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Risks and Safety on the Internet: EU Kids Online Findings from Ireland

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Risks and safety on the internet: *EU Kids Online* findings from Ireland

Brian O'Neill, Dublin Institute of Technology

Surveying 'Europe'

Europe
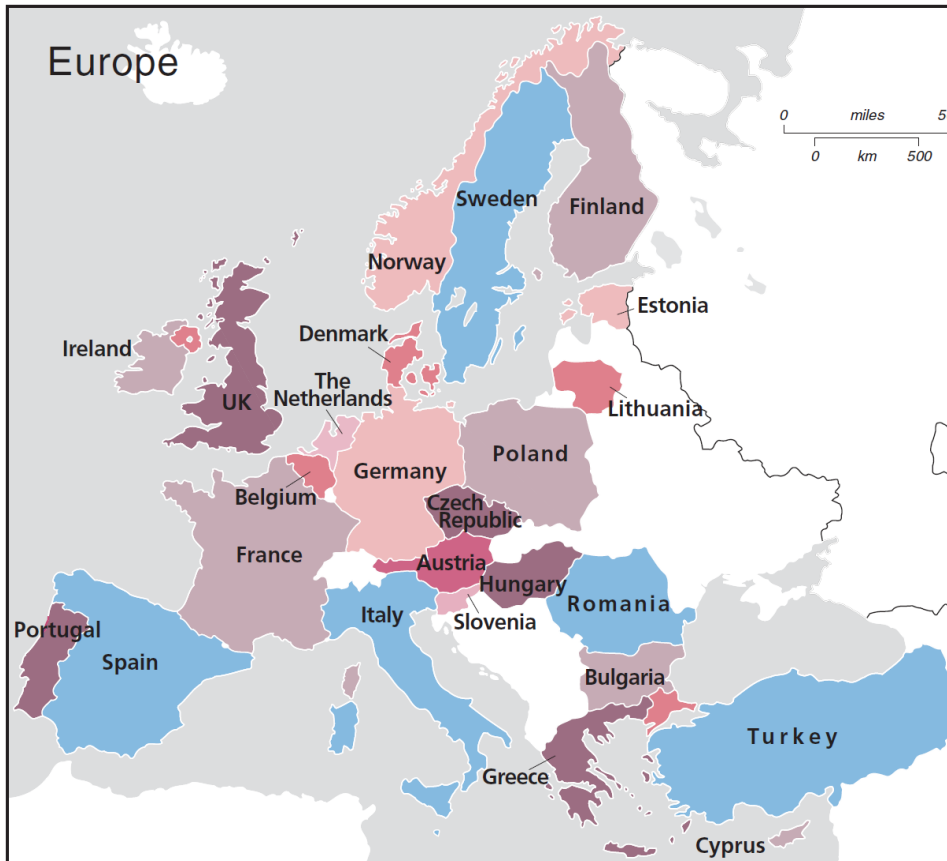
- **Random stratified sample: ~ 1000 9-16 year old internet users per country**
- **Fieldwork in spring/summer 2010**
- **Total: 25142 internet-users, 25 countries**
- **Interviews at home, face to face**
- **Self-completion for sensitive questions**
- **Indicators of vulnerability and coping**
- **Data from child paired with a parent**
- **Directly comparable across countries**
- **Validation via cognitive/pilot testing**
- **National stakeholders consulted**
- **International advisory panel**
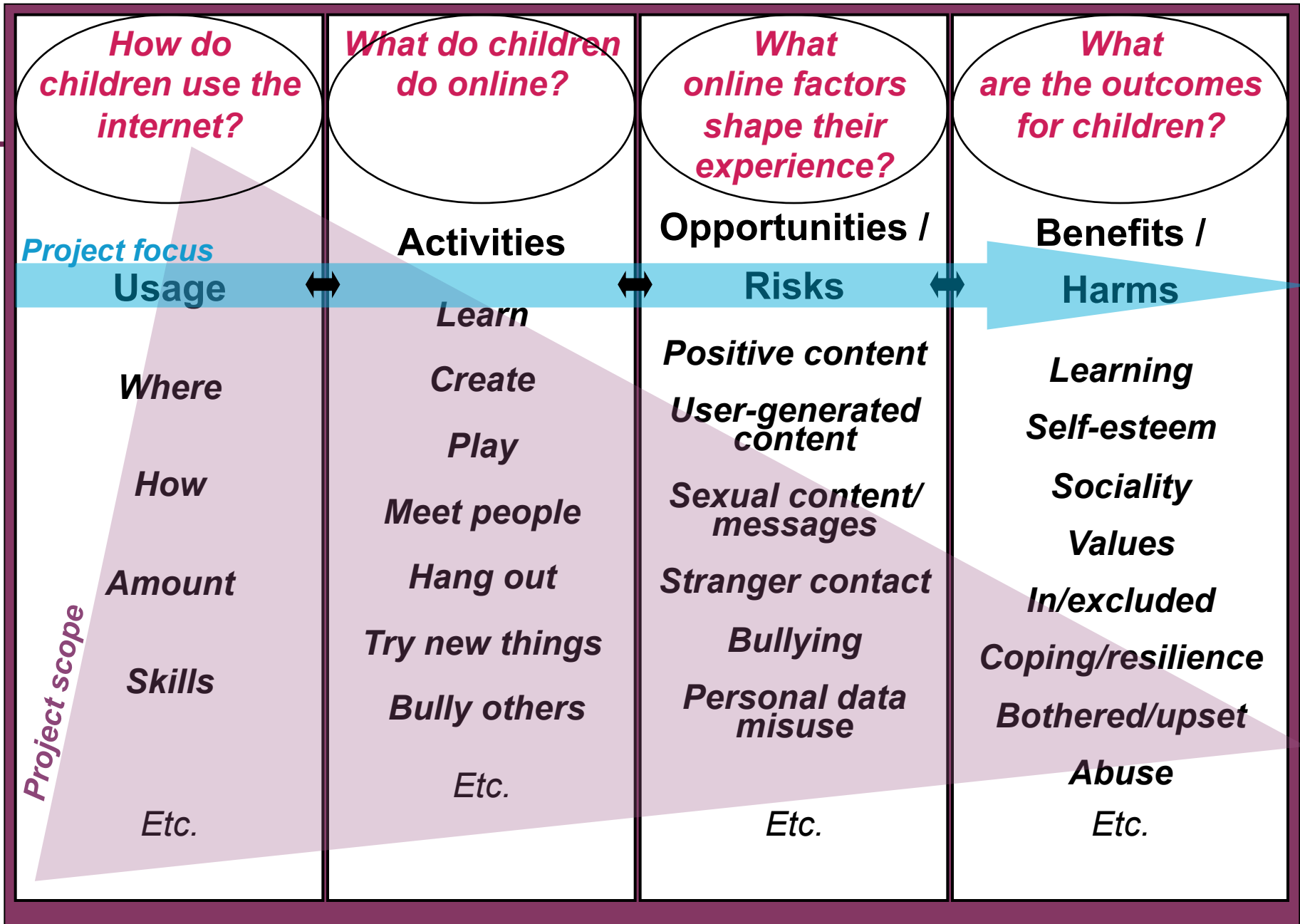
How do children use the internet?	What do children do online?	What online factors shape their experience?	What are the outcomes for children?
Project focus **Usage** ⬌	**Activities** ⬌	**Opportunities / Risks** ⬌	**Benefits / Harms**
Where	*Learn*	**Positive content**	**Learning**
How	*Create*	**User-generated content**	**Self-esteem**
Amount	*Play*	**Sexual content/ messages**	**Sociality**
Skills	*Meet people*	**Stranger contact**	**Values**
	Hang out	**Bullying**	**In/excluded**
	Try new things	**Personal data misuse**	**Coping/resilience**
	Bully others		**Bothered/upset**
			Abuse
Etc.	*Etc.*	*Etc.*	*Etc.*

Project scope

How do children use the internet?

