Access and use, risks and opportunities of the internet for Italian children. Preliminary findings

# Details

## Year

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## Language

English

## Authors

Mascheroni G.;Ólafsson K.

## Type

Report and working paper

## Topics

* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Risks and harms
* Social mediation
* Literacy and skills

## Sample

1,006 children aged 9-17

# Abstract

# Outcome

- Italian children access the internet mainly through
their smartphones: 84% of children aged 9-17
(ranging from 51% of 9-to-10-years-old children to
97% of 15-to-17-years-old teenagers) use their
smartphone at least once a day to go online.
- Most Italian children, and especially teenagers,
possess operational and social skills;
- Overall, the number of children who have felt
bothered (upset, uncomfortable or scared) by
something they experienced on the internet has
more than doubled, raising from 3% in 2013 to
13% in 2017.
- 51% of 11-to-17-year-olds have been exposed to
at least one form of Negative User Generated
Content (NUGC) in the past year, including violent
or gory images of people harming animals or other
people (36%), hateful content (33%) and websites
where people discuss ways of physically harming
themselves (22%).
The number of children who have been bullied
and/or cyberbullied has remained stable (10%) -
but bullying is one the most harmful experiences
for a child, with 79% of those who have been
bullied who felt very or fairly upset.
- Sexting is also on the rise, with 7% of Italian 11-to-
17-year-olds having received a sexual message in
the past 12 months. Girls (67%) and 11-to-12-
year-olds (56%) are more likely to be very upset
by the sexually suggestive messages they have
received, compared to boys (14% very upset) and
older teenagers (23% very upset).
- Among enabling mediation practices, parents tend
to favour those practices that promote safer uses
of the internet: 43% talks to children about what
they do on the internet often or very often; 52%
suggests ways to use the internet safely; 38%
help children when something bothers them on
the internet.
- Teachers tend to engage more in restrictive
mediation rather than enabling mediation:
according to children, 39% of teachers made
rules about what pupils can do on the internet
at school; 26% suggested ways to use the
internet safely, 22% helped children when
something bothers them on the internet, or
encouraged them to explore and learn things
on the internet. Similarly to parental mediation,
teachers’ mediation decreases as the age of
children increases.
 (Mascheroni Olafsson, 2018, p. 5).