EUROBAROMETER

Towards a safer use of the Internet for children in the EU – a parents' perspective

Analytical report

Fieldwork: October 2008
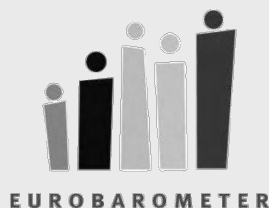
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Towards a safer use of the internet for children in the EU – a parents' perspective

Conducted by
The Gallup Organisation, Hungary
upon the request of Directorate General
Information Society and Media

EUROBAROMETER

Survey co-ordinated by
Directorate General Communication

THE GALLUP ORGANISATION

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Introduction

This survey (Flash Eurobarometer 248: *Towards a safer use of the Internet for children in the EU – a parents' perspective*) was conducted to study parents' views about their children's use of the Internet, to determine parents' strategies to supervise their child's Internet usage and their own awareness of safety measures.

In detail, the survey examined:

- children's Internet and mobile phone use, and the link with their parents' Internet use
- parents' concerns about the risks their child was facing when using the Internet
- the contexts in which children asked their parents for help with an Internet-related problem
- parental supervision over their child's Internet use (i.e. tactics used to supervise usage, setting rules for children's Internet use and using filtering or monitoring software)
- institutions or organisations to whom parents could / would report illegal and harmful content seen on the Internet
- parents' views about actions that would contribute to a safer use of the Internet
- parents' preferred sources for obtaining information and advice about safe use of the Internet.

Earlier surveys on this topic were carried out in *2003/04* (*Special Eurobarometer Nº 203* and *Candidate countries Eurobarometer CC-EB 2004.1*) and *2005/06 (Special Eurobarometer Nº 250)*. Although this Flash Eurobarometer builds on these earlier surveys, it is different in various ways:

- the survey only looked at parents (including step-parents/guardians) of a 6-17 year-old child
- the questionnaire has been re-designed
- telephone interviews have replaced face-to-face discussions.

The fieldwork of the Flash Eurobarometer 248 *"Towards a safer use of the Internet for children in the EU – a parents' perspective"* was conducted between 9 and 17 October 2008. Approximately 12,750 randomly selected parents (including step-parents/guardians) of a 6-17 year-old child were interviewed in the 27 EU Member States. If there was more than one 6-17 year-old in the household, the parents were asked to answer the questions thinking about the child whose birthday was closest to the date of the interview.

Interviews were predominantly carried out via fixed telephone, with WebCATI (web-based computer assisted telephone interviewing), approximately 500 in each country – except in Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta where approximately 250 interviews were conducted. More details on the survey methodology are included in the annex of this report.

Main findings

Usage of the Internet

- The number of children using the Internet varied considerably across Europe. The proportion of parents who thought that their child used the Internet was the lowest in Italy (45%), Greece and Cyprus (both 50%). In all other Member States, at least two-thirds of the parents answered that, as far as they knew, their child used the Internet: from 68% in Portugal to 94% in Finland.

- Looking at both children's and parents' Internet usage, similarities existed in the country breakdown: for both, the same countries appeared at the higher and lower ends of the distribution. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the proportion of online parents and children was .64 – a moderately-strong correlation between the two variables at the country level.

- Half of the parents who did not use the Internet themselves said that their child had online access. Nine out of 10 children – who were Internet users – accessed it from home.

- Older children were more likely to use the Internet on their own computer at home (47% of 15-17 year-olds vs. 22% of 6-10 year-olds), at school (57% vs. 49%), at a friend's place (32% vs. 16%) or in an Internet café (6% vs. 1%).

Mobile phones usage

- Almost two-thirds of respondents said that their child had a mobile phone. In comparison, in 2005/06, only 48% of the 6-17 year-olds owned a mobile phone.

- As for Internet use, mobile phone use increased with age: nearly all parents answering questions about their 15-17 year-old said they owned a mobile phone (94%) – in this group, ownership of a mobile phone was more common than use of the Internet.

Concerns and awareness about online risks

- The biggest risk in parents' eyes (65%) was that their child might see sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet: 45% were *very* worried.

- In terms of inappropriate contact, parents were most worried that their child could become a victim of online grooming (60%); other concerns were that their child could be bullied online by other children (54%) or bullied by others over a mobile phone link (49%).

- Parents were the least worried that their child might reveal personal or private information when using the Internet: only a quarter said they were *very* worried and 21% were *rather* worried.

- Parents in France, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Cyprus worried the most that their child might see inappropriate content, make contact with someone intent on grooming or bullying, or reveal personal information. Parents in Denmark, Sweden and Slovakia had the least concern there.

- Parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use it, most frequently answered that they were *very worried* about the risks faced by their child when using the Internet and mobile phones.

- Parents answering a question about their 6-10 year-old or their 11-14 year-old more frequently said they were *very worried* about the risks their child faced when using the Internet and mobile phones.

Offering assistance to children in case of problems

- Only a minority of the respondents said that when their child asked for their help with an Internet-related problem, this was due to: contact online by a stranger (4%), harassment (4%) or bullying online (3%), or the existence of sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet (4%).

- Almost three out of 10 Dutch parents (28%) and a quarter of the parents in the UK (24%) said that, when their child asked for their help, this was because they had been contacted by a stranger, were bullied or harassed online or saw violently or sexually explicit images online.

- Older children, who asked their parents for help, more often did so for any of the reasons listed above (e.g. 7% of the 15-17 year-olds asked their parents for help because they were harassed online compared to 1% of the 6-10 year-olds).

Strategies for parental supervision when children use the Internet

- Three-quarters of parents – with a child who accessed the Internet at home – said they always or very frequently talked with their son or daughter about what they had been doing online. A majority of the parents (61%) took care that they – always or very frequently – stayed nearby when their child used the Internet, while one-third said that they sat next to their child when they used the Internet.

- Parents in almost all Member States were the least likely to regularly check whether their child had a profile on a social networking site (30%) or the messages in their child's email or IM account (24%).

- Parents in the UK and some southern European countries – Portugal, Italy and Spain – were more likely to regularly supervise their child when using the Internet (e.g. stay nearby or sit next to their child) and to check what their child had done online (e.g. check the history file or e-mail account).

- Parents in Lithuania and Estonia, on the other hand, were each time among the most likely to answer that they never supervised or checked their child's Internet-related activities.

- The 15-17 year-olds were subject to less parental supervision than the 11-14 year-olds and the 6-10 year-olds, but this reduction was more noticeable in the supervision of children using the Internet than for the monitoring of children's online activities (e.g. checking the history file or e-mail).

Setting rules for children's Internet use

- Parents in all countries mentioned that they have various rules and restrictions when their child used the Internet. For example, approximately eight out of 10 parents listed online shopping, talking to people that their child did not know in real life and spending a lot of time online as activities that were not allowed for their child.

- The smallest numbers of parents – but more than a third – said their child was not allowed to download or play music, films or games (38%) and use email or IM tools (37%).

