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Blog Post #9

Hello From TechWell!

"Balance Your Tech, Shape Your Future!"

After snowy days we are ready to embrace the energy of spring. We are excited to give latest news from our Project: Investigation and identification of methodology design of our Project is about to be finished. Here is what we have done so far:

Desk research is conducted by the project team to provide a detailed literature review and current status of existing researches on technology addiction topic. This process is carried out by a research team who are competent in terms of both methodology, project management, and academic background.

Three national reports (Turkiye, France and Italy) are created as the output of this activity and will be published shortly. These reports will be published on all the communication channels, website and social media of our project.

In depth interviews were also conducted with the experts on tech addiction. These experts are academics who have academic works in this area, healthcare professionals, education designers and psychologists. Following completion of the interviews, a best practice report will be created to explain various methodologies to struggle with tech addiction. This report will also be published on all the communication channels of the Project to guide people working in the field and social communities.

Now we are excited and ready to take on to our next task: Design and development of the pilot training

Our aim with this task is to create a training methodology that has a scientific infrastructure and can be applied in high schools. All activities in this task are aimed at preparing a needs-targeted methodology, program and content with the help of theoretical and practical results. In this context, the finalized pilot training will respond to the modern educational needs of young people and trainers. This pilot training will raise awareness of young people and trainers about technology addiction.

We have started to elaborate research and the analysis of its findings constitute the scientific and academic basis for the pilot training of the project. Desk research aims to understand the multidimensional causes of young people's technology/smartphone addiction from an interdisciplinary perspective. In this context, we will also undertake in-depth interviews: The aim of this activity is to meet with experts in the field of combating technology addiction and to provide input for the development and design of pilot training and the creation of training modules. After completing these stages, we will continue with conceptualisation of our pilot program.

Now let's have a look at the general overview related curriculum and regulations related to digital use of teenagers in the European Union.

Digital education policies and initiatives can ensure effective integration of digital technologies into pedagogy and enable learners to develop essential skills. For example, conscious use of digital technologies has been introduced into the Hungarian curriculum,[1] and includes programming knowledge, digital citizenship, media literacy and digital safety. Equipping teachers with digital competences can reduce social exclusion, protect learners from digital risks and prepare them to participate in the digital society.

Digital education aims at creating a safe digital experience and should protect youngsters from harmful and illegal online content, conduct, contact and consumer risk. As part of the [Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027](), the European Commission has published a set of guidelines for teachers and educators on [tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy](). The European Commission is further developing the [SELFIE tool]() to provide guidance for teachers on digital wellbeing.[2]

Beyond digital citizenship, regulations to access social media and use of smart phones in schools for young people around the globe is expanding:

Social media platforms say people need to be at least 13 to sign up. Child protection advocates say control is insufficient, however, and official data in several European countries show huge numbers of children under 13 have social media accounts. In the European Union, parental consent is required for the processing of personal data for children under the age of 16, though the bloc's 27 member states can lower that limit to 13. Here are other examples around the world:

As many of you know Australia has approved a social media ban for children aged under 16, one of the world's toughest regulations targeting Big Tech. Brazil also banned use of smart phones in schools in 2025.

In 2023, France passed a law requiring social platforms to obtain parental consent for minors under 15 to create accounts. France is also on trial a ban on mobile phones at school for pupils up to the age of 15, just under 200 secondary schools take place in the experiment that will require youngsters to hand over phones on arrival at reception[3]. If judged successful, this could be expanded nationwide in 2025.

A ban on the non-educational use of smartphones entered into force in the Netherlands in January this year for primary and secondary schools[4]. In Italy, the use of mobile phones in the classroom is banned even for educational purposes between pre-school and secondary school, based on a ministerial decree.

The number of countries banning social media access and smart phone use is increasing. Introduction of new guidelines and educational material into school curricula is important. TechWell is happy to contribute to these efforts.

Last but not least, we are very excited to announce that we have started a new interview series. As part of this series, we will make interviews with leading experts and researchers in the field of technology addiction. In this context, you can access our interview with Prof. Dr. Corrado Petrucco here.

See you soon!

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[1] https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/discover/news/role-digital education-promoting-young-peoples-
digital-wellbeing-and-strengthening-their-resilience
[2] ibid
[3] https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/aug/27/france-to-trial-ban-on-mobile-phones-at-school-
for-children-under-15
[4] https://www.euronews.com/next/2024/12/29/which-countries-in-europe-have-banned-or-want-to-restrict-
smartphones-in-schools