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MINDSET.

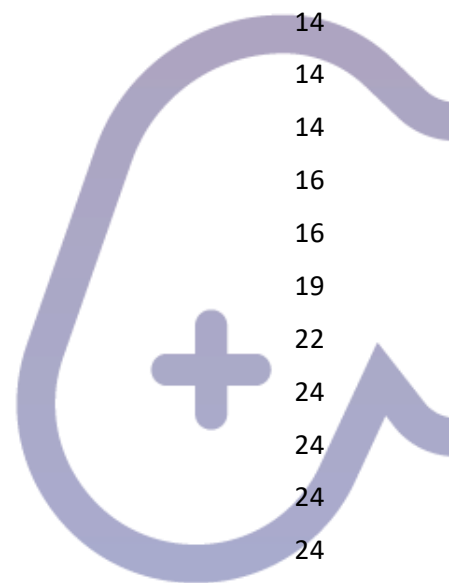
Supporting youth organisations and youth workers for the Identification and Prevention of Youth Gaming Disorder (gaMING DiSordEr youTh)

Playbook for digital well-being
How young people can develop balanced gaming habits

Prepared by
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Level 1

Introduction to the project

According to the 2020 report on Europe's Videogames Industry (ISFE), 72% of the European population aged between 15 and 24 play video games. In 2018, gaming disorder was classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). Gaming disorder has severe consequences on the mental, physical and social health of the person suffering from it.

MINDSET project aims to prepare youth organizations and youth workers to identify the early signs and prevent the development of gaming disorders among youth. More specifically, the project has the following objectives:

- ✓ Raise awareness of the negative effects of excessive gaming,
- ✓ Provide youth workers and youth organizations with the knowledge to recognise the signs of gaming disorder, disambiguating it from normal gaming behaviour,
- ✓ Equip youth workers with the tools to identify early signs and prevent gaming disorder,
- ✓ Promote the development of new policies for the identification and prevention of gaming disorders.

The objectives of the Work Package 2 - Guide for Youth Workers in France, Poland, Germany, Ireland, Austria, Cyprus, Portugal and Greece are to collect necessary data on the situation of gaming disorder and the measures taken to tackle it in national contexts; to gain insight on the views of young people and youth workers on gaming disorder in national contexts; to improve the knowledge of young people and increase awareness among them regarding gaming disorder; to increase awareness on the organisational changes that need to be made in youth organisations to meet the needs of young people with gaming disorder or at risk of gaming disorder.

To reach the aforementioned objectives, the project's partners have conducted primary (both quantitative -through an online survey- and qualitative -through interviews- research), and secondary research (desk research). The outputs of the research have led to the development of two Guides, the **Handbook for Youth** and the **Organisational Change Guide for Youth Organisations**.



Introduction to the Handbook for Youth

The MINDSET – Handbook for Youth targets young people and entails information on gaming disorder, risk factors, dangers, consequences, healthy and balanced gaming and ways to recognize the symptoms of gaming disorder. This way, it increases awareness of gaming disorder and helps young people protect themselves against problematic gaming behaviours.

The Guide was tailored according to the results of the desk and the field research across partnership countries and includes a summary of the results of the research; information on the identification and prevention of gaming disorder; as well as a list of organisations specialised in gaming disorder. This list can help young people explore the organisations specialised in gaming disorder and find the programs that correspond to their needs and gaming habits.

To the young people reading this Handbook

If you are interested in video and digital games, then this Handbook is a must-read. Regardless of your gaming habits and the frequency you are playing, this manual will help you develop healthy gaming habits so that you can keep enjoying computer games without neglecting other activities in your daily life. Even if playing electronic games is just a once in a time leisure activity for you, the information and advice given can help you become aware of what a gaming disorder is and provide support to close ones showing symptoms of problematic gaming behaviour.





Level 2

Summary of Research Result in partner - countries

Austria

So far, no exact figures regarding gaming disorder prevalence in Austria can be found, as these studies require a large coverage to provide representative results, which are associated with high costs (cf. Stevens et al. 2021). The last notable observational study on this topic was conducted in 2016 by David Riedl, who conducted a survey among 389 Tyrolean adolescents and found a prevalence of 5.4% among gaming addicts (cf. Riedl et al. 2016).

Cyprus

No statistics related to the risk of developing gaming disorders or any other related data were found for Cyprus. However, some statistics were found regarding the gaming market in Cyprus. The revenue in the video game segment is projected to reach approximately 15 million EUR (Xace, 2021), with mobile games being the leading gaming methodology in the country, followed by online games, gaming networks and online games (Statista, 2022).

France

It is worth noting that the gaming culture in France is significant, with the country being one of the largest markets for video games in Europe. A study carried out in 2022, by the Union of Video Game Publishers SELL in collaboration with Médiamétrie (a public limited company that specialises in audience measurement and research into audio-visual and digital media usage in France) found that over a quarter of French people play video games every day, and counts more than 37 million gamers.

The French Ministry of Culture has officially recognized video games as a form of art since 2011, which grants them access to various forms of government funding and support typically reserved for other creative pursuits such as film and literature. The Centre National du Cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC), a French governmental agency responsible for promoting and supporting cinema, television, video games, and other audiovisual industries, has been instrumental in the growth of the French video game industry. The CNC oversees the Support Fund for Videogames (FAJV), which aims to encourage innovation and creation within the video game sector. In collaboration



with the CNC, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs also promotes the French video game industry.

Germany

According to a representative survey of German families, 93% of children 12 to 19 years old own a smartphone and over 80% of them reported unrestricted internet access (Paschke et al. 2021). Around six out of every ten Germans play computer and video games, which means that more than 600,000 children and young people show pathological usage behaviour and make 59 per cent of the population between the ages of 6 and 69 reach for their PC, smartphone, tablet or console to dive into the digital world and play computer and video games. In recent years, there has been a consistent increase in the average age of video game players in Germany, which rose from 37.4 in 2020 to 37.6 in 2021 (The German Games Industry Association). According to Thomasius' longitudinal study from 2019 to 2021, the increase in digital games used in Germany is 31.3% during weekdays and 12.9% during the weekends (Thomasius, 2021). There was also a significant increase in gaming disorder of 51,8% (Thomasius, 2021). Even after the pandemic restrictions eased, the average media usage times are still above the pre-pandemic values (Fischbach, 2021).

Greece

According to data retrieved from the helpline of the Greek Safer Internet Centre (SIC), SafeLine¹ for 2021, gaming addiction is one of the main reasons why people call the line, reaching a percentage of 43%. Other reasons mentioned are problems related to personal data privacy (12%), technical issues (11%), violence on the internet (9%), excessive use (7%), sexting (6%), relationships and sexuality (4%), education in the media (4%), sexual abuse (1%), harmful content (1%), online reputation (1%), hate speech (0%) (Greek Safer Internet Centre, 2021).

As far as the profile of those addicted to gaming is concerned, nine out of 10 people who sought rehabilitation services to address their problematic or excessive use of the internet/gaming in KETHEA – Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals² were young, males, with Greek nationality, with an average age of 18.9 years old, residing with their parental family. During 2021, 531 people in total were supported by KETHEA, of which 141 were young people and 390 were their family

¹ <https://www.safeline.gr/en/>

² <https://www.kethea.gr/en/epikoionia/>



members (KETHEA - Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals, 2021, p. 47). Their occupation with the internet was described as daily and concerned mainly with Massively Multi-played Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs).

Ireland

A recent study in Ireland investigated the prevalence of gaming disorders among regular gamers. The study was conducted online, and participants were asked to complete a survey consisting of 21 questions related to gaming behaviours, including the age of onset, hours played, the device used, mobile gaming, motives for gaming, use of microtransactions, engagement in esports, and a screening tool for gaming disorder (Columb, Griffiths, & O'Gara, 2020).

