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# EU Kids Online: The latest insights from research

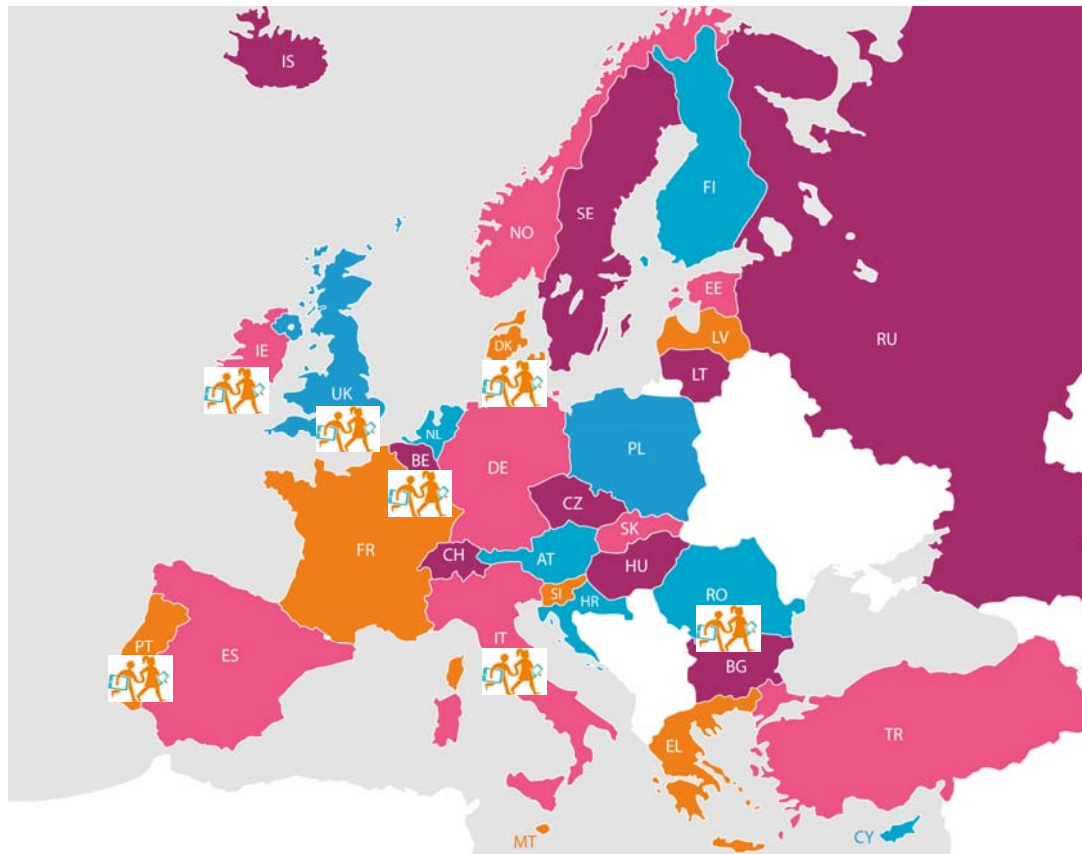
**Presentation to Insafe, Vilnius, September 2014**

