

# This is 'offside': Gambling advertising during Czech football broadcasts

FILIP KOVAŘÍK<sup>1\*</sup> , DAVID FIEDOR<sup>1</sup>  and  
STEVE SHARMAN<sup>2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Department of Geography, Faculty of Science, Palacký University Olomouc, Olomouc, Czech Republic

<sup>2</sup> School of Sport, Exercise, and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, UK

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## FULL-LENGTH REPORT



### ABSTRACT

*Background and Aims:* Gambling advertising during sports broadcasts has received increasing academic attention, although research has primarily focused on the United Kingdom context. This study addresses this geographical limitation by conducting a comprehensive content analysis of gambling advertising during football broadcasts in the Czech Republic. The specific objectives were to examine the frequency, nature, and characteristics of gambling advertisements in coverage of Czech football matches. *Methods:* A content analysis was conducted across four rounds of the Czech First Football League, encompassing 32 matches during August–September 2025. Two coders analysed 16 matches each following the establishment of high inter-rater reliability. All advertisements appearing during broadcasts were systematically recorded, documenting frequency, duration, timing, product types, and promotional characteristics. *Results:* A total of 1,824 gambling advertisements were documented across 32 matches, averaging 57 advertisements per match (SD = 7.04). The total advertising duration was 22,011 s (6.1 h), with an average of 11.5 min per match. Sports betting dominated (85.0%), followed by online casino promotions (10.7%) and lottery advertisements (4.3%). During live match coverage, 700 advertisements from a single title sponsor were recorded. *Discussion and Conclusions:* The findings reveal extensive exposure to gambling advertising during Czech football broadcasts, substantially exceeding the levels documented in prior studies. The predominance of sports betting content and sophisticated promotional techniques, including celebrity endorsements and contextual adaptation to the approaching parliamentary elections, demonstrates comprehensive marketing strategies targeting broader audiences. These results highlight the need for regulatory consideration of gambling advertising exposure in sports broadcasting within the Czech Republic.

### KEYWORDS

gambling advertising, gambling marketing, live broadcasts, football, Czech Republic

## INTRODUCTION

Football, the world's most popular sport, attracts around 3.5 billion viewers annually across all continents and demographic groups (SportforBusiness, 2024). Sports broadcasts, particularly prestigious football events such as the World Cups (Sharman, Piper, McGrane, & Newall, 2024), European championships (Newall, Ferreira, & Sharman, 2022), or league derbies, represent an opportunity for advertisers to reach mass audiences during moments of high emotional engagement. This fact makes sports broadcasts one of the most valuable advertising spaces in the media environment. Over the past two decades, a significant increase in the presence of the gambling industry within the sporting environment has been observed (McGee, 2020). Betting companies, online casinos, and other gambling service providers have become significant sponsors of football clubs, leagues, and individual broadcasts (Bunn et al., 2019). Their advertisements appear not only in traditional advertising blocks but also through shirt sponsorships (Sharman, 2022), stadium naming rights,

\*Corresponding author.  
E-mail: filip.kovarik@upol.cz

virtual banners during broadcasts, and advertising spaces around the pitch (Purves, Critchlow, Morgan, Stead, & Dobbie, 2020). This phenomenon is closely linked to the liberalisation of gambling markets in many European countries, where national markets have been opened to international operators and online gambling has developed (Gainsbury & Wood, 2011). Simultaneously, technological advancement has enabled the emergence of sophisticated forms of targeted advertising, including personalised offers during live broadcasts and excessive promotion of riskier bets (Torrance, John, et al., 2021).

Despite this commercial success and widespread adoption, the presence of gambling advertising in football broadcasts raises considerable controversy and societal debate (Newall et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2024). Critics point to potential negative impacts on vulnerable populations, particularly young viewers (Abarbanel, Gainsbury, King, Hing, & Delfabbro, 2017; Torrance, Roderique-Davies, Thomas, Davies, & John, 2021). Research shows that exposure to gambling advertising at an early age can influence attitudes towards gambling and increase the likelihood of problem gambling (Syvertsen, Erevik, Hanss, Mentzoni, & Pallesen, 2022). Simultaneously, concerns arise regarding the normalisation of gambling as a routine part of the sporting experience (Deans, Thomas, Derevensky, & Daube, 2017).

Researchers have examined various aspects of the gambling advertising phenomenon – from measuring exposure and its effects on consumer behaviour (Syvertsen et al., 2022) to analysing the effectiveness of regulatory measures (Newall et al., 2023). The subject matter of advertising varies. Promotional materials incorporate financial incentives, such as exclusive bonuses, enhanced odds, or complimentary wagers that are typically unavailable to regular customers (Browne, Hing, Russell, Thomas, & Jenkinson, 2019). However, this research landscape presents notable geographical limitations. Studies in this area appear predominantly in jurisdictions designated as ‘Western countries’ (World Population Review, 2025), such as the United Kingdom or Australia. This geographical concentration creates a significant research gap, particularly regarding post-communist societies that have experienced different regulatory and cultural trajectories. Consequently, this study focuses on the Czech Republic, a country that has undergone significant transformations in its society, economy, and gambling sector.