Use at home is high

- **87% use internet in a public room at home**

- **37% have internet in bedroom**

- **Privatised use is growing**

- **SES and age matter more than gender**

■ % Own bedroom at home   ■ % At home but not in own bedroom

Category	% Own bedroom at home	% At home but not in own bedroom
Girls	37	57
Boys	37	55
9-10 yrs	23	67
11-12 yrs	28	65
13-14 yrs	43	51
15-16 yrs	52	42
Low SES	43	44
Medium SES	38	56
High SES	29	69
All children	37	56
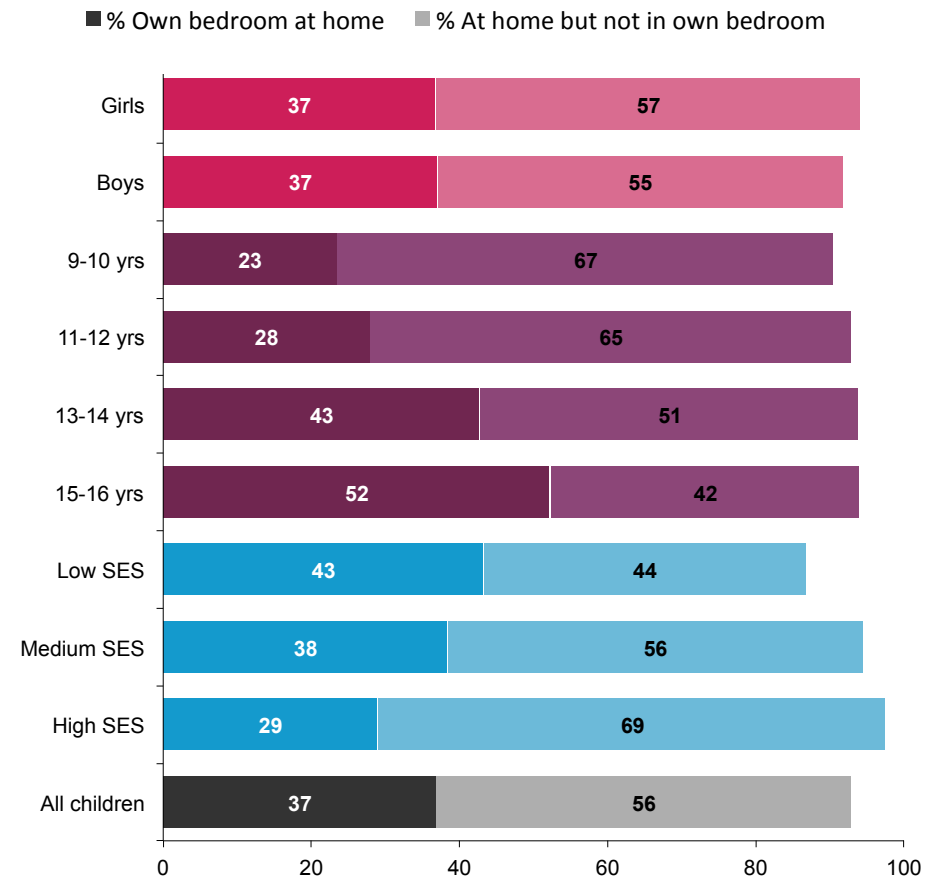
Mobile access growing

- **23% via handheld devices**

- **52% via mobile and/or handheld device**

- **Flexible access is growing**

- **Age and SES matter**

- **In the top league of European countries for mobile access**

■ % Handheld device

■ % Mobile phone but no other handheld device

	% Handheld device	% Mobile phone but no other handheld device
Girls	24	29
Boys	22	29
9-10 yrs	13	18
11-12 yrs	17	31
13-14 yrs	23	32
15-16 yrs	38	35
Low SES	18	38
Medium SES	23	27
High SES	28	22
All children	23	29
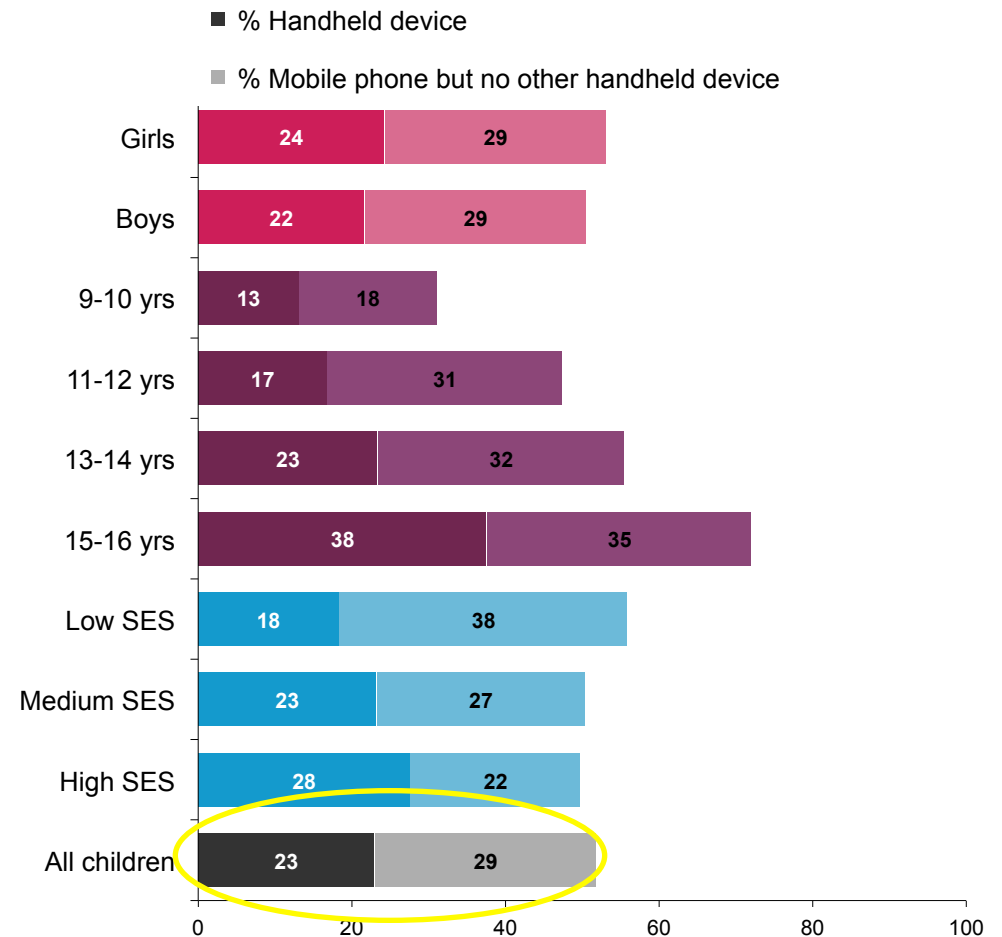
Internet embedded in daily life, users are getting younger

- 53% use every day or almost daily, 89% use at least weekly

- 61 minutes spent online in an average day *(see graph)*

- Age matters for daily use:
  33% 9-10 yrs vs. 73% 15-16 yrs

- Children first go online at 9 yrs old:
  at 7 for 9-10 yrs, at 11 for 15-16 yrs

Category	Minutes
Girls	61
Boys	61
9-10 yrs	45
11-12 yrs	53
13-14 yrs	65
15-16 yrs	80
Low SES	68
Medium SES	57
High SES	58
All children	61

Minutes per day online

Uneven digital skills

www.eukidsonline.net

Top chart (percentages):
- Bookmark a website: 66
- Block messages: 64
- Find info on safety: 64
- Change privacy settings: 58
- Compare sites: 42
- Delete records: 43
- Block spam: 49
- Set filter: 21

Bottom chart (scores by country):
- FI: 5,8
- SI: 5,4
- NL: 5,3
- EE: 5,1
- CZ: 5,0
- SE: 5,0
- NO: 5,0
- PT: 4,9
- LT: 4,8
- AT: 4,7
- UK: 4,7
- BG: 4,7
- FR: 4,7
- DK: 4,6
- PL: 4,5
- ES: 4,5
- BE: 4,4
- DE: 4,2
- IE: 4,0
- CY: 3,8
- EL: 3,7
- HU: 3,4
- RO: 3,4
- IT: 3,3
- TR: 2,6
- ALL: 4,2

Multiple opportunities

www.eukidsonline.net

Watching video clips and playing games are the most popular activities

Activity	Value
Watch video clips	76
Games (alone)	76
Visit SNS	58
Schoolwork	58
Use IM	41
E-mail	41
Share photos/music/videos	31
Post messages	31
Play games (with others)	30
Download music/film	27
Create character/avatar	25
Virtual world	17
Watch/read news	14
Use webcam	14
File-sharing	9
Chatroom	9

Social networking

Girls	63
Boys	56
9-10 yrs	20
11-12 yrs	52
13-14 yrs	75
15-16 yrs	88
Low SES	66
Medium SES	57
High SES	55
All children	59

	% Private	% Partially private	% Public	% Don't know
Girls	69	21	8	3
Boys	57	23	16	4
9-10 yrs	71	8	18	2
11-12 yrs	66	22	10	2
13-14 yrs	66	24	8	2
15-16 yrs	57	23	14	5
Low SES	64	22	14	1
Medium SES	64	20	12	4
High SES	63	24	9	5
All children	63	22	12	3

59% have a SNS profile. 63% keep their profile private.

