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Institut de la statistique du Québec

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

# Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004

## What's New Since 2002?

### Highlights

## Access to the Survey Data

The ISQ encourages researchers and those working in the anti-smoking, alcohol and drug addiction, and gambling fields to use the data of this survey. Researchers can access the data by contacting the *Centre d'accès aux données de recherche of the ISQ (CADRISQ)*, with offices in Montréal and Québec City. Microdata files from the *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004* will be available for the general public in the autumn of 2005. For further information on accessing the data, consult the ISQ's website at ([www.stat.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca)).

### To learn more about the Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004

This document on the highlights of the survey (in English) and the report of the Enquête québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire, 2004 (in French), can be accessed on the ISQ's website at [www.stat.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca) by clicking on "English," "Publications," "Statistical Sector," section entitled "Society-Health."

You can also telephone the Project manager of the survey, Gaëtane Dubé, at (514) 873-4749 or 1-800-463-4090 (toll-free if calling from outside the Montréal region).

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#### Note:

Because of the rounding off of percentages, the total does not necessarily correspond to the sum of its parts.

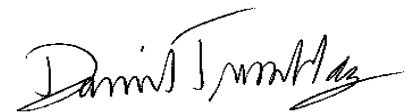
# Highlights

The main goal of the *Enquête québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire, 2004* (Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004), conducted by the **Institut de la statistique du Québec** (ISQ) for the **ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux**, was to continue to monitor trends in cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, drug use and gambling (including lotteries) among high school students.

This survey is the fourth in a biannual series that began in 1998. In the autumn of 2004, 4,726 students in Secondary 1 through 5, in 175 classes, distributed among 158 francophone and anglophone, public and private schools across the province, responded to a questionnaire.

The report of the survey describes cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, drug use and gambling in 2004, trends in smoking since 1998, in alcohol consumption and drug use since 2000, and in gambling including lotteries since 2002. All data are based on self-assessment responses to an anonymous questionnaire administered in the classroom.

The major findings of the report are summarized below. In short, what's new since 2002?



Daniel Tremblay  
Director,  
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*All publications of the Institut de la statistique du Québec are produced in the spirit of its Management Values, in particular, the first, which states: "Objectivity, political neutrality, impartiality, integrity and respect for the confidentiality of information in its possession comprise our fundamental values."*

# Methodology in brief

To ensure the validity of the comparisons, the methodology of this survey has been the same since 1998.

**Target population:** All students enrolled in Québec high schools (public or private, francophone or anglophone), except the following: those not regulated by the Québec Ministry of Education, aboriginal schools, schools in remote areas and schools in which at least 30% comprise handicapped persons. Therefore, 98% of students enrolled in secondary schools in Québec were represented in this survey.

**Sample stratified by...**

- o Language of instruction
- o Type of school (public or private)
- o Region

**...by cluster...**

- o Random selection of classes (36 per grade level, 180 in all) in 159 randomly selected schools (one class per school, in some cases two)
- o All students in the selected classes were asked to respond to the questionnaire (potentially 5,160 respondents).

**Instrument and Data Collection Method:**

- o Questionnaire (closed-ended questions), anonymous and self-administered in the class under the supervision of an ISQ interviewer.

**Data Collection Period:**

- o Beginning of November to mid-December, every two years since 1998.

**Response rate:** 98.9% of classes  
94.7% of students

# Results in brief

## 1. Smoking

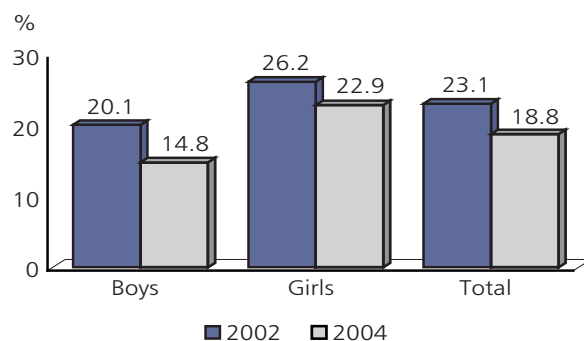
### 1.1 Overview

In 2004, approximately 19% of high school students (or 86,800 students) had smoked cigarettes during a 30-day period (Figure 1). Approximately 23% of female high school students had smoked during a 30-day period versus 15% of male students.

