



# GAMING THE SYSTEM

11 Years of Political Donations  
by the Gambling Industry

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**AUSTRALIAN  
DEMOCRACY  
NETWORK**

## Executive Summary

This research brief analyses political donations from the gambling industry over the 11 years from FY2014-15 to 2024-25. It finds that these donations are bipartisan, tend to concentrate around elections and regulatory moments, and coordinated by a handful of companies.

Between FY2014–15 and 2024–25, gambling companies donated **\$6.24 million** to major federal parties, split almost evenly between Labor (**\$3.07 million**) and the Coalition (**\$3.17 million**). Donations increased sharply in FY2021–22, the year of the 2022 federal election, with Labor's year-on-year increase (**202%**) exceeding that of the Coalition (**138%**).

Although donations were made through **23 separate entities**, four organisations—Tabcorp, Crown Resorts, Flutter Entertainment, and Responsible Wagering Australia—accounted for the vast majority of the total, making **480 of the 518** observed gambling industry donations over the period.

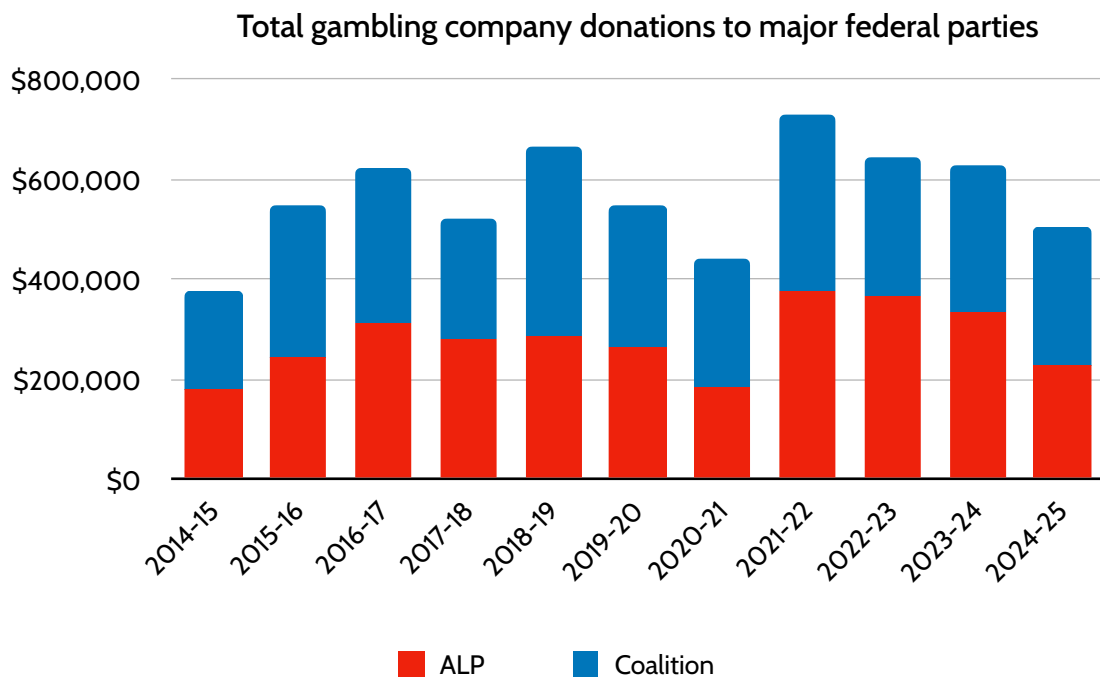
## Key Findings

Political donations are systemic, bi-partisan and strategically concentrated during elections and periods of regulatory debate.

In the 11 years to FY2024-25, gambling companies have donated **\$6.24 million** to the major federal political parties. This is split almost exactly between Labor (**\$3.07 million**) and the Coalition (**\$3.17 million**).

In FY2021-22, the year of Labor's federal election win, donations increased substantially across both parties. Labor's increase from the previous year (**202%**) was more than the Coalition's (**138%**). In the last four years, over the term of the Albanese Government, donations to Labor have remained at high levels.

