



CONSENT

Consumer sentiment regarding privacy
on user generated content services
in the digital economy

Awareness, values and attitudes of user generated content website users and non-users towards privacy in the UK: a quantitative study

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CONSENT

Consumer Sentiment regarding privacy on user generated content (UGC) services in the digital economy
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<http://www.consent.law.muni.cz>

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1. Key Findings

This document presents the UK results of a study undertaken as part of the CONSENT project. Analyses and results are based on an online survey regarding the awareness, values and attitudes of user generated content (UGC) website users towards privacy. The questionnaire consisted of 75 questions and was available online in several European languages, including Dutch, between July and December 2011.

The UK sample consists of 1339 respondents (15.5% of the total sample), of which 36.1% male and 63.9% female, with an average age of 28 and 67.3% tertiary education. With 93% UGC users (total sample 90%), 10.86 mean years of internet usage (total sample 10.67) and 91.5% using the internet at home every day or almost every day (total sample 93%), it is a considered a sample of predominantly *experienced* internet users.

This level of experience is in line with the UK respondents' awareness and behaviour regarding the handling of technical details: 64% are aware of "cookies" (total sample 65%), and more than two out of three respondents actually disabled them (UK 72%, total sample 68%). On the level of specific technical measures taken to maintain or increase personal internet security, all practices (pop-up window blockers, checking opt-in / opt-out boxes, checking for spyware, clearing the browser history, blocking emails) are well established, with the UK sample showing results that are noticeably above the overall sample average.

96.0% of UK respondents indicated that they shop online (total sample 87.4%), with an increase in positive affirmations to shopping online with increasing age and a strong preference to pay at the time of ordering online by debit or credit card or by using electronic money. Of those UK respondents who never bought anything online, 11.3% highlighted their lack of trust in online sellers as a reason for this, which is below the overall sample average (15.4%).

The large proportion of UK respondents (90.6%) who have ever opened an account with a social networking website (SNS) is slightly above the total sample average (86.7%). Regarding other UGC websites, 30.7% of UK respondents have at some point created an account with a photo/video sharing website (total sample 27.9%), and 20.3% with a micro blogging website (total sample 13.6%); all other UGC website types are clearly under the 20% mark.

As main drivers for the use of SNS sites, UK respondents indicate their interest in networking (UK 25.7%, total sample 31%) and the worldwide usage (UK 13.7%, total sample 15.2%). In the reasoning for not using the SNS account can be observed a higher-than-average interest of UK respondents in networking effects (UK 43.0%, total sample 34.4%) which is complemented by 30.2% who indicate disinterest; only 5.5% give trust issues as reasons – a proportion which is below the total sample average (8.1%). In the reasons given for deleting an account, trust issues and concern about information misuse and/or disclosure are more strongly indicated but still clearly below the total sample average, (UK 21.2%, total sample 29.9%). Similar proportional reasons are given for deleting an account with UGC websites.

Regarding the perception of general risks related to the disclosure of personal information on UGC websites, UK respondents appear generally less apprehensive than the overall average. This applies also to the specific risks perceived (information being used by website owners without the user's knowledge or consent, information used to send unwanted commercial offers, personal safety being at risk, or becoming a victim of fraud), where UK scores lower than the total sample average. Only regarding the likelihood of being discriminated against and the likelihood of reputation being damaged did UK respondents perceive a slightly higher risk than the average CONSENT respondent (UK 23.3%, total sample 22.9%; UK 27.3%, total sample 25.1%).

Generally, UK respondents show a low level of awareness amongst CONSENT respondents regarding the use of personal information by website owners. However, there appears to be some form of "balance" between user awareness and user acceptance. For example, while UK respondents show a higher than average level of awareness for personal information being used to customise advertising and to contact users by email, they show a lower than average level of non-acceptance for the same practices. On the other side, while UK respondents show a lower than average level of awareness for the sharing of information, linked to user's name, with other parts of the company and for in-depth gathering of information, selling it, or making it available to others, they also show higher than average level of non-acceptance for the same practices. But such practices are seen as generally unacceptable, and commercial trade-offs in this respect also meet little acceptance by UK respondents. Here it is Austria and Germany that show the highest level of non-acceptance.

Actual experience of privacy invasions is comparably low with UK respondents scoring 2.60 (total sample 2.89) on a 7 point scale (1=never, 7=very frequently). To safeguard their privacy, 60.1% of UK respondents often or always change the privacy settings of their personal profiles on UGC sites (total sample 53.5%), and 82.3% (total sample 79.7%) of those who change privacy settings indicated that they made the privacy settings and less information about themselves available to others.

In dealing with privacy policies, comparatively less respondents from UK (40%, total sample 47%) ever decided not to use a website due to their dissatisfaction with the site's privacy policy, and more than half of UK respondents never or rarely actually read a site's terms and conditions (68.6%) or privacy policy (63.3%). If reading the privacy policies, respondents rarely read the whole text (UK 6.6%, total sample 10.8%), although being somewhat confident that – when reading it – the text is mostly or fully understood (UK 58.9%, total sample 63.6%).

2. Introduction

The analyses and results in this document are based on an online survey regarding the awareness, values and attitudes of user generated content (UGC) website users towards privacy. This study was undertaken as part of the CONSENT¹ project.

This document highlights the findings from the study that are relevant to the UK. Other separate reports are available for the countries listed in the table below.

The online questionnaire used in this study consisted of 75 questions and sub-questions, covering general internet usage, online behaviour – in particular regarding online shopping and UGC websites – and the related consumer perceptions and attitudes. Given the specific interest of this research project, attitudes and practices in the disclosure of personal information and online privacy were particularly targeted.

The questionnaire was available online between July 2011 and December 2011. A snowball technique was used to promote the study and disseminate links to the questionnaire. A total of 8641 individuals from 26 countries completed at least a part of the questionnaire. Fourteen countries had respondent numbers which were sufficient for a meaningful quantitative analysis by country:

Nationality	Number of Respondents ²	% of Total Sample
Austria	131	2%
Bulgaria	480	6%
Czech Republic	833	10%
France	388	4%
Germany	756	9%
Ireland	626	7%
Italy	204	2%
Malta	618	7%
Netherlands	392	5%
Poland	659	8%
Romania	929	11%
Slovakia	523	6%
Spain	427	5%
UK	1,339	15%
Others	336	4%
Total Sample	8,641	100%

¹ “Consumer Sentiment regarding privacy on user generated content (UGC) services in the digital economy” (CONSENT; G.A. 244643) – which was co-financed by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development of the European Union (SSH-2009-3.2.1. “Changes in Consumption and Consumer Markets”).

² As the online questionnaire allowed respondents to leave individual questions out / not respond to all questions, these numbers can vary in the following analyses. If questions allowed – or required – more than one answer analyses may also be based on the number of responses (rather than number of respondents).

Of the total number of respondents, 45% were male and 55% female. The average age of respondents was 30 years, and the highest education level achieved by participants was of 34% secondary school or lower and 66% tertiary education. 45% of respondents were students. 71% of respondents described their location as urban, 13% as sub-urban and 16% as rural.

This quantitative analysis does not claim to be representative of either the entire EU population or the respective individual EU countries listed above, due to the fact that the sample used was a non-probability sample. Firstly, given that an *online* questionnaire was used, the population of possible respondents was limited to individuals with internet access. Secondly, although the dissemination of links to the online questionnaire (see also chapter 3 Methodology) was targeting a wider public to include all age groups, education levels, employment situations and geographic locations, its points of origin were the partners in this project, many of which are universities. This has resulted in a sample that is more likely to be representative of experienced, frequent internet users who are very likely to also be UGC users, and it also contains a substantial proportion of students.

Consequently, the frequency of internet usage amongst CONSENT respondents is slightly higher than in studies with samples that reflect the general population (in particular Eurobarometer³ and Eurostat⁴).

Internet Usage at Home	Every day / almost every day	2-3 times a week	About once a week	Less often
Total Sample	93%	5%	1%	1%
Eurobarometer ⁵	71%	18%	6%	5%
Eurostat 2011 ²	75%	16%		9%

This above-average frequent usage is also supported by a comparison of the incidence of online shoppers (CONSENT total sample: 87.4% vs. Eurobarometer: 60%; Eurostat 2011: 58%) and Social Networking Site (SNS) users (CONSENT total sample: 86.7% vs. Eurobarometer 52%; Eurostat 2011: 53%).

However, throughout this report the CONSENT data are, wherever possible, compared with those from these studies and local reports to constantly evaluate the “proximity” of the CONSENT results to those from surveys which aim to be representative of the EU population as a whole.⁶ In order to facilitate such comparison, the online questionnaire included a number of

³ Special Eurobarometer 359 – Attitudes on Data Protection and Digital Identity in the European Union, published 06/2011.

⁴ Eurostat – Statistics in focus 50/2010: Internet usage in 2010 – Households and Individuals; Eurostat – Statistics in focus: 66/2011 – Internet use in households and by individuals in 2011.

⁵ For comparison reasons, percentages have been recalculated without those respondents who never use the internet and/or have no internet access.

⁶ In the Eurobarometer study, the total average is, obviously, based on the results in *all* 27 EU countries. Additionally – and in contrast to the total CONSENT sample, the EU27 average is a weighted average based on the respective population size in each country. Consequently, the total Eurobarometer average will be comparably closer to the country results of e.g. Germany or the UK, and less similar to the results of e.g. Slovakia or Malta. As

marker questions which are largely compatible in content and/or structure with questions set in other studies. Responses to these marker questions make comparisons between results of different studies possible and also highlight possible different interpretative standpoints.

In this context, one noticeable result of the present study is that the *general* aspects related to perceptions, attitudes and practices in UGC usage across national boundaries do vary from country to country, but they do not appear to reflect any general North/West-South/East divide as stated in the Eurobarometer survey, e.g., regarding what information is perceived as personal, or high SNS usage rates versus low online shopping rates (and vice versa).

Additionally, the CONSENT data did *not* reveal any general *trend* which would confirm a socio-geographic divide. On the level of *specific* perceptions and practices, observable variations *do* exist, but rather than ascribing these to either socio-economic differences or putative “national characters” it may be more productive to depict and analyse a situation where shifting ideas and concerns about online privacy and disclosure of personal information are informed by different local – institutional, legal, historical – *and* trans-local structures, which merge and supersede each other. Instead of linking CONSENT results back to assumed “cultural” differences, they can then contribute to the understanding of a, perhaps, specifically European dynamic where ideas and concerns transgress national boundaries. This aspect of the study which requires further *qualitative* research is addressed in another separate CONSENT study (Work Package 8).

the CONSENT study is not aiming at representing a total EU population but a trans-European perspective on internet users, we have chosen to attribute to every European respondent the same weight.

3. Methodology

The English version of the online questionnaire used in this study may be viewed in Appendix A. The questionnaire was also translated into Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, French, Hungarian, German, Greek, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, and Swedish. Respondents could choose which language to see the questionnaire in by selecting from a pull-down menu on the first page of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was available online between July 2011 and December 2011. A snowball technique was used to promote the study and disseminate links to the questionnaire. Each partner in the CONSENT project was responsible for the dissemination of links in their respective country.

In the UK, the collection of data was organised via five main routes.

First, a number of personal contacts of the UK researcher were asked to utilise their own email address books to send out a request to complete the survey. The reason for this was to provide a more legitimate request than one which came from someone unknown to the recipient. This appeared to be a relatively successful operation, with a number of individuals also posting messages on their social networking sites asking others to complete the survey.

Second, a number of requests were made to various other social networking sites requesting that they post information on their website for their members. This was a less successful strategy and there was usually a null response from the individual requested. It is not known why this strategy was unsuccessful but may be due to individuals not wishing to highlight privacy concerns with facilities they were themselves providing. Where it was successful, it was because the researcher knew the individuals who could promote the survey on that particular social networking site.

Third, a number of requests were made to NGO and government organisations (e.g. The Information Commissioner's Office) that the survey be advertised on their web site. The ICO agreed but other agencies (more governmental) felt that this was not a valid use of their web site and declined to support the data collection.

Fourth, being aware that there would be a tendency to gather data from younger individuals, it was tried to access information from older people. Thus contacts in the social world/education field were used to find groups who were training older people to use the internet or who had groups who met who might be 'silver surfers'.

Fifth, the Queen's University online facilities were used to advertise the survey. Thus when students used one of the many workstations in the QUB library, a message was shown asking for survey completion.

4. The Sample

4.1 General Demographics

The data analysis for UK is based on a sample size of 1339, representing 15.5% of the total number of respondents to the study. The gender distribution for the UK sample is 36.1% male and 63.9% female, and the average age of respondents was 28 years with a standard deviation of 12 (average age for all CONSENT respondents: 30). 32.7% of UK respondents indicated their highest level of education as secondary school or lower, 67.3% responded indicating tertiary education, and 61.2% of respondents were students. Finally, 77.3% described the area where they live as urban or suburban and 22.7% as rural.

4.2 General Internet Usage

Following Eurostat 2011, 85% of UK households had access to the internet⁷, and according to Facebook statistics 59% of internet users were Facebook users, which is above the EU 27 average (51%). At the same time, the UK shares with Slovakia and Ireland the lowest increase of Facebook users between November 2011 and May 2012 (UK 1.52%, Slovakia 2.09%, and Ireland 2.98%)⁸. Within the CONSENT sample regarding overall UGC usage, UK respondents are slightly “above average” UGC users (93% vs. total sample 90%).

UGC Users vs UGC Non-users			
Nationality	Count	UGC Users	UGC Non-Users
Austria	121	85%	15%
Bulgaria	415	94%	6%
Czech Republic	678	85%	15%
France	313	78%	22%
Germany	549	89%	11%
Ireland	564	93%	7%
Italy	185	88%	12%
Malta	465	84%	16%
Netherlands	331	87%	13%
Poland	511	94%	6%
Romania	754	91%	9%
Slovakia	396	91%	9%
Spain	325	88%	12%
UK	1,082	93%	7%
Others	288	93%	7%
Total Sample	6,977	90%	10%

⁷ The British Office for National Statistics (ONS) reports that in the UK 80% of households have internet access in 2012 with 67% of adults using a computer every day. The British CONSENT sample thus mirrors the high internet experience found in the UK. For those who do not have household access, 4% report privacy concerns as a reason for non-use.

⁸ Source: Socialbakers.com; accessed 05/2012.

Years of Internet Usage (and average age) of Respondents			
Nationality	Mean years of Internet Usage	Standard Deviation	Average Age of Respondents (years)
Austria	13.04	3.779	31
Bulgaria	10.96	3.326	32
Czech Republic	9.90	3.587	31
France	11.88	3.922	38
Germany	10.90	3.472	29
Ireland	9.85	3.023	25
Italy	12.82	4.134	40
Malta	11.08	3.503	29
Netherlands	13.77	3.614	42
Poland	9.22	3.157	22
Romania	9.33	3.550	30
Slovakia	9.72	3.470	25
Spain	10.79	4.107	31
UK	10.86	3.335	28
Others	11.52	4.047	30
Total Sample	10.67	3.712	30

The cross country comparison of mean years of internet usage seems to indicate a noticeable East/West divide with the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia all being significantly below the CONSENT average of 10.67 years. This divide, however, becomes less distinct when looking at the average age of respondents: For example, the low numbers in Ireland, Poland and Slovakia have to be seen in relation to their rather low average age; similarly, the comparably high numbers e.g. in France or Italy correspond with a high average age. In the UK sample, the relation between years of internet usage and respondents' age is similar to the total sample average – at the same time, there is a slight gender variation, and with a “gap” that appears to be increasing with age (see table below).

