WhichBingo

PLAYER INSIGHT REPORT

The Bingo & Casino Player *Survey 2026*

A data-led portrait of UK bingo and casino players highlighting how Britain plays online.

1,915	28	3	2026
RESPONDENTS	QUESTIONS	DEMOGRAPHICS	FIELDWORK

FOREWORD BY LYNSEY SWEENEY, SENIOR DIRECTOR, WHICHBINGO

A changing market, and the players who shape where it goes

2026 has been an impactful year for British bingo and casino; Remote Gaming Duty on online casino and slots almost doubled from 21% to 40%, while Bingo Duty on land-based clubs was scrapped altogether. Meanwhile wagering requirements were capped at 10x as of 19th January, meaning better bonuses for players.

This report looks at the impact of all these changes as well as player spending, devices, withdrawals, the pull of the black market, and the rise of artificial intelligence.

We asked 1,915 people how they really behave and what they'd like to see more of.

What we found is encouraging in some ways and worth watching in others. Most players stay loyal to regulated operators and keep their spending within sensible, modest limits, which is good news all round.

At the same time, a younger and more mobile group is easier to tempt towards unregulated sites, leans more heavily on bonuses, and is quicker to walk away the moment a site stops delivering. For these players, fairer terms like lower wagering requirements are often the difference between staying and leaving.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ten findings that define the 2026 player

1. Most players spend modestly
Nearly half stake £20 or less a month, and 30% spend under £10. The high-roller tail is thin as only 8% stake more than £200.

2. This is a young, mobile audience
58% are under 45 and 63% play primarily on a mobile device.

3. The gender split has levelled
The sample is 51% male to 48% female which is a marked shift from the female-dominated bingo audience of previous reports.

4. Players unaware of regulation changes
Just 27% of players know online casino duty doubled to 40%.

5. The Bingo Duty cut hasn't moved players
Only 10% have visited a land-based club more often, and just 10% noticed cheaper prices or better prizes.

6. The black market tempts the young
14% have been tempted by unlicensed operators and 6% have deposited. Temptation runs nearly three times higher among 18–24s than over-65s.

7. £50 is the magic number
Most players wait until they have £50 before they consider withdrawing. A psychological anchor that has survived across every WhichBingo survey.

8. Trust is earned through reviews
75% check reviews before depositing, yet a third find terms and conditions genuinely hard to understand.

9. Not winning is what drives churn
The single biggest reason players abandon a site for good is the feeling of never winning.

10. Players want value, not novelty
Players want better welcome bonuses (54%) and ongoing promotions (49%). AI gimmicks are not the ask.

2 MOST POPULAR BRANDS

The brands players choose and how the survey has shifted since 2020

WhichBingo has surveyed players for years, and placing the 2026 findings alongside the 2025 Bingo Players Survey and the 2020 Online Bingo Annual Report reveals how the audience has changed, detailing who plays, how they play, and which brands they rate.

Britain's favourite bingo brands

Like the 2020 report, which crowned tombola the most popular brand, the 2025 Bingo Players Survey asked players which bingo brands they actually use. **Mecca topped the table on 20.2%**, ahead of Gala on 13.8% and Foxy Bingo on 12.3%, with Tombola fourth on 11.3%. Tellingly, **16% of mentions went to smaller, lesser-known or newly launched sites** which shows a sign of a fragmenting, more competitive market than the tombola-dominated picture of 2020.

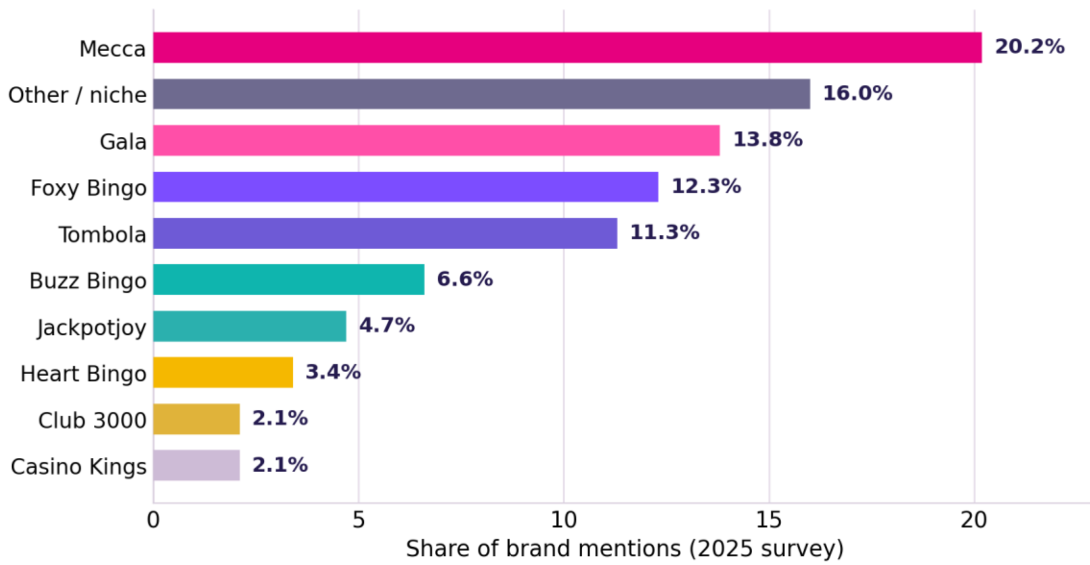

FIG 18 *Most-used bingo brands, 2025 Bingo Players Survey. Mecca leads, but smaller and newer sites collectively take 16% — a more fragmented market than 2020.*

The 2026 player-voted WhichBingo Awards reinforce the same names at the top: **Gala** took Best Bingo Site for a third successive year, while heritage high-street brands such as Mecca, Buzz and Heart Bingo swept the customer-service, club and bingo-game categories. The consistent thread across both the survey and the awards is that **established, trusted, multi-channel brands command player loyalty**, even as challenger sites multiply.

2020 vs 2025 vs 2026 at a glance

The table below tracks the metrics that recur across surveys. Because question wording, fieldwork method and scope differ year to year, these are directional comparisons rather than exact restatements with the note beneath explaining the key differences.

