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THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE



Online Risks Encountered on the Top 10 Social Networking Sites of Europe

Eukids Panel at ICA, Boston May 27th 12:00 – 13:15

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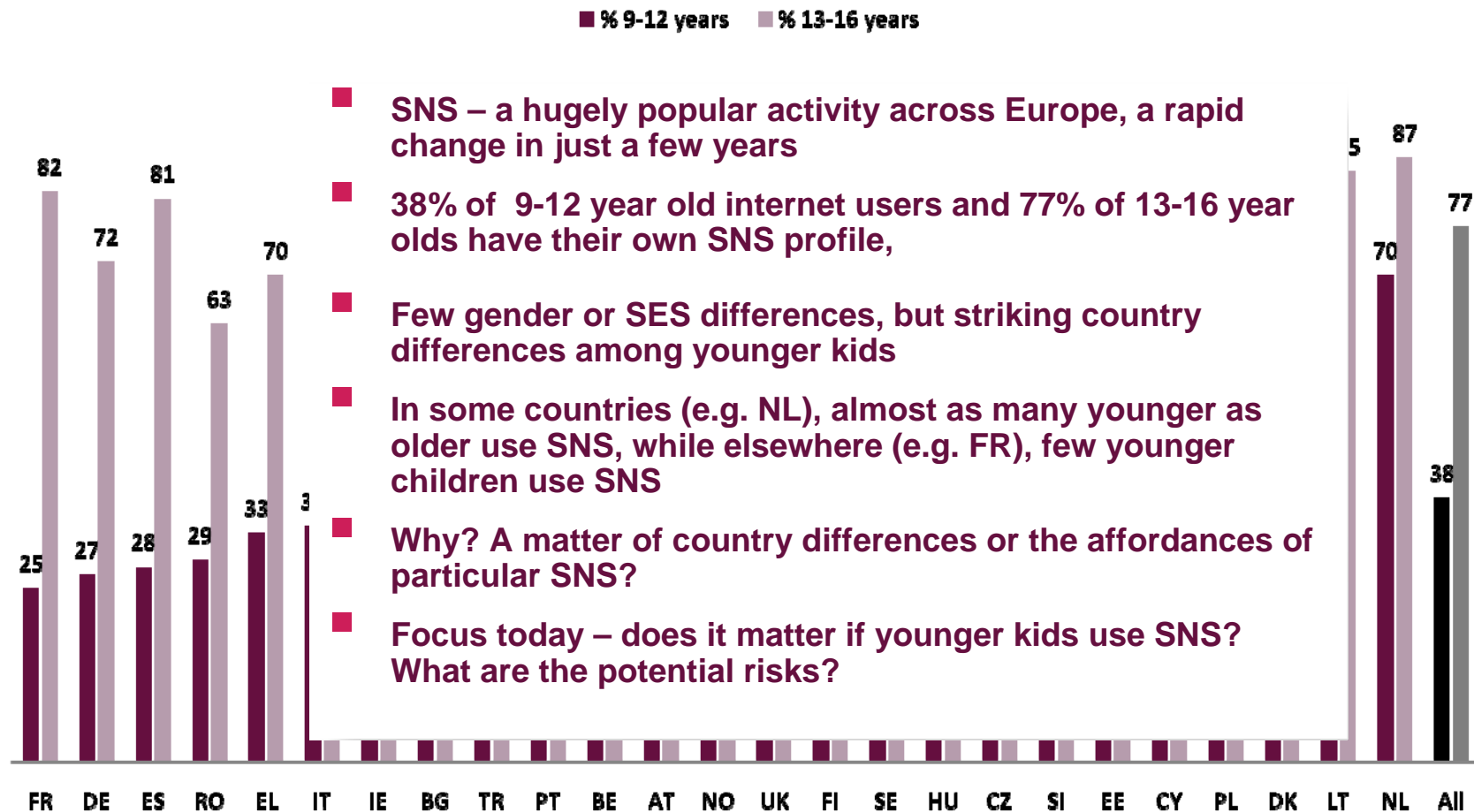
Surveying SNS in 'Europe'



