
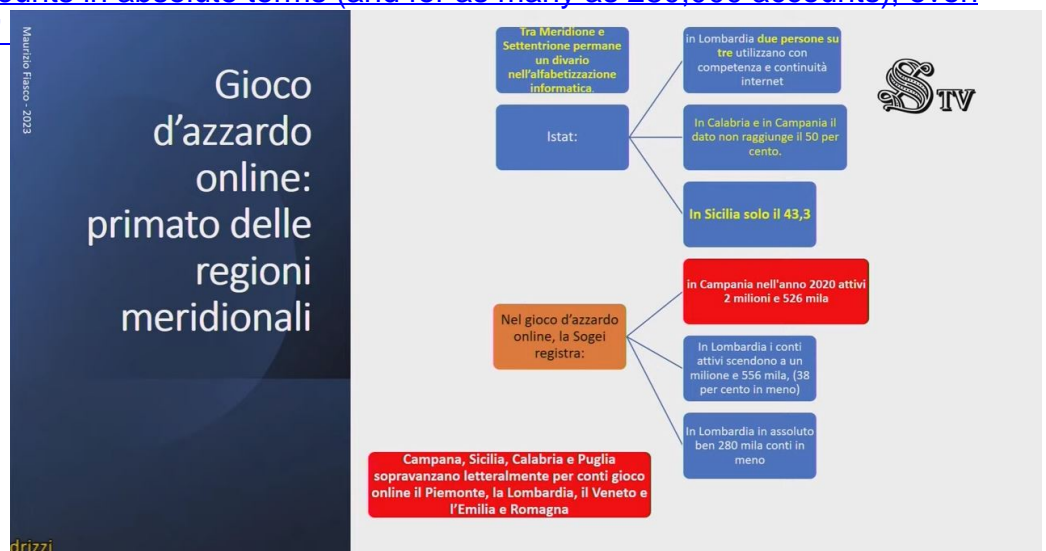


## Society. Fiasco: "The bonds connecting local communities, gaming and organized crime networks must be closely monitored".

There are connections linking local communities, gambling and organised crime. The latest findings were discussed by sociologist **Maurizio Fiasco** during the presentation at the Senate in Rome of the final Report of the bicameral Anti-Mafia Commission on gambling, on the occasion of the conference

"Gambling and Mafia. Measures to combat organised crime and proposals for legal public gaming."  The expert placed specific emphasis on online gambling. "Based on data published by Italy's Customs and Monopolies Agency, it was possible to determine in which areas of the country online gambling is practised more, and to what extent. Some significant findings emerged that need to be further investigated, both in terms of their underlying conditions and their exposure to the risk of organized crime infiltration," he explained, pointing out that "without an in-depth analysis, it would be normal to assume that online gambling is widespread especially in the northern Italian regions, i.e. in those areas of the country marked by a greater use of digital technologies. In fact, there remains a marked gap in computer literacy between the southern and northern regions of the country. According to the Italian Institute of Statistics, while in Lombardy two out of three people use the Internet with competence and continuity, this figure drops to less than 50 per cent in Calabria and Campania. The proportion is even lower when compared to the figures for Sicily (43.3)." In abstract terms, "one could reasonably argue that a less Internet-savvy population would proportionally be matched by a lower rate of 'remote' gambling. But in actual fact, the data obtained on web-based gambling access surprisingly suggests that the opposite is true." According to the data recorded by Sogei (Information Technology company that is fully-owned by the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance, Transl.'s note), "in the year 2020, over 2 and a half million online gambling accounts were active in Campania - with 5 million 850 thousand residents. Conversely, in Lombardy, marked by a considerably greater digital literacy, active accounts were less than 1,556,000, with a population of approximately 10 million inhabitants: almost two times that of Campania. Lombardy recorded a smaller number of such accounts in absolute terms (and for as many as 280,000 accounts), even when compared with Sicily."

