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

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and Net Children Go Mobile (November 2014)

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Executive summary

- 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 better 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, pro-anorexic 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.

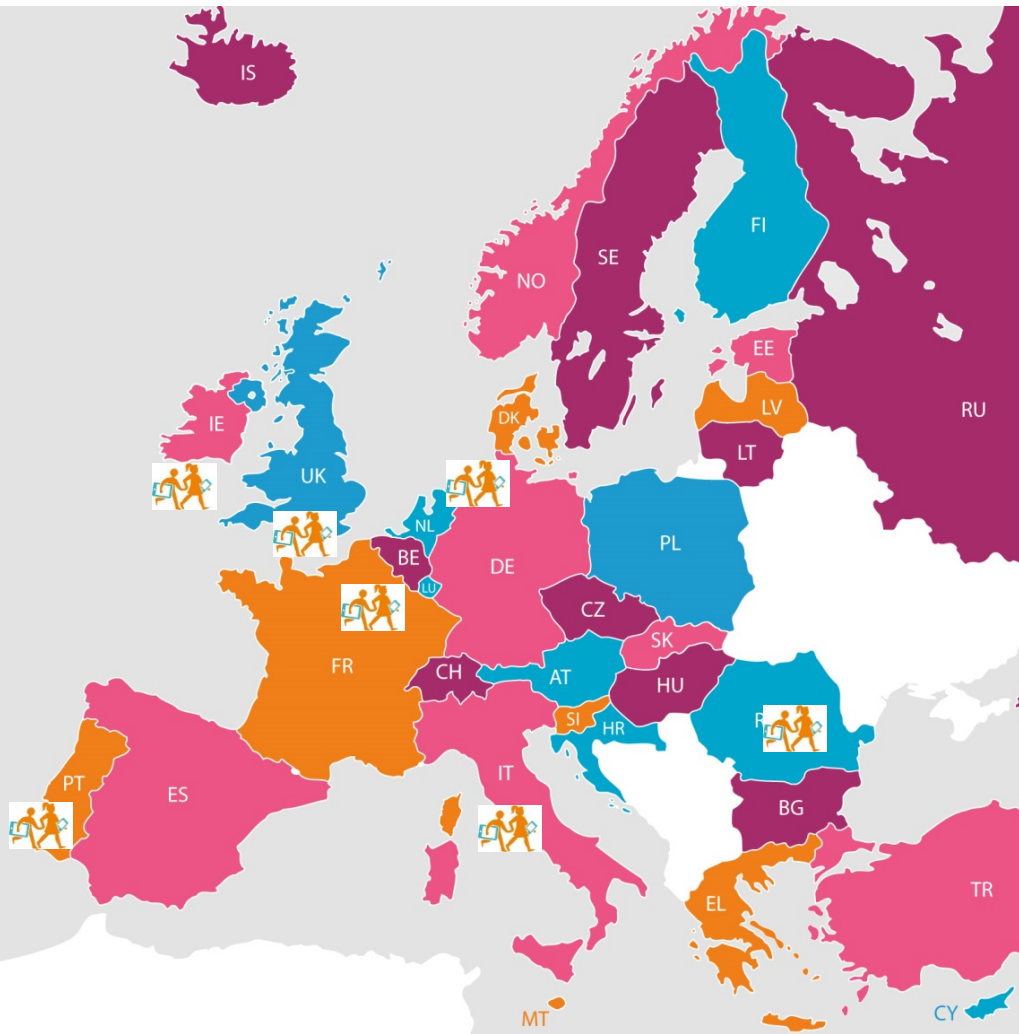www.eukidsonline.net

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Report overview

- Data sources
- Access and use
- Activities
- Social networking
- Digital skills
- Risks and harm
- Parental mediation
- Recommendations
- Methodology

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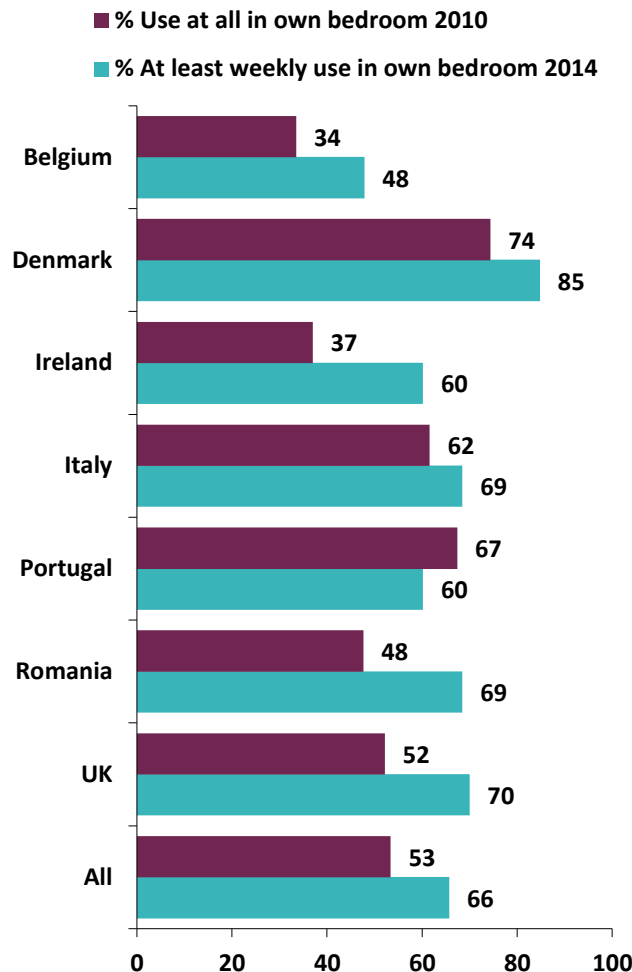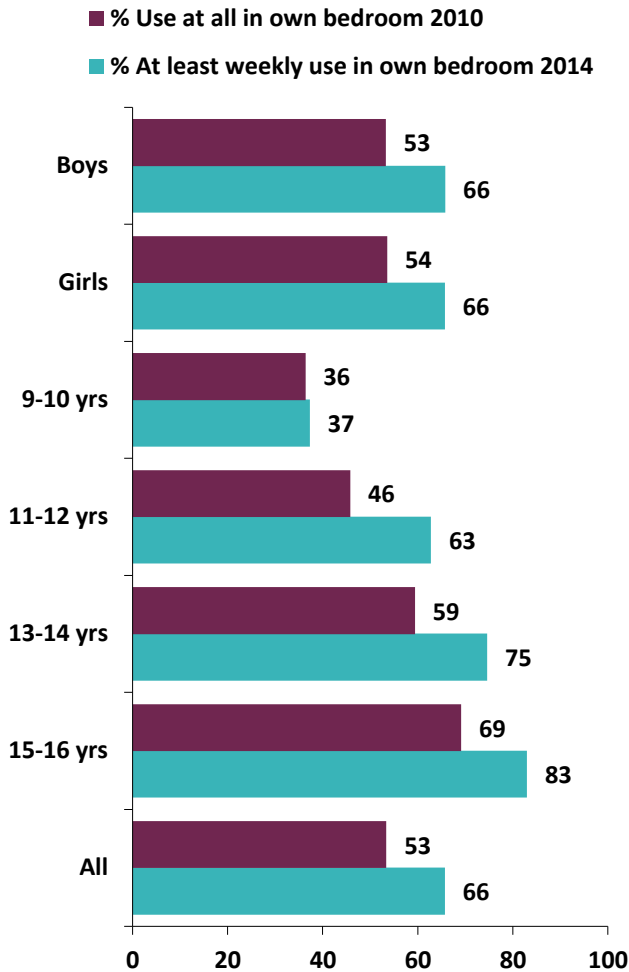
Sources of findings: survey data 2010 & 2014

- The **EU Kids Online** survey conducted in-home face-to-face interviews with 25,000 European 9-16 year old internet users and their parents in **25 countries in 2010**. Report: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/33731

- The **Net Children Go Mobile** survey replicated major parts of the EU Kids Online survey, adding a focus on mobile devices, with 3,500 European 9-16 year old internet users in **7 countries in 2013/14**. Report: www.netchildrengomobile.eu/reports

- Selected findings follow for **7 countries**: Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Access and use

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Home is the most common place to go online, and many have private access to the internet

Left chart:

Legend:
- % Use at all in own bedroom 2010
- % At least weekly use in own bedroom 2014

Group	Use at all 2010	At least weekly 2014
Boys	53	66
Girls	54	66
9-10 yrs	36	37
11-12 yrs	46	63
13-14 yrs	59	75
15-16 yrs	69	83
All	53	66

Right chart:

Legend:
- % Use at all in own bedroom 2010
- % At least weekly use in own bedroom 2014

Country	Use at all 2010	At least weekly 2014
Belgium	34	48
Denmark	74	85
Ireland	37	60
Italy	62	69
Portugal	67	60
Romania	48	69
UK	52	70
All	53	66

- The figures show children aged 9-16 in the 7 countries who access the internet in their own bedroom.

- In 2010, one in two of 9-16 year olds ever used the internet in their bedroom. Now two in three go online there weekly.

- There are big age differences: one third of 9-10 year olds rising to four fifths of 15-16 year olds go online weekly in their bedroom.

- There are few gender differences in access.

- There are big differences by country – half of Belgian children rising to four fifths in Denmark. Ireland has now 'caught up' with the average.

EU Kids Online QC301: Where do you use the internet these days: at school or college, living room (or other public room) at home, at a friend's home, own bedroom (or other private room) at home, at a relative's home, in an internet café, in a public library or other public place, when 'out and about'.
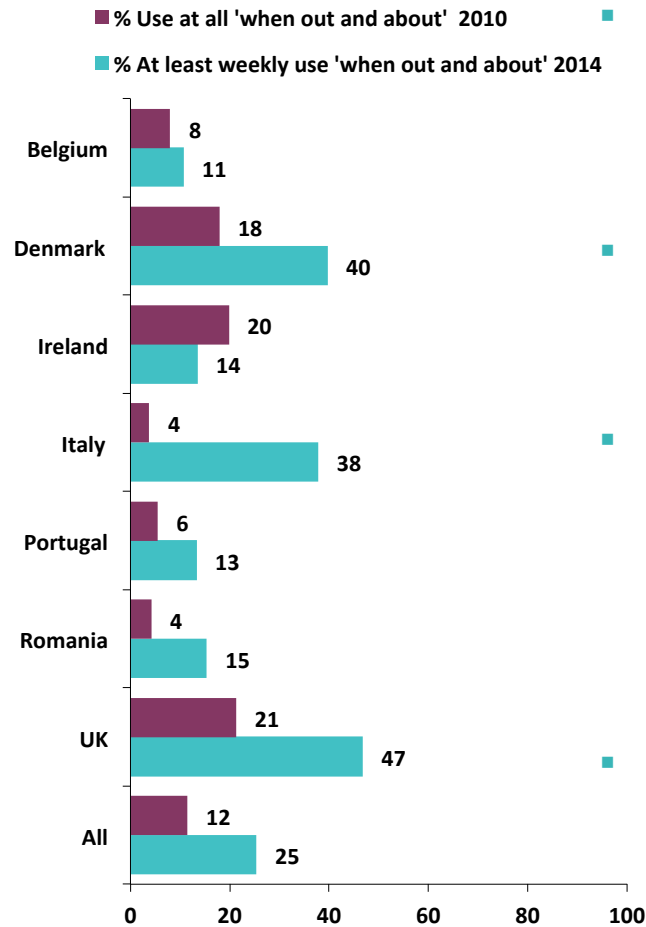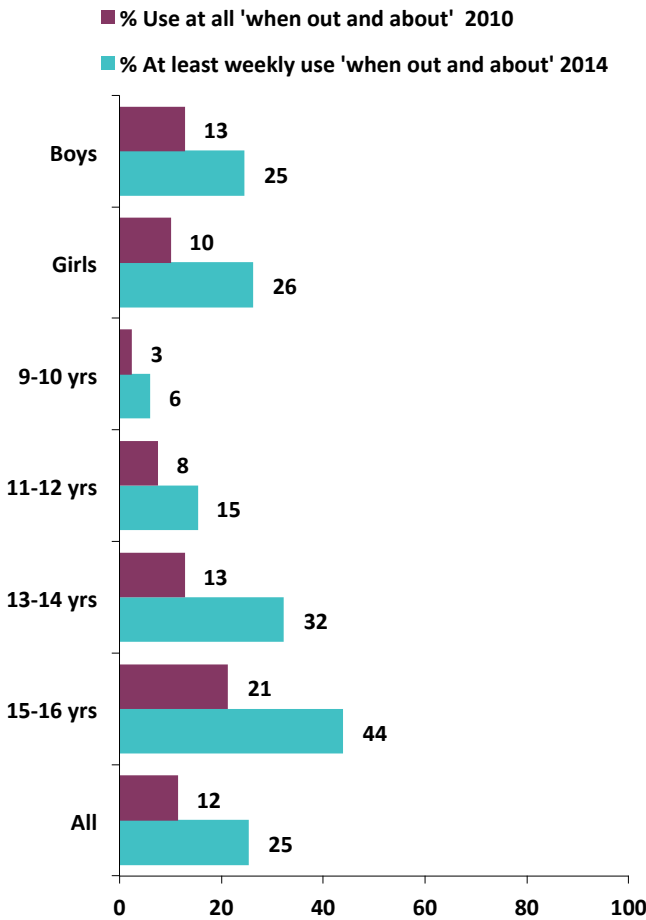NCGM-Q1: How often do you go online or use the internet (from a computer, a mobile phone, a smartphone, or any other device you may use to go online) at the following locations: Own bedroom, at home but not own room, at school, other places, when out and about.
Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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There are big age and country differences in whether children go online when 'out and about'

Chart 1 (Boys/Girls/Age groups):

Category	2010 (% Use at all)	2014 (% At least weekly use)
Boys	13	25
Girls	10	26
9-10 yrs	3	6
11-12 yrs	8	15
13-14 yrs	13	32
15-16 yrs	21	44
All	12	25

Chart 2 (Countries):

Country	2010 (% Use at all)	2014 (% At least weekly use)
Belgium	8	11
Denmark	18	40
Ireland	20	14
Italy	4	38
Portugal	6	13
Romania	4	15
UK	21	47
All	12	25

- The figures show children aged 9-16 who access the internet when out and about: 1/4 go online when out and about but most do not.