The survey received responses from 166 participants, and the results showed that 2.4% of the study population had a gaming disorder, while up to 5.4% showed some evidence of disordered gaming. The study found that the disordered gaming group spent more time playing games on weekdays and weekends compared to the non-disordered group (Columb, Griffiths, & O'Gara, 2020).

The main motivation for gaming among the non-disordered group was recreation, while the disordered group reported competition, escape, and coping as their primary motives for gaming.

Poland

Data from Statistics Poland (GUS) 2021 shows that 98.4 % of young people between 16 and 24 use a computer or laptop for activities varying from studying to shopping and entertainment. With the increasing technological possibilities, more and more young people spend their time playing computers, video consoles or mobile games. This situation has been boosted by a pandemic - the transition to working and learning from home. According to a survey conducted by CBOS (Public Opinion Research Centre) in 2022, 100% of people between 18 and 24 use the Internet and 41% of them play online games.

Portugal

In Portugal, there isn't much information about gamers' profiles; however, there is data about the use of the internet and electronic devices for gaming. The Department for Intervention in Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD) published a paper prepared by Guerreiro and Ferreira (2021) with some statistics on Gaming and the Internet. The report consisted of information from young people aged 18, and it showed that 58,3% of the inquired played games online, with 55,7%



playing during weekdays, and 53,8% during the weekend. Of these, 7,2% played six or more hours per day on weekdays, with 9,1% on the weekends, and more commonly, up to one hour was spent on online gaming, both on weekdays (25,2%) and the weekend (19,9%). Additionally, there was an increase noted in online gaming between 2015 and 2019, from 53,9% to 58,3%.

Conclusions Reached through the Desk and Fieldwork Research in Partner Countries

Although problematic gaming was recognised as a mental health disease by WHO, partners found that the legal framework regulating the use of computer and electronic games by children and adolescents is still underdeveloped in project countries. A positive remark is that all partner countries have adopted the PEGI (Pan European Game Information) age rating system, which is endorsed by the European Commission and can serve as a model for harmonising legislation on electronic games.

The gaps in the legal framework gaming are explained by the recent inclusion of gaming disorder in the 11th edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) in 2018 – officially in 2019 – and the controversial reactions received. Furthermore, the gaming industry is an ever-evolving industry and thus, constant legislation reforms are needed to keep up with the new trends in video and digital gaming.

It is also worth noting that in many cases the legal framework for gambling works as an umbrella for gaming disorder as well. Even though gaming disorder presents some similarities with gambling, such as loot boxes, the different nature of gaming disorder being a legal leisure activity with a proven positive impact on the cognitive and emotional development of children and adolescents demands different and separate legal approaches.

Research showed that young people, as well as the family and social environment surrounding them, are not yet aware of the gaming disorder and its impact on mental health and social life. Not only is there a lack of awareness about gaming being a potential source of addiction, but there is also a resistance to accepting that problematic gaming habits are actually a behavioural addiction that needs medical attention and treatment. This resistance is linked to the social stigma around addictions and seeking treatment. The online survey also revealed the fear of being stigmatised for having a gaming disorder. Even though the majority of participants responded by playing computer games daily or weekly, participants who played at high frequency answered that they



can control their gaming habits on their own, or that they do not spend a lot of time playing games to need help/support.

Regarding difficulties in treating gaming disorders, many similarities were found in project countries. The state does not have an organised strategy against gaming disorder, which in turn perpetuates the limited awareness of gaming disorder by young people and their families. In addition, in the school environment, the educational personnel lack the training skills and resources needed to support students struggling with problematic gaming behaviour. Another difficulty that needs to be highlighted is the lack of visibility of organisations specialised in preventing and treating gaming disorder. The field research showed that not only the general public but also youth workers had limited knowledge of organisations specialised in gaming disorder. Apart from their weakness in raising awareness on their activities, their concentration in big urban centres accentuates the difficulty of the population living in small cities and villages to reach the support they provide.

The interviews conducted with youth workers shed light on the obstacles and needs that youth workers face in their efforts to help and protect young people against gaming disorder. The majority of youth workers who participated in the interviews responded that they do not have the proper knowledge and training skills to help young people with symptoms of gaming disorder. Their needs were identified to be better information about the situation of gaming disorder among young people, the legal framework, the organisations, the policies and tools available for treating gaming disorder. They also expressed the need for training programs and educational resources that can help them identify and support young people with gaming disorder, as well as increased funding for implementing programs and activities related to gaming disorder.

Based on the results of the desk and field research, the following recommendations were made:

- ✓ Given the lack of visibility of organisations specialised in gaming addictions, a mapping of all the specialised services and organisations that can deal with gaming disorder with contact information is deemed necessary.



- ✓ Due to limited public awareness of gaming disorder, the organisation of awareness-raising activities addressed to parents, children, teachers and other professionals working on gaming disorder is also essential.
- ✓ Considering the needs of youth workers on better information and training skills on gaming disorder, a guide with practical recommendations, best practices, useful tools and resources can help youth organisations to become more competent and effective.
- ✓ Finally, the organisation of capacity-building activities on gaming disorder for professionals is also considered important, as well as for parents. A guide should include general information on gaming disorder (early and alerting signs, causes, risk factors, course of the disorder), positive and negative effects of gaming, prevention strategies, intervention strategies, alternative activities, support mechanisms, updated services' mapping with contact information, ready to use tools and activities with instructions. Regarding the form that such training paths should have, it is best that participation and interaction of learners is encouraged.





Level 3

Gaming Disorder



Figure 1 Photo by Florian Olivo on Unsplash

Gaming disorder, as described in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), refers to repetitive gaming behaviour characterised by lack of control over gaming activities (digital or video games). This disorder is characterised by a growing emphasis on gaming, surpassing other activities to the point where gaming becomes the primary

focus over personal interests and daily responsibilities. Also, despite experiencing negative consequences, individuals affected by this disorder continue to engage in gaming and may even intensify their gaming habits (World Health Organisation, 2023).

Signs and Symptoms of Video Game Addiction

Gaming disorder, as described by Cleveland Clinic (2022), manifests through various signs and symptoms. Excessive video game playing can lead to poor performance in school, work, or household responsibilities. When games are taken away, or gaming becomes impossible, individuals may experience withdrawal symptoms,

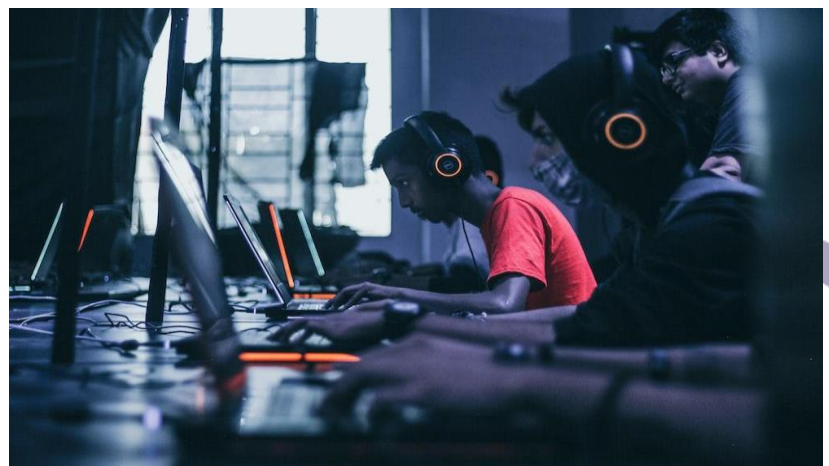


Figure 2 Photo by Fredrick Tendong on Unsplash

including sadness, anxiety, or irritability. There is a progressive need to spend more time gaming to maintain the same level of enjoyment. People affected may give up on previously enjoyed activities and relationships, and despite recognising the negative consequences, they struggle to control their gaming time. Deception about gaming habits, neglect of personal hygiene, and using gaming as a means of escape or mood relief are also common indicators. Recognising these signs is essential in identifying and addressing gaming disorders and their impact on individuals' lives.