### The Czech Republic gambling market

The Czech Republic stands out for its notably high provision and accessibility of gambling venues, especially casinos (Frajer et al., 2024). The country’s regulatory framework permits several forms of gambling activities, including lotteries (both numerical and instant such as scratch cards), sports betting, live games (dealer-operated casino games), technical games (operated directly by players through technical devices, particularly slot machines, electromechanical roulette, and electromechanical dice games), bingo, raffles, and small-scale tournaments (elimination-type card

game tournaments). The Czech gambling market has undergone a substantial transformation over the past few decades (Szczyrba, Mravčík, Fiedor, Černý, & Smolová, 2015), demonstrating remarkable growth across all major segments (Fig. 1). Total wagering volumes increased from €15.6 billion in 2019 to €39.5 billion in 2024, representing a 154% increase over the six-year period.

Within this rapidly expanding market, sports betting has demonstrated steady yet moderate growth, increasing from €3.4 billion in 2019 to €5.8 billion in 2024, representing a 71% rise. However, the relative market position of sports betting has undergone significant shifts. The segment’s share of total gambling expenditure declined from 21.8% in 2019 to 14.7% in 2024, indicating that while sports betting continues to grow in absolute terms, it has been outpaced by the explosive expansion of technical games. This relative decline creates competitive pressure within the sports betting sector, likely intensifying marketing efforts and advertising expenditure as operators seek to maintain market share and attract new customers. Despite a reduced market share, the consistent growth in sports betting volumes suggests a maturing yet competitive landscape where operators must differentiate their offerings and refine their customer acquisition strategies to remain competitive. This market context provides crucial background for understanding the intensified presence of gambling advertising in sports broadcasts, as operators pursue aggressive marketing approaches to capture audience attention and maintain growth momentum in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

Multiple sports betting operators offer their services in the Czech Republic. An overview of licensed gambling operators, known as the ‘whitelist’, is published on the Ministry of Finance’s website, allowing the public to verify the legitimacy of specific operators conducting gambling activities (Ministry of Finance, 2025). Individual operators may hold licences covering both land-based and online provision of the same form of gambling activity under a single basic licence. In the sports betting segment, four operators are licensed to operate in land-based venues, whilst 10 operators are authorised to conduct online sports betting as of October 2025.

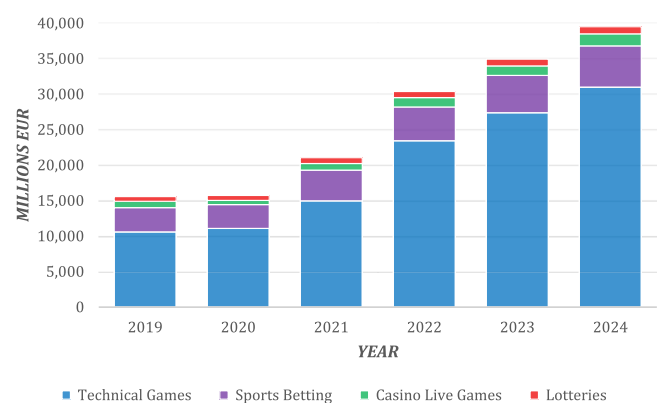


Fig. 1. Gambling market value in the Czech Republic

The association between gambling operators and sports, especially football, already has deep roots and is likely to strengthen further. This is evidenced in the Czech context by new sponsorship contracts, such as the recent partnership between Slavia Prague and a betting company, reportedly the most significant collaboration of its kind in Czech football history, worth over €12 million across five years (Macháčová, 2025).

The Czech top-flight football league, known as ‘Chance Liga’, comprises 16 teams, with 8 matches played in each round of matches. All games are broadcast by Oneplay, an IPTV service operated by O2 TV, which holds exclusive broadcasting rights for the Czech league. The league demonstrates significant viewer engagement, with the 2024/2025 season broadcasting a total of 276 matches that reached a record number of viewers. The cumulative reach exceeded 34 million, representing a year-on-year increase of nearly 9% (iSport, 2025) with an average of approximately 123,000 viewers per match. The Chance Liga stands as the most-watched sporting competition in the Czech Republic, with record viewership figures again anticipated for the current season.

Given the substantial reach of Czech football broadcasts and the presence of multiple licensed gambling operators in the market, there is a clear opportunity to examine how gambling advertising manifests within this highly popular sporting environment. The present study, therefore, aims to address a geographical research gap by conducting a content analysis of gambling advertising during football broadcasts in the Czech Republic. The specific objectives are to examine:

1. The frequency of gambling advertisements in live television coverage of Czech football matches.
2. The nature and types of gambling products advertised during football broadcasts.
3. The characteristics of gambling advertising content, including timing, duration, and presentation methods.

