Environment: Gambling machines

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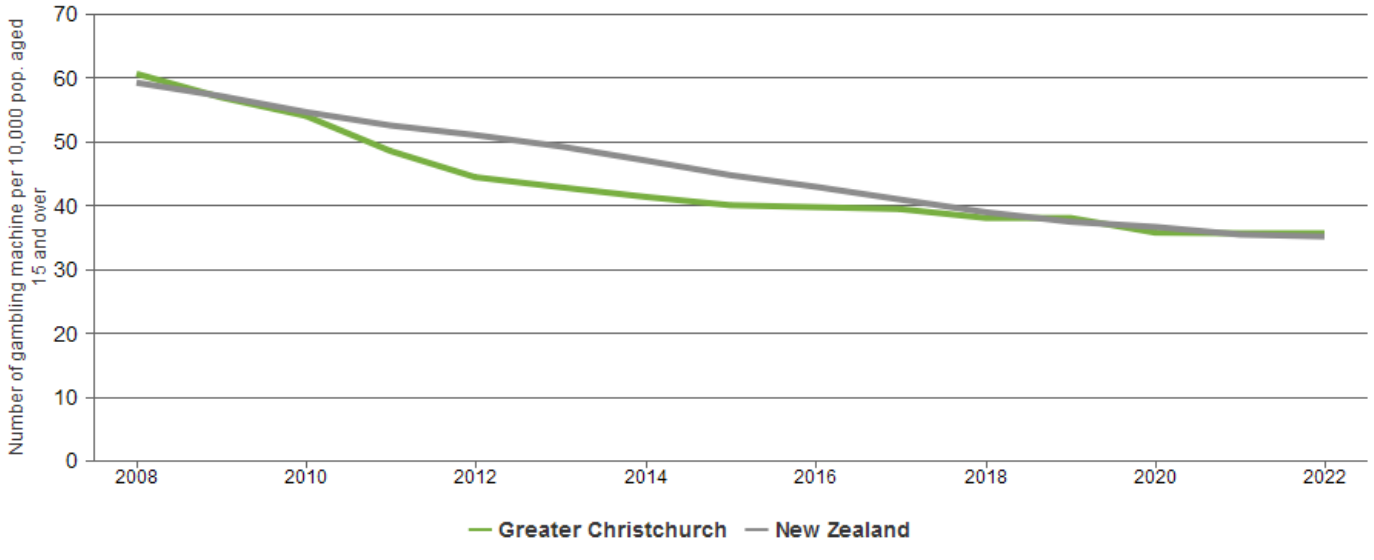
Gambling can lead to significant health, social, and economic implications for individuals and families [12]. Harms associated with gambling may include addiction, social isolation, depression, suicide, relationship breakdown, lowered work productivity, job loss, bankruptcy, and crime, including family violence [12]. National statistics demonstrate that the harms of gambling disproportionately affect Māori, Pacific people, and those living in low socioeconomic areas [13, 14].

Studies of the detrimental effects of gambling have confirmed a link between the geographic accessibility of gambling establishments and the prevalence of problem gambling [15-17]. People living close to all types of gambling premises have a higher chance of becoming problematic gamblers than those living at a distance from gambling premises [18]. Gambling machine establishments (specifically ‘Class 4 venues’ or ‘non-casino’ pubs and clubs) are typically clustered within socioeconomically deprived areas [19-21] and this has been shown to widen existing social and health inequalities [20, 22]. Gambling tends to be ‘economically regressive’, meaning that it increases inequality by diverting money from a larger group (typically of lower socioeconomic status) to a smaller group (of higher socioeconomic status) [23].

Gambling machine density has reduced steadily in New Zealand since the early 2000s, in large part due to the adoption of ‘sinking lid’ policies by many Territorial Authorities (when an existing ‘pokie’ venue closes, consent is not granted for another to be established) [24].

This indicator presents gambling machine density (the number of gambling machines per 10,000 population), in greater Christchurch and New Zealand from 2008 to 2022. Note internet or live casino games are not captured by this measure. Gambling machine proceeds, per annum, per 10,000 population aged 15 years and over, are also described.