What are the risks?

Sexual images off/online

"In the past year, you will have seen lots of different images – pictures, photos, videos. Sometimes, these might be obviously sexual – for example, showing people naked or having sex. Have you seen anything of this kind?"
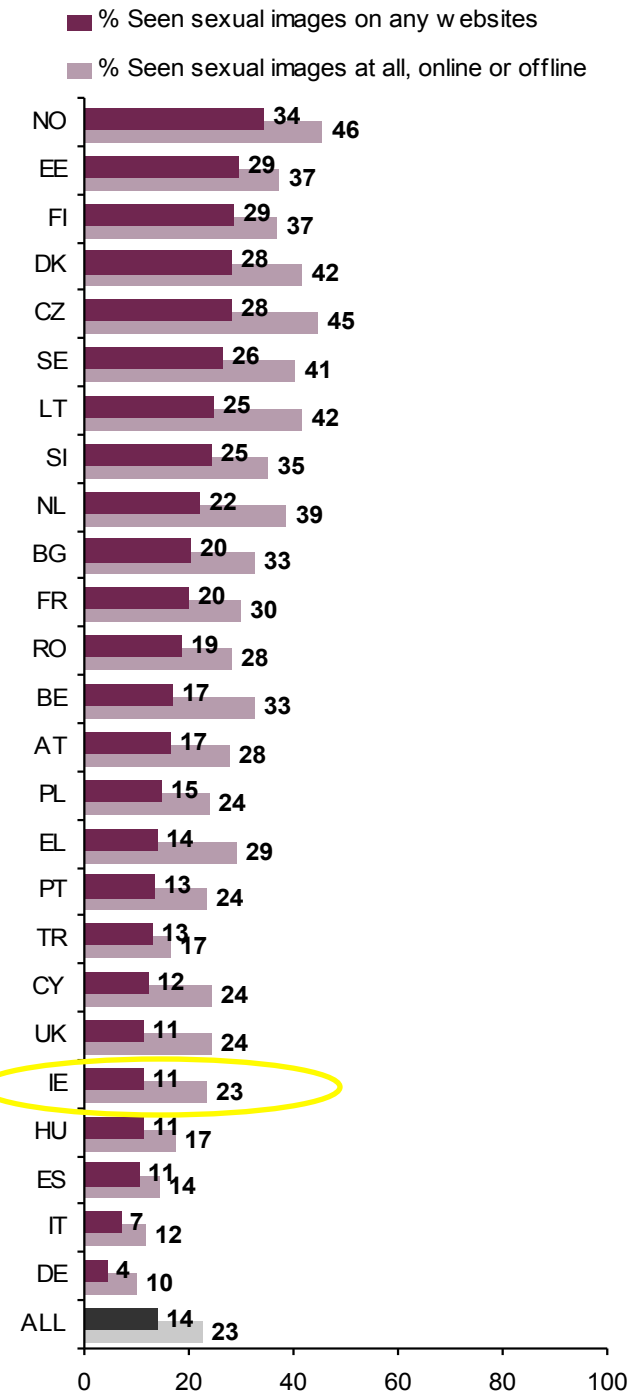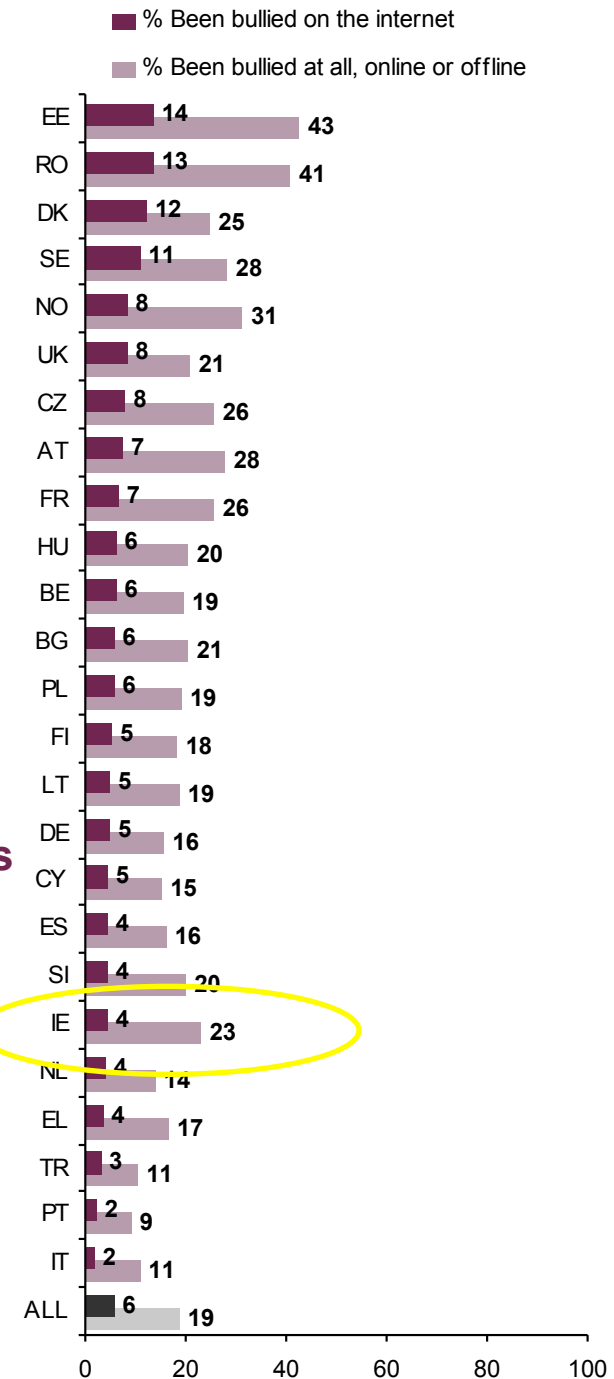
- **23% have seen sexual images online or offline**

- **Who? More older than younger children**
  Teenage boys 15-16 most likely to see sexual images online – 45%

- **Where did they see this? 11% online, 14% on television/film/video, 7% in magazines**
  Most often seen via accidental pop-ups

■ % Seen sexual images on any websites
■ % Seen sexual images at all, online or offline

Country	On any websites	At all, online or offline
NO	34	46
EE	29	37
FI	29	37
DK	28	42
CZ	28	45
SE	26	41
LT	25	42
SI	25	35
NL	22	39
BG	20	33
FR	20	30
RO	19	28
BE	17	33
AT	17	28
PL	15	24
EL	14	29
PT	13	24
TR	13	17
CY	12	24
UK	11	24
IE	11	23
HU	11	17
ES	11	14
IT	7	12
DE	4	10
ALL	14	23

Bullying off/online

"Has someone acted in this kind of hurtful or nasty way to you in the past 12 months?/ Have you been treated in a hurtful or nasty way on the internet?"