A notable decrease in the prevalence of smoking was observed between 2002 and 2004 (from 23% in 2002 to 19% in 2004), particularly in boys (from 20% to 15%). The prevalence also tended to decrease in girls (from 26% to 23%) (Figure 1).

The mean age at which students had smoked their first whole cigarette was 12.3 years. This was slightly older than the mean age observed in 2002 (12.1 years).

**Figure 1**  
**Trends in Smoking Among High School Students During a 30-Day Period, by Sex, Québec, 2002 to 2004**



Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

The data revealed that in 2004, approximately 11% of students were current smokers (8% were daily smokers and 3.4%, occasional smokers), 8% were new smokers and 81% were non-smokers (Table 1). Proportionally more girls than boys were current smokers (13% v. 9%) and more were new smokers (10% v. 6%). In contrast, more boys than girls were non-smokers (85% v. 77%).

Important changes in smoking status were detected between 2002 and 2004: the proportion of current smokers decreased (from 15% to 11%) while that of non-smokers increased (from 77% to 81%). The decrease in current smokers was seen in both boys (from 13% to 9%) and girls (from 17% to 13%) (Table 1). No significant changes in prevalence were observed for new smokers.

Table 1

**Trends in Smoking Status Among High School Students During a 30-Day Period, by Sex, Québec, 2002 to 2004**

	2002	2004
	%	
<b>Current smokers</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>11.1</b>
Boys	13.0	9.2
Girls	16.8	13.2
<b>New smokers</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>7.6</b>
Boys	7.0	5.6
Girls	9.4	9.7
<b>Non-smokers</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>81.2</b>
Boys	79.9	85.3
Girls	73.8	77.1

Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

The 2004 data also revealed that the proportion of students who were current smokers over a 30-day period increased by grade level, from 5% in Secondary 1 to 22% in Secondary 5, while that of non-smokers decreased, from 88% to 70%.

With regard to the number of cigarettes smoked per day, approximately 47% of smokers smoked two or fewer cigarettes a day, 22% between 3 and 5, 20% between 6 and 10 and 11% smoked 11 or more cigarettes a day.

In 2004, the most common times for high school students to smoke cigarettes were on the weekend (64%) and during the school day (at recess or lunch time) (52%). This latter proportion indicates a decrease from what was observed in 2002 (58%).

In 2004, approximately 18% of students (or 85,200 students) reported that they smoked cigars over a 30-day period, representing an increase from what was observed in 2002 (15%).

## 1.2 Cigarette addiction and quitting smoking

Smoking your first cigarette of the day within 30 minutes of waking up in the morning is one way in which cigarette addiction can be measured. In 2004, approximately 24% of all smokers fulfilled this criterion for addiction. Among daily smokers, the proportion climbed to 48%, and in occasional smokers, it decreased to 12%. No significant difference was observed between the sexes.

With regard to their perception of being addicted to cigarette smoking, approximately 73% of daily smokers considered themselves addicted, while 18% of daily smokers believed they would never develop an addiction. Nearly all new smokers (97%) believed themselves to be only slightly addicted or not addicted at all to cigarettes, and 74% of them also believed they would not develop an addiction. Also, more daily smokers than new smokers recognized that smoking cigarettes was risky for their health (86% v. 68%).

Approximately 37% of girls who smoked considered themselves to be mostly or totally addicted to cigarettes versus 29% of boys. More boys who smoked than girls believed they would not develop an addiction to cigarettes (30% v. 18%).

Among students who had smoked during a 12-month period (namely 21% of all secondary students), 63% had tried to quit smoking (Table 2). Approximately 67% of girls had tried to quit smoking versus 57% of boys.