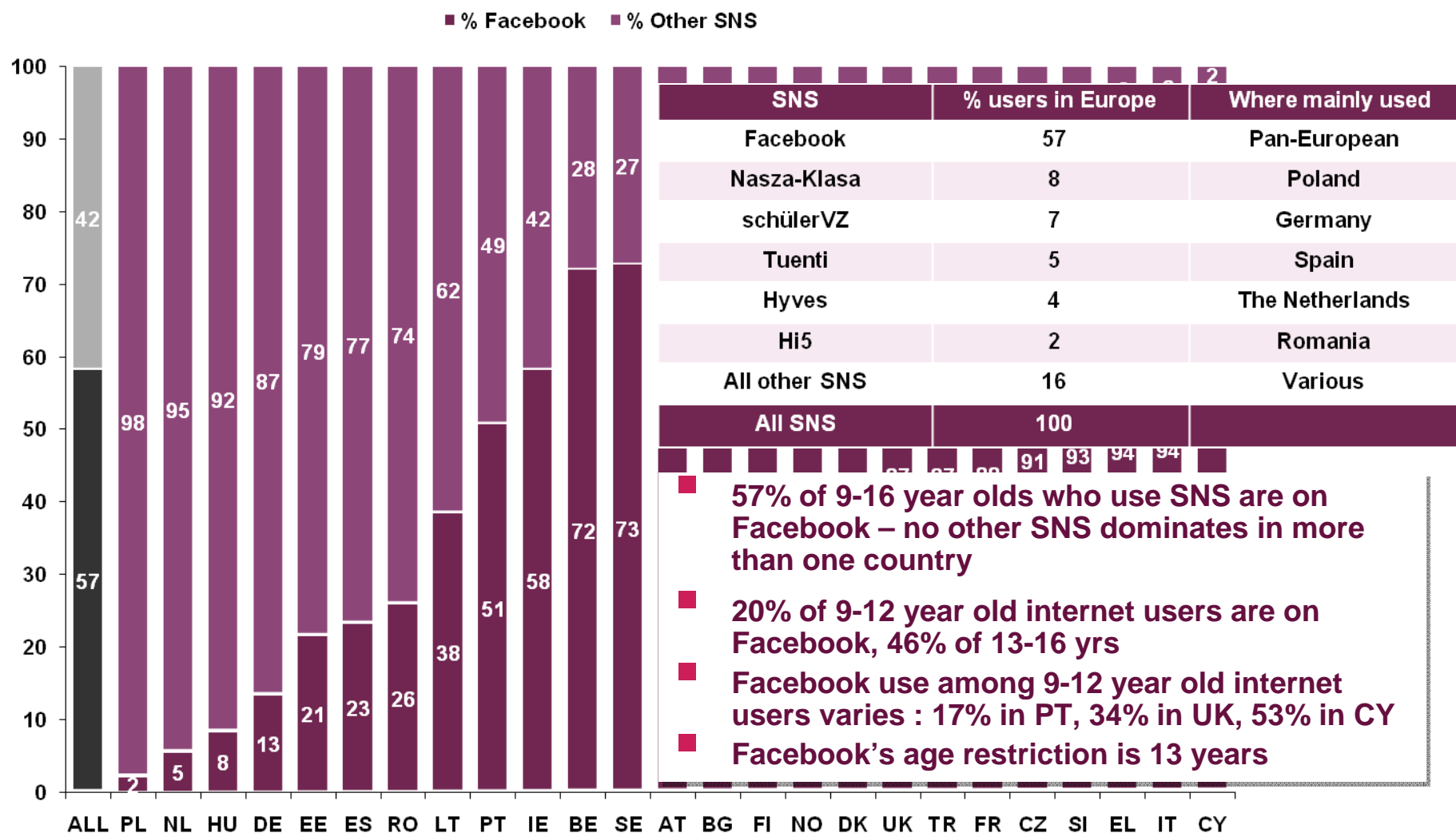
- Random stratified sample: ~ 1000 9-16 year old internet users per country; total of 25.142 internet-users, 25 countries
- Almost 80 specific Social Networking Sites (SNS) identified in the questionnaires + 'other'
- Unweighted total of respondents with SNS profile was 15.303
- 23% had more than one profile, these were asked to answer thinking of the one they used *the most*
- The data are weighted using:
 - (i) design weights to adjust for unequal probabilities of selection;
 - (ii) non-response weights to correct for differing levels of response across population subgroups;
 - (iii) a European weight to adjust for country contribution to the results according to population size.
- For analysis within countries, design- and non-response weights are used. For analysis across countries, all three weights are used.
- The proportion of children using each SNS is estimated as if the sample were a simple random sample of all internet-using children in Europe.