- Parents in Italy, Portugal and Ireland were more likely to set certain rules for their child when using the Internet, while respondents in some eastern European countries – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia – were the least likely to specify such rules.

- Younger parents and parents answering questions about a younger child were the most likely to say that they had imposed restrictions on their child's Internet use for each of the online activities listed. For most restrictions on online activities, parents did not distinguish between boys or girls.

The use of monitoring and filtering software

- Half of the parents participating in this survey answered that they had installed filtering software on the computer that their child used at home. Monitoring software was not as popular, but was still used by almost four out of 10 parents (37%).

- There was considerable variation across countries in the use of monitoring and filtering software: more than half of the British parents used such software compared to only 5% of the parents in Romania and Bulgaria.

- More than six out of 10 parents – who did not use filtering or monitoring software – simply saw no need for using such software as they trusted their child on the Internet.

- Younger parents, those with younger children or with more children in the family were more likely to answer that filtering and/or monitoring software was installed on their home computer.

Where and to whom would parents report illegal content seen on the Internet?

- Parents in all of the EU27 Member States most often thought of the police when asked how they would report illegal or harmful content seen on the Internet – 92% gave this response. Four out of 10 parents (38%) would report such content to a hotline set up for this purpose and one-third mentioned non-profit or other associations.

- Parents who did not use the Internet were more likely not to know how they would report illegal or harmful content seen on the Internet. For example, almost one-fifth of the parents who did not use the Internet did not know they could report illegal content to a hotline set up for this purpose compared to 12% of the parents who did use the Internet.

What would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet?

- For each of the proposed measures or actions to improve Internet safety and its effective use by children – e.g. more awareness-raising campaigns about online risks or more advice for parents about the websites that children visit – a large majority of the parents surveyed agreed that it would contribute to this cause.

- Relatively speaking, parents most often thought that more and better teaching and guidance about Internet use in school would contribute to safer and more effective use of the Internet by children (88%) and least often that training sessions organised for parents by NGOs, the government or local authorities would do the same (70%).

- The countries with the highest level of support for each of the proposed actions were Portugal, Ireland, Malta, Cyprus and Greece: in these countries between 65% and 79% of the parents believed each one would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child.

- The countries with the lowest levels of support were Denmark, the Czech Republic, Austria, Estonia and Slovakia: in these countries not more than one-third of the parents thought that each of these actions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child (between 24% and 33%).

- Parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use it, more often answered that more and better teaching and guidance about Internet use in school, training sessions for parents organised by NGOs and contact points where children and parents could go for individual support would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet by their child.

Sources for information and advice about safer use of the Internet

- Family and friends were the most popular source of information or advice for parents about monitoring and filtering tools and safe use of the Internet: 71% of parents had turned to a friend or family member to discuss Internet safety issues.

- Four out of 10 parents had browsed the Internet and found information or advice about safer Internet on various websites, and a similar proportion (36%) counted on Internet service providers (ISPs) to get such information.

- There was a great similarity across Member States, with many parents opting for similar sources of advice (family and friends, news media, different websites or ISPs). These choices would be at the expense of potential contact with their child's school to discuss safe Internet use and with associations or organisations dealing with Internet safety issues.

- Regarding the child's age, there were few differences in their parents' sources for information about safe use of the Internet; however, parents answering question about their 11-14 year-old were more likely to select their child's school (32% vs. 23% for a 6-10 year-old and 26% for a 15-17 year-old) as a source.

1. Internet use and mobile phones

In all Member States, apart from Greece, Italy and Cyprus, at least two-thirds of the parents said that, as far as they knew, their child used the Internet. Nine out of 10 children – who were Internet users – accessed it from home.

Children whose parents were frequent Internet users, were themselves also the most likely to use the Internet. Half of the parents who did not use the Internet themselves said that their child had online access.

Almost two-thirds of respondents said that their child had a mobile phone.

1.1 Parents' Internet use

More than eight out of 10 parents participating in this survey (84%) had used the Internet – whether at home, at work or somewhere else. Only one in six parents (16%) answered that they had never used the Internet.

A slim majority of interviewees were "regular users" – surfing the Internet at least once a day (32%) or several times a day (22%). An additional 16% of the parents went online several times a week and 6% at least once a week. Only a minority said they were occasional users – using the Internet a few times a month (3%), once a month (2%) or less often (3%).

Chart 1: Frequency of parents' Internet use
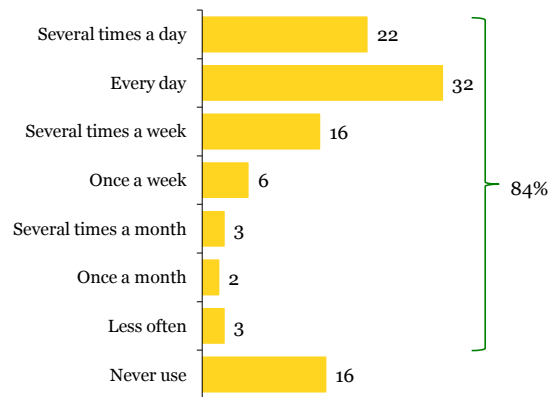
Q3. How often do you use the Internet (from any location)?
Base: all respondents
%, EU27

Individual country differences in the frequency of parents' Internet use

The proportion of parents who had used the Internet ranged from 54% in Greece to virtually all respondents in Denmark and Finland (both 98%). Other countries at the lower end of the scale were Cyprus, Romania, Malta and Portugal – where less than two-thirds of the respondents had used the Internet. Other countries at the higher end of the ranking were Sweden and the Netherlands – where 97% of the interviewees had used the Internet. The country rankings showed that respondents in the eastern and southern EU Member States were less likely to be online users than those in the Union's northern and central regions.

Chart 2: Frequency of parents' Internet use
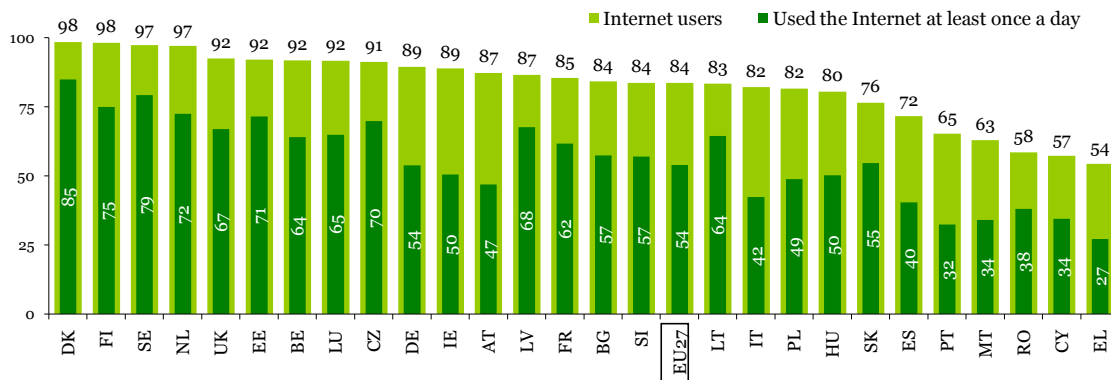
Q3. How often do you use the Internet (from any location)?
Base: all respondents
"Internet users" = "Several times a day" + "Every day" + "Several times a week" + "Once a week" + "Several times a month" + "Once a month" + "Less often"
% by country

The analysis in terms of the frequency of use (at least once a day vs. less often) showed a slightly different country ranking. Although similarities existed, with the same countries appearing at the top and bottom of the ranking in both cases, some of the central European countries now scored lower than the eastern European countries:

- parents in the Nordic countries – Denmark, Sweden and Finland – were not only the most likely to be Internet users but also to use it the most frequently (85%, 79% and 75%, respectively)
- those in Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Malta and Romania, on the other hand, were the least likely to be Internet users and also the least likely to use it at least daily (between 27% and 38%)
- although parents in Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Slovakia were less likely than those in Germany, Ireland and Austria to have used the Internet, they were more likely – when using the Internet – to use it frequently (55%-68% vs. 47%-54%).