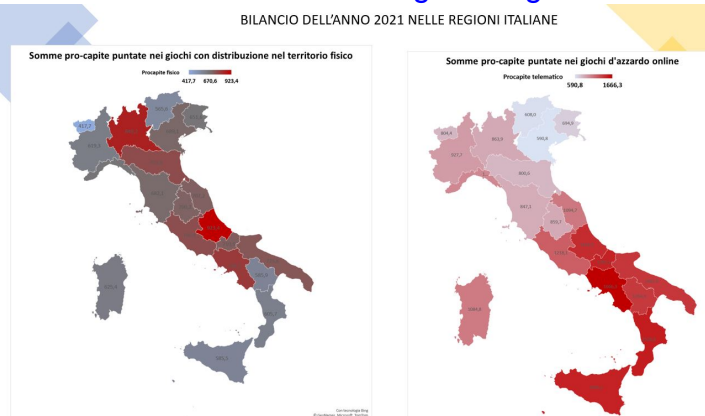


The sociologist pointed out: "The gap widens further when the surveyed figures are compared with the resident population in each region: in Lombardy there were approximately 15 gaming accounts for every 100 residents, in Campania approximately 44 (almost three times as many). The North-South divide appears evident: regions in the south of the country- such as Campania, Sicily, Calabria and Puglia - have more gaming accounts than the regions of the North - such as Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna - which by contrast are markedly more advanced in terms of digitalisation and digital literacy."

Also "with reference to per capita gambling, we see a markedly higher incidence of gaming in

the southern regions."

"Considering the same absolute value, and thus disregarding the regions' population size, Campania registers 20 per cent more gambling accounts than Lombardy, despite having 41.5% fewer inhabitants. In fact, 5,850,000 people resided in Campania and about 10 million in Lombardy. In terms of online gambling per capita, "While the figure for Lombardy was €864, Campania registered €1,663 per capita. Lombardy, the most populous region in the country, is ranked 13th in terms of per-capita figures at regional level, preceded by all the southern and central Italian regions," added Fiasco, for whom "in this case, the North-South duality is reversed, lending itself to two possible interpretations." "A first explanation is that gambling services have deliberately lowered the digital skills threshold for use, so that the lowest level of digital literacy is sufficient to access services. In this respect, the increased presence of online gambling accounts could in part be an expression of the greater propensity to gamble that has long been observed in lower-income regions and households. However, this propensity was most evident in relative terms, considering a share per €1,000 income. Given the higher overall figure, other related factors must be taken into account", Fiasco noted. In fact, the latest figures (ISTAT, 2020), the sociologist recalled, show that "Campania, Calabria and Puglia were the regions with the highest number of crimes of money laundering, usury, criminal conspiracy and mafia involvement (per 100,000 inhabitants), ahead of the Lombardy region by two points. The Ministry of the Economy, the National Police and the Customs and Monopolies Agency will assess whether and to what extent the increased use of online gambling is a vehicle for infiltration of transactions for illicit purposes."



Finally, "in the context of online gambling, the phenomenon of so-called 'betting exchange', a no small market niche, should be the object of specific investigation." In fact, "this online gambling segment records a total of € 2 billion 225.5 million in sums 'won' by bettors, while the revenues collected by the State Treasury are virtually negligible, due to a ridiculous tax rate of less than 1 % of the transactions (0.97 % in the year 2020, subsequently reduced to 0.90 % in the year 2021)." According to the definition of the Customs and Monopolies Agency, "betting exchange is a fixed odds sports betting mode whereby players can play the role of bettor or dealer, and the dealer acts as an intermediary, limiting himself to connecting, anonymously and through the platform, the individual bettors." "An extremely low tax rate and the possibility of exchanging bets between private individuals residing abroad and private individuals residing in Italy are the key aspects of this type of game," the expert remarked. In fact, more than a third of the bets have a corresponding counterpart abroad (36.3 % in 2021)." It is therefore necessary to "exclude the possibility that money transfers or transfers abroad of sums may be disguised, e.g. through a fictitious bet with an agreed outcome, for the payment of illegal transactions or for money laundering purposes. In this case, direct management by the State or at least the presence of an intermediary dealer among the bettors, tasked with verifying the identity of the bettors as well as the regularity and lawfulness of the transactions, is essential. If not, the general and fundamental supremacy of the rule of law would be violated, undermining the objectives of public interest." Based on the available data, the sociologist pointed out, "the territorial distribution of betting propensity among private individuals is markedly

