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Net Children Go Mobile:Initial findings from Ireland

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Go Mobile

Initial findings from Ireland.

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Summary

Net Children Go Mobile is a two-year research project funded under the European Commission's Safer Internet Programme. Seven countries participate: Demark, Italy, Romania, United Kingdom, Ireland, Portugal and Belgium.

The project uses quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate access and use, risks and opportunities of mobile internet use. This report presents the initial findings of the survey of children and young people's use of mobile internet technologies in Ireland. 500 9-16 year olds were interviewed face-to-face in their homes. The fieldwork was carried out in Ireland by Ipsos MRBI in November and December 2013.

Access and Use

- **Smartphones stand out as the most used device** for internet access on a daily basis by 9-16 year olds in all contexts. Smartphones (35%) followed by laptops (29%) and tablets (27%) are the devices most used most to go online.

- **Most internet use is, in fact still at home.** 63% of children report using the internet several times a day or at least once a day at home.

- **Just under half or 46% of children access the internet from their own bedroom** on a daily basis, with 22% saying the do so several times per day.

- **Over half (53%) of 9-16 year olds say they never or almost never use the internet in school**. Just 7% of Irish 9-16 year olds children report using the internet in school on a daily basis.

- **Internet access while on the move - such as on the way to school or when out and about - is still limited.** 87% of children say they never or almost never do this. **Three quarters of young people rely exclusively on free wifi** access to go online using their smartphone.

- In Ireland, home games consoles are the device that 9-16 year olds are likely to own

(44%), followed by smartphones (40%), a tablet (28%) or a mobile phone that is not a smartphone (27%).

Activities

- **Entertainment uses** (listening to music and watching video clips online) continue to be the most popular online activities for all age groups.

- The next most popular use of the internet is **visiting a social networking site,** especially so for teenagers for whom it is – with listening to music – the most reported online activity.

- **Instant messaging (e.g.,Skype, WhatsApp) is used daily by more than a third of 13-16 year olds.**

- **9 in 10 of all 15-16 year olds In Ireland have a profile on a social networking site.** Notably, just under 40% of 11-12 year olds also have a social networking profile despite the age restriction of 13 for most social networking services. There is a steep rise from age 11-12 to age 13-14 where use of social networking more than doubles.

- **8 out of 10 children who use social networking use Facebook as their main profile.**

- **10% of 15-16 year olds say they use Twitter as their primary social networking platform**. This contrasts with the UK where 1 in 4 children say the profile they use most is Twitter.

- Over one third of all 9-16 year olds (36%) have a profile on a media sharing platform.

- **Instagram is the most popular media sharing platform** and is reported by 42% of 9-16 year olds as the media platform they use most often. This is followed by YouTube (34%).

Risk and Harm

- **Overall, 1 in 5 children in Ireland (20%) say that they have been bothered by something on the internet in the past year**, a doubling of the figure reported by EU Kids Online in 2011. A quarter of 13-14 year olds and 37% of older

15-16 year say they have experienced something that bothered them or wished they hadn't seen.

- **22% of children have experienced any form of bullying on- or offline.** 13% of 13-14 year olds say that they have been bullied on a social networking site. Girls are more likely to experience bullying than boys (26% for girls compared to 17% of boys). 20% of girls compared to 11% of boys say they were upset by what happened.

- **One of the risks that young people most often encounter is seeing potentially harmful user-generated content.** 35% of girls aged 13-16 have encountered some form of harmful content such as hate messages (15%), anorexic or bulimic content (14%), self-harm sites (9%); sites discussing suicide 8% and sites where people share their experiences with drugs (7%).

- **47% of older teenagers have seen sexual images in the past 12 months** compared to 11% of younger children. About half of older teenagers who had seen sexual images said they were upset by the experience.

- **10% of 13-14 year olds and 22% of 15-16 year olds report having received sexual messages** online. 4% report being 'very' (1%) or 'a little ' (3%) upset as a consequence.

- **1 in 5 children (22%) have had contact online with people they have never met face to face.**

Mediation

- **Most parents are actively involved in guiding their children's internet use**: suggesting ways to use the internet safely (82%), explaining why websites are good or bad (81%), suggesting ways to behave with others online (74%) or talking about what to do if something bothered the child online (69%).

- **Peers also offer support** but mostly in a practical way, with friends helping each other to do or find something (51% overall or 81% for teenage girls).

- **Most teachers also suggest ways to use the internet safely** (81%) or explain why some websites are good or bad (77%).

1. Introduction

1.1 The Net Children Go Mobile study

This report provides the first initial findings from Ireland of the Net Children Go Mobile study. Net Children Go Mobile is a two-year research project funded by the European Commission's Safer Internet Programme. It builds on previous research by the EU Kids Online network into children's risks and safety online. Currently seven countries (Italy, Denmark, Romania, United Kingdom, Ireland, Portugal and Belgium) participate in the project.

The aim of Net Children Go Mobile is to study children and young people's use of mobile internet technologies and to examine consequences they may have for children's online welfare. Employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the research focuses specifically on how new mobile conditions of internet access and use (smartphones, tablets, other portable devices and use of wifi) bring greater or lesser risks to children's online safety.

1.2 Methods

The first phase of the research uses a quantitative survey methodology modelled on the original EU Kids Online study.[1] A total sample of 500 children between the ages of 9 and 16 were interviewed in their own homes using a standardised questionnaire on access, use, risks and safety features of mobile internet use.

The fieldwork for the research was carried in November and December 2013 by Ipsos MRBI. A three-stage random selection method was used in order to ensure that the sample is representative of the internet-using population between the ages of 9 and 16 years old. Inclusion criteria consisted of internet-using children with access to a mobile connected device (iPhone, other smartphone, Blackberry, mobile games console etc.). Protocols for parental consent and child were used. The study received ethical approval from the Dublin

Institute of Technology's Research Ethics Committee[2] as well from the coordinating partner Università Cattolica Del Sacro Cuore (UCSC) Milan. A safety leaflet with information about Webwise.ie, Childline and the Irish National Hotline was left with each household interviewed.

In addition to the survey, qualitative interviews and focus groups are also planned as part of the research. Interviews with groups of young people, parents, teachers and youth workers will take place during the first quarter of 2014 and will be presented in a future report from the project.

1.3 Further Reports

This report is published to coincide with Safer Internet Day in Ireland on February 11, 2014.

At the same time, a report with findings from 5 European countries (Italy, Denmark, Romania, United Kingdom and Ireland) is also released to coincide with Safer Internet Day (see Mascheroni, G. & Ólafsson, K. (2014) *Net Children Go Mobile: risks and opportunities*.

Full findings from the Irish dataset will be published in a later report planned for June 2014. In addition, more detailed analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data will be undertaken to explore the different dimensions of access and use, activities, risk and harm, and mediation.

[1] See www.eukidsonline.net for a full description of the EU Kids Online project and findings.

[2] See:http://dit.ie/researchandenterprise/integrityethics indit/ethicscommittee/

2. Access and Use

The proliferation of mobile connected devices has greatly expanded children and young people's opportunities to go online and access the internet outside the confines of the home. Research has shown that the social context of internet access and use is a major factor in shaping children's online experiences (S. Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, & Ólafsson, 2011). With mobile, 'always-on' connectivity, the locations, time spent and ways of using the internet are likely to intensify, creating new challenges for parents, educators and policy makers (Haddon, 2013).

The Net Children Go Mobile uses three indicators to capture the different contexts of internet access and use:
- **Location of use:** own bedroom at home; at home but not in own bedroom; at school; in other places such as libraries, cafés and relatives' or friends' homes; when out and about or on the way to school and other places.
- **Frequency of use:** several times each day, daily, at least every week, never or almost never.
- **Devices used to go online:** desktop computers, laptop computers, mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, other handheld devices such as iPod Touch, e-book readers and games consoles.

2.1 Where children use the internet

The EU Kids Online survey reported in 2011 that the locations from which children access the internet were diversifying (Livingstone et al., 2011). This trend is continuing according to Net Children Go Mobile data. A wider range of devices and increasing amounts of time spent online facilitates more intensive use of the internet from more locations than is possible with a fixed line connection.

Table 1 shows how often children use the internet at the locations asked about, bearing in mind that they generally use it in more than one location.

Table 1: How often children use the internet at different places

	Several times each day	Daily or almost daily	At least every week	Never or almost never
Own bedroom	22	24	14	40
At home but not in own room	25	38	27	10
At school	1	6	40	53
Other places (home of friends/relatives libraries, cafés etc.)	3	8	36	53
When out and about, on the way to school or other places	2	6	5	87

Q1a-e: Looking at this card, please tell me how often you go online or use the internet (from a computer, a mobile phone, a smartphone, or any other device you may use to go online) at the following locations.
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland).