UK: Mean years of Internet Usage by Age and Gender			Mean years of Internet Usage	Standard Deviation	Count
Age	20 years or less	Male	9.43	1.945	61
		Female	9.62	2.065	81
	21-30 years	Male	11.11	2.594	55
		Female	10.49	2.817	134
	More than 30 years	Male	15.08	3.537	61
		Female	12.24	3.797	79

Regarding the respondents' location, there is very little variation; additionally, the definition of location may also be influenced by the respective respondent's self-ascriptions and personal interpretations.

UK: Mean years of Internet Usage by Location			
	Mean years of Internet Usage	Standard Deviation	Count
Urban	11.45	3.522	217
Suburban	11.13	3.217	152
Rural	10.84	3.274	103

Finally, the high frequency of internet usage at home by UK respondents (91.5%) stands in contrast to the Eurobarometer data (56%⁹ every day or almost every day), and still varies from the Eurostat 2011 data which state 70%¹⁰ for UK. For the specific usage of internet at work, there are currently no comparable data available.

UK: Frequency of Internet Usage								
		Every day / almost every day	2-3 times a week	About once a week	2-3 times a month	Less often	Never	Total
At home	Count	1209	83	19	7	0	3	1321
	%	91.5%	6.3%	1.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	100.0%
At work	Count	565	108	53	18	76	389	1209
	%	46.7%	8.9%	4.4%	1.5%	6.3%	32.2%	100.0%

⁹ Base however including non-users.

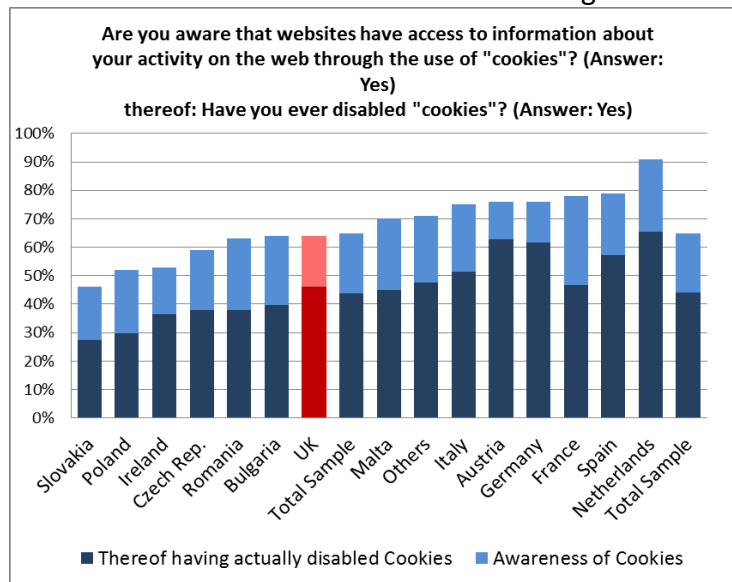
¹⁰ No distinction between usage at home and usage at work.

5. Results

5.1 Online Behaviour

5.1.1 General Behaviour

The level of an individual's internet literacy and that individual's privacy concerns represent a complex (and ambivalent) relationship. Since some level of internet proficiency is required for users to be able to avail themselves of privacy options, the awareness and usage of *technical* measures to protect personal information has been targeted within the analysis of general online behaviour. In this context, the awareness and the practices of disabling or deleting "cookies" are considered as markers for such technical knowledge.

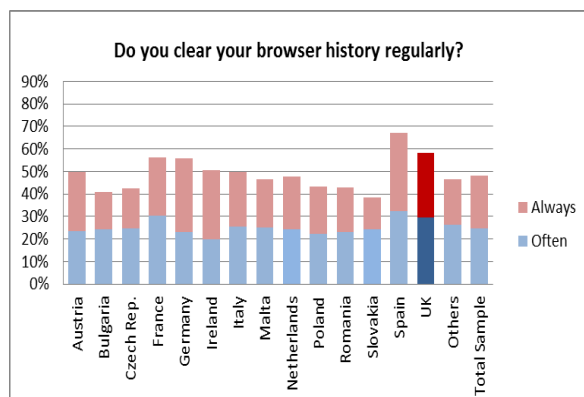
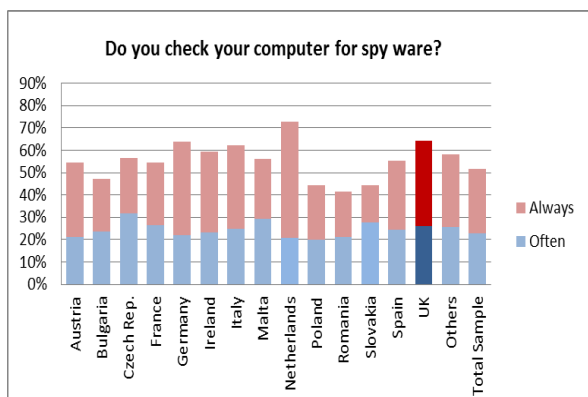
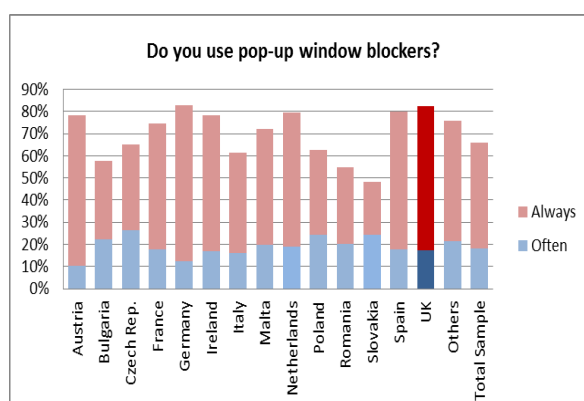
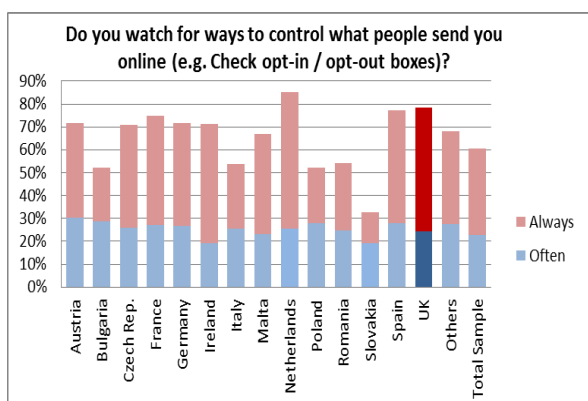


Respondents who disabled cookies. Base=those who are aware of the use of cookies		
Nationality	Count	Percentage
Poland	161	57%
France	146	60%
Romania	264	60%
Slovakia	123	60%
Bulgaria	157	62%
Czech Rep.	254	64%
Malta	211	64%
Others	138	67%
Italy	93	68%
Ireland	219	69%
Netherlands	207	72%
UK	420	72%
Spain	170	73%
Germany	388	81%
Austria	80	92%
Total Sample	3,031	68%

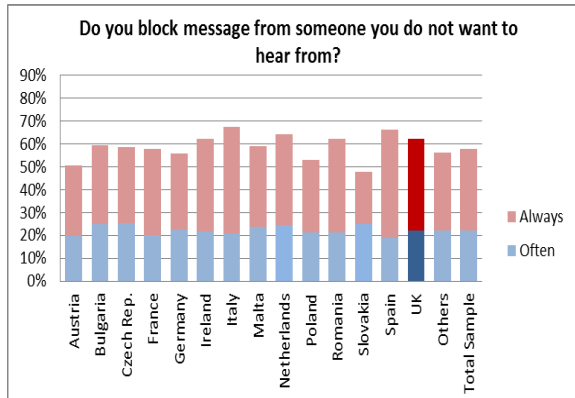
The overall considerably higher frequency of internet usage (at home) within the CONSENT total sample in comparison to the Eurobarometer sample allows for the general assumption that CONSENT respondents are significantly above-average experienced in handling technical details. However, the UK respondents themselves show a slightly below average *awareness* of the use of cookies (64%; total sample 65%), within an “East-West divide” (except for Ireland and the UK) that ranges between Slovakia (46%) and the Netherlands (91%).

In contrast to this comparatively low awareness of cookies indicated by the UK respondents, an above-average portion of those UK respondents who were aware of the use of cookies stated that they ever disabled them (UK 72%, total sample 68%). Here, the distribution between the different countries may be linked to a combination of factors, ranging from country-specific levels of technical internet experience to general user inertia.¹¹

Similarly, different “technical” measures being taken to maintain or increase personal internet security cannot simply be explained by differences in geographic regions.



¹¹ Differences between awareness and actual practices may, here, also be linked to the fact that many websites do not work properly if cookies are generally disabled (rather than deleted on a selective basis). Additionally, it can also be browser-dependent how easy (or difficult) it is to disable cookies.



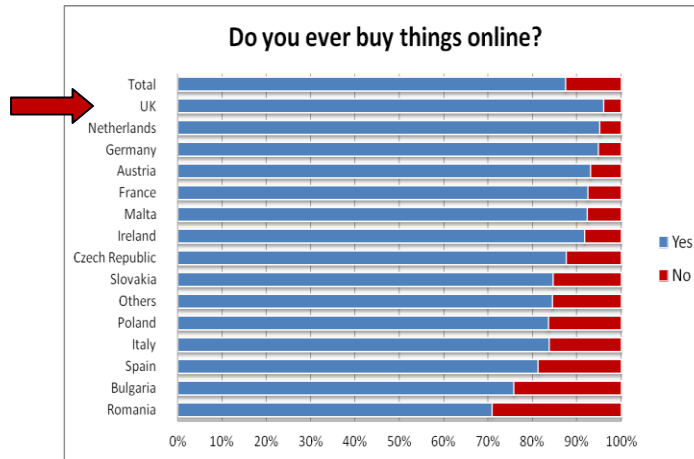
On a general level, some practices (pop-up window blockers, checking opt-in / opt-out boxes, blocking emails) are more established than others (checking for spyware, clearing the browser history), with frequencies ranging from 60.4% of all respondents always or often watching for ways to control what people send them online, to 48% of all respondents always or often clearing their browser history. The lowest spread between countries is observable in the practice of blocking messages (Slovakia 47.9%, Italy 67.3%) whilst the highest spread is in watching for ways to control what is being sent online (Slovakia 32.6%, Netherlands 85.1%). In all practices, UK respondents show results that are at the high end of the total CONSENT sample.

5.1.2 Online Shopping Behaviour

The higher incidence of online shopping found in the current study when compared to previous studies may, again, reflect the fact that the sample in the CONSENT study is one of experienced internet users whereas those in other studies is more likely to consist of general internet users.

Do you ever buy things online? (Answer: Yes)				
Nationality	CONSENT sample	Eurobarometer	Eurostat 2010	Eurostat 2011
Romania	70.8%	26%	9%	13%
Bulgaria	75.8%	21%	11%	13%
Spain	81.3%	39%	36%	38%
Italy	83.8%	35%	25%	27%
Poland	83.6%	56%	45%	45%
Others	84.5%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Slovakia	84.7%	52%	41%	47%
Czech Republic	87.6%	63%	37%	39%
Ireland	91.7%	73%	52%	55%
Malta	92.4%	62%	60%	65%
France	92.5%	66%	69%	66%
Austria	93.1%	62%	60%	60%
Germany	94.8%	72%	72%	77%
Netherlands	95.2%	81%	74%	74%
UK	96.0%	79%	79%	82%
Total Sample	87.4%	60%	57%	58%

Note: The percentages applied in the Eurobarometer and Eurostat studies are all based on internet users.



UK: Online Shopping practice by Age			UK: Online Shopping by Location		
Age	Yes	No	Location	Yes	No
20 years or less	95.8%	4.2%	Urban	97.7%	2.3%
21 – 30 years	97.8%	2.2%	Suburban	98.1%	1.9%
> 30 years	98.5%	1.5%	Rural	95.6%	4.4%

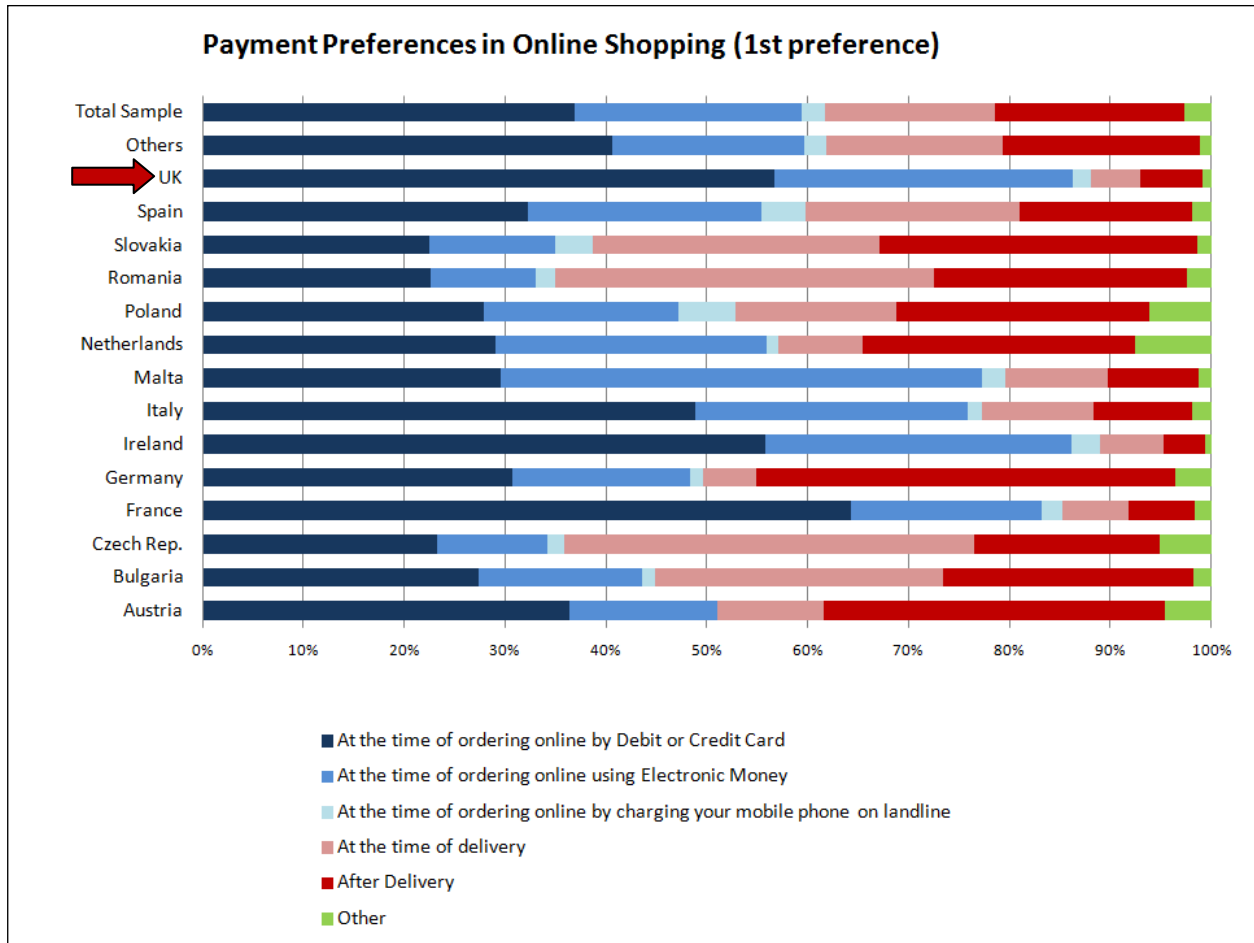
Of the 14 countries analysed in the CONSENT study – with the UK at the top end (96%)¹² – seven countries had over 90% of respondents stating that they shopped online and a total sample average of 87.4%. Five of the remaining seven countries which scored lower than 90% are those traditionally regarded as belonging to the former eastern bloc, the remaining two, Italy and Spain may be seen as representative of a southern European flank. Thus, there can be observed a certain East/South-West/North divide; however, e.g. the figures for Malta do not “fit” into such classification.

