

# Addictology

## Adiktologie

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THE PREVENTION,  
TREATMENT OF,  
AND RESEARCH  
INTO ADDICTION

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# AIM & SCOPE

ADDICTOLOGY is an international journal devoted to publishing peer-reviewed interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific reports on psychoactive substance use, other behavioral addictions and related issues.

Articles range from studies on education, training, and fostering professionalism in addiction professionals, prevention and treatment research, public health interventions, and studies employing methods from epidemiology, economics, historical and cultural aspects of substance use.

Original research, scholarly reviews, policy analyses, editorials, commentaries, and book reviews aim to stimulate and support internationally relevant and quality communication between science and prevention, clinical, and decision making practices. Journal continually supports translation of science to practice and policy.

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# Contents

## EDITORIAL

**Addictions in the Age of Digital Governance: Bridging Behavioral Science, Platform Regulation, and Public Policy**

5

GAVUROVÁ, B.

---

## ORIGINAL PAPERS

**The shame and stigma among people with comorbid hepatitis C virus and substance use disorder: a narrative review**

7

SYED, A., DÉKÁNY, L., RIEGEL, K. D.

**Online time of slovak and czech adults and its relation to big five**

17

ČEREŠNÍK, M., KŇAŽEK, G., DOLEJŠ, M., KŇAŽEK POVAŽANOVÁ, B.

**The Role of Family Background in Adolescent Risky Behavior Development**

29

GOMOLČÁKOVÁ, V., DOLEJŠ, M.

**Online Gambling In Europe: Prevalence, Risk and Regulatory Challenges In The Digital Era**

41

AL KHOURI, I., IANNACCONE, B., KAŠČÁKOVÁ, I.

**Problematic Pornography Use as a Predictor of Depressive and Apathetic Symptoms in Slovak Young Adults**

55

KAČMARIKOVÁ, K., BOČANOVÁ, J., BERINŠTEROVÁ, M., MAJDÁKOVÁ, V.