METRIC	2020 REPORT*	2025 SURVEY	2026 SURVEY
Sample size	290	1,200+	**1,915**
Female share	78%	62.9%	**48%**
Male share	21%	36.6%	**51%**
Spend ~£10 or less / month	22% (<£10)	56.4% (£0–10)	**30% (<£10)**
Mobile play	36.5% (mobile-only)	77.4% (online players)	**63% (primary)**
Tried / noticed AI	—	13.6% tried	**~34% noticed**
Reviews / comparison value	58% trust review-responders	37.6% value comparison sites	**75% check reviews first**
Top bingo brand	tombola	Mecca (20.2%)	**Gala (Awards)**

**The 2020 Online Bingo Annual Report surveyed bingo players only (290 responses, Q4 2019). The 2025 Bingo Players Survey (1,200+ responses, Prolific) is bingo-focused. The 2026 survey (1,915 responses) spans bingo, casino and slots, which partly explains the lower female share and the broader spend profile. Figures are taken from each published report and rounded; differing question wording means comparisons are directional.*

WHAT THIS MEANS

The recognisable and well-known heritage brands — Mecca, Gala, Foxy, Tombola — keep winning player preference. But the audience choosing them is almost entirely mobile.

For operators, the lesson is that brand heritage still converts, but the product must meet a 2026 player who plays casino and slots alongside bingo, and lives on a phone.

3 DEMOGRAPHICS

Who plays in 2026

Online bingo and casino play in Britain is now a young person's habit.

A third of all respondents (**33%**) fall in the 25–34 bracket, with a further **26%** aged 35–44. Taken together, **58% of players are under 45**. The 18–24 group alone accounts for **15%** which is larger than the 55–64s and over-65s combined. This is a near-complete inversion of the audience profile WhichBingo reported at the close of the last decade, when roughly four in five players were aged 35–64.

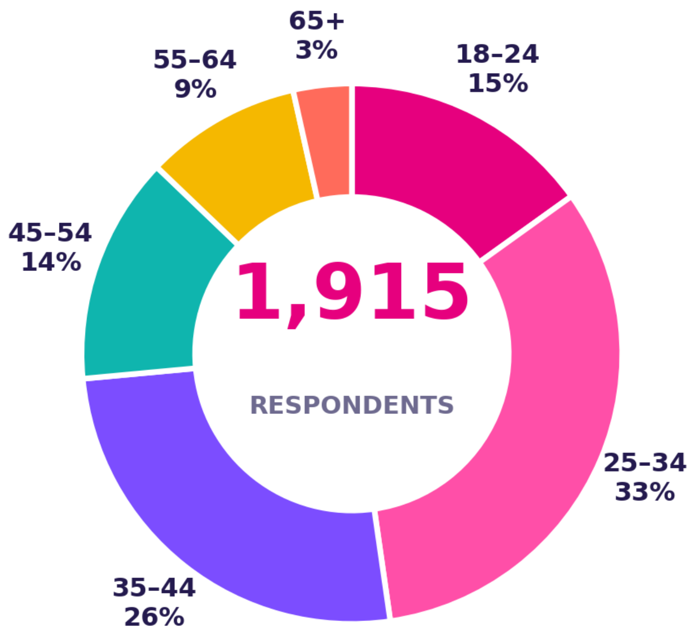

FIG 1 *Age distribution of the 1,915 survey respondents. The 25–44 cohort dominates, accounting for almost six in ten players.*

WHAT THIS MEANS

The "bingo" brand and the bingo player are diverging. Product, tone and responsible-gambling messaging should be built for a mobile-first under-45 majority that moves fluidly between bingo, slots and casino in a single session.

4 SPENDING HABITS

Modest stakes, a thin high-roller tail

The typical player in this survey wagers very little. The distribution is heavily weighted toward the low end and falls away sharply.

30%	49%	8%	3.3%
stake under £10/month	stake £20 or less/month	stake more than £200/month	stake £500+/month

Nearly a third of players (**30%**) report total monthly stakes below £10, and almost half (**49%**) stake £20 or less. Spend tapers steadily from there: **20%** sit in the £21–50 band, **15%** in £51–100, and only **8%** stake more than £200 in a typical month. The £500+ segment, is just **3.3%** of the base.

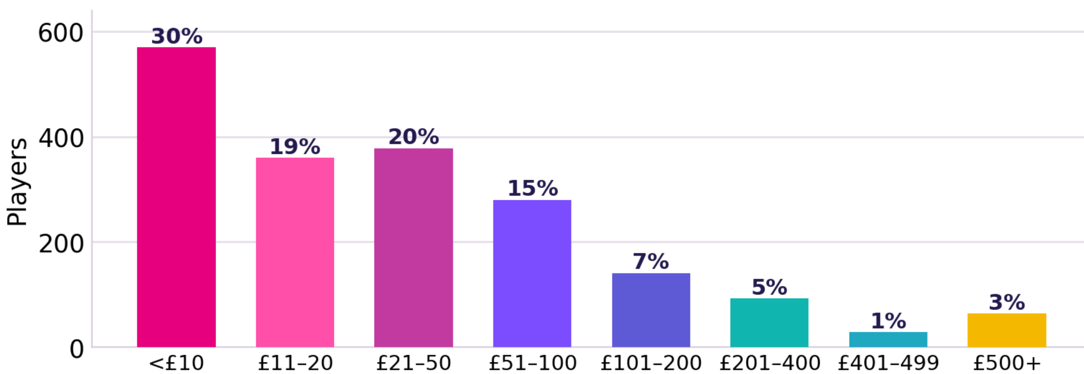

FIG 2 *Total monthly stake across all gaming. The curve is front-loaded: most players spend little, and the high-value tail is slim.*

Stake levels are remarkably consistent across age. The 45–54 group is fractionally the most likely to stake £101+ (**22%**), but no age band departs dramatically from the average.