Statistics

Adair (2023) reports that video game addiction has not received the same level of attention from mental health experts and research funding as other disorders like gambling and substance abuse. Despite the field of video game addiction research and treatment still being in its early stages of development, there are multiple high-quality papers and studies available that shed light on video game addiction statistics, demographics, and prevalence rates, helping us understand the seriousness of the issue.

According to Adair (2023), there are currently over two billion people worldwide who play video games, and this number is anticipated to exceed three billion by 2023. Approximately 3-4% of gamers are addicted to video games, which indicates a significant number of affected individuals. A systematic review and meta-analysis conducted in 2021 found that the global prevalence of gaming disorder is around 3.05%, suggesting that there could be as many as 60 million people or more suffering from gaming disorder.

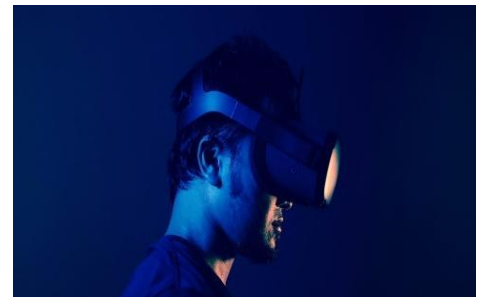


Figure 3 Photo by Minh Pham on Unsplash

Additionally, between 0.3% and 1% of the general population display symptoms associated with gaming disorder, indicating that the issue is not limited to dedicated gamers alone. Among young people aged 8-18 years old, the prevalence of gaming disorder is even higher, at 8.5%.

The popularity of gaming is continually increasing each year. In 2015, there were 1.9 billion gamers, and by 2021, the number had risen to an estimated 2.81 billion, with projections suggesting it will overtake 3 billion by 2023. This growth in gaming participation suggests that the number of individuals suffering from gaming disorders is also likely to increase each year.

Risk Factors

Mandriota (2022) discusses several risk factors associated with gaming disorders. These factors include:

- **Dopamine desensitisation**, where excessive gaming leads to brain receptors becoming less responsive to dopamine, the neurotransmitter associated to instant gratification, resulting in the need to play more to experience the same level of satisfaction.



- **Escapism** is another risk factor, as gamers may play excessively to escape stress and real-life problems, which can worsen existing issues.
- A **sense of belonging** is found in multiplayer gaming, providing an appealing way for introverted or socially anxious individuals to interact without face-to-face contact.
- **Gender factors** suggest that males may have a genetic predisposition to be more susceptible to compulsive gaming based on neuroimaging studies.
- **Instant gratification** plays a role, as video games provide achievable challenges and rewards, reinforcing gaming behaviour.

Consequences

Adair (2022) highlights that the harmful impacts of video games can affect both physical and mental health, and sometimes both together. It's crucial to recognise that the symptoms may vary from person to person, but gaming disorder is known to lead to a range of consequences.

Like many addictions, excessive video game use is often the root cause of these symptoms. The more time spent gaming, the more other essential aspects of life get neglected, such as social life, career, family relationships, mental well-being, and physical health.

The harmful effects of prolonged daily gaming can be broadly categorised into two main areas: negative physical effects and negative mental/emotional effects. Both can contribute to the overall negative impact of excessive video game playing on an individual's well-being (Adair, 2022).

Physical Health Impacts of Gaming

Adair (2022) found that spending extensive hours a day playing video games can have serious consequences on physical health. Neglecting regular meals, drinking water, exercise and overall well-being is common among gamers absorbed in their virtual worlds. The negative physical effects of gaming addiction encompass poor sleep hygiene, dehydration, physical health atrophy, poor concentration, heart problems, and obesity. These consequences can, in turn, affect mental health, forming an interconnected cycle. Poor sleep habits can lead to depression and anxiety, while inadequate nutrition and hydration cause headaches, muscle loss, and more severe health issues. Physical health atrophy, obesity, and heart problems can result from prolonged inactivity due to excessive gaming. Additionally, gaming's demanding focus and fixation can hinder



concentration on other tasks like schoolwork or career obligations. Proper attention to these physical and mental aspects is essential to maintaining overall well-being and avoiding the detrimental impacts of gaming disorder.

How to balance gaming with other activities

In an era dominated by digital technology, gaming has emerged as a popular form of entertainment and engagement, especially among the youth. While gaming offers many interactive experiences and social interactions, it also challenges finding a delicate equilibrium between virtual and real-world activities. Balancing gaming with other commitments is not just about time management but about



Figure 2 Photo by Unsplash+ on Unsplash

cultivating a holistic lifestyle encompassing academic, physical, social, and emotional well-being. This section delves into **strategies** and insights that empower individuals to balance their gaming pursuits and other essential facets of life.

One of the strategies is **understanding the need for balance**. When approached mindfully, gaming can offer cognitive benefits, enhance problem-solving skills, and provide a sense of accomplishment. However, excessive gaming can have adverse consequences, including impaired academic performance, strained relationships, and compromised physical health. Striking the right balance is essential to prevent gaming from encroaching on valuable time and experiences required for personal growth and development.

Time, being a finite resource, demands careful allocation to various activities. **Creating a well-structured schedule** that designates specific time slots for gaming, studying, socialising, exercising, and other commitments lays the foundation for a balanced living (Primack et al., 2012). Employing digital tools such as calendar apps, task managers, and alarms can aid in adhering to the designated time blocks and ensuring a productive routine. Balancing gaming with other activities entails **setting clear priorities**. Education, work, family responsibilities, and health should hold precedence. Individuals can engage in gaming without jeopardising essential commitments by recognizing and honouring these obligations. This approach instils discipline and accountability, fostering a sense of accomplishment across multiple domains.



Establishing a structured routine can be a game-changer in the pursuit of balance. Designating specific time frames for gaming and other activities helps mitigate the risk of gaming consuming excessive hours. Individuals can create a well-rounded schedule that supports physical, mental, and emotional well-being by integrating daily rituals such as exercise, mealtime, and relaxation. Balancing gaming with other activities involves transparent **communication** with peers, family members, and support networks. Engaging in conversations about gaming preferences, goals, and potential challenges allows for external perspectives and insights. Collaborative efforts enable the identification of potential pitfalls and provide a support system to ensure that gaming remains a positive component of life.

Establishing achievable gaming goals is a proactive approach to balance. This could involve completing specific in-game achievements, progressing in a storyline, or participating in gaming events. Attaining these goals offers a sense of accomplishment while preventing gaming from becoming an all-consuming activity. Mindfulness extends beyond meditation; it can also be applied to gaming. Engaging in **mindful play** entails being fully present and aware of the gaming experience. This practice helps prevent mindless, prolonged gaming sessions and allows individuals to savour the enjoyment without losing track of time. Incorporating **regular breaks** during gaming sessions serves multiple purposes. Physically, breaks mitigate the risk of sedentary behaviour and promote physical well-being. Mentally, they allow for cognitive refreshment, preventing mental fatigue and enhancing overall focus and engagement.

Learning how to design a game would also provide gamers with a bird view perspective on their own behaviour while playing. In fact, understanding what game dynamics, mechanics and components are used to design a game, and, most of all, how they are used to engage a player, would represent a valuable asset for the gamers. They would be also able to better discern the overt or hidden objectives that they are called upon to pursue during the gaming experience.

For younger individuals, **parental guidance** is pivotal in establishing a balanced gaming routine. Parents can collaborate with their children to set reasonable gaming limits, define tech-free zones, and encourage diverse activities. These measures ensure that gaming remains a positive outlet without overshadowing other aspects of life (Gentile et al., 2017).

