

## **Alkohol, Rauchen und pathologisches Glücksspiel – die Komorbiditätsproblematik im situativen Alltagskontext der Casinos**

(Alcohol abuse, smoking and pathological gambling – a closer look at comorbidity in the everyday setting of Swiss casinos)

### **Summary**

The research project focuses on the comorbidity of critical alcohol consumption, smoking and pathological gambling in the context of Swiss casinos.

With the liberalisation of the casino legislation, an increase in the number of pathological gamblers is anticipated. According to the only epidemiological study available so far in Switzerland prevalence estimates amount to 1.1% in the general population; 36% of the gamblers in the total sample reported 'probable alcohol abuse'. Treatment samples in Switzerland have shown that 11% of the subjects report alcohol abuse.

The exploratory study suggested here is the first to provide a description and close-up of the drinking and smoking patterns in the casino setting. The project takes into account that research in this area has moved from the description of syndromes and co-occurrence to the situational analysis of the meaning and functions of comorbidity: Firstly, data will be collected in the 14 casinos in German speaking part of Switzerland on contextual and environmental characteristics and patterns such as pricing and variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, availability of cigarettes and smoking rules, material devices to facilitate consumption, distances to onsite outlets/bar, room temperature, humidity, audio- level (music, sounds), serving policies and visibility of consumption (spatial arrangement) which might influence consumption levels. These onsite investigations lead to a typology and are complemented by documentary analysis of the casinos' published social concepts and – if access is granted – of business figures on revenues, alcohol and cigarette sales and number of visitors. Secondly, semi-structured interviews with barkeepers and servers of the 14 casinos will be conducted. Thirdly, selection of an A-casino (e.g. Grand Casino Bern) for an in-depth analysis: Participant observation will shed light on the functions of smoking and drinking sequences 'in the event'. The observer takes the role of a first time visitor. Risk taking behaviour and gambling time in connection with smoking and drinking will be part of the observation protocol (based on information from step 1 and 2) as well as the coding of winning or losing streaks and consumption sequences.

The study will help to tailor prevention and treatment programs to the needs of pathological gamblers and will complement existing social programs of the casino industry.