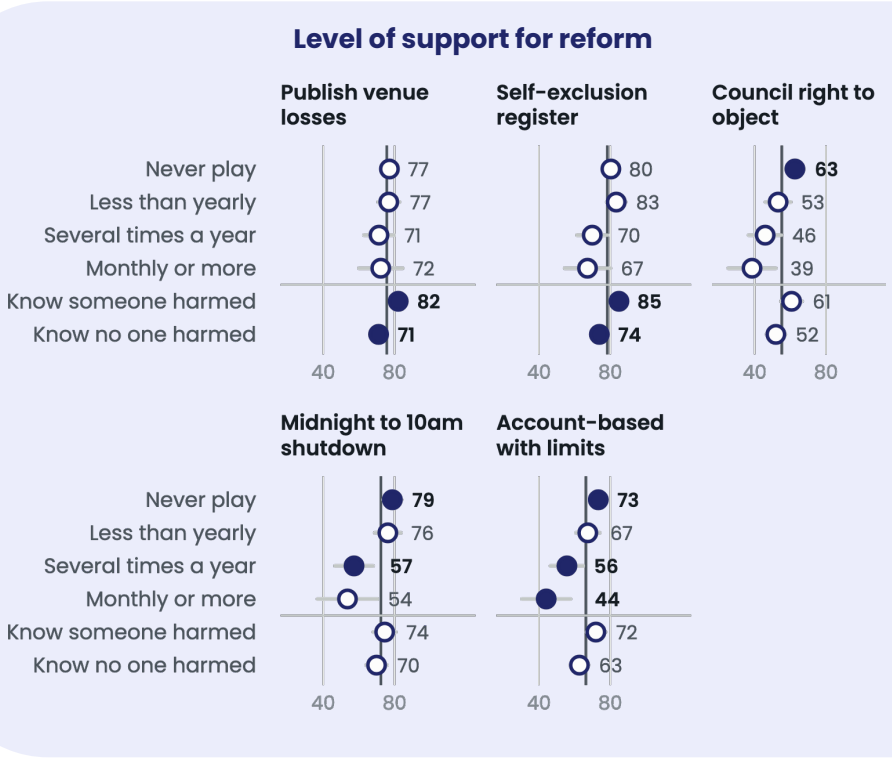
- **Support for reform is as high among people who live in areas with the highest per capita poker machine losses as it is elsewhere**.
- Our analysis uses loss per adult data from Liquor & Gaming NSW linked to each respondent's postcode through their local government area.
- Across different age groups, genders and regions of NSW, support for all reforms remains broadly consistent.



% support by tercile of LGA poker machine losses per adult, with 95% intervals. Vertical lines indicate average support across the entire sample.

Support declines the more often people gamble

- **Support for gambling reform declines the more frequently people gamble on poker machines.** Even so, among monthly-plus users, supporters still outnumber opponents on four of Wesley Mission's five reform asks.
- Midnight to 10am shutdown support runs from 79% among people who never gamble on poker machines, to 54% among those who use them at least once a month.
- Attitudes to account-based gambling with limits are relatively even among regular poker machine users (44% support vs 48% oppose).
- People who know someone harmed by poker machines are among the most supportive group on every reform.



% support by gambling behaviour and exposure to gambling harm, with 95% intervals. Vertical lines indicate average support across the entire sample.

Who opposes gambling reform and why

- **Opposition to the two most contested reform proposals is small and follows a clear profile.**
- Opposition to account-based gambling is highest among people who support venues keeping their poker machines (32%), people who gamble on poker machines several times a year or more (29%) and One Nation supporters (21%). These rates of opposition compare to just 15% of all adults.
- Asked why, opponents of account-based gambling are more likely to cite personal freedom (36%) or privacy and surveillance (31%) far more than doubts about whether it would work (12%).





A mandatory account-based gaming system would require people to use a card or app linked to their identity to play poker machines, instead of cash. Would you support or oppose this? · Would you support or oppose giving your council a formal right to object when a pub or club applies to add poker machines? · What is the main reason you oppose a mandatory account-based payment system? [Coded open-ended responses. Base: Oppose account-based gambling, n=98]

PART 05

Gambling as an electoral issue

Industry influence, satisfaction with government efforts and whether reform moves votes

Standing up to the gambling industry

- **50% believe the gambling lobby has too much influence on NSW politics**, and just 16% trust the government to stand up to the industry.
- Trust in government has more than halved since the previous survey in May 2025 – down 19 percentage points to 16%.
- 48% say the government should have done more on gambling reform ahead of the March 2027 election.