Online shopping activity of the UK respondents appears to be *not* substantially linked to location. Regarding age, though, there seems to be a slight increase in positive affirmations to shopping online with increasing age.

Regarding online shopping *frequency*, UK respondents are also above the average in comparison to other European respondents, with 43.6% shopping between 1-10 times a year (compared to the total sample average of 63.1%) but 27.6% shopping between 11-20 times a year (total sample 20.5%) and 28.8% more than 20 times a year (total sample 16.4%).

Results also indicate that there is a clearly above-average preference in the UK to pay (via Debit/Credit card or Electronic Money) at the time of ordering, similarly to Ireland and France, and in contrast to respondents from Germany, Austria and particularly East European countries who show a stronger preference for payment to be made at or after the time of delivery. These differences may point at potential trust issues with online shopping providers in these countries, but it may also be a reflection of the availability of the option of payment at or after delivery.

¹² The ONS suggests that currently 8% of all sales are online in the UK (excluding sales of fuel for motor vehicles).



Generally, the issue of lack of trust was highlighted by a certain proportion of those UK respondents who have never bought anything online: Of these 151 respondents, 11.3% stated lack of trust in online sellers was their reason for refraining from online shopping, whereas this trust issue ranges from 5.6% (France) to 46.2% (Malta) with a total sample average of 15.4%. The main reasons for refraining from online shopping additional to trust issues were: a fear of disclosing financial details online (UK 18.5%, total sample 14.9%) and a dislike of the idea of having to return things to online shops (UK 9.9%, total sample 6.8%).

A further stratification of the reasoning behind not getting involved in online shopping on a country level results in very small absolute numbers with limited significance; however, whilst there is also no general sign that urban or rural location influence trust, or foster the preference for a more (or less) “traditional” shopping experience, there appears to be an increasing preference for payment at or after delivery with the UK respondents’ age increasing.

UK: Payment Preferences in Online Shopping (1 st preference) by Age								
Age		At the time of ordering online by Debit or Credit card	At the time of ordering online using Electronic Money	At the time of ordering by charging your mobile phone on landline	At the time of delivery	After delivery	Other	Total
20 years or less	Count	195	89	3	12	13	1	313
	Percentage	62.3%	28.4%	1.0%	3.8%	4.2%	0.3%	100%
21 – 30 years	Count	220	123	8	18	20	1	390
	Percentage	56.4%	31.5%	2.1%	4.6%	5.1%	0.3%	100%
> 30 years	Count	130	65	1	14	24	4	238
	Percentage	54.6%	27.3%	0.4%	5.9%	10.1%	1.7%	100%

5.1.3 UGC-related Behaviour

	Have you ever created an account with a SNS website?		
		Yes	No
UK	Count	1084	112
	Percentage	90.6%	9.4%
Total Sample	Count	6,970	1,068
	Percentage	86.7%	13.3%
Eurobarometer: UK	Percentage	57%	43%
Eurobarometer: EU27	Percentage	52%	48%

The proportion of UK respondents having ever opened a SNS account is above the overall CONSENT results and confirms the Eurobarometer data in which UK users range also above the EU27 average.¹³ Further analysis reveals that there are only slight differences in opening a SNS account amongst those living in an urban (92%), suburban (90%) or rural (86%) areas.

	With which UGC websites have you ever created an account for your personal use?			
	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Business net-working websites such as LinkedIn	169	7.9%	2,422	16.7%
Dating websites such as parship.com	71	3.3%	651	4.5%
Websites where you can share photos, videos, etc., such as YouTube	658	30.7%	4,047	27.9%
Websites which provide recommendations and reviews, such as Tripadvisor	412	19.2%	2,574	17.8%
Micro blogging websites such as Twitter	436	20.3%	1,970	13.6%
Wiki sites such as Wikipedia, my-heritage	255	11.9%	1,675	11.6%
Multi-player online games	144	6.7%	1,161	8.0%

¹³ The ONS reported in 2011 that “Social networking is becoming ever more popular. Overall, 57 per cent of adult Internet users used online social networks in 2011, up from 43 per cent in 2010. 91 per cent of 16-24 year old Internet users now use social networking sites.”

The percentages of UK respondents having ever created accounts with websites where one can share photos, videos etc. (30.7%), with websites which provide recommendations and reviews (19.2%) and with micro blogging websites such as Twitter (20.3%) stand above the percentage for the total sample. This higher incidence of accounts with photo/video sharing, recommendation/review websites and micro blogging sites is counter-balanced by smaller percentages of respondents who open accounts with other UGC websites, in particular business networking websites.

5.2 UGC Perceptions and Attitudes

Between the different SNS websites available, UK respondents gave a very strong preference to Facebook (having opened an account with) which was preferred by 99.9% of UK respondents (Bebo 19.7%, MySpace 18.8%), and very similar to the 96.7% of total respondents having ever opened a Facebook account.

Why would you miss this SNS website (Facebook)?				
	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Many people I know have an account with this site	323	25.7%	2,751	31.0%
It's easier to use than other sites	137	10.9%	630	7.1%
It has more features than other sites	111	8.8%	683	7.7%
I trust this site more than other sites	82	6.5%	311	3.5%
It's easier to meet new people on this site	35	2.8%	405	4.6%
It is more fashionable	103	8.2%	524	5.9%
It is used worldwide	172	13.7%	1,347	15.2%
It gives you information quickly	133	10.6%	1,035	11.7%
You can find out what is happening worldwide	131	10.4%	893	10.1%
Other	29	2.3%	301	3.4%

From the table above it appears that for UK respondents an important driver for the use of Facebook is networking and, to a lesser extent, its worldwide coverage, within a wide variation between countries, ranging from the UK (25.7%) at the lower end to Malta (44.3%) at the upper end. A similar distribution of answers was given to the question why this site is being used most often.

Why don't you use your account with this SNS site?				
	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
I can no longer access my account	8	1.8%	128	4.0%
This type of website no longer interests me	132	30.2%	952	29.6%
I tried the website but found I didn't like	67	15.3%	573	17.8%
I no longer trust the company running the website	11	2.5%	112	3.5%
My friends / colleagues no longer use this website	188	43.0%	1,105	34.4%
I was concerned about use of information about me	13	3.0%	147	4.6%
Other	18	4.1%	198	6.2%

At the same time, in the reasoning for not using the SNS account can be observed a higher-than-average interest of UK respondents in networking effects (UK 43.0%, total sample 34.4%) which is complemented by 30.2% who indicate disinterest; only 5.5% give trust issues as a reason (compared to the total sample average of 8.1%).

Why did you delete your account with this SNS site?				
	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
I tried the website but found I didn't like it	19	7.5%	277	15.5%
The website no longer interests me	93	36.6%	569	31.8%
I no longer trust the company running the site	10	3.9%	130	7.3%
My friends / colleagues no longer use this website	76	29.9%	334	18.7%
I was concerned about use of information about me	14	5.5%	183	10.2%
I want the content that I have created on the website to be deleted	30	11.8%	222	12.4%
Other	12	4.7%	75	4.2%

In the reasons given for *deleting* the account, trust issues and concern about information misuse and/or disclosure are still below average, but more strongly indicated by UK respondents (UK combined 21.2%¹⁴, total sample 29.9%) than was the case for simply not using the account. However, as in the total sample, dislike and disinterest remain the major motivators for people deleting their accounts (as was the case for non-usage of the account).

Why did you delete your accounts with UGC websites?				
	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
I tried the website but found I didn't like	114	17.7%	1,012	17.0%
The website no longer interests me	244	37.9%	2,070	34.8%
I no longer trust the company running the site	27	4.2%	305	5.1%
My friends no longer use this website	66	10.3%	455	7.7%
Membership of the website is not worth the money	36	5.6%	304	5.1%
I was concerned about use of information about me	64	10.0%	664	11.2%
I want the content that I have created on the website to be deleted	53	8.2%	685	11.5%
I don't want people to know that I have used this website	23	3.6%	327	5.5%
Other	16	2.5%	123	2.1%

The distribution of reasoning for deleting an UGC (non-SNS) account is very similar to the one for deleting a SNS account. 26.0%¹⁵ of UK respondents claimed that they deleted accounts with UGC websites because of privacy or trust issues, being as such again below the average

¹⁴ Combined percentages of respondents answering "I no longer trust the company running the site", "I was concerned about use of information about me" and "I want the content that I have created on the website to be deleted".

¹⁵ Combined percentages of respondents answering "I no longer trust the company running the site", "I was concerned about use of information about me", "I want the content that I have created on the website to be deleted" and "I don't want people to know that I have used this website".

percentage of 33.3% of total respondents with similar concerns. Dislike and disinterest (combined 55.6%) remain again the stronger motivators.

UK: Why haven't you ever opened an account with this kind of website?						
	20 years or less		21 - 30 years		> 30 years	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
This kind of website does not interest me	777	62.3%	925	59.4%	647	66.5%
Hadn't heard of this type of website before now	51	4.1%	73	4.7%	23	2.4%
Didn't know you could open an account with websites like this before now	25	2.0%	38	2.4%	25	2.6%
None of my friends use this website	42	3.4%	53	3.4%	13	1.3%
It is not worth the money	39	3.1%	32	2.1%	4	0.4%
I was concerned about use of information about me	23	1.8%	53	3.4%	54	5.5%
I visit these sites but don't feel the need to become a member	290	23.3%	384	24.6%	207	21.3%

The main reason for *not opening* an account with an UGC (non-SNS) site appears to be also the lack – or loss – of interest, which is independent from age. The specific concern about information disclosure, however, is increasing with the respondents' age, and although this percentage remains relatively low in UK respondents (5.5%) as well as in the total sample (4.1%), it may indicate that whilst among most respondents potential misuse of information disclosed online is not top of mind, there is a small core of respondents for whom this is a concern.

5.3 Disclosure of Personal Information

5.3.1 Types of Information

Thinking of your usage of UGC sites, which types of information have you already disclosed?	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Medical Information	9	1%	97	1%
Financial Information	28	3%	194	3%
Work history	364	37%	2,074	30%
ID card / passport number	10	1%	173	3%
Name	883	90%	5,679	83%
Home address	135	14%	1,028	15%
Nationality	519	53%	3,966	58%
Things you do (hobbies etc.)	624	64%	3,626	53%
Tastes and opinions	532	54%	3,002	44%
Photos of you	757	77%	4,635	68%
Who your friends are	668	68%	3,731	55%
Websites you visit	147	15%	1,138	17%
Mobile phone number	257	26%	1,527	22%
Email address	785	80%	5,434	79%
Other	33	3%	243	4%

There are some differences between the UK and the majority of CONSENT respondents in other countries on the types of information disclosed online – in particular regarding the disclosure of things one does (hobbies etc.), the disclosure of tastes and opinions and the disclosure of who one’s friends are. Additionally, there are some differences to the results of the Eurobarometer survey, which split the question between information released on SNS websites and information given in the context of online shopping:

Eurobarometer Survey: Which types of information have you already disclosed?	UK		EU 27	
	On online shopping websites	On SNS websites	On online shopping websites	On SNS websites
Medical Information	2%	3%	3%	5%
Financial Information	39%	6%	33%	10%
Work history	5%	10%	5%	18%
ID card / passport number	5%	4%	18%	13%
Name	89%	79%	90%	79%
Home address	92%	25%	89%	39%
Nationality	24%	36%	35%	47%
Things you do (hobbies etc.)	4%	36%	6%	39%
Tastes and opinions	6%	35%	5%	33%
Photos of you	3%	67%	4%	51%
Who your friends are	1%	53%	2%	39%
Websites you visit	4%	12%	4%	14%

Mobile phone number	42%	13%	46%	23%
Other	1%	1 %	1%	1%

Levels of disclosure regarding hobbies, tastes and opinions, photos and friends relationships on SNS websites amongst UK respondents in the Eurobarometer study are fairly similar to each other, but the UK (as well as all) CONSENT respondents are significantly less likely to have disclosed their ID card / passport number and, in particular, their home address. The substantial difference between Eurobarometer respondents in disclosing the home address on online shopping sites (UK 92%, EU27 89%) and on SNS websites (UK 25%, EU27 39%) supports the assumption that CONSENT respondents, the majority of which are very regular SNS users, consider their home address at a different level of privacy than hobbies, tastes and opinions, photos, or friends relationships.

