

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Perceived prevalence of a sensitive scalp: A worldwide study

Dear Editor,

In 2008, a publication¹ highlighted the fact that sensitive scalp is a reality. This refers to sensory disorders of the scalp triggered by non-pathogenic factors (cosmetics, shampoos, heat, stress, etc.). In this publication, based on a representative French population, 44.2% of French people reported having a sensitive scalp (47.4% of women against 40.8% of men). We carried out the same study 15 years later to reassess this prevalence, while giving it an international dimension. 50,552 adults from 20 countries on five continents were interviewed. In each of the 20 countries studied, we constructed representative samples (using the quota method) that could be extrapolated from the general population aged 16 or above. For the sake of consistency, the questions were worded identically to those used in the 2008 study. Since the study used anonymized data and did not involve any clinical examination, institutional review board approvals were not required. (IRB 2022-A01859-34). The reported prevalence of sensitive scalp (when we take into

account the weight of each country) in the population aged 16 and over was 47.2% (48.8% for women vs. 44.6% for men, p -value < 0.0001). For France, the prevalence is consistent with the results obtained 15 years ago. Although there are differences in prevalence between the different countries, it should be noted that prevalence is not below 35% in any country and is not above 60% in any country. (Figure 1) It can be seen that the perceived prevalence of a sensitive scalp is higher when patients are younger: 50.9% for 16 to 44-year-olds, 44.3% for 45 to 64-year-olds and 39.7% for those aged 65 and over (p < 0.0001). The prevalence of a sensitive scalp is also higher among those who declared sensitive skin: 77.3%, 61.9%, 29.3% and 4.4%, respectively, for very sensitive, sensitive, slightly sensitive and not sensitive skin. A linear regression was carried out to assess the strength of the association between the presence of sensitive scalp and parameters of age, sex and presence of sensitive skin. The linear regression confirmed that the presence of sensitive skin was the factor most strongly associated with the

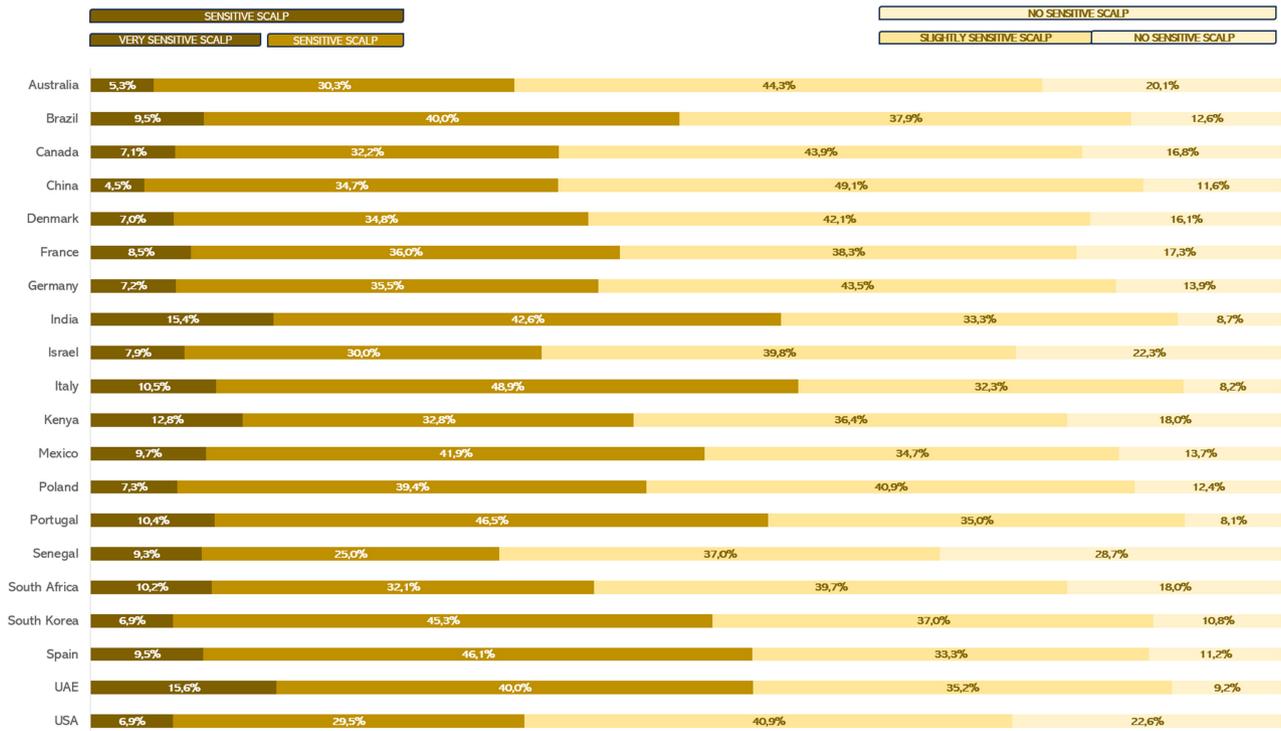


FIGURE 1 Prevalence of sensitive scalp by country.

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QLS Regression Results						
Dep. Variable :	Sensitive Scalp		R-squared:	0.186		
Model:	QLS		Adj. R-squared:	0.185		
Method:	Least Squares		F-statistic:	1156.		
	coef	std err	t	P> t	[0.025	0.975]
Age	0.0029	0.000	8.822	0.000	0.002	0.004
Sex	0.0238	0.010	2.465	0.014	0.005	0.043
Sensitive Skir	0.3832	0.006	60.618	0.000	0.371	0.396
Pain of Scalp	0.2527	0.014	18.809	0.000	0.282	0.229
Omnibus:	234.695	Durbin-Watson:	1.955			
Prob (Omnibus:)	0.000	Jarque-Berra (JB):	255.465			
Skew:	0.234	Prob(JB):	3.36e-56			
Kurtosis:	3.290	Cond.No.	242.			

FIGURE 2 Logistic regression results.

presence of sensitive scalp. (Figure 2) Although age and gender were discriminating factors in the descriptive analysis, they were, however, the least influential factors. As described in the 2018 publication, sensitive scalp is a common occurrence in all countries. The frequent but not constant association between sensitive skin and sensitive scalp suggests that sensitive scalp belongs to the sensitive skin syndrome, but with a number of specific features, probably linked to some specific triggering factors^{2,3} and the particular organization of the innervation of the scalp.⁴

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

C. Baissac and M. Saint Aroman are employed by the Pierre Fabre Laboratory. L. Misery, Y. Ben Hayoun, C. Skayem, C. Taieb, M. Inane and B. Halioua have no conflict of interest in this study.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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