Bingo is the entry point; slots carry the spend

Breaking stakes down by vertical reveals a clear hierarchy. Bingo is where the smallest stakes live as **51%** of bingo players wager just £1–9 a month which is consistent with its role as a low-cost, sociable game. Slots and casino stakes are spread more widely up the scale, with slots in particular showing a longer tail of higher-spend.

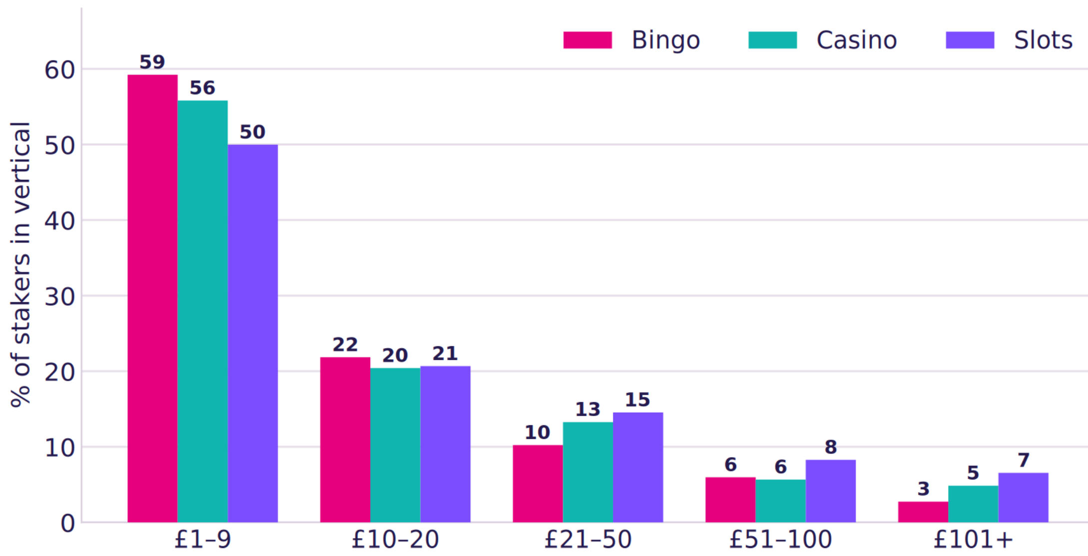

FIG 3 *Monthly stake distribution within each vertical, among players who record any stake there. Bingo concentrates at the lowest band; slots stretch higher.*

WHAT THIS MEANS

The bulk of players are low-stakes and recreational.

5 DEVICES & SETTING

Mobile, at home, on the sofa

Where and how people play has settled into a clear pattern: the phone, in the home, predominantly the living room.

A decisive **63%** of players use a mobile device as their primary way to play, dwarfing desktop (**14%**). On-site play at a physical bingo club is the main mode for **13%**, with a further **10%** mixing online and in-person. The migration to mobile that earlier reports tracked as an emerging trend is now the default.

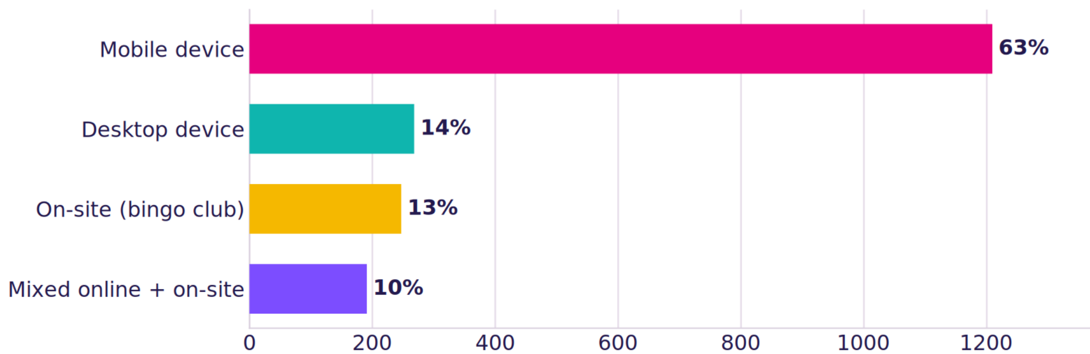

FIG 4 *Primary device or setting for play. Mobile is the runaway leader; physical clubs and mixed play together account for under a quarter.*

The living room is the gaming room

Among those playing online, the home dominates with the living room being the most popular space. **71%** play in the living room and **44%** in the bedroom (respondents could select more than one). More revealing are the margins: **8%** play in the bathroom and **6%** on the commute, small but telling signals of how thoroughly play has woven into everyday downtime.

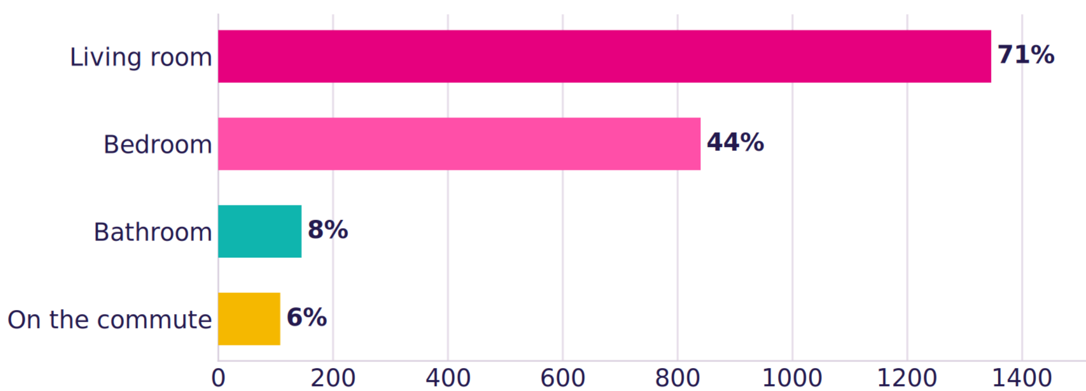

FIG 5 *Where players play online (multi-select). Play is overwhelmingly domestic, but pockets of "anywhere" mobile play are emerging.*

Mobile has gone from emerging to total

In 2020, mobile-only play was a rising trend at 36.5%. By 2025, **77.4% of online bingo players** named mobile their main device, and in the 2026 survey 63% play primarily on mobile across all verticals. The phone is now the bingo hall and the casino floor combined.