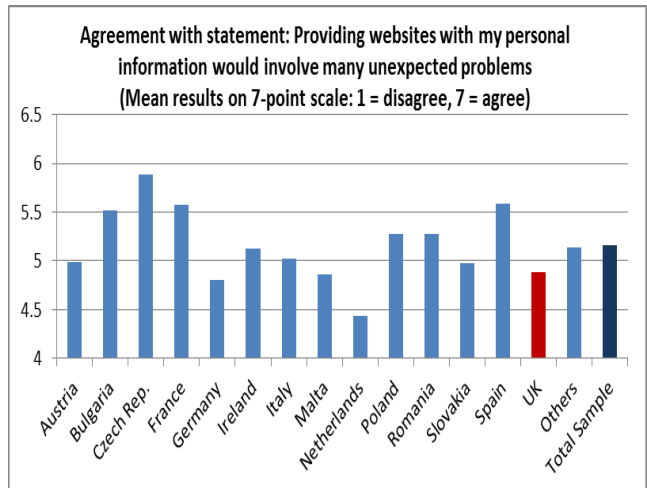
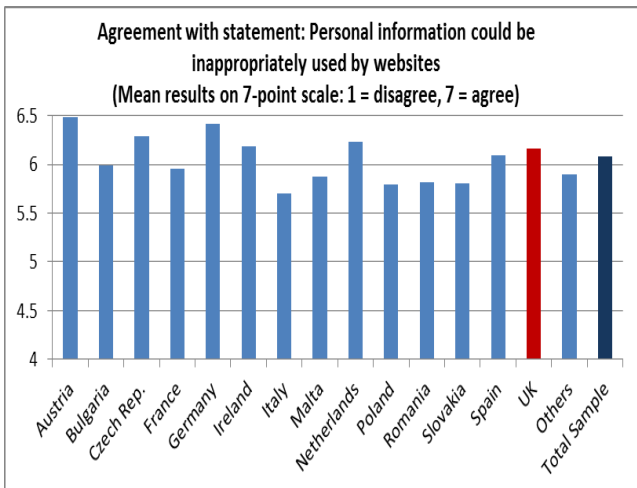
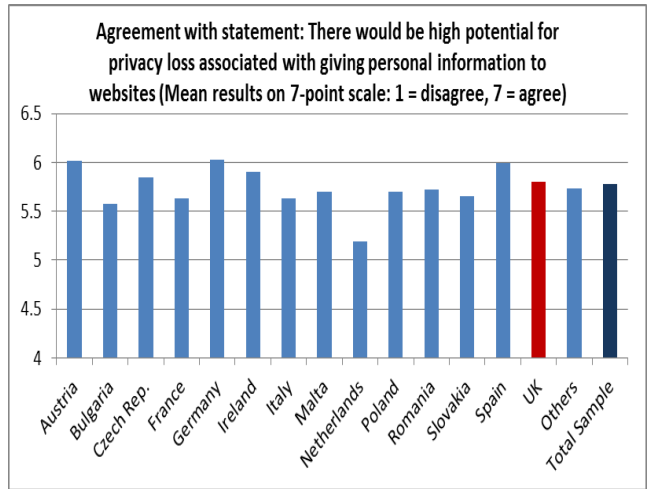
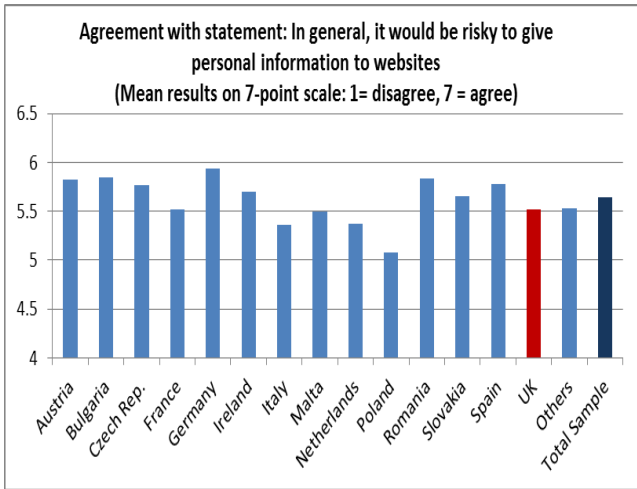
5.3.2 Risk Perceptions

Perception of general risks related to the disclosure of personal information (Rated on a 7-point scale, 1 = disagree, 7 = agree)	UK	Total Sample
	Mean	Mean
In general, it would be risky to give personal information to websites	5.52	5.64
There would be high potential for privacy loss associated with giving personal information to websites	5.80	5.78
Personal information could be inappropriately used by websites	6.16	6.08
Providing websites with my personal information would involve many unexpected problems	4.88	5.16

The set of results in the table above relates to general risk perceptions: UK respondents mostly agree that giving personal information online is risky and are similarly apprehensive to the overall CONSENT average about this. In the Eurobarometer survey, 30% of UK respondents (EU27: 33%) agreed with the statement that disclosing personal information “is not a big issue”, whereas 67% disagreed (EU27: 63%); but 82% of the UK respondents (EU27: 74%) agreed with the statement that “disclosing information is an increasing part of modern life”¹⁶ – a statement which could be read as a certain acceptance of risk but may, partially, also be blurred with differing interpretations of a “modern life”.

UK CONSENT respondents, whilst being above the total sample average in their perception of the risk of information misuse and the risk of privacy loss, are at a level which is slightly below the overall CONSENT average in their perception of general risks and in being faced with unexpected problems.

¹⁶ The base for these Eurobarometer questions was both internet users and non-users. However, on a EU27 level the results show no substantial differences between users and non-users.



Expectations that the following is likely to happen as a result of disclosing information on UGC sites (combined answers 'likely' and 'very likely')	UK		Total Sample	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Information being used without your knowledge	618	65.1%	4,872	73.9%
Information being shared with third parties without your agreement	621	65.7%	4,799	72.7%
Information being shared to send you unwanted commercial offers	723	76.2%	5,342	80.9%
Your personal safety being at risk	188	20.0%	1,596	24.4%
Becoming victim of fraud	280	29.6%	2,082	31.8%
Being discriminated against (e.g. job selection)	220	23.3%	1,491	22.9%
Reputation being damaged	257	27.3%	1,638	25.1%

Eurobarometer	UK		EU27	
	In Online Shopping	On SNS websites	In Online Shopping	On SNS websites
What are the most important risks connected with disclosure of personal information (Respondents could choose up to 3 answers)				
Information being used without your knowledge	34%	35%	43%	44%
Information being shared with third parties without your agreement	33%	28%	43%	38%
Information being shared to send you unwanted commercial offers	22%	17%	34%	28%
Your personal safety being at risk	11%	27%	12%	20%
Becoming victim of fraud	65%	49%	55%	41%
Being discriminated against (e.g. job selection)	3%	7%	3%	7%
Reputation being damaged	3%	8%	4%	12%

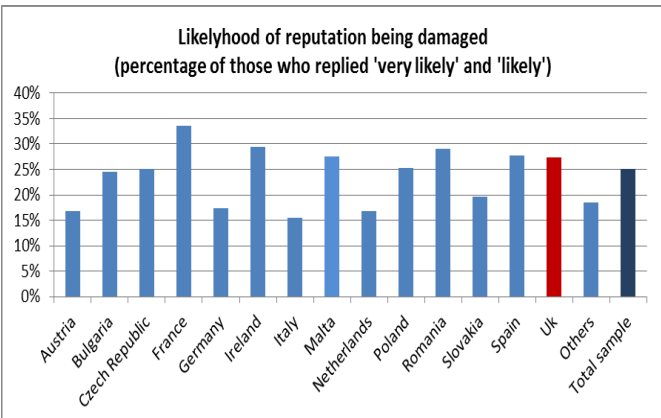
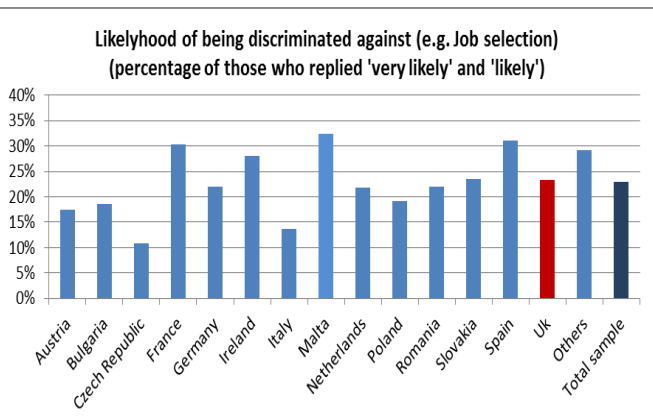
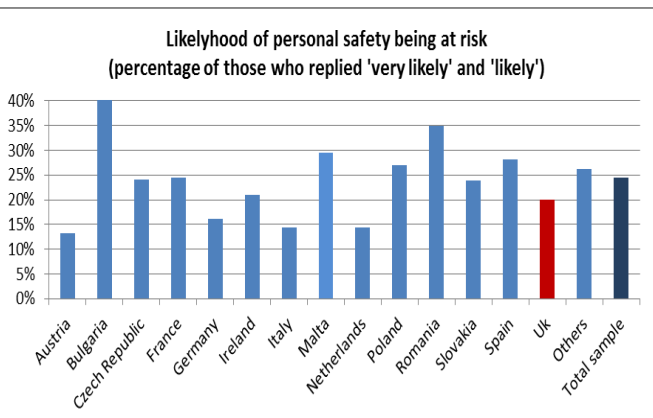
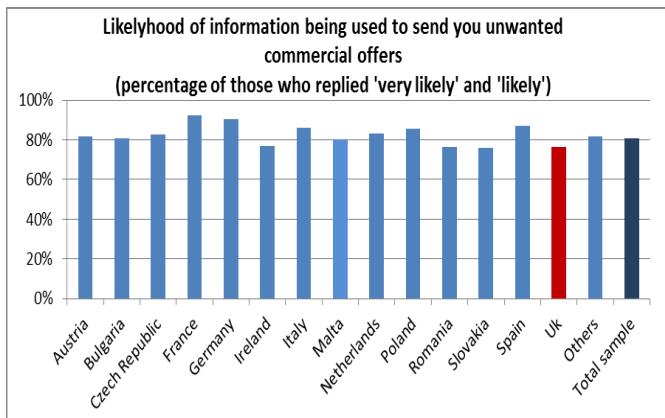
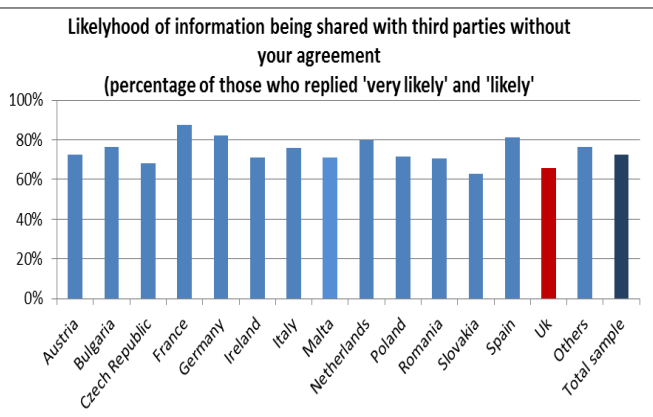
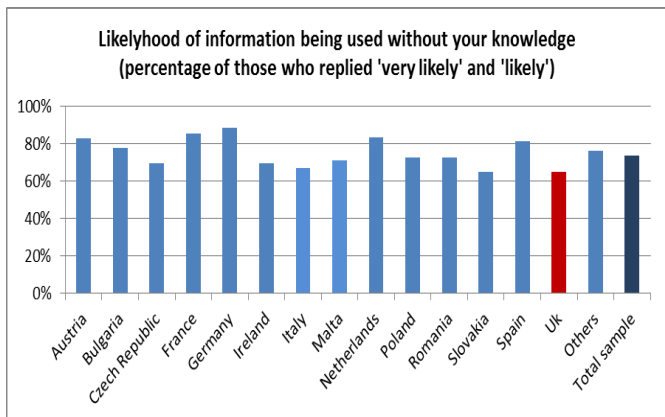
Analyses on the level of *specific* risks connected with the disclosure of personal information on UGC sites show an even more differentiated picture. Whilst, here, the statements in the CONSENT and Eurobarometer studies for the results shown in the tables above were identical, different questions were asked about the statements. This makes a direct comparison of the results from the two studies difficult. The Eurobarometer question requires selecting the most important risks up to a maximum of three answers which necessarily focuses attention on the risks more generally encountered and deemed to have the most serious consequences. By contrast, the CONSENT data reflect a more realistic picture of the perception of the likelihood of all potential consequences. There is a higher level of perceived likelihood of all risks in the

CONSENT study when compared to the importance of these risks found in Eurobarometer, except for becoming a victim of fraud. Becoming a victim of fraud is certainly an important risk (as shown from the Eurobarometer results), but it is perceived as not amongst the three risks most likely to occur in the CONSENT study.

More than 70% of respondents in the CONSENT study think that it is likely or very likely that information disclosed on UGC sites is used without their knowledge, used to send them unwanted commercial offers and shared with third parties without their agreement. The other four risks are deemed to be far less likely to occur (all less than 33%).

It is also interesting to note that responses regarding the likelihood of the top three situations are somewhat “homogenous” on a similarly high level across countries; however, UK respondents appear to generally perceive less of these specific risks than the average CONSENT respondent. Additionally, there are larger disparities in perception of the more personal risks such as personal safety, risk of job discrimination, the risk to personal reputation and becoming the victim of fraud. Here, respondents from the UK show a level of perception which is, again, partially lower than the total sample average – except for the perceived risks of discrimination and reputational damage, where UK respondents score slightly higher than the total CONSENT average.¹⁷

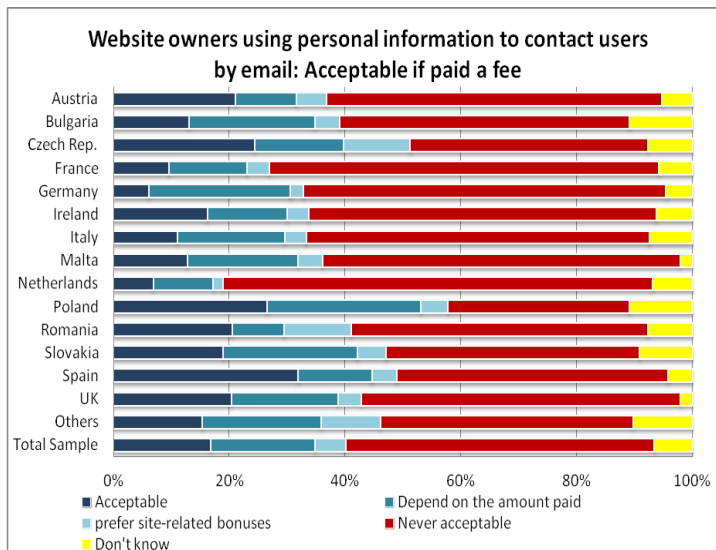
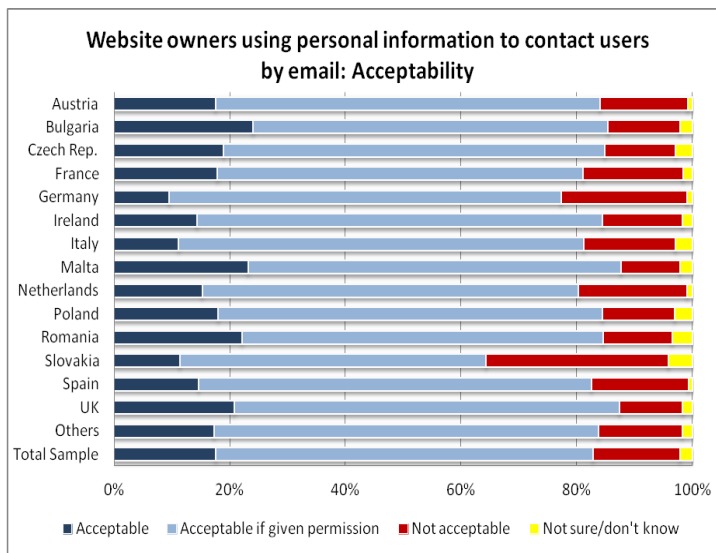
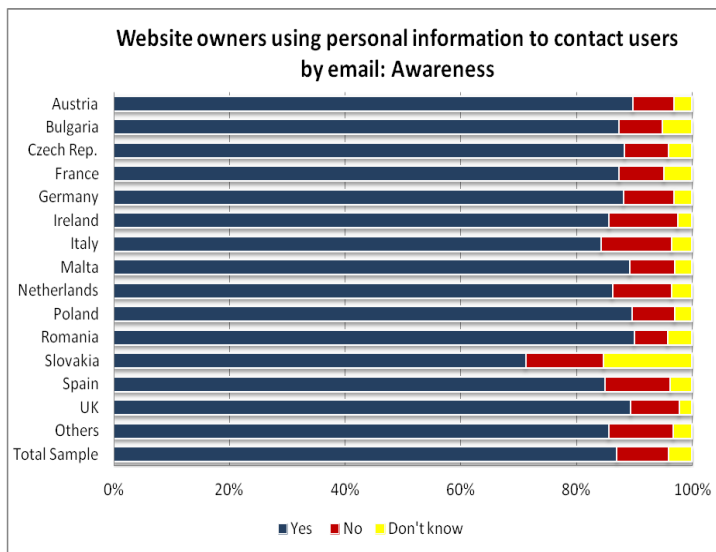
¹⁷ The ONS figures from 2011 indicated that for the general UK population, “21 per cent of Internet users did not believe their skills were sufficient to protect their personal data”.



