

Spain

Spain has been categorised as a 'medium use, medium risk' country in EU Kids Online findings. As far as frequency of going online or the age when children first go online are concerned Spanish minors are very close to the European average, even though below 'high use' countries. Nevertheless, time spent online is remarkably lower and the percentage of children who use the internet in their own bedroom is one of the lowest in Europe.

If we consider that 84% of Spanish minors use the internet at home, this fact has an obvious effect for risk prevention policies: parents hold the best position in order to mediate their children's use of the internet. In fact, children's use in a private environment is a challenge for parents' mediation: 42% among minors surveyed stated they used the internet in their own bedroom where parents' supervision is nearly impossible. This is one of the lowest percentages in Europe, where the average is 54% and in some countries (such as Denmark) is nearly 74%. Such difference between Europe and Spain shows that this data can increase in the short term, which underlines the need for promoting communication between parents and their children as a basic requirement for safer use of the internet.

As far as connecting devices are concerned, most minors use two different devices and one of them is mobile. The increase in the use of mobile technologies, which allows young people to surf on their own and makes monitoring more difficult, emphasizes the need for self-regulatory and/or co-regulatory management of online technologies and providers of services for younger users.

Risk incidence is below the European average for all types considered. Even though this is a positive fact in itself, we must consider that it can be due to the lower use in Spain. Still it is noteworthy that most parents whose children were exposed to some kind of risk did not know this fact.

In short, on the one hand the low risk incidence needs to be qualified by the lower use in Spain regarding other European countries. But on the other hand, a more ambitious policy is still needed in order to raise awareness related to the use of the internet among parents.