

# Assessing the Availability of Responsible Gambling Tools on Cryptocurrency Gambling Websites

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## Abstract

As cryptocurrency gambling becomes more popular among adolescents, questions about security, safety, legitimacy and availability of responsible gambling tools on cryptocurrency gambling sites arise. This paper provides a systematic literature review on current responsible gambling tools and assesses the availability of said responsible gambling tools on the fifty most popular cryptocurrency gambling websites. Age verification was voluntarily available on 92% of the gambling websites. Only 10% of the sites required identity verification (KYC) to allow a deposit and less than 25% provided the ability to set wager or loss limits. Cooling off periods (66%) and self-exclusion (82%) were more common but often required the user to contact customer support. Out of operators who hosted a responsible gambling page (88%), not even one addressed cryptocurrency specific risks. The findings indicate major gaps in harm reduction measures and thus the need for better regulation and research into gambling protections that work on cryptocurrency-based platforms.

## Keywords

Cryptocurrency Gambling, Responsible Gambling, Online Gambling

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## 1. Introduction

Online gambling has become more frequent and accepted among young people today than in the past (Monreal-Bartolomé et al., 2023). The ease of access to and the ability to make quick deposits at cryptocurrency casinos and sports-betting platforms have been responsible for the increased incidence of problem gambling among adolescents (Gainsbury, 2015; Calado et al., 2016). The rise of cryptocurrency-based gambling is a new problem that may pose specific issues regarding

the availability and effectiveness of responsible gambling tools and protections (Derevensky & Gainsbury, 2015).

This research aims to assess the availability and effectiveness of responsible gambling tools on fifty most popular cryptocurrency gambling websites.

#### Prevalence of Adolescent Gambling

Adolescent gambling is one of the major public health concerns and the studies show that a large number of youths who gamble are likely to face adverse effects (Wilber & Potenza, 2006; Blinn-Pike et al., 2010). Many studies have established that adolescents are especially prone to the development of gambling problems that can have adverse implications for their education, relationships, and psychological well-being (Wilber & Potenza, 2006; Derevensky & Gainsbury, 2015).

A review of the current literature reveals that the rates of problem gambling among youths are between 0.2% and 12%, while 8% - 14% of them are classified as at-risk of becoming problem gamblers (Shi et al., 2021). These high rates of problem gambling among adolescents highlight the importance of understanding the specific factors that contribute to this problem, especially in the context of the online gambling industry and the emergence of cryptocurrency gambling sites (Wilber & Potenza, 2006; Blinn-Pike et al., 2010; Derevensky & Gainsbury, 2015).

#### Cryptocurrency Gambling and Responsible Gambling Tools

The use of cryptocurrency in gambling has introduced several challenges in the implementation of responsible gambling tools and harm reduction measures. The first major issue is the anonymity of cryptocurrency transactions, which makes it difficult to track and monitor gambling activities. Such anonymity can increase the risks of gambling-related harm, especially for the young people. Andrade et al. pointed out that the decentralized system of cryptocurrency not only hides the users' information but at the same time presents more risks to the people with gambling problems, which indicates that policy makers should be cautious when regulating such products (Andrade et al., 2022; Andrade & Newall, 2023).

Furthermore, the decentralization of cryptocurrency ecosystem allows for transactions to occur without any intermediaries which significantly complicates invasive consumer protections efforts like deposit limits that can be easily implemented in traditional casinos (Gainsbury & Blaszczynski, 2017).

Another challenge related to cryptocurrency gambling is the lack of strict age verification policies that can increase young people's impulsivity and risk taking. Research shows that conventional online gambling sites are more likely to have responsible gambling tools than the cryptocurrency gambling sites (Andrade et al., 2022). This difference emphasizes the importance of developing effective consumer protection measures in the cryptocurrency gambling industry in order to avoid gambling related harm.

Psychological framing of bets is another aspect of cryptocurrency gambling that might exacerbate problem gambling behaviours. When monetary bet values are displayed, gamblers perceive them as tangible, which can cause risk-aversion. When bets are presented as tokens, like cryptocurrency, the real-life impacts of losses

are obscured which might lead to impulsive betting behaviour (Kim et al., 2023).

