



**The media plays a crucial role in constructing popular narratives on addiction, which are also molded by country particularities such as the welfare regime, the most prominent addiction problem in the society, or the level of secularity**

**addiction media**  
cultural constructions

We have been able to discern governing ideas in popular narratives on addiction from different countries and traced them to their welfare state cultural origin.

Mappings of how different countries deal with addiction problems are often achieved through descriptions of treatment systems or policy interventions. Although these can be of great value, they often lack a conceptual context of origin, and information of societal reasons and implications. Often, the action repertoire is portrayed in relation to aims of global epistemic governance, which in turn is construed as value-free evidence.

In the media study of work package 3 we have shown that the governing story on the nature of and on the solution to addiction problems correlates with the kind of problem most prevalent and salient in the studied country. This problem served as a baseline idea of addiction that permeated constructs of other addiction-related problems. In Finland and Poland alcohol has played a crucial role (in Poland also tobacco); whereas in the Netherlands and in Italy, illicit drugs have been more salient in the public discussion.

Level of secularity, welfare state regime and system for handling the problems also played a role in the governing cultural constructions. Patterns in perceptions on how to address the problems can especially be discerned from the solution repertoires offered in the press stories. In the USA small scale voluntary peers, community, family and church played a great role, whereas in Finland the welfare state institutions that deal with the problems were referred to in abstract terms as a “machinery” that will address the problems after they have been put on the public agenda.

The study suggests that the media plays a crucial establishing and reinforcing role in the cultural articulation of the problems. However, the media will take different roles depending on their country-specific normative roles in relation to state and other actors. A general de-politization of addiction-related question was observed in all participating countries.

## READ MORE

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