Co-funded by the European Union

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

www.eukidsonline.net

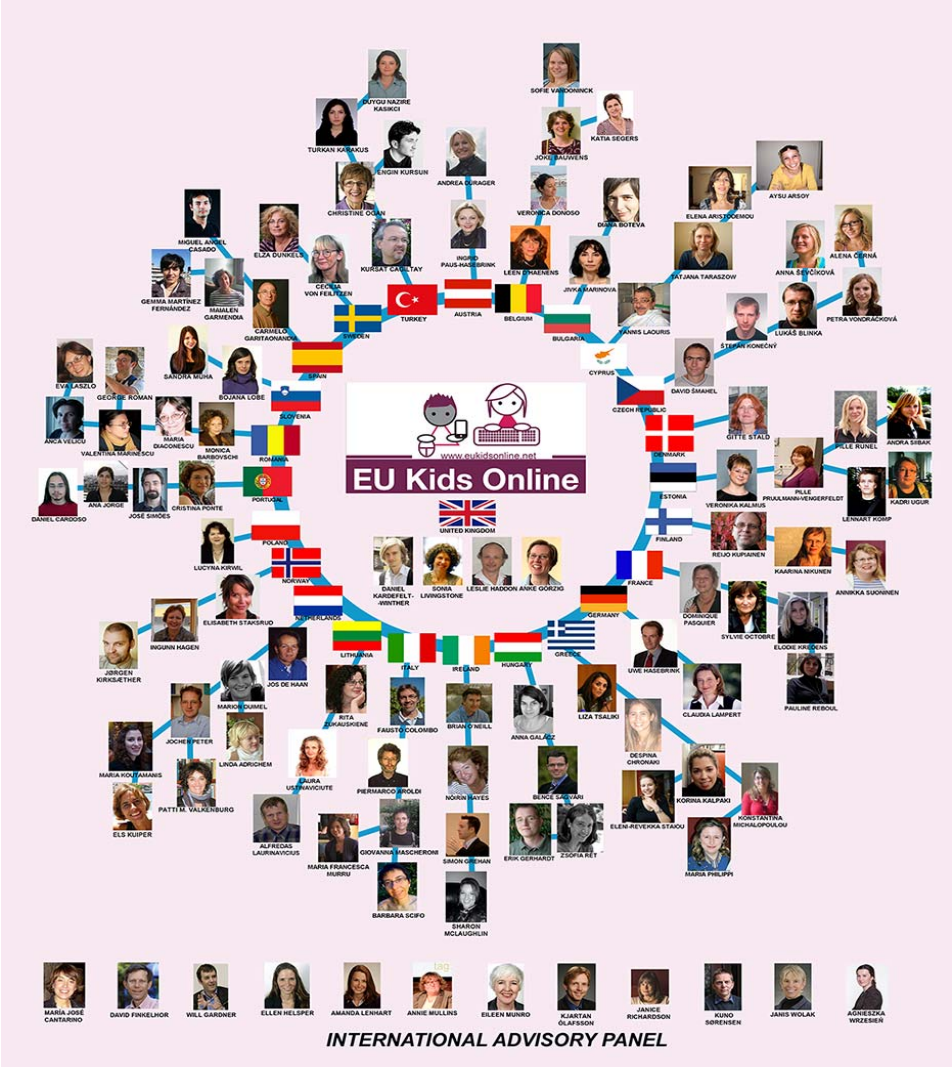
Risks and opportunities on the internet:
The perspective of European children