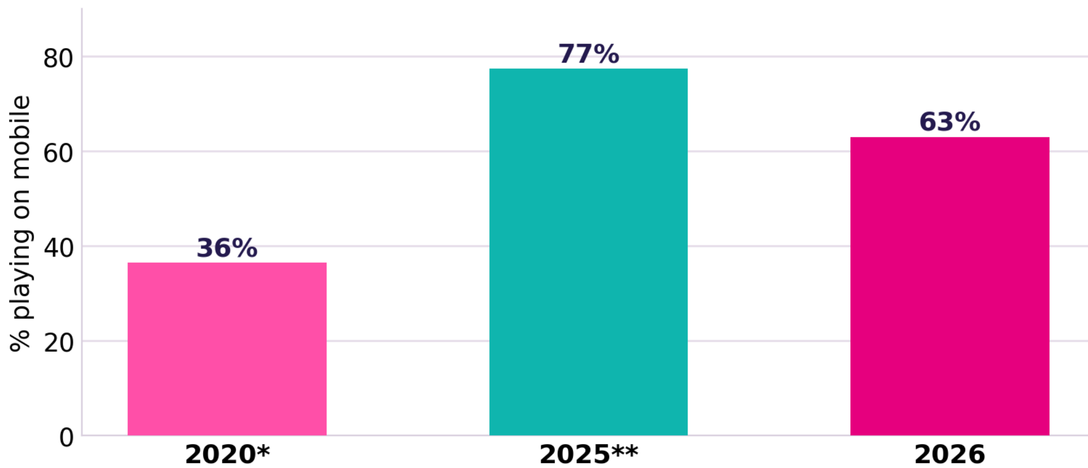

FIG 20 *Mobile play across surveys. *2020 measured mobile-only play; **2025 measured device among online bingo players; 2026 measures primary device across all play.*

6 **PLAYING HABITS**

Frequent, but rarely daily

The rhythm of play is regular; most players engage less than weekly, though a committed core return most days.

Most people say they play “less than once a week”; selected by 47% of bingo players, 47% of casino players and 43% of slots players.

A minority plays regularly: roughly 17–18% across verticals play most days or daily. Slots show the most engaged profile of the three.

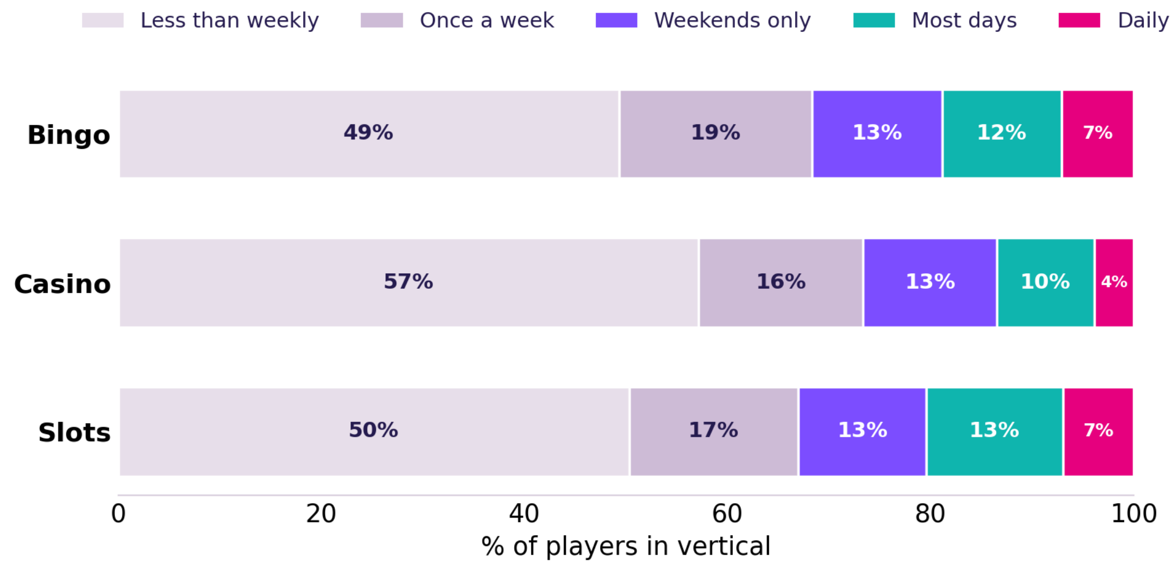

FIG 6 *Frequency of play within each vertical. The modal player is a less-than-weekly recreational user, with a smaller daily core, most pronounced in slots.*

7 THE 2026 TAX SHAKE-UP

Two duty changes the player hasn’t noticed

April 2026 reshaped the tax landscape for British gaming. Remote Gaming Duty on online casino and slots almost doubled, while Bingo Duty on physical clubs was abolished. The survey shows both changes remain largely invisible to players.

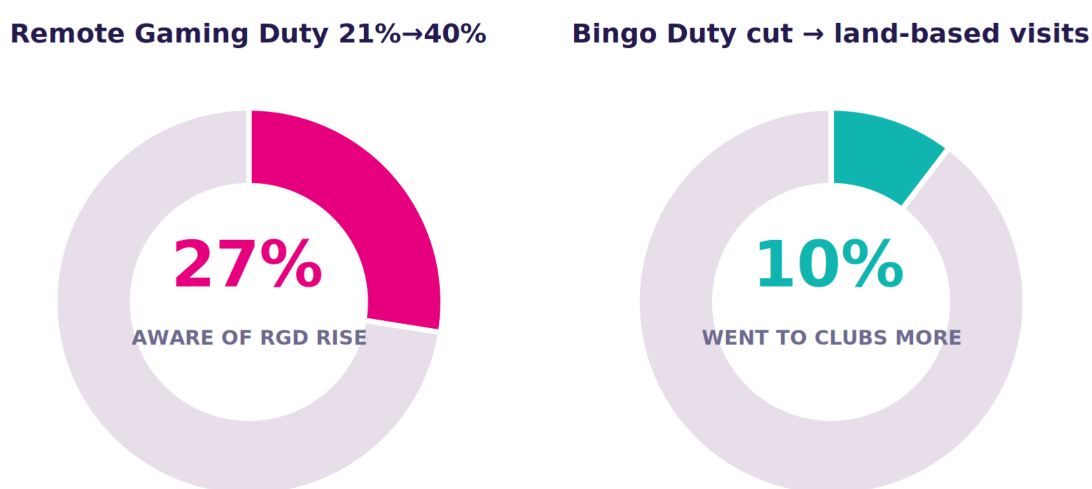

FIG 7 *Player awareness and behavioural response to the two April 2026 duty changes. Awareness of the RGD rise is low; the Bingo Duty cut has yet to change habits.*