different between regions. Considering the average per-capita gambling spend recorded in the year 2021 (amounting to 23.43 euro), the figure for Campania was almost 60% higher, with Lazio, Marche and Basilicata also higher by at least 30 percentage points", while the propensity in the North-West and North-East of the Peninsula is "markedly lower." Moreover, "the overwhelming preponderance of foreign bettors choosing to invest their sums on betting exchange confirms the low access threshold and an overriding level of betting activity that has not been observed in any other modality accessible from outside the Italian State borders."

Scommesse tra privati, distribuzione nelle regioni, rilievo delle puntate provenienti dall'estero

REGIONE	TOTALE GIOCATO	TOTALE VINCITE	Ricavi Erario	% TOTALE GIOCATO 2021	% DEL TOTALE VINCITE 2021	% VINCITA
	2021	2021	2021			
ABRUZZO	24.666.139 €	24.465.487 €	22.200 €	1,10	1,10	99,19
BASILICATA	17.511.400 €	17.394.563 €	15.760 €	0,78	0,78	99,33
CALABRIA	33.189.338 €	32.963.874 €	29.870 €	1,48	1,48	99,32
CAMPANIA	220.156.683 €	218.656.571 €	198.141 €	9,84	9,82	99,32
EMILIA ROMAG	119.956.929 €	119.121.643 €	107.961 €	5,36	5,35	99,30
ESTERO	806.335.357 €	803.985.659 €	725.702 €	36,03	36,12	99,71
FRIULI VENEZIA	18.131.088 €	17.996.668 €	16.318 €	0,81	0,81	99,26
LAZIO	184.870.063 €	183.688.175 €	166.383 €	8,26	8,25	99,36
LIGURIA	28.154.862 €	27.943.276 €	25.339 €	1,26	1,26	99,25
LOMBARDIA	190.434.716 €	188.960.694 €	171.391 €	8,51	8,49	99,23
MARCHE	47.646.874 €	47.353.975 €	42.882 €	2,13	2,13	99,38
MODISE	3.407.548 €	3.372.625 €	3.067 €	0,15	0,15	98,98
PIEMONTE	95.666.885 €	95.012.742 €	86.100 €	4,27	4,27	99,32
PUGLIA	89.391.124 €	88.729.464 €	80.452 €	3,99	3,99	99,26
SARDEGNA	24.365.867 €	24.137.831 €	21.929 €	1,09	1,08	99,06
SICILIA	137.553.765 €	136.501.280 €	123.798 €	6,15	6,13	99,23
TOSCANA	69.442.421 €	68.909.287 €	62.498 €	3,10	3,10	99,23
TRENTINO ALTO	14.195.958 €	14.107.410 €	12.776 €	0,63	0,63	99,38
UMBRIA	25.192.421 €	24.985.694 €	22.673 €	1,13	1,12	99,19
VALLE D'AOSTA	2.516.794 €	2.502.374 €	2.265 €	0,11	0,11	99,43
VENETO	85.356.735 €	84.795.951 €	76.821 €	3,81	3,81	99,34
TOTALE	2.238.142.966 €	2.225.585.381 €	2.014.329 €	100,00	100,00	99,44

Se si osserva la distribuzione territoriale della "propensione" alle scommesse tra privati, risalta la notevole differenza da Regione a Regione. Considerando il valore medio pro-capite nazionale registrato nell'anno 2021 (pari a 23,43€) il dato della Campania è di quasi il 60 per cento superiore, mentre si pongono al di sopra di 30 punti percentuali anche Lazio, Marche e Basilicata. Decisamente più bassa la propensione nei territori del Nord Ovest e del Nord Est della penisola