Figure 4.1: Gambling machine density (per 10,000 population aged 15 years and over), in greater Christchurch and New Zealand, 2008–2022

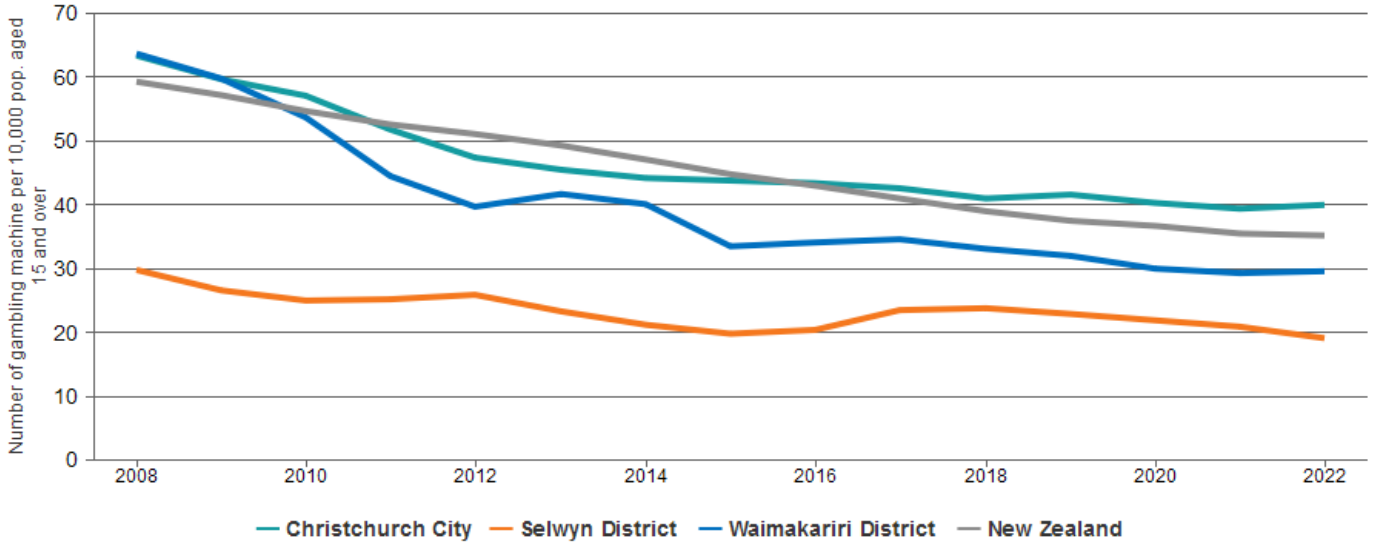


The figure shows that gambling machine density in greater Christchurch has declined substantially over the time period shown, from 60.7 machines per 10,000 population in 2008 to 35.7 machines per 10,000 population in 2022 (unchanged since 2020). This pattern is broadly in line with gambling machine density across New Zealand.

Similarly, gambling machine proceeds, per annum, per 10,000 population aged 15 years and over have declined across greater Christchurch and New Zealand over the same period (data not shown). For greater Christchurch, gambling machine proceeds have declined from $2.62M per 10,000 population aged 15 years and over, in 2008 ($262 per person) to 2.35M per 10,000 population aged 15 years and over, in 2022 ($235 per person). For New Zealand, gambling machine proceeds have declined from $2.71M to $2.44M per 10,000 population between 2008 and 2022.

Breakdown by Territorial Authority

Figure 4.2: Gambling machine density (per 10,000 population aged 15 years and over), by Territorial Authority and for New Zealand, 2008–2022



The figure shows the gambling machine density per 10,000 population for Christchurch City, and the Selwyn and Waimakariri districts, from 2008 to 2022. The pattern is one of declining density overall, in keeping with the national picture. The figure shows that the gambling machine density in Selwyn District has been consistently substantially lower than the other Territorial Authorities, over the time series shown (in 2022, Selwyn 19.1; Waimakariri 29.6; Christchurch City 40; and New Zealand 35.2 machines/10,000 population).

In 2022, gambling machine proceeds (data not shown) were highest in Christchurch City (equivalent to $275 per person aged 15 years and over) and lowest in Selwyn District ($88 per person). Gambling machine proceeds for the Waimakariri District were approximately midway between Christchurch City and Selwyn District in 2022 ($171 per person).

Data Sources

Source: Department of Internal Affairs.
Survey/data set: Administrative data to December 2022. Access publicly available data from the Department of Internal Affairs website https://catalogue.data.govt.nz/dataset/gaming-machine-profits-gmp-dashboard.
Source data frequency: Quarterly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/our-wellbeing/index-data

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