The Remote Gaming Duty rise: an operator problem, not yet a player one

Only **27%** of players are aware that RGD on online games rose from 21% to 40%. Awareness climbs with age however, from around **26%** among under-35s to **37%** of the over-65s, but even at its highest, a clear majority of every group is unaware. For now, the doubling of duty is a margin pressure absorbed within the industry.

If operators respond by trimming bonuses, payout generosity or game quality, players will feel the duty rise without ever understanding its cause.

The Bingo Duty cut: a gift not yet passed on

The abolition of Bingo Duty was intended to support land-based clubs. Yet only **10%** of players say they have visited a club more often as a result, and an identical **10%** of those who did visit noticed any price cut or improved prize values.

The policy's intent, to allow cheaper, livelier clubs drawing players back through the doors has not, on this evidence, reached the customer.

WHAT THIS MEANS

There is a clear opening for clubs and bingo brands to visibly pass on the duty saving — cheaper tickets, bigger prizes come to mind.

On the online side, the strategic risk is that a 40% duty quietly erodes player value. Operators that protect the bonus and payout experience, and communicate value honestly, will hold trust through the squeeze; those that silently cut will accelerate the very churn examined later in this report.

8 THE BLACK MARKET

The pull of the unlicensed fringe

Unlicensed, non-GamStop, non-UKGC operators are a growing concern for the regulated industry. The survey suggests the licensed market is holding, but a younger, restless minority is being drawn outside it.

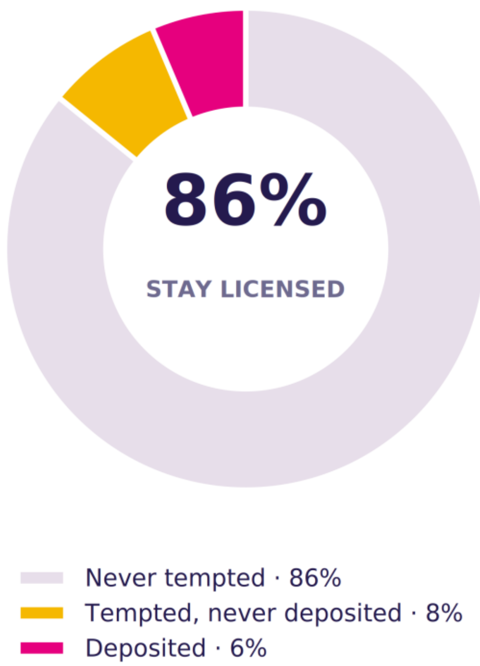

FIG 9 *Overall exposure to black-market operators across the full sample.*

The reassuring headline: **86%** of players have never been tempted by unlicensed operators. But **14%** have been tempted, and **6%** have gone as far as depositing or playing with a non-licensed site. In a market of millions, that is a substantial leakage of players and revenue outside the regulated, duty-paying perimeter.

Among those who were tempted, the reasons cluster around **better bonuses and offers**, the ability to **bypass GamStop self-exclusion**, wider **game choice**, and perceptions of **better odds and payouts**. A smaller group cited higher or absent stake limits, and faster, less intrusive withdrawals.

Temptation falls steeply with age

The clearest pattern in the entire survey is the age gradient on black-market temptation. Among 18–24s, **17%** have been tempted and **6.6%** have deposited. By the over-65s, temptation falls to just **6%** and deposits to **1.5%**. The unlicensed market is, disproportionately, a young person's temptation, the same segment that is most mobile, most bonus-driven and most likely to encounter these operators through social media and search.

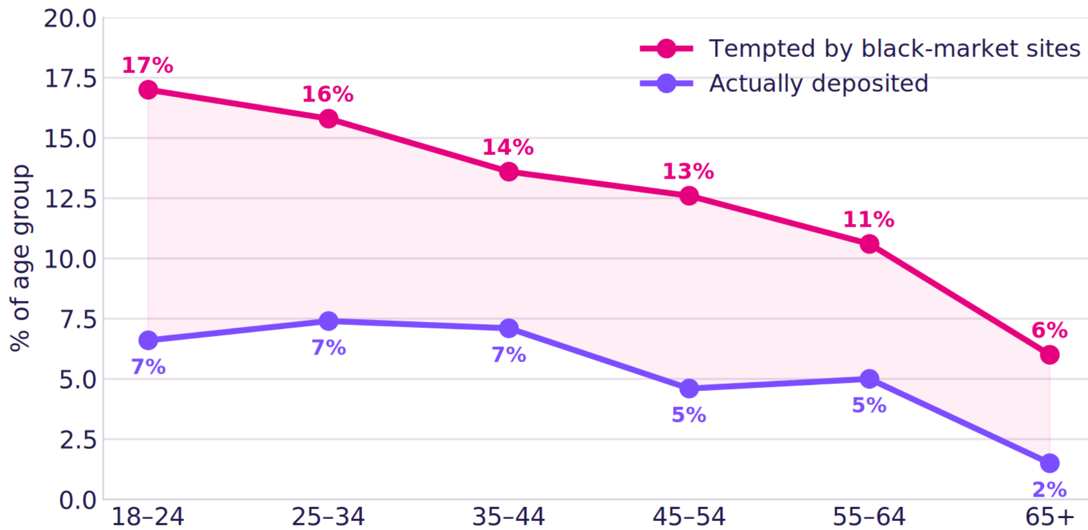

FIG 8 *Black-market temptation and deposit behaviour by age. Both decline monotonically with age — the young are markedly more exposed.*

WHAT THIS MEANS

The 40% RGD rise raises a genuine policy tension: if it pushes licensed operators to cut value, it widens precisely the bonus and odds gap that draws younger players toward unlicensed sites.

