Excessive internet use in European adolescents: What determines differences in severity?

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## Authors

Blinka L.;Škařupová K.;Ševčíková A.;Wölfling K.;Müller K.;Dreier M.

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* Internet usage, practices and engagement
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## Sample

The present study analysed data from the international research project EU Kids Online II. The project surveyed approximately 1,000 internet users between the ages of 9 and 16 and their parents (one parent per respondent) in 25 European countries (N = 25,142). However, only children aged 11–16 years were asked about excessive internet use, and thus the final sample included 18,709 participants (9,352 boys and 9,357 girls).

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

Objectives:
This study investigated the differences between non-excessive, moderately excessive, and highly excessive internet use among adolescents. These differences were explored in terms of personal characteristics, psychological difficulties, environmental factors, and manner of internet use.

Methods:
A representative sample was investigated, consisting of 18,709 adolescents aged 11–16 and their parents, from 25 European countries. Excessive internet use was measured using a five item scale covering following factors: salience, conflict, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, and relapse and reinstatement. The main data analysis utilised multinomial and binary logistic regression models.

Results:
The vast majority of respondents reported no signs of excessive internet use. Moderately excessive users (4.4 %) reported higher emotional and behavioural difficulties, but also more sophisticated digital skills and a broader range of online activities. The highly excessive users (1.4 %) differed from the non-excessive and moderately excessive users in their preference for online games and in having more difficulties with self-control.

Conclusions:
Adolescents who struggle with attention and self-control and who are inclined toward online gaming may be especially vulnerable to the otherwise uncommon phenomenon of excessive internet use.

# Outcome

"The vast majority of respondents reported no signs of excessive internet use. Moderately excessive users (4.4 %) reported higher emotional and behavioural difficulties, but also more sophisticated digital skills and a broader range of online activities. The highly excessive users (1.4 %) differed from the non-excessive and moderately excessive users in their preference for online games and in having more difficulties with self-control." (Blinka, Škařupová, Ševčíková, Wölfling, Müller, Dreier, 2015, Abstract)