Digital and social change: understanding the implications for children’s well-being

Sonia Livingstone, Media@LSE
“Net Children 2020 – Growing up with Media” Berlin 16.4.15
Nearly a decade of research
(funded by EC Better Internet for Kids)

From **2006-09**, as a thematic network of 21 countries, EU Kids Online identified and evaluated the findings of nearly 400 research studies to draw out substantive, methodological and policy implications.

From **2009-11**, as a knowledge enhancement project across 25 countries, the network surveyed 25,000 children and parents to produce original, rigorous data on online opportunities and risk of harm.

From **2011-14**, the network expanded to 33 countries to conduct targeted analyses of the quantitative survey and new qualitative interviews with children.

In 2015, network coordination passed from Department of Media and Communications at LSE to the Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research, University of Hamburg.

Net Children Go Mobile replicated parts of EU Kids Online’s qualitative and quantitative research in selected countries in 2011-14.

See [www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)

See [www.netchildrengomobile.eu](http://www.netchildrengomobile.eu)
EU Kids Online

Findings . methods . recommendations
Compared with 2010, European 11- to 16-year-olds are now:

- more likely to be exposed to hate messages: 13% to 20%
- more likely to be exposed to pro-anorexia sites: 9% to 13%
- more likely to be exposed to self-harm sites: 7% to 11%
- more likely to be exposed to cyberbullying: 7% to 12%

European 9- to 16-year-olds say they are now: more likely to say they were upset by something seen online in 2014:

13% to 17%

See [http://goo.gl/3JJBbU](http://goo.gl/3JJBbU) for our YouTube playlist of 75 videos in most EU languages.
Ladder of opportunities

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

- When strangers message me on the internet, sex sites that open without me clicking on them. (boy, 10, Austria)
- Violence against women and children and perverted humiliations and cruelty. (girl, 14, Germany)
- Showing images of physical violence, torture and suicide images. (girl, 12, Slovenia)
- Animal cruelty, adults hitting kids. (girl, 9, Denmark)
- A mate showed me once a video about an execution. It was not fun, but insane. I get scared. (boy, 12, Poland)
- Propositions to meet from people whom I do not know. (boy, 10, Portugal)
- Those things that show other people’s suffering or torment as a funny thing. (boy, 14, Hungary)
- I was shocked seeing a starving African child who was going to die and a condor waiting to eat him. (girl, 13, Turkey)
- See people having sex or naked people. (boy, 10, Portugal)
- Scary things - I saw something at my friend’s house and I can’t get it out of my head. (boy, 11, Ireland)
- To take a photo of me without my knowledge and upload it to an inappropriate website. (girl, 10, Bulgaria)
- Facebook shows scary things even if you click on something that does not look or sound scary. (girl, 9, UK)
Usage → Activities → Risk factors → Harm or coping

INDIVIDUAL USER

Demographic → Psychological

SOCIAL MEDIATION

Parents → School → Peers

Child as unit of analysis

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Socio-economic stratification → Regulatory framework → Technological infrastructure → Education system → Cultural values

Country as unit of analysis
European diversity
Activities, Literacies, Strategies, Affordances, Design Practices, Benefits and harms that affect well-being

ONLINE

Children
- Identities
- Experiences
- Capacities

User-led
- Activities
- Literacies
- Strategies

Digital ecology
- Affordances
- Design Practices

Opportunities and risks

Outcomes
- Benefits and harms that affect well-being

INDIVIDUAL

Family

Educators

Peers and community

SOCIAL RESOURCES & MEDIATORS

Structures of inclusion and inequality

Technological and regulatory infrastructures

Education system

Cultural values, norms, practices

SOCIETAL CONDITIONS
Affordances shape practices

What is being designed? What practices are being invited?

Does it make sense? Is it fair? Is it interesting? Do we want it?
Online too, design shapes practice and literacy follows (or doesn’t)

Yet positive affordances could build great digital literacies
More questions than answers!