Table 2

**Proportion of High School Smokers Who Attempted to Quit Smoking During a 12-Month Period, by Smoking Status and Sex, Québec, 2004**

	Yes	No
	%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>37.2</b>
<b>Smoking status</b>		
Current smokers	65.0	35.0
New smokers	51.3	48.8
Non-smokers <sup>a</sup>	73.5	26.5
<b>Sex</b>		
Boys	57.4	42.6
Girls	66.6	33.4

<sup>a</sup> Non-smokers, in this case, are former smokers and former experimenters only.

Source : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

Among students who had tried to quit smoking (namely 13% of all secondary students), approximately 45% had tried once and 27% had tried twice, and 27% had tried three times or more to stop.

For 37% of smokers, the duration of their last attempt to quit was seven days or shorter; a similar proportion, namely 43%, had quit for more than a month. A significantly lower proportion of smokers, 20%, had quit for a duration of between one week and one month.

More than half of all smokers (52%) thought it would not be very hard or not hard at all to stop smoking. Approximately 58% of boys expressed this versus 47% of girls. However, 25% of smokers thought it would be very hard or almost impossible to quit.

### 1.3 Sources of Cigarettes

In 2004, high school students' main sources of cigarettes were the following: obtained them from friends (41%), purchased them themselves in a store (36%), obtained them by means of a third party purchasing them (31%), bought them from a friend at school (28%) (Table 3).

Proportionally more girls than boys obtained their cigarettes from friends (45% v. 36%) and/or had a third party purchase cigarettes for them (35% v. 25%). However, more boys than girls bought cigarettes themselves in a store (42% v. 33%) (Table 3).

Over a period of one month, more than half of student smokers under 18 years of age (51%) had bought or had tried to buy their cigarettes in a store. Approxi-

mately 45% of student smokers under 18 had been asked to show proof of their age, and 50% had never been refused a purchase because of their age.

### 1.4 Exposure to Second-Hand Smoke

In 2004, 47% of students were exposed every day or nearly every day to tobacco smoke in the school yard. However, the proportion of students who had never been exposed to second-hand smoke in the school yard rose from 28% in 2002 to 32% in 2004.

In 2004, 32% of students were exposed every day or nearly every day to tobacco smoke in their home. However, the proportion who had never been exposed in their home increased from 47% in 2002 to 51% in 2004.

## 2. Alcohol Consumption

### 2.1 Alcohol Consumption During a 12-Month Period

In 2004, 63% of high school students (or 293,200 students) reported having consumed alcohol at least once during a 12-month period. No significant difference was observed between the sexes. Trends in alcohol consumption observed between the 2002 and 2004 surveys are encouraging. Overall prevalence of alcohol consumption decreased from 69% in 2002 to 63% in 2004; this decline was seen in both boys (from 69% to 63%) and girls (from 69% to 64%) (Figure 2).

Table 3

Sources of Cigarettes Among High School Smokers, by Sex, Québec, 2004

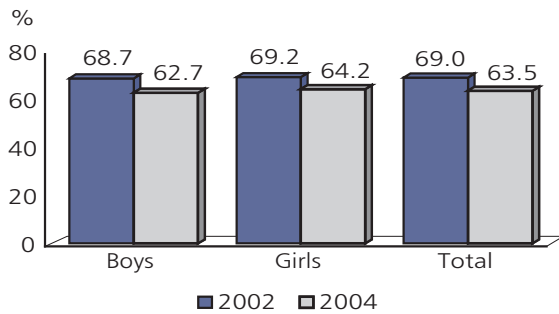
	Boys	Girls	Total
	%		
Purchased themselves in a store	41.9	32.9	36.4
Purchased from a friend (or someone else) at school	24.4	29.9	27.8
Purchased from a friend (or someone else) elsewhere than at school	16.9	19.1	18.2
Third party purchased them	25.4	35.2	31.4
Parents provided them	11.5*	17.1	14.9
Brothers/sisters provided them	6.5*	8.2	7.5
Friend provided them	35.6	44.5	41.1
Other sources	8.4*	8.5*	8.5

\* Coefficient of variation between 15% and 25%; interpret with caution.