## METHODS

### Variables

A comprehensive set of variables was recorded for each gambling-related advertisement identified to capture the multifaceted nature of gambling promotional content. The coded variables are described in greater detail in Table 1. While all these variables were systematically collected during the coding process, they are analysed and reported separately to provide focused insights into specific aspects of gambling advertising practices. Supplementary data, including a broader range of promotional screenshots, is available at <https://www.osf.io/4ngwz>.

The call-to-action variable captured the primary action that viewers were encouraged to take, coded as: registration (creating new accounts), website visit (directing to operator’s website), betting action (placing bets), bonus

Table 1. Monitored variables

Variable	Description
Ad Number	Cumulative number given to each ad
Match ID	ID of the match
Ad Type	Type of the ad
Operator	Name of the gambling operator promoted
Segment	Segment of a match when the ad occurred
Ad Time	Exact time when the ad starts
Ad Length	Length of the ad (seconds)
Call-To-Action	The specific action viewers are prompted to take by the ad
Gambling Form	What gambling form is promoted?
Key Message	What is the ad primarily about?
Celebrity Appearance	Does a celebrity appear in the ad?
Ad Description	Ad summary based on highlights of music and descriptions that evoke an emotional response
Age Message	Presence of a message about the legal age for participation
Warning Message	Presence of a warning message about addiction
Safe Gambling Message	Presence of a responsible gambling message
Safe Gambling Message Delivery	Type of a responsible gambling message delivery

claim (accessing promotional offers), fantasy (participating in fantasy sports), other (alternative actions), or none (no explicit call-to-action present). The values of the variable capturing call-to-action were partially adopted from previously conducted research (Newall et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2024); however, they had to be modified due to the differences in the cultural environment.

### Pilot data collection

A pilot recording phase was conducted on August 2nd and 3rd, 2025, during which two independent coders (FK and DF) systematically coded gambling advertisements across four Czech First Football League matches. All matches were broadcast by Oneplay, an IPTV service operated by O2 TV. Broadcasts were accessed through the Oneplay video library, which retained each match for 14 days following live broadcast, allowing coders to review, pause, and replay content as needed. This allowed both coders to independently review the same recorded content to ensure accurate identification and coding of all gambling-related promotional materials. The coding process involved identifying and categorising gambling-related promotional content appearing during pre-match, after-match studios, and live football broadcasts. Using a standardised coding sheet, coders documented each advertisement’s timing, duration, presentation characteristics, form of gambling product, and all variables outlined in Table 1. The extracted data were subsequently compared to ensure consistent agreement between coders. Percentage agreement was employed to calculate inter-rater reliability. All coded variables achieved

satisfactory levels of inter-rater reliability (91.8%), exceeding the 70% agreement threshold considered acceptable, and attained agreement levels that were regarded as excellent (Stemler & Tsai, 2008). Any coding discrepancies between the two coders were discussed, and a consensus was reached through collaborative resolution.

## Main data collection

The analysis encompassed four rounds of the Czech First Football League, covering four weekends with 32 matches (the final round in August and three rounds in September 2025). Following the same procedure as in the pilot phase, broadcasts were accessed through the video library, ensuring precise documentation of advertisement frequency, timing, duration, and presentation characteristics that would not be feasible during live viewing. Each coder independently reviewed their assigned recorded broadcasts and systematically documented all gambling-related advertisements using a standardised coding sheet. For each identified advertisement, coders recorded: (1) gambling operator, (2) match segment, (3) the exact timing of appearance (timestamp), (4) duration in seconds, (5) form of gambling product advertised, and (6) all other variables specified in Table 1. The recorded broadcasts allowed coders to replay segments when necessary to ensure accurate capture of all relevant information. Following the establishment of high inter-rater reliability in the pilot phase, both coders (FK and DF) proceeded to analyse 16 matches each, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the selected fixtures while maintaining the coding consistency established during the pilot phase. A comprehensive database of advertisement types appearing during the monitored matches was created, with all advertisements that appeared during the broadcasts being systematically recorded into this single database.