Level 4

Introduction to Gaming Disorder Symptoms



The topic of gaming disorder symptoms has been debated since the emergence of video games (Kuss et al., 2017). Since then, many have tried to find common ground regarding symptoms that arise from excessive gaming, while Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5 (DSM) finally concluded in some symptoms (Bean et al., 2017). These psychological and behavioural symptoms appear to be largely borrowed from the criteria for substance abuse addictions. The criteria of gaming disorder are presented in Table 1 in a summarised form. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), gaming disorder is characterised as a pattern of gaming behaviour, referred to as "digital-gaming" or "video-gaming," where individuals have impaired control over their gaming habits (WHO, 2019). This behaviour involves prioritising gaming over other activities to the point where it becomes more important than other interests and daily responsibilities. Despite experiencing negative consequences, individuals with gaming disorders continue to engage in gaming and may even escalate their gaming habits. Studies suggest that gaming disorder affects only a small proportion of people who engage in digital- or video-gaming activities (WHO, 2020).

Label	Description
1. Preoccupation with Excessive Gaming	Preoccupation with Internet games. (The individual thinks about previous gaming activity or anticipates playing the next game; Internet gaming becomes the dominant activity in daily life.)
2. Experienced withdrawal	Withdrawal symptoms when gaming is taken away. (These symptoms are typically described as irritability, anxiety, or sadness, but there are no physical signs of pharmacological withdrawal.)
3. Developed Tolerance	Tolerance—the need to spend increasing amounts of time engaged in Internet games.
4. Loss of Control	Unsuccessful attempts to control the participation in Internet games.
5. Continued Use	Continued excessive use of Internet games despite knowledge of psychosocial problems



6. Mislead others	Has deceived family members, therapists, or others regarding the amount of Internet gaming.
7. Use as escape	Use of Internet games to escape or relieve a negative mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety)
8. Reduced Interests	Loss of interest in previous hobbies and entertainment as a result of, and with the exception of, Internet games
9. Risked Opportunities	Has jeopardised or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of participation in Internet games.

Table 1 DSM-5 Criteria in a Summarised format retrieved from (Luo et al., 2022)

Despite the symptomatology that is presented in Table 1, WHO defined gaming disorder using only three essential features, which are impaired control, increasing priority and continuation despite negative consequences. Within those three features important aspects have been included, such as increased duration or frequency of gaming, requirement of increased complexity or skills, craving experience of dysphoria, exhibition of adversarial behaviour or aggression and disruptions in diet, sleep, exercise and other health-related behaviours. In other words, ICD-11 describes gaming disorder as persistent and problematic gaming behaviour including impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other life interests, and continued gaming despite negative consequences (WHO, 2019). The behaviour must be ongoing for an extended period (e.g., 12 months), not attributed to another mental disorder or substance use, and must cause significant distress or impairment in various areas of life. Therefore, both the DSM-5 and ICD-11 manuals identify several problems or negative consequences typically associated with Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) or Gaming Disorder (GD) (Martončík et al., 2023).

These include neglect of basic needs such as:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Fulfilling obligations
- Decrease in interpersonal activities.

Other negative outcomes include:

- Avoidance of boredom,
- Aggression
- Declining grades
- Health and sleep problems.

Solid evidence supports the existence of other negative outcomes, such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, emotional distress, lower life satisfaction, and poor self-esteem (Ropovik et al., 2023). Based on DSM-5 standards (Table 1), a diagnosis of IGD requires meeting at least five out of nine criteria within the past 12 months (Wartberg et al., 2017). Therefore, in the following section, we aim to create an assessment tool to serve as guidance and increase awareness among young people and youth organisations dealing with gaming disorders. It is important to note that this tool should not be employed for medical purposes, as only experts on gaming disorders and mental health can provide an accurate diagnosis.

Self-Assessment Tool

After considering the symptoms discussed in the previous chapter, our goal is to create a self-assessment tool that relies on empirical and scientific data. However, it is important to note that self-assessment tools cannot replace professional help and should not be used for diagnosing others. This tool should only be used to raise awareness among young people and not as a substitute for professional help. It is important to remember that these tools are not designed to provide a diagnosis, but rather to identify potential areas of concern.

Therefore, this chapter provides a questionnaire based on ICD-11, DSM-5, and relevant studies to help youth workers and young people identify areas of concern when it comes to gaming disorders (Bäcklund et al., 2022; Dieris-Hirche et al., 2023; Kaptsis et al., 2016; Kochuchakkalackal & Reyes, 2020; Larsson et al., 2018; Wartberg et al., 2017). We will be using the method of Borges et al. (2021) and Wartberg et al. (2017) to raise concerns, which involves considering 12 months of video game playing as a starting point. This approach has been adopted from previous studies related to general mental health issues and has proven to be effective (Leon et al., 1997; Ormel et al., 2008).

The assessment tool utilises the Likert Scale method for measurement. The scale consists of five response options ranging from "Never" to "Always." This allows individuals to express the



frequency and severity of situations they have encountered due to their gaming activity. The following are the possible answers to select from:

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Rarely
- 3 – Sometimes
- 4 – Often
- 5 – Always

Questionnaire³:

1. In the last 12 months, how often have you spent an hour or more thinking about when you can play a game?
2. In the last year, did you risk losing important relationships, educational opportunities, or job chances because of gaming?
3. In the past year, did you feel sad, hopeless, nervous, or anxious?
4. In the past year, did you feel that you lose interest in all other hobbies or activities besides gaming?
5. In the past year, have you ever attempted to stop gaming due to its interference with your daily life?
6. In the last year, did you consider seeking professional help for your gaming habits?
7. In the past year, have you ever concealed the amount of time you spent playing games from others?
8. How often do you use computer games to avoid feeling bad?
9. Do you often regret spending too much time playing video games?
10. In the past year, have you had trouble sticking to your self-imposed limits on gaming and ended up playing longer or more frequently than you intended?

It is important to note that this self-assessment tool cannot accurately diagnose potential young people who may be struggling with gaming disorder and should not be used in such way. However, it can be used to increase general awareness around the issue and may be helpful for youth organisations to be used as a guiding tool and be used by young people as a self-reflection tool. It is crucial to work closely with mental health and gaming disorder experts to achieve the best possible outcome and accurately diagnose young people's behaviours regarding gaming. It is

³ <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/110usV6qbz41ehXD7Rkss4kdyW-TdQA1bly4aefVvmgo/edit>



suggested that before using this self-assessment tool, mental health experts or gaming disorder experts should be consulted. There are also available online and free assessment tools for video game addiction that are directly related to gamers' behaviour. One can be found on the online community Game Quitters⁴ and focuses on nine questions with a Yes/No format:

1. Firstly, do you spend a lot of time thinking about games even when you're not playing, or planning when you can play next?
2. Do you feel restless, irritable, moody, angry, anxious, bored, or sad when you try to cut down or stop gaming, or when you are unable to play?
3. And do you feel the need to play for increasing amounts of time, play more exciting games, or use more powerful equipment to get the same amount of excitement you used to get?
4. Have you felt you should play less, but are unable to cut back on the amount of time you spend playing games?
5. And have you lost interest—or reduced participation—in other recreational activities due to gaming?
6. Have you continued to play a game even though you knew about the negative consequences, such as not getting enough sleep, being late to school/work, spending too much money, having arguments with others, or neglecting important duties?
7. Have you been deceptive, or lied to family, friends, or others about how much you game? Or tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you game?
8. Do you game to escape from or forget about personal problems, or to relieve uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, anxiety, helplessness, or depression?
9. And finally, have you risked or lost significant relationship, job, educational, or career opportunities because of gaming?