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# Hear from the researchers



# Survey update: 2010 - 2014

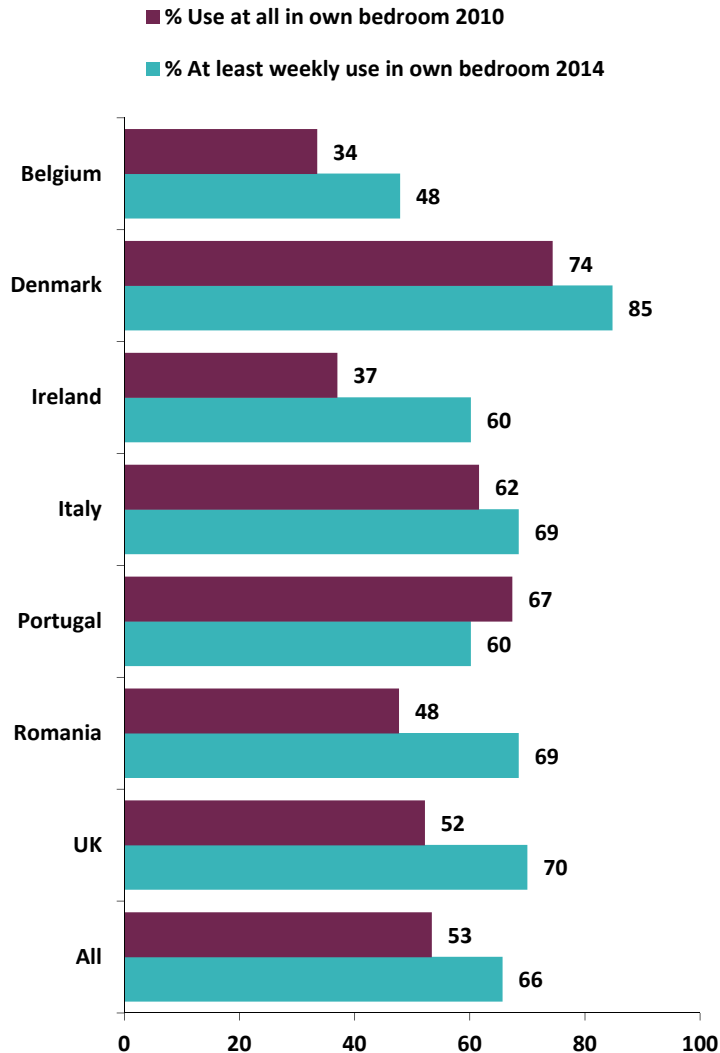


- **EU Kids Online** conducted detailed face-to-face interviews with 25,000 European 9-16 year old internet users and their parents in **25** countries in **2010**.  
<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/33731>
- **Net Children Go Mobile** replicated major parts of the EU Kids Online survey, adding a focus on mobile devices, with c.3,500 European 9-16 year old internet users in **7** countries in **2013/14**.  
<http://www.netchildrengomobile.eu/reports/>
- Selected findings follow, for the **7 countries**: Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, UK.