This survey measured a higher level of Internet use among parents with children aged between 6 and 17 compared to the average of the EU total adult population[1]. Note: research in many countries has shown that households with children tend to have more communicating devices. This was also confirmed by the results of the Eurobarometer on "*Internet safety*" conducted in 2005/06: among those families with at least one child, the proportion of Internet users in the EU was almost 20 percentage points higher than for the average EU adult (in all types of families).

Socio-demographic considerations

Certain socio-demographic groups were characterised by a higher number of parents who did not use the Internet: e.g. the over 54 year-olds (34% vs. 16% average), the less-educated ones (40%), manual workers (24%) and those not working (29%).

Fathers, younger parents, those with older children, the more educated ones, those living in metropolitan or urban areas, employees and the self-employed were the most likely to have used the Internet regularly (i.e. at least every day):

- six out of 10 fathers (62%) used the Internet every day, compared to half of the mothers
- slightly more than four out 10 of the over 54 year-olds used the Internet this often (44%), compared to more than half of the younger parents (55% of 40-54 year-olds, 52% of the 25-39 year-olds)[2]
- half of the parents talking about their 6-10 year-old said they (the parent) used the Internet this frequently, compared to 55% of the parents talking about their 11-14 year-old and 59% of those talking about their 15-17 year-old[3]
- the most educated parents were twice as likely as those in the lowest educational category to use the Internet at least every day (64% vs. 33%)
- half of the rural residents were frequent Internet users; this proportion increased to 64% for respondents living in metropolitan areas
- while six out of 10 self-employed respondents and employees used the Internet this frequently, only four out of 10 manual workers and non-working respondents did so (42% and 41%, respectively).

For more details, see annex table 1b.

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[1] The country ranking in terms of Internet use observed in this study was fairly similar to that for the adult population in the EU27 according to Eurostat's "Community survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals". Conducted in 2007, it said that Internet use among adults in the EU27 was the most widespread in Denmark, Finland and Sweden and the least widespread in Romania, Bulgaria and Greece (For more details, see: http://nui.epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=isoc_ci_ifp_iu).

[2] The number of 15-24 year-old parents participating in this survey was less than 50.

[3] This analysis could not consider the age of other children in the household.

1.2 Children's Internet use

Internet use among children in the EU27 is widespread and growing continually. The results of the Eurobarometer on "*Internet safety*" conducted in 2005/06 showed that 68% of children (6 to 17 years-of-age) – in the opinion of one of their parents – had gone online[4]; this proportion increased to three-quarters for this 2008 survey.

Nevertheless, the number of children using the Internet varied considerably across Europe. The proportion of parents who thought that their child (6 to 17 years-of-age) used the Internet was the lowest in Italy (45%), Greece and Cyprus (both 50%). In all other Member States, at least two-thirds of the parents answered that, as far as they knew, their child used the Internet: from 68% in Portugal to 94% in Finland.

Chart 3: Does your child use the Internet?
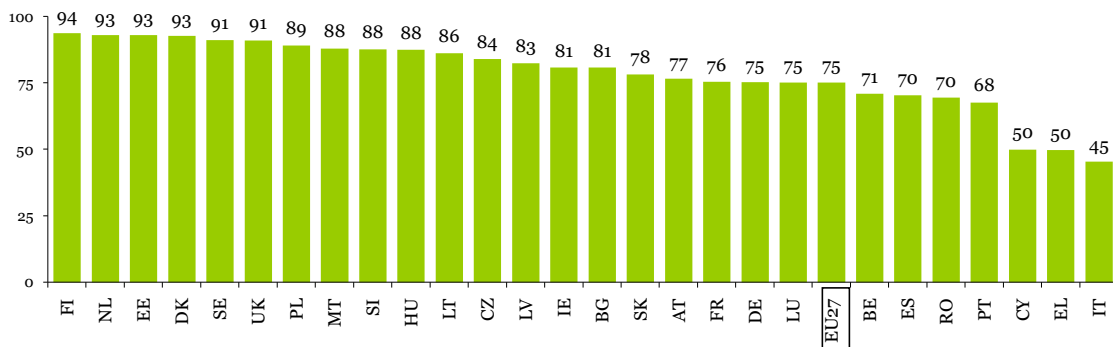
Q5. As far as you know, does your child use the Internet anywhere?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown, by country

Internet use has increased gradually in the past years and this current survey measured a higher level of Internet use among 6-17 year-olds in the EU27 in the opinion of a parent. Furthermore, this increase in Internet use was observed in almost all Member States. The eastern European countries saw the largest increase. For example, Internet use among 6-17 year-olds in Bulgaria has almost doubled (41% in 2005/06 and 81% in 2008)[5]. The most notable exceptions were France, Luxembourg and Belgium where the Internet penetration rate among 6-17 year-olds has not changed or slightly decreased. The rate of Internet use among children did not change much either, in, for example, the Netherlands and Denmark. However, in these countries more than 90% of the 6-17 year-olds already used the Internet in 2005/06.

Socio-demographic considerations

A slightly higher proportion of girls used the Internet (74% for boys and 76% for girls). This was mainly due to the larger difference in access to the Internet in the 15-17 year-old age group, where girls were more likely to use the Internet (e.g. 91% of 16 year-old girls vs. 84% of boys).

Note: Parents were reporting Internet use and it might be that they were under-reporting its use by their sons compared to their daughters (especially in the 15-17 year-old age group). Furthermore, this study only looked at access to the Internet and not at, for example, time spent online – other studies have showed that boys were more likely to spend a greater amount of time online.

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[4] Own calculations – the Eurobarometer report on "*Safer Internet*" (2004/05) presents results for children aged between 0 and 17.

[5] Note: the 'real' increase in Internet use might be smaller than the increase observed when comparing the results of the two surveys. The observed rate of Internet use is influenced by the age structure of the samples – a younger age structure of the 2005/06 sample would have caused a lower observed Internet rate. Furthermore, both surveys asked parents to assess their child's Internet use. Earlier survey results showed that parents' belief of children's Internet use is lower than children's reported use – if parents became more aware of their children's Internet use, the observed Internet rate will have increased.

