



Genome-wide association analyses of risk tolerance and risky behaviors in over 1 million individuals identify hundreds of loci and shared genetic influences

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1 **TITLE: Genome-wide association analyses of risk tolerance and risky behaviors in over**
2 **one million individuals identify hundreds of loci and shared genetic influences**

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174

175

176 **ABSTRACT:**

177 Humans vary substantially in their willingness to take risks. In a combined sample of over one
178 million individuals, we conducted genome-wide association studies (GWAS) of general risk
179 tolerance, adventurousness, and risky behaviors in the driving, drinking, smoking, and sexual
180 domains. Across all GWAS we identified hundreds of associated loci, including 99 loci associated
181 with general risk tolerance. We report evidence of substantial shared genetic influences across risk
182 tolerance and the risky behaviors: 46 of the 99 general risk tolerance loci contain a lead SNP for
183 at least one of our other GWAS, and general risk tolerance is genetically correlated ($|\hat{r}_g| \sim 0.25$ to
184 0.50) with a range of risky behaviors. Bioinformatics analyses imply that genes near general-risk-
185 tolerance-associated SNPs are highly expressed in brain tissues and point to a role for
186 glutamatergic and GABAergic neurotransmission. We found no evidence of enrichment for genes
187 previously hypothesized to relate to risk tolerance.

188

189

190 **INTRODUCTION:**

191 Choices in important domains of life, including health, fertility, finance, employment, and social
192 relationships, rarely have consequences that can be anticipated perfectly. The degree of variability
193 in possible outcomes is called risk. Risk tolerance—defined as the willingness to take risks,
194 typically to obtain some reward—varies substantially across humans and has been actively studied
195 in the behavioral and social sciences. An individual’s risk tolerance may vary across domains, but
196 survey-based measures of *general* risk tolerance (e.g., “Would you describe yourself as someone
197 who takes risks?”) have been found to be good all-around predictors of risky behaviors such as
198 portfolio allocation, occupational choice, smoking, drinking alcohol, and starting one’s own
199 business¹⁻³.

200 Twin studies have established that various measures of risk tolerance are moderately heritable
201 ($h^2 \sim 30\%$, although estimates in the literature vary³⁻⁵). Discovery of specific genetic variants
202 associated with general risk tolerance could provide insights into underlying biological pathways;
203 advance our understanding of how genetic influences are amplified and dampened by
204 environmental factors; enable the construction of polygenic scores (indexes of many genetic

205 variants) that can be used as overall measures of genetic influences on individuals; and help
206 distinguish genetic variation associated with general versus domain-specific risk tolerance.

207 Although risk tolerance has been one of the most studied phenotypes in social science genetics,
208 most claims of positive findings have been based on small-sample candidate gene studies
209 (**Supplementary Table 1**), whose limitations are now appreciated⁶. To date, only two loci
210 associated with risk tolerance have been identified in genome-wide association studies (GWAS)^{7,8}.

211 Here, we report results from large-scale GWAS of self-reported general risk tolerance (our primary
212 phenotype) and six supplementary phenotypes: “adventurousness” (defined as the self-reported
213 tendency to be adventurous vs. cautious); four risky behaviors: “automobile speeding propensity”
214 (the tendency to drive faster than the speed limit), “drinks per week” (the average number of
215 alcoholic drinks consumed per week), “ever smoker” (whether one has ever been a smoker), and
216 “number of sexual partners” (the lifetime number of sexual partners); and the first principal
217 component (PC) of these four risky behaviors, which we interpret as capturing the general
218 tendency to take risks across domains. All seven phenotypes are coded such that higher phenotype
219 values are associated with higher risk tolerance or risk taking. **Table 1** lists, for each GWAS, the
220 datasets we analyzed and the GWAS sample sizes.

221

222 **RESULTS:**

223 **Association analyses**

224 All seven GWAS were performed in European-ancestry subjects; included controls for the top 10
225 (or more) principal components of the genetic relatedness matrix and for sex and birth year
226 (**Supplementary Table 2**); and followed procedures described in a pre-specified analysis plan (see
227 URLs) and in the **Supplementary Note**.

228 In the discovery phase of our GWAS of general risk tolerance ($n = 939,908$), we conducted a
229 GWAS using the UK Biobank (UKB, $n = 431,126$) and then performed a sample-size-weighted
230 meta-analysis of those results with GWAS results from a sample of research participants from
231 23andMe ($n = 508,782$). The UKB measure of general risk tolerance is based on the question:
232 “Would you describe yourself as someone who takes risks? Yes / No.” The 23andMe measure is
233 based on a question about overall comfort taking risks, with five response options ranging from

234 “very comfortable” to “very uncomfortable.” The genetic correlation⁹ between the UKB and
235 23andMe cohorts ($\hat{r}_g = 0.77$, $SE = 0.02$) is smaller than one but high enough to justify our approach
236 of pooling the two cohorts (see Section 2 in the Supplementary Note of ref.¹⁰ for a theoretical
237 demonstration of the merits of pooling cohorts despite moderate heterogeneity of phenotype
238 measures).

239 The Q-Q plot (**Supplementary Fig. 1a**) from the discovery GWAS exhibits substantial inflation
240 ($\lambda_{GC} = 1.41$). According to the estimated intercept from a linkage disequilibrium (LD) Score
241 regression¹¹, only a small share of this inflation (~5%) in test statistics is due to confounding biases
242 such as cryptic relatedness and population stratification. To account for these biases, we inflated
243 GWAS standard errors by the square root of the LD Score regression intercept¹².

244 We identified 124 approximately independent SNPs (pairwise $r^2 < 0.1$) that attained genome-wide
245 significance ($P < 5 \times 10^{-8}$). These 124 “lead SNPs” are listed in **Supplementary Table 3** and shown
246 in **Fig. 1a**. All have coefficients of determination (R^2 's) below 0.02%, and the SNP with the largest
247 per-allele effect is estimated to increase general risk tolerance by ~0.026 standard deviations in
248 our discovery sample (**Supplementary Fig. 2**). To test if the lead SNPs' effect sizes are
249 heterogeneous across the 23andMe and UKB cohorts, we generated an omnibus test statistic by
250 summing Cochran's Q statistics across all lead SNPs; consistent with our genetic correlation
251 estimate of less than unity between the two cohorts, we rejected the null hypothesis of homogeneity
252 ($P = 4.32 \times 10^{-5}$; **Supplementary Note**). To define genomic loci around the lead SNPs, we took
253 the physical regions containing all SNPs in LD (pairwise $r^2 > 0.6$) with the lead SNPs and merged
254 loci within 250 kb of each other; the 124 lead SNPs are located in 99 such loci (**Supplementary**
255 **Table 3**). We supplemented those analyses with a conditional and joint multiple-SNP (COJO)
256 analysis¹³, which identified 91 genome-wide significant “conditional associations”
257 (**Supplementary Table 3**).