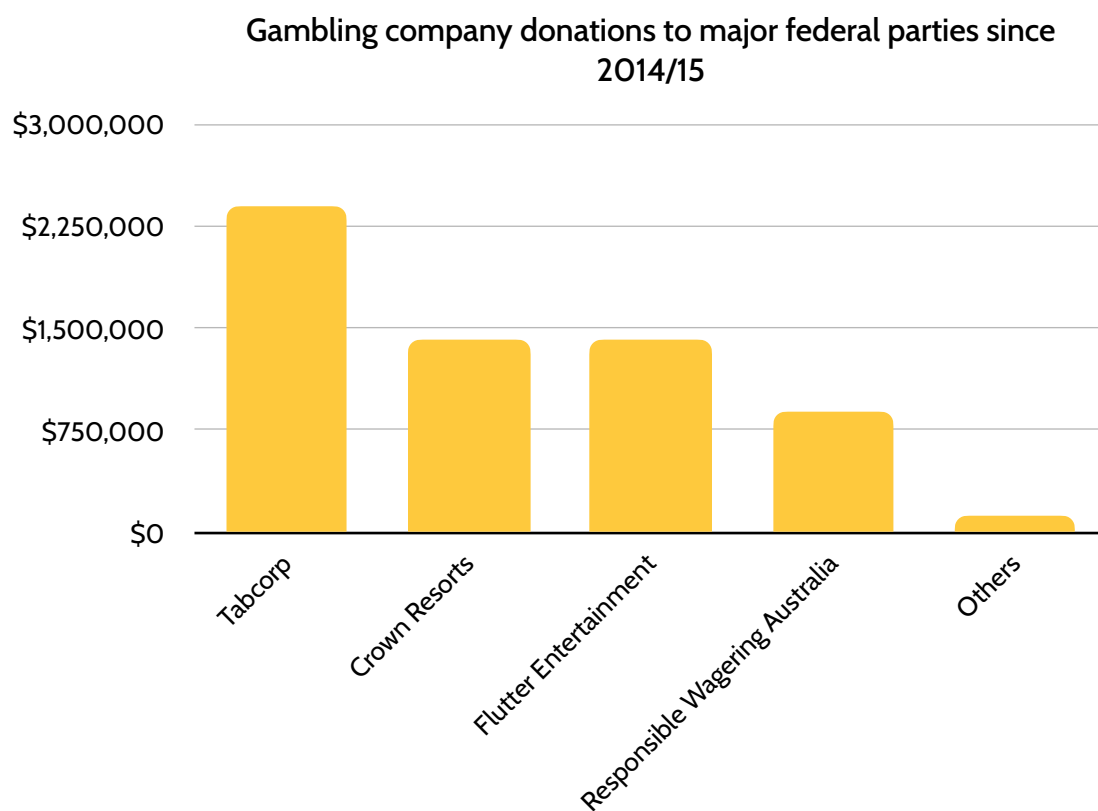
This increase in donations coincides with a period of intense public debate around gambling reform, and the *Inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm* (the Murphy Review), which commenced in September 2022 and delivered its final report in June 2023. We note the government has not formally responded to this inquiry and its bipartisan recommendations have largely not been implemented.