Children with SNS profile by country and age



Facebook dominates



Policy context:

Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU



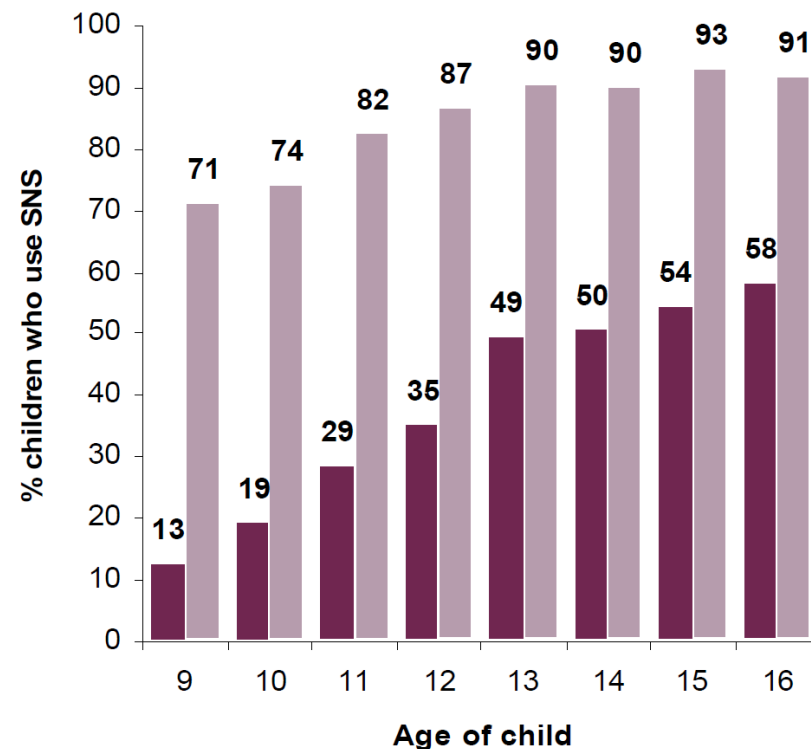
- 1. Services should be age appropriate, with measures in place to ensure that under-age users are rejected and/or deleted from the service**
- 2. Privacy provisions should ensure that profiles of minors are set to 'private' by default, and that users can control who can access their full profile and be able to view their privacy settings at all times**
- 3. SNS should encourage and enable users so they can safely manage personal information**
- 4. SNS services should provide an easy-to-use mechanism for children to report inappropriate content or conduct by other users**

Parental discretion principal tool, but does it work?