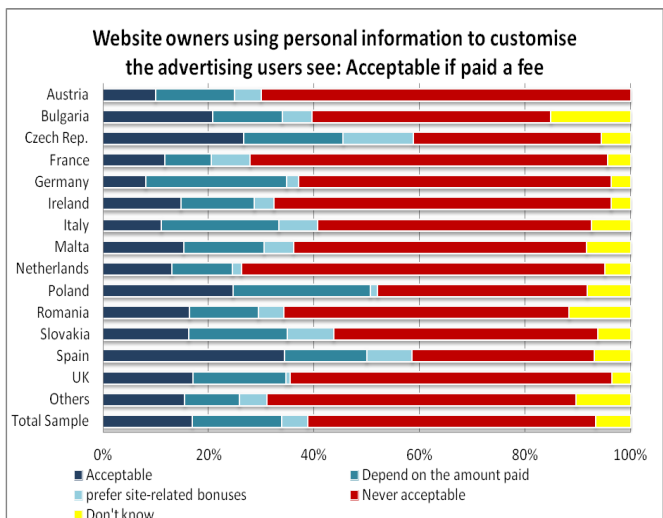
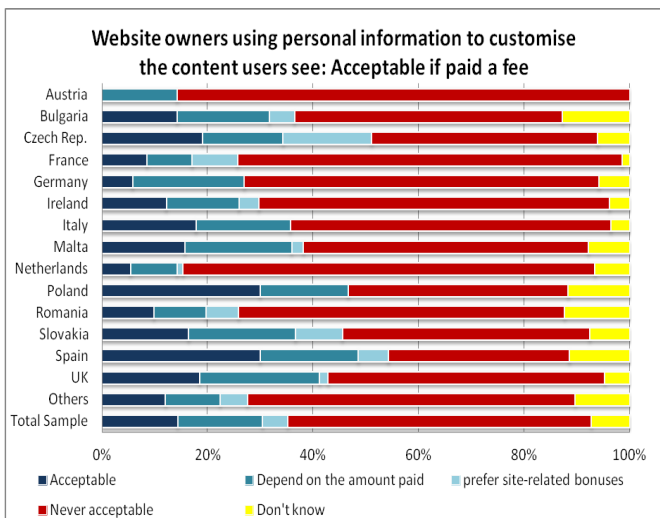
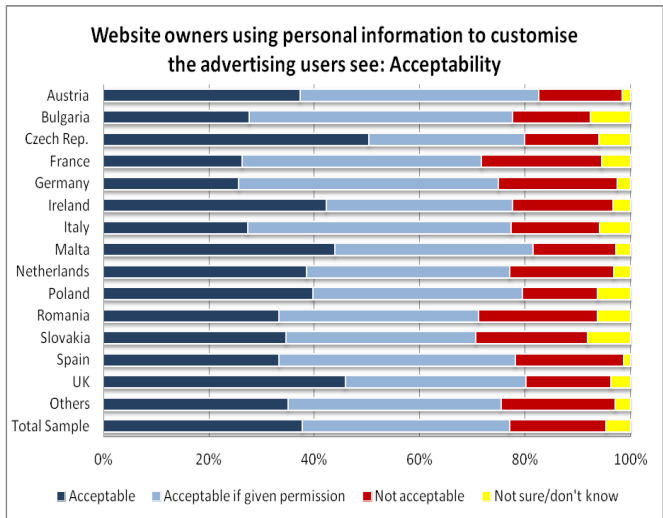
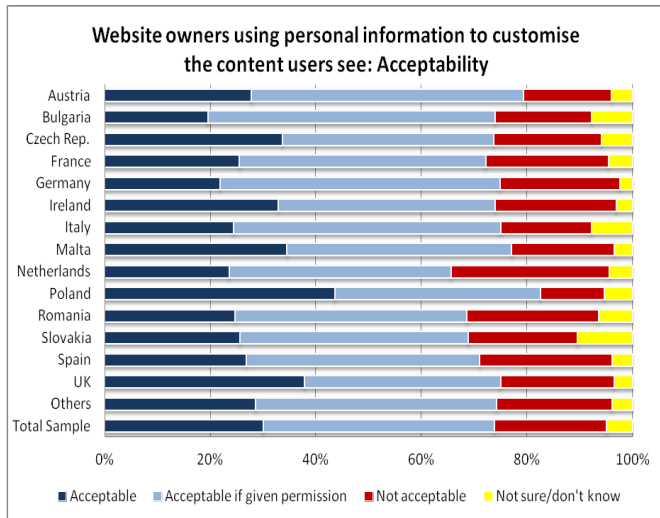
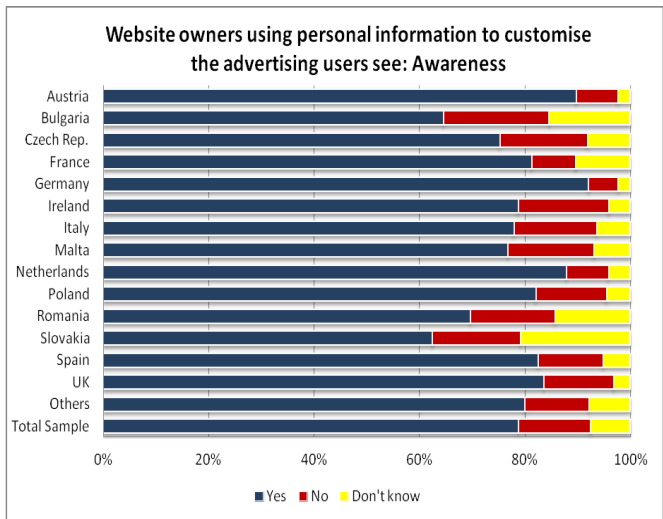
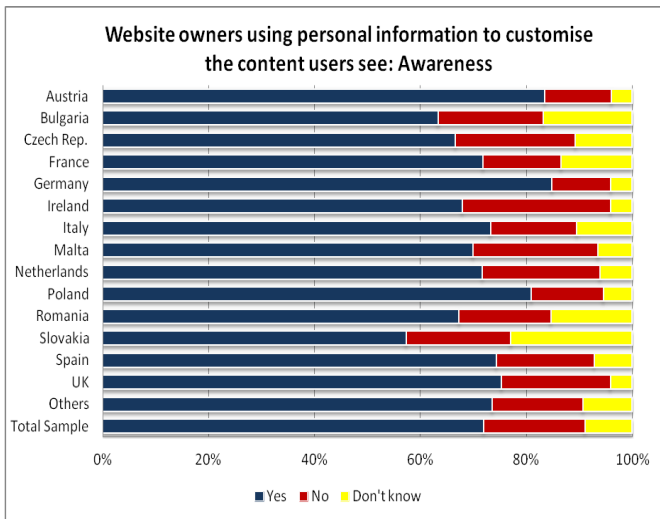
5.3.3 Awareness and Acceptance

Were you aware that the information you include in your account on a website may be used by the website owners for a number of purposes?				
	Count	Yes	No	Not sure what this means
Austria	128	88.3%	6.2%	5.5%
Bulgaria	403	72.0%	18.6%	9.4%
Czech Republic	687	76.7%	15.9%	7.4%
France	319	70.8%	9.4%	19.7%
Germany	637	88.9%	6.8%	4.4%
Ireland	599	59.9%	33.4%	6.7%
Italy	182	83.5%	11.5%	4.9%
Malta	478	74.7%	18.2%	7.1%
Netherlands	326	83.1%	11.0%	5.8%
Poland	548	81.9%	13.9%	4.2%
Romania	706	76.5%	13.9%	9.6%
Slovakia	422	60.9%	28.2%	10.9%
Spain	307	82.4%	14.0%	3.6%
UK	957	64.9%	28.8%	6.3%
Others	294	74.1%	17.0%	8.8%
Total Sample	6,993	74.3%	18.2%	7.5%

Generally, UK respondents show a low level of awareness amongst CONSENT respondents about the use of personal information, at a similar level as Ireland and Slovakia, compared to some countries where respondents were substantially more aware (in particular Austria and Germany). But these differences cannot be simply ascribed to national differences in internet exposure or internet experience. Here, awareness (or non-awareness) may also be linked to internet-related local information policies and regulations.

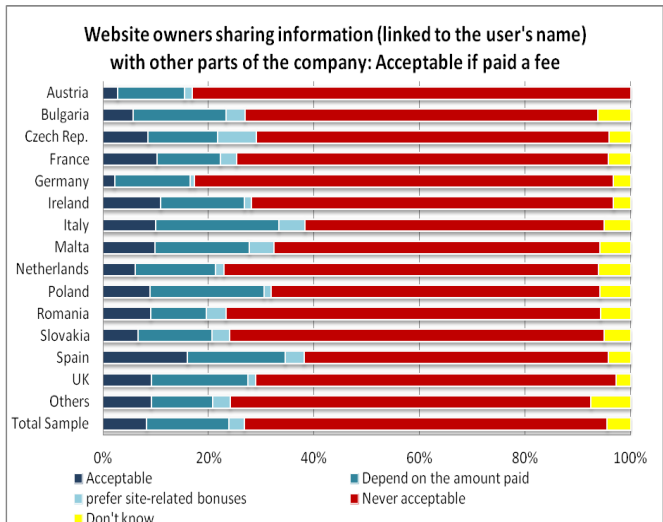
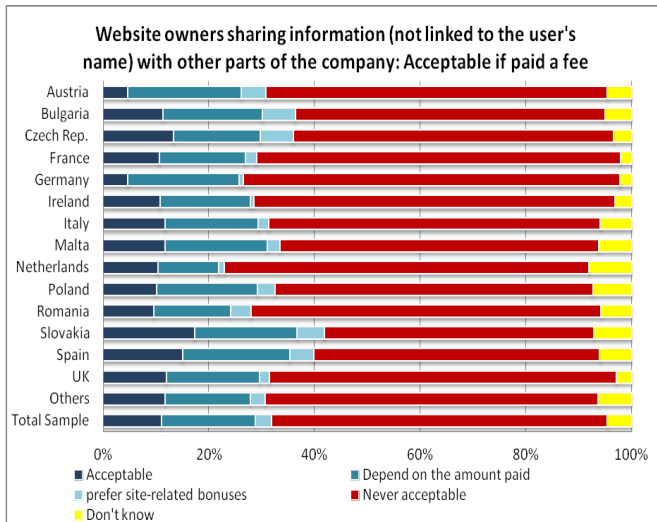
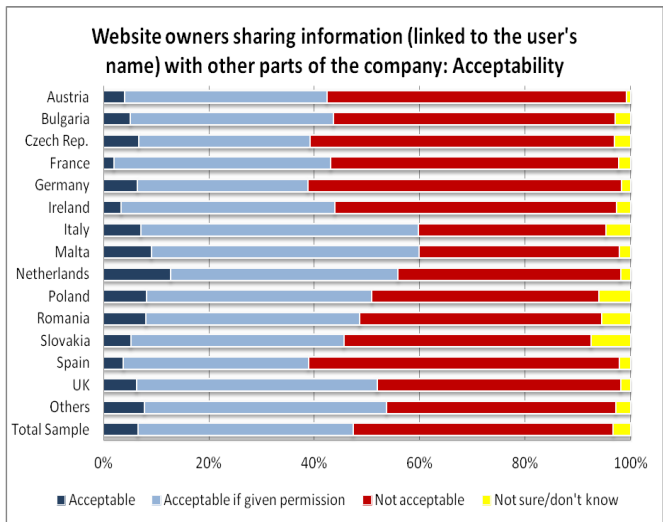
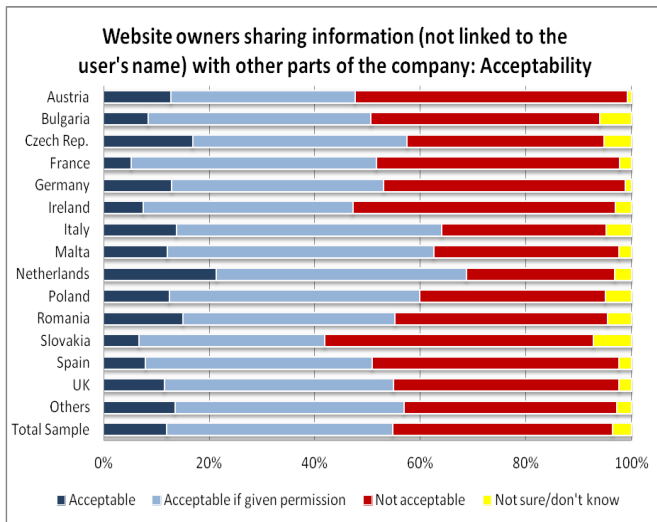
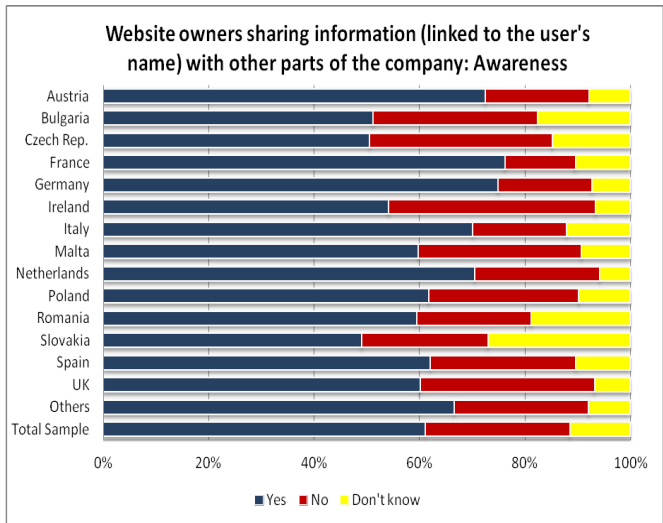
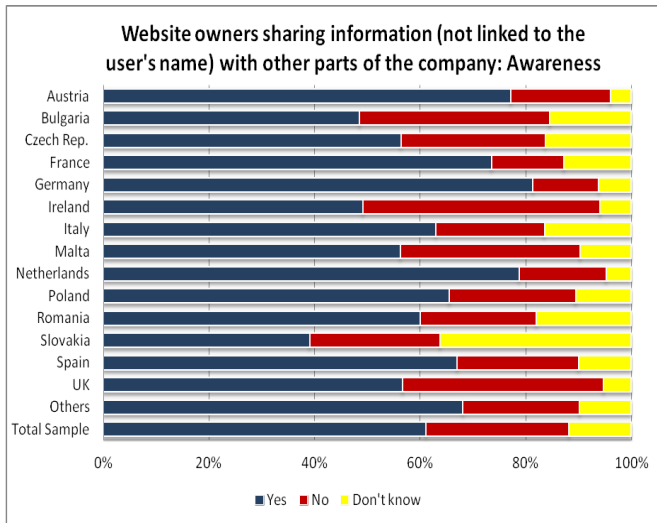


Base: Only respondents who answered that it was unacceptable to contact users by email.