- Thus the home is still the main place for children's internet use, with the bedroom the main place for smartphone use.

- But this use is more personalised: in 2010, a shared PC was the most common way of accessing the internet (58%) with 31% using their phone. Now, every day 46% use a laptop and 41% use a smartphone to go online.

- There are no gender differences but big age and country differences, suggesting a European divide resulting from differential costs of connection.
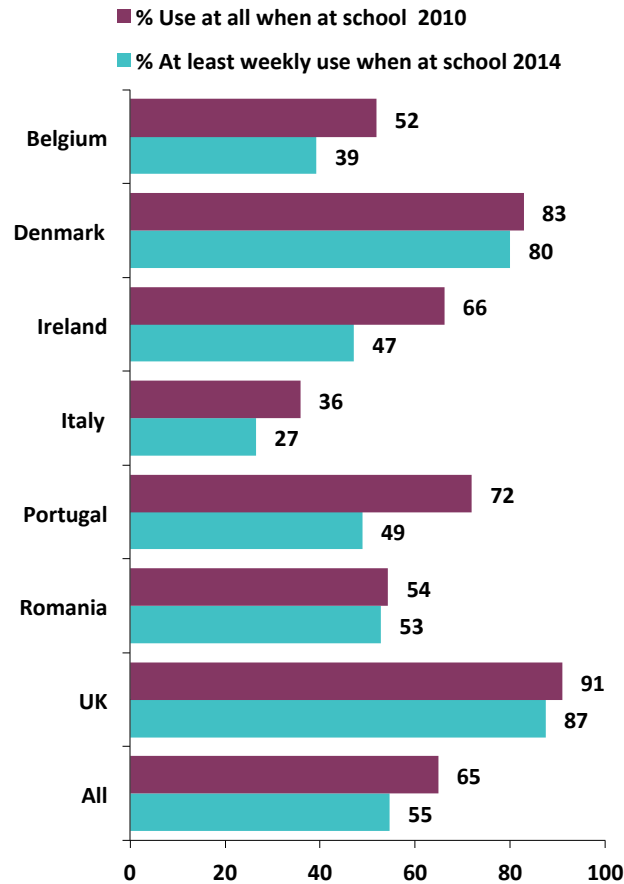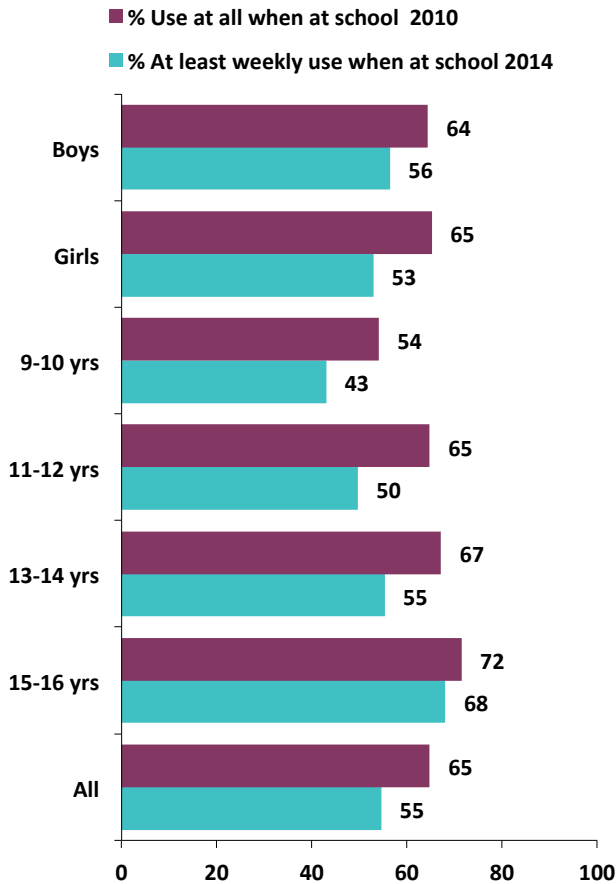
EU Kids Online QC301a-h: Looking at this card, please tell me where you use the internet these days: at school or college, living room (or other public room) at home, at a friend's home, own bedroom (or other private room) at home, at a relative's home, in an internet café, in a public library or other public place, when 'out and about'.

NCGM-Q1 a-e: Looking at this card, please tell me how often you go online or use the internet (from a computer, a mobile phone, a smartphone, or any other device you may use to go online) at the following locations: Own bedroom, at home but not own room, at school, other places, when out and about.

Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Most children use the internet at school though countries differ greatly in educational practices

Chart 1

■ % Use at all when at school 2010
■ % At least weekly use when at school 2014

Group	2010	2014
Boys	64	56
Girls	65	53
9-10 yrs	54	43
11-12 yrs	65	50
13-14 yrs	67	55
15-16 yrs	72	68
All	65	55

Chart 2

■ % Use at all when at school 2010
■ % At least weekly use when at school 2014

Country	2010	2014
Belgium	52	39
Denmark	83	80
Ireland	66	47
Italy	36	27
Portugal	72	49
Romania	54	53
UK	91	87
All	65	55

- The figures show children aged 9-16 who access the internet at school. Note that for 2010, the measure is 'use at all' while for 2014 it is 'use weekly' (hence the apparent reduction in use).
- There are age differences but no gender differences in use of the internet at school.
- Age differences are strong especially for daily use at school (8% 9-10 year olds rising to 38% 15-16 year olds).
- Internet use at school is highest in Denmark and the UK (where most children have access) and it is very low in Italy.

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Activities

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Many children enjoy the internet but most do not climb far up the 'ladder of opportunities'

■ 2010   ■ 2014

Activity	2010	2014
Created a character, pet or avatar	2	3
Used file sharing sites	4	10
Spent time in a virtual world	5	8
Posted photos, videos or music to share with others	6	20
Used a webcam	6	9
Read/watched the news on the internet	7	18
Visited a chatroom	9	19
Posted a message on a website	9	15
Downloaded music or films	10	24
Played games with other people on the internet	16	28
Used the internet for school work	18	33
Watched video clips (e.g. on YouTube)	32	59
Used instant messaging	40	49
Visited a social networking profile	44	63

- The figure shows 11-16 year old children's online activities in the past month, comparing 2010 and 2014.

- Watching video clips and social networking are the two most common activities, and both have increased in popularity recently.

- Instant messaging remains popular, and around one in three also use the internet regularly for school work and playing games with other people.

- Posting photos or videos, and downloading content have recently increased in popularity, suggesting an increase in sharing peer-to-peer.

- Participating via virtual worlds, file-sharing sites or webcam remain relatively uncommon.

- Reading the news online has recently risen to one in five, suggesting increased use of the internet for civic interests.

- The increases over time in online activities are similarly evident among both 11-13 year olds and 14-16 year olds. However, 14-16 year olds do more of all activities shown except playing games with others (where levels of play are little changed).

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Children have become less satisfied with the content available for them on the internet

Legend: ■ % Very true 2010 ■ % Very true 2014

Left chart (by demographic):

Category	% Very true 2010	% Very true 2014
Boys	45	43
Girls	49	39
9-10 yrs	35	30
11-12 yrs	44	36
13-14 yrs	49	45
15-16 yrs	56	51
All	47	41

Right chart (by country):

Country	% Very true 2010	% Very true 2014
Belgium	41	29
Denmark	47	37
Ireland	44	51
Italy	40	30
Portugal	52	44
Romania	49	40
UK	56	57
All	47	41
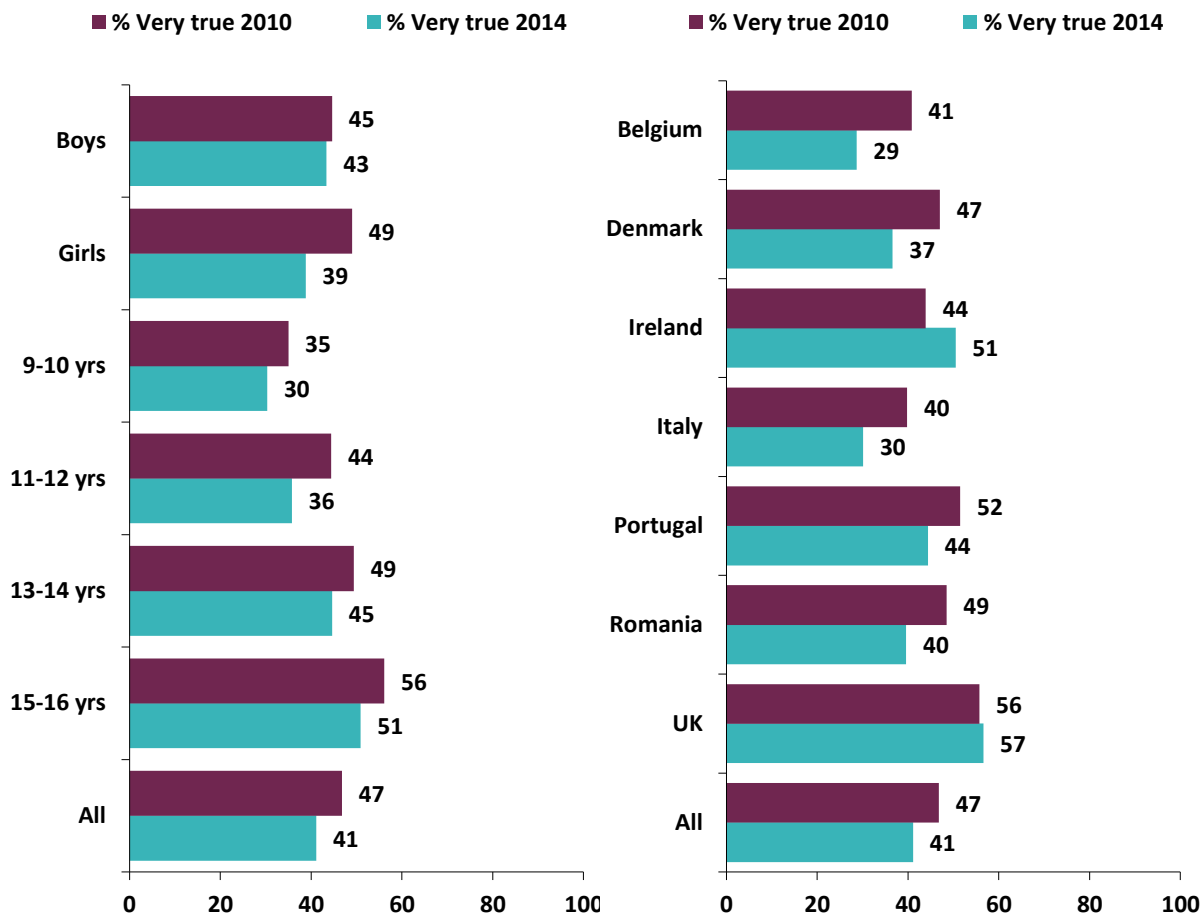
- The figures show how many children say it is 'very true' that 'There are lots of things on the internet that are good for children of my age'.
- Overall, there is a slight decline in children's satisfaction with online content.
- This reduction is more evident among girls than boys, but evenly spread by age.
- This reduction is more noticeable among non-English speaking countries, suggesting a decline in national content production.
- In the UK and, especially, in Ireland, it is easier for children to benefit from the wealth of English-language content online.