Gambling lobby has too much influence on NSW politics

50%

No 14% · Unsure 36%

Trust the government to stand up to the gambling industry

16%

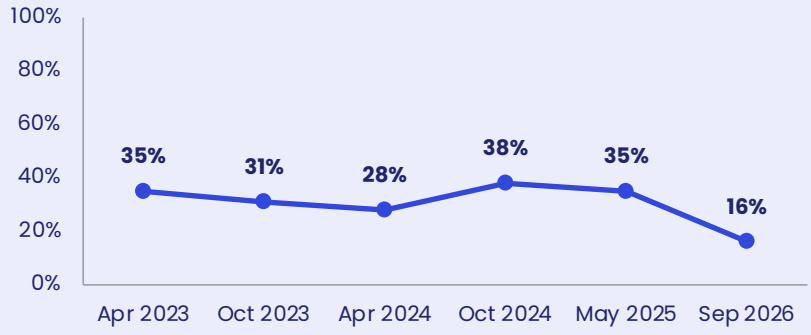
No 61% · Unsure 23%

Government should have done more on gambling reform

48%

Done enough: 10% · Don't know 39%

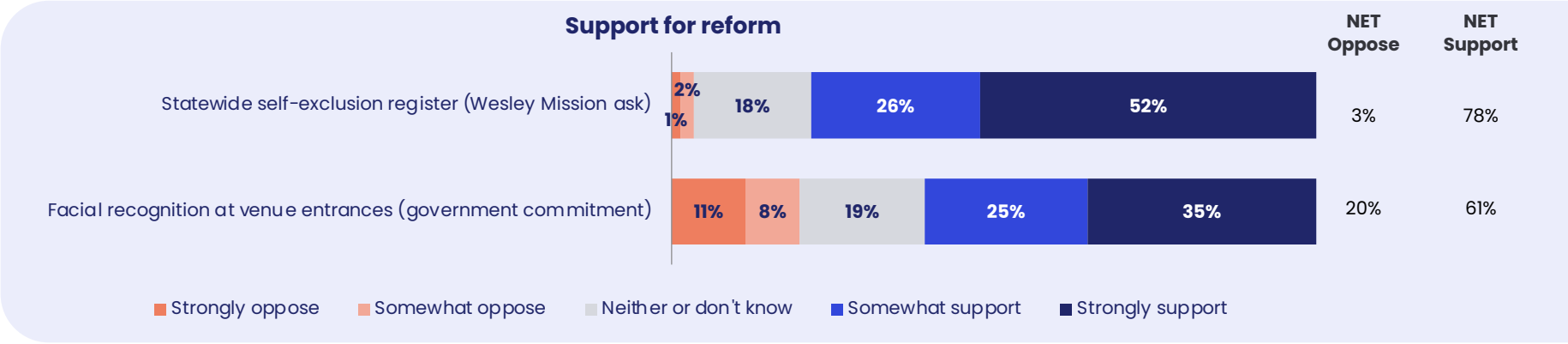
Trust in government to stand up to the gambling industry, % yes



Do you believe the gambling lobby has too much influence on NSW politics? · Do you trust the government to stand up to the gambling industry? · Ahead of the March 2027 state election, do you think the NSW Government has...

NSW government's facial recognition commitment

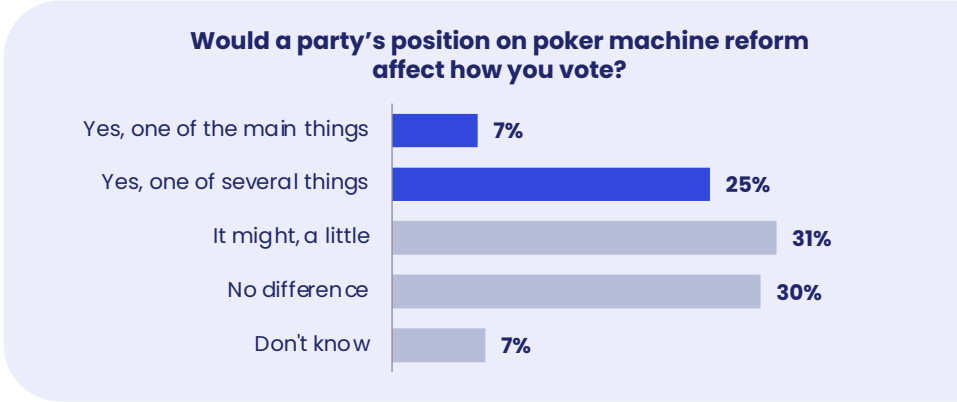
- Support for a statewide self-exclusion is high (78%) but this drops significantly if it is facilitated by facial recognition technology at the entrance to venues.
- Overall support drops by 17 percentage points to 61%, while opposition to reform increases by 17 points to 20%.