- **23% have had someone act in this way, online or offline**

- **Who? Mostly teenagers 15-16 experience this online – 9%**

- **How? 15% face to face; 9% online, 4% by mobile phone calls/texts**

- **What (11+)? 3% - nasty/hurtful messages, 1% - messages passed around about them, or threatened online**

- **14% have bullied others**

■ % Been bullied on the internet
■ % Been bullied at all, online or offline

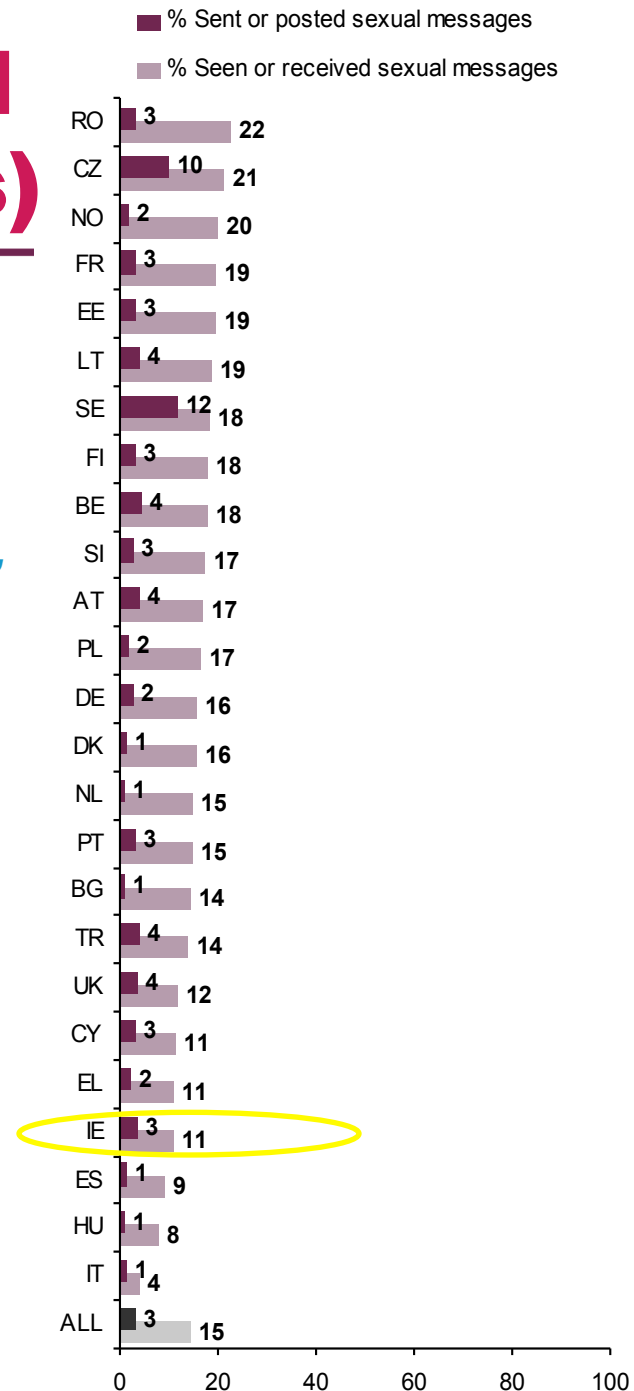| Country	Been bullied on the internet	Been bullied at all
EE	14	43
RO	13	41
DK	12	25
SE	11	28
NO	8	31
UK	8	21
CZ	8	26
AT	7	28
FR	7	26
HU	6	20
BE	6	19
BG	6	21
PL	6	19
FI	5	18
LT	5	19
DE	5	16
CY	5	15
ES	4	16
SI	4	20
IE	4	23
NL	4	14
EL	4	17
TR	3	11
PT	2	9
IT	2	11
ALL	6	19

Sending/receiving sexual messages online (11+yrs)

"People do all kinds of things on the internet. Sometimes they may send sexual messages or images. By this, we mean talk about having sex or images of people naked or having sex.

Have you seen/sent/received/posted a sexual message (words, pictures or video) of any kind on the internet?"
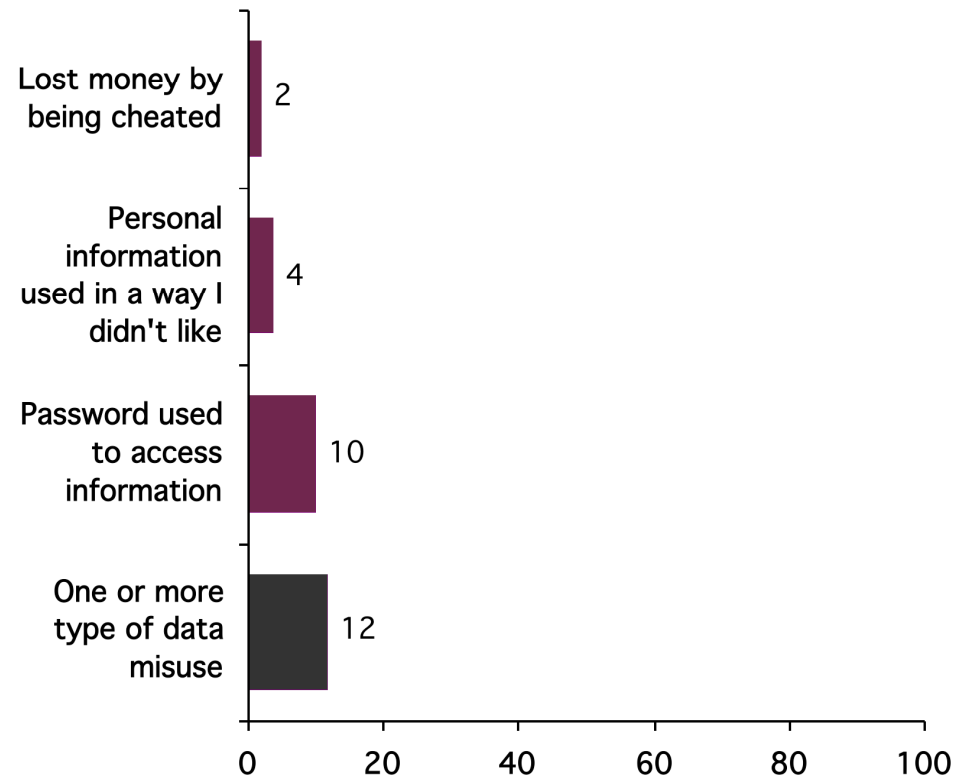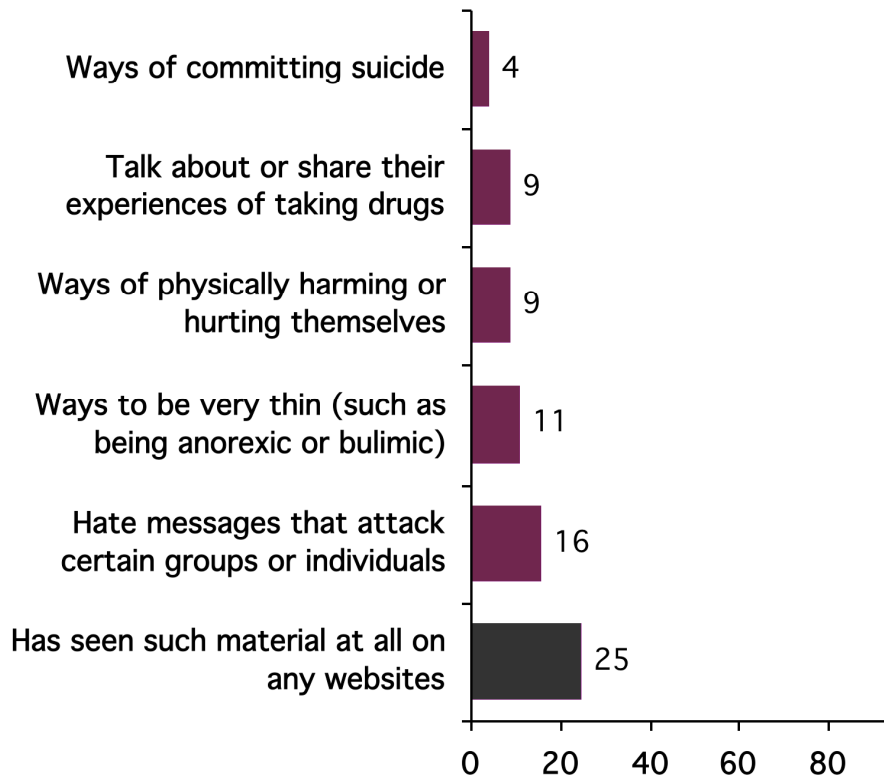
- **11% have seen/received sexual messages online**