258 In the replication phase of our GWAS of general risk tolerance (combined $n = 35,445$), we meta-
259 analyzed summary statistics from ten smaller cohorts. Additional details on cohort-level phenotype
260 measures are provided in **Supplementary Table 4**. The cohorts' survey questions differ in terms
261 of their exact wording and number of response categories, but all questions ask subjects about their
262 overall or general attitudes toward risk. The genetic correlation⁹ between the discovery and
263 replication GWAS is 0.83 ($SE = 0.13$). 123 of the 124 lead SNPs were available or well proxied

264 by an available SNP in the replication GWAS results. Out of these 123 SNPs, 94 have a concordant
265 sign ($P = 1.7 \times 10^{-9}$) and 23 are significant at the 5% level in one-tailed t tests ($P = 4.5 \times 10^{-8}$)
266 (**Supplementary Fig. 3**). This empirical replication record closely matches theoretical projections
267 that take into account sampling variation and the winner's curse (**Supplementary Note**).

268 In the UKB we tested and confirmed that a much higher fraction of males (34%) than females
269 (19%) described themselves as risk tolerant on the general risk tolerance measure (t -test $P <$
270 1×10^{-100} ; **Supplementary Fig. 4**), consistent with much prior research^{14,15}. We used bivariate
271 LD Score regression¹² to calculate the genetic correlation between GWAS performed separately
272 in the sample of females and in the sample of males in the UKB. Our estimate ($\hat{r}_g = 0.822$, $SE =$
273 0.033) is high enough to justify our approach of pooling males and females in our other analyses
274 to maximize statistical power¹⁰. Nonetheless, our estimate is significantly smaller than unity,
275 suggesting that the autosomal genetic factors contributing to general risk tolerance, while largely
276 similar across sexes, are not identical.

277 Our six supplementary GWAS—of adventurousness, the four risky behaviors, and their principal
278 component ($n = 315,894$ to $557,923$; **Supplementary Tables 4-5**)—were conducted using
279 methods comparable to those in the primary GWAS, except that they had no replication phases
280 and most involved a single large cohort. **Supplementary Fig. 1** shows Q-Q plots and
281 **Supplementary Fig. 5** shows Manhattan plots.

282 **Table 1** provides a summary overview of the seven GWAS. We identified a total of 864 “lead
283 associations”: the sum total of the 124 general-risk-tolerance lead SNPs together with the 740 lead
284 SNPs from the six supplementary GWAS. (These 864 lead associations were obtained by
285 considering each of our seven phenotypes separately and using the standard genome-wide
286 significance P value threshold of 5×10^{-8} . If we instead consider the seven GWAS jointly and use
287 a Bonferroni-corrected P value threshold of 7.1×10^{-9} ($= 5 \times 10^{-8}/7$), we obtain 566 lead associations
288 across the seven GWAS.) Since we did not have the data to conduct replication analyses of the
289 lead associations from the supplementary GWAS, we calculated the “maxFDR”¹⁶, a theoretical
290 upper bound on the false discovery rate (FDR), for each GWAS. The maxFDR estimates were low
291 across all GWAS (the highest estimate was 1.22×10^{-3} , for automobile speeding propensity), thus
292 providing reassurance about the robustness of the lead associations.

293 Applying our locus definition, we identified a total of 703 “locus associations”: the sum total of
294 the 99 general-risk-tolerance loci together with the 604 loci from the supplementary GWAS
295 (**Supplementary Note**). Pooling the loci corresponding to the 703 locus associations, and merging
296 loci within 250 kb from each other, yields 444 distinct loci. COJO analyses¹³ identified a sum total
297 of 655 conditional associations across all seven GWAS. (If we instead consider the seven GWAS
298 jointly and use a Bonferroni-corrected P value threshold of 7.1×10^{-9} ($= 5 \times 10^{-8}/7$), we obtain 464
299 locus associations and 505 conditional associations across the seven GWAS.) We verified that the
300 results of the COJO analyses are consistent with those from multiple regressions using individual-
301 level genotype-dosage data from the UKB (**Supplementary Note**). **Supplementary Tables 3** and
302 **6-7** report the lead SNPs, the genomic loci, and the results of the COJO analyses. **Table 1** also
303 shows the SNP heritabilities¹⁷ of the seven phenotypes, calculated from the GWAS results; the
304 SNP heritabilities range from ~ 0.05 (for general risk tolerance) to ~ 0.16 (for the first PC of the
305 four risky behaviors).

306 We note that 212 of the 864 lead associations are located within long-range LD regions¹⁸ or
307 candidate inversions (i.e., genomic regions that are highly prone to inversion polymorphisms;
308 **Supplementary Note**). Of these, only 109 are also conditional associations, and 46 are in loci that
309 contain no conditional associations, thus indicating that many lead associations in the long-range
310 LD regions or candidate inversions may tag causal variants that are also tagged by other lead
311 associations. We discuss some of these regions in the next section.

312

313 **Genetic overlap**

314 There is substantial overlap across the results of our GWAS. For example, 46 of the 99 general-
315 risk-tolerance loci contain a lead SNP of at least one of the other GWAS, and 72 of the 124 general-
316 risk-tolerance lead SNPs are in weak LD (pairwise $r^2 > 0.1$) with a lead SNP of at least one of the
317 other GWAS (including 45 for adventurousness and 49 for at least one of the four risky behaviors
318 or their first PC). To empirically assess if this overlap could be attributed to chance, we conducted
319 resampling exercises under the null hypothesis that the lead SNPs of our supplementary GWAS
320 are distributed independently of the general-risk-tolerance loci and lead SNPs. We strongly
321 rejected this null hypothesis ($P < 0.0001$; **Supplementary Note**).

322 Several long-range LD regions, candidate inversions, and LD blocks¹⁹ stand out for being
323 associated both with general risk tolerance and with all or most of the supplementary phenotypes.
324 We tested whether the signs of the lead SNPs located in these regions tend to be concordant across
325 our primary and supplementary GWAS. We strongly rejected the null hypothesis of no
326 concordance ($P < 3 \times 10^{-30}$; **Supplementary Note**), suggesting that these regions represent shared
327 genetic influences, rather than colocalization of causal SNPs. **Fig. 1b** and **Supplementary Fig. 6**
328 show local Manhattan plots for some of these long-range LD regions and candidate inversions.
329 The long-range LD region¹⁸ on chromosome 3 (~83.4 to 86.9 Mb) contains lead SNPs from all
330 seven GWAS as well as the most significant lead SNP from the general-risk-tolerance GWAS,
331 rs993137 ($P = 2.14 \times 10^{-40}$), which is located in the gene *CADM2*. Another long-range LD region,
332 on chromosome 6 (~25.3 to 33.4 Mb), covers the HLA-complex and contains lead SNPs from all
333 GWAS except drinks per week. Three candidate inversions on chromosomes 7 (~124.6 to 132.7
334 Mb), 8 (~7.89 to 11.8 Mb), and 18 (~49.1 to 55.5 Mb) contain lead SNPs from six, five, and all
335 seven of our GWAS, respectively. Finally, four other LD blocks¹⁹ that do not overlap known long-
336 range LD or candidate inversion regions each contain lead SNPs from five of our GWAS
337 (including general risk tolerance). While many of the lead SNPs in these regions are not conditional
338 associations, the above results regarding the numbers of GWAS with lead SNPs in these regions
339 also hold if we only consider the conditional associations instead of the lead SNPs in those regions.
340 The two long-range LD regions and the three candidate inversions have previously been found to
341 be associated with numerous phenotypes, including many cognitive and neuropsychiatric
342 phenotypes²⁰.