# Survey update (1)

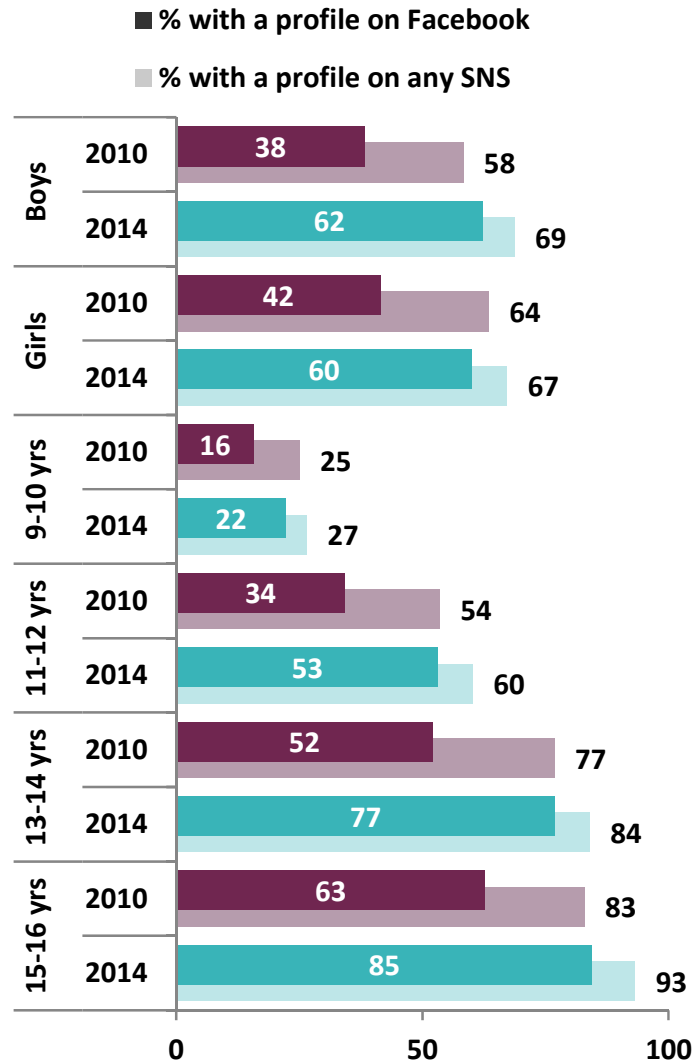
## Where/how children go online



- In 2010, on average half of 9-16 year olds in the 7 countries ever used the internet in their bedroom. Now 2/3 have access, and around half use it there weekly.
- There are still big differences by age: a third of 9-10 year olds, over 4/5 of 15-16 year olds go online weekly in their bedroom.
- There are also still big differences by country – half of Belgian children rising to nearly all in Denmark.
- The home remains the main location of internet use, with the bedroom the main location for smartphone use.
- Nearly half rarely or never go online in other places, and 3/4 never go online when out and about.
- But in 2010, a shared PC was the most common way of accessing the internet (58%) with 31% using their phone. Today, the balance has shifted – every day, 46% use a laptop and 41% use a smartphone to go online.

# Survey update (2)

## Social networking sites



- Facebook is the main SNS used even though teens are diversifying their choice of SNS. The use of Twitter is rather distinctive to the UK.
- SNS use has increased for boys and for teens overall. The proportion of SNS use that is on Facebook has also increased.
- 1/4 of 9-10 year olds and over half of 11-12 year olds use SNS – with 22% and 53% on Facebook respectively. Four in 10 give a false age on SNS.
- In some countries, SNS use is becoming 'safer' (more privacy, fewer contacts, less under-age use) – notably the UK and Ireland. In other countries, this is far from the case. In Romania, SNS use rose from 46% to 79% in the past four years – and 39% of those have 300+ contacts (vs. 18% average).

# Survey update (3)

## Online risk and harm



% who...	2010	2014
<b>Seen hate messages</b> (11-16 years)	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Received sexual messages</b> (11-16 years)	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Seen sexual images online</b> (9-16 years)	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Been cyberbullied</b> (9-16 years)	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Seen pro-anorexic sites</b> (11-16 years)	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Met online contact offline</b> (9-16 years)	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Bothered or upset online</b> (9-16 years)	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>

- Some risks have increased – hate messages, pro-anorexia sites and, to a lesser degree, porn, cyberbullying and meeting online contacts offline. Only sexual messaging has decreased (except in Denmark).
- Arguably the increase in risk is because of parallel increase in opportunities.
- However, the overall proportion bothered or upset by something online has also risen slightly – especially among girls and among older teens.
- The biggest increase in % upset online are in Denmark (from 28% to 39%), Ireland (from 11% to 20%) and Romania (from 21% to 27%). The percentages are fairly stable in the other countries.