The licensed market's defence is not to match the black market on stake limits, but to win decisively on trust, safety, payment reliability and clear, fair value. The self-exclusion bypass motive is especially serious, underlining why robust, joined-up responsible-gambling tools are a retention and welfare priority, not a compliance afterthought.

9 WITHDRAWALS

The enduring psychology of £50

How and when players take their money out reveals as much about mindset as about money. The data shows small, frequent withdrawals and a persistent psychological anchor around £50.

Monthly withdrawal amounts mirror the modest staking picture: **34%** withdraw just £1–9, and **57%** withdraw £20 or less. Larger withdrawals are rare, with only **6%** taking out more than £200 in a typical month.

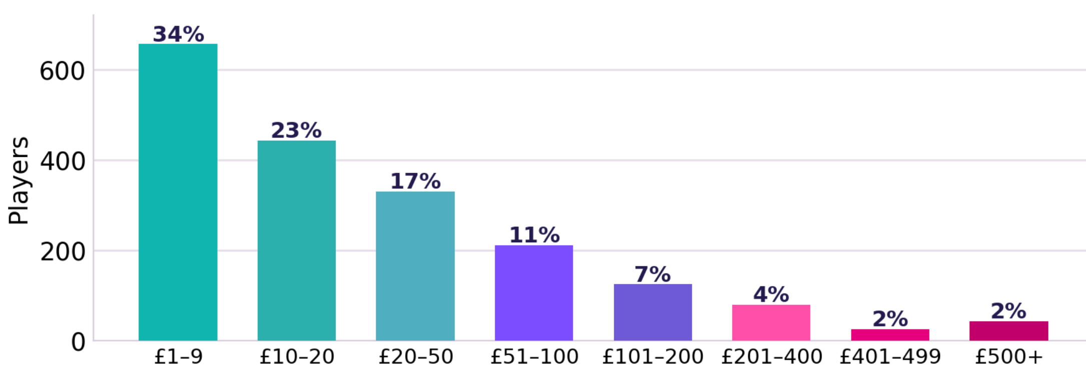

FIG 10 *Typical monthly withdrawal amounts. Like staking, withdrawals concentrate at the low end.*

£20 — the number that won't move

Asked the threshold they like to reach before withdrawing winnings to their bank, players cluster tightly: the median sits at **£20**, and the £26–50 band is the most populated, with £50 itself the single most common round-number answer. This echoes findings across multiple prior WhichBingo surveys, where £50 has repeatedly emerged as the psychological tipping point — small enough to feel attainable, large enough to feel worth banking.

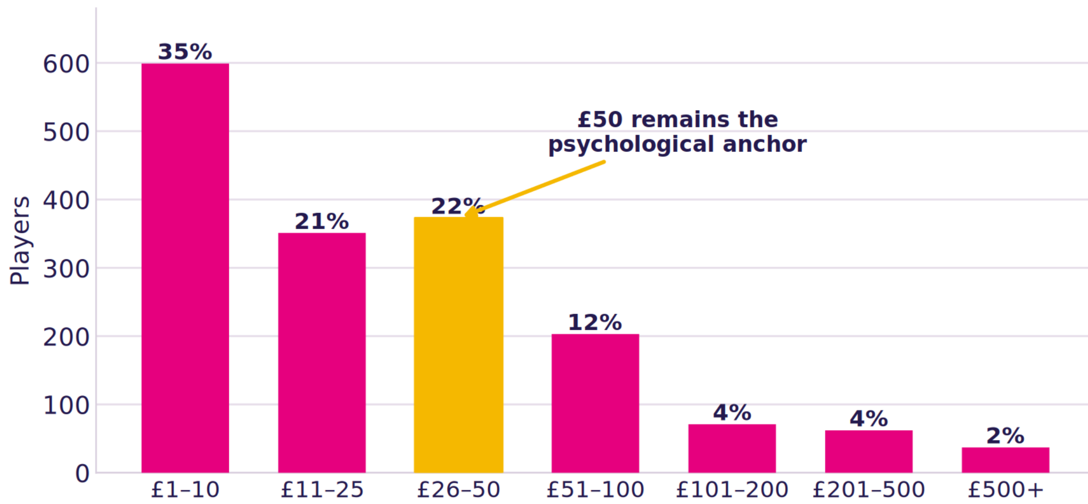

FIG 11 *Self-reported withdrawal threshold (free-text responses, banded). The £26–50 band — anchored by the recurring £50 figure — is the most common.*

WHAT THIS MEANS

Withdrawal friction is felt acutely by an audience that deals in small sums. For a player whose threshold is £50, a slow or restrictive payout is more than a minor inconvenience, it is a meaningful share of their funds and a direct driver of distrust and churn. Fast, frictionless, clearly communicated withdrawals are one of the highest-leverage trust investments an operator can make.

10 TRUST, REVIEWS & THE SMALL PRINT

Players do their homework if they can read it

This is a discerning audience. Three-quarters check reviews before committing money, and most attempt to read the terms. The problem is that the terms are too often impenetrable.

