Children’s online risks and opportunities: Comparative findings from EU Kids Online and Net Children Go Mobile

# Details

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English

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## Type

Report and working paper

## Topics

* Social mediation
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Literacy and skills
* Wellbeing
* Risks and harms
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities

## Sample

Data consider sample from Eu Kids Online and Net Children Go Mobile.
EU Kids Online: 25,000 European 9-16 year old internet users and their parents in 25 countries in 2010.

Net Children Go Mobile: 3,500 European 9-16 year old internet users in 7 countries in 2013/14

## Implications For Parents About

* Parental practices / parental mediation
* Parental digital literacy
* Parenting guidance / support

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* High-quality content online for children and young people
* Creating a safe environment for children online
* Stepping up awareness and empowerment

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Industry

# Abstract

In 2010, half of European 9-16 year olds ever used the internet in their bedroom; now two thirds go online there weekly.
Internet use at school is highest in Denmark and the UK and it is very low in Italy. Although children do more online in 2014, most do not climb far up the ‘ladder of opportunities’. SNS use has increased for boys and teens; 22% 9-10 year olds and 53% 11-12 year olds use Facebook. Romania has seen a large increase in children with 100+ contacts and most have a public profile; by contrast, SNS use is relatively ‘safer’ (more privacy, fewer contacts, less under-age use) in the UK and Ireland. Fewer than half of children see themselves as “digital natives” compared with their parents. Digital self-confidence has decreased among the 9-10 year olds, only 10% of whom now believe they are more skilled than their parents. Children now report being being able to protect themselves online: more than half of 11-13 years olds (55%) say they can change their SNS privacy settings (it was 43% in 2010); among 14-16 year olds, it is now 79%.
 The comparison of findings from 2010 to 2014 shows only moderate increases in some risks, and no increase at all for others. Potentially negative forms of user-generated content (e.g. hate, proanorexic or self-harm content) are more common. The proportion of children who reported being bothered or upset online in the past year has increased from 13% to 17%; the biggest increases in recent years are among girls and teenagers. Around half of all 11-16 year olds has encountered one or more of the 10 risks we asked about, with a recent increase among girls and the younger children. In some countries, the changes from 2010 to 2014 suggest children are experiencing more of both risks and opportunities - in Denmark, Italy and Romania (and, less, in Ireland); but in Belgium, Portugal and the UK, children are now benefiting from more online activities without an equivalent increase in risk. Two thirds of parents have suggested ways for their child to use the internet safely, according to children aged 9-16. Indeed, parents prefer far more to talk about internet safety than use parental controls in all countries and for all age groups; but the levels of parental mediation are not increasing despite parental concern and awareness-raising efforts.

# Outcome

- Home is the most common place to go online, and many have private access to the internet.
- There are big age and country differences in whether children go online when ‘out and about’.
- Most children use the internet at school though countries differ greatly in educational practices.
- Many children enjoy the internet but most do not climb far up the ‘ladder of opportunities.
- Children have become less satisfied with the content available for them on the internet.
- Facebook is taking over social networking across Europe.
- Countries differ in risky uses of SNS – multiple contacts, public settings, under-age use.
- Children a little less likely to see the internet as an opportunity for private self-disclosure.
- Fewer than half of children see themselves as “digital natives” compared with their parents.
-Levels of digital skills are rising slowly.
- Negative UGC and cyberbullying are on the rise.
- Girls and teenagers are more likely to be bothered online, country differences are large.
- Cyberbullying has increased, especially among girls and the youngest age group.
- Slight increase in exposure to sexual content, both online and offline – especially among girls.
- The proporIon of children aged 11-16 years who have experienced “sexIng” (i.e. received sexual messages online) has decreased across all age groups and among both boys and girls.
- Children are less likely to meet new people online but more likely to meet online contacts offline.
- Compared to 2010, the percentage of children aged 11-16 years old who experienced different forms of excessive internet use has slightly increased.
- Exposure to one or more out of ten risks has increased among girls and 11-14 year olds.
- Active mediation of internet safety by parents is unequal across Europe.
- Most forms of parental mediation are stable or even decreasing.
- Do children think their parents know much about what they do on the internet?