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Social networking

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Facebook is taking over social networking across Europe

■ % with a profile on Facebook
■ % with a profile on any SNS

Left chart

		Facebook	Any SNS
Boys	2010	41	58
	2014	62	69
Girls	2010	44	64
	2014	60	67
9-10 yrs	2010	15	25
	2014	22	27
11-12 yrs	2010	33	54
	2014	53	60
13-14 yrs	2010	54	77
	2014	77	84
15-16 yrs	2010	62	83
	2014	85	93
All	2010	42	61
	2014	61	68

Right chart

■ % with a profile on Facebook
■ % with a profile on any SNS

		Facebook	Any SNS
Belgium	2010	45	64
	2014	56	66
Denmark	2010	64	75
	2014	71	81
Ireland	2010	34	59
	2014	44	54
Italy	2010	53	57
	2014	61	64
Portugal	2010	30	59
	2014	70	72
Romania	2010	12	46
	2014	78	79
UK	2010	58	67
	2014	43	58

- The figure shows children with a profile on any social networking site (and on Facebook).

- Facebook is the main SNS used even though teens are diversifying their choice of SNS (e.g. a turn to Twitter in the UK).

- Across Europe, SNS use has increased for boys and for teens overall. The proportion of SNS use that is on Facebook has also increased.

- One in four 9-10 year olds and over half of 11-12 year olds use SNS – with 22% and 53% on Facebook respectively.

- One in four teens and six in ten 'under-age' (9-12 year old) users display an incorrect age on their SNS profile.

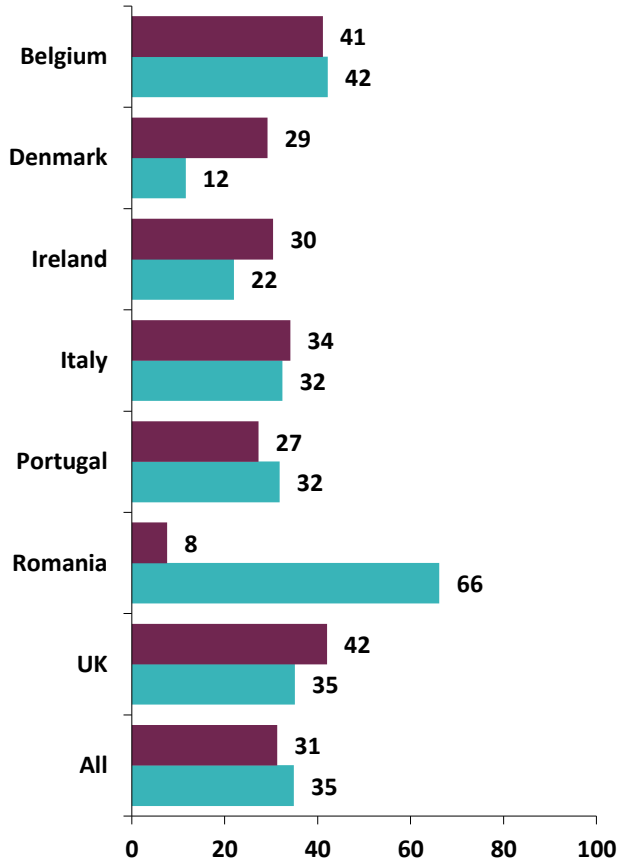- SNS use has decreased recently in the UK and Ireland, and it has sharply increased in Romania.

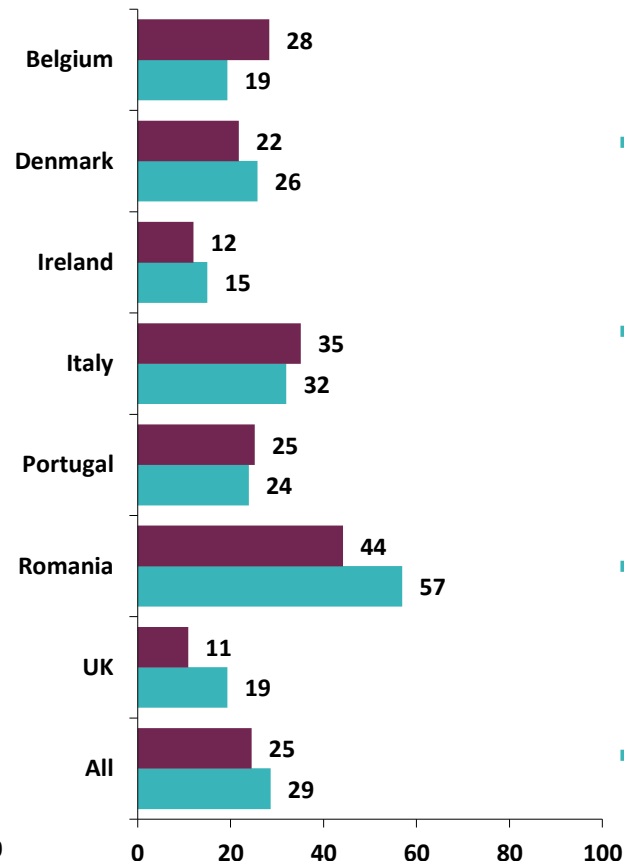www.eukidsonline.net

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Countries differ in risky uses of SNS – multiple contacts, public settings, under-age use

Chart 1:
- % 100+ contacts on SNS 2010
- % 100+ contacts on SNS 2014

Country	2010	2014
Belgium	41	42
Denmark	29	12
Ireland	30	22
Italy	34	32
Portugal	27	32
Romania	8	66
UK	42	35
All	31	35

Chart 2:
- % With a public profile on SNS in 2010
- % With a public profile on SNS in 2014

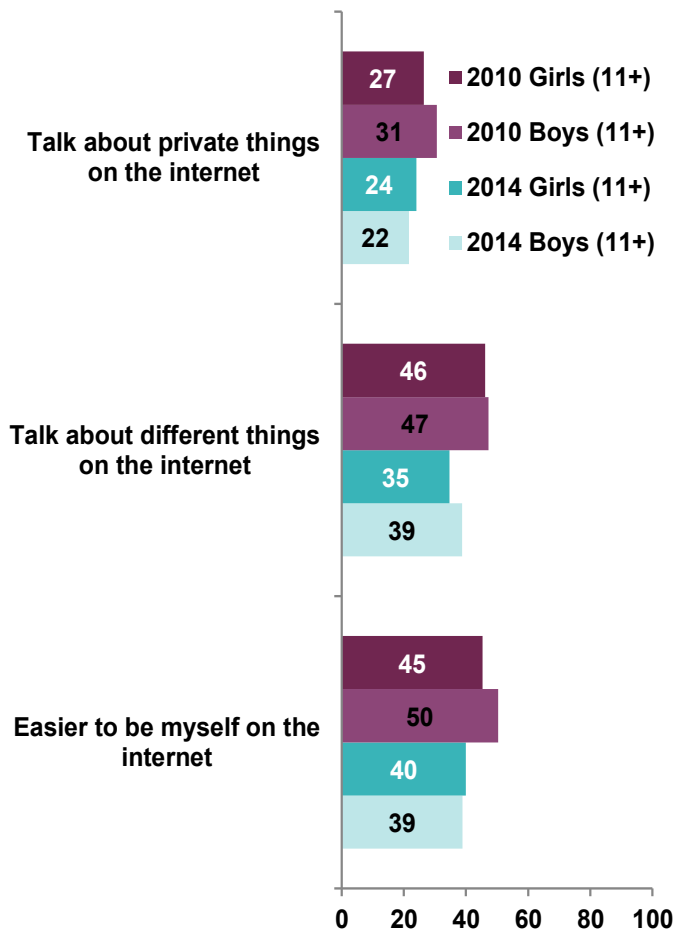| Country	2010	2014
Belgium	28	19
Denmark	22	26
Ireland	12	15
Italy	35	32
Portugal	25	24
Romania	44	57
UK	11	19
All	25	29

- Two thirds of 9-16 year olds have fewer than 100 contacts on their most-used SNS profile, and the same proportion have set their profile to private.

- Among the 9-10 year olds, less than 10% have 100+ contacts, though around a quarter have public profiles.

- Country differences are bigger. In Romania, there has been a large increase in children with 100+ contacts, and most also have a public profile.

- By contrast, SNS use is relatively 'safer' (more privacy, fewer contacts, less under-age use) in the UK and Ireland.

- For example, under-age use of Facebook (9-12 years) averages 39%, rising from 18% in Ireland and 21% in the UK to 66% in Romania.

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Children a little less likely to see the internet as an opportunity for private self-disclosure

Talk about private things on the internet
- 27 — 2010 Girls (11+)
- 31 — 2010 Boys (11+)
- 24 — 2014 Girls (11+)
- 22 — 2014 Boys (11+)

Talk about different things on the internet
- 46
- 47
- 35
- 39

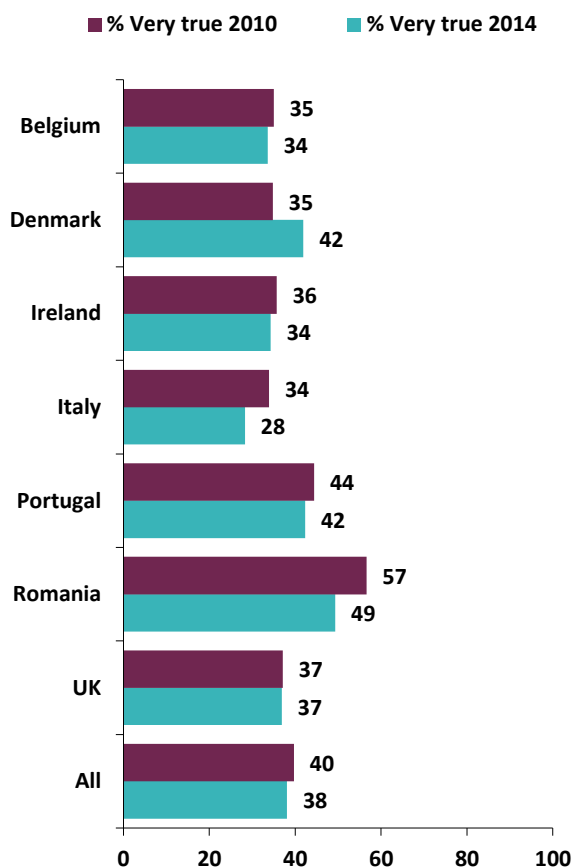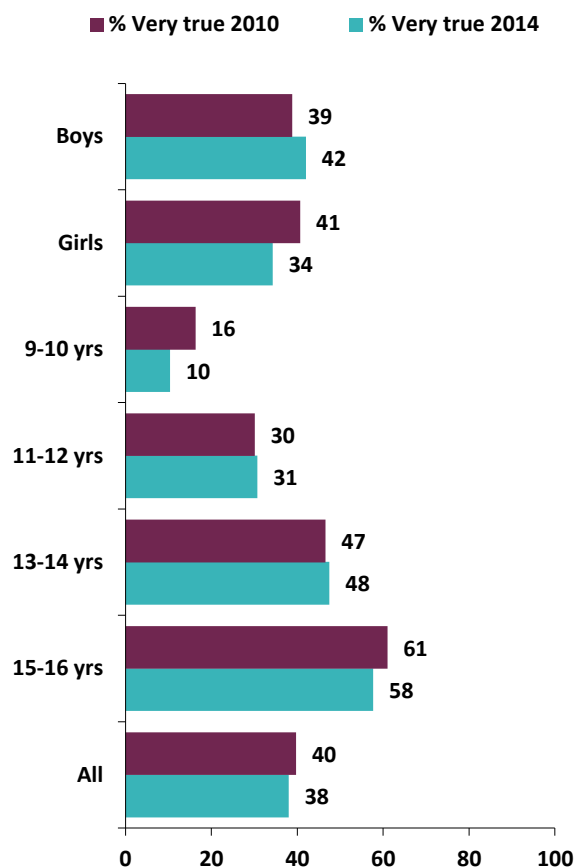**Easier to be myself on the internet**
- 45
- 50
- 40
- 39

- Between clear opportunities and clear risks lie the risky opportunities that draw children to use the internet – self-disclosure online, for instance, may be an opportunity for some but it may also be risky.

- Around one quarter of 11-16 year olds talk about private things online, with over a third saying they talk about different things online compared with face-to-face, and a similar proportion say they find it easier to be themselves online.

- The proportion of children who feel more comfortable with online communication – saying they tend to talk about private thinks more, or talk about different things, or feel easier to be themselves – has decreased in recent years.

- country differences are more notable, with the three indicators decreasing in Belgium, Denmark, and UK. They are stable in Ireland and Romania but increasing in Italy – where more children say they talk about different or more private things online.