After completing the quiz, Gaming Quitter sends a personalised email based on the responses. Additionally, an online community called Gaming Addicts Anonymous⁵ provides a video game addiction test to act as a guide for self-assessment but only as “food for thought”. The measurement is based on the number of clicks, and the more clicks an individual makes, the higher the likelihood of gaming addiction:

⁴ <https://gamequitters.com/hobby-tool/>

⁵ <https://www.gamingaddictsanonymous.org/self-test-for-video-gaming-addiction/>



- Do you set rules or limits with gaming and then break them, playing longer or more frequently than intended?
- Do you lose hours of sleep to gaming?
- Do you skip or neglect self-care (cooking, eating, bathing, cleaning, shopping, exercise, etc) when gaming?
- Do you find yourself gaming whenever you have free time?
- Have you ever sworn off a game, uninstalled it, and later returned to it?
- Do you often re-live gaming experiences or think about future ones?
- Have you ever used sick days or vacation days or skipped work or class just for gaming?
- Has gaming taken the place of any hobbies or sports you used to enjoy?
- Has your contact with in-person friends and family declined significantly since gaming?
- Have you ever taken a break from gaming and binged uncontrollably upon your return?
- Do you feel irritable and restless when away from games for some time?
- Do you forget or neglect appointments, responsibilities or deadlines in work, school, or family when gaming?
- When anxious, upset, or depressed, do you soothe yourself with games or plans to game?
- Have you ever skipped real-world social plans that you were looking forward to in order to game more?
- Have you ever gamed in inappropriate or unsafe situations (in class, at work, while driving)?
- Do you get very angry when someone or something interrupts a game?
- Have you ever felt regret after a gaming binge?
- Do you hide or lie about your gaming?
- Have you ever had a moment when you really wanted to stop gaming to do something else, but just could not?
- Do you feel guilt and shame around your gaming?

The assessment methods presented in this section should not replace professional help, and they should only be used under professional guidance. Youth organisation that are using these tools should be aware that if a person seeks for help should immediately visit a professional around the topic of gaming disorder and not rely their diagnosis on self-assessment tools that were made just to raise awareness around the issue of gaming disorders. As the number of people, especially young ones, seeking help for gaming disorders has increased following the COVID-19 pandemic (Paschke et al., 2021), it has become evident that people require more assistance over time. The



field of gaming disorder is still emerging but in the next section, we will explore various methods and locations to receive help.

How and Where to Seek Help

Dealing with gaming disorders can be challenging, especially when it comes to finding help. Treatment options for addiction include formal counselling, cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), and rehabilitation programs. In-person services are available through counselling centres, therapists, and treatment centres. Additionally, online forums and websites can serve as useful resources for parents, young people, and youth workers to learn more about gaming disorders. However, video game addiction is most commonly treated by a mental health professional such as a licensed therapist, psychiatrist, or psychologist specialising in video game addiction. Some individuals may choose to receive support from a video game addiction specialist such as a video game addiction recovery coach. Organisations specialising in gaming addiction have identified five main ways to quit or moderate gaming addiction (Cleveland Clinic, n.d.; Foothills at Red Oak Recovery, 2023; Smitha, 2023):

1. **Set Time limit for daily gaming activity:** Health experts recommend that adolescents should not spend more than two hours per day in front of any screen, considering the time spent on television, cell phones, homework, and gaming. With these activities, time can add up quickly.
2. **Remove gaming devices from bedrooms:** It is best to avoid having gaming devices in bedroom as they make it too easy to play at any point. Moreover, playing games before bedtime can lead to poor-quality sleep.
3. **Seeking help from family members and friends:** When young people excessively play video games, it is important for people close to them to create a safe space for discussion. This will allow them to feel secure and open up about any problems they may be facing. Also, family members and friends should suggest alternative solutions for socialising.
4. **Alternative stress-relieving activities:** Gaming relieves stress for many people. Developing other coping strategies will make it easier to limit game time. Try working out or go for a challenging hike. Creative expression is also a stress-buster. Draw, paint, write, play music or enjoy any other screen-free hobby.
5. **Professional Help:** If all of the aforementioned factors have been taken into account and young people are still playing games compulsively, professional assistance will be helpful.

There are also many websites that young people can seek help such as Game Quitters⁴, Gaming Addicts Anonymous⁵, while at the same time students can seek help from their institutions as they provide counselling services. The Handbook concludes by providing a list of resources and organisations from each partner country. These organisations offer professional support to young people who are struggling with gaming disorders. Psychologists, mental health experts, teachers, and school staff usually handle cases of excessive gaming in young individuals. The listed organisations offer both offline and online consultation services, as well as anonymous helplines that operate 24/7.





Level 5

Prevention

Healthy gaming habits

Cultivating healthy gaming habits is essential to prevent the escalation of gaming behaviour into a disorder. Practising **mindful gaming** involves becoming conscious of time spent gaming and emotional responses, ensuring that gaming remains a positive and controlled activity (Primack et al., 2012). **Regular breaks** during gameplay mitigate the adverse effects of extended screen time (Gentile et al., 2017). Furthermore, exploring **various game genres** and types contributes to healthy gaming habits. Exploring a variety of game genres, platforms, and styles prevents monotony and excessive fixation on a single game. This diversification fosters cognitive flexibility, adaptability, and the ability to appreciate different forms of entertainment. Just as a diverse diet enhances physical health, a diverse range of gaming experiences nourishes cognitive and emotional well-being.

Gaming often triggers emotions, from exhilaration and joy to frustration and stress. They develop emotional intelligence while gaming involves constructively recognizing and responding to these emotions. If a game generates excessive stress or negative emotions, it may be a sign to take a break, engage in a different activity, or practise relaxation techniques. Individuals navigate gaming experiences with resilience and a sense of control by cultivating emotional awareness.

Moreover, integrating **physical activities and real-world interactions** into gaming routines promotes holistic well-being. Designating time for exercise, socialising, and other offline pursuits ensures that gaming complements, rather than dominates, daily life. This integration enhances physical health, social connections, and cognitive development.

Engaging with family members and friends in discussions about gaming preferences, goals, and boundaries fosters mutual understanding. Family and social support also provide emotional anchors that reduce the risk of turning to excessive gaming as a coping mechanism for stress, anxiety, or loneliness. Healthy relationships offer a sense of belonging, reducing the need to seek solace solely within virtual worlds. Family support can reinforce healthy gaming behaviours, while peer interactions provide accountability and perspective. By building strong connections and relationships, individuals are equipped with the tools to navigate the digital landscape responsibly and cultivate a life enriched by meaningful experiences within and beyond the gaming realm.



Going further in this line, a recommended practice could be to learn how to design games, in particular, if done in a collaborative way. The understanding of the game design techniques (dynamics, mechanics and components) implemented to set game objectives and to engage players would be extremely helpful to gain a mindful gaming habit.

Alternative activities to gaming

The allure of gaming lies in its ability to transport individuals into immersive worlds and scenarios. However, an overemphasis on virtual experiences can inadvertently lead to a sense of detachment from the physical world. Integrating alternative activities is a potent counterbalance, reconnecting individuals with tangible experiences, genuine interactions, and creative outlets.

For example, outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, camping, or nature photography provide a refreshing break from screens. These experiences foster a deeper connection with the environment, invigorate the senses, and promote physical well-being.

Furthermore, **artistic expression** is a powerful avenue for channelling creativity and emotions. Activities like painting, drawing, sculpting, or playing a musical instrument enable individuals to convey thoughts, feelings, and narratives in tangible forms. The act of creation promotes self-discovery and offers communication beyond words.

Physical activity is essential for a healthy lifestyle. Participating in team sports, individual workouts, or dance classes improves physical health, boosts self-esteem, instils discipline, and fosters camaraderie. The joy of movement and the pursuit of personal fitness goals become invigorating alternatives to gaming.

Contributing to the community through volunteering, charity work, or local initiatives instils a sense of purpose and belonging. These activities nurture empathy, social responsibility, and a deeper understanding of societal needs, enriching personal growth and strengthening the fabric of society.

Moreover, engaging in reading, attending workshops, enrolling in online courses, or exploring new languages and cultures enhances cognitive skills, broadens perspectives, and stimulates intellectual curiosity. **Spending quality time with family and friends**, engaging in face-to-face conversations, and participating in group outings cultivate meaningful connections that transcend the digital realm.