343 To investigate genetic overlap at the genome-wide level, we estimated genetic correlations with
344 self-reported general risk tolerance using bivariate LD Score regression⁹. (For this and all
345 subsequent analyses involving general risk tolerance, we used the summary statistics from the
346 combined meta-analysis of our discovery and replication GWAS.) The estimated genetic
347 correlations with our six supplementary phenotypes are all positive, larger than ~0.25, and highly
348 significant ($P < 2.3 \times 10^{-30}$; **Fig. 2**), indicating that SNPs associated with higher general risk
349 tolerance also tend to be associated with riskier behavior. The largest estimated genetic
350 correlations are with adventurousness ($\hat{r}_g = 0.83$, $SE = 0.01$), number of sexual partners (0.52, SE
351 = 0.02), automobile speeding propensity (0.45, $SE = 0.02$), and the first PC of the four risky
352 behaviors (0.50, $SE = 0.02$).

353 Our estimates of the genetic correlations between general risk tolerance and the supplementary
354 risky behaviors are substantially higher than the corresponding phenotypic correlations
355 (**Supplementary Tables 8 and 9**). Although measurement error partly accounts for the low
356 phenotypic correlations, the genetic correlations remain considerably higher even after adjustment
357 of the phenotypic correlations for measurement error. The comparatively large genetic correlations
358 support the view that a general factor of risk tolerance partly accounts for cross-domain correlation
359 in risky behavior^{21,22} and imply that this factor is genetically influenced. The lower phenotypic
360 correlations suggest that environmental factors are more important contributors to domain-specific
361 risky behavior^{23,24}.

362 To increase the precision of our estimates of the SNPs' effects on general risk tolerance, we
363 leveraged the high degree of genetic overlap across our phenotypes by conducting Multi-Trait
364 Analysis of GWAS (MTAG)¹⁶. We used as inputs the summary statistics of our GWAS of general
365 risk tolerance, of our first five supplementary GWAS (i.e., not including the first PC of the four
366 risky behaviors), and of a previously published GWAS on lifetime cannabis use²⁵ (**Supplementary**
367 **Note**). MTAG increased the number of general-risk-tolerance lead SNPs from 124 to 312
368 (**Supplementary Fig. 7 and Supplementary Table 10**).

369 We also estimated genetic correlations between general risk tolerance and 28 additional
370 phenotypes (**Fig. 2** and in **Supplementary Table 9**). These included phenotypes for which we
371 could obtain summary statistics from previous GWAS, as well as five phenotypes for which we
372 conducted new GWAS. The estimated genetic correlations for the personality traits extraversion
373 ($\hat{r}_g = 0.51$, $SE = 0.03$), neuroticism (-0.42 , $SE = 0.04$), and openness to experience (0.33 , $SE =$
374 0.03) are significantly distinguishable from zero after Bonferroni correction and are substantially
375 larger in magnitude than previously reported phenotypic correlations²⁶, pointing to shared genetic
376 influences among general risk tolerance and these traits. After Bonferroni correction, we also
377 found significant positive genetic correlations with the neuropsychiatric phenotypes ADHD,
378 bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. Viewed in light of the genetic correlations we found with
379 some supplementary phenotypes and additional risky behaviors classified as externalizing (e.g.,
380 substance use, elevated sexual behavior, and fast driving), these results suggest the hypothesis that
381 the overlap with the neuropsychiatric phenotypes is driven by their externalizing component²⁷.

382

383 **Polygenic prediction**

384 We constructed polygenic scores of general risk tolerance to gauge their potential usefulness in
385 empirical research (**Supplementary Note**). We used the Add Health, HRS, NTR, STR, UKB-
386 siblings, and Zurich cohorts as validation cohorts (**Supplementary Table 5** provides an overview
387 of these cohorts; the UKB-siblings cohort comprised individuals with at least one full sibling in
388 the UKB). For each validation cohort, we constructed the score using summary statistics from a
389 meta-analysis of our discovery and replication GWAS that excluded the cohort (for the UKB-
390 siblings cohort, we reran our UKB GWAS after excluding individuals from that cohort). Our
391 measure of predictive power is the incremental R^2 (or pseudo- R^2) from adding the score to a
392 regression of the phenotype on controls for sex, birth year, and the top ten principal components
393 of the genetic relatedness matrix.

394 Our preferred score was constructed with LDpred²⁸. Our largest validation cohort ($n \sim 35,000$) is
395 the UKB-siblings cohort. In that validation cohort, the score's predictive power is 1.6% for general
396 risk tolerance, 1.0% for the first PC of the four risky behaviors, 0.8% for number of sexual partners,
397 0.6% for automobile speeding propensity, and $\sim 0.15\%$ for drinks per week and ever smoker.
398 Across our validation cohorts, in which other phenotypes are measured, the score is also predictive
399 of several personality phenotypes and a suite of real-world measures of risky behaviors in the
400 health, financial, career, and other domains (**Supplementary Figs. 8-9** and **Supplementary**
401 **Tables 11-14**). The incremental R^2 we observe for general risk tolerance is consistent with our
402 theoretical prediction, given the GWAS sample sizes, the SNP heritability of general risk tolerance
403 (**Table 1**), and the imperfect genetic correlations across the GWAS and validation cohorts^{29,30}
404 (**Supplementary Note**).

405

406 **Biological annotation**

407 To gain insights into the biological mechanisms through which genetic variation influences general
408 risk tolerance, we conducted a number of bioinformatics analyses using the results of the combined
409 meta-analysis of our discovery and replication GWAS of general risk tolerance.

410 First, we systematically reviewed the literature that aimed to link risk tolerance to biological
411 pathways (**Supplementary Note**). Our review covered studies based on candidate genes (i.e.,

412 specific genetic variants used as proxies for biological pathways), pharmacological manipulations,
413 biochemical assays, genetic manipulations in rodents, as well as other research designs. Our review
414 identified 132 articles that matched our search criteria (**Supplementary Table 1**). This previous
415 work has focused on five main biological pathways: the steroid hormone cortisol, the monoamines
416 dopamine and serotonin, and the steroid sex hormones estrogen and testosterone. Using a
417 MAGMA³¹ competitive gene-set analysis, we found no evidence that SNPs within genes
418 associated with these five pathways tend to be more associated with general risk tolerance than
419 SNPs in other genes (**Supplementary Table 15**). Furthermore, none of the other bioinformatics
420 analyses we report below point to these pathways.

421 We also examined the 15 most commonly tested autosomal genes within the dopamine and
422 serotonin pathways, which were the focus of most of the 34 candidate-gene studies identified by
423 our literature review. We verified that the SNPs available in our GWAS results tag most of the
424 genetic variants typically used to test the 15 genes. Across one SNP-based test and two gene-based
425 tests, we found no evidence of non-negligible associations between those genes and general risk
426 tolerance (**Fig. 1c** and **Supplementary Table 16**). (We note, however, that some brain regions
427 identified in analyses we report below are areas where dopamine and serotonin play important
428 roles.)