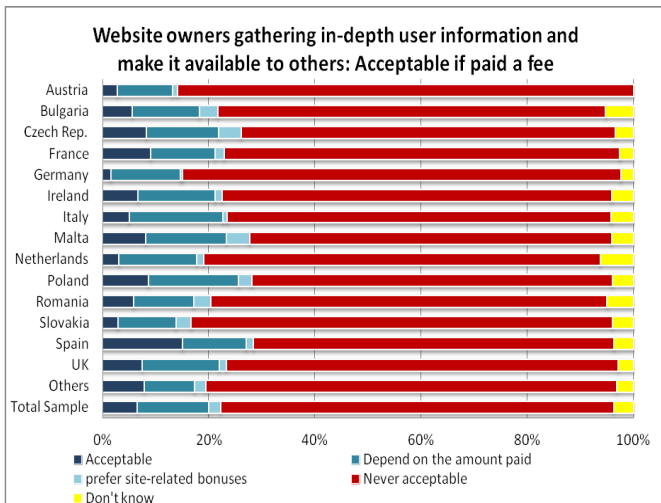
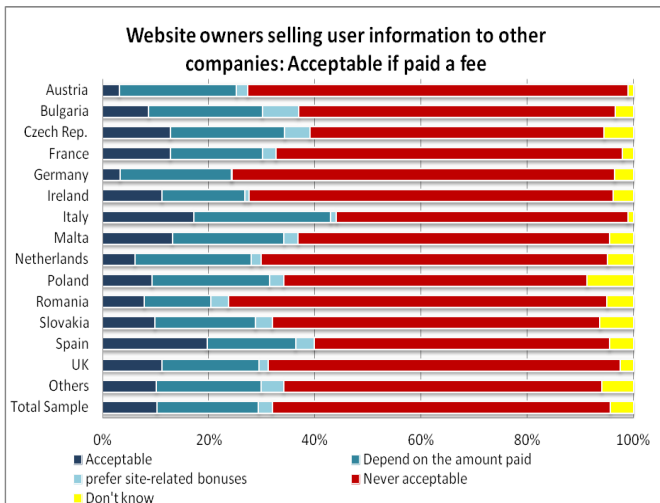
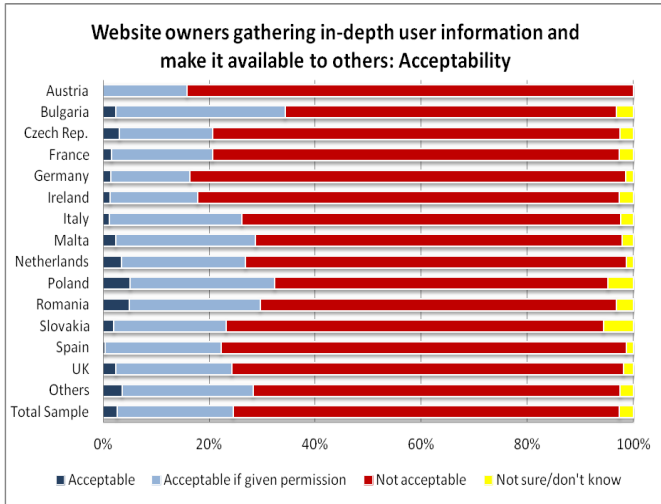
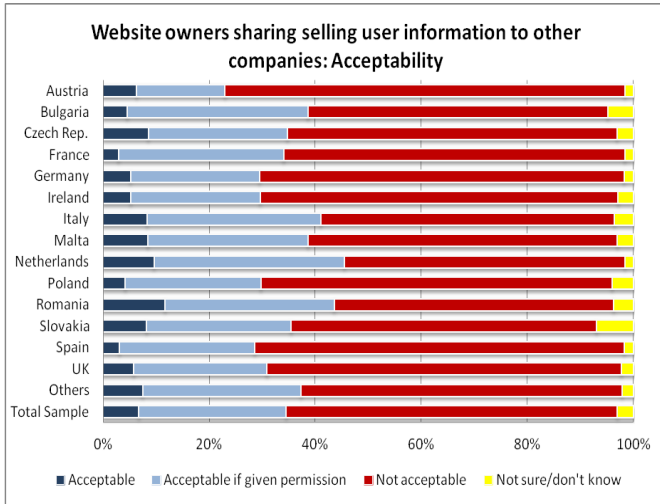
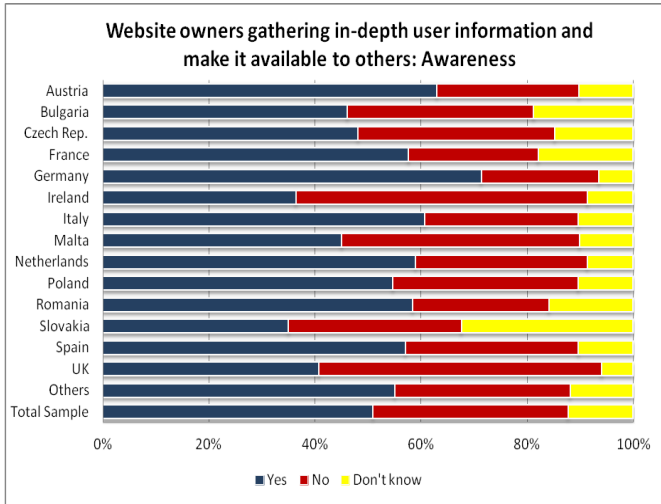
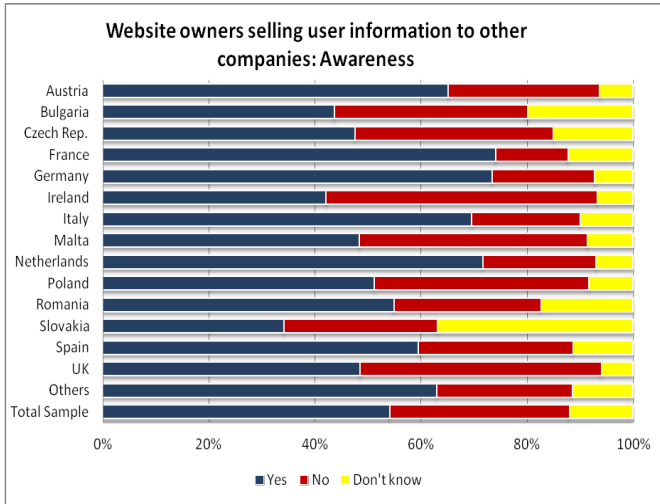
Base: Only respondents who answered it was unacceptable to customize the content users see.

Base: Only respondents who answered it was unacceptable to customize the advertising users see.



Base: Only respondents who answered it was unacceptable that website owners share information (not linked to the user's name) with other parts of the company.

Base: Only respondents who answered it was unacceptable that website owners share information (linked to the user's name) with other parts of the company.



Base: Only respondents who answered it was unacceptable that website owners sell information to other companies.

Base: Only respondents who answered it was unacceptable that website owners gather in-depth information and make it available to others.

Regarding the awareness – and acceptance – of specific purposes, the use of personal information by website owners to contact users by email appears to be known about and accepted by most respondents. There are uniform high levels of awareness (above 84%) and acceptance (above 77%) of use of information by website owners to contact users by email, and the large majority of those who deem it acceptable for website owners to use information to contact users by email think that this should only be done if permission has been granted by users.

Of those who do not think it acceptable for information to be used to contact them by email, in most countries the majority still think it unacceptable even if they were to be paid a fee. Respondents from the UK are, here, slightly below the total CONSENT average.

There is also little support for the idea of receiving site related bonuses in return for information being used to contact users by email.

Awareness and acceptance of the use of personal information to customise content and advertising is high as well, though not at the levels of use of information to contact users by email and with more variability between countries. Here the UK respondents show a slight above-average level of both awareness and acceptance. Interestingly, it appears that most CONSENT respondents are accepting the customisation of advertising more than the customisation of content, and they are also generally more willing to consider commercial trade-off's in advertising than in the customisation of content. This may relate to the comparatively higher awareness of advertising, but, potentially, also to a privacy-related fine line drawn between the sphere of “private” (and not to be commercialised) content and the “public” sphere of advertising.

However, whereas in being contacted by email as well as in the customisation of content and advertising there still appears to be some form of “balance” between user awareness and user acceptance, overall acceptance levels are clearly decreasing when personal information (both linked and not linked to the user's name) is being shared with other parts of the website owner's company. Gathering in-depth information about users and making it available or selling it to others is largely seen as unacceptable, and commercial trade-offs in this respect also meet little acceptance by all CONSENT respondents. Here, UK respondents show a below-average level of awareness (UK 41%, total sample 51%), and an average level of non-acceptance (UK 74%, total sample 74%).

5.4 Privacy

5.4.1 Experience of Privacy Invasions

Perceived privacy invasions / information misuse		
Mean Results		
Nationality	How frequently have you been victim of what you felt was an improper invasion of privacy on the internet? Rating on a 7-point scale 1 = never, 7 = very frequently	How much have you heard or read about the potential misuse of the information collected from the internet? Rating on a 7-point scale 1 = not at all, 7 = very much
Austria	3.31	5.86
Bulgaria	3.06	4.82
Czech Rep.	2.87	5.43
France	3.15	4.74
Germany	3.36	5.86
Ireland	2.63	4.55
Italy	3.05	4.60
Malta	2.60	4.43
Netherlands	2.92	5.38
Poland	2.83	4.45
Romania	3.01	4.68
Slovakia	2.60	4.49
Spain	3.22	5.17
UK	2.60	4.67
Others	2.79	5.00
Total Sample	2.89	5.13

Actual experiences of invasions of privacy are, as is to be expected, much lower than second-hand experience of misuse of information on the internet. UK respondents score slightly lower than the total sample average in both the personal invasion of privacy, and in hearing or reading about misuse of information. The Eurobarometer study shows similar results: 65% of UK respondents had “heard” about violation of privacy or fraud (EU27: 55%), but only 20% (EU27: 12%) had been affected themselves (or family/friends). In the Eurostat 2010 research, 4% of the UK respondents actually reported an abuse of personal information.

5.4.2 Safeguarding Privacy

		Have you ever changed the privacy settings of your personal profile on a UGC site?				
Nationality	Count	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Austria	114	4.4%	7.9%	22.8%	23.7%	41.2%
Bulgaria	395	7.3%	13.9%	32.7%	23.8%	22.3%
Czech Rep.	631	12.2%	11.6%	30.7%	23.6%	21.9%
France	279	15.4%	17.6%	24.7%	25.8%	16.5%
Germany	615	2.4%	3.9%	16.6%	22.8%	54.3%
Ireland	587	7.0%	8.5%	23.0%	22.1%	39.4%
Italy	169	16.6%	12.4%	32.5%	18.3%	20.1%
Malta	466	7.1%	7.7%	32.0%	25.1%	28.1%
Netherlands	312	12.2%	6.4%	23.4%	27.6%	30.4%
Poland	536	6.0%	14.2%	29.7%	25.9%	24.3%
Romania	711	11.3%	12.2%	33.9%	20.1%	22.5%
Slovakia	414	7.7%	12.1%	39.9%	23.7%	16.7%
Spain	300	4.7%	9.7%	28.0%	22.0%	35.7%
UK	957	6.9%	6.1%	26.9%	24.2%	35.9%
Others	284	6.3%	12.3%	30.3%	26.4%	24.6%
Total Sample	6,770	8.1%	9.9%	28.4%	23.6%	29.9%

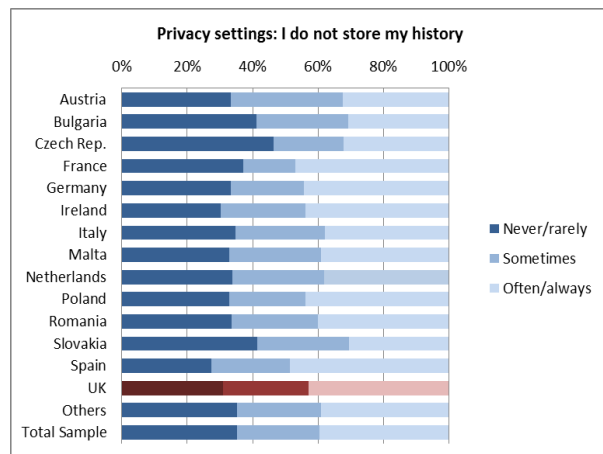
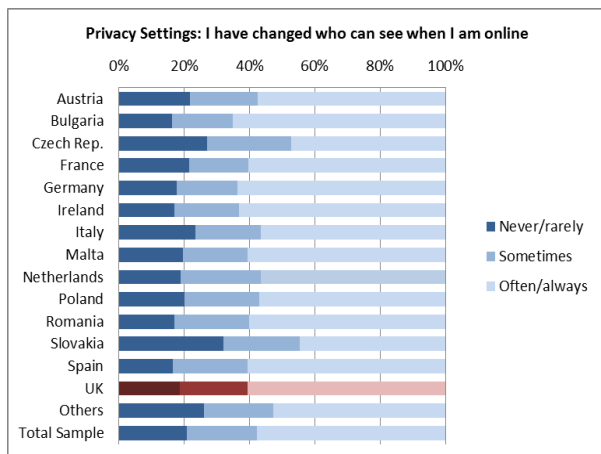
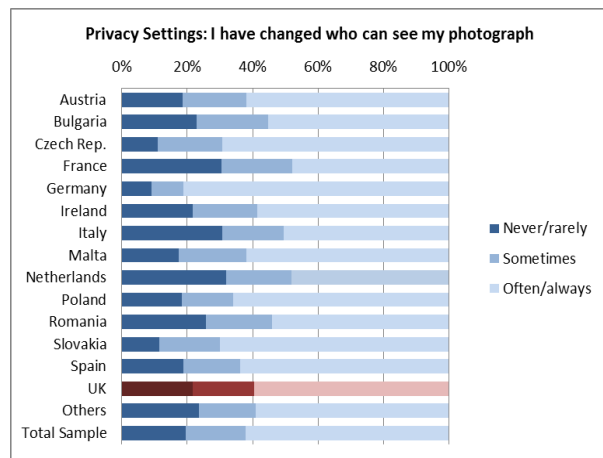
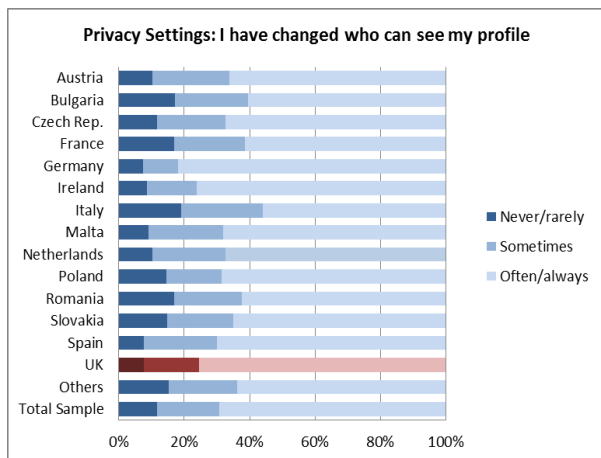
In respect to the question how the respondents safeguard their privacy, 60.1% of the UK respondents often or always change the privacy settings of their personal profiles on UGC sites. This is above the overall sample average (53.5%). UK respondents who never or rarely changed privacy settings amounted to 13.0% which is compared to 18% of total respondents. The Eurobarometer survey included a similar question, asking whether the respondents “ever tried to change the privacy settings”. There, UK respondents gave a similar picture (68%; EU27: 51%). However, “trying” is a more vague expression which asks more for (more or less serious) intentions rather than actual practices.