## Analysis

For the analysis of the dataset, basic descriptive analysis methods were utilised, primarily the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and range. Beyond these, a sign scheme was employed, which captures statistically significant differences between categories in the contingency table at various levels of significance. For the analysis of associations between broadcast time segments and call-to-action types in gambling advertisements, a graded sign scheme based on standardised residuals from the chi-square test of independence was employed. This method enables the identification and quantification of the strength of associations between categorical variables. The sign scheme was constructed according to the following criteria for association intensity based on adjusted standardised residuals (Naioti & Mudrak, 2018):

- +++/---: Extremely strong positive/negative association ( $|z| > 5.0$ )
- ++/--: Very strong positive/negative association ( $3.0 < |z| \leq 5.0$ )
- +/-: Strong positive/negative association ( $1.96 < |z| \leq 3.0$ )

- 0: No statistically significant association ( $|z| \leq 1.96$ )

The threshold of 1.96 corresponds to the statistical significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ , whilst higher thresholds (3.0 and 5.0) indicate progressively stronger associations. Positive signs denote over-representation of the given combination relative to the expected frequency, whilst negative signs indicate under-representation.

## Ethics

This study did not necessitate ethical clearance.

## RESULTS

### Advertisement frequency and distribution

Across 32 matches in the Czech football league, 1,824 gambling advertisements were documented, with an average of 57 advertisements per match (SD = 7.04, range: 46–72). These advertisements were attributable to 8 distinct gambling operators. Regarding temporal placement (Fig. 2.2), the highest frequency occurred during live match coverage ( $n = 700$ , 38.4%), followed by half-time breaks ( $n = 452$ , 24.8%), post-match ( $n = 383$ , 21.0%), and pre-match programming ( $n = 289$ , 15.8%).

The total duration of gambling advertisements across all 32 matches was 22,011 s (approximately 6.1 h). On average (Fig. 2.1), each match contained 688 s (11.5 min) of gambling advertising content (SD = 136.6). The temporal distribution of advertisement duration varied considerably across broadcast segments. Half-time breaks contained the longest average duration of gambling advertisements ( $M = 205$  s, SD = 13.4), followed by post-match programming ( $M = 181$  s, SD = 29.1), pre-match programming ( $M = 164$  s, SD = 145.5), and live match coverage ( $M = 139$  s, SD = 22.6). Notably, pre-match programming exhibited the highest variability in advertisement duration (SD = 145.5), ranging from minimal exposure in some matches to extensive promotional content in others. Conversely, half-time advertising duration demonstrated the most consistent pattern across matches (SD = 13.4).

### Advertisement content types

Analysis of gambling advertisement content revealed three distinct promotional forms across the monitored matches (Fig. 2.3). Sports betting dominated the advertising landscape, accounting for 1,550 advertisements (85.0% of total content), with an average of 48 sports betting ads per match (SD = 5.8, range: 38–62). Online casino promotions comprised 196 advertisements (10.7% of total), averaging 6 advertisements per match (SD = 1.8, range: 4–10). Lottery advertisements were the least prevalent, totalling 78 instances (4.3% of the total), with an average of 2 advertisements per match (SD = 0.8, range: 1–6).

Beyond the quantitative distribution of gambling product types, the advertisements employed sophisticated promotional techniques to enhance audience engagement.

