

***Excessive internet use in European adolescents (summary from 25 countries in EU Kids Online project)***

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The term excessive Internet use (EIU) is often associated with pathological extensive Internet usage, which could also be called “online addiction” and is usually defined by the following components used for determining other types of addictive behaviour: salience, mood modification, withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, conflicts and relapse and reinstatement. Behaviours fulfilling these criteria may lead to the social, mental, and/or physical impairment in children and youth. A number of recent studies provided insights into the prevalence and correlates of this phenomenon. Nevertheless, only a limited amount of research has focused on comparison of excessive Internet use in adolescents from different cultural and national contexts.

In this presentation I will reflect upon findings from the EU Kids Online II project, which includes representative samples of adolescents aged 11 to 16 from 25 European countries (N = 18,709), the biggest pan-European project on social and psychological factors of children’s use of digital media so far. A short five-item Excessive Internet Use Scale was used to measure the phenomenon. In the presentation, I will provide methodological details of the project and psychometric properties of the scale. I will discuss issues of identifying at-risk population, psychological, behavioural, and social factors associated with EIU as well as cross-country and cultural differences.