429 Second, we performed a MAGMA³¹ gene analysis to test each of ~18,000 protein-coding genes
430 for association with general risk tolerance (**Supplementary Note**). After Bonferroni correction,
431 285 genes were significant (**Supplementary Fig. 10** and **Supplementary Table 17**). To gain
432 insight into the functions and expression patterns of these 285 genes, we looked them up in the
433 Gene Network³² co-expression database.

434 Third, to identify relevant biological pathways and identify tissues in which genes near general-
435 risk-tolerance-associated SNPs are expressed, we applied the software tool DEPICT³³ to the SNPs
436 with P values less than 10^{-5} in our GWAS of general risk tolerance (**Supplementary Note**).

437 Both the Gene Network and the DEPICT analyses separately point to a role for glutamate and
438 GABA neurotransmitters, which are the main excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmitters in the
439 brain, respectively³⁴ (**Fig. 3a** and **Supplementary Tables 18** and **19**). To our knowledge, with the
440 exception of a recent study³⁵ prioritizing a much larger number of genes and pathways, no
441 published large-scale GWAS of cognition, personality, or neuropsychiatric phenotypes has pointed

442 to clear roles both for glutamate and GABA (although glutamatergic neurotransmission has been
443 implicated in recent GWAS of schizophrenia³⁶ and major depression³⁷). Our results suggest that
444 the balance between excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmission may contribute to variation in
445 general risk tolerance across individuals.

446 The Gene Network and the DEPICT tissue enrichment analyses also both separately point to
447 enrichment of the prefrontal cortex and the basal ganglia (**Fig. 3b** and **Supplementary Tables 18,**
448 **20, and 21**). The cortical and subcortical regions highlighted by DEPICT include some of the major
449 components of the cortical-basal ganglia circuit, which is known as the reward system in human
450 and non-human primates and is critically involved in learning, motivation, and decision-making,
451 notably under risk and uncertainty^{38,39}. We caution, however, that our results do not point
452 exclusively to the reward system.

453 Lastly, we used stratified LD Score regression⁴⁰ to test for the enrichment of SNPs associated with
454 histone marks in 10 tissue or cell types (**Supplementary Note**). Central nervous system tissues
455 are the most enriched, accounting for 44% ($SE = 3\%$) of the heritability while comprising only
456 15% of the SNPs (**Supplementary Fig. 11a** and **Supplementary Table 22**).
457 Immune/hematopoietic tissues are also significantly enriched. While a role for the immune system
458 in modulating risk tolerance is plausible given prior evidence of its involvement in several
459 neuropsychiatric disorders^{36,37}, future work is needed to confirm this result and to uncover specific
460 pathways that might be involved.

461

462 **DISCUSSION:**

463 Our results provide insights into biological mechanisms that influence general risk tolerance. Our
464 bioinformatics analyses point to the role of gene expression in brain regions that have been
465 identified by neuroscientific studies on decision-making, notably the prefrontal cortex, basal
466 ganglia, and midbrain, thereby providing convergent evidence with that from neuroscience^{38,39}.
467 Yet our analyses failed to find evidence for the main biological pathways that had been previously
468 hypothesized to influence risk tolerance. Instead, our analyses implicate genes involved in
469 glutamatergic and GABAergic neurotransmission, which were heretofore not generally believed
470 to play a noteworthy role in risk tolerance.

471 Although our focus has been on the genetics of general risk tolerance and risky behaviors,
472 environmental and demographic factors account for a substantial share of these phenotypes'
473 variation. We observe sizeable effects of sex and age on general risk tolerance in the UKB data
474 (**Supplementary Fig. 4**), and life experiences have been shown to affect both measured risk
475 tolerance and risky behaviors (e.g., refs. ^{41,42}). The GWAS results we have generated will allow
476 researchers to construct and use polygenic scores of general risk tolerance to measure how
477 environmental, demographic, and genetic factors interact with one another.

478 For the behavioral sciences, our results bear on an ongoing debate about the extent to which risk
479 tolerance is a “domain-general” as opposed to a “domain-specific” trait. Low phenotypic
480 correlations in risk tolerance across decision-making domains have been interpreted as supporting
481 the domain-specific view^{23,24}. Across the risky behaviors we study, we found that the genetic
482 correlations were considerably higher than the phenotypic correlations (even after the latter are
483 corrected for measurement error) and that many lead SNPs are shared across our phenotypes.
484 These observations suggest that the low phenotypic correlations across domains are due to
485 environmental factors that dilute the effects of a genetically-influenced domain-general factor of
486 risk tolerance.

487

488 **URLs.**

489 Publicly archived analysis plan for this project, <https://osf.io/cjx9m/>;

490 Social Science Genetic Association Consortium (SSGAC), <https://www.thessgac.org/data>;

491 BCFtools, <https://samtools.github.io/bcftools/bcftools.html>;

492 BEAGLE, <http://faculty.washington.edu/browning/beagle/b3.html>;

493 BOLT-LMM v.2.3.2, <https://data.broadinstitute.org/alkesgroup/BOLT-LMM/>;

494 DEPICT (Retrieved Feb 2015), <https://data.broadinstitute.org/mpg/depict/>;

495 EasyQC v9.0, [http://www.uni-regensburg.de/medizin/epidemiologie-
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497 GCTA, <http://cnsgenomics.com/software/gcta>;

498 HESS, <http://bogdan.bioinformatics.ucla.edu/software/hess/>;

499 IMPUTE2, http://mathgen.stats.ox.ac.uk/impute/impute_v2.html;
500 IMPUTE4, <https://jmarchini.org/impute-4/>;
501 LD Score Regression (ldsc), <https://github.com/bulik/ldsc/>;
502 LDpred, https://bitbucket.org/bjarni_vilhjalmsson/ldpred/;
503 Mach2QTL, <http://csg.sph.umich.edu/yli/mach/download/mach2qtl.source.V112.tgz>;
504 MAGMA, <https://ctg.cncr.nl/software/magma>;
505 Minimac2, <https://genome.sph.umich.edu/wiki/Minimac2>;
506 MTAG software, <https://github.com/omeed-maghzian/mtag>;
507 PBWT, <https://github.com/richarddurbin/pbwt>;
508 PLINK, <http://zzz.bwh.harvard.edu/plink/plink2.shtml>;
509 Python v2.7, <https://www.python.org/download/releases/2.7/>;
510 QCtool v2, http://www.well.ox.ac.uk/~gav/qctool_v2/;
511 R, <https://www.r-project.org/>;
512 REGSCAN v0.2.0, <https://www.geenivaramu.ee/en/tools/regscan>;
513 Rstudio, <https://www.rstudio.com/>;
514 ShapeIT, http://mathgen.stats.ox.ac.uk/genetics_software/shapeit/shapeit.html;
515 SMR, <https://cnsgenomics.com/software/smr/>;
516 SNPTEST, https://mathgen.stats.ox.ac.uk/genetics_software/snptest/snptest.html;
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863