---

## NEWS / ISSUP

**ISSUP Delivers Introduction to Evidence-Based Prevention (INEP) Plus Refresher Training**

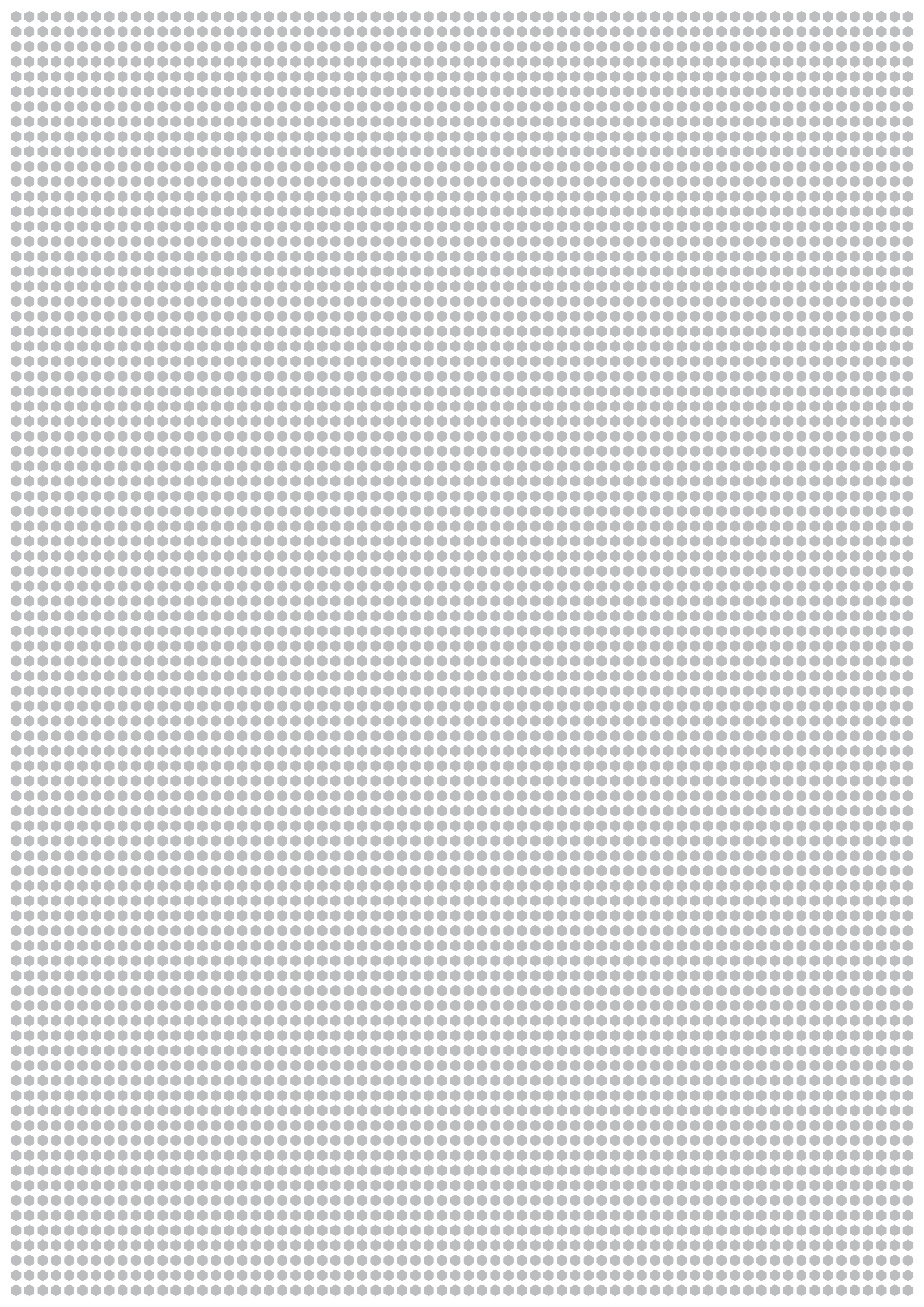
66

**Expanding Knowledge Resources: From Drug Demand Reduction to Drug Supply Reduction**

66

**Training Team Collaboration**

66



# Addictions in the Age of Digital Governance: Bridging Behavioral Science, Platform Regulation, and Public Policy

The first issue of *Adiktologie* in 2026 offers a timely and conceptually ambitious contribution to the evolving field of addiction research in the context of rapid digital transformation. At a moment when the European Union is implementing significant regulatory frameworks, such as the Digital Services Act and the Artificial Intelligence Act, the study of addictions can no longer be confined to individual-level or clinical perspectives. Instead, it has to be understood as embedded within broader socio-technical systems shaped by platform architectures, algorithmic curation, and regulatory environments. This issue reflects a critical shift towards an integrated understanding of addictions as systemic phenomena emerging at the intersection of psychological vulnerabilities, social environments, and digital infrastructures. To carry out this, the growing field of evidence-based digital governance is applied, where empirical research informs policy design, platform regulation, and public health strategies.

The opening study examines stigma and shame among individuals with comorbid hepatitis C and substance use disorders. While rooted in traditional public health concerns, the study gains new relevance in digitally mediated environments, where stigma may be reproduced, amplified, or mitigated through online interactions and access to care. In perspective of the DSA's emphasis on systemic risk mitigation and the protection of fundamental rights, these findings highlight the need to incorporate psychosocial dimensions into the assessment of digital services. The second contribution explores the relationship between online activity and Big Five personality traits, underscoring the importance of individual predispositions in shaping digital behaviour and suggesting that exposure to online risks, including addictive patterns, is not uniform across users. This insight is particularly relevant for the AI Act, which emphasises risk-sensitive approaches to AI systems and their differential impact on individuals. The third study focuses on the role of family environments in shaping adolescent risk behaviour and demonstrates that the quality of parent-child relationships outweighs structural family characteristics, reinforcing the importance of relational protective factors. In digital contexts, this raises critical questions about how online environments interact with or disrupt these mechanisms, an issue of growing importance for youth protection policies and platform governance.

The study on online gambling in Europe provides a direct link between addiction research and regulatory challenges by highlighting the rapid expansion of digital gambling, cross-national disparities, and the lack of harmonised regulation. These findings resonate strongly with the objectives of the Digital Markets Act and the DSA that address platform power, systemic risks, and market concentration. Thus, online gambling emerges as a paradigmatic case where technological design, economic incentives, and public health risks converge. The final paper investigates problematic pornography use as a predictor of depressive and apathetic symptoms, revealing nuanced psychological effects of digitally mediated content consumption and highlighting gender-specific patterns. In the context of algorithm-driven content distribution, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how digital environments shape emotional and cognitive processes, a field that remains only partially addressed in current regulatory frameworks.

The contributions in this issue offer a distinctive and coherent perspective by moving beyond fragmented analyses of individual addictive behaviors towards a more integrated understanding of addictions as outcomes of interacting psychological, social, and technological processes. This perspective aligns with the broader shift in European policy from reactive regulation towards the proactive management of systemic risks, including behavioral addiction, information manipulation, and the erosion of trust. The findings presented across the articles highlight that digital environments are not neutral spaces but actively structure exposure to content, patterns of interaction, and ultimately behavioural and psychological outcomes.

For researchers, this issue underscores the need for methodological innovation, including the integration of survey-based approaches with computational methods such as digital trace analysis and algorithmic audits that are essential for capturing the complexity of addiction in digitally mediated environments. For policymakers, the results provide empirical support for platform-specific regulatory strategies, more nuanced risk assessment frameworks, and the integration of public health considerations into digital policy design. For practitioners, including psychologists, clinicians, and social workers, the findings highlight the evolving nature of addiction and the need to

adapt intervention strategies to behaviour that has been increasingly embedded in digital ecosystems.

In the context of accelerating digitalisation and the implementation of European regulatory frameworks, this issue represents an important step toward a more comprehensive understanding of addiction as a socio-technical phenomenon. It demonstrates that addictions are not merely individual pathologies but are co-produced within digital ecosystems that shape access to information, patterns of interaction, and perceptions of risk and reward. By bridging behavioral science, digital technology, and policy frameworks, *Adiktologie* reaffirms its role not only as a research journal, but also as a platform for advancing knowledge with direct implications for research, governance, and practice in the 21st century.

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