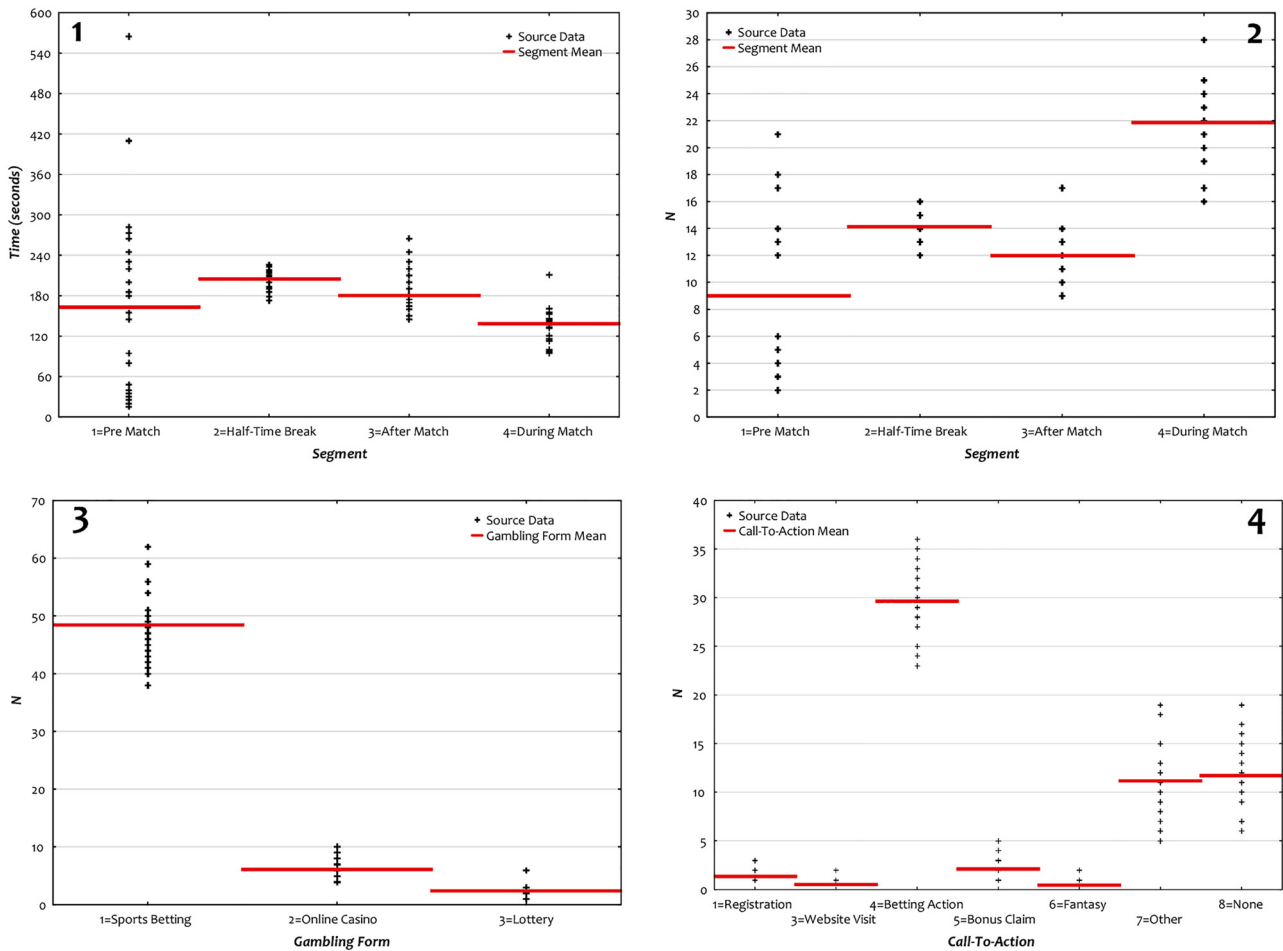


Fig. 2. Gambling advertisement broadcasts: (1) total advertising time by broadcast segment, (2) number of ads by broadcast segment, (3) advertisement distribution by gambling form, (4) advertisement frequency by call-to-action type

Celebrity appearances were featured in over a quarter of advertisements (27.0%), predominantly involving prominent Czech athletes from various sports, including those beyond football. Players from three first-division football clubs also appeared in promotional content representing their clubs for their principal gambling sponsor. Notably, several advertisements featured a Czech actor who portrayed the lead character in a television series and subsequent films centred on Czech football culture, including themes of betting and corruption scandals (Filmovyprehled.cz, 2022). The temporal context also influenced advertising content, with new election-themed advertisements emerging during the final monitored weekend (27th–28th September), strategically timed ahead of the Czech parliamentary elections (3rd–4th October). These content strategies were implemented in conjunction with targeted promotional calls to action, creating comprehensive marketing approaches.

An examination of call-to-action elements across broadcast segments revealed distinct promotional strategies (Fig. 2.4). Betting action prompts constituted the majority of calls-to-action ( $n = 948, 52.0\%$ ), followed by generic promotional content ( $n = 375, 20.6\%$ ) and other unspecified actions ( $n = 357, 19.6\%$ ). Registration encouragement

appeared in 44 instances (2.4%), bonus claim prompts in 68 cases (3.7%), website visits in 17 instances (0.9%), and fantasy sports promotions in 15 cases (0.8%). The distribution of call-to-action types varied markedly across broadcast segments. During live match coverage, betting action prompts were exclusively employed ( $n = 700, 100\%$ ). Conversely, pre-match programming demonstrated the most diverse range of promotional approaches, whilst half-time and post-match segments exhibited mixed strategies with betting action remaining predominant but accompanied by various supplementary promotional tactics.

To illustrate the strategic emphasis of different call-to-action types across broadcast segments, a comparative sign scheme was developed based on relative frequency patterns (Table 2). The scheme employs symbols ranging from substantially above expectation (+ + +) to notably below expectation (– –), with neutral presence (0) indicating expected baseline occurrence levels.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The during-match segment was excluded from this analysis, as this broadcast segment exclusively featured betting action content ( $n = 700, 100\%$ ). Including this segment would have disproportionately skewed the sign scheme results for other segments.

