

Slovenia

According to EU Kids Online findings Slovenia is a 'high use, some risk' country, although previously it was in the 'high use, high risk' category. Persistent national awareness centre work with many initiatives taken to Slovenian schools and youth clubs might have contributed to this. However, there are some areas that still need immediate attention. Slovenian children start to use the internet at around the age of eight which is amongst the youngest in Europe. Almost three quarters of children use the internet in a daily basis, for about an hour and a half daily. Even though excessive use is below the European average, it still requires some attention, particularly with regard to younger children. Risk areas that remain critical are negative user generated content, exposure to sexually explicit content online and meeting new people online. Slovenian children are above the European average when it comes to experiencing harm online and below average when it comes to coping. With regards to opportunities the findings show that Slovenian children have amongst the highest number of digital literacy and safety skills in Europe. They also engage in the above average number of online activities. Looking at the ladder of opportunities, almost two thirds of Slovenian children are in the more advanced steps in the "ladder". One third of them are advanced and creative users.

According to EU Kids Online findings, over half of parents practice some form of parental mediation, including talking to their child. However, the parallel Slovenian study showed that a considerably lower percentage of parents mediate children's media use, including TV and internet (only a quarter) and even a lower share of parents talk to their children about daily internet practices. Similarly, only a quarter of children in this study state that their parents are mediating their internet use. Slovenian parents are also amongst those less confident when using the internet. Therefore, the main policy priorities in Slovenia should be educating parents in competent and effective internet use and mediation, followed by encouragement to communicate about internet use with their children. The findings of this study show that Slovenian parents mostly get skills and digital safety information from traditional media and from children's schools. Preferred sources for this information are mostly from other parents and family but less so from educational institutions such as schools.

Looking at the fact that the majority of children get safety information from their parents it would be wise and reasonable to take the following steps:

- To initiate a national campaign, addressing the parent to parent and within-family (as oppose to school to parent, and school to children) digital literacy and safety skills education, with the help of the national awareness centre and similar institutions;
- To encourage parents to talk (as oppose to use blocking and filtering software alone) to their children on a daily bases about their internet use (just as talking about how was in school today, for example);
- To provide effective and targeted awareness tools to younger children, especially those from six years on who are entering the internet arena. Children in this age group find themselves in a digital skills gap due to lack of parental knowledge as well as lack of digital literacy related topics in school syllabi for younger children.