



Co-funded by the European Union



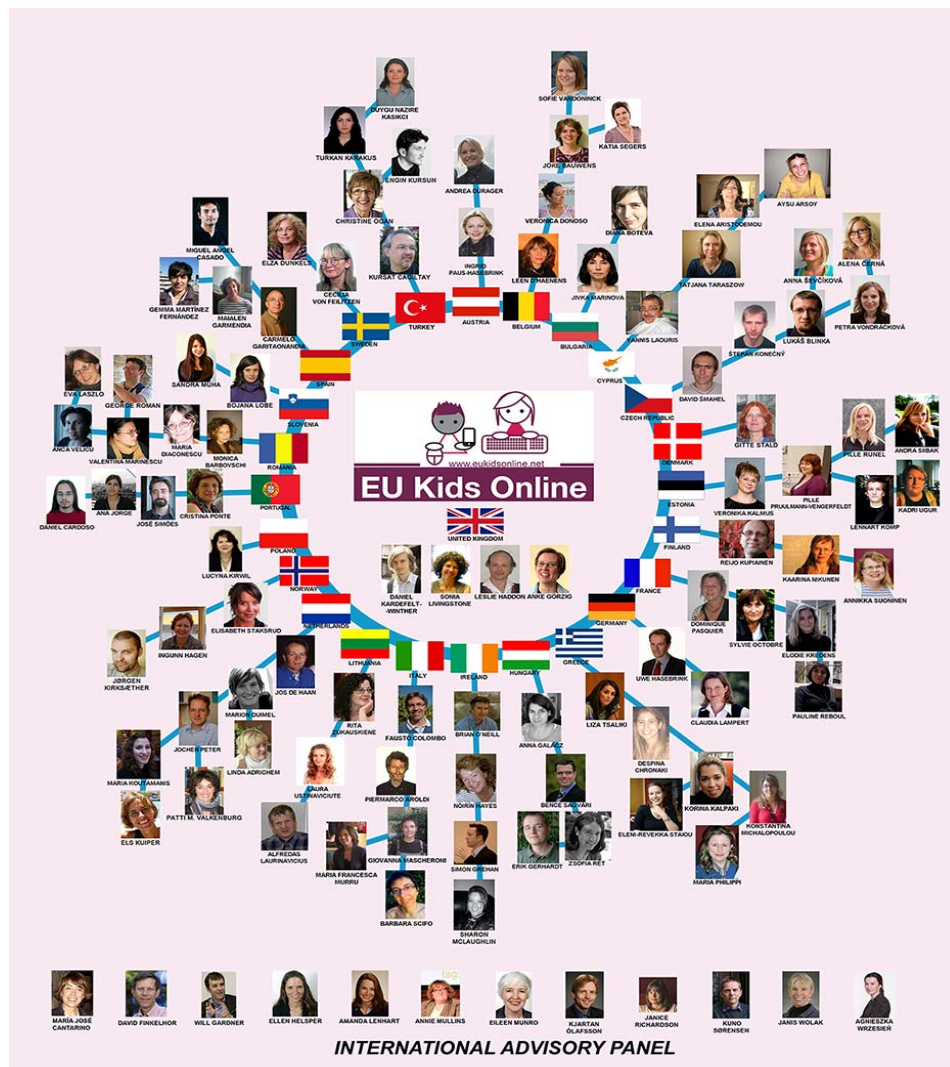
THE LONDON SCHOOL  
OF ECONOMICS AND  
POLITICAL SCIENCE



# Risks and opportunities on the internet: The perspective of European children

Findings from *EU Kids Online*, September 2011  
Sonia Livingstone & Uwe Hasebrink