Table 2. Sign scheme for gambling advertisements across match segments and call-to-action types

Match segment	Registration	Website visit	Betting action	Bonus claim	Fantasy	Other	None
Pre Match	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	+	--	++	-	<b>0</b>
	11	5	81	1	12	64	115
Half-Time Break	<b>0</b>	+	<b>0</b>	+++	-	<b>0</b>	-
	16	12	82	59	0	165	118
After Match	<b>0</b>	-	<b>0</b>	--	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	17	0	85	8	3	128	142

The analysis reveals distinct promotional strategies across broadcast segments. Pre-match programming demonstrates call-to-action frequencies above expectation for betting action prompts (+), while showing notably below-expectation occurrence for bonus claim offers (- -) and substantially above-expectation levels for fantasy sports content (+ +). Half-time breaks exhibit the most diverse promotional approach, with substantially above-expectation emphasis on bonus claim opportunities (+ + +) and above-expectation promotion of website visits (+), while fantasy sports content occurs below expectation (-). Post-match

programming shows a more conservative approach, with an under-expected occurrence of website visits (-) and bonus claims (- -), while maintaining expected levels for other promotional categories.

**During match advertisements**

During live match play (defined as the period between the referee’s whistle for kick-off and final whistle of each half), a total of 700 in-match advertisements were recorded across 32 matches. These advertisements consisted exclusively of two distinct types (Fig. 3), both originating from a single gambling

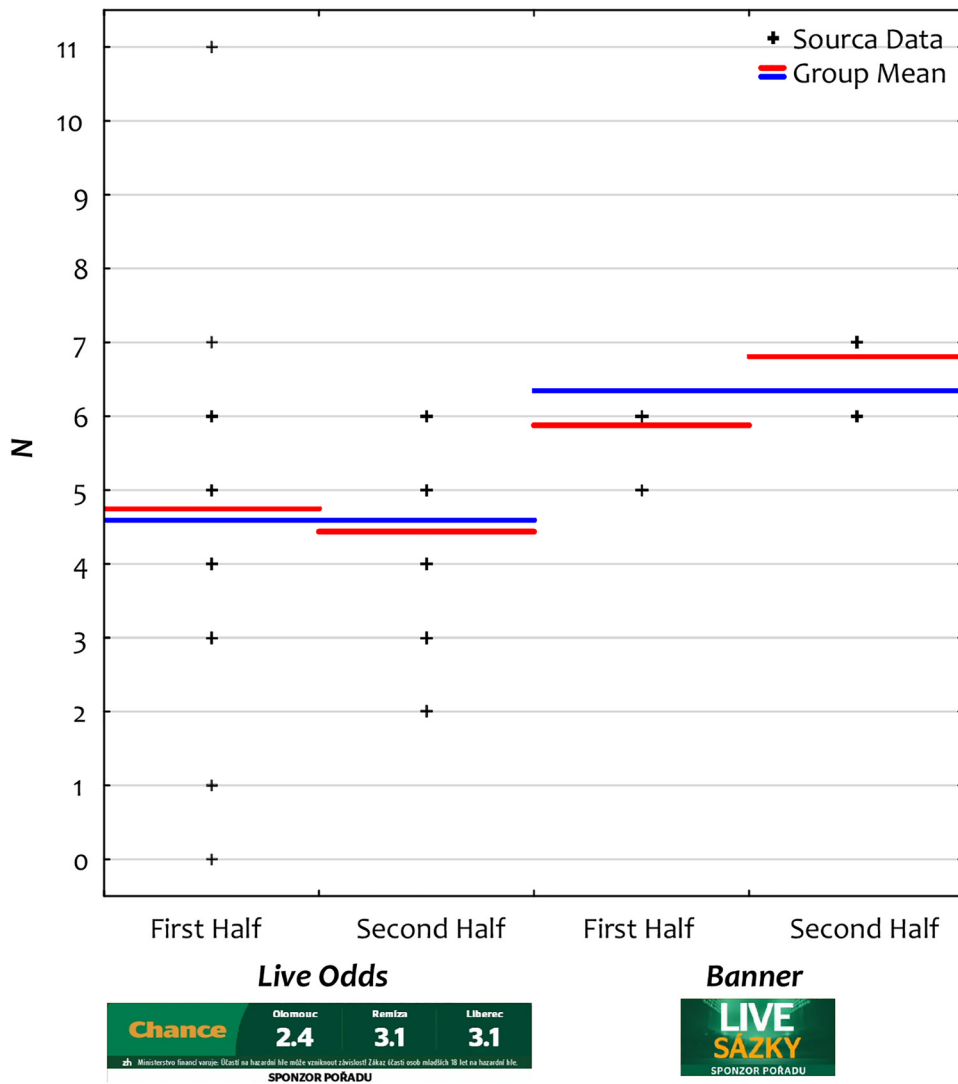


Fig. 3. Distribution of during match gambling adverts by match halves

operator serving as the league's title sponsor. The first type ('Live Odds') comprised a 10-s spot displaying the gambling operator's logo alongside live odds for home win, draw, and away win, accompanied by sponsorship acknowledgement text. The second advertisement ('Banner') consisted of a 5-second spot featuring the operator's logo, followed by "Live Betting" text, which promoted in-play wagering opportunities and included sponsorship information.