- **3% have sent/posted sexual messages online**

- **Who? More older (21% 15-16 yrs) than younger teens**

- **How? Occurs more by 'pop up', IM or SNS**

- **What? 7% have been sent message online, 4% have seen sexual messages where others could see it**

Chart

Legend:
- ■ % Sent or posted sexual messages
- ■ % Seen or received sexual messages

Country	% Sent or posted	% Seen or received
RO	3	22
CZ	10	21
NO	2	20
FR	3	19
EE	3	19
LT	4	19
SE	12	18
FI	3	18
BE	4	18
SI	3	17
AT	4	17
PL	2	17
DE	2	16
DK	1	16
NL	1	15
PT	3	15
BG	1	14
TR	4	14
UK	4	12
CY	3	11
EL	2	11
IE	3	11
ES	1	9
HU	1	8
IT	1	4
ALL	3	15

Other risks

- **25% exposed to potentially harmful user-generated content**

- **12% experienced personal data misuse**

Left chart:
- Ways of committing suicide: 4
- Talk about or share their experiences of taking drugs: 9
- Ways of physically harming or hurting themselves: 9
- Ways to be very thin (such as being anorexic or bulimic): 11
- Hate messages that attack certain groups or individuals: 16
- Has seen such material at all on any websites: 25

Right chart:
- Lost money by being cheated: 2
- Personal information used in a way I didn't like: 4
- Password used to access information: 10
- One or more type of data misuse: 12

Parental awareness

Among those children who have encountered the particular risk online …

- *Seeing sexual images online:*
  49% of parents are not aware of this, 15% say they don't know
  36% of parents are aware when their children have seen sexual images online

- *Being bullied online:*
  68% of parents are not aware of this, 3% say they don't know
  29% of parents are aware this has happened

- *Receiving sexual message online:*
  52% of parents are not aware of this; 27% say they don't know
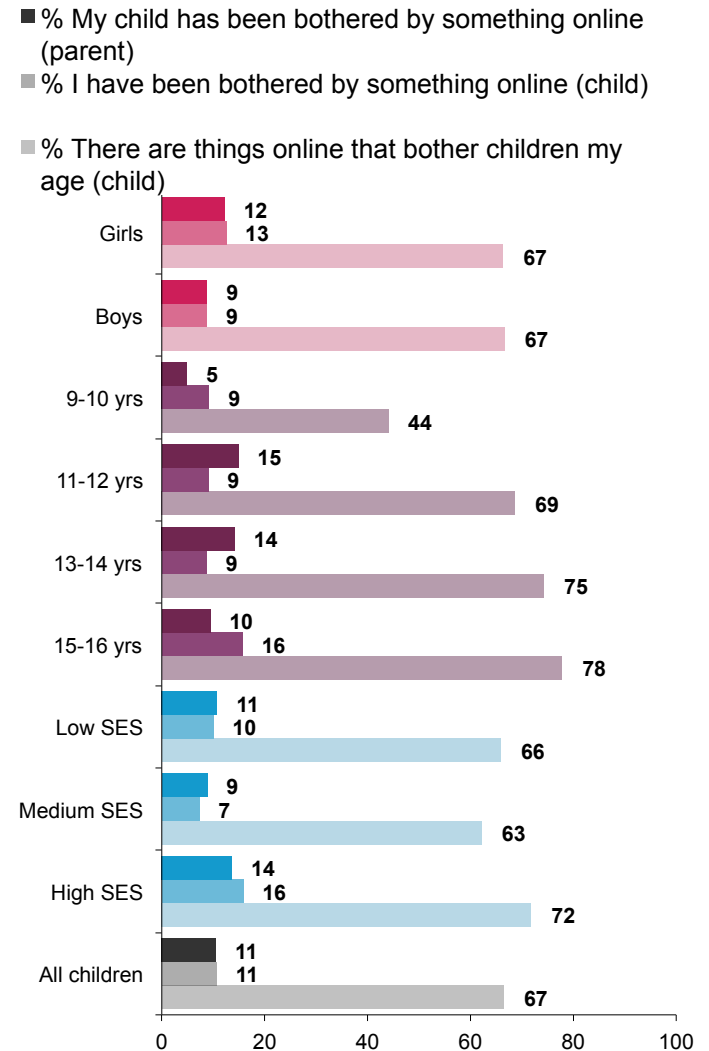 21% of parents are aware this has happened

Overall experiences of harm
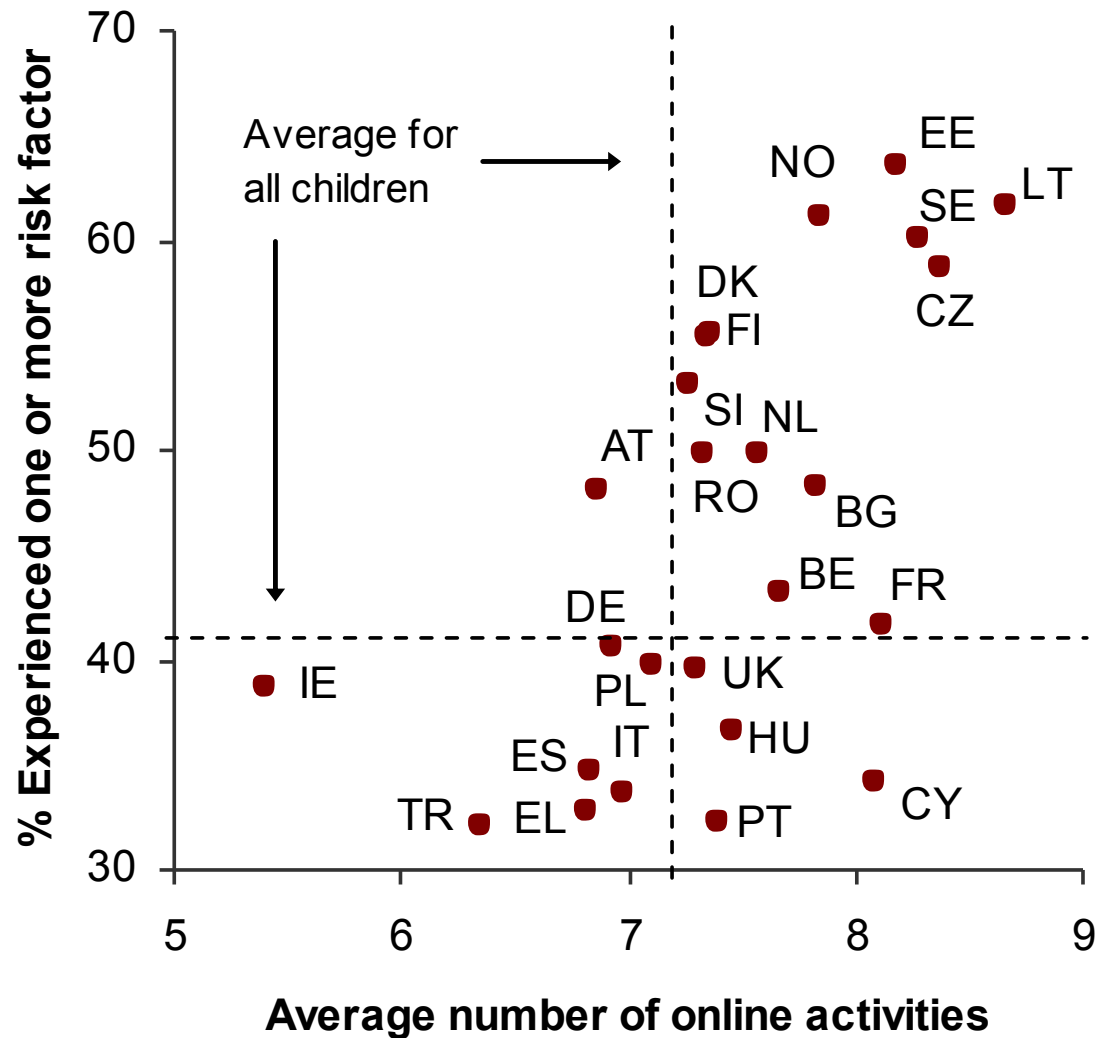
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"By bothered, we mean, made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it"