# Survey update (4)

## Digital skills



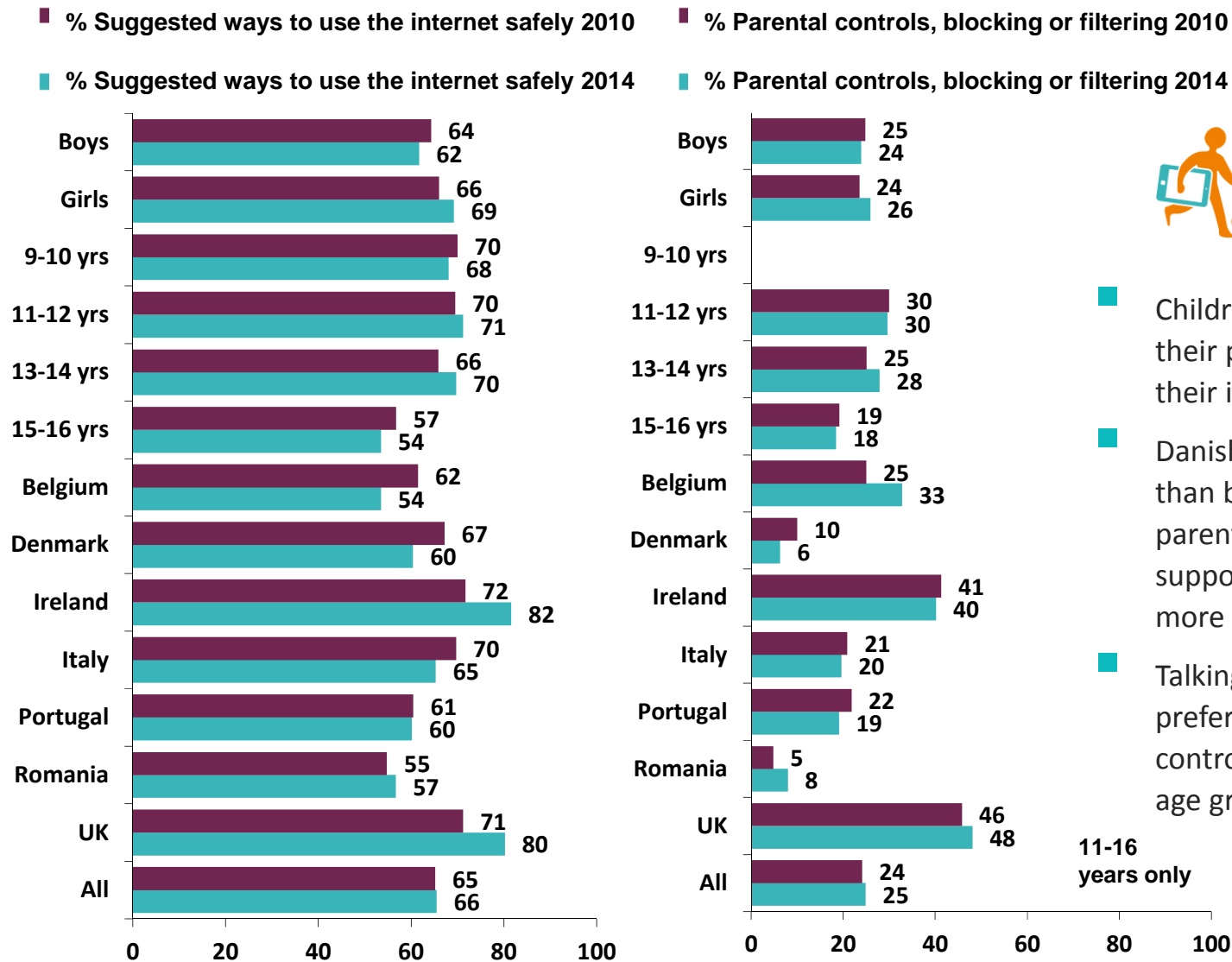
% 11-16 year olds who know how to:	2010	2014
<b>Bookmark a website</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Find information on how to use the internet safely</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Block messages from someone you don't want to hear from</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Block unwanted adverts or junk mail/spam</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Change privacy settings on a social networking profile</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Compare different websites to decide if information is true</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Delete the record of which sites you have visited</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Change filter preferences</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>



- Children now report being a bit more able to do most things related to internet safety.
- Given the increase in use and the efforts of industry and educators, the increase in skills is maybe lower than would be expected.
- Net Children Go Mobile's full report notes inequalities by gender, age and country also.
- Since substantial minorities still lack digital skills, this suggests that more can be done to teach children how to use the internet and, further, that internet could be made easier to use.

# Survey update (5)

## Parental actions - kids' views



- Children report little change in their parents' actions to support their internet safety.
- Danish parents do a little less than before; British and Irish parents do a little more social support; Belgian parents use more parental controls.
- Talking about internet safety is far preferred over use of parental controls in all countries and for all age groups.

# The meaning of online problematic situations



A qualitative report on what 9-16 year olds said in interviews and focus groups in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Spain and the UK (N = 378).

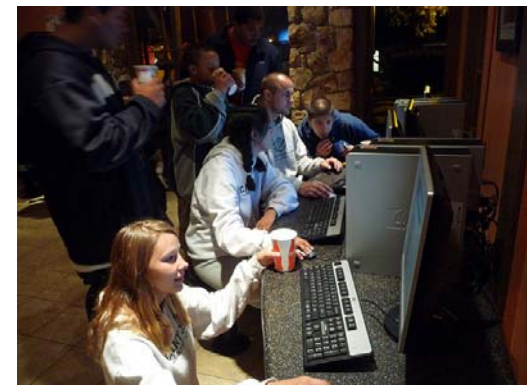
It reveals multiple upsets and problems, as kids see it . . . But also many ways of coping . . .