Source : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

Figure 2

**Trends in Alcohol Consumption Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Sex, Québec, 2002 to 2004**



Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

The 2004 data revealed that the proportion of students who had consumed alcohol over a 12-month period increased by grade level, from 37% in Secondary 1 to 57% in Secondary 2, to 66% in Secondary 3, and 83% and 88% in Secondary 4 and 5 respectively.

In 2004, the mean age at which students reported having had their first ever alcoholic beverage was 12.4 years. Boys had had their first drink at a slightly younger age than girls (12.2 years vs. 12.6 years).

When the data were assessed by type of drinker, 37% of high school students were abstainers, 10% were experimenters with alcohol, 37% were occasional drinkers, 16% were regular drinkers and 0.3% were daily consumers of alcohol. More boys than girls were regular drinkers (18% v. 15%) (Table 5).

With regards to the frequency of consumption, during a 12-month period, 47% of students reported a low-level consumption of alcohol (experimenters or occasional drinkers) and 17% reported a high level of consumption (regular and daily drinkers). Low-level consumption decreased from 2002 to 2004 (51% to 47%), but high-level consumption (regular and daily drinkers) remained the same.

Table 4

**Type of Drinker Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Sex, Québec, 2004**

	Abstainer	Experimenter	Occasional	Regular	Daily
	%				
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>0.30**</b>
Sex					
Boys	37.3	9.5	34.4	18.4	0.47**
Girls	35.8	10.7	38.8	14.6	0.12**

\*\* Coefficient of variation greater than 25%; imprecise estimate given as information only.

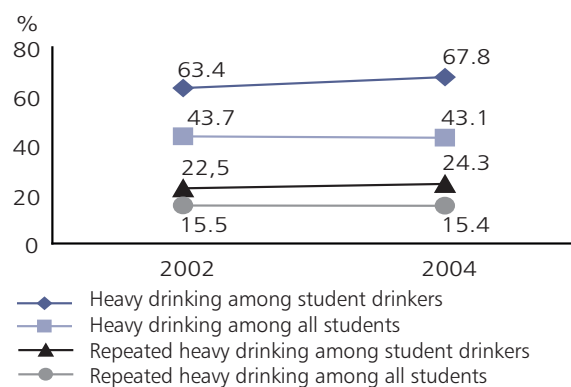
Source : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

**2.2 Heavy Drinking and Repeated Heavy Drinking**

In 2004, approximately 43% of high school students reported heavy alcohol consumption, that is, they had consumed 5 drinks or more on a single occasion at least once during a 12-month period. There was virtually no change in the prevalence compared to 2002 (Figure 3). No significant difference was observed between the sexes in the 2004 prevalence.

Figure 3

**Trends in the Prevalence of Heavy Drinking and Repeated Heavy Drinking Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, Québec, 2002 to 2004**



Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

However, among students having consumed alcohol, approximately 68% reported heavy drinking in 2004, a disturbing increase from what had been reported in 2002 (63%). Proportionally more boys than girls reported heavy drinking in 2004 (70% v. 65%).

The 2004 data also revealed that approximately 15% of all secondary students reported repeated heavy drinking (that is, 5 drinks or more on 5 or more occasions during a 12-month period), a proportion that had not changed since 2002. More boys than girls reported repeated heavy alcohol consumption (18% v. 13%).

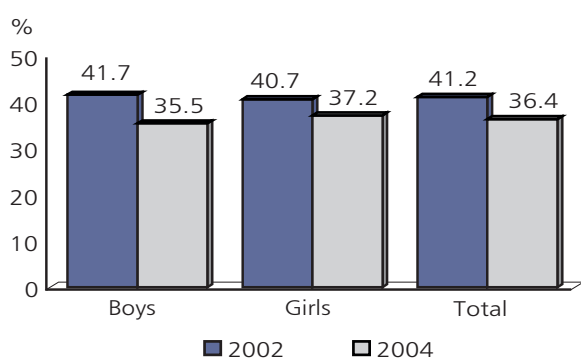
Among students who indicated having consumed alcohol in 2004, approximately 24% reported repeated heavy drinking, a proportion that had not changed since 2002. Once again, more boys than girls reported repeated heavy alcohol consumption (28% v. 20%).