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Digital skills

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Fewer than half of children see themselves as "digital natives" compared with their parents

■ % Very true 2010   ■ % Very true 2014

Boys	39 / 42
Girls	41 / 34
9-10 yrs	16 / 10
11-12 yrs	30 / 31
13-14 yrs	47 / 48
15-16 yrs	61 / 58
All	40 / 38

■ % Very true 2010   ■ % Very true 2014

Belgium	35 / 34
Denmark	35 / 42
Ireland	36 / 34
Italy	34 / 28
Portugal	44 / 42
Romania	57 / 49
UK	37 / 37
All	40 / 38

- The proportion of children who say it is "very true" that "I know more about the internet than my parents" has little changed in the past few years.

- However, gender variations are noteworthy, with girls now less likely than boys to think that they know more about the internet than their parents.

- Self-confidence has decreased among the 9-10 year olds, only 10% of whom now believe they are more skilled than their parents.

- The proportion of children who think they know more about the internet than their parents is higher in Denmark and Romania, although even in Romania there is a decrease in this measure.
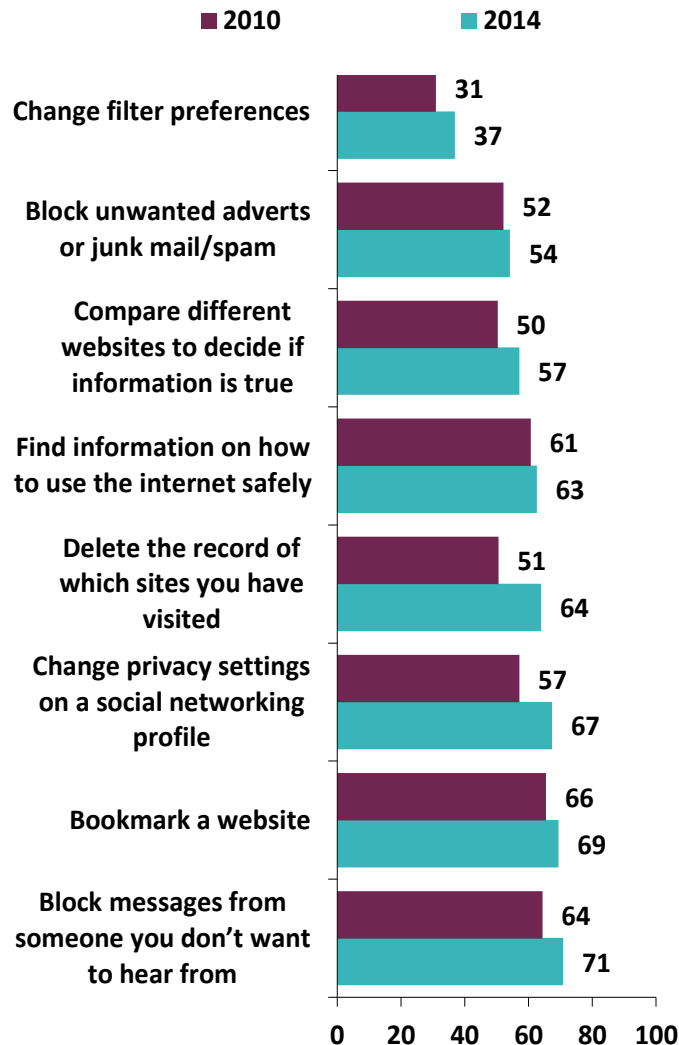
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Levels of digital skills are rising slowly

■ 2010   ■ 2014

Change filter preferences
- 2010: 31
- 2014: 37

Block unwanted adverts or junk mail/spam
- 2010: 52
- 2014: 54

Compare different websites to decide if information is true
- 2010: 50
- 2014: 57

Find information on how to use the internet safely
- 2010: 61
- 2014: 63

Delete the record of which sites you have visited
- 2010: 51
- 2014: 64

Change privacy settings on a social networking profile
- 2010: 57
- 2014: 67

Bookmark a website
- 2010: 66
- 2014: 69

Block messages from someone you don't want to hear from
- 2010: 64
- 2014: 71

(axis: 0 20 40 60 80 100)

- Children now report being a bit more able to do most things related to internet safety.
- More than half of 11-13 years olds (55%) now say they know how to change privacy settings of a SNS profile now (only 43% in 2010). For 14-16 year olds, it's 79% now.
- In 2010, 37% of 11-13 year olds said they knew how to delete the records of visited sites. Now 53% of them say they can.
- Only 24% of 11-13 year olds say they know how to change filter preferences. Half of 14-16 year olds say they know how.
- Given the increase in use and the efforts of industry and educators, the increase in skills is maybe lower than would be expected.
- Moreover, inequalities by gender, age and country remain.
- Since a substantial minority still lacks digital skills, this suggests that more can be done to teach children how to use the internet and, also, that internet could be made easier to use.

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Risks and harm

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Negative UGC and cyberbullying are on the rise

■ 2010   **■ 2014**

Category	2010	2014
Had contact with someone not met face to face before	32	29
Seen sexual images online	18	20
Received sexual messages	14	12
Seen websites where people publish hate messages that attack certain groups or individuals	13	20
Seen websites where people promote eating disorders (such as being very skinny, anorexic or bulimic)	9	13
Met online contact offline	9	13
Been cyberbullied	8	12
Seen websites where people talk about or share their experiences of taking drugs	7	10
Seen websites where people discuss ways of physically harming or hurting themselves	7	11
Seen websites where people discuss ways of committing suicide	4	6

(x-axis: 0, 50, 100)

- Although is often claimed that levels of online risk to children are rising fast, 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 (UGC - such as hate, pro-anorexic or self-harm content) are more common.
- The percentage of children aged 11-16 years old who report receiving nasty or hurtful ('cyberbullying') messages rose from 8% to 12%.
- Sexual messaging has decreased a little (except in Denmark), as has the percentage of children making a new contact online unconnected with their offline friends.
- Arguably the increase in risk is because of parallel increase in opportunities – children have greater access, especially via personalised and portable devices, they are developing more skills, and these shifts combine to lead them towards more risk.
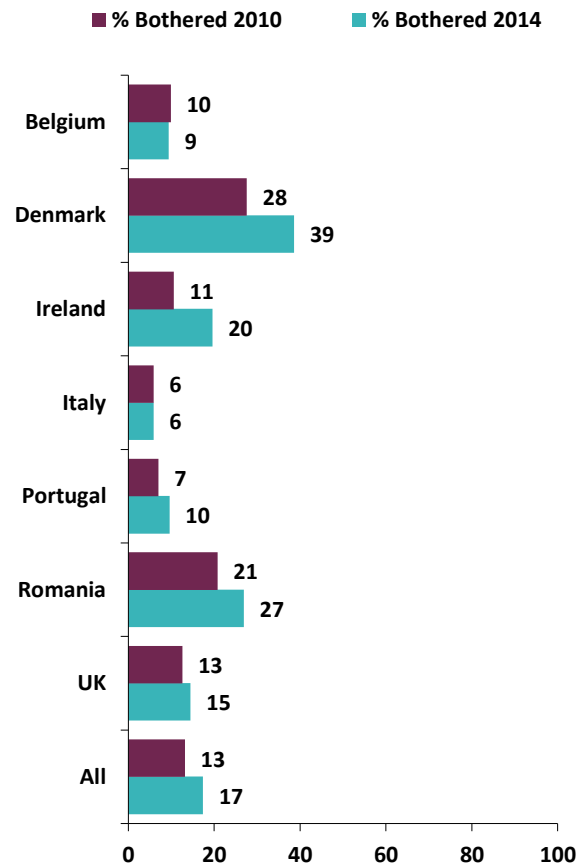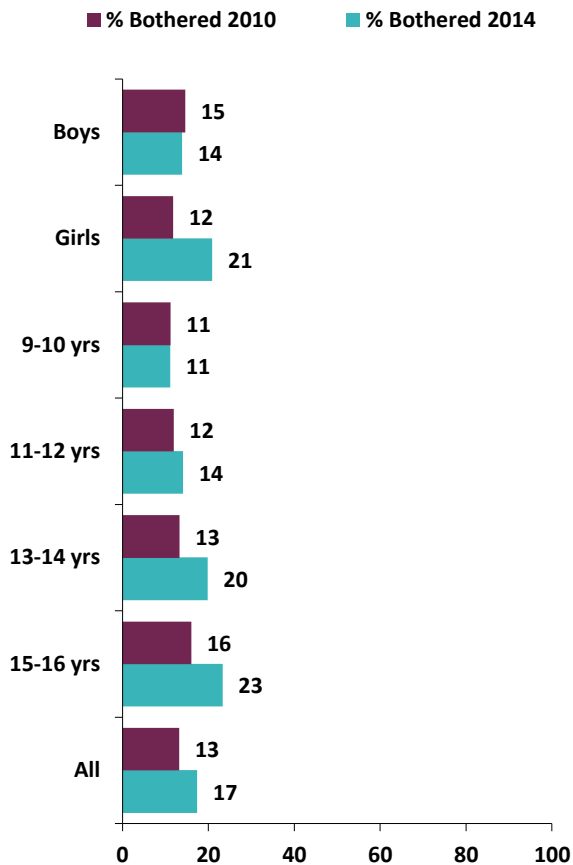
EU Kids Online and NCGM measures in this graph are explained for each risk separately in the graphs on the following slides.
Base: All 11-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Girls and teenagers are more likely to be bothered online, & country differences are large

Chart 1 (by demographic):

Legend: ■ % Bothered 2010   ■ % Bothered 2014

Group	% Bothered 2010	% Bothered 2014
Boys	15	14
Girls	12	21
9-10 yrs	11	11
11-12 yrs	12	14
13-14 yrs	13	20
15-16 yrs	16	23
All	13	17

Chart 2 (by country):

Legend: ■ % Bothered 2010   ■ % Bothered 2014

Country	% Bothered 2010	% Bothered 2014
Belgium	10	9
Denmark	28	39
Ireland	11	20
Italy	6	6
Portugal	7	10
Romania	21	27
UK	13	15
All	13	17

- As the EU Kids Online network has often argued, risk does not necessarily result in harm – children may be resilient to the risks they encounter online.
- However, 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.
- The biggest increase in the percentage of children upset online is in Denmark (from 28% to 39%), Ireland (from 11% to 20%) and Romania (from 21% to 27%); the percentages are fairly stable in other countries.

EU Kids Online - QC110: In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you seen or experienced something on the internet that has bothered you in some way? For example, made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it. QP228: As far as you are aware, in the past year, has your child seen or experienced something on the internet that has bothered them in some way? QC322: Do you think there are things on the internet that people about your age will be bothered by in any way?
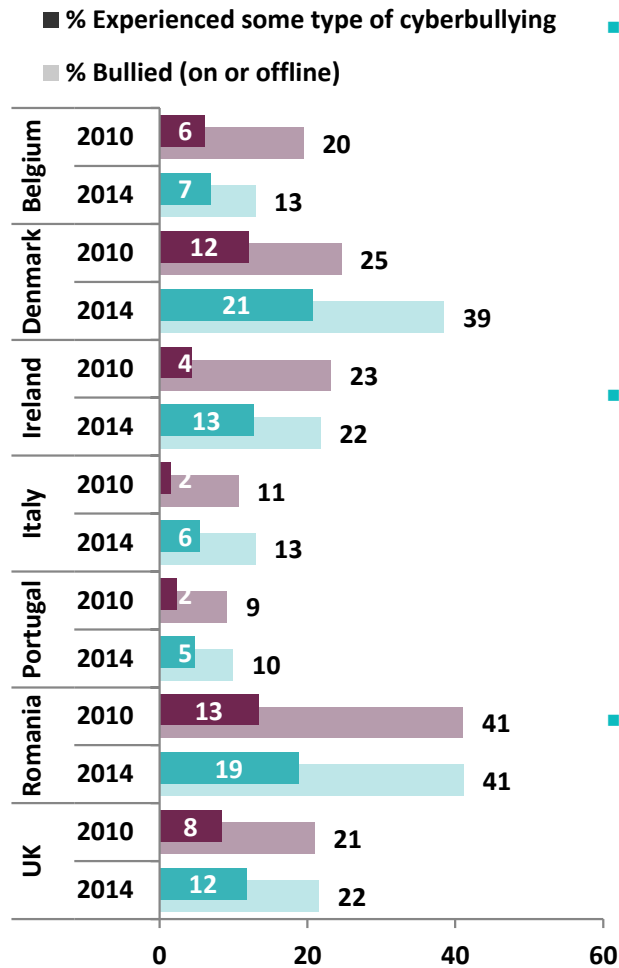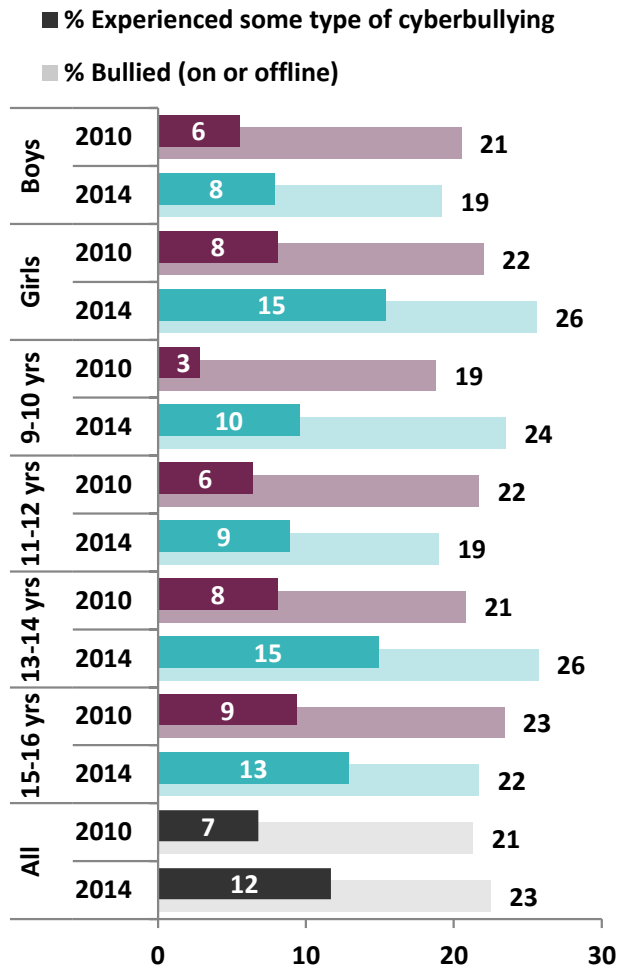Base: All children who use the internet and one of their parents.
NCGM - Q30: In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you seen or experienced something on the internet that has bothered you in some way? For example, made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it.
Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Cyberbullying has increased, especially among girls and the youngest age group