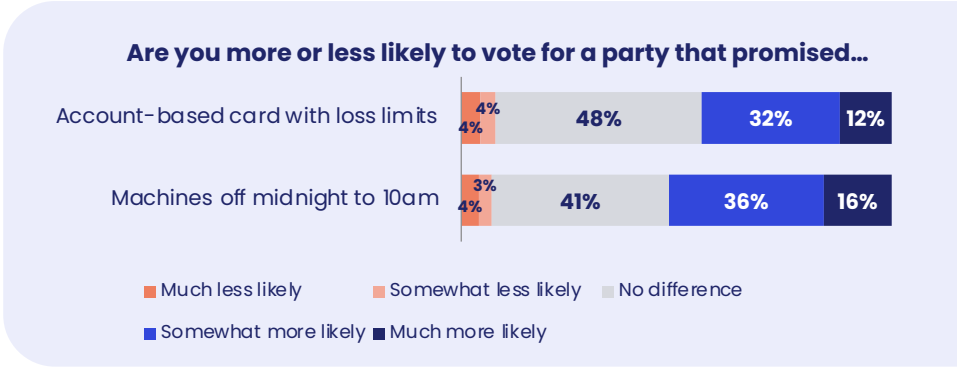


Would you support or oppose a single statewide self-exclusion register? Would you support or oppose requiring hotels and clubs with poker machines to use facial recognition technology?

Does gambling reform move votes?

- **32% say a party's position on poker machine reform would be one of the main things (7%) or one of several things (25%) they consider at the state election.**
- A promise to introduce an account-based card with loss limits would make people 44% more likely to vote for a party and 8% less likely – a net increase of 36%.
- A promise to shut machines from midnight to 10am has a net increase of 45% (52% more likely, 7% less likely).





Would a party's position on poker machine reform affect how you vote at the next state election? · Would you be more or less likely to vote for a party that promised to introduce a mandatory account-based gambling card with loss limits? · Would you be more or less likely to vote for a party that promised to shut down all poker machines between midnight and 10am?

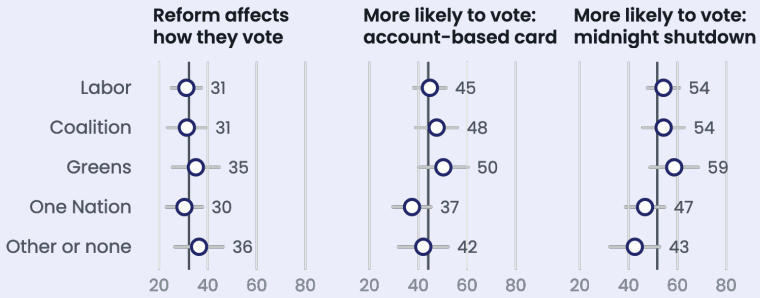
Vote effect by trust and party identification

- Gambling reform is just as likely to affect voting intention among those who trust government to stand up to the gambling industry (33%) as those who don't trust the government (36%).
- No matter which political party people identify with, promises on gambling reform are more likely to attract than lose electoral support.

Gambling reform as a vote affecting issue, by trust in government to stand up to gambling industry



Gambling reform as a vote affecting issue, by political identification



Would a party's position on poker machine reform affect how you vote at the next state election? · Would you be more or less likely to vote for a party that promised to introduce a mandatory account-based gambling card with loss limits? · Would you be more or less likely to vote for a party that promised to shut down all poker machines between midnight and 10am?