In addition, games themselves can promote and support alternative activities if their design foresees setting objectives outside the digital environment into the real world.

In conclusion, the preventive strategies of balancing gaming with other activities, cultivating healthy gaming habits and embracing alternative activities to gaming form a harmonious symphony of well-being. This symphony resonates with self-discovery, resilience, and the transformative power of intentional engagement. As individuals embrace these practices, they embark on a journey of empowerment, forging a path where gaming becomes a source of joy, creativity, and connectivity while nurturing a holistic approach to life.





Level 6

Annexe

List of organisations specialised in gaming disorder

Austria

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. Anton Proksch Institute	Vienna Austria	Addiction clinic which diagnoses, treats and researches all forms of addiction, including gaming addiction	https://www.api.or.at/
2. The Federal Office for the Positive Rating of Digital Games	Vienna Austria	Offers information and recommendation on computer games, games for consoles and mobile devices (smartphones, tablets) in order to provide parents and educators with guidance in their selection.	https://bupp.at/
3. Therapy and Counseling Center for Media Addiction at the university outpatient clinic of the Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna	Vienna Austria	The therapy and counselling centre is a contact point for adults, children and young people, as well as their relatives (partners, parents, other affected people). It offers support against the excessive use of Internet (computer games, social networks, Internet pornography, online gambling, etc.) and other digital media.	https://ambulanz.sfu.ac.at/de/angebote/verhaltenssuechte/therapie-und-beratungsstelle-fuer-mediensucht/
4. Advice on Wire (Rat auf Draht) counseling centre Advice on Wire parent page (Raf auf Draht elternseite.at)	Vienna Austria	Austrian emergency number / help line for children and young people. The number can be reached anonymously and free of charge around the clock, and advice is given by a multi-professional team of psychologists, clinical/health psychologists, life and social counsellors, social educators and lawyers. Raf auf Draht parent page specialises in support to parents and caregivers of children/youth with behavioural problems/addictions	https://www.rataufdraht.at/ https://elternseite.at/de/home
5. Various specialist centres for addiction prevention and addiction coordination centres in the Austrian federal states	Austria	Various outpatient and inpatient facilities that offer support related to dependency and addiction in different Austrian federal states	https://www.gesundheit.gv.at/service/gesundheitsuche/suchtpraevention-koordination.html
6. Federal Network for Austrian Youth	Vienna Austria	The Federal Network for Austrian Youth offers information, counselling and different services. In the website there are lists of more specialized contact points.	https://www.jugendportal.at/
7. wienXtra association	Vienna Austria	It is an organization for children and young people in Vienna. Eleven facilities provide everything from	https://www.wienxtra.at/



		events and information to education and advice, at low cost or free of charge. It works closely with the City of Vienna and especially with the department - Education and Youth.	
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Cyprus

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. ElectrA	Nicosia & Limassol, Cyprus	The organisation specialises in g and services for children with the following problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video game addiction • Persistent addiction to social media • Persistent persistent attachment to pornographic sites. 	https://psychotherapy.cyprus.com/new-page-28
2. "Prometheus" Prevention and Counselling centre for Adolescents and Families	Limassol & Paphos, Cyprus	The Prevention and Counselling Centre for Adolescents and Families provides programmes for the prevention, early intervention, and treatment of addictive behaviours, such as substance abuse, gambling, the Internet, and electronic games.	https://shso.org.cy/en/clinic/kentro-prolipsis-kai-symvouleftikis-efivon-kai-oikogeneias-promitheas/

France

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. Centre for Dependence on Video Games Centre de référence sur le jeu excessif (CRJE)	Nantes, FRANCE	The centre provides a range of services such as prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and research on excessive gambling and gaming. Its activities are aimed at helping people struggling with excessive gambling or gaming to regain control of their lives and improve their well-being	https://www.chuv.ch/fr/jeu-excessif/cje-home
2. Addiction Help (Addict'Aide)	Centres all over France.	It aims to provide information and prevention of addictions, with a focus on young people. The organization's website offers resources for evaluating and understanding addiction, as well as finding advice, forums, helplines, and professionals for various addictions such as gaming, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, drugs, and more.	https://www.addictaide.fr/



<p>3. Pedagogical (PédaGoJeux)</p> <p>Games</p>	<p>Paris</p>	<p>PédaGoJeux offers resources for parents and educators about video games. Their goal is to promote responsible gaming, educate adults about gaming benefits and risks, and provide informative materials. Managed by "Familles de France" and supported by the French Ministry of National Education, PédaGoJeux strives to create a safe gaming environment for French children through its website, educational materials, events, and training courses for parents and educators</p>	<p>https://www.pedagojeux.fr/</p>
<p>4. Consultation for Young Consumers (CJC)</p>	<p>All around France</p>	<p>The CJC offers support and assistance to young individuals aged 14 to 25 dealing with addictive behaviours related to substance use (such as cannabis, alcohol, ecstasy, and cocaine) and excessive screen time. The CJC provides services focused on prevention, care, and risk reduction for young people facing addiction-related challenges. Importantly, it offers an anonymous and free service, connecting young individuals with healthcare professionals who can provide guidance and support</p>	<p>https://addictions-france.org/dispositifs/consultations-jeunes-consommateurs-cjc/</p>
<p>5. jeprotegemonenfant.gouv.fr (I protect my child)</p>	<p>Online</p>	<p>The jeprotegemonenfant.gouv.fr website is a platform launched by the French government to help parents protect their children from online risks, including pornography, cyberbullying, and excessive screen time. The website provides information, advice, and resources for parents on how to promote healthy screen habits, protect their children's privacy and security online, and prevent and respond to online risks.</p>	<p>https://jeprotegemonenfant.gouv.fr/</p>
<p>6. e-enfance association (childhood)</p>	<p>National Helpline</p>	<p>The e-Enfance association is recognized as a public utility and aims to promote safe and responsible use of the internet and digital devices among young people.</p> <p>The website e-enfance.org provides a national helpline number, 3018, for children, adolescents, and parents to</p>	<p>e-enfance.org</p>



		seek help and advice on all issues related to digital use, including cyberbullying. The website also provides resources and information for parents and educators on how to prevent and respond to online risks, including cyberbullying, sexting, and excessive screen time.	
7. National Union of Family Associations (UNAF)	A website and resource platform in France	It supports families and promotes family policies. The website mon-enfant-et-les-ecrans provides resources and guidance for parents on how to find a balance in their family's use of screens. The website aims to help parents promote healthy screen habits and prevent excessive screen time among children.	https://www.mon-enfant-et-les-ecrans.fr/
8. House of Adolescents (MDA)	All around France	MDA is a program established in 1999 to provide integrated youth health care services. Over 100 MDAs have been created since then, offering young people access to specialized care in youth-friendly facilities. These centres function as multidisciplinary hubs, coordinating professionals' efforts in adolescent care. Locally, they offer vital services such as prevention, treatment, and risk reduction for youth facing addiction, mental health, and other health issues	https://sante.gouv.fr/soins-et-maladies/prises-en-charge-specialisees/article/les-maisons-des-adolescents
9. Website 3-6-9-12.org	Paris	The 3-6-9-12 campaign by French psychiatrist Serge Tisseron promotes healthy screen habits in children. It suggests four age-based screen time limits: under 3, no screens; 3-6, one hour; 6-9, two hours; 9-12, three hours daily.	https://www.3-6-9-12.org/
10. Internet Without Fear (Internet Sans Crainte)	A national awareness program	It is dedicated to promoting digital citizenship and online safety. The organization offers resources, training, and support to young people, parents, and educators, providing over 100 free resources for individuals aged 6 to 18. The organization is part of the Safer Internet France program and is involved in the Safer Internet Day initiative, focusing on safe and	https://www.internetsanscrainte.fr/



		responsible digital technology use, especially among youth	
11. TRALALERE	Paris	It allows companies, associations, institutions, and communities to address young people and their educational mediators (teachers, educators, families) on various themes.	https://www.tralalere.com/en/home/
12. Info-jeunes (info-youth)	A European- and Nation-wide network of youth organisations	A local network of over 1,300 organisations that assist young people in meeting their needs and becoming self-sufficient. The network welcomes young people in local and regional structures, Youth Information Centres, and Regional Youth Information Centres across the country.	https://www.infos-jeunes.com/