Much of what they talked about was how 'weird' the internet can be

*I was on one of those online games. And there's a chat that allows you to speak with everyone else in the game. And I was speaking, I don't remember what, I was a beginner and I asked different things and they offended me; and I told them to cut it out. And it got even worse, but I don't understand why they got mad, for something silly. He said, 'Just wait, I'll find you and beat you up,' and stuff like that. (boy, 15–16, Romania)*

See Smahel, D. and Wright, M. (2014) "The meaning of online problematic situations for children: Results of cross-cultural qualitative investigation in nine European countries."

<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/56972/>



# Methodology & coding



	Focus groups			Interviews			Schools	
Countries	Number of groups	N (males + females)	Average duration	Number of interviews	N (males + females)	Average duration	Number of schools or youth centres	Characteristics of schools or youth centres
Belgium	6	36 (17 + 19)	69 mins	20	20 (9 + 11)	30 mins	1 school + 3 youth centres	Catholic and public schools, youth centres
Greece	6	26 (13+13)	88 mins	8	8 (3+5)	40 mins	3	2 public, 1 private (all in the capital)
Malta	6	27 (13+14)	95 mins	12	12 (6+6)	44 mins	18	6 public, 9 church, 3 private
Italy	6	30 (15 +15)	85 mins	12	12 (6+6)	42 mins	3	All public: 1 urban, 2 suburban
Portugal	6	22 (10+12)	66 mins	12	12 (6+6)	50 mins	3	All public and suburban
Romania	8	28 (14+14)	80 mins	11	11 (5+6)	40 mins	6	All public
Spain	6	30 (15+15)	77 mins	12	12 (6+6)	60 mins	4	1 public urban; 1 public semirural; 2 private religious urban
United Kingdom	6	30 (15+15)	90 mins	15	15 (8 + 7)	43 mins	5	
Czech	6	25 (15 + 10)	80 mins	12	12 (7 + 5)	40 mins	5	All public: 2 rural schools, 1 suburban, 2 in cities
Summary	56	254		114	114		51	

# Varieties of risk



Context of development	Content	Communication
<b>Relationships – Peers and friendship</b>	Vulgar content shared with peers Viruses automatically sending spam emails or viruses to friends	Hate, vulgar and nasty messages Bullying by peers or strangers Creating fake SNS profile about somebody Exclusion from a group in games Being killed or cursed in games Hacked SNS or games profile by peers
<b>Relationships – Romantic relationships</b>	Advertisements for dating sites (including sexual or vulgar content)	Reporting fake romantic relationships Publishing sexual pictures of ex-partner as “revenge” Publishing attractive pictures to attract peers Meeting online strangers for dating purposes
<b>Relationships – Parents</b>	Seeing inappropriate content without parents’ permission	Parent–child conflicts because of the internet Parents force child to be offline because of addiction Posting vulgar comments about parents
<b>School</b>	Untrue online information used for homework Tech problems at school (e.g. viruses, filters)	Offensive comments/fake profiles about teachers School problems after being online too much
<b>Sexuality</b>	Commercials with sexual content (YouTube, games, web, pop-ups, email) Pornographic material Sexual pictures / videos online (e.g. ask.fm) Watching live pornography Viruses put pornography on computers	Sexual communication, requests and comments Bullying with sexual content Publishing sexual pictures to attract peers / get “likes” Shared revenge porn or virtual sex