- Most internet use, as revealed in our data, is in fact still at home. **63% of children report using the internet several times a day or at least once a day** in a room which is not their private room. This is somewhat higher than a wider European average (5 countries) of 59%.
- **Just under half or 46% of children access the internet from their own bedroom on a daily basis,** with 22% saying the do so several times per day. 40% of children say they do not use the internet in their own bedroom or a private room at home.
- Going online from school is less common (see below) and just over half (53%) say they never or almost never use the internet in school.
- Surprisingly, **internet access** while **on the move** - such as on the way to school or when out and about - is **still limited. 87% of children say they never or almost never do this.**

Table 2 shows the distribution of daily internet access in the locations asked about by gender, age and country, and helps us to understand in more detail the changing contexts of internet use

Table 2: Daily internet use at different places by age, gender and country

	Own bedroom	At home but not own room	At school	Other places	When out and about
Boys	48	60	9	9	7
Girls	45	66	6	14	9
9-10 yrs	11	50	1	11	
11-12 yrs	31	57	5	3	2
13-14 yrs	77	75	9	17	15
15-16 yrs	77	73	16	14	20
Denmark	77	76	61	38	26
Italy	58	52	8	18	30
Romania	60	40	11	9	8
UK	64	63	29	22	33
IE	46	63	7	11	8

Q1a-e: Looking at this card, please tell me how often you go online or use the internet (from a computer, a mobile phone, a smartphone, or any other device you may use to go online) at the following locations
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- **Daily internet use is strongly differentiated by age** with teenagers having more access everywhere. Half of all 9-16 year olds in Ireland use the internet on a daily basis rising to three quarters of all teenagers.

- **Accessing the internet from a young person's own room is associated more with teenagers.** There is a rapid rise in the development of a 'bedroom culture' (Sonia Livingstone & Bober, 2006) from 13 years and upwards. The overall average of own room internet use is however lower compared to the five other European countries in the study.

- Use of the internet when out and about, even for teenagers, is lower than other countries (with the exception of Romania) suggesting that 'mobile' internet access has yet to make a strong impact on Irish children.

- Gender differences in access are minor, though slightly more girls than boys report accessing the internet in other places and when out and about.

Figure 1 shows the comparison between home and school access across gender, age groups and countries.

Figure 1: Comparison between home and school access

- % Daily use at school
- % Daily use at home (bedroom or elswhere)

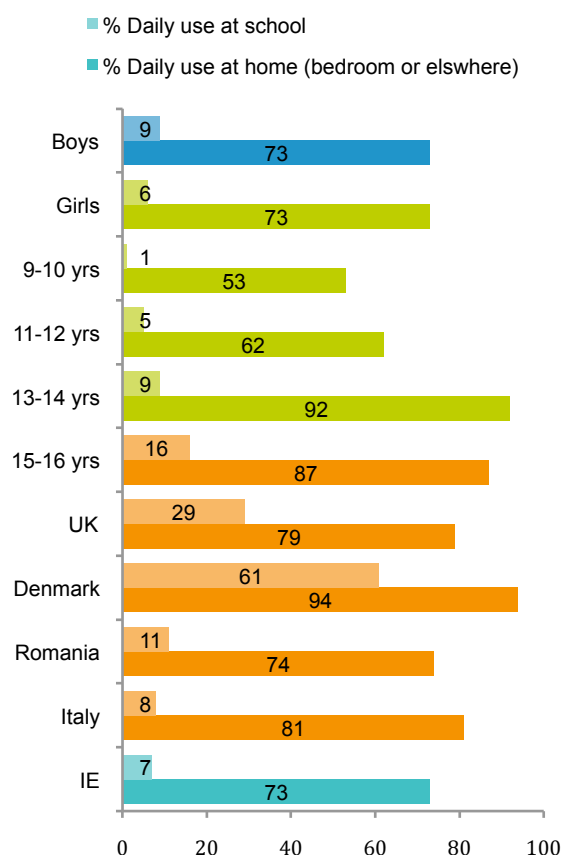|	% Daily use at school	% Daily use at home
Boys	9	73
Girls	6	73
9-10 yrs	1	53
11-12 yrs	5	62
13-14 yrs	9	92
15-16 yrs	16	87
UK	29	79
Denmark	61	94
Romania	11	74
Italy	8	81
IE	7	73

Q1a, Q1b and Q1c: Looking at this card, please tell me how often you go online or use the internet (from a computer, a mobile phone, a smartphone, or any other device you may use to go online) at the following locations.
Base: All children who use the internet.

- **Just 7% of Irish 9-16 year olds children report using the internet in school on a daily basis.** This is the lowest of all 5 countries in the study. It is below the United Kingdom where nearly a third (29%) use the internet everyday in school and substantially below Denmark where 61% report daily use of the internet in school.

- The gap between home and school access to the internet is particularly stark. At a time when greater use of technology in education has been widely advocated, as has the need to enhance young people's digital skills, the low use of the internet in schools for all age groups will be of concern to policy makers.

- It is also the case that daily use of the internet by Irish young people remains somewhat below other European countries. Only Denmark within the current study represents a full integration of internet use both at home and in school.

2.2 How children access the internet

The shift towards greater smartphone use for online access and the rise of a 'post-desktop media ecology' (Mascheroni & Ólafsson, 2013) is evident when we look at the devices children use to go online in each of the locations asked about.

Table 3 shows which devices children use on a daily basis to access the internet in different places.

Table 3: Devices used to go online daily at different places

	Own bedroom	At home but not own room	At school	Other places	When out and about
A desktop computer (PC)	5	14	3	1	N/A
A laptop computer	13	22	2	2	N/A
A mobile phone	9	10	1	2	1
A smartphone	28	31	4	13	9
A tablet	20	24	3	3	0
E-book reader	3	3	0	0	0
Other handheld devices	9	11	1	3	1
Home games consoles3	10	12	1	5	0
Access at least once a day	46	63	7	11	8

Q2 a-h When you use the internet these days at …, how often do you use the following devices to go online?
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland).

- Smartphones stand out as the most used

[3] The questionnaire asked about the use of home games consoles but the fact that 8% of respondents say that they use home game consoles when 'out and about' might both reflect the ambiguous meaning of that phrase or that some respondents are thinking about portable versions of devices that mostly are used in the home

device for internet access on a daily basis by 9-16 year olds in all contexts.

- In a domestic context, just under 60% use their smartphone to go online at least daily. It is also the device most used to go online in other locations.

- Other portable connected devices include tablets which are the next most used device in the home by (44%); home games consoles (22%); and other handheld devices such as iPod Touch (20%).

- Nearly a third (28%) also use a smartphone for internet access in the privacy of their own room.

- Laptop computers are also used on a daily basis by a significant number of children. 35% of children use a laptop at home compared to the 19% who use a desktop PC on a daily basis.

Table 4 shows how daily use of different devices varies by age and gender.

Table 4: Daily use of devices by age and gender

	9-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
A desktop computer (PC)	22	7	22	25	18
A laptop computer	19	30	36	30	29
A mobile phone that is not a smartphone	3	7	24	22	13
A smartphone	20	19	44	61	35
A tablet	29	21	24	33	27
E-book reader	7	2	3	3	4
Other handheld devices	7	10	21	16	13
Home games consoles	28	2	43	3	18

Q2 a-h When you use the internet these days at …, how often do you use the following devices to go online?
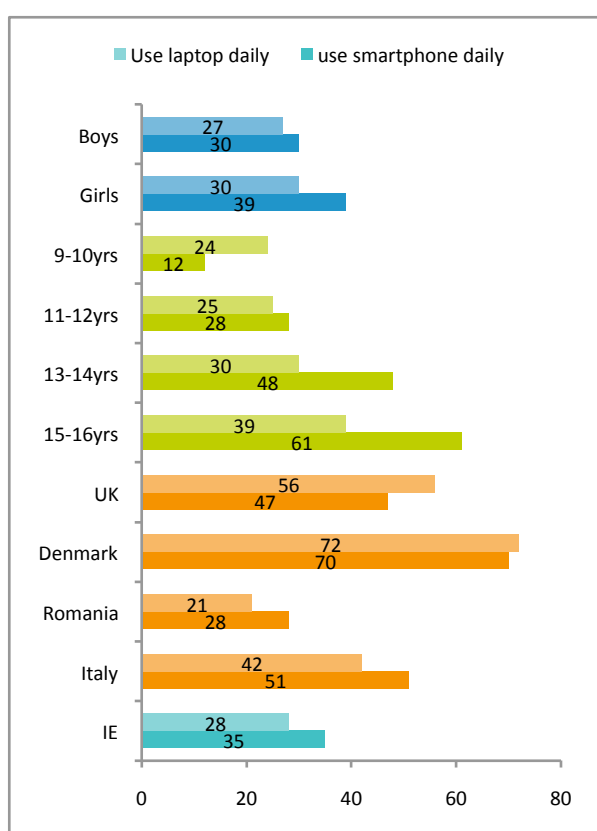Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- Smartphones (35%) followed by laptops (29%) and tablets (27%) are the devices most used most to go online. Desktop

computers now fall into joint fourth place for daily internet access along with home games consoles (18%) underlining the shift to a post-desktop ecology.