### 3. Drug Use

#### 3.1 Drug Use During a 12-Month Period

In 2004, approximately 36% of high school students (or 168,000 students) reported having used drugs in 2004 during a 12-month period. No significant difference was observed between boys and girls with respect to their overall drug consumption (Figure 4).

**Figure 4**  
Trends in Drug Use Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Sex, Québec, 2002 to 2004



Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

However, notable changes were observed between the 2002 and 2004 surveys. There was a decrease in the prevalence of drug use from 41% in 2002 to 36% in 2004; this change was particularly noted in boys (from 42% to 36%).

The data also revealed that, in 2004, the proportion of drug users jumped from 16% to 30% between Secondary 1 and Secondary 2, and from 38% to 50% between Secondary 3 and Secondary 4.

The mean age of first-time drug use was 13 years. No difference was observed between boys and girls.

#### 3.2 Types of Drugs Used

In 2004, cannabis (36%), hallucinogens (11%) and amphetamines (10%) were the three types of drugs most frequently used by high school students during a 12-month period. No significant difference was observed between the sexes with regards to these three types of drugs (Table 5). However, between 2002 and 2004, there was a decrease in the use of cannabis (from 39% to 36%), particularly in boys (from 40% to 35%). The use of hallucinogens had not changed since 2002, except in boys, among whom a decrease was observed (from 14% in 2002 to 11% in 2004). Amphetamine use, however, increased between 2002 and 2004 (from 8% to 10%), particularly in girls (from 7% in 2002 to 11% in 2004) (Table 5).

**Table 5**  
Trends in the Use of Cannabis, Hallucinogens and Amphetamines Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Sex, Québec, 2002 to 2004

	2002	2004
	%	
<b>Cannabis</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>35.5</b>
Boys	40.0	35.0
Girls	38.2	36.1
<b>Hallucinogens</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>11.2</b>
Boys	13.8	11.1
Girls	11.2	11.3
<b>Amphetamines</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>10.3</b>
Boys	8.3	9.5
Girls	7.0	11.0

Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

### 3.3 Combined Use of Psychoactive Substances

In 2004, approximately 35% of students had consumed two or more psychoactive substances (namely alcohol and drugs at least once during a 12-month period, either together or separately on one or more occasions). A small proportion, 1.5% of students, had only used drugs, 29% of students had only consumed alcohol and 35% had not consumed any alcohol or drugs. No significant difference was observed between the sexes with regards to these categories.

Notable decreases in prevalence were observed between the 2002 and 2004 surveys. The prevalence of the combined use of psychoactive substances dropped from 39% in 2002 to 35% in 2004, particularly in boys (from 39% to 34%). The prevalence of students who had only consumed alcohol also decreased, from 2.7% to 1.5%.

Of particular interest was the increase in the proportion of students who had not consumed any alcohol or drugs (from 28% in 2002 to 35% in 2004), an increase that was observed in both boys (from 28% to 36%) and girls (from 29% to 35%).

### 3.4 Problematic alcohol consumption and drug use (DEP-ADO scale)

In 2004, approximately 84% of high school students had no problematic alcohol consumption or drug use and therefore required no professional intervention (Green Light on the DEP-ADO scale). The prevalence showed virtually no change from 2002 (Table 6).

Approximately 10% of students had an alcohol consumption or drug use level putting them at risk, for which a minor intervention would be needed to address an emerging problem (Yellow Light on the DEP-ADO scale). This prevalence showed little change from 2002.

Slightly over 5% of students had a problematic alcohol consumption or drug use level for which major, specialized intervention would be required (Red Light on the DEP-ADO scale). This prevalence showed no change from 2002.