On an overall level, the CONSENT data reveal a strong confidence (into providers’ practices) of those users who never changed privacy settings. In fact 38.6% of respondents either trusted the site to set appropriate privacy settings, or they were happy with the standard settings. Another 14.7% “did not find the time to look at the available options”, revealing a certain user inertia.

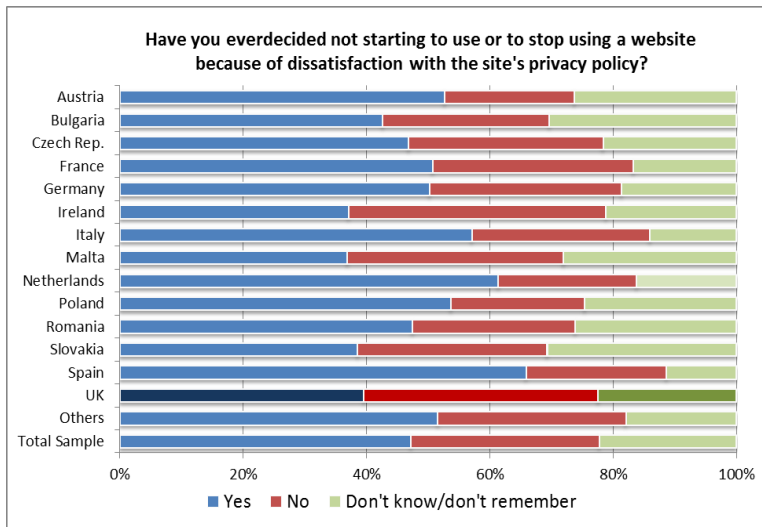
Given that only 8.1% of respondents stated that they have never changed privacy settings, a focus on the practices of those who actually *did* change their settings reveals more substantial results – also on a country level:

UK: Changes in Privacy Settings				
		I have made the privacy settings less strict such that more information about me is available to others	Sometimes I have made the privacy settings stricter and sometimes less strict	I have made the privacy settings stricter so that others can see less information about me
UK	Count	23	130	710
	Percentage	2.7%	15.1%	82.3%
Total Sample	Count	177	1,028	4,744
	Percentage	3.0%	17.3%	79.7%

Here, UK respondents strongly tend to change their privacy settings to a stricter level, demonstrating a similar behaviour to the overall average, whereas results of other nationalities range from 63.8% (Romania) to 89.9% (Germany). Regarding what specific settings are actually being changed, a comparison shows that some practices, in particular changing who can see a personal profile, are significantly more established than others (particularly storing one's history). With the exception of who can see one's photograph online, UK respondents are more restrictive than the total CONSENT average. It is also in this setting of who can see one's photograph, where the widest disparities between country results can be observed, allowing for the assumption that, here, levels of technical experience merge with different perspectives on the privacy of personal pictures.



5.4.3 Dealing with Privacy Policies

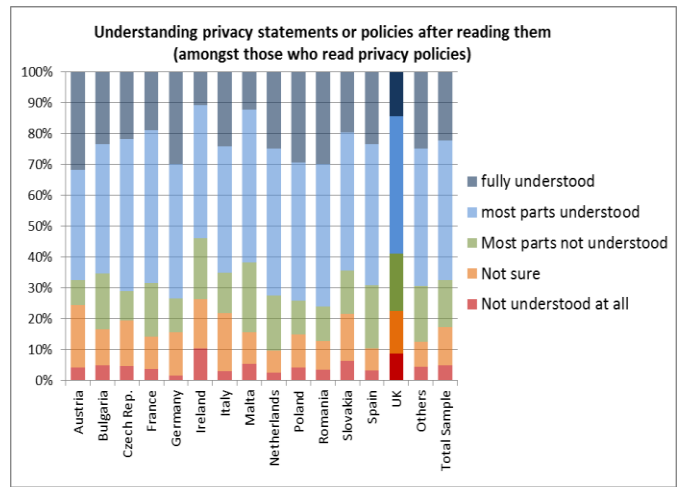
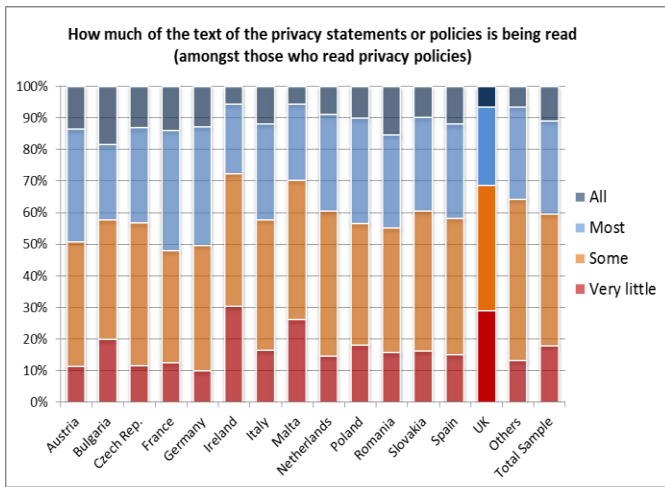
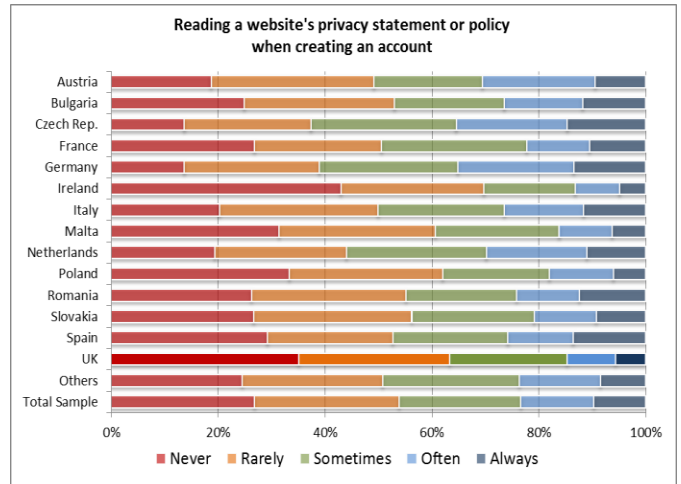
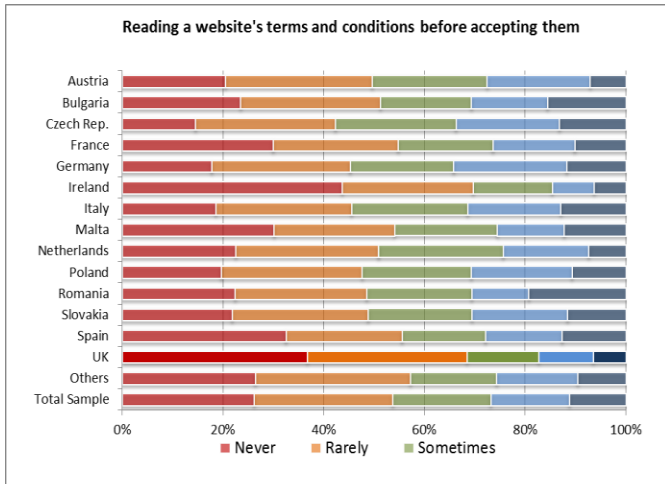


There is much variability between responses from different countries on the question relating to the impact of privacy policies on behaviour. A comparably smaller proportion of UK respondents (40%, total sample 47%) have ever decided not to use a website due to dissatisfaction with the site's privacy policy, which is at the lower end of the range together with Malta (37%), Ireland (37%) and the Slovakia (39%).

Results from the set of graphs below suggest that many respondents are giving consent without being aware of what they are consenting to. A significant proportion of respondents rarely or never read a website's terms and conditions before accepting them, with some variability between countries. At one end of the range, 45.2% of respondents in Germany and 45.5% of respondents in Italy rarely or never read the terms and conditions. At the other end of the range, 69.7% of Irish respondents and 68.6% of UK respondents rarely or never read websites' terms and conditions. A small core of respondents always read terms and conditions, 6.4% amongst UK respondents do so which is below the sample average (11.3%).

A fairly similar pattern of results was recorded for reading of websites' privacy policies when creating an account with a substantial number of respondents never or rarely reading them (UK 63.3%, total sample 54%).

The majority of those who do read privacy policies do not read the whole text (total sample 89.2%). Only 6.6% of UK respondents read all the text, whereas as many as 18.3% of Bulgarian respondents read all the text of privacy policies. Despite the generally low number of respondents who read all of the text of privacy policies, there is a fair deal of confidence that what is read in privacy policies is fully or mostly understood (sample average 63.6%). 58.9% of UK respondents claim to understand usually most or all of what they read in privacy policies.



6. Conclusion

The UK CONSENT respondents represent a sample of predominantly experienced – and very frequent – internet users in a local environment with generally high SNS usage. At the same time, it also appears that their high level (in comparison to the total CONSENT sample average) of taking technical measures to maintain or increase their personal internet security is – to a large extent - keeping up with this high-frequency usage.; but concern about information misuse only plays a minor (and compared to the total CONSENT sample, below-average) role for those respondents who decided not to use or delete their UGC accounts.

However, these – at first sight contradictory – results are in line with those regarding UK respondents’ risk perceptions. Whereas being similar to the total CONSENT sample in their perception of the risk of information misuse and privacy loss, they are at a level below the total sample average regarding their perception of general risks and specific risks (with the exception of job discrimination and reputational damage), or being faced with unexpected problems.

This comparably low awareness of *specific* risks is also reflected in the low *general* levels of awareness regarding the various practices of website owners. Additionally, levels of awareness and non-acceptance regarding the more “commonly known” website owners’ practices (contact users by email, customisation of website content and adverts) are around the total sample average, but below-average regarding the less known, and less accepted, practices such as sharing, selling and in-depth gathering of user information.

In contrast, three out of five UK CONSENT respondents indicated that they have changed their privacy settings often or always (and a very high portion thereof having made their settings stricter), and regarding most specific protection measures asked for (such as the accessibility of their personal profile, restrictions who can see when they are online, or the storage of their history) the UK respondents indicated more conservative behaviour, which could be interpreted as being more risk-aware.

However, any risk-awareness does not translate to the reading of privacy policies; UK respondents show (together with respondents from Ireland) the highest portion of non-readers amongst the total CONSENT sample, and those who do read privacy policies only read – and understand – little. Particularly this latter result may provide an explanation for the contradictory “gap” between the UK respondents’ low awareness levels (of website owners’ sharing, selling and in-depth gathering of user information) but comparably high frequency of taking (in particular technical) protective measures. Whereas there is a long-standing “history” of internet experience in the UK which goes alongside with an increasingly “engrained” everyday usage of particularly technical protection, there is also a certain general inertia and/or lack of information which cannot keep up with the more recent practices of UGC website providers. Probing such interpretation will require and be one of the core tasks of further research as set out in the qualitative research planned in CONSENT Work Package 8).

Acknowledgements

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Appendix

A.1 English Online Questionnaire

0.0 Introduction

Make your views count!

And help in strengthening the legal protection of consumers and online users.

This survey is part of the CONSENT project – a collaborative project co-funded by the European Commission under the FP7 programme – that aims to gather the views of internet users from all countries of the EU on the use of personal information, privacy, and giving consent online.

This information will be used to prepare briefings to European policy makers and legal experts aimed at encouraging the strengthening of the legal protection of consumers and online users. Results will also be published on the CONSENT website.

Filling in this questionnaire takes about 15 minutes. All responses are anonymous and no personal details such as your name, email address or IP address will be processed. You may stop and return to the questionnaire at a later point. Your assistance in this project is much appreciated.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this project.

For more information visit the CONSENT website at www.consent.law.muni.cz

Privacy Policy

No personal information (such as name or e-mail) is collected in this questionnaire. All data collected are anonymous and are not linked to any personal information. This site uses a “cookie” to allow you to return to the questionnaire and continue from the same place you were before if you do not complete and submit it the first time you visit.

This questionnaire is hosted by Qualtrics. The Qualtrics privacy policy may be viewed at www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement.

1.0 Internet experience

1.1 For how many years have you used the Internet? ___ years.

1.2 How often do you use the internet in the following situations?

1=Everyday/almost every day;

2=Two or three times a week;

3=about once a week;

4=two or three times a month;

5=less often;

6=never

1. At home
2. At your place of work
3. Somewhere else (school, university, cyber-café, etc)

ALT.1.3 Do you ever buy things online?

1=yes 2=no

1.3.H.1 How many times a year do you buy items online?

1.3.H.2 When making purchases online how do you prefer to pay?

1st preference, 2nd preference, 3rd preferences.

1. At the time of ordering online by Debit card or Credit card
2. At the time of ordering online using Electronic Money such as Paypal, Moneybookers, etc
3. At the time of ordering online by charging your mobile phone or landline
4. At the time of delivery
5. After delivery
6. Other - please give details

1.3.H.3 Why haven't you ever bought anything online?

1. I don't trust online sellers
2. I would like to buy online but I do not have a debit or credit card
3. I would like to buy online but online purchase websites are difficult to use
4. I don't like disclosing my financial details online
5. I don't like disclosing details of where I live online
6. I fear that when I receive the things I bought they will not be what I ordered
7. I don't like the idea of having to return things to online shops
8. I prefer to be able to see/touch/try things before I buy them
9. I dislike paying for delivery of items I've bought online
10. Other reason (please give details)

1.3.H.4 How likely are you to purchase items online in the next six months?

1=very unlikely

2=unlikely

3=neutral

4=likely

5=very likely

ALT 2.0 UGC services usage

ALT.2.1. Have you ever created an account with a social networking website such as Facebook, MySpace, classmates, etc

1=yes 2=no

ALT.2.2 Which social networking websites have you opened an account with?

Facebook, MySpace <Please also include the top local website/s identified for your country as reported in WP2.> Other 1 (please give details). Other 2 (please give details)

ALT.2.2.1 Why did you choose to open an account with rather than any other site?

1. Many people I know have an account with this site
2. It's easier to use than other sites
3. It has more features than other sites
4. I trust this site more than other sites
5. It's easier to meet new people on this site
6. It is more fashionable
7. It is used worldwide
8. It's in the language I prefer to use
9. Other (please give details)

ALT.2.2.2 Do you still have and use the account you opened with <website mentioned>?

1. I still have it and use it everyday/ almost everyday
2. I still have it and use it every week
3. I still have it but use it less often than once a week
4. I still have it but don't use it
5. I deleted the account

ALT.2.2.2.1 Why don't you use your account with <website mentioned>?

1. This type of website no longer interests me
2. I can no longer access my account
3. I tried the website but found I didn't like it
4. I no longer trust the company running the website
5. My friends/ colleagues no longer use this website
6. I was concerned about use of information about me
7. Other (please give details)

ALT.2.2.2.2 Why did you delete your account with <website mentioned>?