The frequency of in-match advertisements varied between halves of the match. During the first halves, 340 advertisements were broadcast (152 'Live Odds' spots and 188 'Banner' spots), whilst second halves contained 360 advertisements (142 'Live Odds' spots and 218 'Banner' spots). 'Banner' advertisements were more prevalent overall ( $n = 406$ , 58.0%) compared to 'Live Odds' advertisements ( $n = 294$ , 42.0%). Notably, 'Banner' promotions increased in the second half (188 vs. 218 instances), whilst 'Live Odds' advertisements decreased slightly (152 vs. 142 instances), suggesting a strategic shift towards encouraging active wagering as matches progressed. Individual match analysis revealed relatively consistent advertisement patterns, with most matches containing 4–6 'Live Odds' advertisements per half and 5–7 'Banner' advertisements per half, demonstrating standardised promotional scheduling during live coverage.

## DISCUSSION

The present research revealed a substantial prevalence of gambling advertisements during live broadcasts of Czech football matches, with an average of 57 advertisements per match and a total exposure of 11.5 min of gambling content per fixture. It is important to emphasise that this study focused specifically on advertising content during broadcasts, including commercials and on-screen graphics, rather than sponsorship elements such as shirt logos or pitch-side hoardings (Wheaton et al., 2025). Studies examining sponsorship exposure typically document even higher frequencies of gambling brand appearances, as these visual elements remain continuously present throughout match play. Our findings, therefore, represent only one component of the broader gambling advertising ecosystem to which viewers are exposed.

A comparative analysis with previous studies reveals significant differences in the prevalence of gambling advertisements across various football competitions and jurisdictions. Newall et al. (2022) documented an average of 4.5 gambling advertisements per match during the 2020 Men's European Championship, whilst Sharman et al. (2024) recorded 5.2 gambling advertisements per fixture during the 2022 Men's World Cup. Notably, the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup demonstrated even lower exposure to gambling advertisements, with Piper, Youngs, Newall, and Sharman (2025) recording only 0.6 adverts per match. In the United Kingdom, the average number of gambling advertisements per match reaches a value of 4 (McGrane, Pryce, Wilson, Field, & Goyder, 2025). The frequency of 57 adverts

per match identified in our study, therefore, represents more than a tenfold higher exposure compared to these previous findings. This pronounced disparity may be attributed to distinct cultural contexts and differing regulatory frameworks governing gambling advertising across various jurisdictions. The markedly elevated frequency observed in this study reflects the specific socio-cultural environment, more permissive advertising standards, and intensified commercialisation of Czech football. Within the Czech regulatory context, there are virtually no restrictions on gambling company promotion, unlike the whistle-to-whistle ban implemented in the UK (Conway, 2018), where operators are required to comply with conditions stipulated by advertising legislation. However, even such regulatory measures may not be entirely effective, as McGrane et al. (2025) demonstrate that partial advertising restrictions during live sports are inadequate, as they fail to limit exposure during unrestricted periods surrounding matches.

The dominance of sports betting as the promoted gambling form during broadcasts (85% of all advertisements) corresponds with global trends, where sports betting has become the primary segment of the gambling industry targeting sports audiences. The relatively low representation of online casinos (10.7%) and lotteries (4.3%) suggests that operators are strategically targeting products with direct relevance to the viewed content, thereby maximising the relevance and potential effectiveness of advertisements. This targeted approach is particularly concerning, given research findings that individuals who frequently watch both live and televised sporting events, where sports betting is heavily promoted, demonstrate higher Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) scores, indicating an increased risk of gambling-related harm (Hing, Russell, Vitartas, & Lamont, 2016). Celebrity endorsement was present in a substantial proportion of advertisements (27%), representing a significant marketing strategy employed by gambling operators. The majority of these featured Czech football players, though endorsements also included a hockey player and a UFC fighter. Particularly noteworthy was the frequent appearance of a Czech actor known for portraying the protagonist of a talented footballer in a widely popular television series and films—a character whose career was ultimately destroyed by alcohol, substance abuse, and poor lifestyle choices. Whilst this series and its film adaptations treat such themes with humour and enjoy particular popularity among younger audiences, the ironic use of this character to promote gambling activities raises concerns about the normalisation of risk-taking behaviours. The strategic deployment of recognisable public figures in gambling promotion contributes to the broader cultural acceptance and normalisation of such activities within the population. Furthermore, when endorsers possess relevant expertise or perceived authority in their field, their trustworthiness is likely to be enhanced, thereby potentially increasing consumer engagement and the commercial effectiveness of promotional campaigns (Agnihotri, Bhattacharya, & Prasad, 2018). Research indicates that celebrity endorsers not only enhance brand behavioural intentions

but also contribute to the legitimisation of gambling behaviour, as viewers may infer that respected public figures would not associate themselves with irresponsible or harmful activities (Han & Saunak, 2025).