PART 06

Reform prioritisation

How the community prioritises different gambling reform initiatives

Ranking the reform agenda

- **When asked to prioritise a set of eight potential reforms – including Wesley Mission's five asks – the shutdown of machines from midnight to 10am and implementation of statewide self-exclusion register were ranked highest.**
- Scores are aggregate best-worst scores rescaled to 0 to 100, where 50 means an item was chosen as most important as often as least important. They rank priorities in the set of eight options; they do not measure absolute support (which is reported in Part 3).



Best-worst ranking exercise (5 screens of 4 items per respondent, 14-version balanced design)

Ranking by community group

- **The top ranked reform changes between groups, whereas the bottom three reforms are most stable and consistently ranked across different groups in the community.**

	Machines off midnight to 10am	Statewide self-exclusion register	Stronger limits on gambling advertising	Account-based card with loss limits	Reduce the number of machines in NSW	More funding for counselling and treatment	Publish venue losses every three months	Council right to object to new machines
GAMBLING STATUS								
Monthly-plus pokies users n=52	3	1	2	7	6	5	4	8
Other gamblers n=447	3	1	4	2	5	6	7	8
Did not gamble n=201	1	5	2	4	3	6	8	7
PARTY IDENTIFICATION								
Labor n=224	1	3	2	4	5	6	7	8
Coalition n=133	2	5	4	1	3	6	7	8
One Nation n=151	1	2	5	4	3	6	7	8
Other or none n=93	3	2	4	5	1	6	7	8
REGION								
Sydney inner, north, east n=234	3	5	1	4	2	6	7	8
Sydney west, south-west n=212	2	1	4	3	5	6	7	8
Rest of NSW n=254	1	2	3	5	6	4	7	8

PART 07

Advertising

Exposure and attitudes to gambling advertising

Support for a total ban on gambling advertising

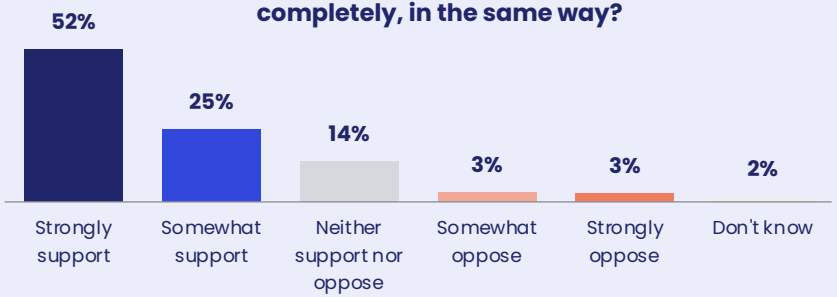
Gambling advertising is regulated by the Commonwealth and sits outside of Wesley Mission's primary focus on state regulatory reform. Our survey took place ahead of the government's reforms to restrict advertising on 1 January 2027 which stops short of implementing a total ban.

- **78% support banning gambling advertising completely, in the same way tobacco advertising is banned**; 52% strongly support, 6% oppose.
- Asked about the current rules, 50% say they do not go far enough, 26% that they are about right and 10% that they go too far.

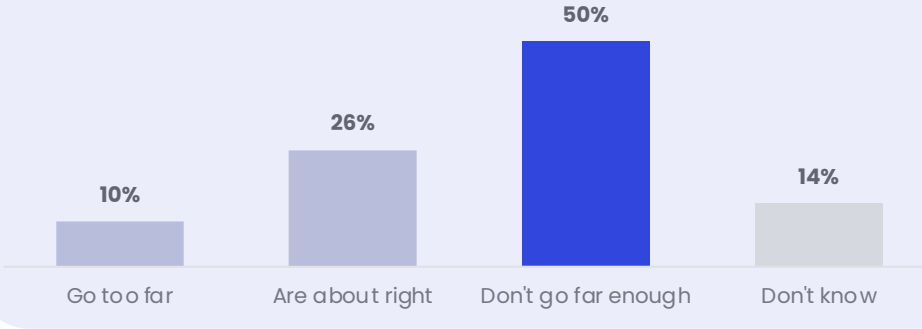
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG NSW ADULTS

- People who politically identify with the Greens are more likely to support a total advertising ban (88%) than other adults (76%).

Tobacco advertising is banned completely in Australia. Would you support or oppose banning gambling advertising completely, in the same way?



Do the current rules on gambling advertising...