# Welcome from the network



**Children, risk and safety online**

**An international conference**

**Aims to put research and policy challenges in comparative perspective**

**Co-funded by the Safer Internet Programme**



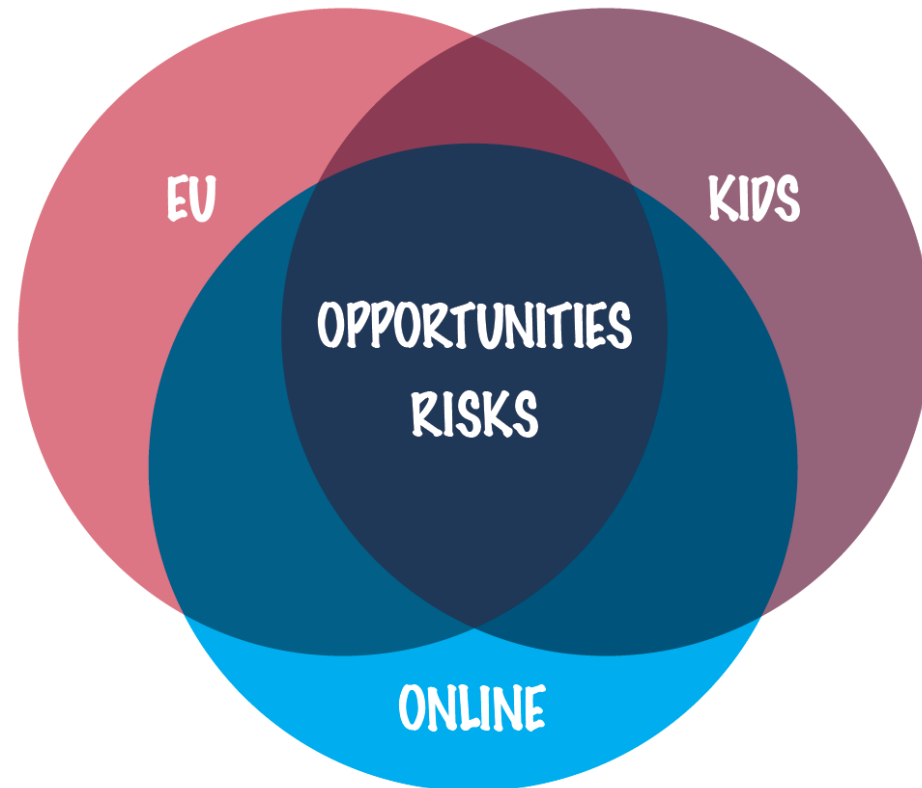
# EU Kids Online's aims



In the context of widespread interest in the opportunities and risks the internet affords children . . .

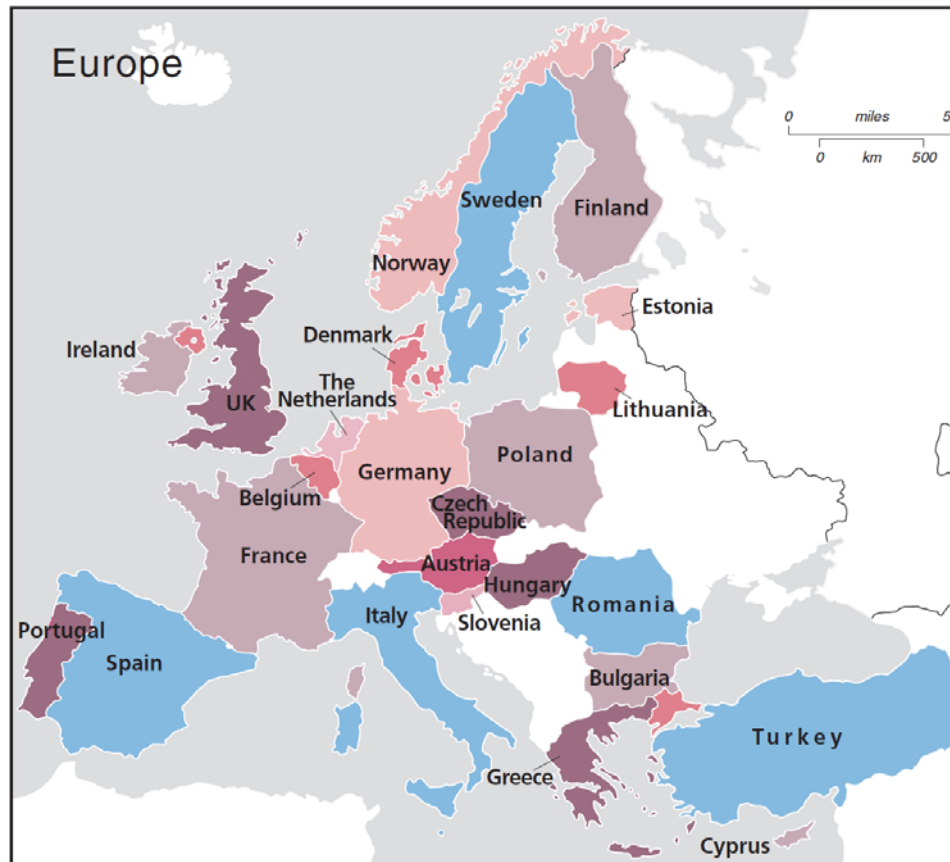
We sought to enhance knowledge of the experiences and practices of European children and parents . . .