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865 Adam Auton, Pierre Fontanillas, David A Hinds, and Aaron Kleinman are employees of 23andMe.
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971 **Figure 1 | Manhattan plots.** In all panels, the *x*-axis is chromosomal position; the *y*-axis is the
972 GWAS *P* value on a $-\log_{10}$ scale (based on a two-tailed *z*-test); each lead SNP is marked by a red
973 “×”; each conditional association is marked by a red “O”; and each SNP that is both a lead SNP
974 and a conditional association is marked by a red “⊗”. **a**, Manhattan plots for the discovery GWAS
975 of general risk tolerance ($n = 939,908$). **b**, Local Manhattan plots of a long-range LD region on
976 chromosome 3 and a candidate inversion on chromosome 18 that contain lead SNPs for all seven
977 of our GWAS. The gray background marks the locations of long-range LD or candidate inversion
978 regions. **c**, Local Manhattan plots of the areas around the 15 most commonly tested candidate
979 genes in the prior literature on the genetics of risk tolerance. Each local plot shows all SNPs within
980 500 kb of the gene’s borders that are in weak LD ($r^2 > 0.1$) with a SNP in the gene. The 15 plots
981 are concatenated and shown together in the panel, divided by the black vertical lines. The 15 genes
982 are not particularly strongly associated with general risk tolerance or the risky behaviors, as can
983 be seen by comparing the results within each row across panels **b** and **c** (the three rows correspond
984 to the GWAS of general risk tolerance, adventurousness ($n = 557,923$), and the first PC of the four
985 risky behaviors ($n = 315,894$)).

986

987 **Figure 2 | Genetic correlations with general risk tolerance.** The genetic correlations were
988 estimated using bivariate LD Score (LDSC) regression⁹. Error bars show 95% confidence
989 intervals. For the supplementary phenotypes and the additional risky behaviors, green bars
990 represent significant estimates with the expected signs, where higher risk tolerance is associated
991 with riskier behavior. For the other phenotypes, blue bars represent significant estimates. Light
992 green and light blue bars represent genetic correlations that are statistically significant at the 5%
993 level, and dark green and dark blue bars represent correlations that are statistically significant after
994 Bonferroni correction for 35 tests (the total number of phenotypes tested). Grey bars represent
995 correlations that are not statistically significant at the 5% level. The two dotted vertical lines
996 indicate genetic correlations of -0.5 and 0.5 , respectively. All significance tests are two-sided.

997

998 **Figure 3 | Results from selected biological analyses.** **a**, DEPICT gene-set enrichment diagram.
999 We identified 93 reconstituted gene sets that are significantly enriched ($FDR < 0.01$) for genes
1000 overlapping DEPICT-defined loci associated with general risk tolerance; using the Affinity
1001 Propagation method⁴³, these were grouped into the 13 clusters displayed in the graph. Each cluster

1002 was named after its exemplary gene set, as chosen by the Affinity Propagation tool, and each
1003 cluster's color represents the permutation P value of its most significant gene set. The “synapse
1004 part” cluster includes the gene set “glutamate receptor activity,” and several members of the
1005 “GABA_A receptor activation” cluster are defined by gamma-aminobutyric acid signaling. Overlap
1006 between the named representatives of two clusters is represented by an edge. Edge width represents
1007 the Pearson correlation ρ between the two respective vectors of gene membership scores ($\rho < 0.3$,
1008 no edge; $0.3 \leq \rho < 0.5$, thin edge; $0.5 \leq \rho < 0.7$, intermediate edge; $\rho \geq 0.7$, thick edge). **b**, Results
1009 of DEPICT tissue enrichment analysis using GTEx data. The panel shows whether the genes
1010 overlapping DEPICT-defined loci associated with general risk tolerance are significantly
1011 overexpressed (relative to genes in random sets of loci matched by gene density) in various tissues.
1012 Tissues are grouped by organ or tissue type. The orange bars correspond to tissues with significant
1013 overexpression (FDR < 0.01). The y -axis is the significance on a $-\log_{10}$ scale. See **Supplementary**
1014 **Note** for additional details.

1015

1016

1017

1018 **Table 1 | GWAS results**

1019

GWAS	Cohorts analyzed	<i>n</i>	Mean χ^2	LD Score intercept (SE)	# lead SNPs	# loci	# cond. assoc.	SNP h^2 (SE)
General risk tolerance (disc. GWAS)	UKB; 23andMe	939,908	1.85	1.04 (0.01)	124	99	91	0.046 (0.001)
General risk tolerance (repl. GWAS)	10 indep. cohorts	35,445	1.03	1.00 (0.07)	0	0	0	--
General risk tolerance (disc. + repl.)	UKB; 23andMe; 10 indep. cohorts	975,353	1.87	1.04 (0.01)	132	107	97	0.045 (0.001)
Adventurousness	23andMe	557,923	1.98	1.05 (0.01)	167	137	126	0.098 (0.002)
Automobile speeding propensity	UKB	404,291	1.53	1.03 (0.01)	42	36	33	0.079 (0.003)
Drinks per week	UKB	414,343	1.61	1.03 (0.01)	85	62	61	0.085 (0.003)
Ever smoker	UKB; TAG Consortium ⁴⁴	518,633	1.97	1.05 (0.01)	223	183	172	0.109 (0.003)
Number of sexual partners	UKB	370,711	1.77	1.04 (0.01)	117	97	88	0.128 (0.003)
First PC of the four risky behaviors	UKB	315,894	1.77	1.05 (0.01)	106	89	84	0.156 (0.004)

1020 The table provides an overview of the GWAS of our primary and supplementary phenotypes. Replication analysis of the lead SNPs’
1021 association results in independent cohorts was only conducted for the discovery GWAS of general risk tolerance. “*n*”: GWAS sample
1022 size; “Mean χ^2 ”: mean GWAS chi-squared statistics across HapMap3 SNPs with minor allele frequency (MAF) greater than 0.01; “LD
1023 Score intercept”: estimate of the intercept from a LD Score regression¹¹ using HapMap3 SNPs with MAF greater than 0.01; “# lead
1024 SNPs”: number of approximately independent (pairwise $r^2 < 0.1$) lead SNPs; “# loci”: number of associated loci; “# cond. assoc.”:
1025 number of conditional associations in the COJO analysis¹³; “SNP h^2 ”: SNP heritability estimated with the Heritability Estimator from
1026 Summary Statistics (HESS) method¹⁷ using 1000 Genomes phase 3 SNPs with MAF greater than 0.05; “disc.”: discovery; “repl.”:
1027 replication; “indep.”: independent.

1028

1029

1030 **ONLINE METHODS:**

1031

1032 This article is accompanied by a **Supplementary Note** with further details. Further information on
1033 experimental design is also available in the Life Sciences Reporting Summary linked to this article.

1034

1035 **Phenotype definitions, GWAS, quality control, and meta-analysis**

1036 For our discovery GWAS of general risk tolerance ($n = 939,908$), we performed a sample-size-weighted
1037 meta-analysis of results from the UK Biobank (UKB, $n = 431,126$) and a sample of research participants
1038 from 23andMe ($n = 508,782$). For our replication GWAS of general risk tolerance ($n = 35,445$), we
1039 performed a sample-size-weighted meta-analysis of results from ten smaller cohorts from seven studies:
1040 Army STARRS, BASE-II, NFBC 1966, RSIII, STR, UKHLS, and VIKING. The exact measures for the
1041 general risk tolerance phenotype vary across cohorts in wording and number of response categories, but all
1042 measures are similar and ask about one's tendency, preparedness, or willingness to take risks in general
1043 (**Supplementary Table 4**).