Tobacco advertising is banned completely in Australia. Would you support or oppose banning gambling advertising completely, in the same way? · Thinking about the rules on gambling advertising in Australia, do you think they... ·

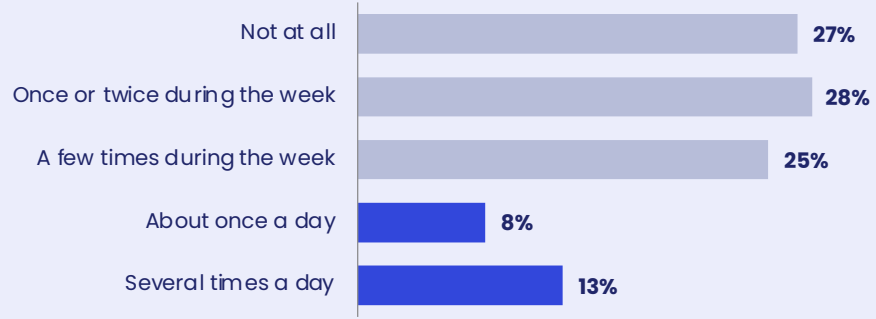
Exposure to gambling advertising

- 20% of NSW adults saw or heard gambling advertising at least daily in the past week, and 13% several times a day. 27% saw no gambling advertising at all.
- Among people who use an online gambling account, 22% see it daily or more, against 19% of everyone else.

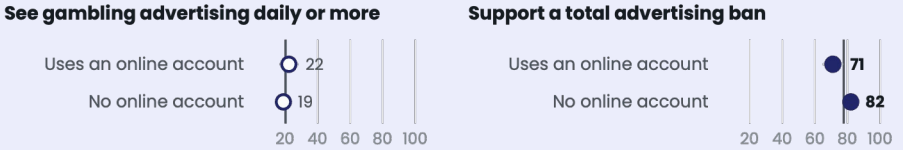
Significant differences among NSW adults

- Advertising exposure is higher among people aged 55 and over (30% see daily or more), compared to those aged 18-34 (13%).
- Men are more likely to see advertising daily or more (27%) than women (14%).

Gambling advertising seen or heard in the past 7 days



Gambling exposure and support, by online gambling account use



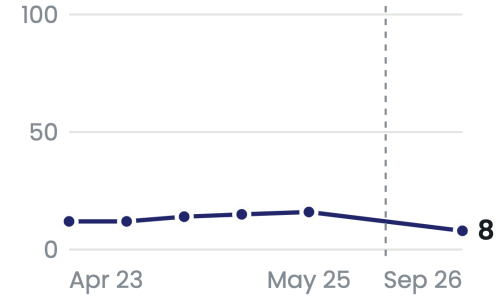
PART 08

Trends

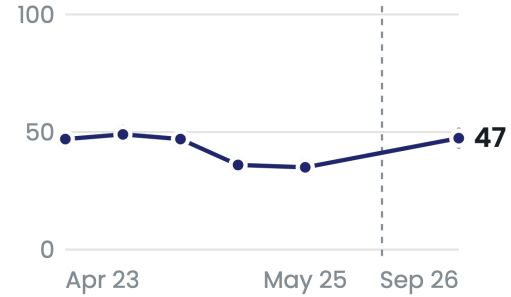
Tracking changes in community attitudes from April 2023 to September 2026

Trends, April 2023 to September 2026

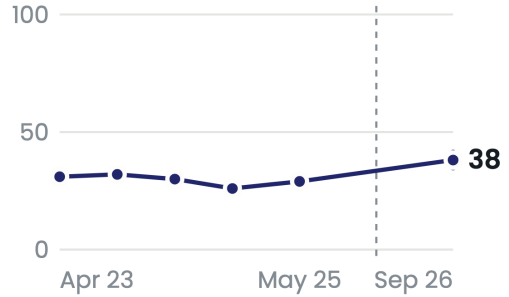
Play poker machines more than once a month %