In order to produce a rigorous evidence base to inform the promotion of a safer online environment for children.



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

# Surveying 'Europe'



- **Random stratified sample: ~ 1000 9-16 year olds per country; a total of 25,142 internet users across 25 countries**
- **Fieldwork in spring/summer 201; interviews (with child, with parent), conducted at home, face to face**
- **Questions validated via cognitive/pilot testing; self-completion for sensitive questions; care with research ethics**
- **Informed by national stakeholders and an international advisory panel**
- **The survey covered access, use, activities, risks (sexual images, sexual messages, bullying, meeting strangers), parental mediation, vulnerability, coping – directly comparable across countries**



**How do children use the internet?**

**What do children do online?**

**What online factors shape their experience?**

**What are the outcomes for children?**

*Project focus*

**Usage**

**Activities**

**Opportunities /**

**Risks**

**Benefits /**

**Harms**

**Where**

**How**

**Amount**

**Skills**

**Etc.**

**Learn**

**Create**

**Play**

**Meet people**

**Hang out**

**Try new things**

**Bully others**

**Etc.**

**Positive content**

**User-generated content**

**Sexual content/ messages**

**Stranger contact**

**Bullying**

**Personal data misuse**

**Etc.**

**Learning**

**Self-esteem**

**Sociality**

**Values**

**In/excluded**

**Coping/resilience**

**Bothered/upset**

**Abuse**

**Etc.**

*Project scope*

# Classifying risks (exemplars)

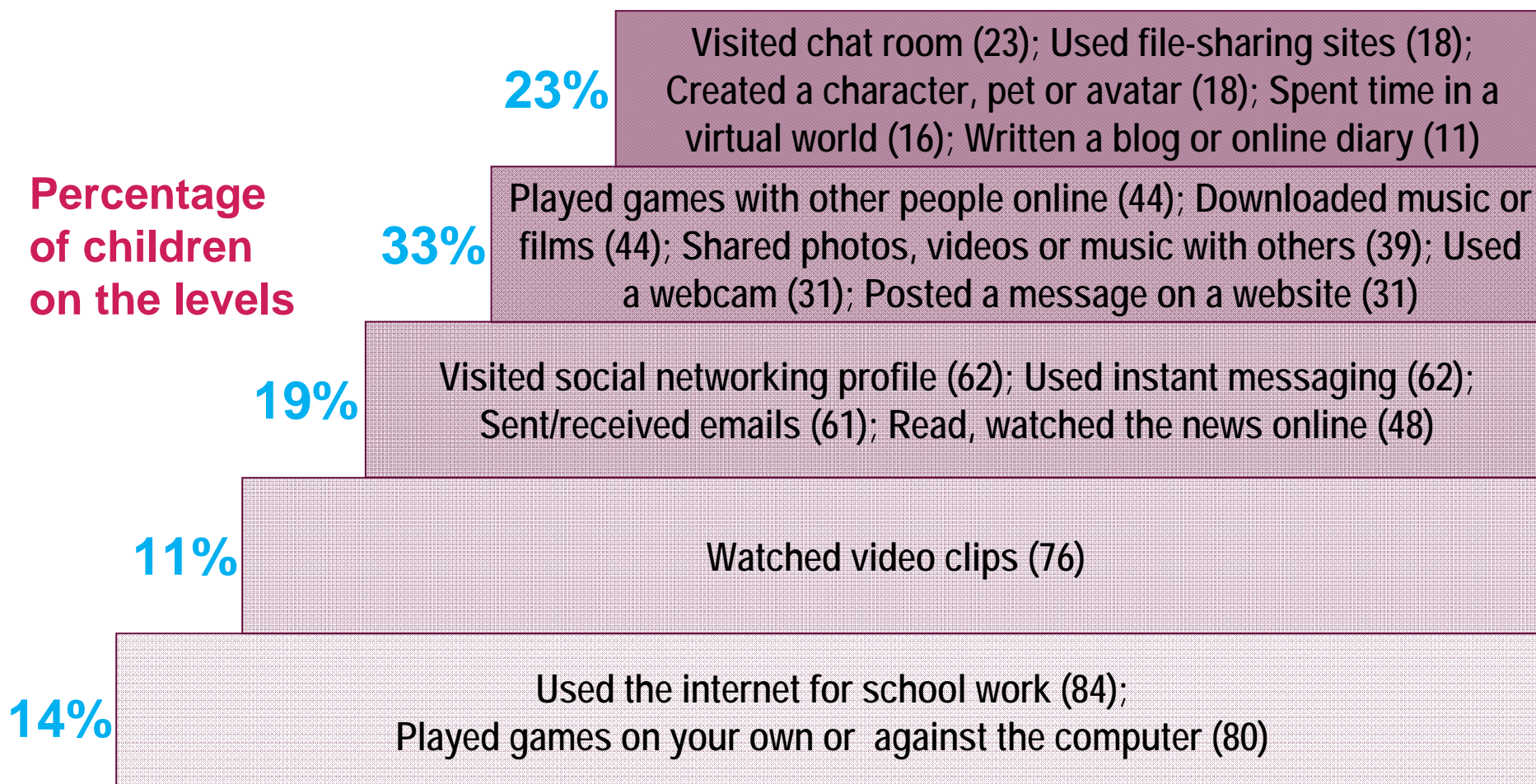


	<b>Content</b> Child as receiver (of mass productions)	<b>Contact</b> Child as participant (adult-initiated activity)	<b>Conduct</b> Child as actor (perpetrator / victim)
Aggressive	Violent / gory content	<b>Harassment, stalking</b>	<b>Bullying, hostile peer activity</b>
Sexual	<b>Pornographic content</b>	<b>'Grooming', sexual abuse or exploitation</b>	<b>Sexually harassment, 'sexting'</b>