Table 1: Does your child use the Internet?

Age of the child	Boys	Girls	Total
6 years	39%	45%	42%
7 years	56%	47%	52%
8 years	57%	55%	56%
9 years	71%	72%	72%
10 years	76%	77%	77%
11 years	79%	82%	80%
12 years	83%	87%	85%
13 years	84%	85%	85%
14 years	84%	84%	84%
15 years	81%	88%	84%
16 years	84%	91%	87%
17 years	86%	89%	87%

Q5. As far as you know, does your child use the Internet anywhere?
Base: all respondents
% "Yes" shown, EU27

The table above also shows that Internet use increases with age: e.g. 42% of the 6 year-olds used the Internet compared to 85% of the 13 year-olds and 87% of the 17 year-olds. Furthermore, eight out of 10 children with more than one brother or sister used the Internet, compared to only 72% of boys and girls who were an only child.

Children living in a city were more likely to be Internet users than their counterparts in rural areas: 79% of parents in metropolitan areas and 76% of those in urban areas said their child used the Internet compared to 72% of parents in rural areas.

Finally, fathers, older parents, the more educated ones, employees and the self-employed were the most likely to answer that their child used the Internet:

- 78% of fathers said their child used the Internet, compared to 74% of the mothers
- 82% of the over 54 year-olds and 79% of the 40-54 year-olds said their child used the Internet, compared to 68% of the 25-39 year-olds – older parents were, however, more likely to answer questions about an older child
- three-quarters of the highly-educated parents answered that their child used the Internet compared to 61% of parents in the lowest educational category
- while 78% of the self-employed respondents and employees said their child had access to the Internet, 73% of the manual workers and 68% of non-working respondents did so.

For more details, see annex table 2b.

1.3 A comparison of children's and parents' Internet use

Looking at both children's and parents' Internet usage, similarities could be seen, with the same countries each time appearing at the higher and lower ends of the distribution. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the proportion of online parents and online children was .64 – i.e. this number signifies a moderately-strong correlation between the two variables at the country level.

In most countries, the proportion of parents using the Internet was higher than the proportion of children; at the European level, this difference was 9 percentage points (84% of parents vs. 75% of children). At the individual country level, the largest difference between these two proportions was seen in Italy (82% of parents vs. 45% of children), followed by Belgium (92% vs. 71%) and Luxembourg (92% vs. 75%).
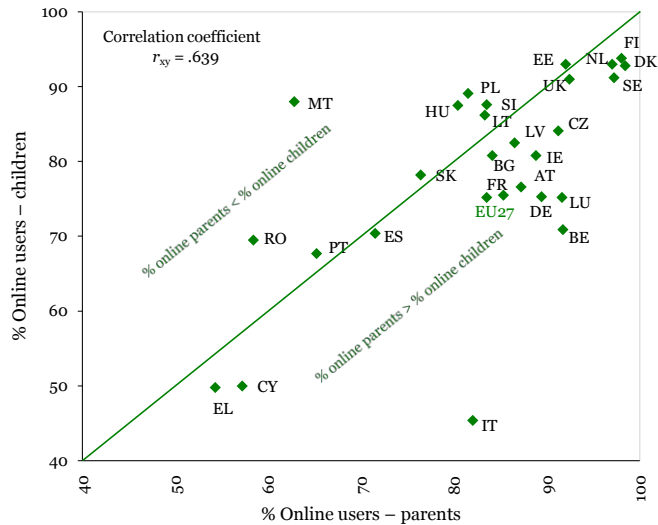
There were exceptions: children were more likely, than their parents, to use the Internet in Malta (88% of children vs. 63% of parents), Romania (70% vs. 58%), Poland (89% vs. 82%) and Hungary (88% vs. 80%).

Chart 4: Parents' and children's Internet use

Correlation coefficient $r_{xy} = .639$

% online parents < % online children

% online parents > % online children

Q3. How often do you use the Internet (from any location)?
Q5. As far as you know, does your child use the Internet anywhere?
Base: all respondents
% by country

The overall finding seems to contradict the expectation that children are more likely to be Internet users than their parents' generation. However, a higher probability that parents would use the Internet was only seen in regard to the younger children: for parents answering questions about their 6-10 year-old, the values were 81% for parents and 60% for children. However, for the older groups there were no differences: 84% of 11-14 year-olds and 86% of 15-17 year-olds used the Internet compared to 85% of their parents.

Comparing Internet use of parents and children at the micro-level
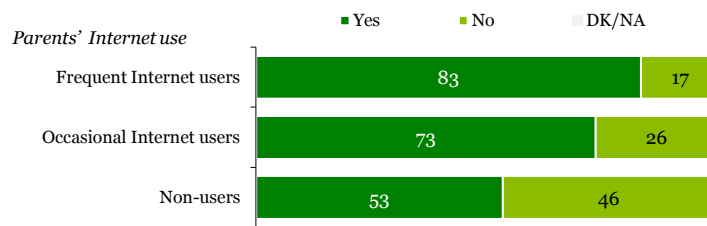
Children whose parents were frequent Internet users (i.e. using the Internet every day) were themselves also the most likely to use the Internet (83%), followed by those whose parents were occasional Internet users (73%). Nevertheless, even half of the parents who did not use the Internet themselves said that their child had online access.

Chart 5: Does your child use the Internet?

■ Yes   ■ No   ☐ DK/NA

Parents' Internet use

	Yes	No
Frequent Internet users	83	17
Occasional Internet users	73	26
Non-users	53	46

Q3. How often do you use the Internet (from any location)?
Q5. As far as you know, does your child use the Internet anywhere?
Base: all respondents
% by country

The following chart compares Internet use of parents and children at the micro-level by looking at the four combinations of parents' and children's online use:

• parents who said that they and their child used the Internet – 66% of cases in the EU27
• interviewees who used the Internet but who thought that their child did not – 17%
• parents who did not use the Internet themselves but who said that their child did use it – 9%
• interviewees who did not use the Internet and who also said that their child did not use it – 8%.

The individual country results showed that, in most cases, a minority of respondents belonged to the last group, i.e. neither parent nor child used the Internet. Only in Greece, Cyprus and Romania did more than one-fifth of the parents say that this was the situation (30%, 25% and 22%, respectively).

In almost all Member States, the majority of parents and children belonged to the first group – both using the Internet (from 50% in Romania to 92% in Finland). In Cyprus, Greece and Italy only 32%, 34% and 42%, respectively, belonged to this group. While four out of 10 parents in Italy used the Internet but did not think that their child had online access, only a minority said the opposite was true – that their child used the Internet but they did not (3%). In Cyprus and Greece, however, the proportion of children who used the Internet while their parent did not was significantly higher (18% and 16%, respectively). It was however, the Maltese parents who were the most likely to admit that their child used the Internet but that they did not (30%).