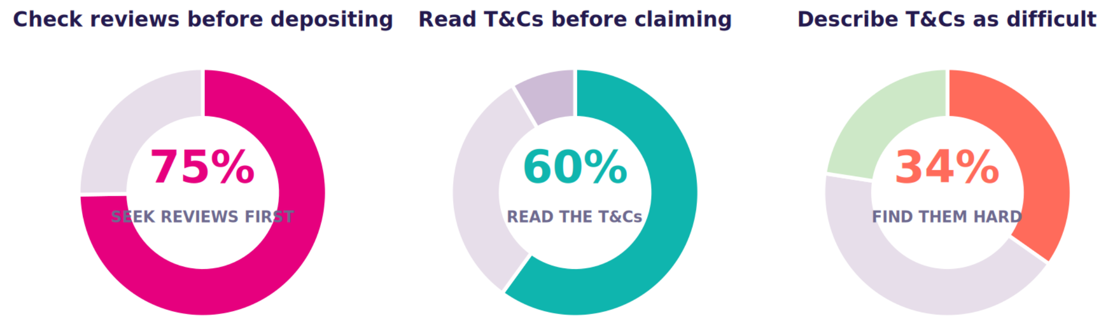

FIG 12 *Three measures of player diligence and the friction they encounter: reviews sought, T&Cs read, and T&Cs found difficult.*

75% of players look for trusted reviews or strong user-review signals before signing up and depositing, validating the role of independent review platforms as gatekeepers of trust. Reliance on reviews is highest among the youngest players (**80%** of 18–24s) and tapers with age, but remains a majority behaviour in every bracket.

On terms and conditions, **60%** say they read the T&Cs before claiming an offer, while **32%** do not and **9%** never claim offers at all. But reading is not the same as understanding.

A third find the terms hard to understand

Only **22%** of players describe casino and bingo T&Cs as easy to understand. **35%** find them outright difficult, with the largest group of **43%** landing on "neither easy nor difficult", a lukewarm verdict that is hardly a ringing endorsement of clarity.

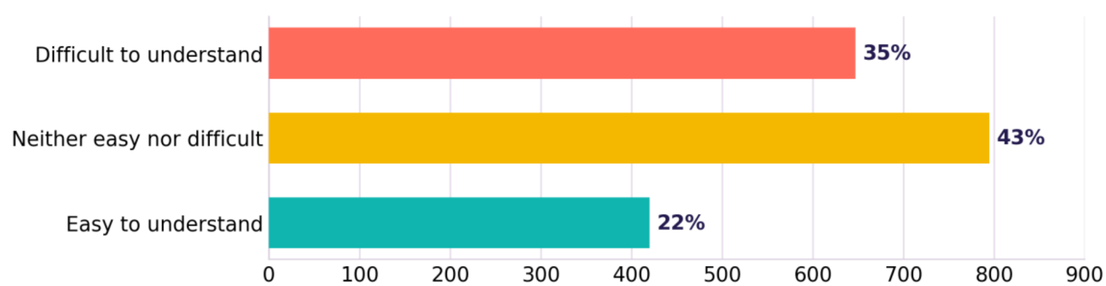

FIG 13 *How players describe the clarity of site terms and conditions. Only one in five find them genuinely easy.*

WHAT THIS MEANS

Reviews and clear terms are the mechanisms by which a sceptical, research-driven audience decides whom to trust with their money. Operators that respond to reviews, and that rewrite their bonus terms into genuinely plain English, are directly addressing the two behaviours this audience exhibits most. With a third of players finding the small print difficult, transparency is both a regulatory expectation and a clear commercial differentiator.

11 BONUSES & CHURN

Why players walk away and never come back

Bonuses bring players in; their absence, and the sense of never winning, drives players out. We asked openly what makes someone leave a site for good — and the answer is unambiguous.

The number-one reason players leave: not winning

When players describe, in their own words, what makes them abandon a site, one theme towers over the rest. **Not winning, poor payouts, empty spins, the feeling of never getting a return** is by some distance the most cited churn driver, named in roughly **29%** of submitted responses. Poor or repetitive game quality, weak promotions, clunky usability, and withdrawal problems follow, but none approaches the dominance of the "I never win" sentiment.

FIG 14 *Share of all players who feel welcome bonuses have worsened, by vertical (multi-select among those who noticed a decline).*

Have welcome bonuses got worse?

A majority of **64%** of players have not noticed welcome bonuses deteriorating over the past year. But among the **36%** who have, the discontent spreads across all three verticals fairly evenly, with slots and casino slightly ahead of bingo. Given that the RGD rise specifically targets online casino and slots, this is a space to watch closely.

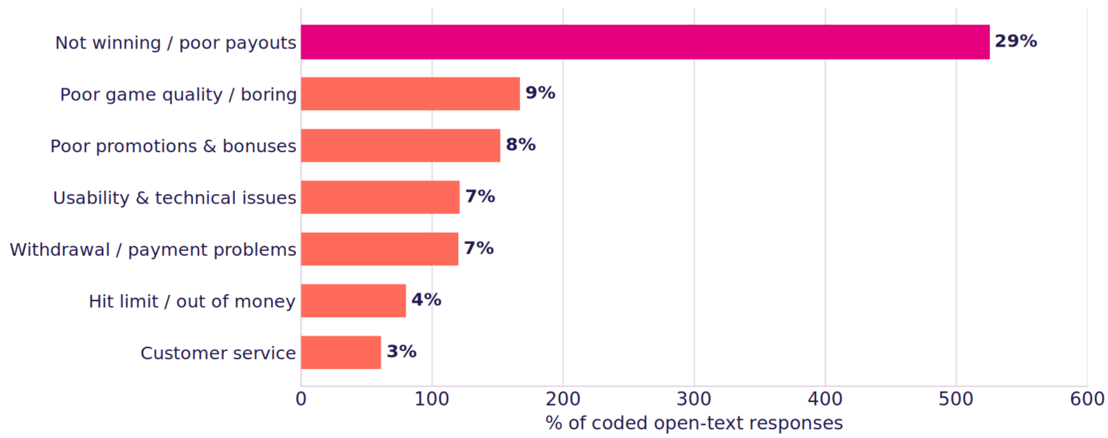

FIG 17 *Primary reasons players abandon a site for good, coded from open-text responses. The perception of never winning dominates.*

> *Players don't leave because they lost. They leave because they stopped feeling they could ever win. That perception — of value, of fairness, of a fighting chance — is the real battleground for retention.*
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WHAT THIS MEANS

In a 40%-duty environment where margins are tighter, the temptation is to reduce exactly these things — but the data warns that doing so attacks the single most important driver of whether a player stays.

12 THE AI QUESTION

Artificial intelligence: invisible, and where visible, unloved

The player view on AI is striking in its indifference, and, where AI is noticed, it's seen sceptically.

