COUNTRY: FRANCE

COMMITTEE: WHO (WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION)

AGENDA ITEM: UNCONTROLLED USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL OBESITY

France is a country located in Western Europe with a population of approximately 67 million people. It is known for its rich history, culture, art, fashion, and cuisine. The capital city of France is Paris, which is renowned for its iconic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, Notre-Dame Cathedral, and the Louvre Museum. France has a highly developed economy and is the world's seventh-largest economy in terms of nominal GDP. The country has a diverse economy with industries ranging from tourism, agriculture, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, and technology. The French education system is highly regarded, with its universities consistently ranked among the best in the world. French is the official language of France, and it is spoken by over 220 million people worldwide. France has some problems; digital obesity is one of them.

Digital obesity is a term used to describe the negative effects of excessive use of digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, computers, and televisions which can lead to negative health consequences. In France, digital obesity is becoming a significant problem, especially among children and teenagers. According to a survey conducted in 2019, 45% of French teenagers aged 15-18 spend more than 3 hours a day on their smartphones, and 24% spend more than 5 hours a day (1) At the end of 2020, 92% of households in France were connected to the internet and 8 out of 10 Frans were connected to social networks and instant messaging every day. (2). Another contributing factor to digital obesity in France is the rise of social media. platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have become integral parts of many people's lives, and the constant need to check notifications and updates can lead to excessive screen time. The effects of digital obesity can be significant, including physical and mental health problems.

In France, the government has taken some serious measures to address this issue: Smartphones banned in schools since 2018, CSA (The Superior Audiovisual Council)'s “Kids and Screens” information campaign, broadcast on all television channels every year, reminds us that television programs are not suitable for children under the age of 3 under any circumstances, for children in CM2 (Cours moyen 2 – ages 10 to 11) and their parents, a national prevention program "Internet consent for children" is in place for careful, safe and responsible internet use simple guidelines for the correct use of screens, such as the 0-3-6-9-12 rule defined by Serge Tisseron, are also offered to parents by experts (3) There are also measures that managers and adults in contact with children and young people can take: Screens should not be used alone before age 3, 3D screens should be banned for children under 5 years old, adhere to the age that allows viewing of movies or use of video games (minimum age stated on products) (4).

However, despite these efforts, digital obesity remains a significant issue in France, and experts suggest that more action is needed to address this growing problem.

References:

1. https://www.statista.com/statistics/751201/daily-mobile-phone-usage-time-age-france/
2. Médiamétrie / l'Année Internet 2020
3. <https://www.drogues.gouv.fr/lessentiel-sur-les-usages-problematiques-decrans>
4. Avis relatif aux effets de l’exposition des enfants et des jeunes aux écrans », Haut Conseil de la santé publique, 12 décembre 2019