

You probably know, that games' popularity grows rapidly. There are over 2.3 billion gamers in the world, which is more than 30% of the World's population (up to 67% in the developed regions). The number of gamers suffering from disordered gaming grows simultaneously. According to some researchers, it reaches even 17% of the population (in Asian countries), in Europe, it is not much better - e.g. 14% in Great Britain is impressive. However, in most cases, even highly-involved gaming can be considered a harmless hobby.

Recently the WHO included Gaming Disorder (GD) in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). This fact is optimistic about preventing GD and is treated as a response to many postulates to identify the addictive properties of gaming. Clear diagnostic criteria allowing the identification of the disorder, and distinguishing it from normal gaming are needed.

We would rather not like governments to introduce top-down limits on playing (some try, e.g. Chinese). This would threaten citizens' freedom (including being sick) and the gaming industry. Besides, alcohol and cigarettes are also harmful, and in Western countries, they are tolerated. The measure that should be applied is efforts to understand the mechanisms driving disordered gaming.

The current project has two main objectives. The first is to identify the causes of the GD (which is not trivial, because the vast majority of studies on GD are correlational so unable to establish the direction of dependence). The second is to identify factors that may favor or prevent the development of GD.

We will test three hypotheses and answer five research questions in the course of the project. Two thousand, four hundred people will participate in the studies, many of them more than once. It will give us an enormous amount of data which will be statistically analyzed later. Finally, we will be able to answer questions as simple and as important as these: 'Do I risk GD by playing computer games for more than 20 hours a week?' or 'Maybe GD causes me to play on the computer for more than 20 hours a week?' An answer to this type of question is currently not available, and you will agree that it seems necessary to protect people from GD, right?

We are also going to look into these dependencies a bit more closely (After all, we will have a lot of data!). For example, answering the question, 'If two similar people play the same games with identical intensity, is there a chance that only one of them will GD?' If the answer is 'Yes', what characteristics of these people protect or particularly compromise them?

There is one more thing! In our research, we will use not only people's answers in questionnaires, thanks to the smartphones, we will also look at their lives in unexpected moments and check how much they really play! Of course, with their consent.