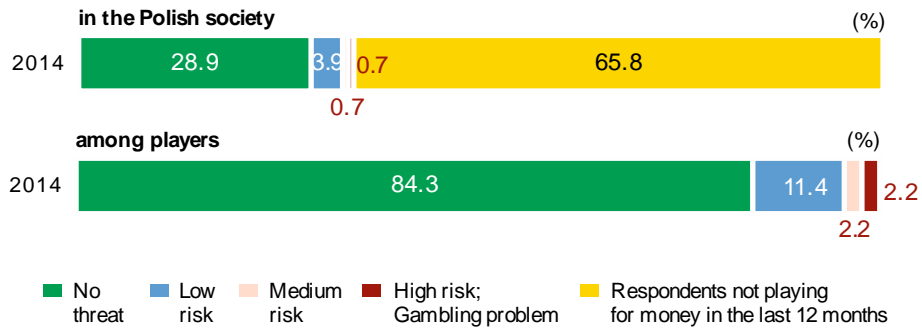


Behavioural addiction

Behavioural problems commonly known as behavioural addiction have become a public issue in Poland only recently. Some of them had the conditions to spread only after market economy was introduced: gambling casinos became legal, shopping malls appeared, unemployment changed the attitude to work. In the 20th century the internet appeared, opening a field for new, previously unknown forms of behavioural disorders. The survey on selected behavioural addictions was co-financed by Fund for Solving Gaming-related Problems at the disposal of the Minister of Health. It was realized by CBOS in cooperation with National Bureau for Drug Prevention.

In the 12 months preceding the survey, a third of Poles aged 15 and above gambled for money (34.2%). Results of the screening test indicate that 5.3% of all Poles show symptoms of addiction to gambling.

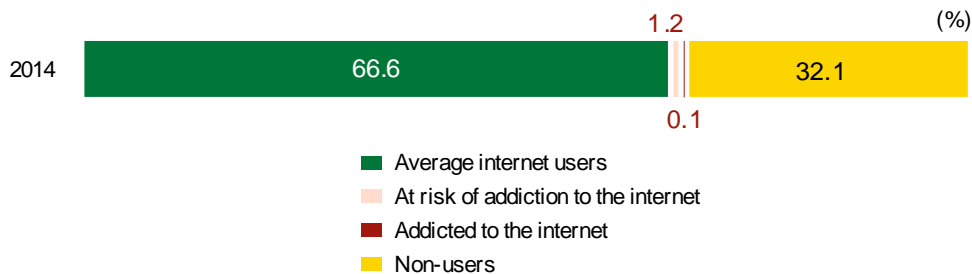
Threat of addiction to gambling:



The majority (67.9%) of Poles aged 15 and above use the internet, at least from time to time. Average users, i.e. those who do not have a problem related to internet use, prevail numerically (98.1%). Results of the screening test indicate that 0.08% of the population, that is 0.12% of internet users, may be addicted to the internet. Some symptoms were detected in 1.2% of respondents, i.e. 1.8% of internet users.

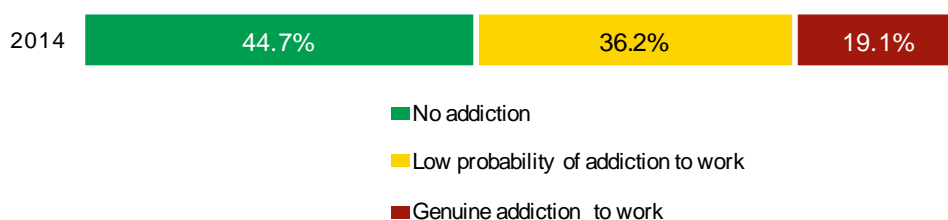
The underage are most at risk of internet addiction: among the youngest internet users (aged 15-17 years) 6.2% have symptoms of addiction or risk thereof.