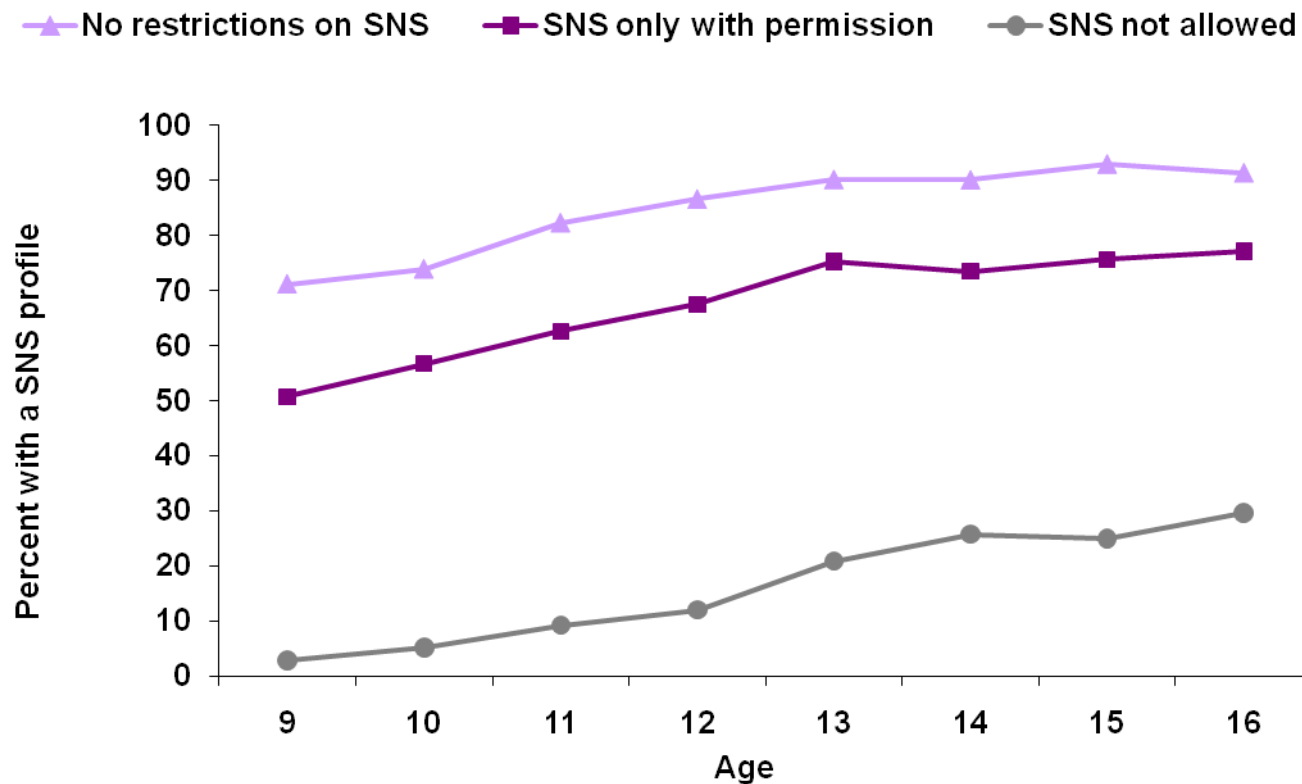
- One third (32%) of parents of the children surveyed say their child is not permitted to have an SNS profile. A fifth (20%) say their child can only use SNS with supervision. Half say they do not restrict their child's use of SNS.
- Country (or cultural) differences are notable. Nearly half of French children (45%), 42% of Greek and 41% of Italian and Spanish children are not allowed to use SNS.
- Fewest restrictions are experienced by children in Northern Europe – Lithuania, Estonia, the Netherlands and Denmark.

■ Some restrictions by parents ■ No restrictions by parents



Base: All children aged 9-16 who use the Internet and one of their parents.

Predicted probability of having SNS profile based vs. Parental restriction



Why/how 9-12 year olds use SNS



Parenting matters

no restrictions = most have an SNS profile, including three quarters of the youngest ages.

if parents restrict SNS use, few young children use SNS

but with no parental restrictions, most use SNS

Age of child matters

Younger children appear to respect parental regulation

Among teenagers whose parents restrict their use, over half of them do have a profile.

SNS Age restrictions matter

53% 9-12 yr olds in Poland use Nasza-Klasa (no age limit)

16% 9-12 year olds in German use SchülerVZ (limit of 12 yrs)

Country matters

Facebook use among 9-12 year old internet users varies:

17% in PT, 34% in UK, 53% in CY

“On Facebook, 273 people know I’m a dog.
The rest can only see my limited profile.”