Most players simply have not noticed AI in the brands they play with, and among those who haven't, an overwhelming **66%** report it makes no difference to them either way. The interesting signal comes from players who have noticed AI: here, those who say it makes the experience **worse (12% of all players)** outnumber those who say it **enhances** the experience (9%) — with the bulk again reporting no perceptible difference.

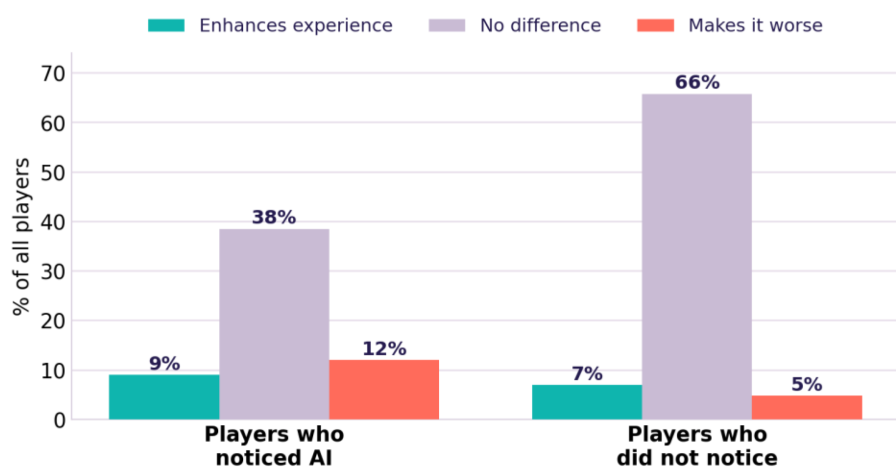

FIG 15 *Perception of AI among players who noticed it versus those who did not. Where AI is noticed, negative sentiment edges out positive.*

A handful of open-text responses went further still, explicitly asking for less AI chat and fewer AI-driven game mechanics, a small but pointed group whose voice could get louder.

WHAT THIS MEANS

AI's value to players, on this evidence, lies in what they don't see: faster support, smarter safer-gambling interventions, fraud prevention, slicker operations. Foregrounded, gimmicky AI, particularly AI chat hosts replacing human community, risks a net-negative reception. The lesson for operators is to deploy AI to remove friction and improve safety quietly, not to market it as a headline feature to an audience that, at best, shrugs.

13 WHAT PLAYERS WANT NEXT

The 12-month wishlist: value, value, value

When asked what they most want from bingo, casino and slots brands over the coming year, players returned a clear and coherent message and it is overwhelmingly about value and fairness, not novelty.

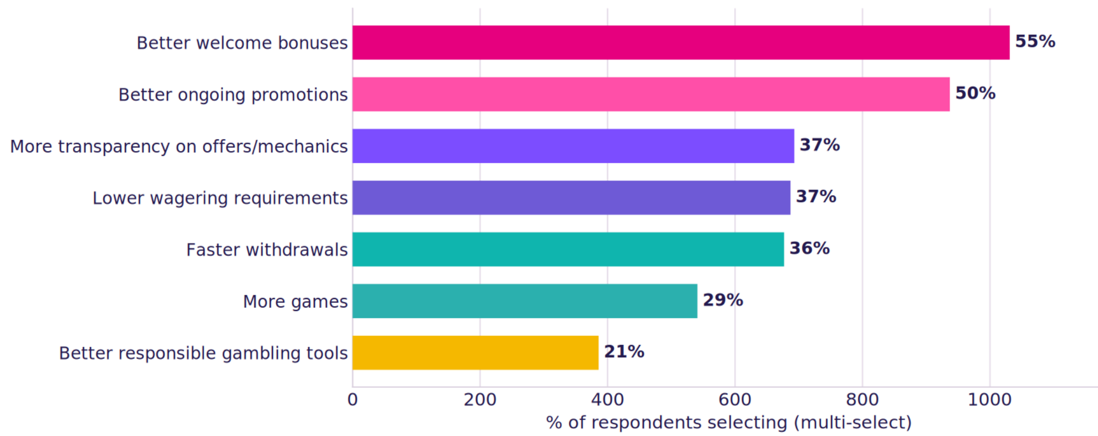

FIG 16 *What players want from operators over the next 12 months (multi-select). The top of the list is dominated by value and transparency.*

Top of the list is **better welcome bonuses (55%)**, closely followed by **better ongoing promotions (50%)**. Crucially, the third and fourth priorities are about fairness, not freebies: **more transparency around offers and game mechanics (37%)** and **lower wagering requirements (37%)**. **Faster withdrawals (36%)** ranks fifth, tying the wishlist back to the withdrawal friction documented earlier. More games (**29%**) and better responsible-gambling tools (**21%**) round out the demand.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The player agenda for 2026 is aligned with what builds long-term trust: generous, honest value; easy to understand terms; fair wagering; and fast payouts. Notably absent is any clamour for more AI, more aggressive gamification, or sheer volume of games. For operators navigating the duty squeeze, this is and a roadmap; the things players want most are the things that defend against churn and against the black market alike.

14 METHODOLOGY & NOTES

About this survey

The WhichBingo Player Survey 2026 is based on **1,915 responses** from UK online and land-based bingo, casino and slots players, gathered via the WhichBingo platform during the second quarter of 2026. The questionnaire comprised 28 questions spanning demographics, spending, device and frequency of play, the April 2026 tax changes, black-market exposure, withdrawals, trust and reviews, terms and conditions, welcome bonuses, artificial intelligence and forward-looking preferences.

Single-response questions are reported as a percentage of all respondents. Multi-select questions (device location, welcome-bonus verticals, and the 12-month wishlist) are reported as the percentage of respondents selecting each option and therefore sum to more than 100%. Vertical-level staking and frequency figures are reported among players who recorded activity in that vertical. Open-text questions, reasons for leaving a site and reasons for black-market play, were thematically coded; the dominant themes are reported, with a residual “other/unclear” category retained for responses that did not map cleanly to a theme. The withdrawal-threshold figure was derived from free-text numeric answers, normalised to pounds sterling and banded.