■ % Experienced some type of cyberbullying

■ % Bullied (on or offline)

Left chart

Group	Year	% Experienced cyberbullying	% Bullied
Boys	2010	6	21
Boys	2014	8	19
Girls	2010	8	22
Girls	2014	15	26
9-10 yrs	2010	3	19
9-10 yrs	2014	10	24
11-12 yrs	2010	6	22
11-12 yrs	2014	9	19
13-14 yrs	2010	8	21
13-14 yrs	2014	15	26
15-16 yrs	2010	9	23
15-16 yrs	2014	13	22
All	2010	7	21
All	2014	12	23

Right chart

■ % Experienced some type of cyberbullying

■ % Bullied (on or offline)

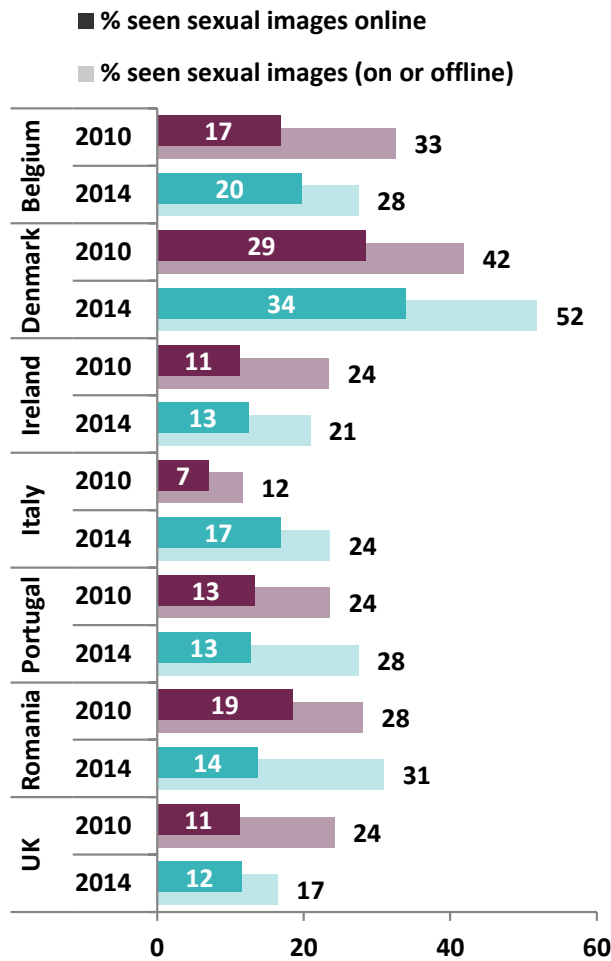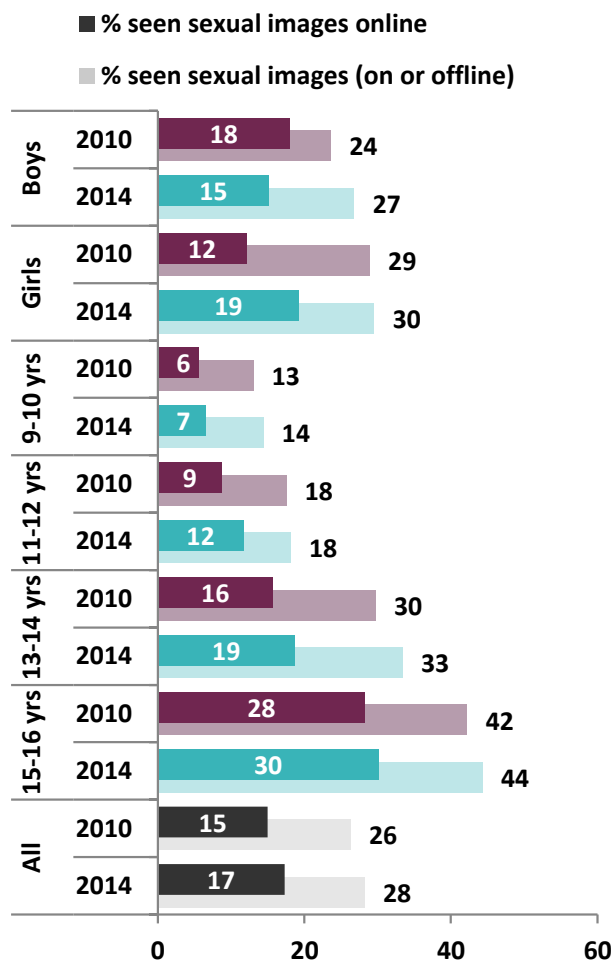| Country	Year	% Experienced cyberbullying	% Bullied
Belgium	2010	6	20
Belgium	2014	7	13
Denmark	2010	12	25
Denmark	2014	21	39
Ireland	2010	4	23
Ireland	2014	13	22
Italy	2010	2	11
Italy	2014	6	13
Portugal	2010	2	9
Portugal	2014	5	10
Romania	2010	13	41
Romania	2014	19	41
UK	2010	8	21
UK	2014	12	22

- The proportion of children who have been bullied at all (on and/or offline) has remained fairly stable at under a quarter of 9-16 year olds – except that it rose markedly in Denmark, and was already very high in Romania.

- But cyberbullying has increased in the past four years – from 8% to 12%, especially among girls, and among the youngest age group (aged 9-10 years, followed by teenagers aged 13-14 years old).

- The biggest increase from 2010 to 2014 in the percentage of children who have been cyberbullied is in Denmark (a rise from 12% to 21%) and Ireland (from 4% to 13%).

EU Kids Online - QC112: Has someone acted in this kind of hurtful or nasty way to you in the past 12 months?
QC113: How often has someone acted in this kind [hurtful and nasty] way towards you in the past 12 months?
NCGM - Q32: In the PAST 12 MONTHS, has someone treated you in this kind of way, and if so, how upset were you about happened?
Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Slight increase in exposure to sexual content, both online and offline – especially among girls

Left chart

■ % seen sexual images online

■ % seen sexual images (on or offline)

Group	Year	Online	On/offline
Boys	2010	18	24
Boys	2014	15	27
Girls	2010	12	29
Girls	2014	19	30
9-10 yrs	2010	6	13
9-10 yrs	2014	7	14
11-12 yrs	2010	9	18
11-12 yrs	2014	12	18
13-14 yrs	2010	16	30
13-14 yrs	2014	19	33
15-16 yrs	2010	28	42
15-16 yrs	2014	30	44
All	2010	15	26
All	2014	17	28

Right chart

■ % seen sexual images online

■ % seen sexual images (on or offline)

Country	Year	Online	On/offline
Belgium	2010	17	33
Belgium	2014	20	28
Denmark	2010	29	42
Denmark	2014	34	52
Ireland	2010	11	24
Ireland	2014	13	21
Italy	2010	7	12
Italy	2014	17	24
Portugal	2010	13	24
Portugal	2014	13	28
Romania	2010	19	28
Romania	2014	14	31
UK	2010	11	24
UK	2014	12	17

Notes

- Seeing sexual images has slightly increased – in total (from 26% to 28%) and online in particular (from 15% to 17%) of 9-16 year olds, from 2010 to 2014.
- Girls are now particularly more likely to encounter sexual content on the internet (from 12% to 19%).
- The proportion of children who report being exposed to sexual images both on the internet and offline has increased especially in Denmark (where half children report having seen sexual images overall) and in Italy (where double the proportion of children encountered pornographic content on any media).
- Still, half of all exposure to pornography is not via the internet.

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A little less "sexting"

Chart 1 (by group):

Group	% Seen or received 2010	% Received 2014
Boys	13	11
Girls	14	12
9-10 yrs		
11-12 yrs	6	4
13-14 yrs	12	10
15-16 yrs	22	19
All	14	11

0   50   100

Chart 2 (by country):

Country	% Seen or received 2010	% Received 2014
Belgium	18	11
Denmark	16	22
Ireland	11	11
Italy	4	5
Portugal	15	5
Romania	22	21
UK	12	4
All	14	11

0   50   100
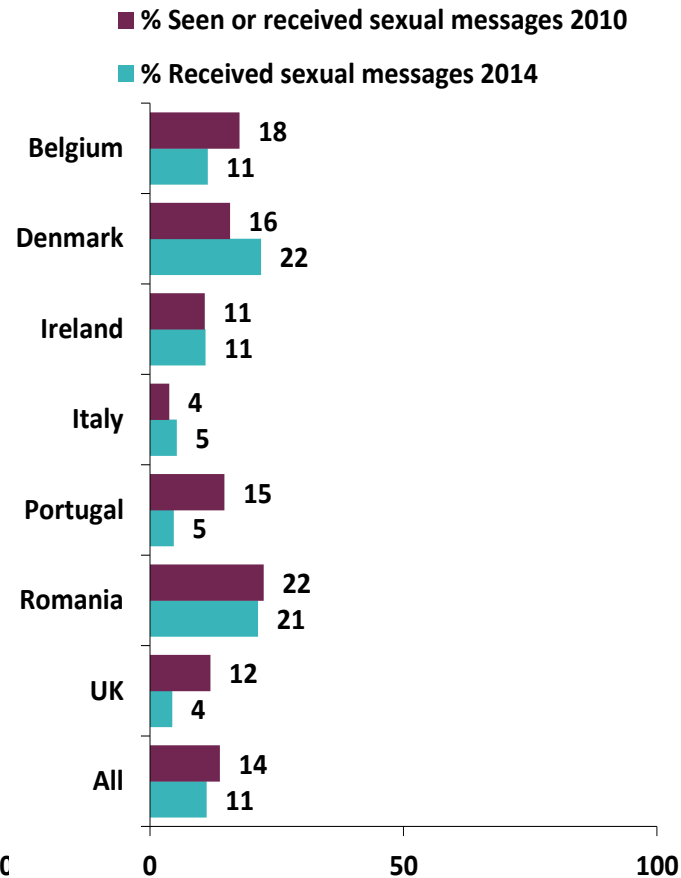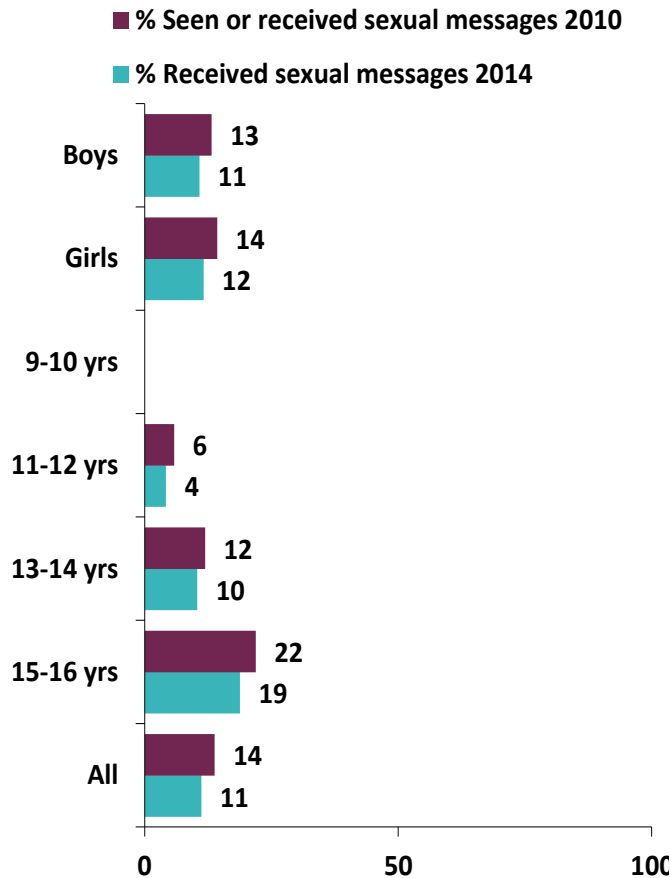
- The proportion of children aged 11-16 years who have experienced "sexting" (i.e. received sexual messages online) has decreased across all age groups and among both boys and girls.