- **67% of children aged 9-16 think that there are things on the internet that will bother children of their age.**

- **11% say there are things that have bothered them personally in the past year**

- **11% parents say their child has been bothered**

- **More girls than boys have been bothered by something online (13% vs. 9%); more older teenagers than younger children (16% vs. 9%)**

■ % My child has been bothered by something online (parent)

■ % I have been bothered by something online (child)

■ % There are things online that bother children my age (child)

Girls	12 / 13	67
Boys	9 / 9	67
9-10 yrs	5 / 9	44
11-12 yrs	15 / 9	69
13-14 yrs	14 / 9	75
15-16 yrs	10 / 16	78
Low SES	11 / 10	66
Medium SES	9 / 7	63
High SES	14 / 16	72
All children	11 / 11	67

0   20   40   60   80   100

More opportunities, more risks

Scatter plot: X-axis "Average number of online activities" (5 to 9), Y-axis "% Experienced one or more risk factor" (30 to 70). Labeled data points: EE, NO, SE, LT, CZ, DK, FI, SI, NL, AT, RO, BG, BE, FR, DE, PL, UK, IE, ES, IT, HU, TR, EL, PT, CY. Annotation "Average for all children" with arrows pointing to dashed reference lines.

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What mediates children's online experiences?
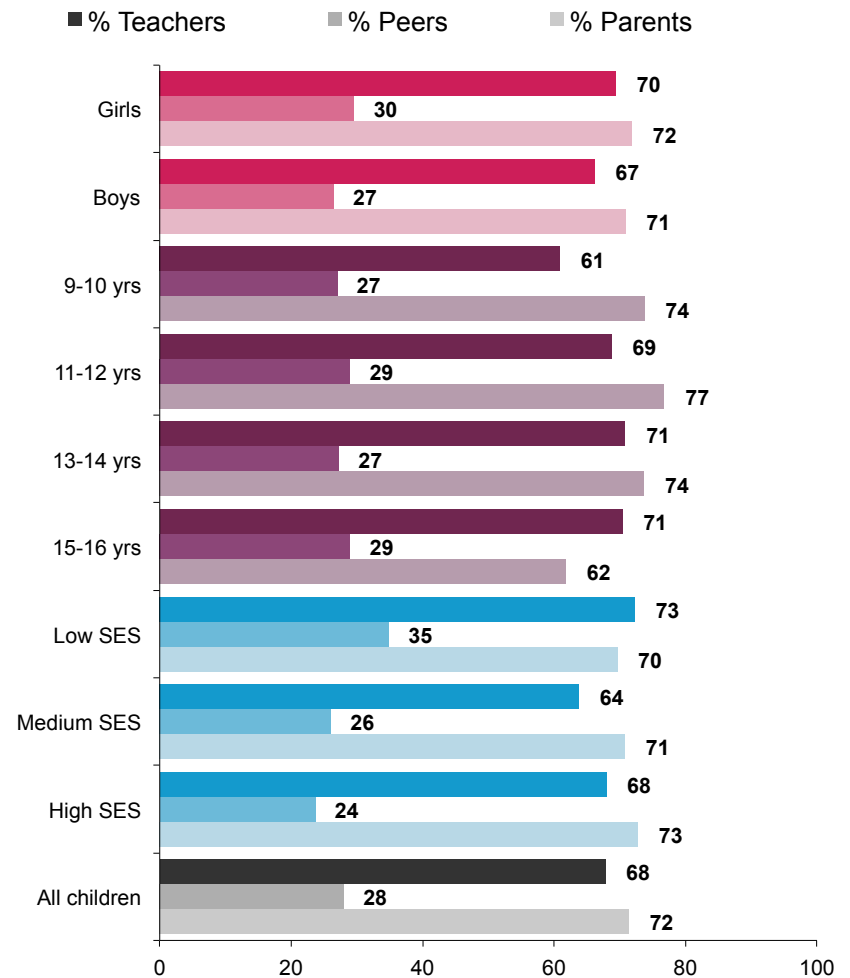
Parental mediation of use

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*Vast majority of parents (91%) mediate their children's internet use in some way.*
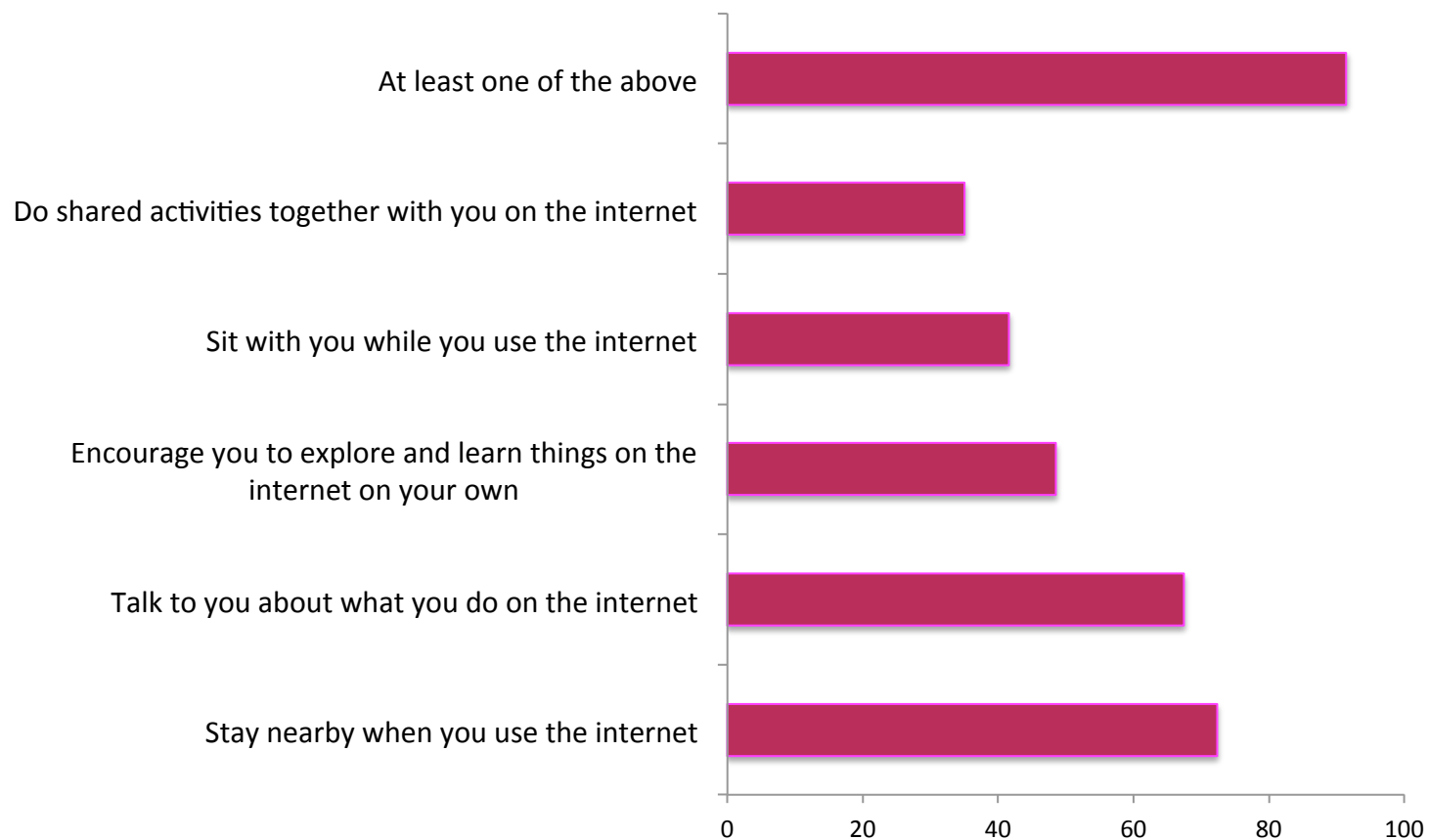
Internet safety