Findings from *EU Kids Online*, September 2011

Sonia Livingstone & Uwe Hasebrink

Welcome from the network

www.eukidsonline.net



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

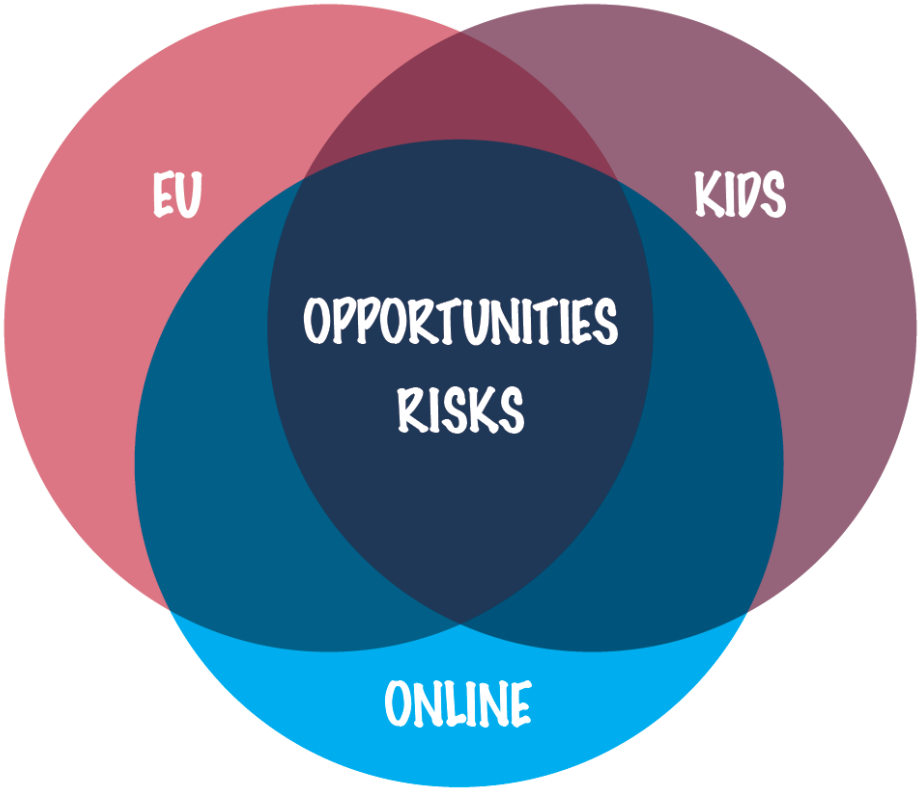
EU Kids Online's aims

www.eukidsonline.net

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

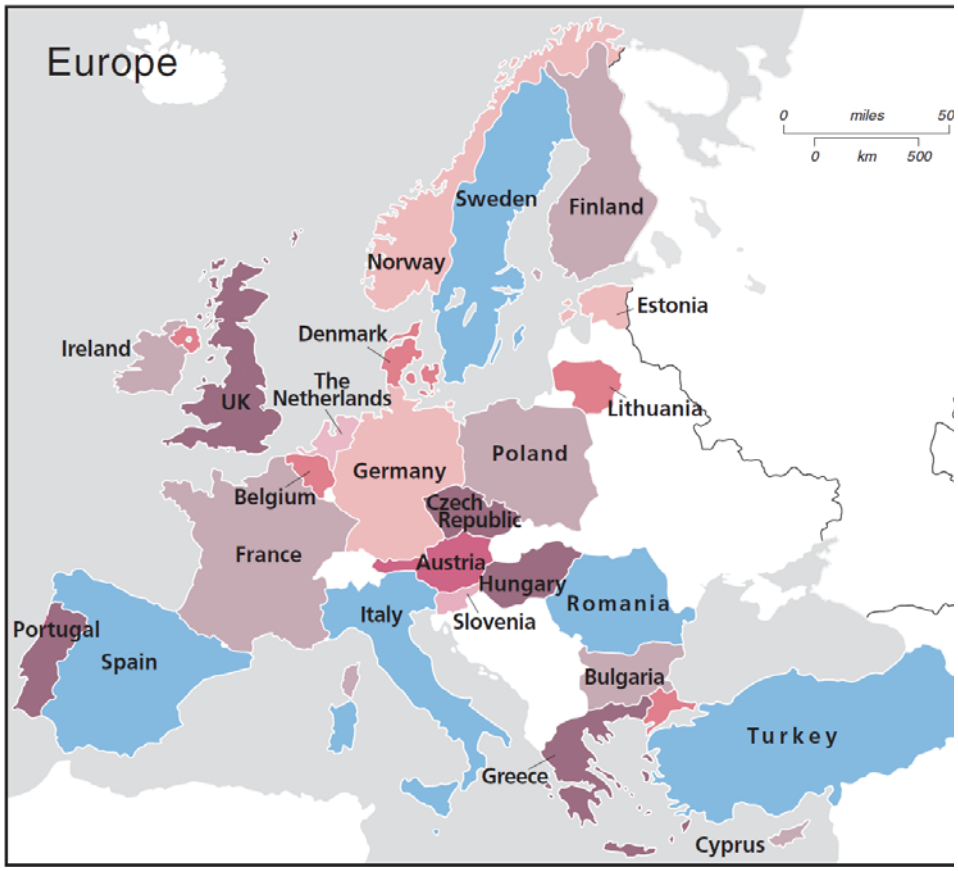
We sought to enhance knowledge of the experiences and practices of European children and parents . . .

