

Risk Behaviour of University Students in the Context of Selected Socio-demographic Characteristics – Comparison of Four Countries as Part of the SLiCE International Study



JANOVSKÁ, A.¹, OROSOVÁ, O.¹, JURYSTOVÁ, L.²

¹ Department of Educational Psychology and Health Psychology, Faculty of Arts, PJ Šafárik University, Košice, Slovak Republic

² Department of Addictology, 1st Faculty of Medicine, Charles University in Prague and General University Hospital in Prague, Czech Republic

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BACKGROUND: *The likelihood of drug abuse tends to reach its peak in young adulthood, the period of university studies. It has been shown that patterns of risky drinking among university students differ from those recorded among their peers who do not study at university.* **AIMS:** *To test whether different sociodemographic factors (gender, accommodation type, relationship status) are related to risky behaviour among university students (risky alcohol use, smoking, drug use, risky sexual behaviour) and to test whether differences exist between countries (Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary).* **DESIGN AND MEASUREMENTS:** *The data were collected as part of the SLiCE international study. Risky drinking was measured using the AUDIT questionnaire. Smoking, experience with drugs, and risky sexual behaviour were measured using selected items of the SLiCE questionnaire battery.*

PARTICIPANTS: *The sample consisted of 860 university students (237 Slovaks, 192 Czechs, 245 Lithuanians, and 186 Hungarians), 75.5% of whom were women. The average age was 20.9 years.* **RESULTS:** *Significant differences in risky drinking were found for gender and relationship status. The effect of gender on excessive alcohol consumption varies significantly between the countries. Slovak university students show a significantly higher rate of tobacco use. Marijuana had been used by 8.6% of the sample. The level of risky sexual behaviour tends to be higher among Slovak and Czech students.* **CONCLUSIONS:** *The study contributed to the analysis of specific patterns in risky drinking behaviour among university students and may prove useful in creating and implementing health-related prevention programmes.*

KEY WORDS: RISKY DRINKING – UNIVERSITY STUDENTS – SLICE INTERNATIONAL STUDY

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Address for correspondence: Anna Janovská, PhD / anna.janovska@upjs.sk / Department of Educational Psychology and Health Psychology, Faculty of Arts, PJ Šafárik University, Moyzesova 9, 040 01 Košice, Slovak Republic