1. The website no longer interests me
2. I tried the website but found I didn't like it
3. I no longer trust the company running the website
4. My friend/ colleagues no longer use this website
5. I was concerned about use of information about me
6. I want the content that I have created on the website to be deleted
7. Other (please give details)

ALT.2.2.3 Do you still have and use the accounts you opened with social networking websites?

1. I still have it and use it everyday or almost everyday
2. I still have it and use it every week
3. I still have it but use it less often than once a week
4. I still have it but don't use it
5. I deleted the account

ALT.2.2.3.1 If one of these sites were to close down, which would you miss most?

ALT 2.2.3.1.1 Why would you miss this site?

1. Many people I know have an account with this site
2. It's easier to use than other sites
3. It has more features than other sites
4. I trust this site more than other sites
5. It's easier to meet new people on this site
6. It is more fashionable
7. It is used worldwide
8. It gives you information quickly
9. You can find out what is happening worldwide
10. Other <please give details>

ALT.2.2.3.2 Why do you use this site most often?

1. Many people I know have an account with this site
2. It's easier to use than other sites
3. It has more features than other sites
4. I trust this site more than other sites
5. It's easier to meet new people on this site
6. It is more fashionable
7. It is used worldwide
8. It gives you information quickly
9. You can find out what is happening worldwide
10. Other <please give details>

ALT.2.2.3.3 Why don't you use your account with <website mentioned>?

1. I can no longer access my account
2. This type of website no longer interests me
3. I tried the website but found I didn't like it
4. I no longer trust the company running the website
5. My friends/ colleagues no longer use this website
6. I was concerned about use of information about me
7. Other (please give details)

ALT.2.2.2.2 Why did you delete your account with <website mentioned>?

1. I tried the website but found I didn't like it

2. The website no longer interests me
3. I no longer trust the company running the website
4. My friend/ colleagues no longer use this website
5. I was concerned about use of information about me

Open information box on UGC SITES

Some types of websites allow users to edit or add to the content of the website which can then be read by other users of the website. This is done by, for example, posting comments (e.g., facebook) or reviews (e.g., tripadvisor), joining discussions, uploading video and digital material (e.g., YouTube, Flickr), editing material (e.g., Wikipedia) etc. These types of websites are called User Generated Content (UGC) sites.

ALT 2.9 With which of the following User Generated Content (UGC) websites have you ever created an account (not just visited the site) for your personal use?

- B. Business networking websites such as LinkedIn, Xing.com
- C. Dating websites such as parship.com
- D. Websites where you can share photos, videos, etc., such as YouTube, Flickr
- E. Websites which provide recommendations and reviews (of films, music, books hotels etc), such as last.fm, tripadvisor
- F. Micro blogging sites such as twitter
- G. Wiki sites such as Wikipedia, myheritage
- H. Multiplayer online games such as secondlife.com, World of Warcraft

ALT 2.9.1 Why haven't you ever opened an account on this kind of website/these kind of websites?

1. This kind of website does not interest me
2. Hadn't heard of this type of website before now
3. Didn't know you could open an account with websites like this before now
4. None of my friends use this website
5. It is not worth the money
6. I was concerned about use of information about me
7. I visit these sites but don't feel the need to become a member
8. Other

ALT.2.9.2 Do you still have all the accounts you opened with UGC websites?

- 1=I still have all the accounts I've opened with UGC sites
- 2=I have some but have deleted others
- 3=no, I've deleted them all

ALT.2.9.2.1 Have you used ALL the accounts you have with UGC websites in the past 6 months?

- 1=yes 2=no

ALT.2.9.2.1.1 Why haven't you used some of the accounts in the past 6 months?

1. I can no longer access my account
2. It's not the kind of website that I use regularly
3. I tried the website but found I didn't like it
4. Website no longer interests me
5. I no longer trust the company running the website
6. My friends no longer use this website
7. I was concerned about use of information about me
8. Other (please give details)

ALT.2.9.2.2 Why did you delete your accounts with UGC websites?

1. I tried the website but found I didn't like it
2. The website no longer interests me
3. I no longer trusted the company running the website
4. My friends no longer use the website
5. Membership of the website is not worth the money
6. I was concerned about use of information about me
7. I want the content that I have created on the website to be deleted
8. I don't want people to know that I have used this website
9. Other (please give details)

3.0 Disclosure Behaviour on UGCs

3.1 Thinking of your usage of UGC sites (such as social networking sites, sharing sites, and gaming sites), which of the following types of information have you already disclosed (when you registered, or simply when using these websites)?

1. Medical information (patient record, health information)
2. Financial information (e. g salary, bank details, credit record)
3. Your work history
4. Your national identity number (*USE APPROPRIATE TERM IN EACH COUNTRY*)\ card number\ passport number
5. Your name
6. Your home address
7. Your nationality
8. Things you do (e.g. hobbies, sports, places you go)
9. Your tastes and opinions
10. Photos of you
11. Who your friends are
12. Websites you visit
13. Your mobile phone number
14. Your email address
15. Other (write in)

16. Don't know

4.0 Perceived Risks

4.1 For each of these situations please indicate how likely you think that this could happen as a result of your putting personal information on UGC sites.

1=very unlikely 2=unlikely 3=neutral 4=likely 5=very likely

- 1. Your information being used without your knowledge**
- 2. Your information being shared with third parties without your agreement**
- 3. Your information being used to send you unwanted commercial offers**
- 4. Your personal safety being at risk**
- 5. You becoming a victim of fraud**
- 6. You being discriminated against (e.g. in job selection, receiving price increases, getting no access to a service)**
- 7. Your reputation being damaged**

5.0 Behaviour relating to Privacy Settings

Open information box on PERSONAL PROFILES

A personal profile on a UGC site (such as social networking sites, sharing sites, and gaming sites) consists of information such as your age, location, interests, an uploaded photo and an "about me" section. Profile visibility – who can see your information and interact with you - can in some cases be personalised by managing the privacy settings offered by the site.

5.1 Have you ever changed any of the privacy settings of your personal profile on a UGC site?

1=Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5=Always

5.1.1 Why haven't you ever changed the privacy settings?

1. I did not know that privacy settings existed
2. I do not know how to change the settings
3. I am afraid that if I change the privacy settings the site will not work properly
4. I did not know that I could change the settings
5. I trust the site to set appropriate privacy settings
6. I am happy with the standard privacy settings
7. I did not find the time to look at the available options
8. Other (please give details)

5.1.2 How have you changed the privacy settings?

1. I have made the privacy settings less strict such that *more information about me is available* to others.
2. Sometimes I have made the privacy settings stricter and sometimes less strict.
3. I have made the privacy settings stricter so that others can see *less information about me*.

5.1.3 Which of these privacy settings have you changed?

“never” “rarely” “sometimes” “often” “always”

1. I have changed who can see my profile
2. I have changed who can see my photograph
3. I have changed who can see when I am online
4. I do not store my history
5. Other (please give details)

6.0 Perceived Playfulness/Ease of Use/Critical Mass

Thinking of the UGC site you use, or if you use more than one your favourite UGC site, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by clicking on the point on the scale that best represents your views where 1=disagree and 7=agree.

6.2 Using UGC sites is fun

7.3 This website is simple to use.

7.4 I easily remember how to use this website.

8.1 Many people I am in touch with use this website.

9.0 Behaviour relating to Terms & Conditions and Privacy Policies

Most internet websites require that users accept, normally by ticking a box, the website's Terms & Conditions before giving you access to the website.

9.1 When you create an account with a website how do you accept the site's terms and conditions

5=I **always read** the terms & conditions before accepting them

4= I **often read** the terms & conditions before accepting them

3= I **sometimes read** the terms & conditions before accepting them

2=I **rarely read** the terms & conditions before accepting them

1=I **never read** the terms & conditions before accepting them

6= don't know/not sure what this means

9.2 When you create an account with a website you have not used before do you read that website's privacy statement or policy?

Open information box on PRIVACY POLICIES

On internet websites, apart from Terms & Conditions (or sometimes as part of them) privacy statements or privacy policies set out how the personal information users enter online will be used and who will have access to it.

1=I never read privacy policies

2=I rarely read privacy policies

3=I sometimes read privacy policies

4=I often read privacy policies

5=I always read privacy policies

9.2.1 When you read privacy statements/privacy policies do you usually:

1=read very little of the text 2=read some of the text 3=read most of the text 4=read all of the text

9.2.2 When you have read privacy statements or privacy policies would you say that:

1. I'm not sure whether I understood them or not
2. I usually did not understand them at all
3. I usually did not understand most parts of them
4. I usually understood most parts of them
5. I usually understood them fully
6. Don't know/don't remember

9.2.3 Have you ever decided to not start using a website or to stop using a website because you were dissatisfied with the site's privacy policy?

1=yes, 2=no 3=don't know/don't remember

9.3.1 Why don't you ever read privacy statements or privacy policies?

1. I did not know about privacy policies before now
2. I do not know where to find privacy policies on a website
3. Privacy policies are too long to read
4. Privacy policies are too difficult to understand
5. If I want an account with a website I don't care about its privacy policy
6. The privacy policy on a website makes no difference to me because I have nothing to hide
7. The privacy policy on a website makes no difference to me because websites ignore the policies anyway
8. If the website violates my privacy the law will protect me in any case
9. Other (write in)

10.0 Awareness & Attitudes – Processing of Information

10.1 The information you include in your account or profile on a website may be used by the website owners for a number of purposes. Were you aware of this?

1=yes, 2=no, 3=not sure what this means

10.2.A Please indicate whether you were aware that websites owners can use the information you include in your account or profile to:

1=Yes 2=No 3=Don't know

10.2.B Please indicate what you think about website owners making use of the personal information you include in your account/profile to:

1= It's an acceptable thing to do, they don't have to ask me; 2=It's acceptable but only if I give permission; 3=Not acceptable; 4=not sure/ don't know

1. customize the content you see
2. customize the advertising you see

3. contact you by email
4. share information (not linked to your name) about your behaviour with other parts of the company
5. share your information (linked to your name) with other parts of the company
6. sell information (not linked to your name) about your behaviour to other companies
7. gather in-depth personal information about you from their own and other websites and make it available to others

10.3 Would it be acceptable to you if you were paid a fee to allow the website to:

1=yes it would be acceptable 2=no it would never be acceptable 3=it would depend on the amount paid 4=I would prefer to be given site related bonuses rather than money fee 5=don't know

1. customize the content you see
2. customize the advertising you see
3. contact you by email
4. share information (not linked to your name) about your behaviour with other parts of the company
5. share your information (linked to your name with other parts of the company
6. sell information (not linked to your name) about your behaviour to other companies
7. gather in-depth personal information about you from their own and other websites and make it available to others

Open information box on COOKIES

In addition to information you yourself have provided in your account or profile, websites can also have access to information about your activity on the web such as which sites you have visited, your preferences on a website, etc. Websites do this through information (sometimes referred to as a "cookie") stored by the program (web browsers such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, etc) you use to surf the internet

10.4 Are you aware that websites have access to information about your activity on the web through the use of "cookies"?

1=yes, 2=no 3=not sure what this means

10.4.1 Web browsers give you the option of refusing permission to websites to store information about your activities by disabling cookies in your web browser. Have you ever disabled cookies in your web browser

1=yes, 2=no, 3=don't remember/don't know

11.0 Perceived privacy risks

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about personal information and the internet by clicking on the point on the scale that best represents your views where 1=disagree and 7=agree.

11.1 In general, it would be risky to give personal information to websites.

11.2 There would be high potential for privacy loss associated with giving personal information to websites.

11.3 Personal information could be inappropriately used by websites.

11.4 Providing websites with my personal information would involve many unexpected problems.

12.0 Technical Protection

Thinking of how you behave online, please indicate how often you do the following:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=always 6=don't know what this is 7=don't know how

12.1 Do you watch for ways to control what people send you online (such as check boxes that allow you to opt-in or opt-out of certain offers)?

12.2 Do you use a pop up window blocker?

12.3 Do you check your computer for spy ware?

12.4 Do you clear your browser history regularly?

12.5 Do you block messages/emails from someone you do not want to hear from?

14.0 Privacy victim

14.1 How frequently have you personally been the victim of what you felt was an improper invasion of privacy on the internet where 1=never and 7=very frequently?

15.0 Media exposure

15.1 How much have you heard or read during the last year about the potential misuse of the information collected from the internet where 1=not at all and 7=very much?

16.0 Disposition to value privacy

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about personal information where 1=disagree and 7=agree.

16.1 Compared to my friends, I am more sensitive about the way online companies handle my personal information.

16.2 To me, it is the most important thing to keep my online privacy.

16.3 Compared to my friends, I tend to be more concerned about threats to my personal privacy.

17.0 Social Norms

17.1 People whose opinion I value think that keeping personal information private is very important.

17.2 My friends believe I should care about my privacy.

17.3 People who are important to me think I should be careful when revealing personal information online.

For the next questions please think about your behaviour in general, not just online.

18.0 Tendency to Self-Disclosure

Indicate the degree to which the following statements reflect how you communicate with people where 1=disagree and 5=agree

18.1 I do not often talk about myself. (R)

18.2 I usually talk about myself for fairly long periods of time.

18.3 Only infrequently do I express my personal beliefs and opinions. (R)

18.4 Once I get started, I intimately and fully reveal myself in my disclosures.

18.5 I often disclose intimate, personal things about myself without hesitation.

19.0 General caution

Thinking about your behaviour generally, not just online

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=always

19.1 Do you shred/burn your personal documents when you are disposing of them?

19.2 Do you hide your bank card PIN number when using cash machines/making purchases?

19.3 Do you only register for websites that have a privacy policy?

19.4 Do you look for a privacy certification on a website before you register your information?

19.5 Do you read license agreements fully before you agree to them?

20.0 Demographics

This section relates to information about you. It may be left blank but it would greatly assist our research if you do complete it.

20.1 Sex 1=male; 2=female

20.2 Age ___ years

20.3 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1=no formal schooling

2=Primary school

3=Secondary/High School

4=Tertiary Education (University, Technical College, etc)

20.4 Employment

NON-ACTIVE	
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Responsible for ordinary shopping and looking after the home, or without any current occupation, not working	1
Student	2
Unemployed or temporarily not working	3
Retired or unable to work through illness	4
SELF EMPLOYED	
Farmer	5
Fisherman	6
Professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, etc.)	7
Owner of a shop, craftsmen, other self-employed person	8
Business proprietors, owner (full or partner) of a company	9
EMPLOYED	
Employed professional (employed doctor, lawyer, accountant, architect)	10
General management, director or top management (managing directors, director general, other director)	11
Middle management, other management (department head, junior manager, teacher, technician)	12
Employed position, working mainly at a desk	13
Employed position, not at a desk but travelling (salesmen, driver, etc.)	14
Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital, restaurant, police, fireman, etc.)	15
Supervisor	16
Skilled manual worker	17
Other (unskilled) manual worker, servant	18

20.5 Nationality

Austrian, Belgian, British, Bulgarian, Cypriot, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Other

20.6 Country of residence

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland,

Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK, Other

20.7 Is the area where you live: Urban/Rural/Suburban?

20.8 Main Language spoken at home

Basque, Bulgarian, Catalan, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, Galician, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Luxembourgish, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish, Other <Please give details>

20.9 Religion 1=Buddhist, 2=Christian 3= Hindu, 4=Jewish, 5=Muslim, 6=Sikh, 7=no religion, 8=Other religion (please give details)