- It has also dropped in most countries – especially in the UK (from 12% to 4%) and Portugal (from 15% to 5%).

- The exception is in Denmark, where it has increased from 16% to 22%.

- In Ireland and Italy the proportion of children who received sexual messages has remained stable.

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EU Kids Online - QC167: In the past 12 months have you seen or received sexual messages of any kind on the internet? This could be words, pictures or videos.
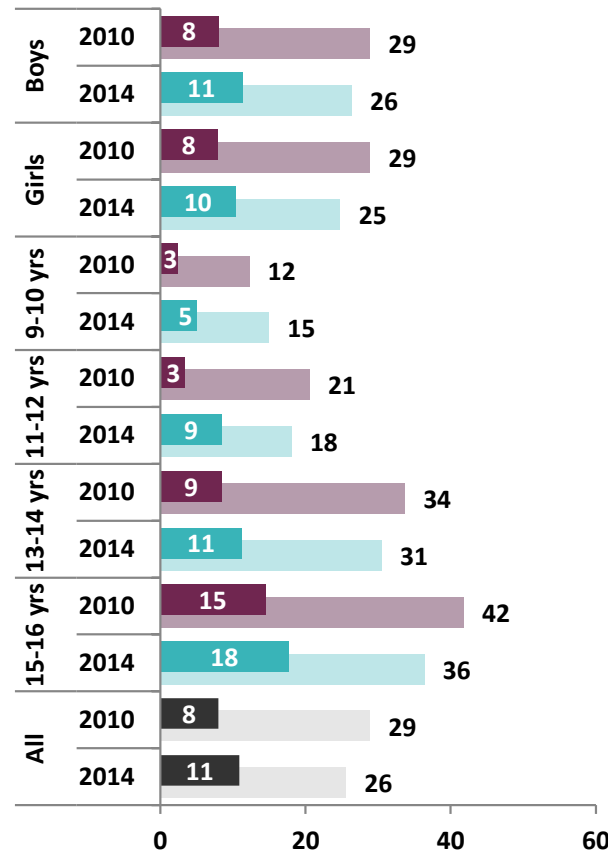NCGM - Q42: In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you received sexual messages of this kind (this could be words, pictures or videos), and if so, how upset were you about happened?
Base: All 11-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.
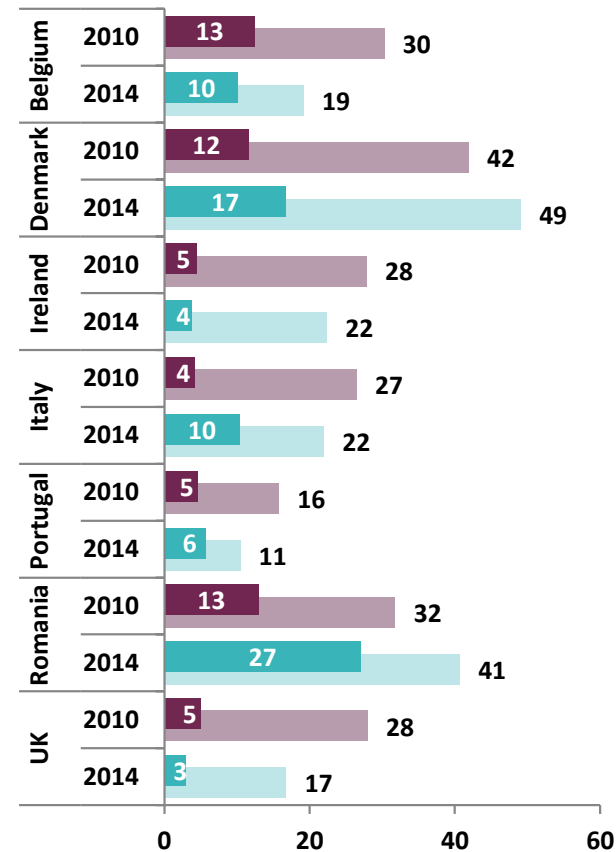
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Children are less likely to meet new people online but more likely to meet online contacts offline

■ % Gone to meet online contacts

□ % Been in contact with someone not met before

Boys
- 2010: 8 | 29
- 2014: 11 | 26

Girls
- 2010: 8 | 29
- 2014: 10 | 25

9-10 yrs
- 2010: 3 | 12
- 2014: 5 | 15

11-12 yrs
- 2010: 3 | 21
- 2014: 9 | 18

13-14 yrs
- 2010: 9 | 34
- 2014: 11 | 31

15-16 yrs
- 2010: 15 | 42
- 2014: 18 | 36

All
- 2010: 8 | 29
- 2014: 11 | 26

■ % Gone to meet online contacts

□ % Been in contact with someone not met before

Belgium
- 2010: 13 | 30
- 2014: 10 | 19

Denmark
- 2010: 12 | 42
- 2014: 17 | 49

Ireland
- 2010: 5 | 28
- 2014: 4 | 22

Italy
- 2010: 4 | 27
- 2014: 10 | 22

Portugal
- 2010: 5 | 16
- 2014: 6 | 11

Romania
- 2010: 13 | 32
- 2014: 27 | 41

UK
- 2010: 5 | 28
- 2014: 3 | 17

- The proportion of children who have been in touch on the internet with someone they first met online has slightly decreased (from 29% to 26%).

- However, the proportion of those who went to meet an online contact offline has slightly increased (from 8% to 11%) across all age groups.

- Across countries, meeting people online has dropped everywhere except from Denmark (from 42% to 49%) and Romania (from 32% to 41%).

- Meeting online contacts offline, by contrast, has increased in Denmark, Italy and Romania; it remained fairly stable in Ireland and Portugal; and it decreased slightly in Belgium and the UK.

QC147: Can I just check, have you ever had contact on the internet with someone you have not met face-to-face before?
QC148: Have you ever gone on to meet anyone face-to-face that you first met on the internet in this way.
NCGM - Q37: In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you ever had contact on the internet (on all platforms/devices) with someone you had not met face to face before? This could have been by email, chatrooms, SNS, instant messaging or gaming sites.
Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Some increase in excessive internet use

■ % Very or fairly often   ■ % Not very often   ■ % Never

Tried unsuccessfully to spend less time on the internet				
	2010	16	22	63
	2014	17	22	60

Spent less time than I should with either family, friends or doing schoolwork				
	2010	16	22	62
	2014	21	26	53

Caught myself surfing when I am not really interested				
	2010	17	25	58
	2014	24	20	57

Felt bothered when I cannot be on the internet				
	2010	12	22	66
	2014	17	22	60

Gone without eating or sleeping because of the internet				
	2010	5	10	85
	2014	10	15	75

(x-axis: 0 20 40 60 80 100)

- Compared to 2010, the percentage of children aged 11-16 years old who experienced different forms of excessive internet use has slightly increased.

- More specifically, the proportion of children who spent less time with family and friends, or doing schoolwork or who felt bothered when they could not be online has increased.

- One in four children also experienced, at least occasionally, going without eating or sleeping because of the internet.

- Country differences are marked, with excessive use lower in Italy and Belgium, and highest in the UK followed by Denmark and Romania.

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Exposure to one or more out of ten risks has increased among girls and 11-14 year olds

■ % Have experienced one or more risks 2010
■ % Have experienced one or more risks 2014

Chart 1 (by demographic):

Category	2010	2014
Boys	48	48
Girls	47	57
9-10 yrs		
11-12 yrs	30	40
13-14 yrs	48	54
15-16 yrs	62	63
All	48	52

■ % Have experienced one or more risks 2010
■ % Have experienced one or more risks 2014

Chart 2 (by country):

Country	2010	2014
Belgium	51	40
Denmark	61	79
Ireland	45	48
Italy	39	55
Portugal	38	34
Romania	56	69
UK	45	42
All	48	52
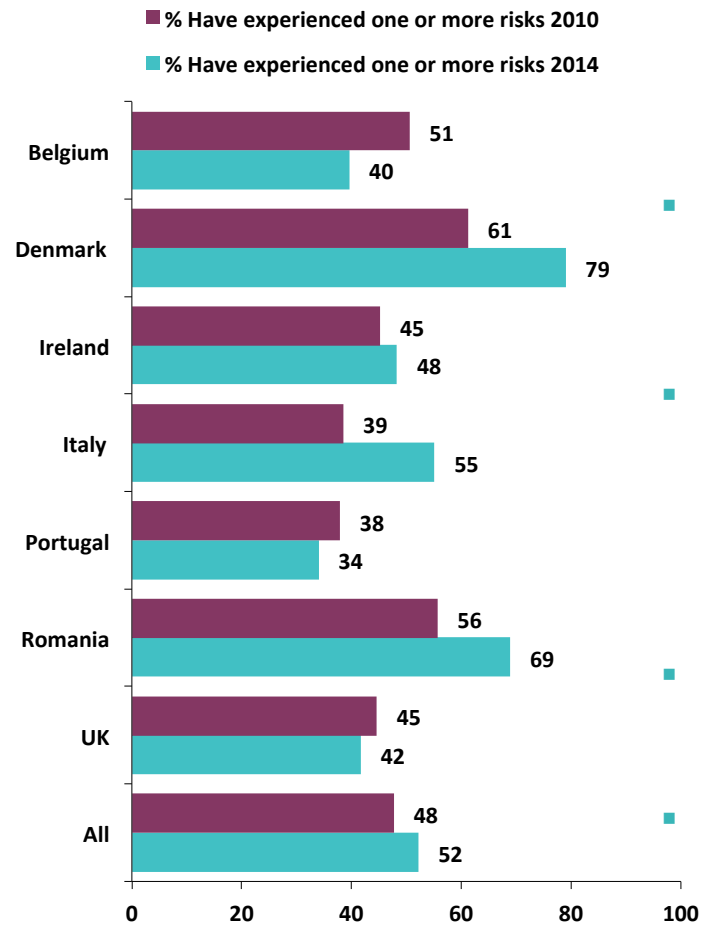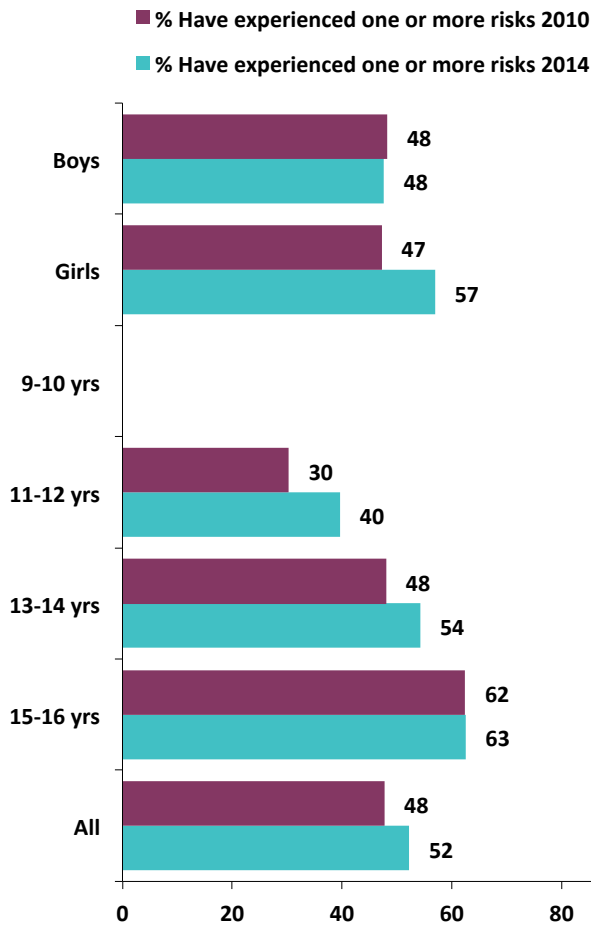
- Around half of all 11-16 year olds has encountered one or more of the 10 risks we asked about in the two surveys (2010 , 2014) in the year preceding the interview.