- Daily smartphone use is particularly associated with age with a notable increase in use for teenagers from 20% to 44% for teenage boys and 61% for teenage girls.

- Certain devices are seemingly highly gendered such as home games consoles which, unsurprisingly, are almost exclusively for boys. By contrast, teenage girls use smartphones and tablets more.

Figure 2 compares the daily use of smartphones and laptop computers by age, gender and country.

Figure 2: Daily use of smartphones and laptops by gender, age and country

Q2b and Q2d When you use the internet these days at …, how often do you use the following devices to go online? Base: All children who use the internet

- Daily use of either smartphones or laptops is

differentiated by age with use for each steadily rising through each age group.

- Of the two, smartphones are the most used for daily internet use. With the exception of 9-10 year olds, all other children and young people are more likely to use their smartphones than use a laptop to go online.

- Average daily use of smartphones is at the lower end of the spectrum of the 5 countries surveyed. Findings for older teens however are closer to the norm.

Price structures and packages for mobile internet access vary widely across the five countries in the survey. Table 5 examines the different kinds of services used by young people in Ireland to connect to the internet.

Table 5: Ways of connecting to the internet from mobile phones/smartphones by age, gender and country

	% Mobile web package and free wifi	% Mobile web package only	% Free wifi only	% Phone does not connect to the internet
Boys	4	7	67	21
Girls	5	7	81	7
9-10 yrs	N/A	N/A	73	27
11-12 yrs	2	3	73	22
13-14 yrs	5	9	79	6
15-16 yrs	8	11	70	11
Denmark	36	19	21	23
Italy	51	14	28	7
Romania	32	24	18	26
UK	15	24	20	41
IE	5	7	75	14

Q8 a-c Are you able to connect to the internet from your smartphone / mobile phone and if so, how do you connect? Base: All children who own or have for private use a mobile phone or a smartphone (Ireland)

- Three quarters of young people rely exclusively on free wifi access to go online using their smartphone. Few use mobile web packages or incur data charges for online access.

- This contrasts sharply with the other countries in the survey where there is much wider use of mobile web packages in combination with wifi.

- While there is little difference between age groups in the use of free wifi, gender stands

out. **More girls than boys (81% vs. 61%) report connecting using wifi only.**

2.3 Ownership

The use of a device and ownership do not necessarily coincide. Children normally have access to a wider range of devices than those they actually possess or have for private use. However, ownership and private use shape the quality of online experience, with children possessing a certain device being more likely to use it intensively throughout the day.

Table 6 shows which devices children possess or have for private use, and how ownership varies by age and gender.

Table 6: Ownership of devices by age and gender

% Children who own…	9-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
A desktop computer (PC)	10	4	12	9	9
A laptop computer	15	19	24	31	22
A mobile phone that is not a smartphone	22	24	33	30	27
A smartphone	16	29	60	64	40
A tablet	24	24	30	32	27
E-book reader	5	5	1	7	5
Other handheld devices	18	19	33	30	24
Home games consoles	54	26	79	17	44

Q3 a-h Do you personally own or have for your private use any of these devices? By private use of a device we mean a device that only you use.
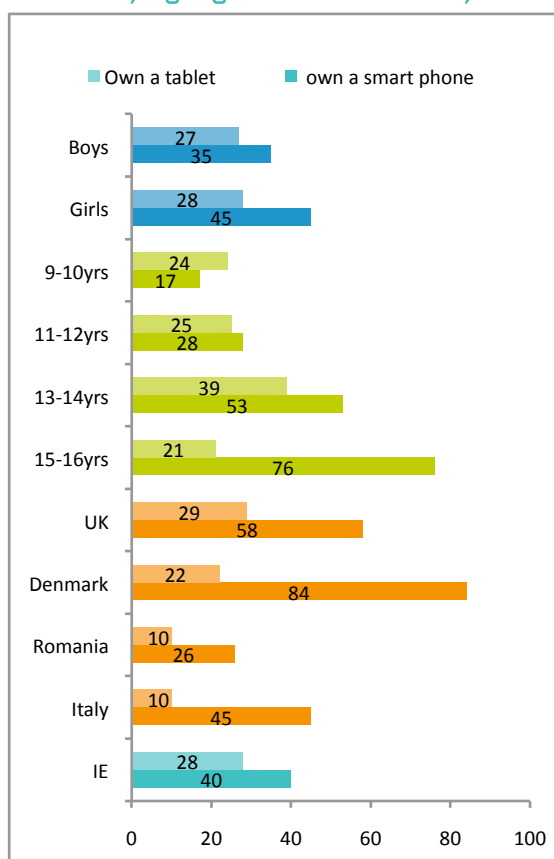Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- In Ireland, home games consoles are the device that 9-16 year olds are likely to own (44%), followed by smartphones (40%), a tablet (28%) or a mobile phone that is not a smartphone (27%).

- **Personally owning an internet-enabled device is closely associated with age.** In the case of smartphones, it more than doubles once children become teenagers.

- **Gender differences in ownership of devices are particularly noteworthy.** Home games

consoles are the preserve of boys with twice as many 9-12 boys (54%) than girls (26%) owning one. A wider gap exists for teenagers (79% of 13-16 year old boys compared to just 17% of girls).

- **In the case of smartphones, twice as many girls than boys in the 9-12 year old bracket own a smartphone.** This gender divide evens out for the teenage group.

- Ownership of tablets and e-readers is also interesting and points to the growing popularity of a variety of handheld devices for information and entertainment purposes, particularly for younger children. **A quarter of 9-12 year olds, for instance, own a tablet computer rising to a third of 13-16 year olds.** One in five of 9-12 year olds owns an e-book reader.

Figure 3 shows how ownership of smartphones and tablets varies by age, gender and country.

Figure 3: Ownership of smartphones and tablets by age, gender, and country

Q3 a-h Do you personally own or have for your private use any of these devices? By private use of a device we mean a device that only you use.
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- Age and gender are both factors in the ownership of smartphones and tablets. **More children own smartphones than tablets overall, a feature that rises sharply in the teenage years**.

- More girls than boys own a smartphone though there is little difference in ownership of tablets between girls and boys.

- Variation in ownership of devices is considerable in the case of smartphones but less so in the case of tablets. UK, Demark and Ireland are broadly on a par in ownership of tablets (with Italy and Romania lagging behind at 10%). A much wider gap exists in smartphone ownership ranging from 26% in Romania to 84% in Denmark.

Table 7 shows ownership of devices compared with daily use of those same devices (defined as using that device to access the internet at least daily at any of the given locations).

Table 7: Children who own devices and children who use devices daily by age

	9-12 years		13-16 years	
	% Own	% Use daily	% Own	% Use daily
A desktop computer (PC)	7	14	11	23
A laptop computer	17	25	28	33
A mobile phone that is not a smartphone	23	5	31	23
A smartphone	22	19	62	53
A tablet	24	25	31	29
E-book reader	5	4	4	3
Other handheld devices	18	9	31	18
Home games consoles	41	16	47	22

Q3 a-h Do you personally own or have for your private use any of these devices? By private use of a device we mean a device that only you use.
Q2 a-h When you use the internet these days at …, how often do you use the following devices to go online?
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- Twice as many children say that they use a desktop computer at least daily to access the internet than those who say that they own such a device or have it for their private use suggesting that **desktop computers are to some extent shared devices.**

- A similar gap exists between ownership and

daily use of laptops, likewise pointing towards their use as shared devices.

- This is not the case, however, for other devices such as smartphones, tablets and home games consoles where the percentage who say that they own the device is higher than the percentage of children who say that they use it at least daily to access the internet.

2.4 Age of first use

EU Kids Online (Livingstone et al., 2011) showed that the average age at which children start using the internet was lowering, with younger children starting to use the internet at an earlier age. In the Net Children Go Mobile survey, we also asked children how old they were when they started to use the internet as well as the age they were when first given a mobile phone and/or a smartphone.