Eukids on SNS

RISK

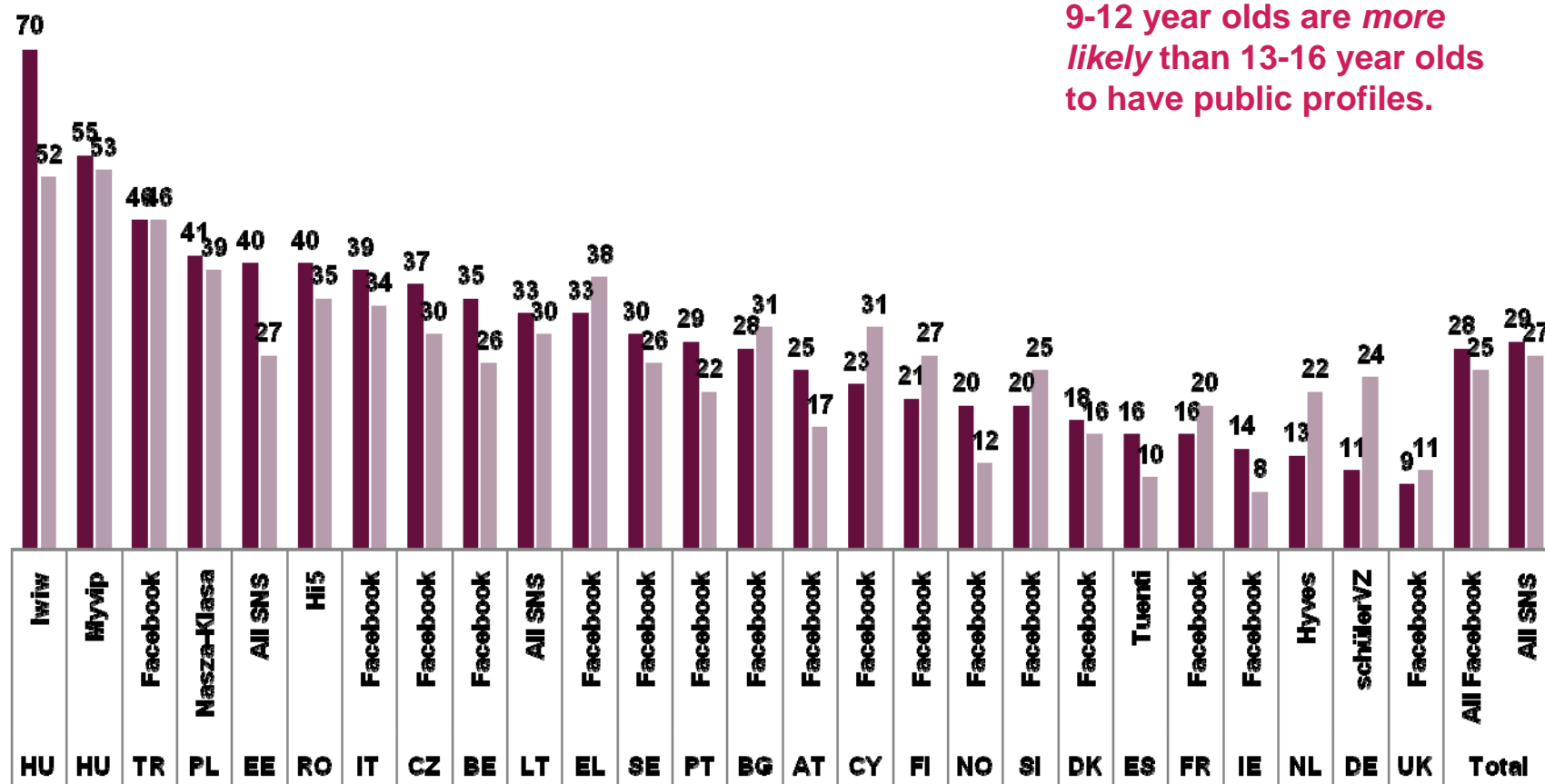


Public profiles



■ 9-12 years ■ 13-16 years

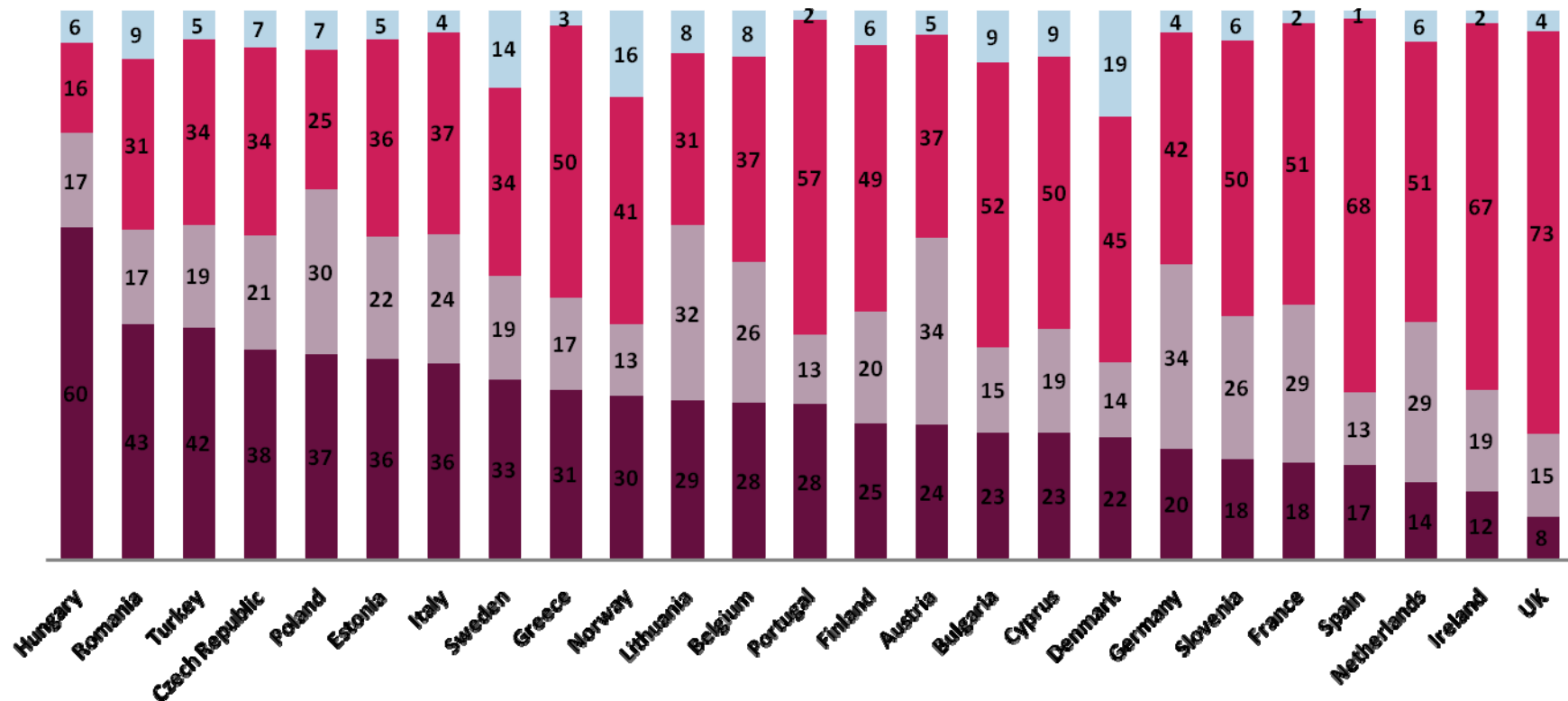
– in 15 of the 25 countries
9-12 year olds are *more likely* than 13-16 year olds
to have public profiles.



SNS profile status 9-12 year olds, by country



- Public, so that everyone can see
- Private so that only your friends can see
- Partially private, so that friends of friends or your network can see
- Don't know



Personal disclosure



- **27% SNS users have public profile, with no difference by age:**
 - 29% 9-12 year old users
 - 27% 13-16 year old users
- **Use of public settings varies:**
 - 10% Facebook users in UK
 - 18% Hyves users in NL
 - 37% Hi5 users in RO
 - 40% Nasza-Klasa users in PL
 - 46% Facebook users in TR
- **Revealing personal information:**
 - Children with public profiles are more likely to post their address/phone number

SNS	Address or phone		School	
	% 9-12	% 13-16	% 9-12	% 13-16
Facebook – private	7	11	26	42
Facebook – public	20	23	28	44
Nasza-Klasa – private	10	18	62	72
Nasza-Klasa – public	20	35	64	76
schülerVZ – private	15	7	79	75
schülerVZ – public	7	15	29	61
Tuenti – private	8	10	42	51
Tuenti – public	4	30	39	43
Hyves – private	15	15	45	63
Hyve – public	14	20	43	63
Hi5 – private	10	15	12	11
Hi5 – public	12	15	24	18
All SNS – private	9	12	34	47
All SNS – public	18	23	35	47

Digital skills



- Only 56% of 11-12 year old users, can manage their privacy settings
- Only 61% can block messages from a unwelcome user
- Some SNSs seem easier to manage than others
- Digital skills rise with age, but knowledge gaps exist at all ages
- Some findings for privacy settings and personal information disclosure may reflect a lack of skills