1044 For our GWAS of adventurousness, we analyzed data from a sample of research participants from 23andMe
1045 ($n = 557,923$). We analyzed responses to the question: "If forced to choose, would you consider yourself to
1046 be more cautious or more adventurous?", with possible responses ranging from "[1] Very cautious" to "[5]
1047 Very adventurous." For our GWAS of three of the four risky behaviors—automobile speeding propensity
1048 ($n = 404,291$), drinks per week ($n = 414,343$), and number of sexual partners ($n = 370,711$)—and for the
1049 first principal component (PC) of the four risky behaviors ($n = 315,894$), we analyzed UKB data. For the
1050 remaining risky behavior, ever smoker ($n = 518,633$), we meta-analyzed GWAS results from the UKB and
1051 from the TAG Consortium⁴⁴. Our automobile speeding propensity phenotype is based on responses to the
1052 question: "How often do you drive faster than the speed limit on the motorway?", with possible responses
1053 ranging from "[1] Never/rarely" to "[4] Most of the time." We dropped individuals who answered "[5] Do
1054 not drive on the motorway," and then we normalized the categorical variable for males and females
1055 separately. Our drinks per week phenotype was constructed based on responses to a series of questions
1056 about drinking habits and is defined as the number of alcoholic drinks consumed per week. Our ever-smoker
1057 phenotype in the UKB is a dummy variable that equals one if a respondent reported being a current or
1058 previous smoker and zero if the respondent reported never smoking or only smoking once or twice; our
1059 ever smoker phenotype from the TAG Consortium is the Consortium's "smoking initiation" phenotype
1060 (which TAG also refers to as "ever versus never regular smoker")⁴⁴. Our number of sexual partners
1061 phenotype is based on responses to the question: "About how many sexual partners have you had in your
1062 lifetime?"; respondents who reported more than 99 lifetime sexual partners were asked to confirm their
1063 responses. We assigned a value of zero to participants who reported having never had sex, and we again
1064 normalized this measure separately for males and females. Our first PC phenotype is the first PC obtained
1065 from a principal component analysis (PCA) in the UKB of the four risky behaviors (**Supplementary Table**
1066 **23**). All seven phenotypes were coded such that higher phenotype values are associated with higher risk
1067 tolerance or risk taking. **Table 1** lists, for each GWAS, the datasets we analyzed and the GWAS sample
1068 size. The **Supplementary Note** and **Supplementary Tables 4** and **5** provide additional details on the
1069 cohorts and phenotype definitions.

1070 All GWAS were performed at the cohort level in European-ancestry subjects according to a pre-specified
1071 and publicly archived analysis plan (see URLs). All GWAS included controls for the top 10 (or more)
1072 principal components of the genetic relatedness matrix and for sex and birth year. Genotyping was
1073 performed using a range of commercially available genotyping arrays. We applied extensive quality-control
1074 (QC) procedures to the cohort-level summary statistics, including but not limited to the EasyQC protocol
1075 developed by the GIANT consortium⁴⁵. We used Haplotype Reference Consortium v1.1 (HRC) data to
1076 construct our main reference panel, which we used for quality control of the GWAS summary statistics and

1077 to determine the independence of significant loci. For the 23andMe and UKB cohorts, only SNPs with
1078 minor allele frequency (MAF) greater than 0.001 were analyzed. All meta-analyses were restricted to SNPs
1079 with a sample size greater than half of the maximum sample size across all the SNPs in the GWAS. In total,
1080 9,284,738 SNPs were analyzed in the discovery GWAS of general risk tolerance; 9,339,358 SNPs were
1081 analyzed in the GWAS of adventurousness; and ~11,515,000 SNPs were analyzed in the GWAS of the
1082 four risky behaviors and their first PC. To adjust standard errors for the possible effects of population
1083 stratification, we inflated them by the square root of the estimated intercept from an LD Score regression¹²
1084 (for the replication GWAS of general risk tolerance, which meta-analyzed different cohorts, we inflated
1085 them at the meta-analysis level). Additional details are provided in the **Supplementary Note** and
1086 **Supplementary Tables 2 and 24-26**.

1087 To identify approximately independent lead SNPs, we applied to the GWAS results a clumping algorithm.
1088 Our clumping algorithm begins by selecting the SNP with the lowest P value as the lead SNP in the first
1089 clump, and includes in the first clump all SNPs that have r^2 greater than 0.1 with the lead SNP and that have
1090 GWAS P value less than 1×10^{-4} . Next, the SNP with the second-lowest P value outside the first clump
1091 becomes the lead SNP of the second clump, and the second clump is created analogously but using only
1092 the SNPs outside of the first clump. This process continues until every genome-wide significant SNP (i.e.,
1093 every SNP with a GWAS P value less than 5×10^{-8}) is either designated as a lead SNP or is clumped to
1094 another lead SNP. We also defined non-overlapping, continuous genomic loci around the lead SNPs using
1095 Ripke *et al.*'s⁴⁶ locus definition, and we performed conditional and joint multiple-SNP analyses (COJO)¹³.
1096 Ripke *et al.* defined a locus as “the physical region containing all SNPs correlated at $r^2 > 0.6$ with [one of
1097 the lead] SNPs”, and merged associated loci within 250 kb of each other. To define the set of distinct loci
1098 that contain all the loci corresponding to the locus associations from across the seven GWAS, we pooled
1099 the loci corresponding to the locus associations and merged loci within 250 kb from each other. For the
1100 COJO analyses, for each of the seven main GWAS we restricted the analysis to the set of SNPs that (1)
1101 pass all GWAS quality control filters, and (2) are located within the loci of the phenotype (which includes
1102 all of the lead SNPs).

1103 **Supplementary Tables 3, 6, 7, and 27** report the lead SNPs, the loci, the results of the COJO analyses, and
1104 the results of a lookup of the lead SNPs in the NHGRI-EBI GWAS Catalog database²⁰ for our seven main
1105 GWAS; **Supplementary Fig. 12** shows the GWAS estimates of general-risk-tolerance lead SNPs in the
1106 23andMe and UKB cohorts and in the replication GWAS, and **Supplementary Data 1** shows LocusZoom
1107 plots for all the loci identified in the seven GWAS.

1108

1109 **Testing for population stratification**

1110 To assess the extent to which population stratification may bias our GWAS estimates, we conducted three
1111 tests. First, we estimated LD Score intercepts using the summary statistics of the discovery and replication
1112 GWAS of general risk tolerance and of the GWAS of our four main risky behaviors and their first PC¹².
1113 Second, following Okbay *et al.* (2016)¹⁰, we conducted sign tests that compare the signs of the estimates
1114 from our discovery GWAS of general risk tolerance (but excluding all full siblings from the UKB cohort)
1115 to the signs of the estimates from within-family (WF) GWAS of general risk tolerance. If our discovery
1116 GWAS estimates were entirely driven by stratification, then the signs of the WF estimates—which are
1117 immune to stratification—should be independent of the signs of the discovery GWAS estimates, in which
1118 case we would expect a sign concordance of roughly 50%. A higher degree of sign concordance would
1119 suggest that at least some of the signal from the GWAS comes from true genetic effects. Across four sign
1120 tests, we strongly reject the null hypothesis of 50% sign concordance for all of the sign tests ($P < 5 \times 10^{-10}$
1121 in all four tests), implying that at least some of the signal from the GWAS comes from true genetic effects.
1122 Our third test of population stratification, the “within-family regression test,” compares both the signs and
1123 magnitudes of the discovery and WF GWAS of general risk tolerance. The **Supplementary Note**,

1124 **Supplementary Tables 28, 29, and Supplementary Fig. 13** provide further details on the three tests and
1125 report their results. All three tests imply no more than low levels of population stratification.