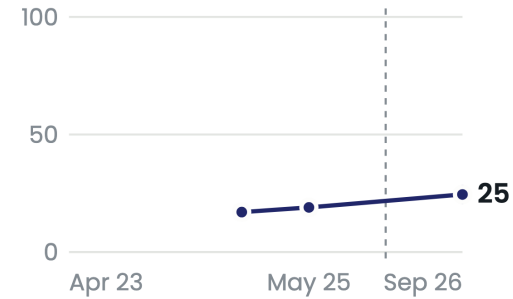
Never gamble on poker machines %



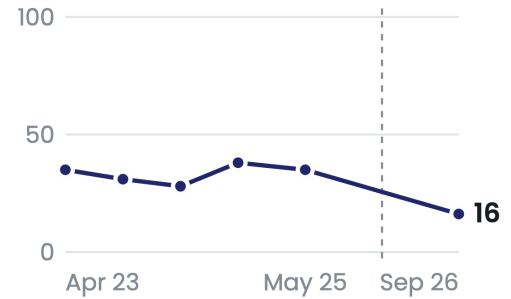
Know someone harmed by poker machines %



Know someone harmed by online gambling %

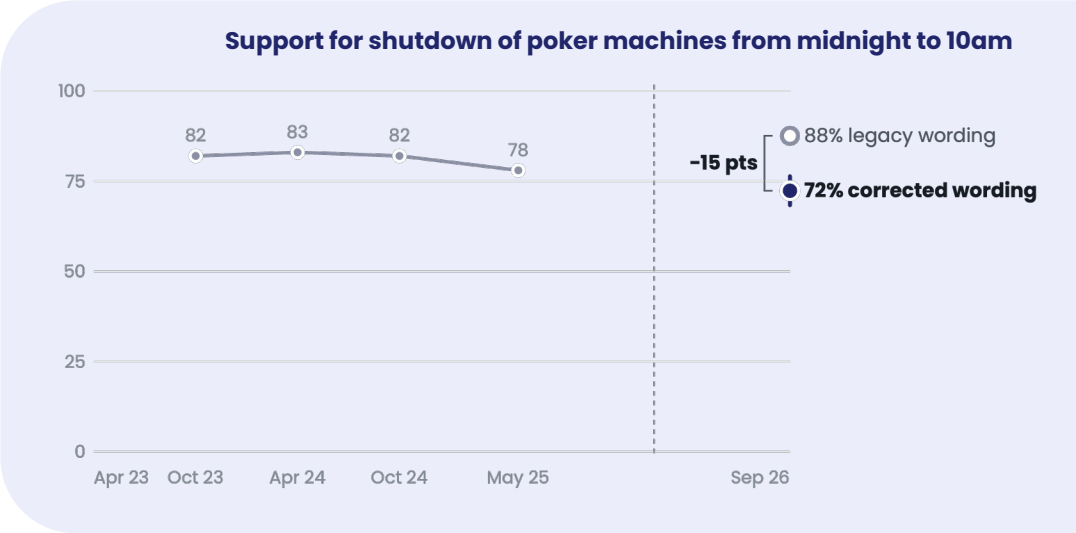


Trust government to stand up to the industry %



Shutdown support

- Support for a midnight to 10am shutdown was previously asked using binary yes/no response options.
- Respondents shown the legacy version of this question (30% of participants) reported support for reform at 88% - the highest level of support from all waves of the survey.
- The updated version of the question – using a five-point scale of support or opposition and a don't know option – was asked to the remaining 70% of respondents. Total support using this measure was 72%.
- The 15-point gap is a measurement effect and suggests that. This report uses the corrected measure (72%) however the results above suggest support for reform is at an all time high.



Do you support a proposal for all poker machines to be switched off from midnight until 10am? [Base: 30%, legacy wording, n=209]· At present, poker machines in NSW pubs and clubs must be switched off between 4am and 10am. Some groups have proposed extending this so that machines are switched off from midnight to 10am. Would you support or oppose this? [Base: 70%, corrected wording, n=491]

PART 09

Sample, design notes and methodology

Participant demographics

N=700. Raw n, Weighted %

Age	N	%
18 - 24	96	11
25 - 34	110	18
35 - 44	122	18
45 - 54	110	16
55 - 64	109	15
65 and over	153	22

Gender	N	%
Men	308	48
Women	381	50
Non-binary or gender diverse	6	1
Prefer not to say	5	1

Education	N	%
Up to completed high school	265	39
VET/TAFE	195	29
Undergraduate or higher	240	33

Party identification	N	%
Greens	99	14
Labor	224	32
Liberal	117	17
Nationals	16	2
One Nation	151	22
Independent	62	9
Other	31	4

Region	N	%
Sydney inner, north, east	234	34
Sydney west, south-west	212	31
Rest of NSW	254	35

Language other than English at home	N	%
Yes	151	21
No	547	78
Prefer not to say	2	0

Work or study	N	%
Working full-time	260	39
Working part-time or casually	153	21
Home duties or caring	46	7
Full-time student	47	6
Retired	141	20
Unable to work	19	3
Unemployed	29	4
Other	4	1
Prefer not to say	1	0

First Nations	N	%
No	673	96
Yes, Aboriginal	15	2
Yes, Torres Strait Islander	0	0
Prefer not to say	12	2

Methodology

The Insight Centre conducted a representative survey of the New South Wales adult population. Participants were recruited via a specialist panel partner, and completed the survey via computer, tablet or mobile phone.