72% of parents, 68% of teachers and 28% of peers and have suggested ways to use the internet safely, according to child

www.eukidsonline.net

Legend: ■ % Teachers ■ % Peers ■ % Parents

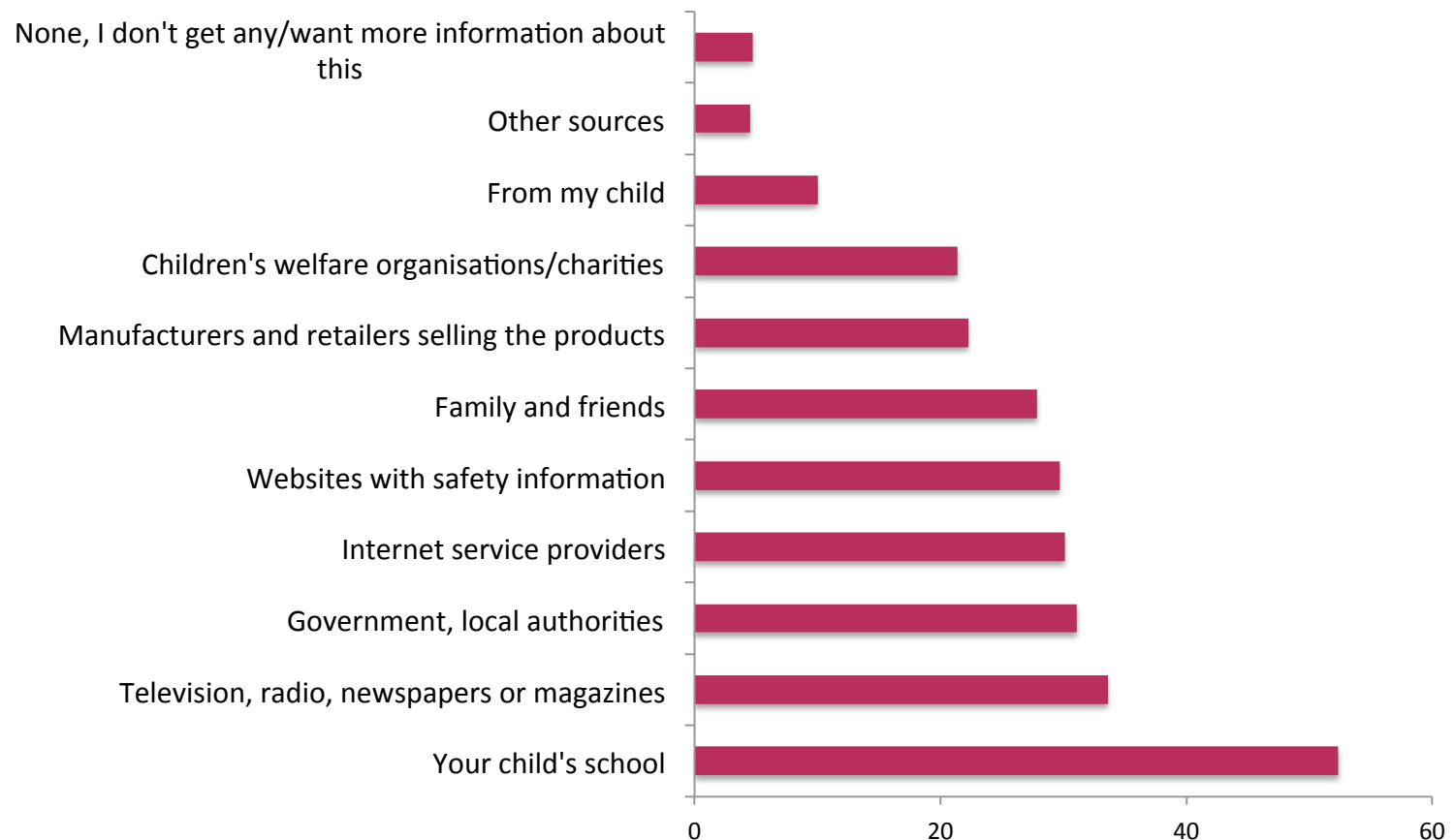| Group	% Teachers	% Peers	% Parents
Girls	70	30	72
Boys	67	27	71
9-10 yrs	61	27	74
11-12 yrs	69	29	77
13-14 yrs	71	27	74
15-16 yrs	71	29	62
Low SES	73	35	70
Medium SES	64	26	71
High SES	68	24	73
All children	68	28	72