1126

1127 **Replication of the general-risk-tolerance lead SNPs and maxFDR calculation**

1128 To assess the credibility of the lead SNPs from our discovery GWAS of general risk tolerance, we compared
1129 those results to the estimates from our replication GWAS of general risk tolerance. (We did not attempt
1130 replication of the results of our six supplementary GWAS in independent data, because we did not have
1131 access to such data for these phenotypes.) We first filtered out SNPs with sample size less than one-half the
1132 maximum sample size in the replication GWAS. After applying this filter, 122 of the 124 lead SNPs were
1133 directly available in the replication GWAS summary statistics, and one of the two remaining lead SNPs
1134 was well proxied by a SNP in high LD ($r^2 > 0.8$) with it. For the resulting 123 SNPs, we conducted a (one-
1135 sided) binomial sign test to assess whether the directions (i.e., the signs) of the effects of the lead SNPs are
1136 more concordant across the discovery and the replication GWAS than expected by chance. We also
1137 conducted a (one-sided) binomial test to assess whether a larger fraction of the lead SNPs are significant at
1138 the 5% level in one-sided tests in the replication GWAS than expected by chance. We then followed the
1139 procedure outlined in Okbay *et al.* (2016)⁴⁷ and conducted a Bayesian analysis to obtain estimates of the
1140 posterior distributions of the 123 SNPs' true effect sizes (the β_j 's), given their GWAS estimates. We used
1141 the SNPs' estimated posterior distributions to estimate their expected replication record in the two binomial
1142 tests, and compared their actual and expected replication records.

1143 To calculate the “maxFDR,” an upper bound on the false discovery rate (FDR) for a GWAS, we used the
1144 MTAG software¹⁶ and followed the methodology described in section 1.4.3 of Turley *et al.*'s
1145 Supplementary Information¹⁶. The maxFDR is defined as the maximum theoretical FDR over a range of
1146 possible fractions of null SNPs (π_{null}).

1147 The **Supplementary Note** and **Supplementary Fig. 3** provide additional details.

1148

1149 **Estimation of genome-wide SNP heritability**

1150 We used the Heritability Estimator from Summary Statistics (HESS)⁴⁸ method to estimate the genome-wide
1151 SNP heritability of our seven main phenotypes. For the results reported in **Table 1**, we used the summary
1152 statistics from the GWAS listed in the table for all 1000 Genomes phase 3 SNPs with MAF greater than
1153 0.05. We did not apply GC prior to estimating heritability with HESS. The **Supplementary Note**,
1154 **Supplementary Table 30**, and **Supplementary Fig. 14** provide additional details, and also report estimates
1155 of the SNP heritability of our seven main phenotypes estimated with the GCTA⁴⁹, LD Score regression¹²,
1156 and HESS methods, using only summary statistics from the UKB GWAS for comparability across
1157 phenotypes and methods (except for adventurousness, which is not available in the UKB and for which we
1158 used the 23andMe summary statistics).

1159

1160 **Genetic correlations**

1161 We used bivariate LD Score regression⁹ to estimate genetic correlations between general risk tolerance and
1162 various phenotypes. We used the scores computed by Finucane *et al.*⁵⁰, which are based on genotypic data
1163 from the European-ancestry samples in the 1000 Genomes Project and only HapMap3 SNPs. As is common
1164 in the literature, we restricted our analyses to SNPs with MAF > 0.01. We used the summary statistics of
1165 the meta-analysis combining our discovery and replication GWAS of general risk tolerance to estimate
1166 genetic correlations with general risk tolerance, and we used the summary statistics of our GWAS of
1167 adventurousness, our four main risky behaviors, and their first PC to estimate genetic correlations with
1168 those phenotypes. For most other phenotypes, we used published GWAS results. We obtained the summary

1169 statistics from the GWAS of lifetime cannabis use²⁵ and of ADHD⁵¹ from the International Cannabis
1170 Consortium and the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium, respectively. We conducted our own GWAS using
1171 the first release of the UKB data for five phenotypes: age first had sexual intercourse ($n = 98,956$), teenage
1172 conception among females ($n = 40,077$), use of sun protection ($n = 111,560$), household income ($n =$
1173 $97,059$), and Townsend deprivation index score ($n = 112,192$). The sex-specific GWAS of general risk
1174 tolerance used to estimate the genetic correlation between males and females were conducted in the full
1175 release of UKB data, separately for males and females, following the same methodology and QC protocol
1176 as for our other GWAS in the full release of UKB data. The **Supplementary Note** and **Supplementary**
1177 **Tables 9, 31** provide additional details. Also, the **Supplementary Note**, **Supplementary Table 32**, and
1178 **Supplementary Fig. 15** report the results of proxy-phenotype analyses in which we examined whether the
1179 general-risk-tolerance lead SNPs tend to also be associated with related phenotypes.

1180

1181 **Multi-trait analysis of GWAS (MTAG)**

1182 We used Multi-Trait Analysis of GWAS (MTAG)¹⁶ to increase the precision of our estimates of the SNPs'
1183 effects on general risk tolerance. We used as inputs the summary statistics of the meta-analysis combining
1184 our discovery and replication GWAS of general risk tolerance; the summary statistics of our GWAS of
1185 adventurousness, automobile speeding propensity, drinks per week, ever smoker, and number of sexual
1186 partners; and the summary statistics of a previously published GWAS on lifetime cannabis use⁵². Because
1187 SNPs that have no effect on one phenotype but a sizeable effect on another can bias MTAG results, we
1188 excluded from this analysis SNPs in the proximity of several genes implicated in biological processes that
1189 are likely to be specific only to one of the phenotypes. Specifically, we excluded all SNPs located within
1190 1Mb of the genes *CHRNA5* and *CHRN3* (nicotinic receptors), *CNR1* and *CNR2* (cannabinoid receptors),
1191 and *ADH1B* (Alcohol Dehydrogenase). We imposed a MAF filter of 0.01 and a sample size filter that
1192 selected, for each GWAS, the SNPs with sample sizes larger than two-thirds of the ninth decile of the
1193 GWAS's sample size. MTAG limited the analysis to the 5,869,552 SNPs analyzed in all GWAS (and that
1194 satisfied these filters). To identify approximately independent lead SNPs for general risk tolerance, we
1195 applied the clumping algorithm described above. The **Supplementary Note**, **Supplementary Table 10**,
1196 and **Supplementary Fig. 7** provide further details.

