

CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-SUICIDAL SELF-INJURY AND SUICIDE ATTEMPTS AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN EUROPE: RESULTS FROM THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH CONSORTIUM SEYLE

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Introduction: Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) is an increasing phenomenon among adolescents. So far, comparable data on prevalence and psychosocial correlates are still rare due to different definitions, study samples, and measures.

Aims: To investigate the prevalence and associated psychosocial factors of occasional and repetitive non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) and its relationship to suicide attempts in a representative adolescent samples from eleven European countries.

Methods: Cross sectional assessment of adolescents was performed within the European Union funded project, Saving and Empowering Young Lives in Europe (SEYLE), which was conducted in eleven European countries. The representative sample comprised 12,068 adolescents (F/M: 6,717/5,351; mean age: 14.9±0.89) recruited from randomly selected schools. Frequency of NSSI was assessed by a modified version of the Deliberate Self-Harm Inventory (DSHI) and the Paykel Suicide Scale. Additionally, a broad range of demographic, social and psychological factors was assessed.

Results: Overall lifetime prevalence of NSSI was 27.6%; 19.7% reported occasional NSSI and 7.8% repetitive NSSI. Lifetime prevalence ranged from 17.1% to 38.6% across countries. Suicidality, anxiety and depression had the highest odds ratios for both occasional and repetitive NSSI.

Conclusions: Results suggest high lifetime prevalence of NSSI in European adolescents, with significant country differences. A strong association of NSSI with both psychopathology and risk-behaviours, including family-related neglect and peer-related rejection/victimization could be found. These results, combined with the observed gender and country differences, support the need for a multidimensional approach to better understand the development of NSSI and facilitate culturally adapted prevention/intervention.