Chart 6: Parents' and children's Internet use

Q3. How often do you use the Internet (from any location)?
Q5. As far as you know, does your child use the Internet anywhere?
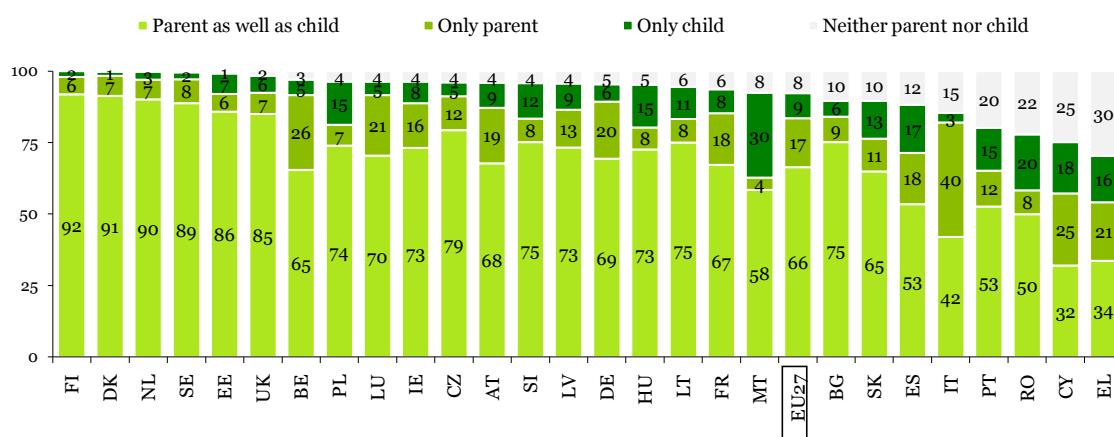*Base: all respondents*
% by country

1.4 Where do children use the Internet?

Although parents did not always know if and where their child used the Internet, they did know to some extent at which places their child had access to the Internet. In this section, we focused solely on the children who – in the opinion of one of their parents – used the Internet.

The largest proportion of online children (65%) used the Internet from their family's computer at home, while one-third used their own computer at home. In total, nine out of 10 children – who were Internet users – accessed it from home.

A majority of the parents (57%) answered that – as far as they were aware – their child had access to the Internet from school; only half as many parents (25%) mentioned a friend's place for using the Internet.

Slightly less than one-tenth of the parents (8%) thought their child

Chart 7: Where does your child use the Internet?
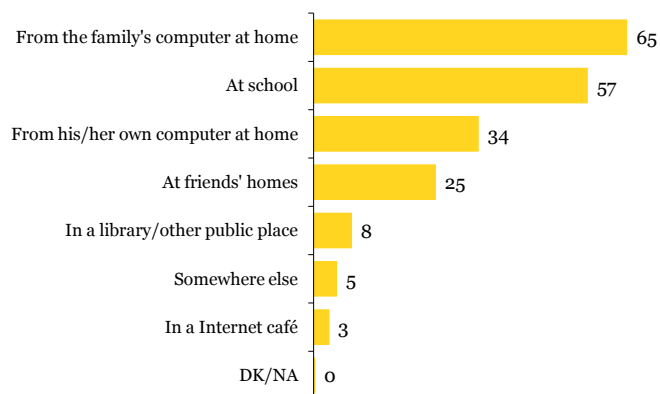
From the family's computer at home	65
At school	57
From his/her own computer at home	34
At friends' homes	25
In a library/other public place	8
Somewhere else	5
In a Internet café	3
DK/NA	0

Q5A. As far as you are aware, where does your child access the Internet.
Please list all the places where you are aware he/she is accessing Internet?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Mentioned", EU27

accessed the Internet from a library or another public place, 3% mentioned an Internet café and 5% referred to some other place than the ones listed in the survey.

Individual country differences

The results in this section focus only on children who – in the opinion of their parents – used the Internet.

Similar to the results obtained for the EU overall, the largest proportion of parents said their child **used the Internet from home**. However, we saw some significant differences as to whether children accessed it from their own computer at home or from the family's computer:

- Virtually all children in Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Estonia and Sweden – who used the Internet – did this from home (between 97% and 99%). In all other countries – except in Portugal and Greece – more than eight out of 10 parents answered that their child used the Internet at home. In Portugal and Greece, respectively, 75% and 79% of the parents said that this was the case.

- The proportion of children who – according to their parents – used the Internet from the family's computer at home ranged from a minority in Cyprus (37%), Romania (38%) and Spain (45%) to more than three-quarters in Ireland (88%), the UK (83%), France and Finland (both 76%).

- Parents in Cyprus, Romania and Spain were, nevertheless, among the most likely to answer that their child used their own computer at home to go online (59% in Cyprus, 51% in Romania and 46% in Spain). It was, however, the Danish parents who most often gave this answer (67%). In sharp contrast, only one-tenth of Irish parents and one-sixth of French parents said their child had their own computer to access the Internet.
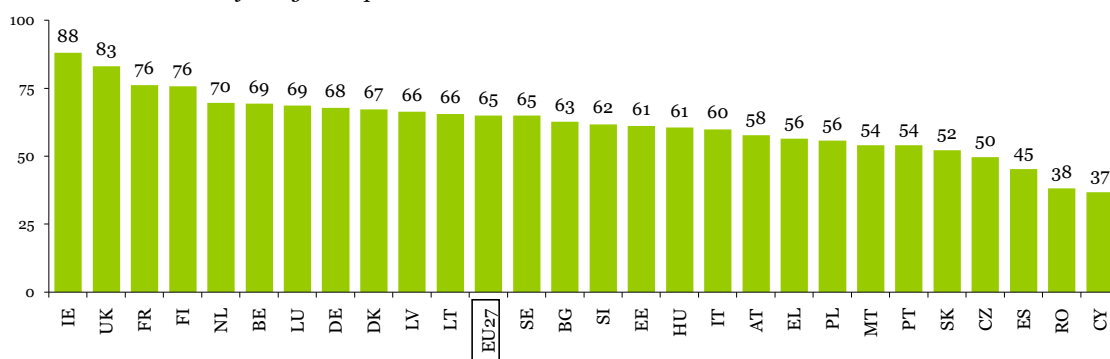
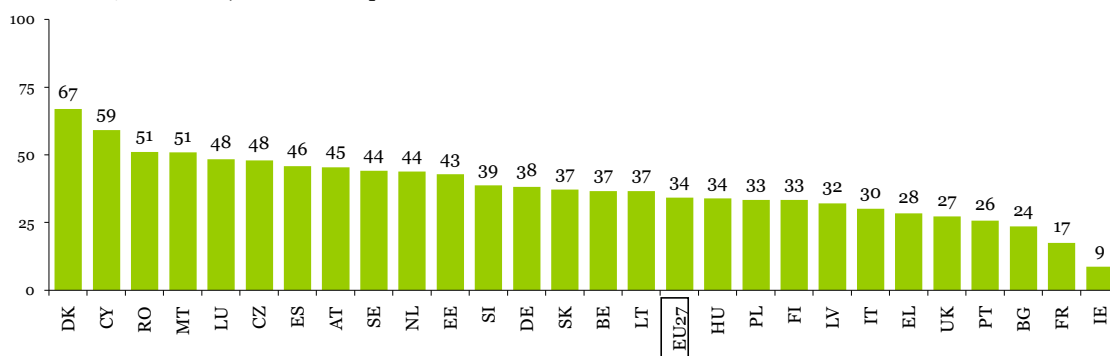**Chart 8:** *From the family's computer at home*