Germany

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. Federal Centre for Health Education (Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung)	Köln	The Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) is an upper federal authority in the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG). They perform prevention and health promotion tasks for the federal government. It carries out addiction prevention in the field of legal and illegal drugs as well as behavioral addictions, for example, prevention of gambling addiction and excessive media use.	https://www.bzga.de/
3. Local office Böblingen (Landratsamt Böblingen)	Böblingen	Addiction prevention and assistance, violence and crime prevention, coordination of the various initiatives in the field, advice and support for day-care centres, schools, youth facilities, as well as support in contacting help facilities.	https://www.lraebb.de/start/Service+Verwaltung/Praev-entia+und+Sucht+hilfe.html
4. German Society for Psychiatry Psychotherapy,	Berlin	It is the largest medical-scientific professional society for mental	https://www.dgppn.de/



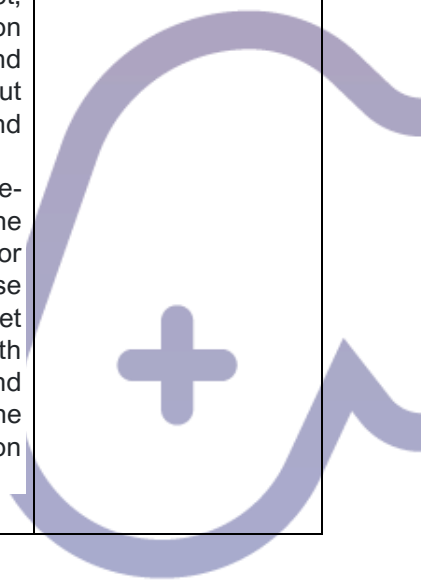
Psychosomatics and Neurology (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie, Psychosomatik und Nervenheilkunde)		health issues in Germany. It pools the expertise of more than 11,000 specialists, therapists, and scientists working in university clinics, hospitals, and outpatient practices, as well as in research in the field of mental health.	
5. Working Group Diakonie in Rhineland-Palatinate (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Diakonie in Rheinland-Pfalz)	Mainz	The Diakonie in Rhineland-Palatinate maintains 14 addiction counseling centers with six branch offices and one socio-therapeutic residential home.	https://www.diakonie-rlp.de/
6. University Hospitals (Universitätskliniken)	Heidelberg	Some university hospitals in Germany have specialized departments or clinics that focus on behavioural addictions, including gaming addiction.	https://www.klinikum.uni-heidelberg.de/

Greece


Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. Adolescent Health Unit (A.H.U.) Second Dpt of Pediatrics - University of Athens, Children's Hospital "P. & A. Kyriakou" Help-Line 800 11 800 15	Athens	The Adolescent Health Unit (AMH) of the "P. & A. Kyriakou" Children's Hospital, operates the toll-free line "ME Support" at 800 11 800 15. It operates for issues related to the proper use of technology by minors (internet addiction, online bullying, seduction-grooming, inappropriate content, personal data issues, pornographic material, gambling, violent games, etc.). It is addressed to children, teenagers, parents, teachers and experts.	http://0317.syzefxis.gov.gr/
2. Department of Adolescents' and Youth Mental Health – Psychiatric department of the General Hospital of Athens "G. Gennimatas"	Athens	The main purpose of the Department is the evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of psychopathological disorders and psychosocial problems of adolescents between the ages of 14 to 21 who face a mental health problem that causes significant difficulties for their lives in the family, social, work and educational spheres.	www.gnagennimatas.gr/psuxiatrikos-tomeas/tmima-psuziatrikis-ugeias-efivwn/



<p>3. For Adolescent Health (F.A.H.)</p>	<p>Athens</p>	<p>Realizing that in Greece there are no adequate structures for the health of adolescents (physical and psychosocial), this body was created to help in the valid information of the adolescents themselves, but also of parents, teachers and specialists, as well as in prevention and holistic treatment problems surrounding their quality of life. Since 2012, he has been supporting the work of the Adolescent Health Unit (AHU) of "P & A Kyriakou" Children's Hospital.</p>	<p>www.youth-life.gr/el/</p>
<p>4. Greek Safer Internet Centre</p>	<p>Heraklion, Crete</p>	<p>Greek Safer Internet Centre provides help through three distinct actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the website SaferInternet4Kids.gr addressed both to parents and teachers as well as to teenagers and children and includes appropriate multimedia material approved by the Ministry of Education and Religion. • Through the Help-line advisory line (available by phone at 210-6007686 and through the website www.help-line.gr), specialized psychologists provide support and advice on issues related to excessive use of the Internet, cyberbullying, exposure on inappropriate content and other concerns about internet, mobile phone and online gaming use. • And through the Safe-Line Complaint Line (www.safeline.gr) for complaints about child abuse and illegal use of the internet and it cooperates with both the Greek police and INTERPOL through the European organization INHOPE . 	<p>https://saferinternet4kids.gr</p>





<p>5. Greek Society of Adolescent Medicine (G.S.A.M.)</p>	<p>Athens</p>	<p>Greek Society of Adolescent Medicine aims at the global and universal treatment of adolescent health problems and the importance of prevention. Specialists and educators who are close to children from their early years have the ability to understand their needs, inform and guide them well into adulthood. Thus, the transition from childhood and adolescence to adulthood is as painless as possible.</p>	<p>www.youth-med.gr</p>
<p>6. Hellenic Gaming Commission</p>	<p>Athens</p>	<p>It was founded in 2004 and it is an independent administrative authority, which has as its mission to regulate, supervise and audit gaming in order to ensure legality and fairness in gaming activities, the interests of players, minors and the public at large, as well as the state revenue collection process.</p>	<p>https://www.gamingcommission.gov.gr/index.php/en/</p>
<p>7. KETHEA (Therapy Centre for Addicted Individuals) - Ariadni</p>	<p>Crete, Dodekanisla</p>	<p>The KETHEA Ariadni has Counseling Centers in Heraklion, Chania, Agios Nikolaos of Crete, Rhodes and Kalymnos. The Centers provide the possibility of information, counseling and preparation for inclusion either in the Therapeutic Community located in Heraklion or in local open structures that offer a more flexible form of treatment for people who remain functional to a significant degree, depending on the needs and the type of dependence (illegal substances, alcohol, gambling, internet/gaming). In Heraklion there is also a Family Support Center for family members or significant others of people with a use problem, regardless of whether the latter have approached KETHEA Ariadni.</p> <p>To support teenagers with a problem of using legal or illegal substances or addiction to the Internet, the specialized Counseling Unit for Teens has been created in Heraklion. Teenagers are supported by KETHEA Ariadni in all cities where its units operate.</p>	<p>https://www.kethea.gr/kethea/therapevtika-programmata/kethea-ariadni/</p> 