Table 8 compares the average age for children to be given access to these different devices across the five countries in the survey.

Table 8: Age of first internet use, first mobile phone and first smartphone

	How old were you when you first…		
	Used the internet	Got a mobile phone	Got a smartphone
Denmark	7	9	11
Italy	10	10	12
Romania	9	9	12
UK	8	10	12
IE	9	10	12
Average	8	9	12

Q5 How old were you when you first used the internet?
Q6 How old were you when you got your first mobile phone (a phone which is not a smartphone)?
Q7 How old were you when you got your first smartphone?
Base: All children who use the internet

- **The age at which children start using the internet has fallen marginally**. 8 years of age is now the average for the 5 countries compared to 9 years of age reported by EU Kids Online in 2011 (Livingstone et al., 2011).

- **In Ireland, there is little change with 9 years of age still the average reported for first internet use though 11-12 year olds report going online at an earlier age** (Figure 4).

- The age at which children start to use smartphones is quite consistent with **12 years (and slightly younger in Denmark) the age of first use in all five countries.**

Figure 4 summarises the average age of adoption of the internet, mobile phones and smartphones across the different age groups, showing that **children start using the internet and get a mobile phone or a smartphone at ever younger ages.**

Figure 4: Age of first internet use, first mobile phone and first smartphone by age

Q5 How old were you when you first used the internet?
Q6 How old were you when you got your first mobile phone (a phone which is not a smartphone)?
Q7 How old were you when you got your first smartphone?
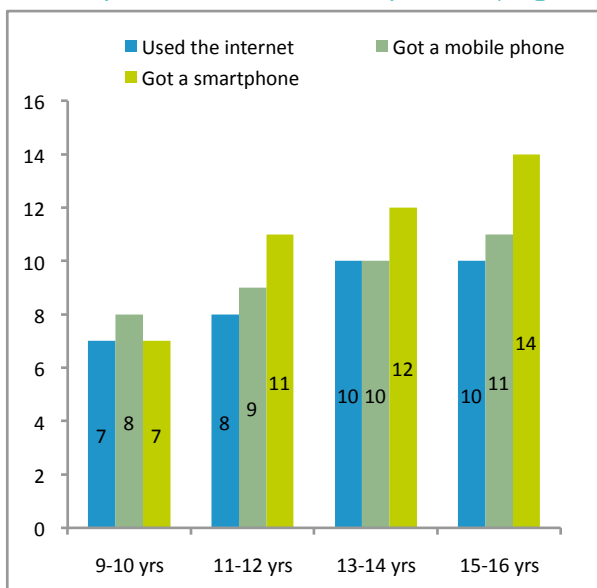Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

3. Online activities

Research has shown that young people's online activities tend to follow a 'ladder of opportunities' (Sonia Livingstone, Haddon, Gorzig, & Ólafsson, 2011), progressing from basic activities such as doing schoolwork and playing games to using the internet interactively for communications and for more advanced and creative uses.

EU Kids Online data for Ireland has shown that Online activities for 9-16 year olds in Ireland fall substantially below European norms leaving many opportunities unexplored with over half (57%) not going beyond information and entertainment activities (O'Neill & Dinh, 2012a).

Net Children Go Mobile asked children aged 9-16 about their online activities in order to track changes since the last survey in Ireland (O'Neill, Grehan, & Ólafsson, 2011) and to assess how the range of activities may vary with greater mobile and convergent media use.

3.1 Types of online activities

Table 9 shows how many children do each of a range of activities, by age and gender.

- Entertainment uses (listening to music and watching video clips online) continue to be the most popular online activities for all age groups.

- The next most popular use of the internet is visiting a social networking site, especially so for teenagers for whom it is – with listening to music – the most reported online activity.

- Instant messaging (e.g.,Skype, WhatsApp) is used daily by more than a third of 13-16 year olds.

- Using the internet for schoolwork on a daily basis is relatively low but is consistent with the low usage of the internet in schools reported in this survey.

Table 9: Daily online activities (all types of access) by age and gender

% Children who…	9-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
Listened to music	31	32	65	78	50
Watched video clips (e.g. on YouTube, iTunes, Vimeo, etc.)	40	27	56	75	49
Visited a social networking profile	14	11	68	76	40
Checked information or satisfied your curiosity when something interested you	19	14	28	45	26
Played games on your own or against the computer	24	20	36	12	23
Used instant messaging	10	10	35	38	22
Used the internet for schoolwork	11	6	28	39	20
Downloaded free Apps	11	16	15	21	16
Downloaded music or films	5	6	19	31	15
Used file sharing sites	4	11	8	24	12
Played games with other people on the internet	11	2	28	7	11
Watched broadcast television / movie online	4	6	14	15	10
Published photos, videos or music to share with others	1	5	7	29	10
Read/watched the news on the internet	5	2	8	17	8
Published a message on a website or a blog	1	8	7	13	7
Looked up maps / timetables	5	1	7	16	7
Visited a chatroom	1	2	3	16	5
Read an ebook	6	2	3	10	5
Registered my geographical location	2		5	10	4
Used a webcam	1	8	1	6	4
Created a character, pet or avatar	2	8	2	1	3
Spent time in a virtual world	2	3	2	1	2
Bought things online	1		3	4	2
Purchased Apps	1		1	1	1
Read QR codes/scan barcodes				1	

Q9a-d, 10a-e, 11a-e, 12a-k For each of the things I read out, please tell me how often you have done it in the past month. Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- Gender differences in activities undertaken are interesting: teenage girls typically do more than boys in all categories with the exception of gaming which is highly gendered

and male-dominated activity.

- Activities that are typical of, though not exclusive to, mobile convergent media such as downloading free apps (16%) or using geo-location (4%), purchasing apps (1%) or reading QR codes (<1%) are practised on a daily basis by only a minority of children.

3.2. Smartphone users

In order to assess the impact of mobile internet devices on the mix of daily online activities, Table 10 compares smartphone and non-smartphone users, divided into two age groups.

- Smartphone users consistently undertake more activities on a daily basis compared to non-smartphone users. This applies in all categories of online activity and for both teens and pre-teens.

- Using entertainment services (listening to music, watching video clips) as well as communication activities (visiting a social networking profile, using instant messaging) on a daily basis are reported more frequently by smartphone users.

- While further research is needed to assess the relationship between smartphone use and more intensive online activity, these findings support the view that children who use a smartphone to go online are more likely to take up online activities on a daily basis, and have thus incorporated the internet more thoroughly into their everyday lives.

Table 10: Daily online activities by age and by whether child uses a smartphone or not

| % Children who…	9-12 years		13-16 years		All* (users and non users)
	Non user	S-ph user	Non user	S-ph user	
Listened to music	27	54	61	82	50
Watched video clips (e.g. on YouTube, iTunes, Vimeo, etc.)	30	52	53	78	49
Visited a social networking profile	9	27	61	83	40
Checked information or satisfied your curiosity when something interested you	16	19	30	44	26
Played games on your own or against the computer	18	39	22	25	23
Used instant messaging	6	30	28	44	22
Used the internet for schoolwork	9	10	23	44	21
Downloaded free Apps	8	38	15	23	16
Downloaded music or films	3	17	15	35	15
Used file sharing sites	5	19	6	27	12
Played games with other people on the internet	5	14	23	12	11
Watched broadcast television / movie online	3	13	11	18	10
Published photos, videos or music to share with others	1	12	17	21	10
Read/watched the news on the internet	3	6	15	11	8
Published a message on a website or a blog	3	6	8	12	7
Looked up maps / timetables	3	2	9	14	7
Visited a chatroom	1	4	5	14	5
Read an ebook	4	4	6	7	5
Registered my geographical location		4	9	6	4
Used a webcam	4	4	1	5	4
Created a character, pet or avatar	5	8	1	2	3
Spent time in a virtual world	1	6	1	2	2
Bought things online	1			6	2
Purchased Apps		2		2	1
Read QR codes/scan barcodes				1	

Q9a-d, 10a-e, 11a-e, 12a-k For each of the things I read out, please tell me how often you have done it in the past month. Base: All children who use the internet

* the 'All' values here refer to the average number of children who are internet users and do a certain activity on a daily basis (as shown in Table 9)

3.3 Social networking and media sharing platforms

Social networking is one of the most popular activities undertaken up by children on a daily basis. Children who also use a smartphone or other mobile device are more likely to engage in social networking on a daily basis.

Figure 5 presents findings on the number of children who have one or more profile on social network sites.