Chart 9: *From his/her own computer at home*

Q5A. As far as you are aware, where does your child access the Internet. Please list all the places where you are aware he/she is accessing Internet?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Mentioned" by country

Chart 10: *From a computer at home*

In a majority of Member States, at least half of the parents thought that their child accessed the Internet from **school**: from 50% in Belgium to 89% in the UK. Denmark and Hungary joined the UK at the higher end of the ranking with, respectively, 80% and 74% of the interviewees mentioning their child's school as a place to use the Internet. In sharp contrast, in Lithuania, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Italy, less than three out of 10 parents selected this answer (between 25% and 29%).

Chart 11: *At school*

The individual country results showed that home was the most common place from which to access the Internet in all Member States, while school followed in second place (except for Greece – see further). However, the difference between the likelihood of using the Internet from each of these places was the smallest in the UK (92% at home vs. 89% at school), Denmark (99% vs. 80%) and Hungary (90% vs. 74%), and the largest in Lithuania (95% vs. 25%) and Romania (87% vs. 28%)[6].

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[6] The results for the Eurobarometer conducted in 2005/06 showed that school was still the most important place for children to go online in most of the (then 10) new Member States.

Chart 12: *Using the Internet at home vs. at school*

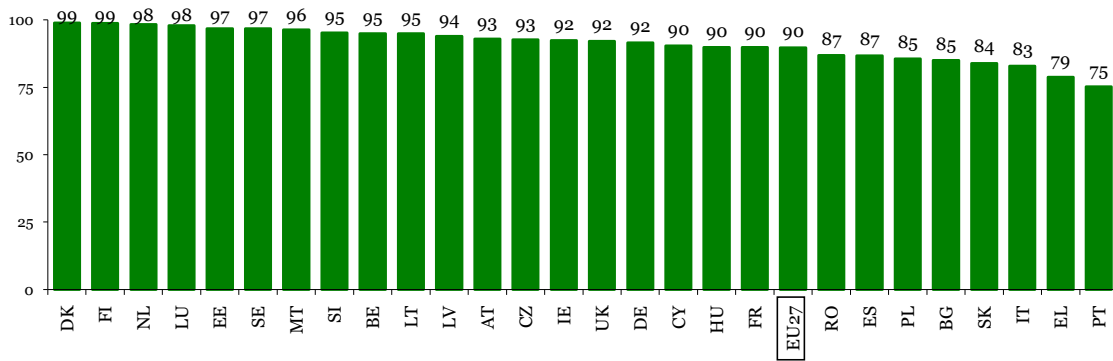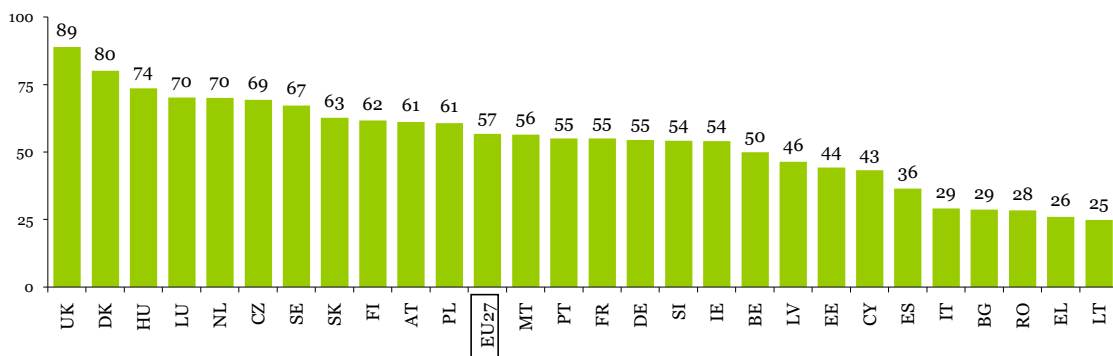■ At home ■ At school

Q5A. As far as you are aware, where does your child access the Internet. Please list all the places where you are
aware he/she is accessing Internet?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Mentioned" by country

Accessing the Internet from a **library or other public place** was not very common in the EU27 Member States. Virtually no parents in Cyprus, Romania and Malta thought that their child accessed the Internet from a public place. In only two countries did at least one-fifth of the parents say that their child, as far as they were aware, used the Internet in a public place: Slovenia (19%) and Denmark (22%).

Chart 13: *In a library/other public place*

Q5A. As far as you are aware, where does your child access the Internet. Please list all the
places where you are aware he/she is accessing Internet?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Mentioned" by country

The proportion of children who – according to their parents – used the Internet at a **friend's place** ranged from 9% in Lithuania to 56% in Denmark. The other Nordic countries – Sweden and Finland – joined Denmark at the higher end of the scale with, respectively, 46% and 40% of children using the Internet at a friend's home. In Bulgaria and the southern European countries – Spain, Malta, Portugal and Italy – less than one in seven children did so.

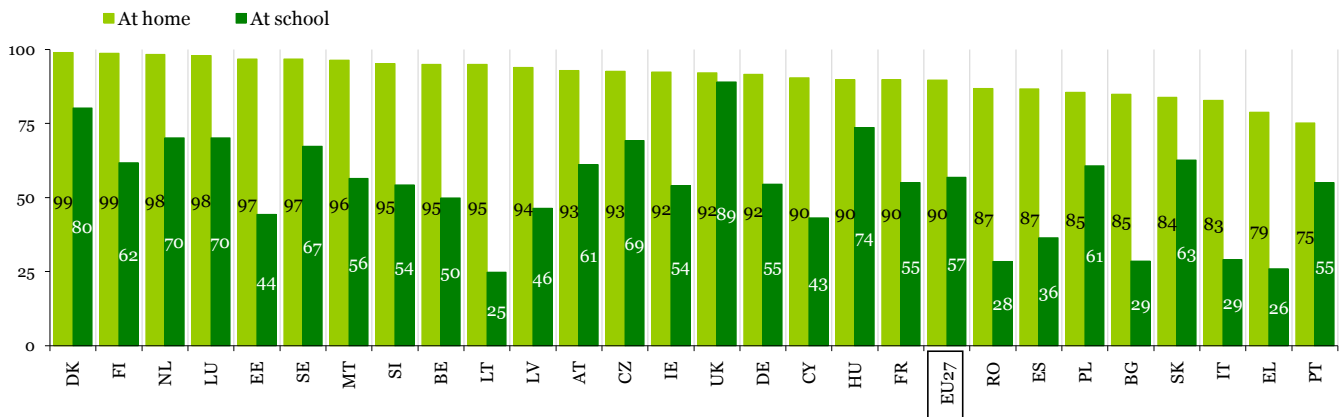**Chart 14:** *At a friend's home*

Q5A. As far as you are aware, where does your child access the Internet. Please list all the
places where you are aware he/she is accessing Internet?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Mentioned" by country

Finally, less than one in 20 parents in most Member States thought that their child went to **Internet cafés** – the most commercial of the various online options. Countries with generally lower proportions of Internet users most often used such Internet cafés: more than a quarter of the Greek parents (27%) and one-tenth of the Cypriot parents (11%) thought that their child used the Internet in such places. In Greece, as many parents thought that their child went to an Internet café than used the Internet at school.