- Over the past few years, the percentage of children who encountered at least one online risk increased from 48% to 52%.

- The increase occurs mainly among girls and the younger children. This suggests future safety resources should be focused on girls and younger children.

- The increase in encounters with online risk were also greatest in Denmark, Italy and Romania.

- The decrease in Belgium is thought-provoking: are there best safety practices there to be shared across Europe?

EU Kids Online and NCGM measures in this graph are explained for each risk separately in the graphs on the preceding slides. The ten risks included here are: online contact with someone not known offline, seen sexual images online, received sexual messages online, seen hate content, seen pro-anorexia content, seen pro-drug content, seen pro-self-harm content, seen pro-suicide content, met online contact offline, been cyberbullied.
Base: All 11-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.
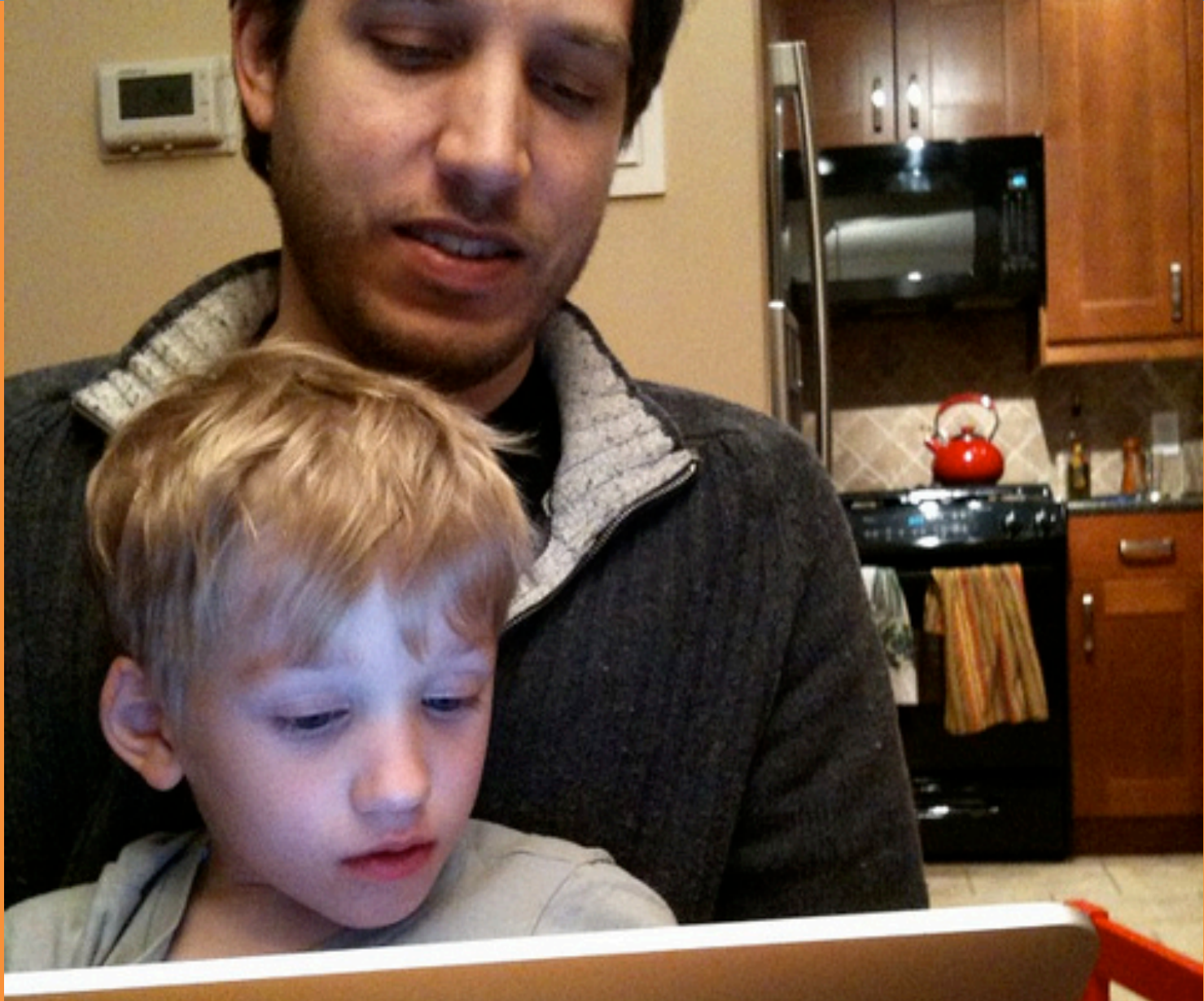
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More opportunities mean more risk, but only in some countries

Chart: X-axis: Average number of daily activities (1 to 5). Y-axis: % Experienced one or more risk factor (30 to 80).

Legend: 2014 (square), 2010 (triangle)
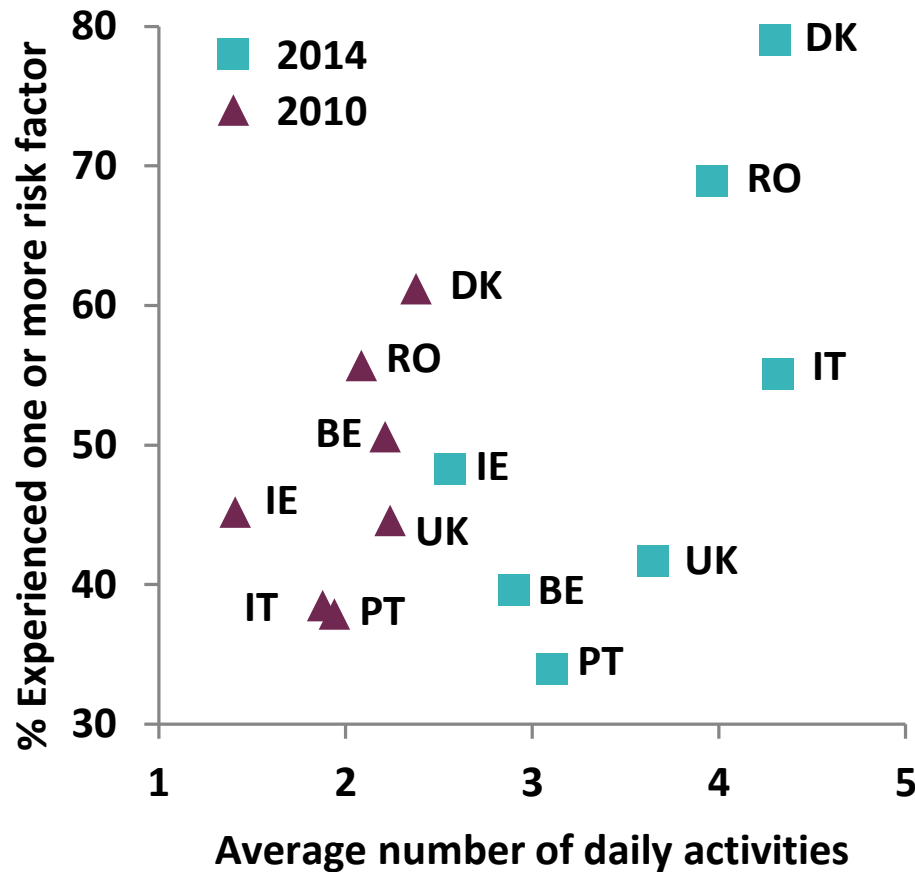
- EU Kids Online findings have consistently shown a positive association between online activities (or opportunities) and online risks – this holds on an individual and a country level.

- Earlier slides showed how many online activities children aged 11-16 years old undertake each day, and how many of them encountered at least one risk online in the past year. This scatterplot positions the seven countries surveyed in 2010 and 2014 on both measures.

- This positive association between opportunities and risks was found in both 2010 and 2014 data – the more children in a country gain opportunities online, the more they also encounter risks.

- 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 (if anything, risk in these countries has declined).

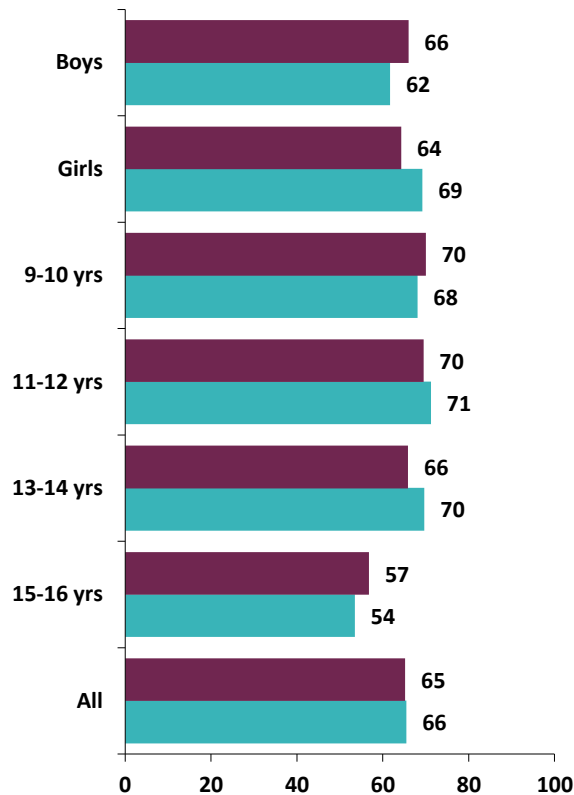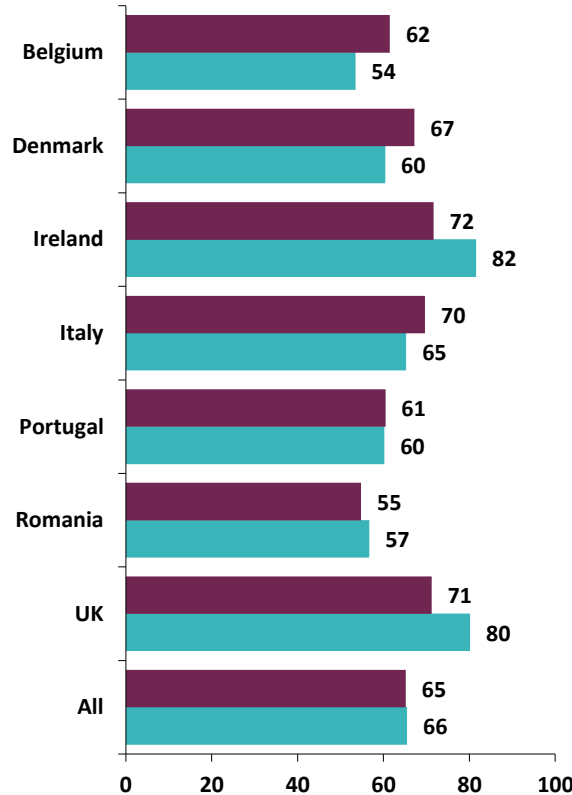- It is, it seems, not inevitable that increasing opportunities means increasing risk.

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EU Kids Online and NCGM measures in this graph are explained in the graphs on the preceding slides.
Base: All 11-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Parental mediation

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Active mediation of internet safety by parents is unequal across Europe

Chart 1:

- **% Suggested ways to use the internet safely 2010**
- **% Suggested ways to use the internet safely 2014**

Category	2010	2014
Boys	66	62
Girls	64	69
9-10 yrs	70	68
11-12 yrs	70	71
13-14 yrs	66	70
15-16 yrs	57	54
All	65	66

Chart 2:

- **% Suggested ways to use the internet safely 2010**
- **% Suggested ways to use the internet safely 2014**

Country	2010	2014
Belgium	62	54
Denmark	67	60
Ireland	72	82
Italy	70	65
Portugal	61	60
Romania	55	57
UK	71	80
All	65	66

- Two thirds of parents have suggested ways for their child to use the internet safely, according to children aged 9-16.

- The proportion of parents actively mediating their children's internet safety in this way has remained stable in recent years, with younger children generally receiving more parental mediation than older children.

- Girls now receive a little more safety advice, while boys receive a little less than in 2010.

- Parents in the UK and Ireland engage in active mediation of internet safety more than parents in other countries, and more than in 2010.

- By contrast, parents in Belgium, Denmark and Italy are less likely to suggest safer uses of the internet than four years ago.