Figure 5: Children with a SNS profile by gender, age and country
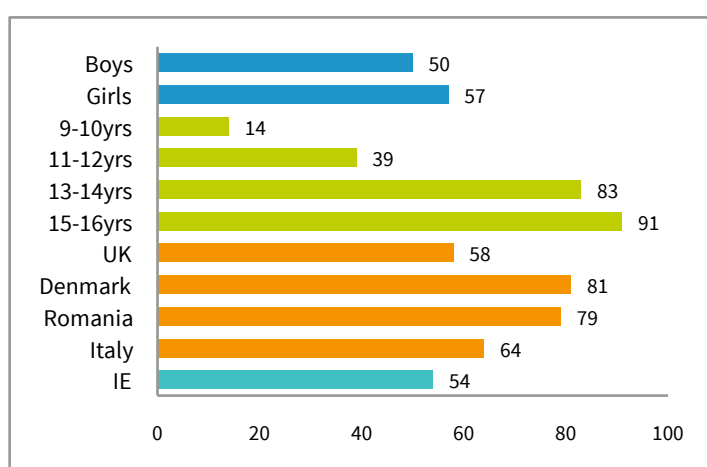
Q16 a-f Do you have your own profile on a social networking site(e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that you currently use and if you have a profile/account, do you have just one or more than one?
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland)

- As shown in Figure 5, **54% of children in Ireland have at least one profile on a social networking site.**

- Use of social networking sites is strongly associated with age. Fewer younger children have a profile on a social networking site. **There is a steep rise from age 11-12 to age 13-14 where use of social networking more than doubles.**

- Gender differences are not particularly evident though slightly more girls than boys are active on social media.

- There is considerable variation between countries, principally due to differences in use of social networking among younger users (see below). For older teenagers, social networking activity is almost universal in all countries.

Table 11 looks more closely at the use of social networking by age in each of the five countries in the Net Children Go Mobile survey.

Table 11: Children with a profile on SNS by country and by age

|	9-10 yrs	11-12 yrs	13-14 yrs	15-16 yrs
Denmark	41	81	98	99
Ireland	14	39	83	91
Italy	15	52	90	93
Romania	50	80	86	92
UK	19	35	73	88
All	28	57	85	93

Q16 a-f Do you have your own profile on a social networking site(e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that you currently use and if you have a profile/account, do you have just one or more than one?
Base: All children who use the internet

- 9 in 10 of all 15-16 year olds in Ireland have a profile on a social networking site. Notably, just under 40% of 11-12 year olds also have a social networking profile despite the age restriction of 13 for most social networking services.

- The lower diffusion of social networking in Ireland, Italy and the UK is mainly due to lower rates of underage use in these countries.

- With considerable attention given to the issue of underage use of social network sites, **the evidence would suggest that such campaigns are beginning to have an effect.**

Figure 6 shows which social networking profile is most used by children, by gender and age.

Figure 6: Which social networking profile is the one children use most by gender, age and country
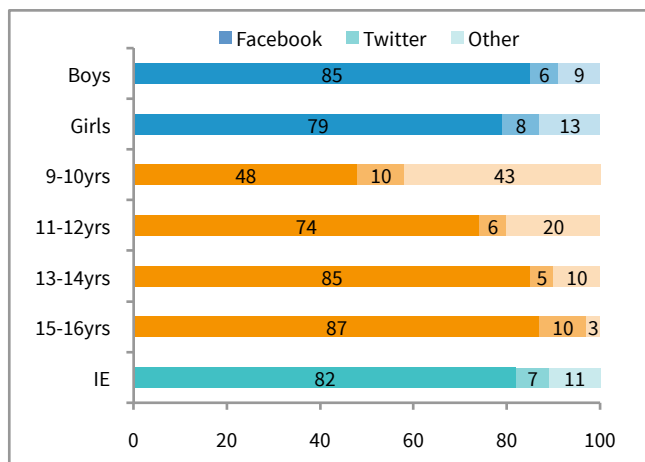
Q17 What social network is the profile/account that you use the most on?
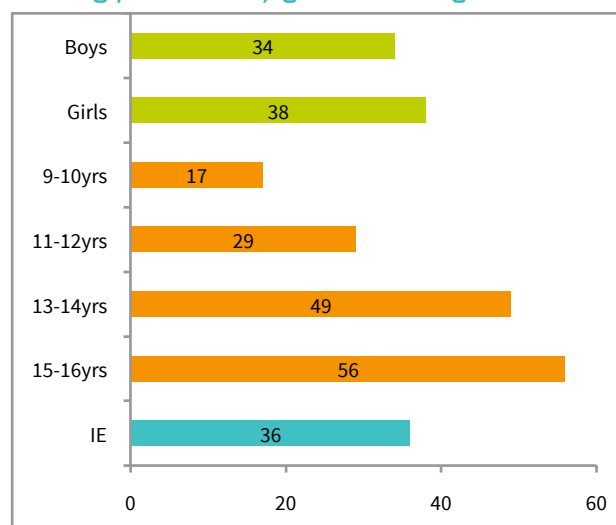Base: All children who use SNS (Ireland).

- Facebook is still the social network site that children are most likely to use with small variations by age and gender. **8 out of 10 children who use social networking use Facebook as their main profile**.

- **7% of children overall and 10% of 15-16 year olds say they use Twitter as their primary social networking platform.**

- **This contrasts with the UK where 1 in 4 children say the profile they use most is Twitter.** The popularity of Twitter varies by gender, age and country, and is higher among boys (though girls in Ireland), teenagers, and especially UK children. See (Mascheroni & Ólafsson, 2014) for further details.

- Younger children use a diverse range of other services (not specified), presumably referring to services designed for their age group.

Given the ease with which smartphones and other mobile devices can be used to create, capture and upload media content, we also asked children if they have a profile on a media sharing platform such as YouTube, Instagram or Flickr.

Figure 7 shows the number of children with an account on one of these platforms by gender and age.

Figure 7: Children with a profile on a media sharing platform by gender and age

Q23 a-f Do you have your own profile/account on a media sharing platform (photo and video) such as YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, that you currently use and if you have a profile/account, do you have just one or more than one?
Base: All children who use the internet

- **Over one third of all 9-16 year olds (36%) have a profile on a media sharing platform.** Use of such platforms is associated with age and rises from a third of 11-12 year olds to half of all 13-14 year olds.

- As with social networking, gender differences are slight with somewhat more girls likely to report a profile on a media sharing platform.

- **Instagram is the most popular media sharing platform and is reported by 42% of 9-16 year** olds as the platform they use most often. **This is followed by YouTube (34%).** A further 25% use other media sharing services.

4. Risk and harm

Online risky experiences reported by children, as evidenced by the EU Kids Online survey (Livingstone et al., 2011), do not necessarily result in harm. Experiences of risk are an inherent part of growing up, learning resilience and gaining more skills. As argued by EU Kids Online, it is children who have less exposure to both opportunities and risks that tend to be more bothered when they have a negative experience online (Hasebrink, Görzig, Haddon, Kalmus, & Livingstone, 2011).

In order to measure the incidence of online risks and harm, we asked children who use the internet if they have "*seen or experienced something on the internet that has bothered them in some way*", where 'bothered' was defined as something that "*made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it*". Additionally, children were asked if they had encountered a range of online risks and, then, if they had been bothered by these.

The measurement of risky and harmful online experiences largely draws on the EU Kids Online framework and methodology (Livingstone et al., 2011). Similarly, harm was measured subjectively in terms of the severity of children's responses to online risky experiences.

Continuities with the EU Kids Online project were also ensured both at the level of the administration of the survey and in the design of the questionnaire. In order to maximise the quality of child's answer and ensure their own privacy, the survey was conducted face-to-face in the home, but sensitive questions were self-completed by the child. The wording of the questionnaire was refined on the basis of cognitive testing with children of different age-groups and gender in each country, in order to ensure children's comprehension and avoid adults' terminology (like 'sexting'). Furthermore, particularly emotive terms, such as 'stranger' or 'bullying' were also avoided.

4.1 Overall perception of risk and harm

Children were asked "In the past 12 months, have you seen or experienced something on the internet that has bothered you in some way? For example made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it".

Figure shows children's accounts of problematic experiences by age and gender.

Figure 8: Online experiences that have bothered children by age and gender
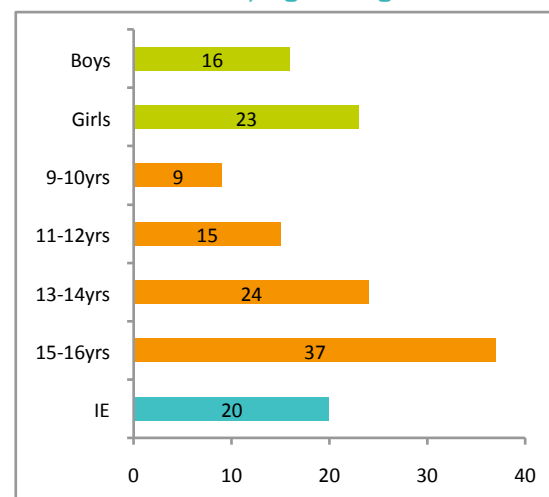
Q30 In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you seen or experienced something on the internet that has bothered you in some way? For example made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it.
Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland).