We calculated an index, based on the aforementioned locations for Internet usage, that reflected the **average number of locations where children used the Internet** – on average, young Internet users in the EU27 went online from 1.9 of these locations.

The following chart shows that Member States did not only differ in the places where children accessed the Internet, but also in the number of locations where children used it from. Parents in Denmark (3.1), the UK (2.5) and Sweden (2.4) listed the highest number of locations where they thought their child used the Internet. Parents in Italy, Bulgaria and Lithuania (all 1.4), on the other hand, were the least likely to list several places.

Chart 15: *Average number of places where children used the Internet*
(7 possible places listed in the survey)
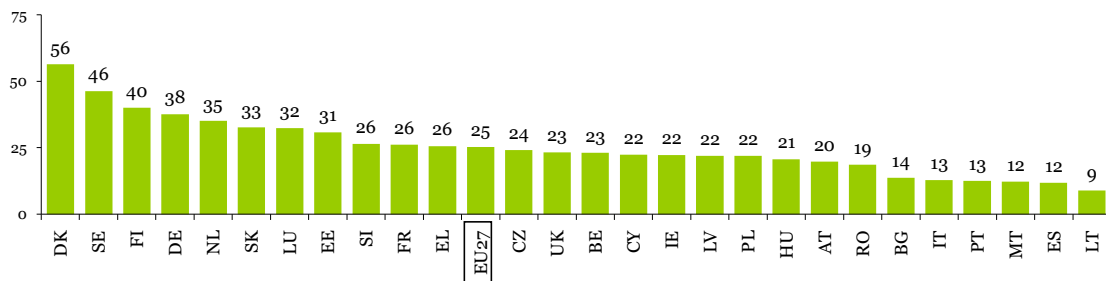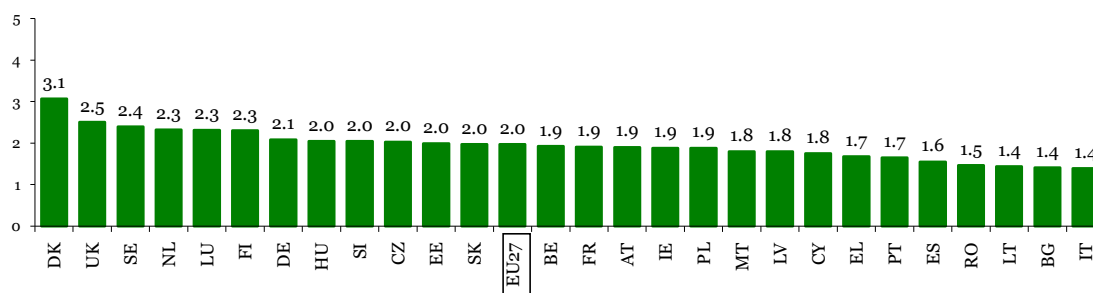

Q5A. As far as you are aware, where does your child access the Internet. Please list all the
places where you are aware he/she is accessing Internet?
Base: parents whose child used the Internet
Average shown by country

Socio-demographic considerations

Characteristics of the child

Older children were more likely to use the Internet on their own computer at home (47% of 15-17 year-olds vs. 22% of 6-10 year-olds), from school (57% vs. 49%), from a friend's place (32% vs. 16%) or from an Internet café (6% vs. 1%).

Children living in metropolitan or urban areas were more likely to have their own computer at home to access the Internet (37% and 35%, respectively, vs. 32% in rural areas), while those in rural areas more often used the Internet at school (61% vs. 52%-55%) or at a friend's place (29% vs. 23%-25%).

Not surprisingly, the more siblings there were, the less likely it was that a child had their own computer at home (23% for children with at least three siblings vs. 36% for the "only" children), and the more likely they were to use a shared family computer. Children in households with more children were also more likely to use the Internet at school (71% for children with at least three siblings vs. 53% for the "only" children) or at a friend's place (28% vs. 23%, respectively).

Characteristics of the parent

Fathers slightly more often said that their child used the Internet from their own computer at home (40% vs. 32% of mothers), while mothers were slightly more likely to say it was from the family computer (66% vs. 63% of fathers). Parents in the lowest educational category also less frequently mentioned the family's computer at home (52% vs. 66% in the highest educational category).

The children's age specific patterns for the location of Internet access were repeated when looking at the parents' age groups. Note: earlier in the report, we explained that older parents more often answered question about an older child.

Employees were the most likely to answer that their child used the family's computer at home to use the Internet (68% vs. 65% average); however, they were the least likely to say that their child had their own computer (33% vs. 34% average). Manual workers, on the other hand, least frequently mentioned

that their child used the Internet at school (53% vs. 57% average) and the self-employed were the least liable to say that their child went to a friend's house to use the Internet (20% vs. 25% average).

For more details, see annex table 3b.

1.5 Mobile phone use

Almost two-thirds of the respondents said that their child had a mobile phone and only 37% said the opposite. In comparison, in 2005/06, only 48% of the 6-17 year-olds had their own mobile phone[7].

Of the children with a mobile phone, the largest group had one without access to the Internet (50%), while 11% had a mobile phone with such access, and 3% of the parents did not know if this was the case.

The *individual country results* showed that children in Spain, France and Greece were the least likely to own a mobile phone: in these countries approximately half of the parents answered their child had a mobile phone – with or without the

Chart 16: Does your child use a mobile phone of his/her own?

Q8. Does your child use his/her own mobile phone?
Base: all respondents; %, EU27

capability of Internet access. In all other countries, at least six out of 10 children owned a mobile phone: from 59% in the UK and Cyprus to 88% in Lithuania and Estonia. The country rankings showed that 6-17 year-olds in the eastern European Member States and the Nordic countries were more likely to own a mobile phone than those in the Union's southern and central regions.

Mobile phones with access to the Internet were most common in Estonia (30%), Lithuania and Latvia (both 29%). In Greece, Spain, France and Cyprus, on the other hand, only one in 20 parents said that their child's mobile phone allowed them to access the Internet. In all countries, a minority of the parents answered that their child had a mobile phone but that they did not know if it had the possibility to access the Internet (1%-6%).