<p>8. KETHEA (Therapy Centre for Addicted Individuals) - Nostos</p>	<p>Piraeus, Chios, Elefsina, Mytilini</p>	<p>The KETHEA Nostos units in Mytilini and Chios mobilise and prepare those interested with a drug use problem for inclusion in the Nostos Residence Therapeutic Community in Piraeus and support families with a drug use problem. They also address wider addictions needs of local communities. They offer early intervention services to experimental, occasional or more regular drug users, as well as their families so that they can effectively deal with their problems and prevent them from becoming more involved with use. In addition, they provide treatment support for alcohol, gambling and internet addiction.</p>	<p>www.kethea.gr/kethea/therapeftika-programmata/kethea-nostos/</p>
<p>9. KETHEA (Therapy Centre for Addicted Individuals) - Network for the Prevention and Early Intervention for Internet Addiction</p>	<p>Athens</p>	<p>KETHEA's Prevention and Early Intervention Services Network addresses the general population, individuals and groups with high-risk behaviours and professionals of various specialities, aiming at prevention and early intervention in the field of addictions.</p> <p>The Department of Primary Prevention in the School Community of the Network designs and implements prevention programs for students, parents and teachers in primary and secondary school communities. It also trains theoretical and experiential staff of the Ministry of Education, such as those in charge of Health Education, those in charge of Youth Counseling Stations, principals of school units and teachers, while it produces prevention material used in primary and secondary education.</p>	<p>https://www.kethea.gr/kethea/therapeftika-programmata/diktyo-prolipsis-egkairis-paremvasis-kethea</p>
<p>10. KETHEA (Therapy Centre for Addicted Individuals) - Plefsi</p>	<p>Athens</p>	<p>Its aim is to support young people as well as the whole family in order to stop the course of use, to deal effectively with personal and interpersonal problems and to establish a lifestyle without the use of substances. Services are also provided to young people with internet and gaming problems and their families.</p>	<p>www.kethea.gr/kethea/therapeftika-programmata/kethea-plefsi/</p>



		Emphasis is also placed on informing parents, professionals and the public about issues related to adolescence, drug use and problematic internet use through information and education actions and materials .	
11. Pathological Internet Use Unit of the Department of Rehabilitation of Addicts "IANOS" of the "G. Papanikolaou" - Psychiatric Hospital of Thessaloniki	Thessaloniki	The Pathological Use of the Internet Unit operates within the framework of the Network of External Services of the Department of Rehabilitation of Dependent Persons "IANOS". It is the only public service in Northern Greece, which deals with the problematic use of the Internet by adults as well as minors (in collaboration with the Papanikolaou child psychiatric clinic). It is aimed at users and their families as well as agencies seeking specialized knowledge in order to more effectively manage problematic use cases.	https://ianos.psychotes.gr/δίκτυο-υπηρεσιών/μονάδα-παθολογικής-χρήσης-του-διαδικ/
12. Pnoi sa Zoi -Association for the support of addicts and their families	Thessaloniki	The program of the rehab centre Pnoi sa Zoi concerns all kinds of addictions: alcohol, drugs (heroin, cocaine, hashish, etc.), gambling (cards, dice, bets, all kinds of games of chance), and Internet addiction. The methodology used is purely person-centered.	https://www.pnoisti.zoi.gr/

Poland

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. Health Psychology Studio Foundation (Fundacja Studio Psychologii Zdrowia)	Pruszków	It provides psychological support, addiction prevention, courses, workshops, training, social campaigns.	https://studio-psychologii.pl/
2. MONAR Association Counselling Centre for Prevention, Treatment and Therapy of addictions (Stowarzyszenie MONAR Poradnia Profilaktyki, Leczenia i Terapii Uzależnień)	Jelenia Góra	The association provides comprehensive diagnosis, psychotherapy and therapy for addicts.	https://monar.biz.pl/
3. Neuropsychiatry Center NEUROMED (Centrum Neuropsychiatrii NEUROMED)	Wrocław	The centre provides comprehensive care for children and young people. The branch runs a therapy centre and an addiction counselling centre,	https://neuropsychiatria.com/



		including for those addicted to computer games. The support provided is free of charge under contract with the National Health Service.	
4. The Provincial Centre for Addiction and Co-Addiction Treatment (Wojewódzki Ośrodek Terapii Uzależnień i Współuzależnienia)	Kraków	The centre provides diagnosis and therapy for behavioural addictions funded by the Ministry of Health and the National Health Fund (also for people without insurance).	http://wotuiw.torun.pl/
5. ETAP Center for Prevention and Therapy for Adolescents and Adults (ETAP Ośrodek Profilaktyki i Terapii dla Młodzieży i Dorosłych)	Białystok	Therapeutic community, individual therapy, psycho-educational activities, occupational therapy, pastoral activities, alternative leisure activities.	https://stowarzyszeni-edroga.pl/osrodek-dzienny-leczenia-uzaleznienn/
6. Lubuski Prevention and Therapy for Addictions and Co-Addictions Centre (Lubuski Ośrodek Profilaktyki Terapii i Uzależnień i Współuzależnień)	Zielona Góra	Addressing behavioural addictions, including computer and gaming. Diagnosis, individual consultations, psychological help, therapy, support for parents.	http://www.lopit.pl/uzalezniennia-behawioralne/
7. Silesian Blue Cross Foundation (Śląska Fundacja Błękitny Krzyż)	Czechowice-Dziedzice	Day unit for addiction therapy, Outpatient cycle - support groups and individual therapy, Alumni support group.	https://bk-europe.pl/index.php/pl/osrodki/miejski-osrodek-terapii-uzaleznienn-w-czechowicach
8. "Behavioral Addictions" Portal (Portal "Uzależnienia Behawioralne")	Warsaw	Maintaining an online counselling service, an up-to-date database of centres, publishing articles on addiction and the latest research, networking, providing information on training courses for professionals.	https://www.uzaleznienniabehawioralne.pl/

Portugal

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. SICAD	Lisbon	The mission of the Intervention Service for Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD) is to promote the reduction of the consumption of psychoactive substances, the prevention of addictive behaviours and the reduction of dependencies.	https://www.sicad.pt/EN/Paginas/default.aspx
2. Instituto de Apoio ao Jogador	Oeiras (Lisbon)	Aims to coordinate efforts in all areas concerning abusive and pathological gamblers, in particular in the field of treatment, training and research.	http://www.iaj.pt/
3. PIN	Lisbon, Porto	A clinical training and research centre dedicated to the study, diagnosis and therapeutic	https://pin.com.pt/



		intervention of disorders related to human behaviour and mental health at all stages of life.	
4. Dianova	Torres Vedras (Lisbon)	It specialises in prevention and health promotion, treatment of addictive behaviours, socio-professional reintegration and social inclusion. It also offers psychosocial support services and training and capacity building for People and Organisations.	https://dianova.pt/

Ireland

Organisation	Location	Description	Website
1. The Rutland Centre	Dublin	The Rutland Centre has been training behavioural addictions such as gaming disorders for many years. They have various treatments available ranging from personal counselling sessions to full residential care.	https://www.rutlandcentre.ie/addictions-we-treat/gaming
2. Department of Children and Youth Affairs	Dublin	The National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020 recognises the importance of involving children and young people in decision-making processes related to their well-being and can help highlight gaming disorders, encouraging young people to be involved in the development and implementation of policies and services that address this problem.	https://assets.gov.ie/24462/48a6f98a921446ad85829585389e57de.pdf
3. Health Service Executive (HSE)	Across Ireland	The national public health service in Ireland, the HSE, provides support services for those suffering with addiction. This includes an integrated range of preventative, therapeutic and rehabilitation services.	https://www.hse.ie/en-g/services/list/5/addiction/
4. Grow Mental Health	Across Ireland	Grow Ireland is a community of people drawn together by first-hand experiences of mental health problems. Having found practical ways of helping each other recover from mental health challenges they developed what they refer to as The Grow Program. They meet weekly in locations all over Ireland and use their proven 12 Step Program to	https://grow.ie/



		recover from various forms of mental health problems.	
5. National Counselling Service	Across Ireland	The HSE National Counselling Service is available free of charge across the country. Counselling is available in person, by phone or by online video. As a service it has a proven track record of providing consistent, quality, counselling and psychotherapy to a wide range of clients.	https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/national-counselling-service/

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