The behavioural characteristics of the cryptocurrency gamblers are also worth highlighting. Recent research has established that people who trade in cryptocurrencies pose traits that make them gamble more frequently and to a higher degree (Sonkurt & Altınöz, 2021; Lee et al., 2023). The crypto trading and gambling activities are interconnected which means that users might be attracted to the element of risk and speculation, which makes the responsible gambling environment more challenging (Şentürk et al., 2023). Therefore, it is important to assess the current state of responsible gambling tools on cryptocurrency gambling sites and to create specific strategies that can help to prevent the problems specific to this type of gambling.

## 2. Methodology

This study used a systematic review of the literature to examine the current state of responsible gambling tools on traditional gambling platforms.

A wide search was carried out from multiple academic databases including Scopus, Web of Science, PsychInfo, SOCIndex, Google Scholar. The search included keywords such as “responsible gambling”, “responsible gambling crypto currency”, “cryptocurrency gambling” and “adolescent gambling”. The inclusion criteria consisted of a) English language, b) abstract including aforementioned keywords, c) responsible gambling was the main aspect of research. Books, conference papers and articles not focusing on responsible gambling were excluded.

The remaining literature was reviewed systematically to identify a set of responsible gambling tools best suited for cryptocurrency gambling.

These tools were then analysed in relation to their availability and efficacy on cryptocurrency gambling sites, with a specific focus on the implications for adolescent users.

## 3. Sample Selection

A list of 1,027 cryptocurrency gambling websites was obtained from DGBetz (<https://dgbetz.com/>), an organization specializing in online gambling site reviews. (Pluta, 2025c) An assessment of over 1,000 websites was beyond the practical scope of the present study. Monthly traffic volume to each of the cryptocurrency gambling websites was obtained from SimilarWeb, a leading web analytics service. To narrow the sample, the top fifty cryptocurrency gambling websites by monthly traffic were selected for further analysis.

Each website was assigned a unique ID for publication in this study.

## 4. Findings

A systematic review of the literature identified a number of responsible gambling tools that are typically used on traditional online gambling sites.

The most popular of responsible gambling tools are age and identity verification, which are meant to ensure that only users of the legal age can access the

gambling website. These tools usually require some form of ID, such as a driver's license or a passport, to allow users to create an account and gamble (Wilber & Potenza, 2006).

One of the most widely recognized responsible gambling tools is the implementation of monetary limit-setting features. These enable the player to set specific limits on the gambling funds (deposit, loss or wager) that they want to use within a day, week or month (Auer et al., 2019). The literature also indicates that such voluntary deposit limits can greatly curb the long-term gambling spend, thus aiding the player in managing their spending better (Auer et al., 2019). In addition, the effectiveness of such tools was previously established based on the fact that they can improve players' self-control and thus decrease the incidence of gambling-related problems (Esparza-Reig et al., 2021). In this study we will focus only on loss and wager limits, as deposit limits are unenforceable in case of cryptocurrency deposits.

In addition to spending limits, many online casinos have adopted features that allow players to self-exclude from gambling activities for specified periods of time. Self-exclusion programs are a preventive measure that allows temporary (cooling-off) or permanent barring from accessing gambling sites for a certain period of time or forever. This tool is particularly beneficial for individuals who recognize their gambling may be becoming problematic but may struggle to stop on their own (Omelchenko et al., 2023).

Another critical tool is the speed-of-play limit, which has been shown to effectively reduce gambling expenditure in fast-paced games such as online roulette (Newall et al., 2021). By slowing down the pace at which players can engage with games, operators can help mitigate impulsive gambling behaviors that often lead to increased losses. This tool is particularly relevant in the context of gambling online where immediacy and accessibility of games can worsen risky gambling behaviors (Chóliz, 2015).