Differences were also recorded in the frequency of advertisement display according to the broadcast segment. The highest number of advertisements was broadcast during the match (38.4%). This strategy may be attributed to maximising reach during peak match viewership or exploiting viewers' emotional engagement during play (Lopez-Gonzalez, Guerrero-Solé, & Griffiths, 2018). These advertisements primarily focused on promoting the possibility of betting during the match (also referred to as "in-play betting" or "live betting") or displaying current odds for home team victory, a draw, and away team victory. The dominance of advertisements during this segment primarily targets players who utilise these types of betting. This targeting strategy is particularly concerning from a harm prevention perspective, as research demonstrates that individuals who engage in live betting exhibit higher problem gambling severity scores compared to those who do not participate in in-play wagering (Gainsbury, Abarbanel, & Blaszczynski, 2020; López-González, Griffiths, & Estévez, 2020). The concentration of gambling advertisements during match play, therefore, not only capitalises on heightened viewer engagement but also specifically promotes the most problematic form of gambling behaviour.

The analysis of call-to-action elements reveals sophisticated promotional strategies employed by gambling operators, with distinct approaches tailored to different broadcast segments. The predominance of betting action prompts (52.0% of all calls-to-action) reflects the industry's primary objective of converting viewer engagement into immediate wagering behaviour. These prompts primarily manifested as odds advertising before or during matches, commentator references to betting odds (Hing, Lamont, Vitartas, & Fink, 2015), or explicit verbal encouragements within advertisements directly instructing viewers to place bets. This is particularly evident during live coverage, where advertisements focus exclusively on immediate betting opportunities. Conversely, the diversified promotional strategies observed during pre-match programming suggest a more comprehensive approach to customer acquisition and retention. The presence of registration encouragement (2.4%) and bonus claim prompts (3.7%) during these segments indicates efforts to attract new customers and incentivise continued engagement through promotional offers (Hing, Sproston, Brook, & Brading, 2017). In particular, bonus offers and promotional incentives can be particularly effective in encouraging initial participation in gambling. The relatively low frequency of website visit prompts (0.9%) and fantasy sports promotions (0.8%) may reflect the industry's shift towards direct betting applications. The substantial proportion of 'other' actions (19.6%) primarily encompassed brand awareness campaigns, showcasing the spectrum of gambling products offered by specific operators, or in cases where operators served as principal sponsors of football teams, emphasising their corporate association with the

clubs. These brand-focused advertisements, whilst not containing explicit calls-to-action, serve to normalise gambling operators' presence within the sporting environment and establish brand recognition (Newall et al., 2019).

The standardised length of advertisements during half-time intervals (SD = 13.4) versus high variability in pre-match programming (SD = 145.5) suggests different commercial strategies. Consistent half-time advertising blocks reflect firmly established advertising slots during intervals, whilst the flexibility of pre-match or post-match content allows adaptation according to match importance or commercial opportunities. Moreover, towards the end of data collection, new advertisements with different content also began to appear. Specifically, these concerns pertained to parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic, or rather, wagering on electoral results. This illustrates how gambling operators adapt their advertising strategies to capitalise on not only sporting events but also broader social and political developments. It should be noted that, beyond direct advertising spots, television broadcast viewers are also exposed to additional advertising spaces promoting gambling operators, such as sponsorship of football shirts (Torance et al., 2023) or the pitch-side advertising hoardings (Purves et al., 2020). This implies that exposure to advertising and brand promotion by operators is nearly constant during broadcasts (Killick & Griffiths, 2023). Future research should systematically examine sponsorship-based gambling exposure across Czech sports to capture a more comprehensive picture of total gambling exposure than advertising-focused analyses alone. Moreover, viewers and fans are exposed to gambling marketing through additional channels not examined in this study, including social media and online platforms, as well as offline formats such as matchday programmes (Sharman, Ferreira, & Newall, 2020) and in-stadium promotional materials.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to map and quantify the exposure of football broadcast viewers to gambling advertising. The analysis of the frequency, content, and strategies of these advertisements provides important insight into the extent to which viewers are exposed to gambling promotion whilst watching sports broadcasts. It is important to note that this study examined advertising content specifically, representing only one component of the broader gambling marketing ecosystem. Viewers are additionally exposed to sponsorship elements, social media, and offline materials such as matchday programmes, suggesting that total gambling exposure during football consumption is substantially higher than documented in broadcast advertising alone. Given the risks associated with gambling, however, it is essential to expand the research scope to include other dimensions of this issue. Future studies should systematically examine sponsorship-based gambling exposure in Czech sports to capture a more comprehensive picture of total exposure. Additionally, research should focus on responsible gambling

principles and their implementation in advertising campaigns, including analysis of preventive messages and warning notices.

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**Conflict of interests:** The authors have no competing interests to declare relevant to this article’s content.

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