Parental restrictions

Restrictive mediation for children in Ireland (93%) is high - highest in Europe - compared to the European average (85%)
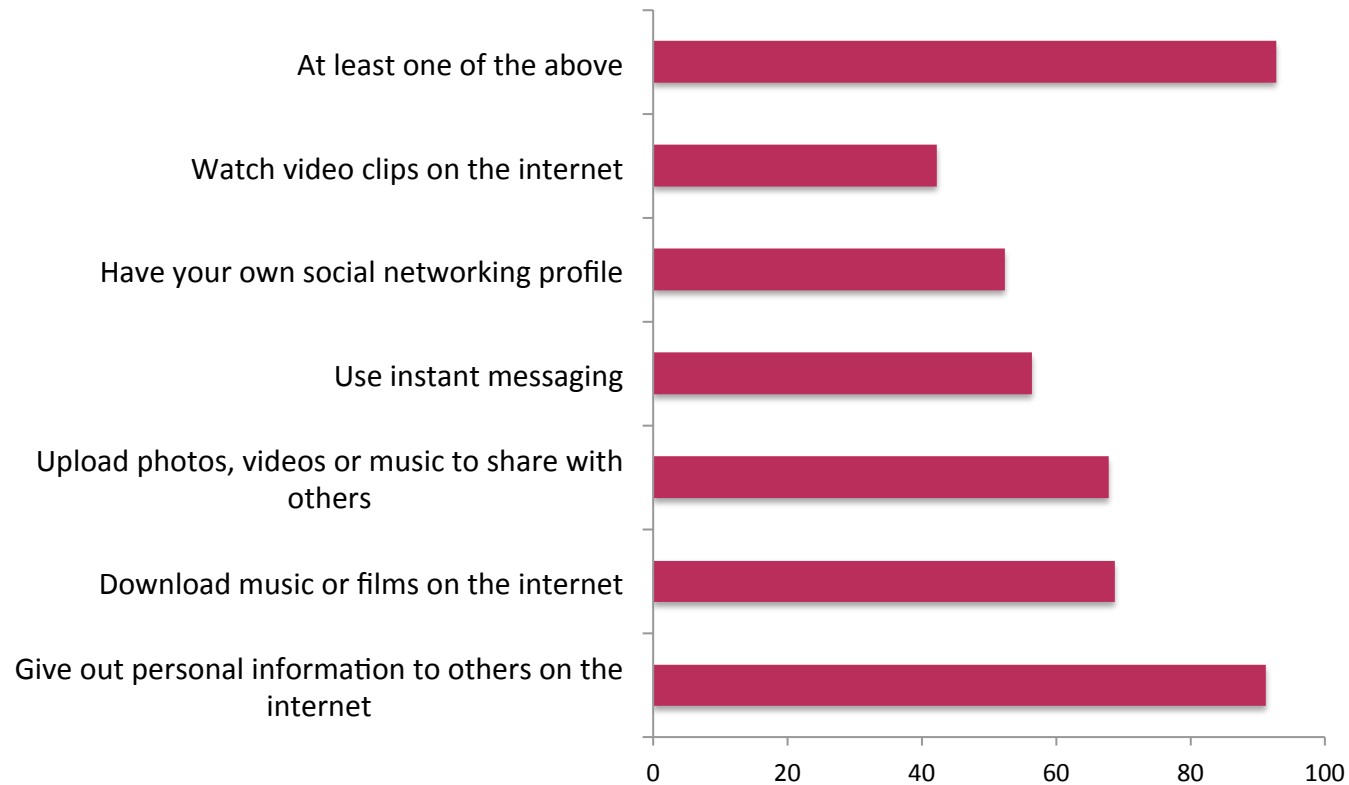
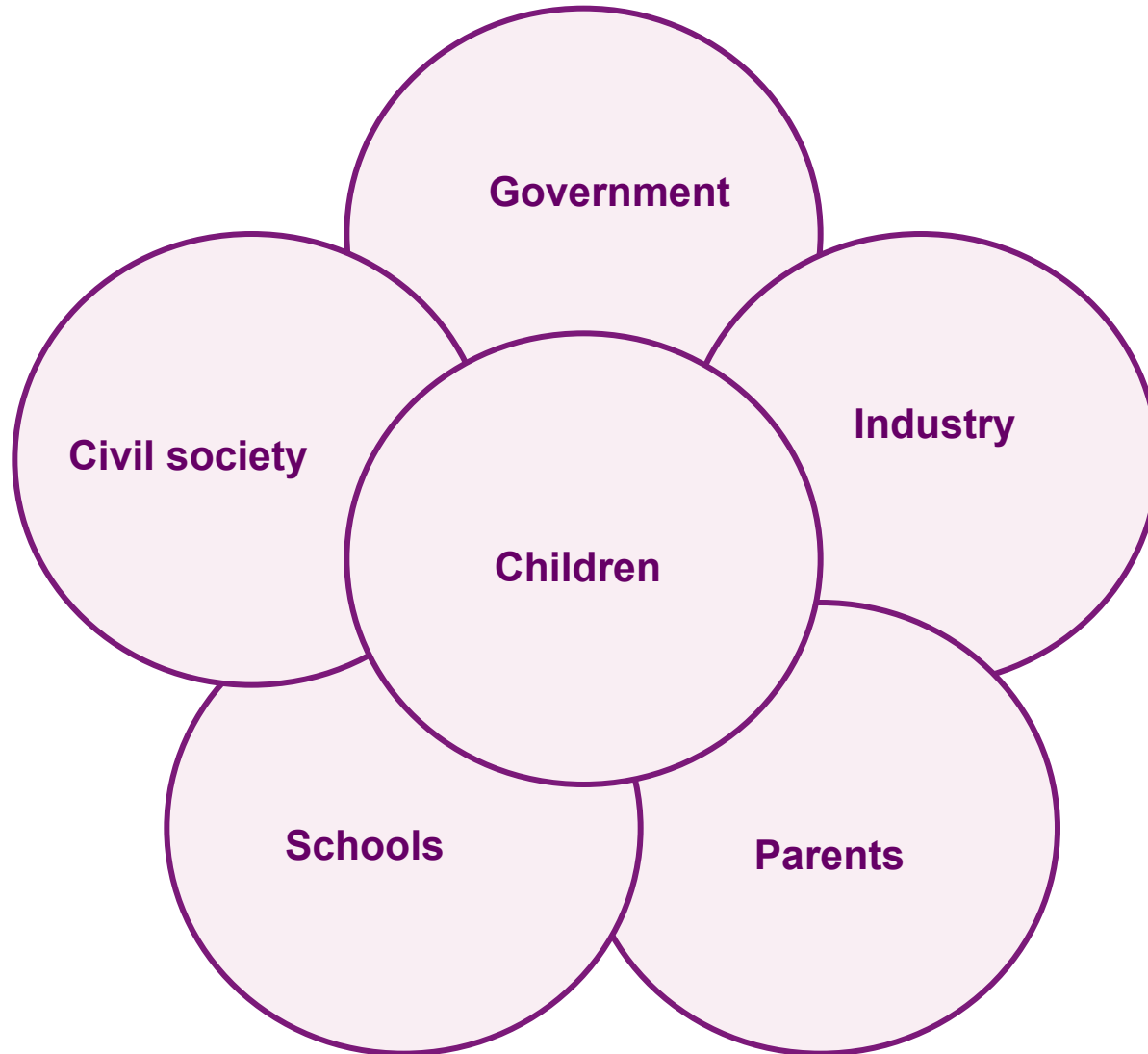# Parents' preferred sources of information on safety

The child's school is by far the preferred source of information about internet safety
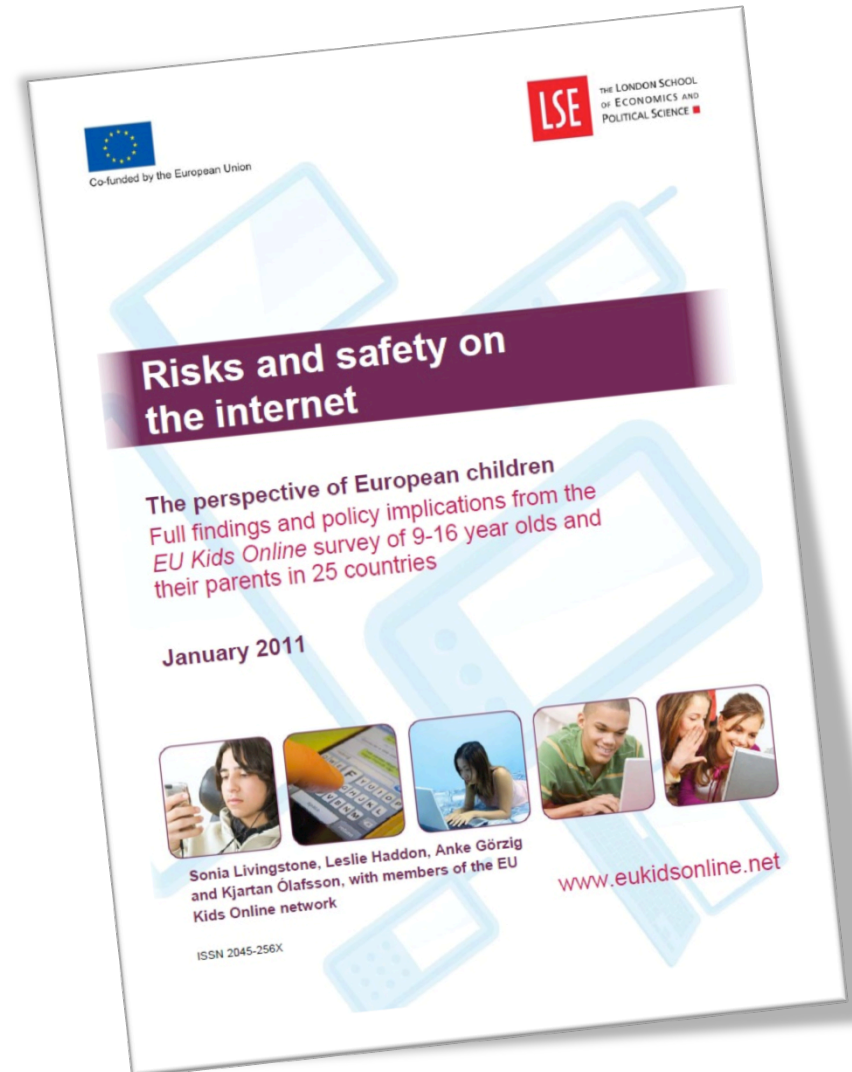

Horizontal bar chart showing parents' preferred sources of information on internet safety (values approximate, x-axis 0–60):

Source	Value
Your child's school	~52
Television, radio, newspapers or magazines	~33
Government, local authorities	~31
Internet service providers	~30
Websites with safety information	~29
Family and friends	~28
Manufacturers and retailers selling the products	~22
Children's welfare organisations/charities	~21
From my child	~10
Other sources	~4
None, I don't get any/want more information about this	~5

Policy implications

Government

Civil society

Children

Industry

Schools

Parents

Thank you

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