- **Overall, 1 in 5 children in Ireland (20%) say that they have been bothered by something on the internet in the past year.** While it is still a minority of children, **this is almost double the percentage (11%) reported by 9-16 year olds in for the EU Kids Online survey** (O'Neill et al., 2011).

- **More girls (23%) report being bothered than boys (16%).** The youngest children, aged 9-10 years, are the least likely to have been bothered by something online (9%) compared with older teenagers.

- A quarter of 13-14 year olds and 37% of 15-16 year olds say they have experienced something that bothered them or wished they hadn't seen.

4.2 Bullying

Being bullied online is one of a number of conduct risks that has attracted much attention and given rise to considerable public concern. In order to avoid any emotive connotations and maintain consistency with previous definitions used by EU Kids Online, bullying was defined in this survey as follows:

"Sometimes children or teenagers say or do hurtful or nasty things to someone and this can often be quite a few times on different days over a period of time, for example. This can include: teasing someone in a way this person does not like; hitting, kicking or pushing someone around; leaving someone out of things."

Following this introduction, children were asked whether: *someone has acted in this kind of hurtful or nasty way to you in the past 12 months.* In order to gauge the severity of the impact, children were then asked how upset they had been when they experienced this conduct.

Figure shows that **22% of children have experienced any form of bullying on- or offline. 16% say they were 'very' (6%) or 'a little upset' (10%) by what happened.**

- Girls are more likely to experience bullying than boys (26% for girls compared to 17% of boys). Girls are more likely to be upset by what happened: **20% of girls compared to 11% of boys say they were upset by what happened.**

- The impact of age is noteworthy. **The youngest age group of 9-10 years and 13-14 year olds experience the most bullying (27% in each age group).**

- It is the youngest age group who report the highest rates of harm with **18% of 9-10 year olds saying they were very upset by what happened.**

Figure 9: Child has been bullied online or offline in past 12 months
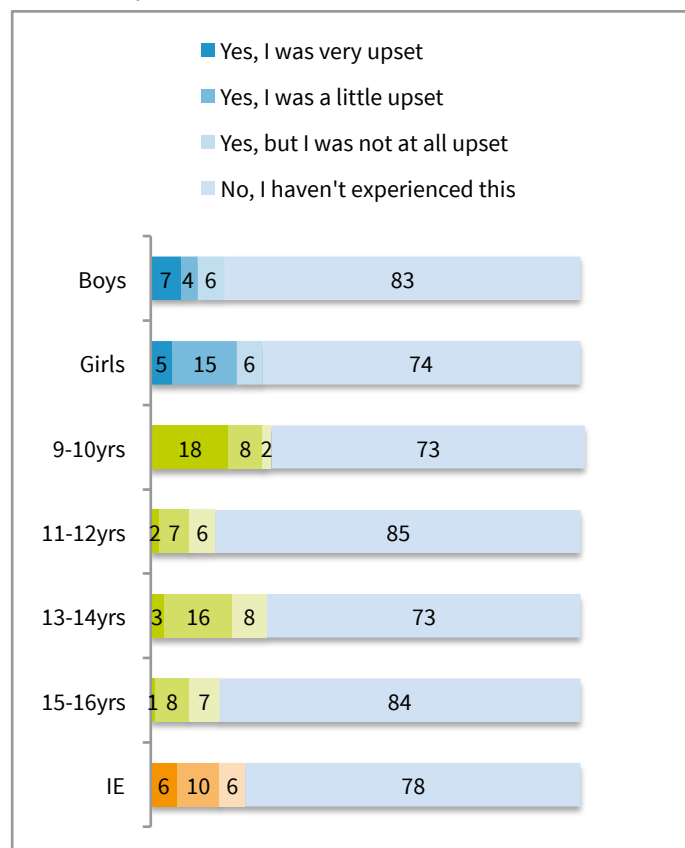
Q32 In the PAST 12 MONTHS, has someone treated you in this kind of way and if so, how upset were you about happened? Base: All children who use the internet (Ireland).

Bullying can occur in many ways. Table 12 shows the ways in which children have actually been bullied.

- In this survey, more bullying takes place across a variety of internet locations than happens face-to-face.

- 5% of young people overall but 13% of 13-14 year olds say that they have been bullied on a social networking site. This compares with 6% of children overall who report that they were bullied face-to-face in the past twelve months.

- Gaming websites (3%), instant messaging (2%) and mobile phone calls (2%) are the other most common forms of cyberbullying.

Table 12: Ways in which children have been bullied in past 12 months, by age

	Age				Gender		
	9-10	11-12	13-14	15-16	Boys	Girls	All
Face to face	7.1	4.5	7.8	4.5	6.9	5.5	6.2
By mobile phone calls	5			1.1	3.2	0.4	1.6
By messages sent to me on my phone (SMS, text or MMS)			1.4	1.1	0.4	0.8	0.6
On a social working site			12.9	9	1.2	9.0	5.2
On a media sharing platform			3.5	1.1	0.4	2.3	1.2
By instant messaging	4.3		2.1		3.2	0.4	1.8
In a chat room							0
By email							0
On a gaming website	6.4	0.8	0.7	4.5	2.4	3.5	3
On a question answer app/ platform (e.g. Ask.fm)			1.4		0.8	0.4	0.4
By a message using Snapchat							0

Q33 If someone has treated you in this kind of way, how did it happen? Multiple responses allowed.
Base: All children who use the internet

- Age differences are notable: the youngest children aged 9-10 are more likely to report being bullied face-to-face or on a gaming website (7% and 6% respectively).

- By contrast among teenagers (13-14 and 15-16 years old) cyberbullying is more likely to occur on a social networking platform.

- Gender differences are also noteworthy: somewhat more boys than girls report being bullied face to face, by mobile phone calls and by instant messaging. In the case of social networking, however, **girls are much more likely to report being bullied.**

- Despite the controversy that has attached to question and answer apps such as Ask.fm, only a small number (**less than 2% of 13-14 year olds**) report being bullied on such a platform.

4.3 Sexual messages

Use of the internet for the exchange of sexual messages, whether in the context of a romantic relationship or more negatively as a form of cyber bullying is a topic that has received increased attention (Lenhart, 2009). In keeping with the EU Kids Online survey, this practice, more commonly labelled 'sexting', was defined as follows: "**sexual messages or images**. *By this we mean talk about having sex or images of people naked or having sex. Here are some questions about this. Think about any way in which you use the internet and your mobile phone/smartphone*".
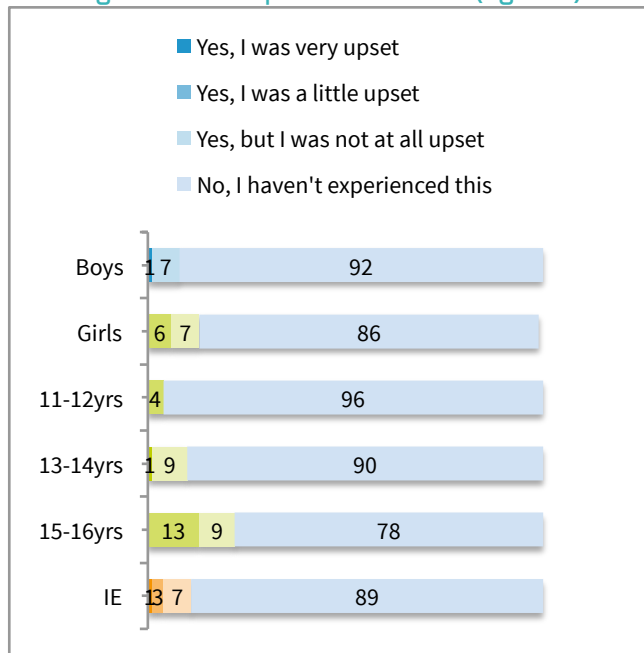
Respondents were then asked: "*In the past 12 months, have you received sexual messages of this kind (this could be words, pictures or videos) and if so, how upset were you about happened? Think about any way in which you use the internet and your mobile phone/smartphone*."[4] For ethical reasons, this question was not asked of 9-10 years old.