Threat of addiction to the internet in the Polish society



The screening test used in the survey allows for diagnosing workaholism as behavioural disorder that may occur even among people who are not in paid employment, as work is defined not only as professional career, but as all activities involving fulfilling obligations. The result of the test shows that, at present, for almost one-fifth of Poles (19.1%) aged 15 or more the addiction to work is a genuine problem, while 36.2% are under threat of such an addiction.

Threat of addiction to work in the Polish society



Purchasing products is a universal activity; everyone goes shopping. In case of some people, however, this apparently common activity is an addiction making life difficult. Results of the screening test show that 4.1% of Poles aged 15 or more may be affected by compulsive shopping. Stereotypically, this is female problem. Empirical results confirm this thesis.

Respondents were asked to evaluate the harm inflicted by addictions on a 10-point scale, in which the extremes were marked as harmless habit (1) and life-threatening addiction (10). Four behavioural disorders were evaluated: gambling, workaholism, compulsive shopping and internet addiction. As a background, three chemical addictions were evaluated in the same way: alcoholism, drug addiction and nicotine addiction.

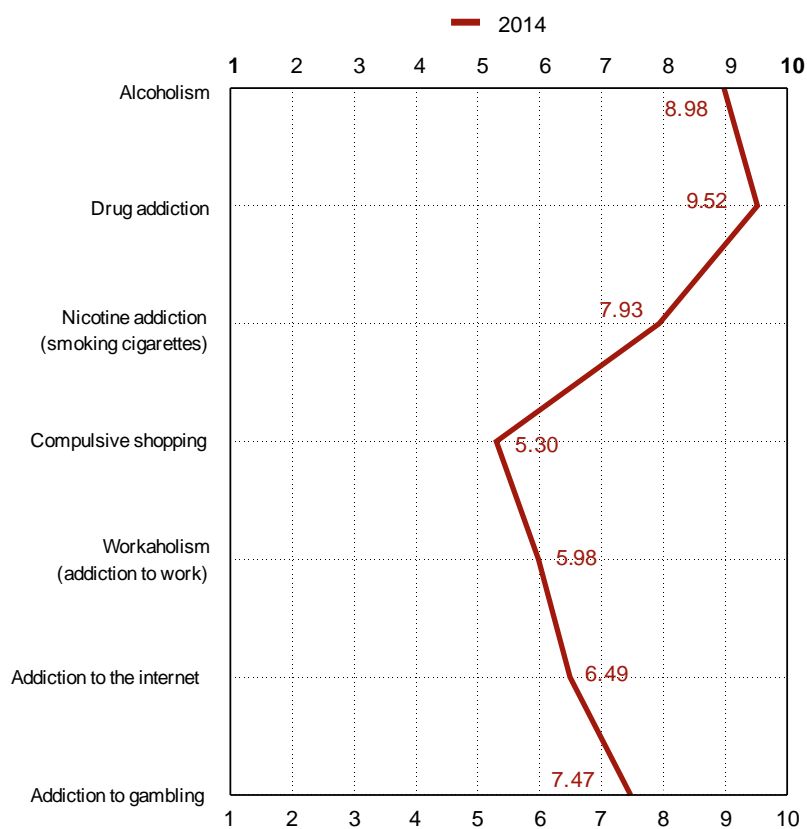
Compulsive shopping in the Polish society



The mean values of selected addictions clearly illustrate their hierarchy in the society. Chemical addictions, especially alcoholism and drug addiction, are perceived as far more dangerous. Behavioural addictions, such as compulsive shopping and workaholism, are seen as far less harmful. Among them, gambling is located closer to life-threatening addictions, while compulsive shopping is closest to harmless habits.

Opinion about different addictions

Answers on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means “harmless habit” and 10 means “life-threatening addiction”



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Workoholics, internet addicts, compulsive shoppers... Behavioural addiction", June 2015. Fieldwork for national sample: November 2014 to February 2015, N=2502. The random address sample is representative for population of Poland aged 15 years and above.