# Varieties of risk (2)



Context of development	Content	Communication
<b>Identity and personal data</b>	<p>Pop-ups or web pages asking for personal data</p> <p>Viruses automatically sending emails, or posting stuff or messages on Facebook</p>	<p>Stolen/sharing virtual identity (email, SNS profile, avatar)</p> <p>Hacked/ hijacked account or posting untrue/private info</p> <p>Pretending to be someone else (e.g., celebrities, fake)</p> <p>Lying about personal data</p> <p>Sharing personal data (e.g., address, phone number, photos) or too many private details</p> <p>Requests for personal information from strangers</p> <p>Meeting online strangers offline</p>
<b>Health and well-being</b>	<p>Over-use or addiction problems, including headaches, reduced eating, reduced sleeping, losing friends, eye problems</p> <p>Seeing pro-anorexia websites</p> <p>Preoccupation by sexual videos or gaming</p>	<p>Emotional problems after bullying or bothering contact</p> <p>Losing contact with reality</p>
<b>Morality</b>	<p>Racist content</p> <p>Illegal activities, like downloading programs, movies, and music</p> <p>Finding untrue or false information</p> <p>Commercials telling you to buy, download, or win something</p> <p>Vulgar, nasty, hate sites/ images/ videos</p>	<p>Racist messages</p> <p>Sharing illegal materials (e.g., programs, movies, music) in P2P networks</p> <p>Fake emails telling you that you could win something</p> <p>Commercial emails</p>

# Awareness

- Younger kids are very influenced by parents and by sensationalist mass media, so they worry about risks that are not very common (strangers, kidnapping, etc.)
- Teens are focused on peer problems, based on their direct experience and the stories/rumours of what has happened to their friends or is being discussed among their peers

*I think kids in our generation...we are more protected on Facebook because of all the stories...a girl got killed, so now we're more like, 'Oh no, I'm not going to do that, because I've read this...and it says that this girl got killed, so I'm not going to do this or I'm not going to do this.' (girl, 11–12, UK)*

*Girl 1: I saw a story about a boy...  
Girl 2: Who published pictures of his ex-girlfriend, they broke up, he had pictures that were meant only for him and he decided to upload them for everyone!  
Girl 1: And then people commented saying it was horrible, that it was stupid...  
Girl 2: And it is...she will never be able to delete them.  
Girl 1: Yes. As they say: once online, forever online.  
(girls, 15, Portugal)*

*I can use the internet as long as I don't upload any photos, and that, because later the kidnappers may chat with me... My parents have already told me, not to chat with people I don't know. They don't want me to talk to unknown people in case they are kidnappers and they want to meet me face-to-face... I've seen lots of cases. But I don't mind, since it's like it won't happen to me... They show cases on the television, people who have started chatting to somebody, then they have met up and been killed. (boy, 11–13, Spain)*

*Or else he could take advantage of you before killing you. If you do not do what he says, he could touch your private body, hurt you, throw stones at you or smack you with a belt or stab you with a knife. (girl, 9–10, Malta)*

# Preventive measures



- Children often try to avoid problems (esp. for porn) but for bullying and harassment, they want pro-active measures to deal with a problem then and there and stop problems escalating out of control
- Teens are rather fatalistic about problems online – ‘bad stuff happens’ – especially if advice focuses on simple restrictions rather than preventive measures they can take as agents (since they don’t want to restrict their online activities)

*One of my friends, she gets bullied quite often on the internet, in school. It’s been happening for years now, they just don’t leave her alone. People still pick on her. Teachers have got people in trouble but they just carry on, they don’t stop. (boy, 11–12, UK)*

*Interviewer: So what type of things would you not want to ask your parents about?*

*Boy: Like...stuff where I go on it. It could be like they don’t trust me on some sites. And then they start checking my history and all that.*

*Interviewer: So if you like...the dilemma is how not to lose your parents’ trust?*

*Boy: Yeah, like you’ve got to stay on a safe website so you don’t lose your parents’ trust. Really...that’s all it is. (boy, 11–13, UK)*

*Girl 1: When you are at home with your friends one evening doing silly things, and one might say, ‘Let’s do this and so and so’... We may laugh about or make jokes to people or we may see some older people who may say, ‘Take off your t-shirt or do so and so...’ And we say, ‘What do you mean, you have gone mad!’*

*Interviewer: And where do you go for that?*

*Girl 1: On ChatRoulette.*

*Girl 2: There are loads... You type ‘chat’ into Google and you get a long list of places you can go.*

*Girl 1: The last one I used, with some friends at my house, was ChatRoulette.*

*Girl 2: You set up the webcam, and you go round meeting different people from different countries. And every so often, whenever you want, you can change people. (girls, 11–14, Spain)*

# Coping measures

- Talking to others, especially friends, is still their preferred coping mechanism after an incident
- While bullying occurs, more common is 'normalised aggression', and many lack non-aggressive coping strategies to manage everyday conflict, especially among 11-12 year olds