1197

1198 **Polygenic prediction**

1199 We assessed the predictive power of polygenic scores of general risk tolerance in six different validation
1200 cohorts: Add Health, HRS, NTR, STR, UKB-siblings, and Zurich. (The UKB-siblings cohort comprised all
1201 individuals with at least one full sibling in the UKB.) We constructed three polygenic scores. Our first two
1202 polygenic scores were constructed with the LDpred²⁸ method, which accounts for the linkage disequilibrium
1203 (LD) between SNPs. The first used the summary statistics from the meta-analysis of the discovery and
1204 replication GWAS of general risk tolerance, while the second used the MTAG summary statistics. (The
1205 LDpred method relies on a Gaussian mixture weight that corresponds to the assumed fraction of SNPs that
1206 are causal. For each of our first two polygenic scores, we first generated LDpred scores for each of the
1207 following mixture weights: 1, 0.3, 0.1, 0.03, 0.01, 0.003, 0.001, 0.0003, and 0.0001⁵³. The LDpred-score
1208 results we present in this paper for our first two polygenic scores are for the scores based on a Gaussian
1209 mixture weight of 0.3 (our "preferred score"), which consistently performed well across cohorts and
1210 phenotypes.) Our third polygenic score was constructed with the classical method, which simply weights
1211 SNPs by their GWAS effect size^{54,55}, using the summary statistics from the meta-analysis of the discovery
1212 and replication GWAS of general risk tolerance.

1213 We used the subset of all the SNPs (i.e., we did not impose a P value threshold) in the HapMap consortium
1214 phase 3 release⁵⁶ with an imputation quality of more than 0.7 to generate all three scores. For every
1215 validation cohort that was also included in the discovery or replication GWAS or in the MTAG analysis,

1216 we reran the GWAS and MTAG analyses without the validation cohort to generate the summary statistics
1217 we used to construct the scores. Due to data access limitations, the 23andMe cohort could not be included
1218 in the meta-analysis whose summary statistics we used to construct the polygenic scores in the NTR, STR,
1219 and Zurich cohorts. The second polygenic score (using the MTAG summary statistics) was only constructed
1220 for the Add Health, HRS, and UKB-siblings cohorts.

1221 Our measure of a score's predictive power for a predicted phenotype is the incremental R^2 (or incremental
1222 pseudo- R^2) from adding the score to a regression of the phenotype on controls for sex, birth year, birth-year
1223 squared, birth-year cubed, as well as the interactions between sex and the three birth-year variables, and the
1224 first ten principal components of the genetic relatedness matrix. We used the bootstrap method with 1,000
1225 iterations to estimate 95% percentile confidence intervals for the incremental R^2 estimates. For continuous
1226 phenotypes, we estimated ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions; for binary phenotypes (e.g., ever
1227 smoker), we estimated probit models; and for censored phenotypes (e.g., equity share, which is
1228 nonnegative), we estimated tobit models. For binary and censored phenotypes, we used McFadden's
1229 pseudo- R^2 to calculate the incremental pseudo- R^2 .

1230 The **Supplementary Note** provides additional details, including a description of how the predicted
1231 phenotypes were constructed. Results are presented in **Supplementary Figs. 8-9** and **Supplementary**
1232 **Tables 11-14**.

1233

1234 **Biological annotation: testing hypotheses about specific genes and gene sets**

1235 We conducted a comprehensive review of the literature on biological pathways that have been hypothesized
1236 to influence risk tolerance. The 132 articles identified by review are compiled in **Supplementary Table 1**.
1237 The **Supplementary Note** and **Supplementary Tables 15, 16, and 33-34** provide further details and report
1238 the results of the various analyses we conducted to assess whether the pathways and genes that have
1239 previously been hypothesized to relate to risk tolerance do indeed show evidence of association with risk
1240 tolerance.

1241

1242 **Biological annotation: additional bioinformatics analyses**

1243 We conducted a series of additional bioinformatics analyses using the results of the combined meta-analysis
1244 of our discovery and replication GWAS of general risk tolerance. We conducted a gene analysis with
1245 MAGMA³¹ to test each of 18,224 genes for association with general risk tolerance in a hypothesis-free
1246 manner (the 18,224 genes are the set of all genes containing at least one SNP in our combined meta-analysis
1247 results). We used our main reference panel to estimate LD. Bonferroni correction was applied to account
1248 for multiple testing, counting each gene as an independent test. We then used the Gene Network³² co-
1249 expression database to gain insight into the functions of the significant MAGMA genes.

1250 We also used DEPICT³³ (release 194) to prioritize tissues, gene sets, and genes that are implicated by our
1251 GWAS results. Only SNPs with GWAS P values less than 10^{-5} were used as input, and DEPICT-defined
1252 loci were defined by clumping these SNPs (see the **Supplementary Note** for the clumping parameters used
1253 for this analysis). Locus boundaries were then defined using a LD r^2 threshold of 0.5, and overlapping loci
1254 were merged, yielding 464 autosomal loci comprising 1,060 genes.

1255 To partition the SNP-based heritability of general risk tolerance, we used stratified LD Score regression⁵⁰,
1256 following the procedure described by Finucane *et al.*⁵⁰. We estimated stratified LD Score regressions both
1257 for the functional genomic regions of the "baseline model" and for the tissue-level annotations provided by
1258 Finucane *et al.* To correct for multiple hypothesis testing, we applied a Bonferroni correction for 52 two-
1259 sided tests in the baseline model (i.e., for 52 annotations) and for 10 two-sided tests in the tissue type models
1260 (i.e., for 10 tissue types).

1261 The **Supplementary Note**, **Supplementary Tables 17-22** and **35-39**, and **Supplementary Figs. 10-11** and
1262 **16** provide further details and report the results of these and other bioinformatics analyses, including a
1263 transcriptome-wide analysis with Summary-based Mendelian Randomization (SMR)⁵⁷, and an
1264 ascertainment of whether the lead SNPs and their LD partners (SNPs with an $r^2 > 0.6$ with a lead SNP and
1265 no more than 250 kb from it) are protein-altering variants or are associated with *cis*-gene expression in
1266 distinct human tissues, among other analyses. The **Supplementary Note** also highlights the most important
1267 results of the bioinformatics analyses and summarizes the conclusions we derive from them.

1268

1269

1270 **DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT:**

1271 GWAS summary statistics will be posted at www.thessgac.org/data. SNP-level summary statistics
1272 from analyses based entirely or in part on 23andMe data can only be reported for up to 10,000
1273 SNPs. For general risk tolerance, we will provide association results for all SNPs that passed
1274 quality-control filters in a GWAS meta-analysis of general risk tolerance that excludes the research
1275 participants from 23andMe; we will also provide association results from the complete GWAS
1276 (which includes data from 23andMe) for all lead SNPs identified in our discovery GWAS and
1277 MTAG analysis of general risk tolerance, and for the next 4,000 most significant SNPs in the
1278 discovery GWAS. For adventurousness, we will provide association results from the complete
1279 GWAS (which includes only data from 23andMe) for all lead SNPs and for the next 4,000 most
1280 significant SNPs. For automobile speeding propensity, drinks per week, ever smoker, number of
1281 sexual partners, and the first PC of the four risky behaviors, we will provide association results
1282 from the complete GWAS for all SNPs that passed quality-control filters.

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