## A handful of major gambling companies are responsible for most donations.

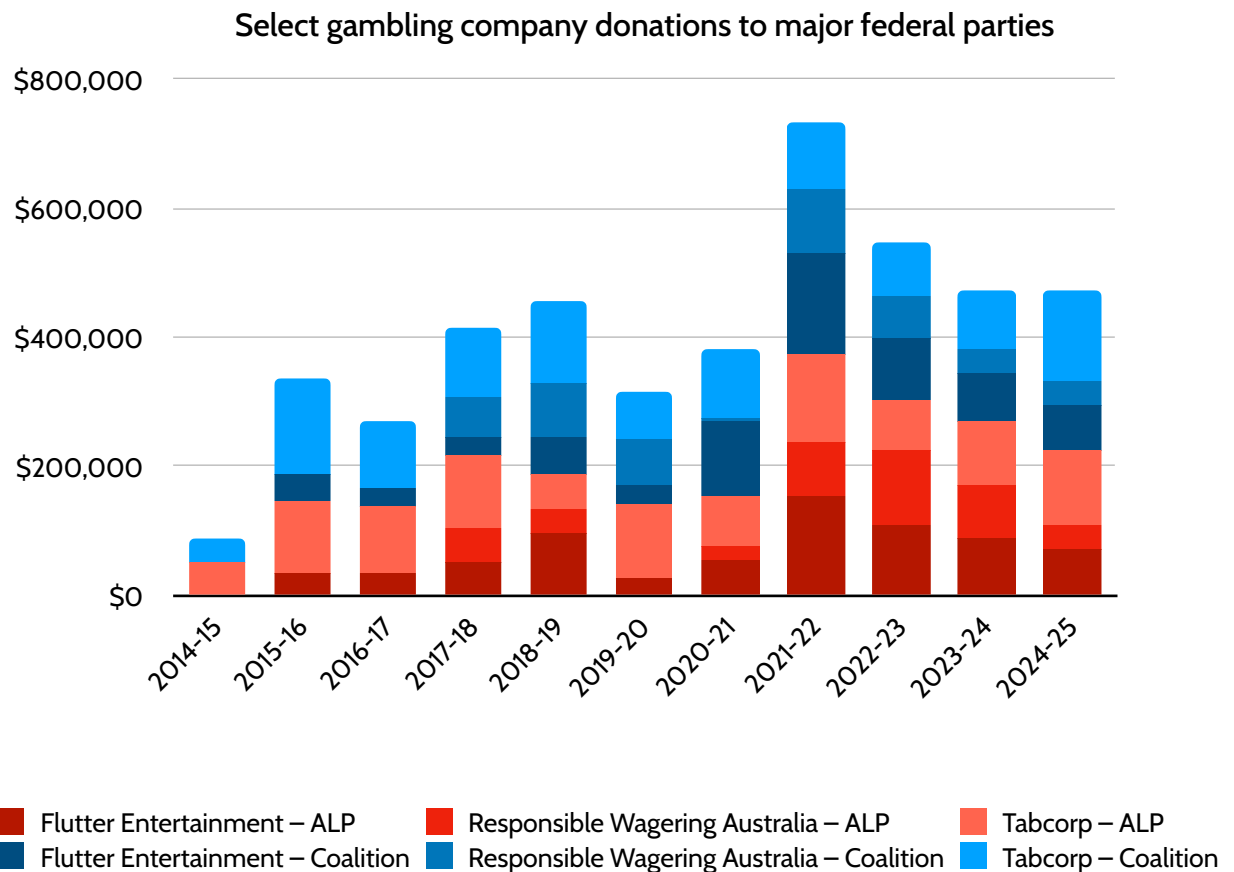
Gambling industry donations are spread across **23 different entities**, giving the impression of diversity. However, our analysis shows the bulk of donations are made by just four companies (see below). These four companies made **480 of the 518** gambling industry donations over the period.

- **Tabcorp** (31%), Australia's largest gambling company and owner of TAB.
- **Crown Resorts** (23%), the gambling and entertainment group that owns and operates Crown Melbourne, Crown Perth, and Crown Sydney.
- **Flutter Entertainment** (22%), which owns Betfair and Sportsbet.
- **Responsible Wagering Australia** (13%), the peak body for Australian-licensed gambling outlets including Bet365, Betfair Exchange, PickleBet, SportsBet, PointsBet and UniBet.



The year-on-year data for Flutter Entertainment, and Responsible Wagering Australia reveals a significant increase in donations to Labor and the Coalition since FY2021-22. Crown stopped donating in FY2020-21.

Tabcorp has donated consistently to both Labor and the Coalition over the last 11 years. Flutter Entertainment, Tabcorp, and Responsible Wagering Australia's clients would be directly impacted by stronger regulation of online gambling advertising.



## Methodology

Our analysis covers the 11 years from FY2014-15 to FY2023-24. Spreadsheets listing all declared donations from third-party donors and all receipts listed by political parties were downloaded from the **Australian Electoral Commission's** [Transparency Register](#).

To identify relevant gambling companies, a long-list of registered gambling entities was created from registers published by federal and state gaming regulatory agencies and keywords searched in an alphabetic list of every identified donor over the period. Parent companies for each gambling entity were identified based on company reports.

Donations were manually categorised as either Labor, Liberal or Nationals according to the political party listed in the donation return. Duplicate entries were removed where a donation reported by a gambling company matched a party-reported donation.

Access to raw data files can be provided upon request.

## About ADN

**Australian Democracy Network** is a campaigning organisation creating a healthy Australian democracy that puts people and the planet first. We bring people and organisations together to campaign for the changes that make our democracy more fair, open, participatory, and accountable.

<https://australiandemocracy.org.au/>