Figure 10 shows how children answered this question by gender and age:

- Overall, **11% of children have received sexual messages of any kind, and 4% report being 'very' (1%) or 'a little ' (3%) upset as a consequence**. 7% of boys and a similar proportion of girls say they were not upset by the experience.

- While the numbers saying they had been upset are small, girls rather than boys were more likely to say that they had been upset by the experience.

- Receiving sexual messages increases with age: while just 4% of children aged 11-12 are likely to say they have received messages of this kind, **10% of 13-14 year olds and 22% of 15-16 year olds report having received such messages.**

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[4] Compared to the EU Kids Online survey, the question was rephrased: while the original question asked children if they have "seen or received sexual messages" we excluded the word 'seen' as potentially misleading (it was thought to lead to potential confusion with sexual images.

Figure 10: Child has received sexual messages online in past 12 months (age 11+)


Q42 In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you received sexual messages of this kind (this could be words, pictures or videos) and if so, how upset were you about happened?
Base: All children aged 11-16 who use the internet.

4.4 Meeting new people

An area for concern for parents and carers is who their children may come into contact with online. 'Stranger danger' is one formulation of this and has led to considerable anxiety that young people's online communication may encourage them to meet contacts offline and end up being abused in a face-to face encounter. Previous research has shown, however, that the risk of harm from face-to-face contact with someone met online is low (Livingstone et al., 2011).

In the EU Kids Online survey (2011), it was revealed many children do make contact with people online they do not know offline and that this results from the inherent social nature of online communication. Net Children Go Mobile One follows this approach and asked children if they ever had contact on the internet (on all platforms/devices) with someone they had not met face to face before. Figure 11 shows the number of children in Ireland who have in been in contact on the internet with people they have never met face to face before, by age and gender.

Figure 11: Child has been in contact with someone not met face to face before
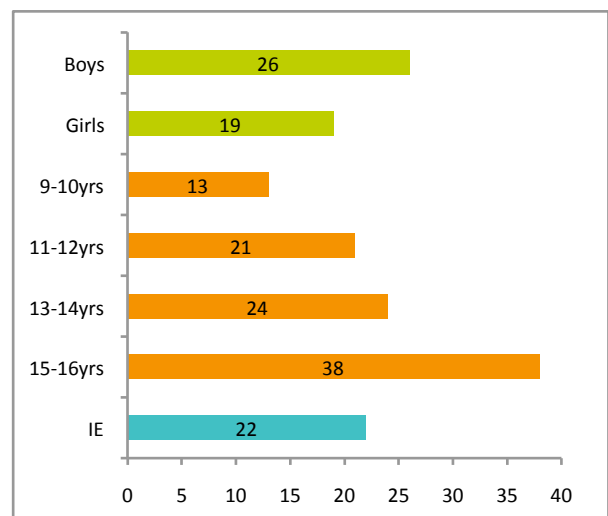
Q37 In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you ever had contact on the internet (on all platforms/devices) with someone you had not met face to face before? This could have been by email, chat rooms, social networking sites, instant messaging or gaming sites.
Base: All children who use the internet.

- 1 in 5 children (22%) have had contact online with people they have never met face to face.

- More boys than girls report being in contact with people they do not know offline. The age trend is also marked: contact with people met online increases with age, ranging from **13% of children aged 9-10 years old to 38% of teenagers aged 15-16.**

However, contact with people met online is not, *per se*, negative or risky: rather, it often provides children with an opportunity to share interests and hobbies. Moreover, not every online contact leads to an offline encounter, and, more importantly, not every face-to-face meeting with someone met on the internet has harmful consequences. In the case of Ireland, fewer than 4% had gone to meet someone offline they first met online.

4.5 Sexual images

Previous research by EU Kids Online revealed that 1 in 4 children has come across pornographic content, and just 14% have accidentally or intentionally encountered sexual images online (Livingstone et al., 2011). The data also showed that, while seeing sexual images is more common among boys and older teenagers, younger

children and girls are more likely to be bothered from what they have encountered.

Drawing on the EU Kids Online methodology, questions about pornography were introduced in the Net Children Go Mobile Study in the following way. "*In the past year, you will have seen lots of different images – pictures, photos, videos. Sometimes, these might be obviously sexual – for example, showing people having sex, or naked people in sexy poses*[5]. *You might never have seen anything like this, or you may have seen something like this on a mobile phone, in a magazine, on the TV, on a DVD or on the internet, on whatever device you use to go online*".

Figure 12 shows how seeing sexual images on and offline varies by gender, age and country

Figure 12: Child has seen sexual images online or offline in past 12 months
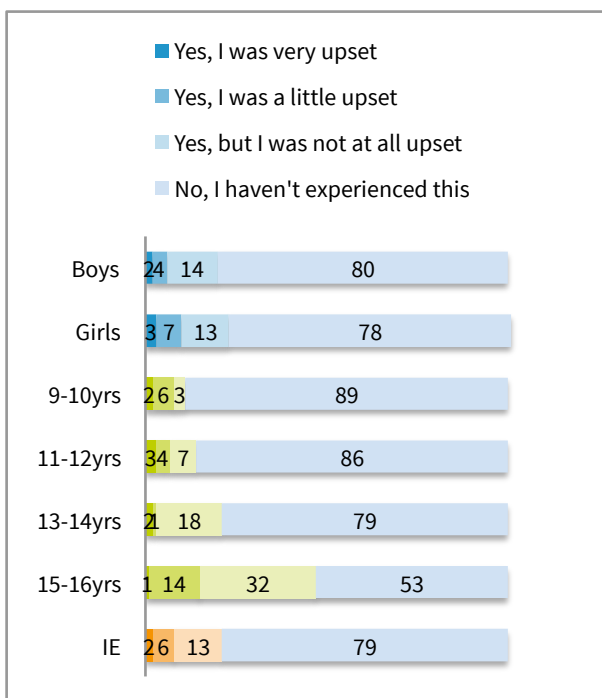
Q35 In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you seen anything of this kind and if so, how upset were you by what you saw?
Base: All children who use the internet age 11-16.

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[5] The original text in the EU Kids Online questionnaire stated: "In the past year, you will have seen lots of different images – pictures, photos, videos. Sometimes, these might be obviously sexual – for example, showing people naked or people having sex". We changed it into "naked people in sexy poses" because the cognitive testing and the researchers' experience suggested that naked images are not necessarily associated with pornographic material in all countries.

- Overall, 21% of children say that they have seen sexual images in the past 12 months, whether online or offline.

- Seeing sexual images is primarily related to age: 47% of older teenagers have seen sexual images in the past 12 months compared to 11% of younger children.

- Of those who have seen sexual content on or offline, **8% of children (or less than half of those who encountered sexually explicit images) were bothered by this experience.**

- While, as we have seen, girls and boys are equally exposed to sexual images, **girls are more likely to be 'very' (3%) or 'a little' (7%) upset by what they have seen.**

- **About half of older teenagers who had seen sexual images said they were upset by the experience.** The proportion of those harmed rises with younger age groups: as many were upset as not upset among 11-12 year olds, rising to a proportion of **3 to 1 who had been upset among 9-10 year olds.**

4.6 Other potentially harmful content

Web 2.0 has enabled the uploading and sharing of vast amounts of so-called 'user generated account' (UGC). While much user generated content offers new opportunities for creative expression and is an essential component of digital literacy, some UGC may be problematic, harmful or age-inappropriate for younger viewers.

EU Kids Online reported in 2011 that exposure to potentially harmful content was a common experience for children (Livingstone et al., 2011) though it has received less attention among policy makers and researchers than bullying, sexting, meeting strangers and pornography.

In the Net Children Go Mobile survey, we asked children: "*In the past 12 months, have you seen websites where people...*" For ethical reasons, this question was not been addressed to 9-10 year olds.

Table 10 presents an overview of the kinds of problematic content children have come across, and how this varies by age. **Overall, 21% of children report seeing potentially harmful UGC online – making this one of the most common**

risks that children encounter.

- The most common type of negative content which children report encountering is hate and discriminatory messages (15%) and anorexic or bulimic content (14%).

- Other forms of harmful content which young people encounter include: self-harm sites (9%); sites discussing suicide 8%; and sites where people share their experiences with drugs (7%)

- Seeing negative user generated increases with age: 16% of children aged 11-12 years have encountered one or more of the content listed compared with 23% of 13-16 year olds.

- Teenage girls report encountering harmful content the most: 35% of girls aged 13-16 have encountered one of the forms of content listed.