Furthermore, responsible gambling measures often incorporate dedicated pages that provide players with knowledge of the dangers of gambling and how to identify problem gambling. As an educational measure this is a crucial part of the responsible gambling strategies, but it has been shown that it is not enough to prevent the gambling related harms (Montañés et al., 2024). Instead, a multi-faceted approach that incorporates both educational resources and practical tools, such as limit-setting and self-exclusion, is essential for effective harm reduction (Marionneau & Järvinen-Tassopoulos, 2021).

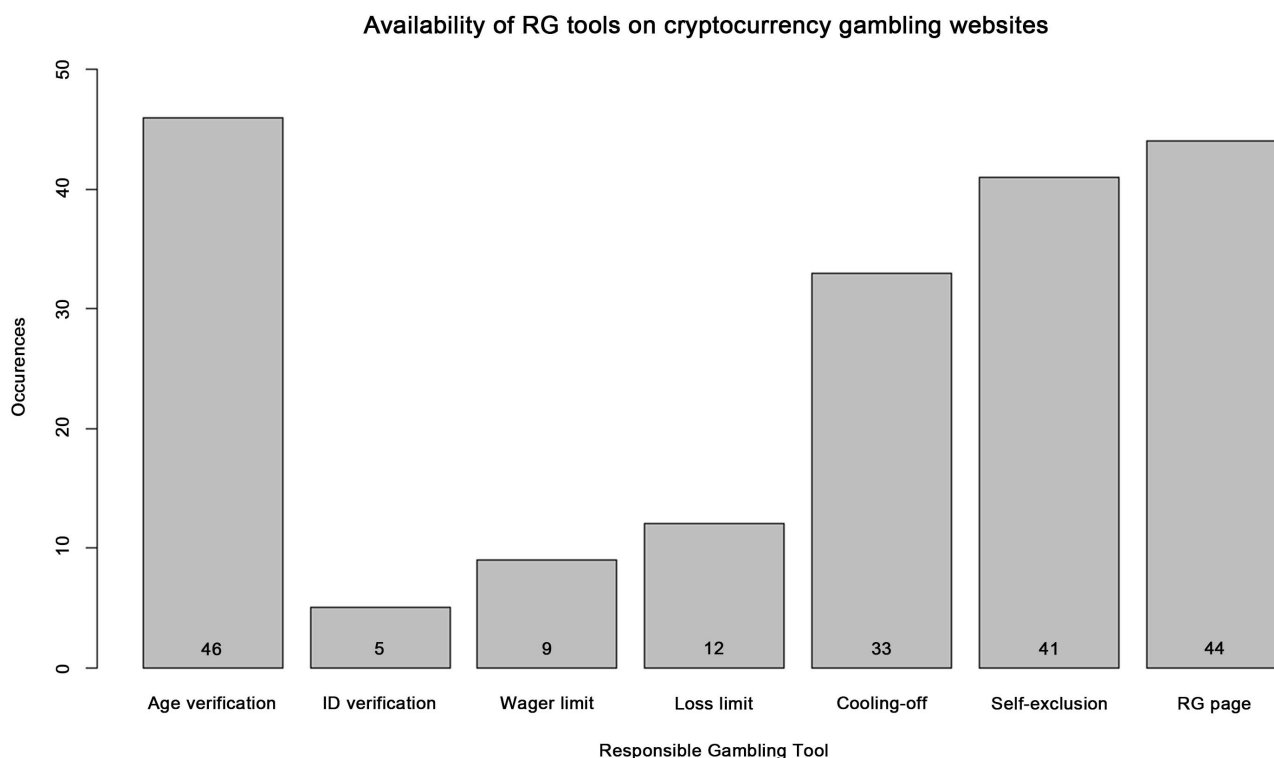
Seven responsible gambling tools were selected for assessment of availability on the top fifty cryptocurrency gambling websites.

- Age verification (voluntary)
- Identity verification (KYC)
- Wager limit setting
- Loss limit setting
- Cooling-off periods setting
- Permanent self-exclusion

- Responsible gambling educational page

## 5. Results

Results of the assessment of availability of selected seven responsible gambling tools on top fifty cryptocurrency gambling websites are presented in **Figure 1** below.