Values	<b>Racist / hateful content</b>	Ideological persuasion	<b>Potentially harmful user-generated content</b>
Commercial	Embedded marketing	<b>Personal data misuse</b>	Gambling, copyright infringement

*Risks in bold are included in the survey*

# 'Ladder of opportunities'

type of opportunities taken up by 9-16 yrs old



# Types of risk and harm



## ■ Sexual images off/online

*“In the past year, you will have seen lots of different images – pictures, photos, videos. Sometimes, these might be obviously sexual – for example, showing people naked or having sex. Have you seen anything of this kind?”*

## ■ Bullying off/online

*“Sometimes children or teenagers say or do hurtful or nasty things to someone and this can often be quite a few times on different days over a period of time. It can include teasing someone in a way the person does not like; hitting, kicking or pushing someone around; leaving someone out of things. Has someone acted in this kind of hurtful or nasty way to you in the past 12 months?/ Have you been treated in a hurtful or nasty way on the internet?”*

## ■ Sending/receiving sexual messages online (11+ yrs)

*“People do all kinds of things on the internet. Sometimes they may send sexual messages or images. By this, we mean talk about having sex or images of people naked or having sex. Have you seen/sent/received/posted a sexual message (words, pictures or video) of any kind on the internet?”*

## ■ Meeting new people

*“Have you ever had contact on the internet with someone you have not met face to face before? Have you ever gone on to meet anyone face to face that you first met on the internet in this way?”*



# Experiences of risk and harm



	Sexual images	Bullying	Sexual messages*	Meeting new people
Experienced the risk at all	23	19	---	---
Experienced the risk online	14	6	15	9
Online perpetrators	---	3	3	---
Felt bothered	4	---	4	1
Felt bothered (% of those who experienced the risk)	32	---	25	11
<b>(Fairly) upset</b> (% of those who felt bothered)	44	55	45	50