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

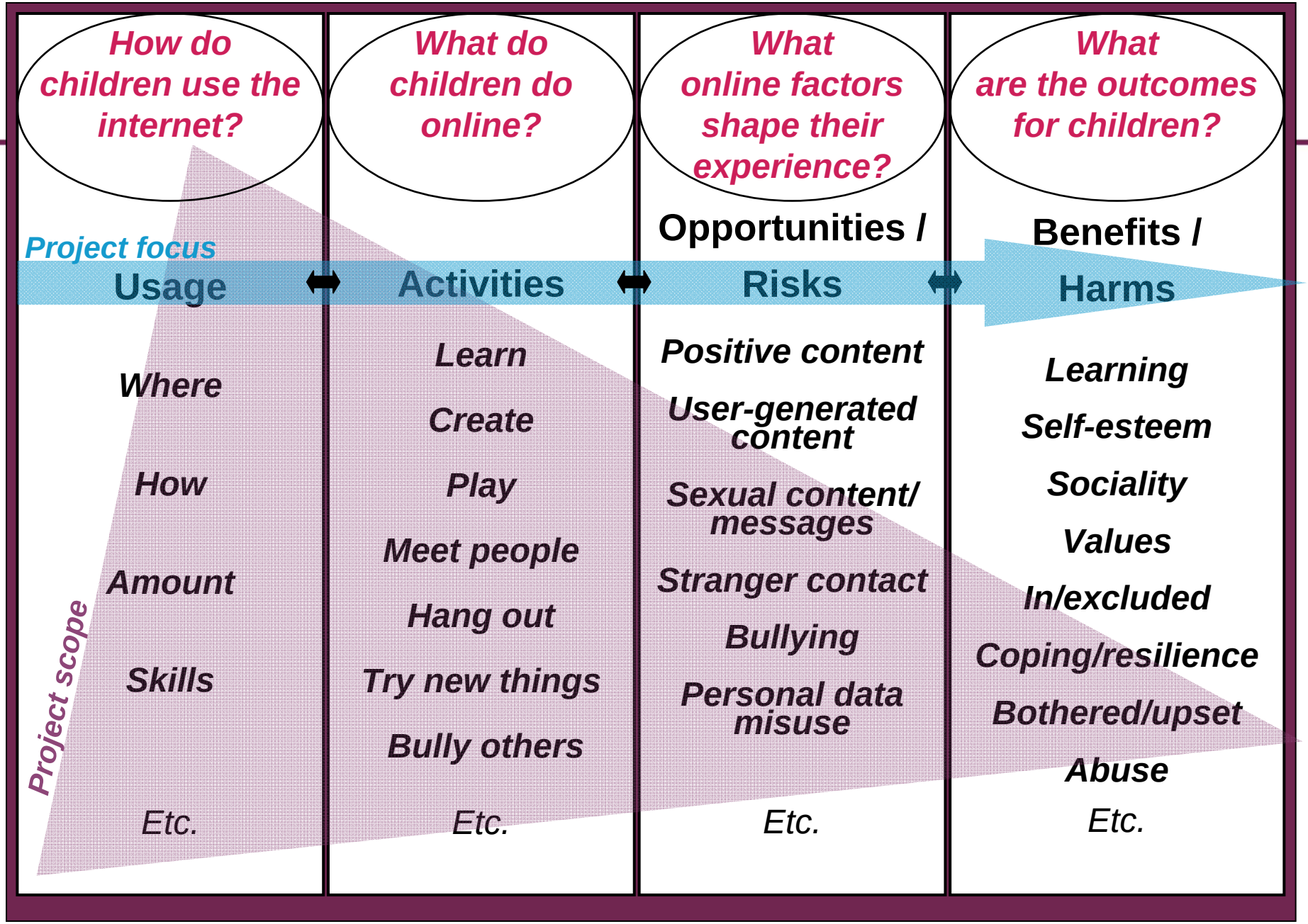


www.eukidsonline.net

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
Project scope
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.

Classifying risks (exemplars)

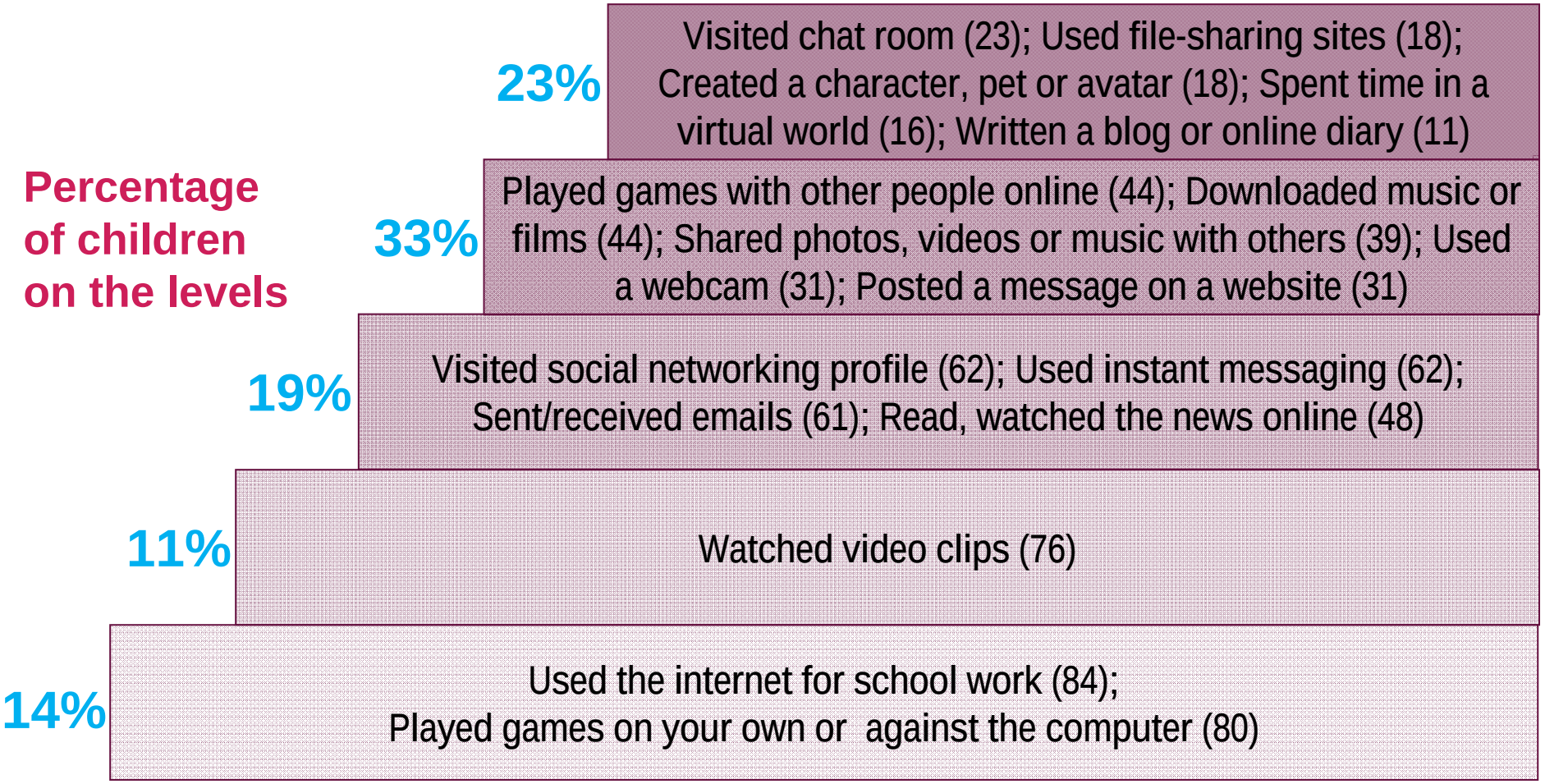
	Content Child as receiver **(of mass productions)**	**Contact** Child as participant **(adult-initiated activity)**	**Conduct** Child as actor **(perpetrator / victim)**
Aggressive	Violent / gory content	**Harassment, stalking**	**Bullying, hostile peer activity**
Sexual	**Pornographic content**	**'Grooming',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