Dates in field	7 – 15 September 2026
Sample (n)	700
Length	10 minutes
Inclusion criteria	NSW resident; 18+
Recruitment quotas	The sample was recruited using quotas representative of the New South Wales adult population using ABS data on age, gender, region and education level.
Data weighting	The final sample was RIM weighted for age, gender, region and education level to precisely align with New South Wales's demographic distribution. The design effect of these weights was 1.02, with a range of 0.59 to 1.47, providing an effective sample size of 684.
Data quality	• Logic checks, attention check and bot-screening questions were included within the survey to ensure data submitted into the survey was of high quality. • The Insight Centre conducted rigorous data cleaning during and after fieldwork to ensure only quality responses are included in analysis and reporting.
Main survey sections	1. Community priorities 2. Gambling participation 3. Gambling reform attitudes 4. Gambling harm exposure 5. Politics, trust and advertising 6. Prioritisation 7. Demographics

Notes on interpreting the report

1. Unless otherwise noted, all demographic differences identified in the report reflect statistically significant variation between groups.
2. Unless otherwise noted in the report, the base for each question is the full sample of n=700.
3. Data shown in charts and tables are rounded to the nearest whole number; data may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
4. Based on an effective sample size of n=684, there is a ±3.7% margin of error at a 95% confidence level.
5. Caution is needed in interpreting data with small base sizes of n=50 and under.
6. FDR adjustment (multiple comparison correction) has been used in the analysis where several statistical tests were performed simultaneously to prevent Type 1 errors.
7. Where percentages are reported as a NET, this means two or more variables in a single question have been combined (e.g. agree and strongly agree in a Likert scale question).

Design notes

Trend Analysis

Previous waves (1 to 5) were conducted by a different provider on a different online panel and reported unweighted results. To test whether this affects comparisons with the current wave (6), the two most recent waves were re-weighted to the same population targets as Wave 6 on age, gender, education and region. Across all items, re-weighting changed no figure by more than 1.5 percentage points - well within the margin of error. All earlier waves are therefore shown as originally published. All trends should be interpreted with the change of provider and panel in mind; a movement between May 2025 and Wave 6 that is within that margin should not be interpreted as change.

Local Gambling Loss

Postcodes were mapped to local government areas (LGAs) and to Liquor & Gaming NSW quarterly poker machine reports for clubs and hotels, to determine annual poker machine losses per adult (published in the quarterly reports as NET PROFIT, which is profit only to the venue).

MaxDiff

The prioritisation of gambling reforms was achieved using a MaxDiff question set using eight reform items, with four shown per screen across five screens. 14 versions form a balanced incomplete block design in which every item appears 35 times across the set and every pair of items appears together 15 times. Reported scores are aggregate best-worst counts, divided by appearances and rescaled to 0-100.

Experimental Design

Two questions included split ballots as part of an experimental design. The shutdown item was asked in its legacy yes/no wording from previous waves for 30% of participants, and in an updated wording for the remaining 70%. The reform question on publishing venue losses was split 50/50, with half being shown local loss figures for their area. Allocation was done using least-fill on an interlocked set of age (three bands), gender and region.

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DISCLAIMER

This report has been prepared by The Insight Centre for Wesley Mission, based on the scope and objectives agreed upon.

Our report may be relied upon by Wesley Mission for the purpose set out in the scope and objectives pursuant to the terms of our statement of work dated 13th July 2026.

The Insight Centre accepts no responsibility or liability for any decisions, actions, or outcomes resulting from the use of this report. Third parties should exercise their own judgement and seek independent advice before relying on the content of this document.

GAMBLING SUPPORT

Gambler's Help provides free, confidential support:
ph. 1800 858 858
https://gamblershelp.com.au

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Thank you

For questions about this report, please contact:

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