*Girl: They were scared too. They supported me when we were not at school, when we were at my place or out, but at school they were afraid of being mocked too. (girl, 14–16, Italy)*

*It happened in our school. Someone took a picture of someone in a pose and then they edited the picture making a small comment and then...my schoolmate was pretty sad about it, then I told everyone to delete the photo because I just asked them, if that was you, how would you feel, so they deleted the photo and everything's fine now. (boy, 11, UK)*

*I immediately found out who it was. Because they referred to all the people I have in my friends, with whom I associate. And then I found out who was not there. And it certainly had to be him. And I wrote that he was a jerk, or I was swearing like that. So I found out who it was like that. So I came to him, I began to bitch at him. And I immediately changed the password. (boy, 12–14, Czech Republic)*

*Girl: Yes...I mean, one girl kept on insulting the other one on Facebook, but then at school didn't say a single word so in this case...but I did it face to face, on Facebook I read it, but...*

*Interviewer: And what did you tell her?*

*Girl: No, I ended up saying her 'why don't you talk to each other? 'cause that you insult her on Facebook and then in class you do as if she weren't here is not fair. So talk to each other and end it.' Even because the atmosphere in class was so... (girl, 14–16, Italy)*

# Parental mediation



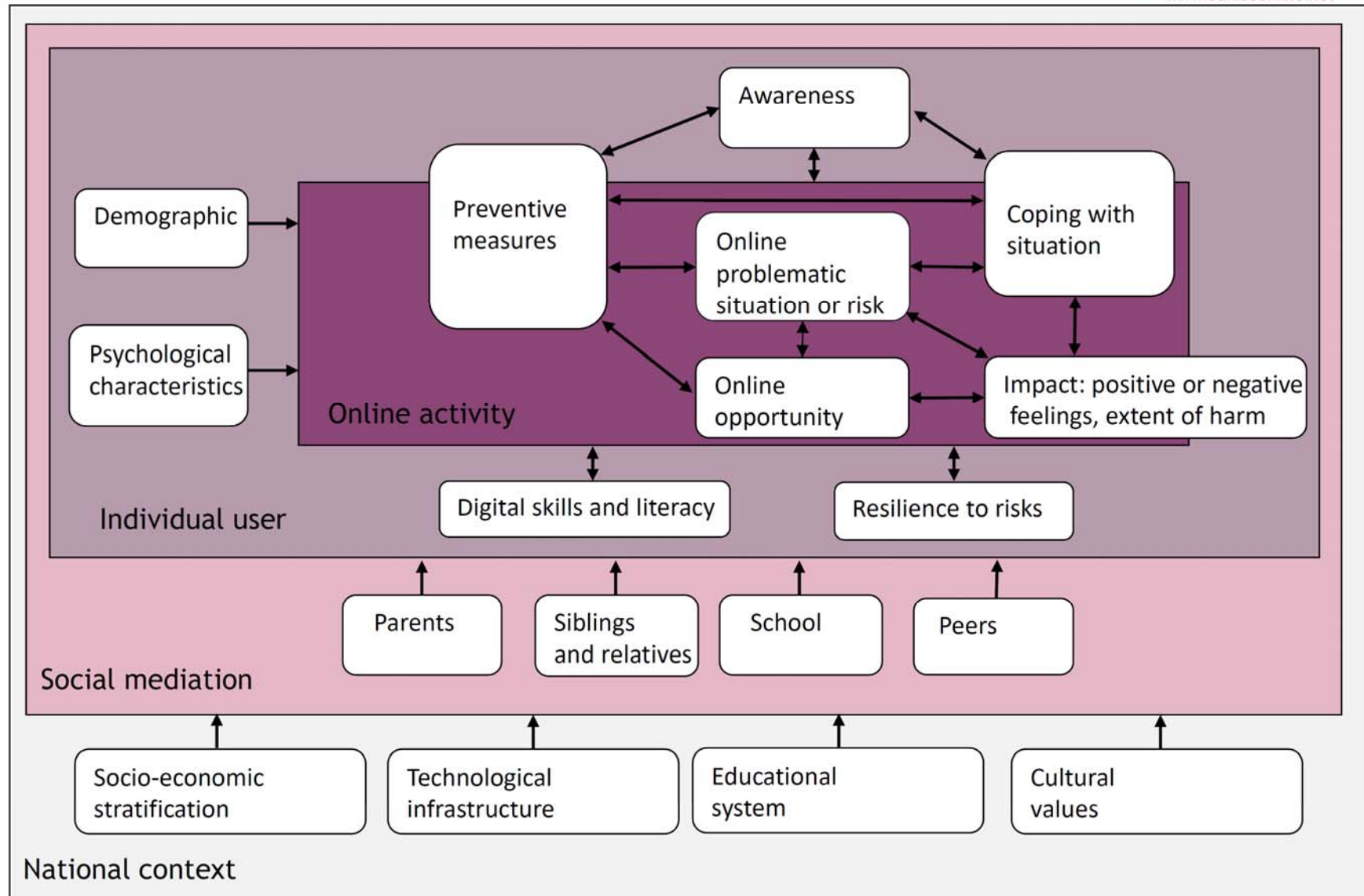
- Parents who lack knowledge of the internet get less respect from/are seen to offer less support for their kids – esp. kids fear having to explain what they were doing, being blamed, losing their privacy
- Parents often confuse their kids through embarrassment, lack of clarity, uncertainty about how to help – everyone ends up muddled

