Country Classification: Opportunities, Risks, Harm and Parental Mediation

# Details

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English

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## Type

Short report

## Topics

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

## Sample

a face-to-face, in home survey during 2010 of 25,000 9-16 year old internet users and their parents in 25 countries, using a stratified random sample and selfcompletion methods for sensitive questions.

## Implications For Parents About

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

# Abstract

This report updates and deepens the understanding of cross-national differences among the countries surveyed in EU Kids Online. Where the previous classification was based simply on the percentage of children in each country who used the internet daily, and who had encountered one or more risks, this report examines the range and type of online opportunities, risks and harm experienced by the children in each country. It also takes into account the ways in which parents mediate or regulate their children’s internet use in each country.

Clusters of countries are most clearly distinguished in terms of sexual content risks. Children who are bullied or who give away personal data are uniformly distributed across the countries. Using these and many other factors, the report identifies four country clusters overall: unprotected networkers, protected by restrictions, semi supported risky gamers, and supported risky explorers.

This new analysis reveals that differences within countries are substantially larger than
differences between countries, whether measured in terms of online opportunities, risk of harm or forms of parental mediation. The advantage of such pan-European similarities is that it makes sense for policy makers in one country to learn from the best practice initiated in another.

On the other hand, the analysis also makes it clear that, to anticipate the online experience of any individual child, a host of factors must be considered – merely knowing where they live is insufficient as a guide to the opportunities or risks they may experience.
Findings detailed in this report give hope that parents’ mediation strategies will develop positively and constructively alongside the use of their children’s internet use. Nevertheless, based on the patterns of children’s online risks, harm and parenting practices across
Europe there is the possibility of a more negative pattern developing in some countries.
There is concern that both too much parental restriction in the protected by restrictions cluster and the lack of support for children’s online use in the unsupported networkers cluster might lead to higher levels of harm when risk is encountered.

# Outcome

-Higher educated parents are more active in mediating their children’s internet use than parents with less education.

The participating countries were divided into 4 clusters:

Supported risky explorers (Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden):
-In these countries, the level of internet diffusion is also relatively high, with parents generally more digitally skilled and aware of online risks compared to other countries
-" In these countries, the focus seems to be on supporting children to develop in a digital environment where risks will be encountered." (Helsper et al., 2013, p. 37)

Semi-supported risky gamers (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland and Romania):
-Most children in these countries fall into groups that encounter either specific risks or a range of risks and subsequent harm
-"Very diverse types of mediation are practised in these countries and active mediation is also included but apparently less effective." (Helsper et al., 2013, p. 37)

Protected by restrictions (Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the UK):
-"While parents might be happy that their restrictive mediation practices take children away from higher risk and harm and sexual or contact risks, it does seem that they may miss out on many of the online opportunities." (Helsper et al., 2013, p. 38)
-In these countries there seems to be an emphasis on minimizing risk at the cost of opportunities.

Unprotected networkers (Austria, Hungary, Lithuania and Slovenia):
-"In these countries the social aspects of Web 2.0 seem to have been taken up with gusto, and the children subsequently experience risks but not as much harm from being in contact with these opportunities." (Helsper et al., 2013, p. 38)
-In these countries, parents are not as involved in their children's internet use