Risks in bold are included in the survey

‘Ladder of opportunities’

type of opportunities taken up by 9-16 yrs old

www.eukidsonline.net



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
(Fairly) upset (% of those who felt bothered)	44	55	45	50

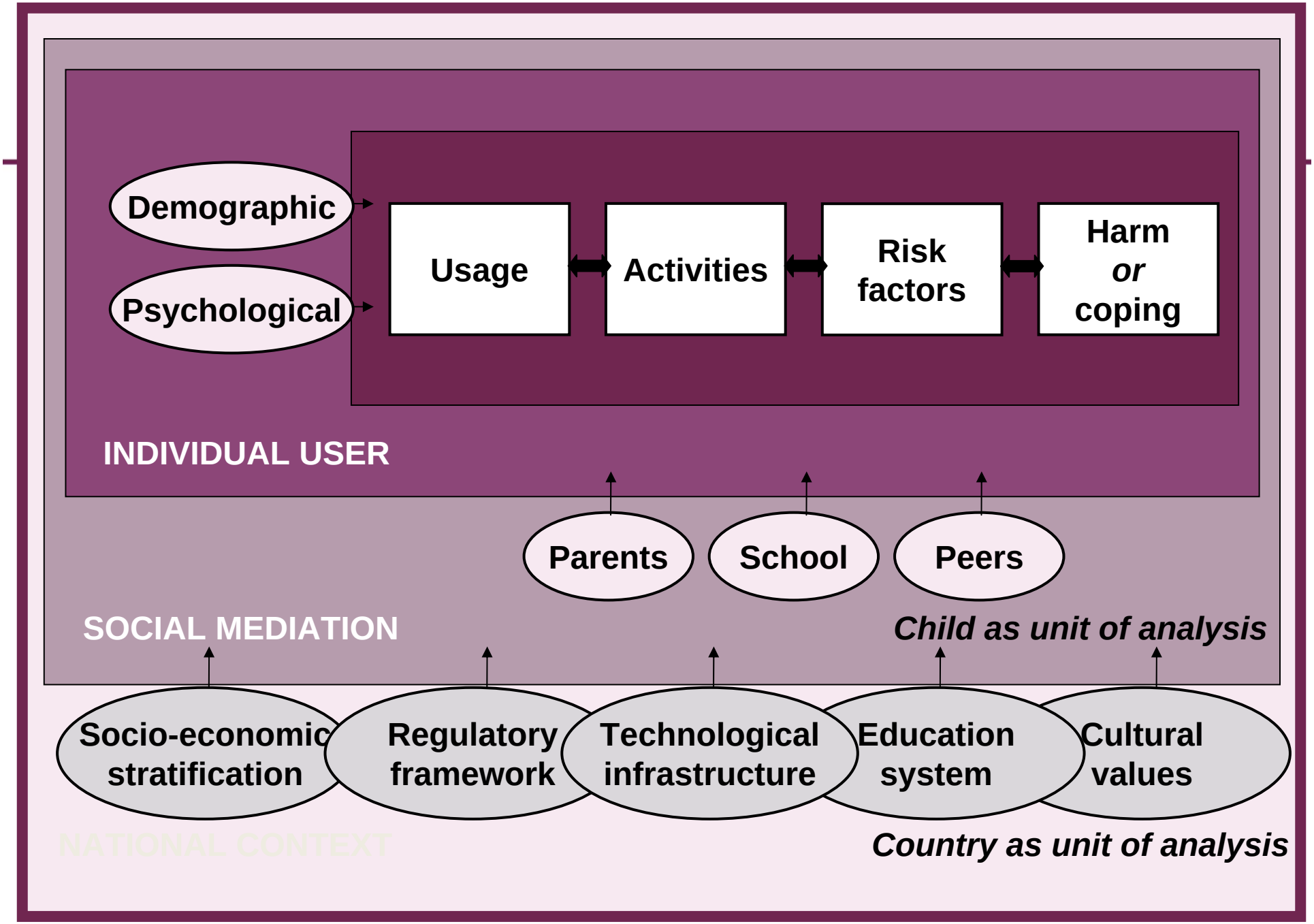
Base: All children, n=25.142
*) only 11-16 years