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Most forms of parental mediation are stable or even decreasing

■ 2010   ■ 2014

Category	2010	2014
Not allowed to have your own social networking profile	18	16
Parental controls or other means of keeping track of the websites you visit	22	25
Blocking or filtering some types of websites	24	25
Encourage you to explore and learn things on the internet on your own	46	41
Suggested ways to use the internet safely	64	65
Helped you when something is difficult to do or find on the internet	64	64
Not allowed to give out personal information to others on the internet	65	53
Talk to you about what you do on the internet	70	65

Scale: 0 20 40 60 80 100

- Parents prefer far more to talk about internet safety than use parental controls in all countries and for all age groups.

- As the graph shows, for 11-16 year olds in Europe, parents use restrictive forms of mediation (banning social networking, using parental controls or filters) less than active forms of mediation (encouraging, suggesting, helping, talking to their child about using the internet).

- The main exception is telling their child not to give out personal information online, and such instructions have decreased in recent years (from 65% to 53%).

- Other forms of mediation have also become less common – parents are a little less likely to encourage their children to explore new things on the internet (from 46% to 41%) or talk to them about what they do online (from 70% to 65%) – despite considerable amounts of advice suggesting that parents should talk to their children about the internet.

- Parental use of technical tools has little changed recently.

- Danish parents now mediate a little less than before; British and Irish parents provide a little more social support; Belgian parents use more parental controls.

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Do children think their parents know much about what they do on the internet?

Chart 1:

Legend: ■ % A lot 2010   ■ % A lot 2014

Category	% A lot 2010	% A lot 2014
Boys	36	35
Girls	32	36
9-10 yrs	52	51
11-12 yrs	40	41
13-14 yrs	27	30
15-16 yrs	21	24
All	34	36

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 1)

Chart 2:

Legend: ■ % A lot 2010   ■ % A lot 2014

Country	% A lot 2010	% A lot 2014
Belgium	31	44
Denmark	33	18
Ireland	49	46
Italy	25	32
Portugal	35	36
Romania	26	27
UK	41	45
All	34	36

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)
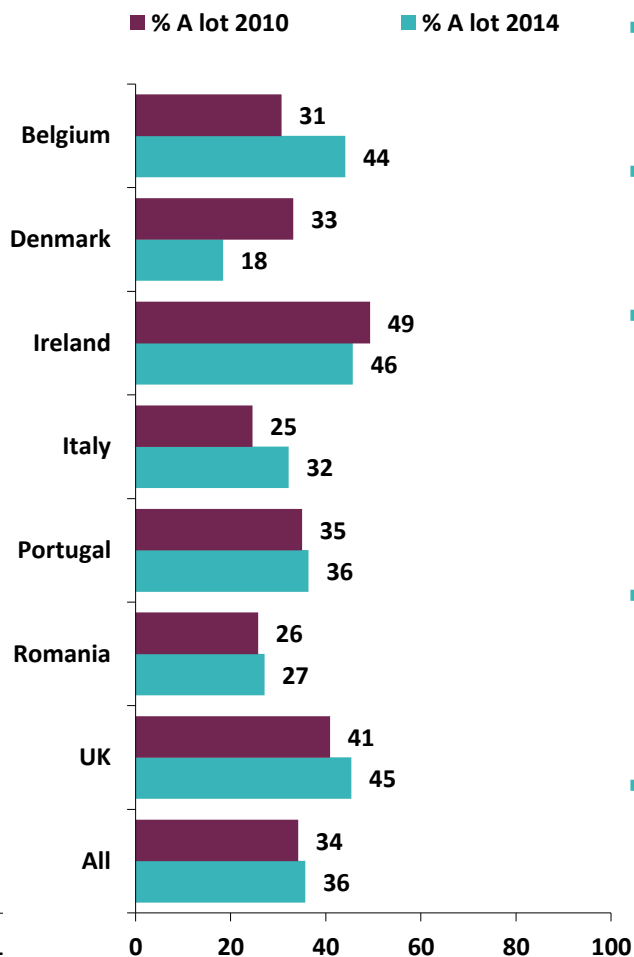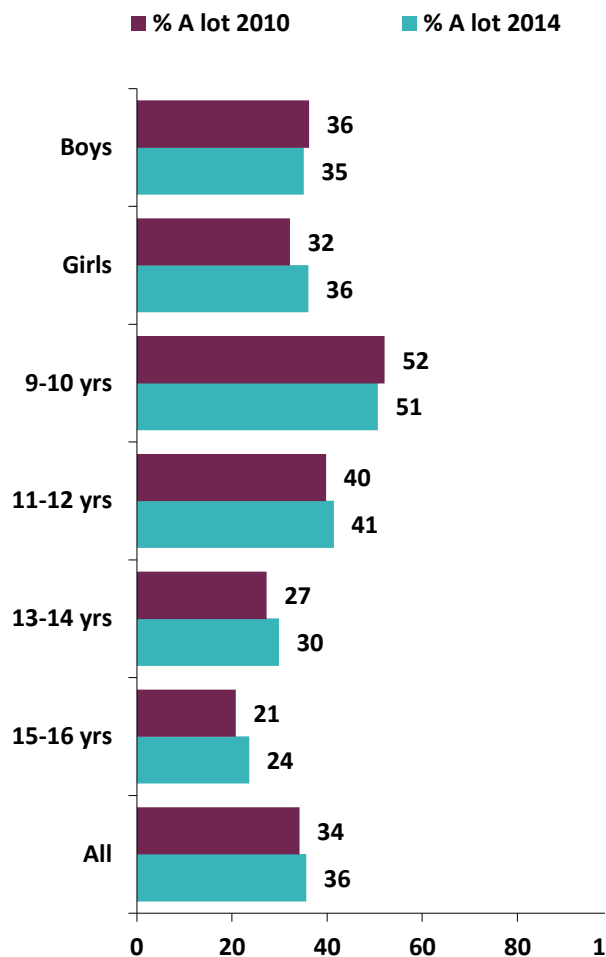
- One in three children thinks their parents know a lot about what they do on the internet.
- This rises to half of 9-10 year olds and drops to a quarter of 15-16 year olds.
- Country differences are sizeable – Irish and British children consider their parents more informed about their internet use than do children in Romania or Italy.
- These figures have not changed much in recent years, though a small rise may be discerned among girls.
- The increase is distinctly greater for Belgium (up from 31% to 44%) and Italy (up from 25% to 32%), while there is a drop in Denmark (33% to 18%).

Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

EU Kids Online - QC325: How much do you think your parent(s) knows about what you do on the internet?
NCGM - Q51: How much do you think your parent(s) knows about what you do on the internet? Would you say a lot, quite a bit, just a little, or nothing?
Base: All 9-16 year old children who use the internet in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.

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Recommendations

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PARENTS should:

- Inform themselves about the benefits and risks that the internet offers, to support children's exploration of the internet and enhance their opportunities, coping skills and resilience to potential harm.

- Keep online risks in proportion, treat media coverage concerning online risks critically, and avoid stressing risks so much that children are reluctant to explore online.

- Communicate regularly with children about what they do online, encourage them to talk about problems they may find, and be clear about expectations and rules relating to online behaviour.

- Work with their children to find mediation strategies that children see as helpful and not intrusive, and help them deal with social pressure or overdependence on devices.

- Encourage collective and collaborative coping strategies that foster online resilience through a supportive context in which children learn step by step how to manage risks.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE are encouraged to:

- Maximise the benefits that the internet affords through diverse activities that expand their digital skills to more participative and creative uses.

- Share responsibility for the online safety and welfare of others, particularly in contexts of online bullying and harassment where as bystanders or participants they can have decisive impact.

- Respect age limits for online services and seek advice from parents and teachers about the suitability of services and content they would like to access.

- Develop proactive coping strategies such as deleting messages, blocking unwanted contacts and using reporting tools.

- Seek help from a parent, trusted adult or friend if they have been bullied or encounter something problematic online.

- Review online privacy settings on a regular basis; share personal information only with friends; and never post another's personal information, including pictures, without consent.

- Take as much responsibility as they can for their safety in their (online) communication environment, and share their awareness and coping strategies with their peers.

EDUCATORS should:

- Promote positive, safe, and effective use of the internet by children in all educational contexts including homework, using public libraries, computer clubhouses and ICT workshops.
- Integrate online safety awareness and digital skills across the curriculum, and work to ensure the benefits of digital technologies reach all children.
- Ensure provision of ICT and digital skills development for teachers, supported by awareness raising about risks and safety for young people online.
- Develop whole-school policies regarding positive uses of technology as well as protocols to deal with instances of online bullying and harassment.
- Form partnerships with trusted providers and sources of expertise in the delivery of internet safety education.

AWARENESS RAISERS AND MEDIA should:

- Increase parental understanding about the risks young people face online without being alarmist or sensationalist.
- Focus first on the many opportunities and benefits that the internet affords and only second on the risks to be managed and harm to be avoided.
- Represent and present young people's perspectives about online experiences in ways that respect their rights and as children get older their expectation about their privacy. Ensure reporting and awareness raising is based on reliable evidence and robust research.

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GOVERNMENTS should:

- Coordinate multi-stakeholder efforts to bring about greater levels of internet safety and ensure there is meaningful youth participation in all relevant multi-stakeholder groupings.

- Continue efforts to support digital inclusion of all citizens while providing support for socially disadvantaged parents and households and finding ways to compensate for the limitations of commercial broadband and wifi networks.

- Promote positive online content, encouraging broadcasters, content developers and entrepreneurs to develop content tailored to the needs of different age and interest groups, as well as children with special needs.

- Review legislative provision for dealing with online harassment and abuse, and ensure that provision for youth protection in traditional media also supports online safety provision.

- Support European and national teachers' programmes to include training on the potential of online, social media and apps that can not only allow students to consult online information but also to create online content.

- Increase parents' awareness of parental controls designed for different devices through public campaigns or accessible information materials.

INDUSTRY should:

- Provide user-friendly, flexible (in terms of settings and functionalities) safety tools tailored to families' needs.

- Ensure 'safety by default' and enable customisable, easy-to-use safety features, accessible to those with only basic digital literacy.

- Promote greater standardisation in classification and advisory labels to guide parents.

- Ensure age limits are effective by developing appropriate methods of age verification where possible and accompanying these with sufficient safety information.

- Implement tools so that under-18s can remove content that may be damaging to their reputation and/or personal integrity.

- Ensure commercial content is clearly distinguishable, and is age-appropriate, ethical and sensitive to local cultural values, gender and race.

- Find ways to empower children by providing safe and private spaces and/or tools for customising apps and platforms, including tools to help children resist the pressure to be always on.

- Ensure that facilities such as content classification, age-appropriate privacy settings, and easy and robust reporting mechanisms on mobile devices and services are widely available.

- Support independent evaluation and testing of all safety tools and child-friendly features.

Net Children Go Mobile

Final Report

Giovanna Mascheroni & Andrea Cuman

Final Report

www.eukidsonline.net

EU Kids Online

Findings • methods • recommendations

The projects

- **EU Kids Online** is a thematic network of **33 countries** that aims to enhance knowledge of European children's online opportunities, risks and safety. From 2009-2011 it conducted a 25-country survey of children and parents across Europe, examining their online activities, skills, risks and safety. It has also developed a European Evidence Database of 1500+ studies, a Research Toolkit for researchers, and a body of qualitative research to inform and interpret the survey findings. Website: www.eukidsonline.net

- **Net Children Go Mobile** is a project across **9 countries** (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain and the UK) that aims to investigate the changing conditions of internet access and use as smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices become more widespread. It asks how these affect children's online safety, whether negative and positively.
  In 2013-14 it conducted a survey and qualitative research focusing on children's uses of mobile technologies.
  Website: www.netchildrengomobile.eu/

- Both projects are funded by the European Commission's Better Internet for Kids Programme.

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Methodology

EU Kids Online

- Sample size: 25,142 children in total, 7091 for the seven countries in NCGM (and in this report).

- Sampling method: Random stratified survey sample of some 1000 children (9-16 years old) who use the internet per country. For each country, samples were stratified by region and level of urbanisation. Addresses were selected randomly using Random Walk procedures in most countries.

- Mode of survey administration: Paper-based and computer-assisted interviews. The survey was conducted in children's homes, as a face-to-face interview. It included a self-completion section for sensitive questions to avoid being heard by parents, other family members or the interviewer.

- Countries included: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, UK.

- For the technical report on the survey, see http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/45270/

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- Sample size: 3,565 children aged 9-16 who use the internet in seven countries.

- Sampling method: Random stratified survey sampling – random walk route based on prior random selection of sampling points in all countries except Denmark, where households were randomly selected based on national residents lists.

- Mode of survey administration: paper-based and computer-assisted interviews. The survey was conducted in children's homes, as a face-to-face interview. It included a self-completion section for sensitive questions to avoid being heard by parents, other family members or the interviewer.

- Countries included: Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Portugal, United Kingdom.

For more information . . .

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