

First-of-kind Gambling Monitoring System in Massachusetts

In March of 2013, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) selected a research team based at the School of Public Health and Health Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst to carry out research required by the Expanded Gaming Act that allowed casinos in Massachusetts for the first time.

The Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA) project is led by three experienced investigators with backgrounds in gambling research, psychology, sociology and biostatistics. Two of the lead investigators are based at UMass Amherst while the third is based in Canada. The lead investigators work with a much larger group of researchers with backgrounds in economics, public health, public policy, and hospitality and tourism.

The SEIGMA study involves a range of research activities. One important activity is doing surveys to measure gambling attitudes and participation in the population. Another important activity is collecting information about construction and employment from the casinos and the MGC. The project also includes interviewing state and city officials and treatment providers. These different activities all contribute to the three main research areas of the SEIGMA study.

**Social
& Health
Impacts
Analysis**

**Economic
& Fiscal
Analysis**

**Problem
Gambling
Services
Evaluation**

The three research areas of the SEIGMA project form the basis for a first-of-its-kind gambling oversight system. This system will provide the residents of Massachusetts with the following:



Neutral information for decision-making



Early warning signs of changes connected with new and existing forms of gambling in the Commonwealth



Help in reducing gambling-related harm and improving services for problem gamblers and their families

SEIGMA TEAM MEMBERS

UMass Amherst

Provides leadership of the project and collects and analyzes social and health data

Williams & Associates

Provides technical expertise on the project

UMass Donahue Institute

Leads economic and fiscal data analyses

NORC at the University of Chicago

Collects the project's general population surveys

IPSOS Public Affairs

Conducts an online panel survey component of the study

Market Street Research

Assists in qualitative data collection

SEIGMA PROJECT OVERVIEW

SEIGMA is a project that uses experts from several disciplines to carry out the different parts of the MGC research effort. The project team is dedicated to working closely with many other groups throughout the Commonwealth. The study uses a state-of-the-art design, rigorous data collection and research methods, and a careful analytic approach to establish the effects of casino gambling at state, regional, and local levels. The SEIGMA team collects its own data as well as using data gathered by other organizations. The SEIGMA study is funded by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.