Table 6

**Trends in Problematic Alcohol Consumption and Drug Use (DEP-ADO scale) Among High School Students, Québec, 2002 to 2004**

	2002	2004
	%	
Green light	84.0	84.5
Yellow light	10.8	10.2
Red light	5.2	5.3

Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

## 4. Gambling including lotteries

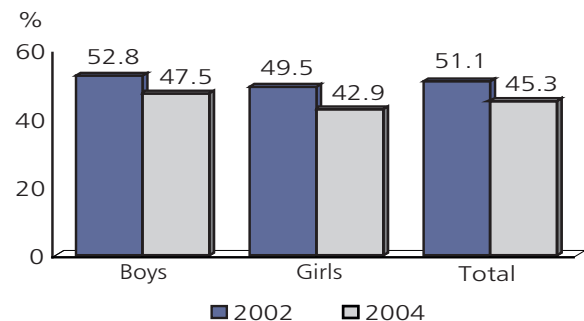
### 4.1 Gambling During a 12-Month Period

In 2004, approximately 45% of high school students (or 209,400 students) reported gambling (including playing lotteries) during a 12-month period. Approximately 48% of students who gambled were boys and 43% were girls. Noteworthy is the decrease in prevalence observed between 2002 and 2004 (from 51% to 45%). This decline was observed in both boys (from 53% to 48%) and girls (from 49% to 43%) (Figure 5).

In 2004, the mean age of first-time gambling was 10.6 years.

Figure 5

**Trends in Gambling Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Sex, Québec, 2002 to 2004**



Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

## 4.2 Type of gambler

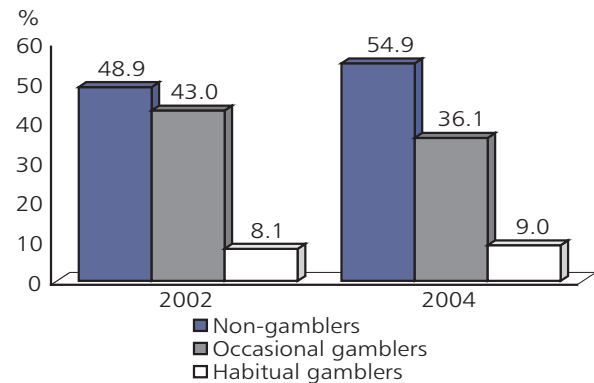
In 2004, approximately 9% of students were habitual gamblers (they gambled at least once a week) and 36% were occasional gamblers (they gambled less often than once a week) (Figure 6). Only the proportion of occasional gamblers in 2004 had significantly decreased from that observed in 2002 (43%). This decline was found in both boys (from 43% to 36%) and girls (from 44% to 36%).

## 4.3 Various types of gambling

In 2004, the most popular forms of gambling were instant lotteries (scratch-and-win) (26%), card games (23%) and skill-testing games (such as playing billiards) (19%) (Figure 7).

Figure 6

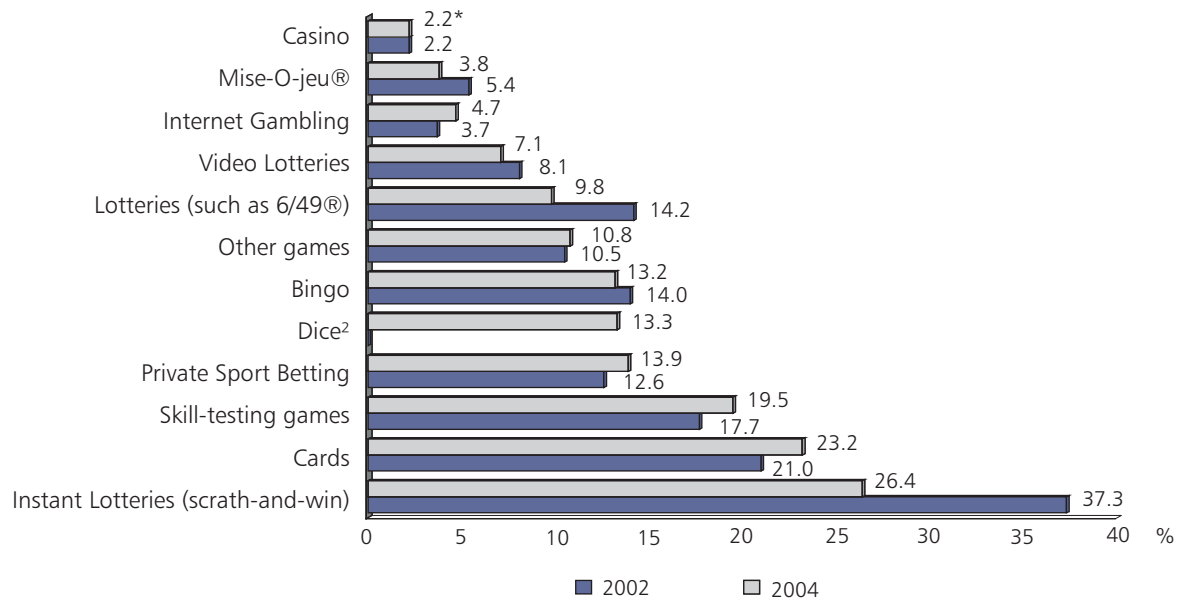
Trends in Gambling Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Type of Gambler, Québec, 2002 to 2004



Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002 and Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004.

Figure 7

Trends in the Prevalence of Gambling Among High School Students During a 12-Month Period, by Type of Gambling<sup>1</sup>, 2002 to 2004



1. The order of presentation by type of gambling does not imply any statistical differences between the proportions.

2. In 2002, playing dice games was classified in the category of "other games." In 2004, playing dice games became a separate category and therefore cannot be compared to 2002.

\* Coefficient of variation between 15% and 25%; interpret with caution.

Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002 and Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004.

It is interesting to note that between 2002 and 2004, there was a decrease observed in students playing instant lotteries (from 37% to 26%), regular lotteries (from 14% to 10%) and *Mise-O-Jeu*® (*Face-Off*) (5% to 3.8%) (Figure 7). The data also revealed that approximately 30% of students received lottery tickets as gifts in 2004, a percentage that had not significantly changed from that observed in 2002.

In 2004, proportionally more girls than boys played instant scratch-and-win lotteries (29% v. 24%) and bingo (15% v. 11%). On the other hand, more boys than girls played card games for money (27% v. 19%), skill-testing games (26% v. 13%), participated in private sports betting (19% v. 8%), played dice games (18% v. 9%), gambled on the internet (7% v. 2.8%) and played *Mise-O-Jeu*® (6% v. 2.0%).

#### 4.4 Problem gambling

In 2004, approximately 2.5% of secondary school students (or 11,400 students) fulfilled the diagnostic criteria of the DSM IV-J for a gambling addiction. These students can likely be considered as possible pathological gamblers. In 2004, 6% of students (or 27,600 students) had behavioral problems vis-à-vis gambling and were therefore at risk of developing an addiction (Table 7). Boys were more likely than girls to have a gambling problem (gamblers at risk and possible pathological gamblers combined) (11% v. 6%) (Table 7). Between 2002 and 2004, the proportion of pathological gamblers showed no change. However, that of gamblers at risk increased, from 4.8% in 2002 to 6% in 2004.

Table 7

**Prevalence of Problem Gambling Among High School Students, by Sex, Québec, 2004**

	Total	Boys	Girls
	%		
Non-gambler	54.5	52.0	57.5
Gamblers without a problem	37.1	36.9	37.2
Gamblers at risk	6.0	7.5	4.4
Possible pathological gamblers	2.5	3.6	1.4*

\* Coefficient of variation between 15% and 25%; interpret with caution.

Source : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

## 5. Combined Risk Behaviours

In 2004, various combinations of the four risk behaviours indicate that cigarette smoking alone, or drug use alone, was almost a non-existent phenomenon, each with a prevalence of less than 1% (Table 8).

