

Embargo: 00.01am GMT Monday 25 November 2013

Brazilian kids online

Many Brazilian children are going online without adult guidance

More than two-thirds of Brazilian children (68-78% depending on socio-economic status) surveyed for the first comprehensive study into Brazilian children's online experiences believe they know more about the internet than their parents or guardians, with over half (53%) living in families where the adults responsible for them are not internet users.

This is a stark comparison with children across Europe, where only 28-46% report that they know more than their parents about the internet.

These are some of the findings published today (Monday 25 November) by EU Kids Online, a research project based at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

The report uses data from the first wave of the ICT Kids Online Brazil Survey on children's online use by the Center for Studies on Information and Communication Technologies in Brazil alongside previous EU Kids Online research to compare European and Brazilian children's online experiences.

The researchers find that children across Brazil and Europe reveal many similar patterns of use and activities.

Both report home and school as the top places to access the internet: 60% home and 42% school in Brazil, compared to 87% home and 63% from school in Europe. Social networking is more of a concern for Brazilian children, however, being the second most popular reason to use the internet for Brazilian children, in comparison with children in Europe who report playing games as their second preferred activity.

Both groups also express similar concerns about risk: the two most reported experiences being pornography and aggressive/violent content, which is reported by one in five children surveyed in both Brazil and Europe. The next highest internet concern reported by Brazilian children (10%) is related to peers' conduct, however, while scary content (8%) was the second most reported concern for European children.

The analysis also highlights areas of difference. Brazilian children are considerably more likely to access the internet from public locations such as cybercafes for example (35% Brazilian against 12% European), possibly with less guidance as a result. Access from public libraries, however, is far more popular in Europe (12%) than in Brazil (4%).

Professor Sonia Livingstone, director of EU Kids Online, Department of Media and Communications at LSE, said: "internet access is spreading fast in Brazil, and many children use the internet in public locations such as cybercafes – one third of 9-16 year olds in Brazil, compared with just an eighth of European children. Since over half that many online activities are unsupported, Europe has spearheaded many empowerment and safety initiatives in recent years and we hope some can be of value also in Brazil."

Alexandre Barbosa, co-author of the report and manager of CETIC, the Center for Studies on Information and Communications Technologies in Brazil, said: "In a country marked by social and economic inequalities with a large youth population that increasingly access the internet it is crucial to foster initiatives to raise awareness on the safe use of the internet. The recently published ICT Kids Online Brazil Survey is an important source of data for policymaking and will certainly contribute to promote the debate on digital rights, freedom of expression and privacy concerns."

'Risks and Safety on the Internet: comparing Brazilian and European results' by Alexandre Barbosa, Brian O'Neill, Cristina Ponte, José Alberto Simões and Tatiana Jereissati will be available at EU Kids Online from Monday 25 November.

www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx

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For a copy of the report, contact the LSE Press Office, 020 7955 7060 or email pressoffice@lse.ac.uk

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Notes for editors

Methodology

The Kids Online Brazil Survey aims to understand the internet experiences of internet users aged 9 to 16 and the parent/legal guardian who was the best informed about their routines and internet use.

The sample for the ICT Kids Online Brazil Survey was initially composed of up to 2,500 children and their respective parent/legal guardian. Answers were only valid if both the child and the parent/legal guardian had been interviewed in a selected household. By the end of the data collection, 1,580 interviews were conducted with children and also their parents or legal guardians.