Table 10: Child has seen potentially harmful user-generated content on websites in past 12 months, by age (age 11+)

% Seen websites in past 12 months where people...	11-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
Discuss ways of physically harming or hurting themselves	6	2	5	17	9
Discuss ways of committing suicide	9		5	14	8
Promote eating disorders (such as being very skinny, anorexic or bulimic)	19	11	3	21	14
Publish hate messages that attack certain groups or individuals	14	6	11	23	15
Talk about or share their experiences of taking drugs	10	2	5	9	7
Has seen such material at all on any websites	17	15	12	35	21

Q44 In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you seen websites where people discuss
Base: All children who use the internet age 11-16.

5. Mediation

The final section of this short report deals with mediation. Mediation in this context refers to the different ways that parents, teachers and peers monitor, guide or otherwise support young people's internet use. It may take a variety of forms ranging from actively engaging with the child's use of the internet, promoting safe and responsible internet use, regulating the amount of time spent online or restricting through technical means the kinds of activities undertaken.

Previous research has shown that Ireland has practiced high levels of restrictive mediation, including setting rules and regulating time spent online, location of use and online activities (O'Neill & Dinh, 2012b). Ireland is included in the cluster of countries classified by EU Kids Online as 'protected by restrictions' indicating that there is scope for developing more active forms of mediation of safety and internet use (Helsper, Kalmus, Hasebrink, Sagvari, & Haan, 2013).

5.1 Parents

Table 11 shows the different forms of active mediation of internet use, as reported by children, and variations by age and gender.

- **Nearly three quarters of parents talk to their children about what they do on the internet (71%),** making this the most popular way to actively mediate children's internet use.

- Most children also say that their parents stay nearby while they are online (64%).

- Other strategies such as sitting with the child while he/she is online or doing shared activities are adopted by about a third of parents.

Active mediation is structured by age, with parents engaging in considerably more active mediation of younger children's use of the internet.

- Gender differences are smaller. However, in the case of teenage girls, **parents appear to be considerably more involved than with teenage boys.**

Table 11: Parent's active mediation of the child's internet use, by age and gender

Do your parents sometimes:	9-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
Talk to you about what you do on the internet	79	79	46	77	71
Sit with you while you use the internet	48	50	16	24	36
Stay nearby while you use the internet	80	80	37	51	64
Encourage you to explore and learn things on the internet on your own	63	42	29	40	44
Do shared activities together with you on the internet	49	38	20	20	33

Q53 Does your parent / do either of your parents> sometimes…
Base: All children who use the internet.

Parents' mediation of children's *internet safety* is shown in Table 12:

Table 12: Parents' active mediation of the child's internet safety, by age and gender

Have parents ever done:	9-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
Helped you when something is difficult to do or find on the internet	89	82	51	65	73
Explained why some websites are good or bad	84	86	68	83	81
Suggested ways to use the internet safely	88	82	67	86	82
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online	73	73	66	81	74
Helped you in the past when something has bothered you on the internet	49	46	37	56	47
In general, talked to you about what you would do if something on the internet ever bothered you	67	72	51	84	69

Q54 Has your parent / have either of your parents ever done any of the following things with you?
Base: All children who use the internet.

- According to the children interviewed, **most parents suggest ways to use the internet safely (82%) and explain why websites are good or bad (81%).**

- Many also take an **active role in suggesting ways to behave with others online (74%) or talked about what to do if something bothered the child online (69%).**

- Age and gender differences are noteworthy: younger children receive considerably more support than teenagers, especially boys.

- Teenage girls, as above, in general receive more support than teenage boys.

5.2 Peers

Peer support also plays a crucial role in mediation of internet safety. Previous research from EU Kids Online shows that young people will often turn to their friends for support when they experience a problem online.

Table 13 shows how peers engage in active mediation of children's internet safety, by age and gender:

- **Most peer support takes the form of offering support in a practical way**, with friends helping each other when something is difficult to do or find something (51% overall or 81% for teenage girls).

- By contrast**, peers are less likely to give safety advice or to help cope with a negative online experience. Just a quarter of peers suggest ways to use the internet safely**.

- Teenage girls do tend to offer more support. 58% suggest ways to behave to others online and 45% suggest ways to use the internet safely.

Table 13: Friends' active mediation of child's internet safety, by age and gender

Have friends ever:	9-12 years		13-16 years		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
Helped you when something is difficult to do or find on the internet	48	45	64	81	59
Explained why some websites are good or bad	15	23	32	46	28
Suggested ways to use the internet safely	12	18	30	45	26
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online	14	30	39	58	34
Helped you in the past when something has bothered you on the internet	21	20	40	54	32
In general, talked to you about what you would do if something on the internet ever bothered you	13	22	35	66	33

Q58 Have your friends ever done any of these things? Please say yes or no to each of the following…
Base: All children who use the internet.

5.3 Teachers

Finally, teachers, it is widely recognised, play a pivotal role in supporting young people's internet use and teaching principles of internet safety.

Table 14 provides an overview of the ways in which teachers are reported by children to have supported their internet use.

Table 14: Teachers' active mediation of the child's internet safety, by age and gender

| | 9-12 years | | 13-16 years | | |
Have teachers ever:	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	All
Talked to you about what you do on the internet	66	82	67	76	73
Helped you when you found something difficult to do or find on the internet	52	57	53	49	53
Explained why some websites are good or bad	74	87	75	74	77
Suggested ways to use the internet safely	72	86	78	88	81
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online	65	75	75	91	76
Made rule about what you can do on the internet at school	53	77	80	82	72
Helped you in the past when something has bothered you on the internet	22	20	19	30	23
In general, talked to you about what you would do if something on the internet ever bothered you	51	62	59	75	61

Question 59: Have your teacher ever .… (Multiple responses allowed)
Base: All children who use the internet.

- Most teachers do suggest ways to use the internet safely (81%), explain why some websites are good or bad (77%) and talk to children about what they do on the internet.

- Teenage girls, whether as a result of negative experiences they have had online, or because of their more active role in social networking, again receive more support than teenage boys.

- 91% of teenage girls say that teachers have suggested ways of behaving towards others online.

- Setting rules about what you can do on the internet in school is mentioned by 81% of teenagers.

6. Conclusions

The first preliminary findings from the Net Children Go Mobile project reveal a changing landscape for children's internet access and use in Ireland with some marked changes in patterns of risk and safety. Since the publication of EU Kids Online data on children's experiences online in 2011, internet use has continued to intensify with young people going online, using the internet more intensively and notably shifting towards more mobile and privatised contexts of use.

The shift to a post-desktop media ecology is remarkable and confirms the speed at which new technologies and portable connected devices have come to dominate use of the internet. The fact that young people's experience of the internet is now predominantly a mobile one, mediated by the use of smartphones, creates a very different environment in which parents, carers and educators need to consider how to best support children's and young people's safe and responsible use of the internet.

From the evidence in this study, parents and teachers are taking an active interest in guiding children's internet use, speaking to them about how to behave towards others online and explaining why some websites are good or bad. This is an important development given that the majority of children's internet use now takes place away from adult supervision. At the same, internet safety education needs to take account of these changed contexts of use and focus on the kinds of risks that arise when using mobile technologies.

Findings in relation to risk in this report showed a marked increase in mediated forms of bullying with instances of cyberbullying over-taking that of face-to-face bullying. Cyberbullying is an evolving phenomenon and is always part of a wider social context. The fact that bullying is more likely to be experienced on platforms such as social networking, gaming or instant messaging reflects in part the wider use of these services by children and young people. It also amplifies the need to educate users in safe use of technologies and appropriate reporting of misuse or abuse.

The proliferation of potentially harmful user-generated content is another aspect of risk online that presents new challenges for educators, carers and policy makers. With 1 in 5 of all young people and over a third of teenage girls encountering sites containing hate messages, pro-anorexia content and other forms of negative content, there is likely to be significant concern for the quality of young people's internet experience. The almost doubling in the number reporting they have been upset by something online or content they wished they hadn't seen underlines the challenge that such content poses.

Against this, the majority of young people appear to enjoy a wide range of benefits from internet use, accessing useful information and using it to socialise and communicate with friends. As illustrated in the findings of this survey, not all risks lead to harm and most young people report not being bothered by potentially problematic content they encounter.

Promoting digital opportunities for education, creativity and more advanced uses remains on the evidence of this report an important challenge for Irish policy. The very low levels of internet use in schools leaves a wide gap between school and out-of-school culture and between the need for greater digital skills and literacy and actual practices in the classroom. Promoting wider integration of digital technologies and internet content in schools can enhance opportunities available to young people, deepen their appreciation of safe and responsible behaviour and extend the range of more advanced and creative uses of rapidly evolving new technologies.

Future reports from Net Children Go Mobile will examine in more detail these emerging opportunities and risks for children and young people online.

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