Types of young online users

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

User types classified by risk and harm

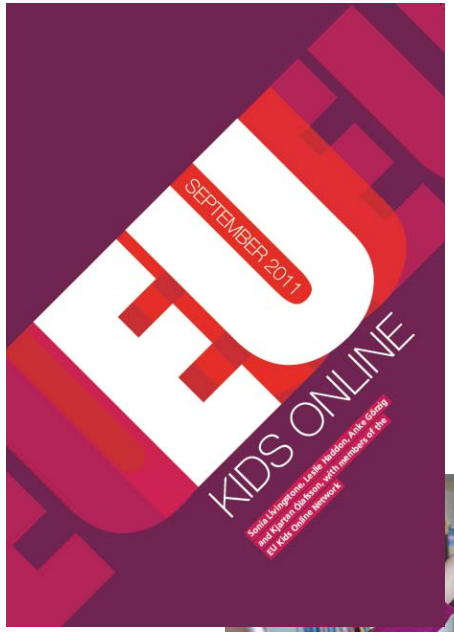
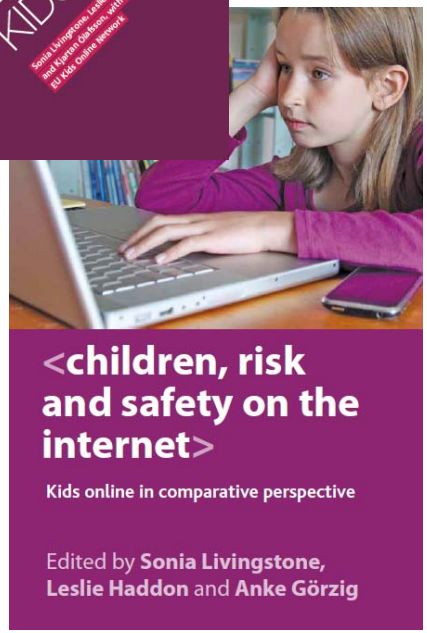
	Low Risk	High Risk
Lower Harm	**Moderate users** Moderate skills, moderate restrictive mediation	**Risky explorers** Fairly high skills, Low restrictive mediation **Experienced networkers** Fairly high skills, moderate restrictive mediation
Medium Harm	**Young networkers** Moderate skills, moderate restrictive mediation	**Intensive gamers** Fairly high skills, fairly low restrictive mediation
Higher Harm	**Low risk novices** Very low skills, high restrictive mediation	


Demographic
Psychological
Usage
Activities
Risk factors
Harm or coping
INDIVIDUAL USER
Parents
School
Peers
SOCIAL MEDIATION
Child as unit of analysis
Socio-economic stratification
Regulatory framework
Technological infrastructure
Education system
Cultural values
NATIONAL CONTEXT
Country as unit of analysis

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

www.eukidsonline.net

- 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