Table 8

**Trends in Combined Risk Behaviours Among High School Students, Québec, 2002 to 2004**

	2002	2004
	%	
<b>No Risk Behaviour</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>25.9</b>
<b>One Risk Behaviour</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>22.7</b>
Cigarettes only		0.4**
Alcohol only		12.6
Drugs only		0.6*
Gambling only		9.0
<b>Two Risk Behaviours</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>24.1</b>
Cigarettes and alcohol		0.9*
Cigarettes and drugs		0.2**
Cigarettes and gambling		0.2**
Alcohol and drugs		8.6
Alcohol and gambling		13.8
Drugs and gambling		0.5*
<b>Three Risk Behaviours</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>17.9</b>
Cigarettes, alcohol and drugs		6.1
Cigarettes, alcohol and gambling		1.3*
Cigarettes, drugs and gambling		0.2**
Alcohol, drugs and gambling		10.3
<b>Four Risk Behaviours</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>9.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Coefficient of variation between 15% and 25%; interpret with caution.

\*\* Coefficient of variation greater than 25%; imprecise estimate given as information only.

Sources : Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Québec Survey of Tobacco Use in High School Students, 2002* and *Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004*.

Alcohol consumption alone or in combination with cigarette smoking, drug use or gambling, was the most frequently reported risk behaviour in students. Of these possible combinations, gambling was the behaviour most frequently associated with alcohol consumption. Indeed, though 13% of high school students reported that they had consumed alcohol only and 9% had participated in gambling only, 14% of students reported a combination of both alcohol consumption and gambling. Moreover, approximately 10% of students reported a combination of alcohol consumption, drug use and gambling, and 9% reported engaging in all four risk behaviours. It should be noted that it cannot be determined from the survey data if these behaviours occurred on separate occasions or on the same occasion.

Certain positive trends were observed between 2002 and 2004. The proportion of students with no risk behaviour increased from 19% in 2002 to 26% in 2004. The proportion of students with a combination of three risk behaviours decreased (from 21% to 18%), and the proportion with a combination of four risk behaviours also declined (from 12% to 9%).

## Conclusion

This bulletin presents a brief summary of the findings of the *Enquête québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire, 2004* (Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004).

Overall, the findings of this fourth edition of the survey bear witness to major changes in the behaviours of high school students with regards to smoking, alcohol, drugs and gambling. From 2002 to 2004, there was a decrease observed in the proportion of students who had smoked cigarettes during a 30-day period (from 23% to 19%). There was a decline in the proportion of students who had consumed alcohol (from 69%

to 63%), had used drugs (from 41% to 36%) or had gambled (51% to 45%) during a 12-month period. The positive trends observed in these four risk behaviours indicate, that in certain ways, the measures in place designed to address these may have had an impact on the lifestyle habits of secondary school students.

However, for each of these categories, there is a subgroup of students who persist in engaging in one or more of these risk behaviours. For example, despite a significant decrease in cigarette smoking, the proportion of new smokers in 2004 had not changed since 2002, remaining at 8% of students. In the same vein, even though alcohol consumption declined from 2002 to 2004, there was an increase in the proportion of student drinkers who reported heavy drinking (from 63% to 68%). Notwithstanding the overall decrease in drug use, the proportion of students using amphetamines also increased (from 8% to 10%). Finally, even though general interest in gambling among high school students had diminished since 2002, the proportion of students at risk of developing a gambling addiction showed an increase in 2004 compared to the previous edition of the survey (from 4.8% to 6%). These results suggest that more intensive, more specialized or targeted intervention is required. It therefore remains essential to continue to monitor these four risk behaviours among Québec high school students because of their current and potential human, social and economic costs to society.

The final report of the *Étude québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire, 2004* (Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, 2004) comprises more in-depth analyses of the four risk behaviours as well as trends in smoking since 1998, alcohol consumption and drug use since 2000, and gambling including lotteries since 2002. Data provided by the survey can contribute to the planning and implementation of prevention and information campaigns in high schools, and provide a quantitative means of measuring the achievement of objectives.

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The report of the Enquête québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire, 2004, *Quoi de neuf depuis 2002* is available (in French) at Publications du Québec and the Institut de la statistique du Québec. Cost: \$27.95 plus taxes.

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