**Figure 1.** Availability of RG tools on cryptocurrency gambling websites.

Forty-six of fifty (92%) gambling websites verified users age before allowing registration. Age verification was voluntary, in most cases a checkbox with a simple text for ex. “I declare I’m over 18 years old” was used.

Five of fifty (10%) gambling websites had an obligatory ID verification process, forcing user to upload a copy of an official ID document before being allowed to make a deposit. It’s worth mentioning that all five gambling websites were operating under the license of Curaçao which does not require its licensees to perform obligatory ID verification before allowing users to deposit. However, at the time of writing all five websites promoted partnerships with prominent sports clubs on their homepage which the author suspects might be the reason for more stringent player verification.

Nine of fifty (18%) gambling websites allowed players to set wager based limits, either directly via gambling website interface or through contact with customer support agent.

Twelve of fifty (24%) gambling websites allowed players to set a loss based limit,

similar to wager limit; it could be done directly via gambling website interface or through contact with customer support agent.

Thirty-three of fifty (66%) gambling websites offered an option to set a cooling-off period (a period during which the player is voluntarily restricted from accessing the account).

Forty-one of fifty (82%) gambling websites allowed players to permanently self-exclude from the website.

Forty-four of fifty (88%) had a dedicated responsible gambling website accessible within two clicks from the homepage.

## 6. Discussion

Data shows that availability of responsible gambling tools among fifty most popular cryptocurrency betting websites is lacking.

Age verification, even though present on 92% of the assessed websites should be displayed more prominently to prevent underage gambling harm.

Voluntary wager and loss limits are usually the first responsible gambling tools players turn to when noticing signs of gambling addiction (Auer & Griffiths, 2019) and its lack in one-third of tested crypto casinos is concerning.

Self-exclusion and cooling-off period setting are among four most popular tools among tested websites. Their efficacy could be enhanced by improving access to them via website interface rather than reaching out to the customer support department of the website.

Out of all assessed gambling websites, 88% had a working responsible gambling page accessible within two clicks from the homepage. None of the responsible gambling pages accounted for specifics of gambling with cryptocurrency and challenges arising from the use of it in gambling context.

On the other hand, the anonymity associated with cryptocurrency gambling, coupled with cryptocurrency users' strong technological proficiency, such as their adeptness in using Virtual Private Networks, makes it more challenging to implement effective regulation in cryptocurrency-based casinos compared to traditional fiat currency-based casinos. It's worth noting that users from the cryptocurrency community have voiced their concerns about the lack of responsible gambling on popular cryptocurrency gambling websites (Pluta, 2025a, 2025b).

International regulation could have an impact on improving the availability of responsible gambling tools on tested cryptocurrency websites however enforcing strict regulation in cryptocurrency gambling can prove to be challenging due to most cryptocurrency gambling sites operating from offshore jurisdictions. Out of fifty tested cryptocurrency gambling websites thirty-nine (78%) operated under the license issued in Curaçao, three (6%) operated with a license issued by Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation, two (4%) held a license issued by Malta Gaming Authority, another two (4%) held a license from the Kahnawake Gaming Commission and one (2%) held a license from Estonian Tax and Customs Board.

Stricter regulation, especially in the area of Know Your Customer (KYC) and voluntary limit setting, by these jurisdictions could positively impact availability of responsible gambling tools on cryptocurrency gambling websites.

## 7. Conclusion

Lack of basic limit setting capabilities on many of the most popular gambling websites is concerning and measures should be taken to educate cryptocurrency gambling websites operators on the importance of voluntary self-limiting tools.

The majority of tested cryptocurrency gambling sites provide adequate player protections and can be considered safe. However, even among the most popular cryptocurrency gambling websites, some were missing basic player protections. Players are advised to perform due diligence before playing at any gambling website accepting cryptocurrency deposits.

Cryptocurrency gambling brings a new set of challenges to the responsible gambling area and further research is needed into the effectiveness of traditional responsible gambling tools.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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