Base: All children, n=25.142

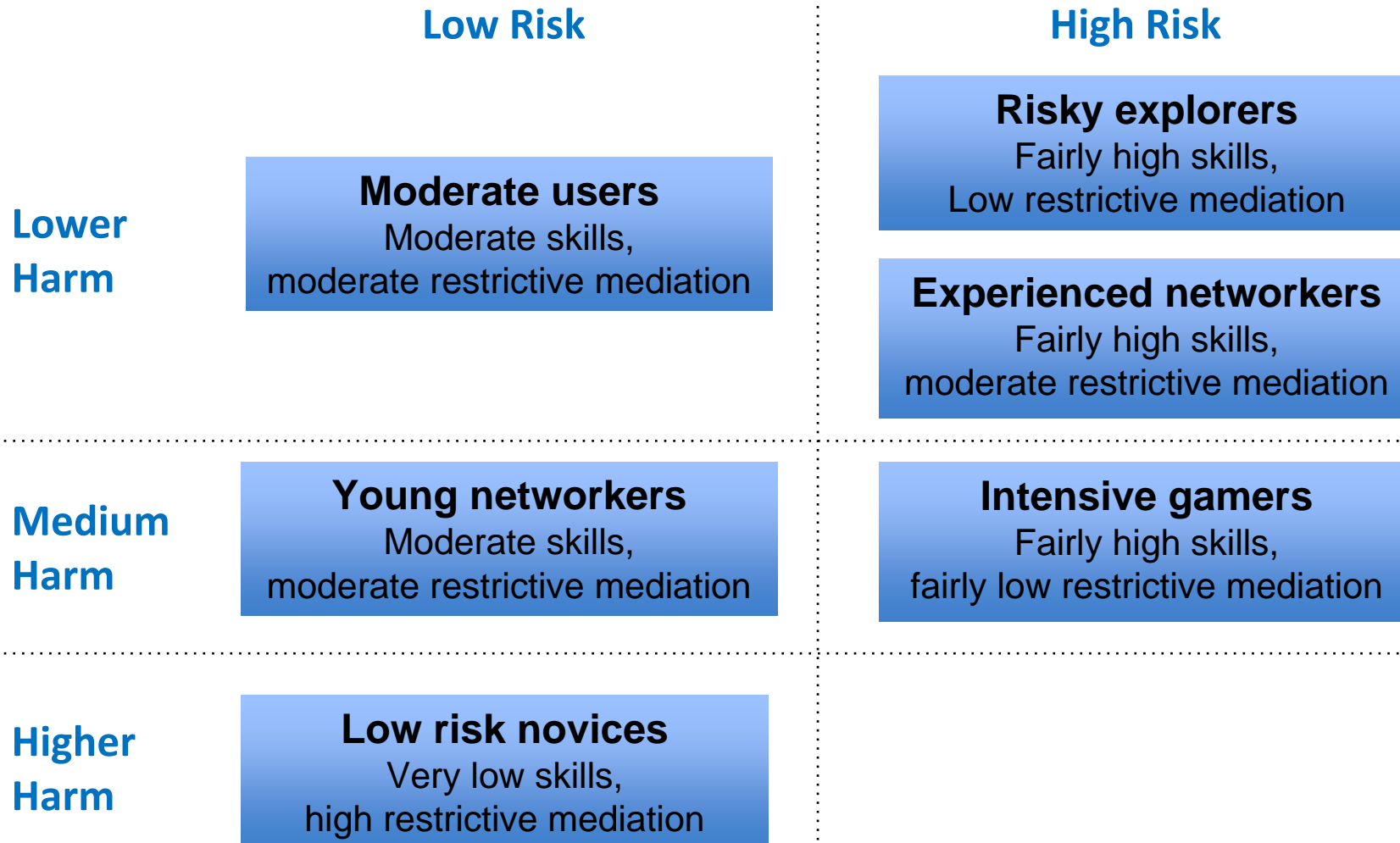
\*) only 11-16 years

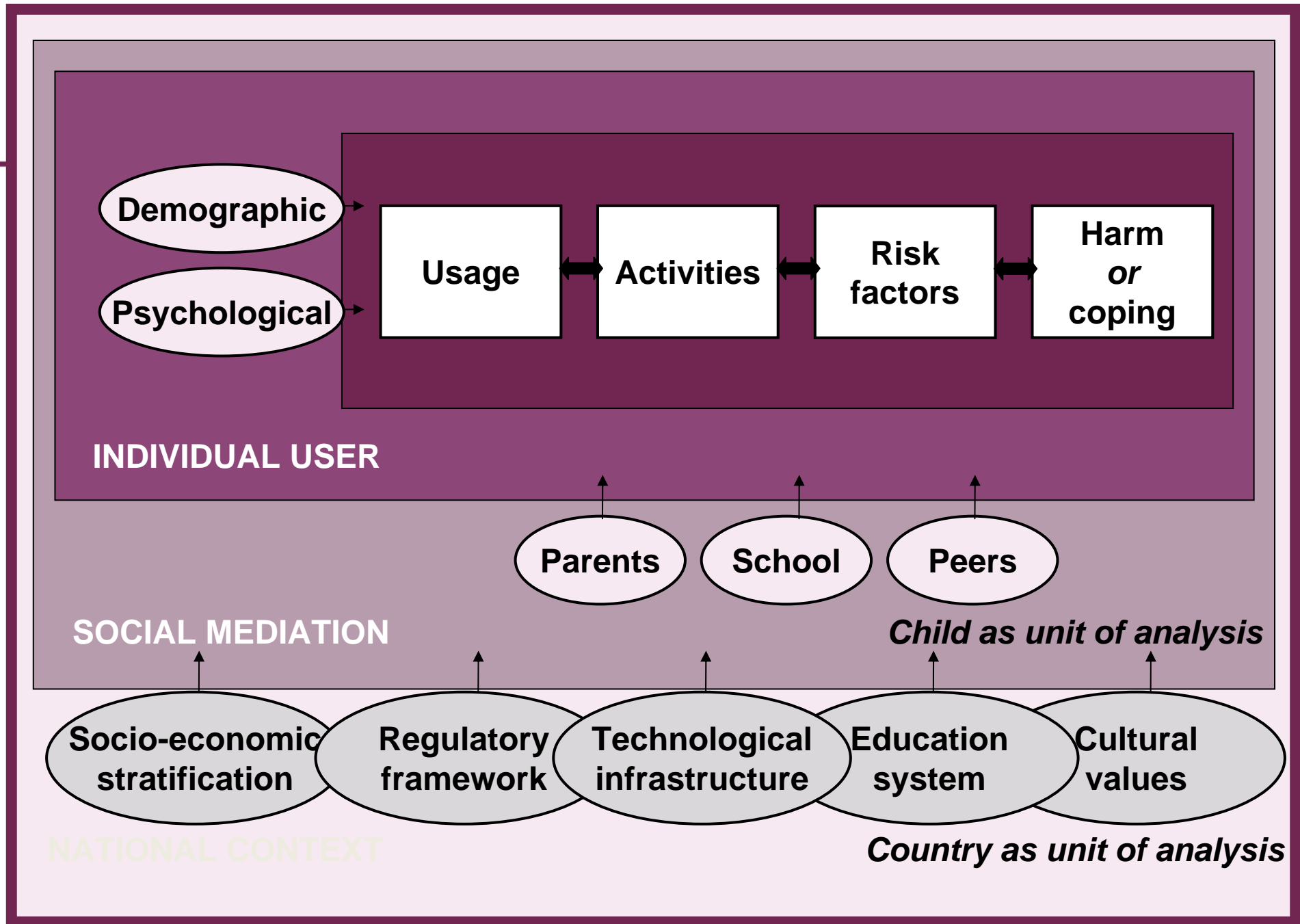
# Types of young online users



	Dura- -tion	Range	Activities	% of sample	Age	% girls
<b>Low risk novices</b>	50	3.0	+ schoolwork	28.5	11.1	50
<b>Young networkers</b>	72	5.8	+ Social networking sites	12.1	12.7	55
<b>Moderate users</b>	71	7.7	+ schoolwork and other content based activities	23.5	12.7	48
<b>Risky explorers</b>	118	13.2	+ all communication and participation related activities	10.9	13.5	38
<b>Intensive gamers</b>	180	9.8	+ games	10.9	13.6	37
<b>Experienced networkers</b>	108	9.6	+ Social networking sites and other communication activities; - games	14.2	14.1	67

# User types classified by risk and harm







# Top ten myths



- 1.** Digital natives know it all
- 2.** Everyone is creating their own content
- 3.** Under 13s don't use social networking sites
- 4.** Everyone watches porn online
- 5.** Bullies are baddies
- 6.** People you meet on the internet are strangers
- 7.** Offline risks migrate online
- 8.** Putting the PC in the living room will help
- 9.** Teaching digital skills reduces online risk
- 10.** Children can get around safety software

# EU Kids Online's work 2009-11



- Risks and safety on the internet: The perspective of European children. Full findings
- Final recommendations: Policy implications, methodological lessons and research recommendations
- Patterns of risk and safety online: In-depth analyses from the EU Kids Online survey
- Cross-national comparison of risks and safety on the internet
- Risky communication online
- Digital literacy and safety skills
- Social networking, age and privacy
- Who bullies and who is bullied online?
- Best practice research guide: How to research children and online technologies in comparative perspective



<children, risk  
and safety on the  
internet>

Kids online in comparative perspective

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Leslie Haddon and Anke Görzig