

Online Poker in Finland – A National Issue

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Abstract

Despite the groundbreaking opening of the online lotto and sport games in 1997, Finland has entered the universe of Internet gambling slowly and with caution. A national alternative of online poker is in the making, but Finns have gambled on foreign Internet gambling sites for years. The interest in online poker has increased rapidly and steadily in Finland. My presentation focuses on the articles, opinions and news about online poker published in the Finnish press between 2005 and 2008. I will ask how online poker became a national issue in Finland and what are the concerns related to Internet gambling. In order to get some answers, I will show how the political statements and arguments, the different attitudes towards online gambling and the anticipation of gambling problems have generated a nationwide debate. The future of the Finnish online poker is still open.

Author Bio

Dr Johanna Järvinen-Tassopoulos is senior researcher at the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) in the Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Abuse Prevention Unit. As a sociologist, she is interested in social harms of gambling, gambling policy, gender and age differences in gambling, and online gambling. Her forthcoming articles examine youth gambling and the media hype surrounding online gambling.