*Girl: It can get all ruined and sometimes when that happens that, like that sex thing, when you can't remove it and it stays a long time. Then sometimes when people get there, they see that and think it's because I wanted to see that, but it's not! And then they blame me and I have to be grounded, and that's a lie, but I can't talk to explain what happened... (girl, 9–10, Portugal)*

*My dad knows my Messenger and Facebook passwords. He sometimes checks to see if I've spoken with strangers after the cases they've heard of ... (girl, 12, Romania)*

*I have caught my mother looking at my FB and my sister's. Watching all our things. I saw her once looking at my sister's FB and later she would ask her, 'Who's that who was doing so and so?' I think that behaviour does not respect our privacy, she doesn't trust us (Spain FG, boys, 11-13 years)*

# Focusing in on the model



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

[Home](#)[Department of Media and Communications](#)[Research](#)[EU Kids Online](#)[About the project](#)[Members only \[access restricted\]](#)

## Contact



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## Methods and Questionnaires

Details of the methods used in the project, all national questionnaires and

## EU Kids Online



EU Kids Online is a multinational research network which seeks to enhance knowledge regarding European children's online opportunities, risks and safety. It employs multiple methods to map children's and parents' changing experience of the internet. It also sustains an active dialogue with national and European policy stakeholders. It has been funded by the EC's **Better Internet for Kids** programme.

[Newsletter](#) - [0- Infographic](#) - [0- Interview](#) - [0- Overview](#) - [0- Book](#)

### New reports and presentations

The meaning of online problematic situations for children: Results of qualitative cross-cultural investigation in nine European countries ([June](#))

Policy influences and country clusters in internet safety ([May](#))

TEDx talk: How children engage with the internet ([May](#))

### Recently released

EC workshop on parental controls. ([May](#))

Presentation to ICT Coalition ([April](#))

Researching children's rights in the digital age ([April](#))

New Book: [Towards a better internet for children?](#)

Recent reports: [Preventive measures](#) [Zero to Eight](#) [Innovative approaches](#)

### Participating countries include:

België, България, Κύπρος, Česká republika, Danmark, Deutschland, Eesti, Ελλάδα, España, France, Hrvatska, Ireland, Island, Italia, Latvija, Lëtzebuerg, Lietuva, Magyarország, Malta, Nederland, Norge, Österreich, Polska, Portugal, România, Россия, Schweiz, Slovenija, Slovensko, Suomi, Sverige, Türkiye, UK. Also [Australia](#) and [Brazil](#) (affiliated)

may help paedophiles to target 13-year-olds  
**News for policy makers**

<kids online> <children, risk and safety on the internet> TOWARDS A BETTER INTERNET FOR CHILDREN?  
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The [#EUKIDSONLINE](#) meeting in Milan is celebrating the many ways in which our research has been noted and