	Change privacy settings			Block another user		
SNS	% 11-12	% 13-14	% 15-16	% 11-12	% 13-14	% 15-16
Facebook	55	70	78	61	76	80
Nasza-Klasa	64	80	85	56	71	83
schülerVZ	61	73	81	62	72	78
Tuenti	53	72	82	67	84	91
Hyves	68	77	89	79	88	94
Hi5	42	63	56	51	65	73
All SNS	56	71	78	61	75	81

Other risk indicators



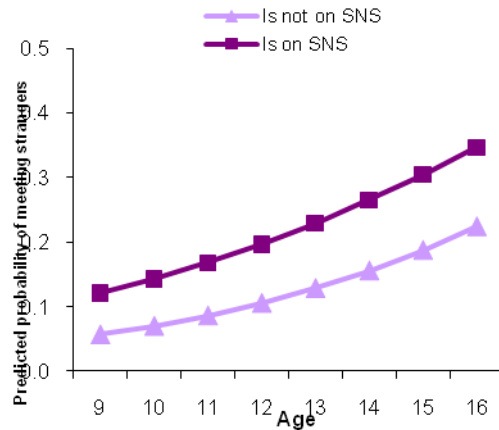
- **15% younger, 35% older SNS users have 100+ contacts**
- **19% younger (24% of Facebook users), 28% older SNS users are in contact with people who have no connection with their lives offline**

SNS use and risk, by age

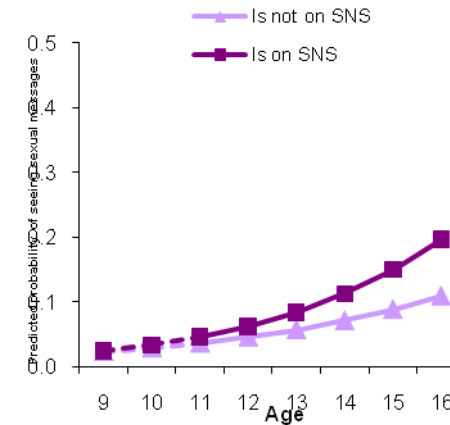
(controlling for gender, internet use, parental rules, SNS and country)



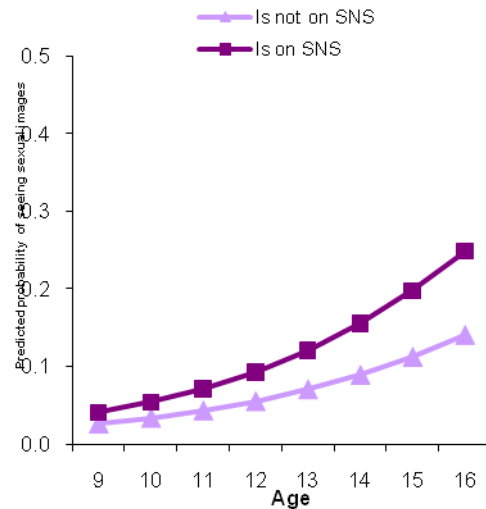
Meeting strangers



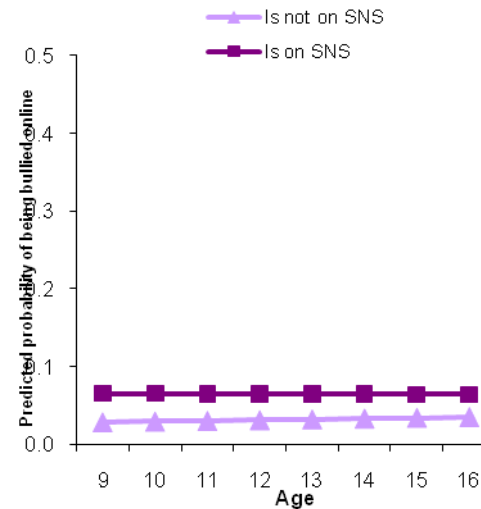
Receiving sexual messages



Seeing sexual images



Being bullied



Conclusions

- Despite all the fun of social networking, children also encounter risks on SNS
- Age limits are not working - younger children are joining SNS, and they are as likely as older to have public profiles, despite lesser skills
- Tools provided to help and protect is not understood by younger users
- Older teens post more personal info, have more contact with 'strangers' and encounter more risk online
- Different SNSs are used in different ways, depending on skills, culture, parents and settings/features
- Thanks to the EU Kids Online Network
- More reports at www.eukidsonline.net

