

Perceptions of digital technology in the post-covid age: a cross-European analysis.

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Aims and objectives: To explore post covid-19 conceptualisations of digital technology in residents of UK, Spain, Germany, Poland, Switzerland and Czech Republic. To determine the most prevalent digital practices in these countries. To identify how these practices, and their implications for health and wellbeing, differ across individuals, countries and cultures.

Theoretical background: Digital technology is changing the way that people work, socialise, and form relationships. However, the impact of significant increases in the prominence and use of digital-technology since covid-19 mean that it is unclear how digital-tech is used in a post-covid world, how it impacts on work and personal life, and how these factors may vary across cultures.

Design: 300 semi-structured interviews were conducted with people currently resident in the UK, Spain, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Poland and Germany. Participants were recruited from a variety of employment sectors and varied in terms of age, gender and level of education. Interviews were analysed using inductive thematic analysis.

Results expected: It is expected that digital-tech will be highly prevalent in all aspects of work, personal and social life.

Limitations: Due to funding restrictions, only six European countries were included in the study. It is possible that digital practices in other European countries may differ from those studied here.

Implications: As governments grapple with how to regulate digital technology and to ensure the “right to disconnect”, this study provides much needed rich insights into the primary uses and concerns of people across Europe, which can be used to inform policy and practice.

Originality: This is one of the largest qualitative analyses of cross-cultural conceptualisations of digital technology ever conducted. The findings therefore offer a once in a generation insight into European digital practices and their implications for health and wellbeing post covid-19.