Chart 17: Does your child use a mobile phone of his/her own?
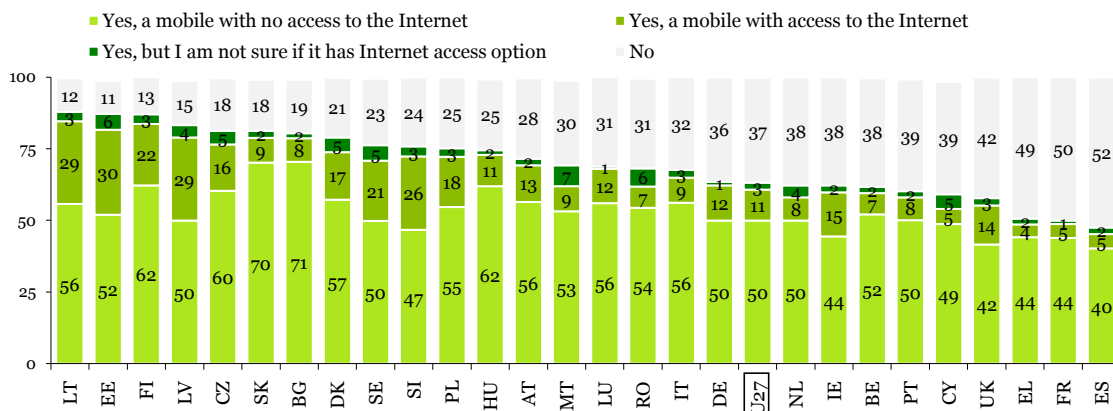
Q8. Does your child use his/her own mobile phone?
Base: all respondents ; % by country, DK/NA not shown

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[7] Own calculations – the Eurobarometer report on "*Safer Internet*" (2004/05) presents results for children aged between 0 and 17. This increase in mobile phone ownership among 6-17 year-olds was also observed in all individual Member States.

Socio-demographic considerations

As for Internet use, mobile use increased with age: e.g. only 11% of the 6 year-olds used a mobile phone of their own compared to 52% of the 10 year-olds, 87% of the 13 year-olds and 95% of the 17 year-olds. Among 15-17 year-olds, a mobile phone was more common than the use of the Internet was (84%-87% used the Internet – see section 1.2).

Table 2: Does your child use a mobile phone of his/her own?

Age of the child	*Yes, a mobile with no access to the Internet*	*Yes, a mobile with access to the Internet*	*Yes, but I am not sure if it has Internet access option*	*Total* *Yes*	*No*
6 years	9%	1%	1%	11%	89%
7 years	11%	2%	0%	13%	87%
8 years	18%	3%	1%	22%	78%
9 years	27%	4%	1%	32%	68%
10 years	45%	6%	1%	52%	47%
11 years	54%	8%	2%	64%	36%
12 years	64%	15%	3%	82%	18%
13 years	72%	11%	4%	87%	13%
14 years	67%	17%	3%	87%	13%
15 years	68%	18%	4%	90%	8%
16 years	71%	18%	6%	95%	5%
17 years	73%	19%	3%	95%	4%

Q8. Does your child use his/her own mobile phone?
Base: all respondents
%, DK/NA not shown

Boys and girls were equally likely to have a mobile phone (62% and 64%, respectively). However, children with at least three siblings were less likely to have a mobile phone of their own (54% vs. 63% average), as were those living in rural areas (60% vs. 65%-66% in urban and metropolitan areas).

Finally, older parents, the less educated ones and the self-employed were the most likely to answer that their child had a mobile phone:

- three-quarters (74%) of the over 54 year-olds and 71% of the 40-54 year-olds said their child used a mobile phone, compared to 48% of the 25-39 year-olds – older parents were, however, more likely to answer questions about an older child
- six out of 10 of the parents in the highest educational category answered that their child had a mobile phone compared to 65%-66% of parents in the other educational categories
- while 67% of the self-employed respondents said their child had their own mobile phone, only 61%-64% of the parents in the other occupational categories said the same.

For more details, see annex table 21b.

A comparison of mobile phone use and Internet use

Furthermore, parents who answered that their child did not use the Internet were twice as likely as parents who said the opposite to say that their child did not have a mobile phone of his or her own (61% vs. 29%). More than half of the parents whose child did use the Internet said that they had a mobile phone without Internet access, 13% said that it was one with Internet access and 3% did not know the type of mobile phone their child had. The corresponding proportions for children who did not use the Internet were 34%, 3% and 2%, respectively.

Chart 18: Does your child use a mobile phone of his/her own?

- Yes, a mobile with no access to the Internet
- Yes, a mobile with access to the Internet
- Yes, but I am not sure if it has Internet access option
- No

Children's Internet use

| Internet users | 55 | 13 | 3 | 29 |
| Non-users | 34 | 3 | 2 | 61 |
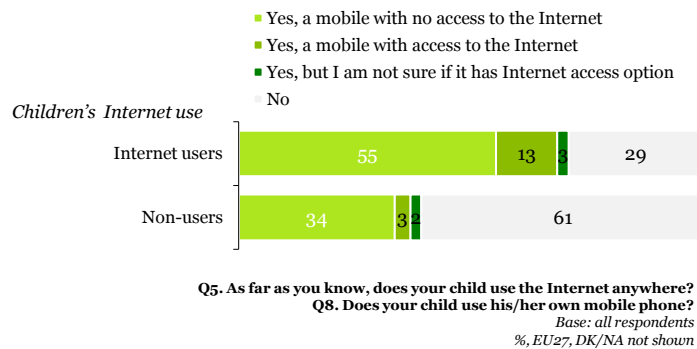
As stated above, in the 15-17 year-old age group, a mobile phone was more common than the use of the Internet. Nevertheless, when comparing mobile phone use and Internet use *at the country level*, we saw that a mobile phone was generally less common as a means of communication than the Internet: 75% of the 6-17 year-olds in the EU27 used the Internet compared to 63% who had their own mobile phone – with or without Internet access.

Similar to the result obtained for the EU27 overall, in almost all countries the proportion of children using the Internet was higher than the proportion having a mobile phone. There were some exceptions:

- Children were as likely to have a mobile phone as to use the Internet in the Czech Republic (84% of children used the Internet and 81% had a mobile phone), Latvia (both 83%), Bulgaria (both 81%), Slovakia (78% vs. 81%) and Romania (70% vs. 68%).
- In Luxembourg and Italy, however, 6-17 year-olds were even more likely to have a mobile phone than to use the Internet (75% vs. 88% for Luxembourg and 45% vs. 68% for Italy).

Chart 19: Children's Internet and mobile phone use

■ Internet users   ■ Mobile phone users

Country	Internet users	Mobile phone users
FI	94	87
NL	93	62
EE	93	87
DK	93	79
SE	91	76
UK	91	58
PL	89	75
MT	88	69
SI	88	76
HU	88	75
LT	86	69
CZ	84	81
LV	83	83
IE	81	62
BG	81	81
SK	78	81
AT	77	72
FR	76	50
DE	75	63
LU	75	88
EU27	75	63
BE	71	62
ES	70	48
RO	70	68
PT	68	60
CY	50	59
EL	50	51
IT	45	68
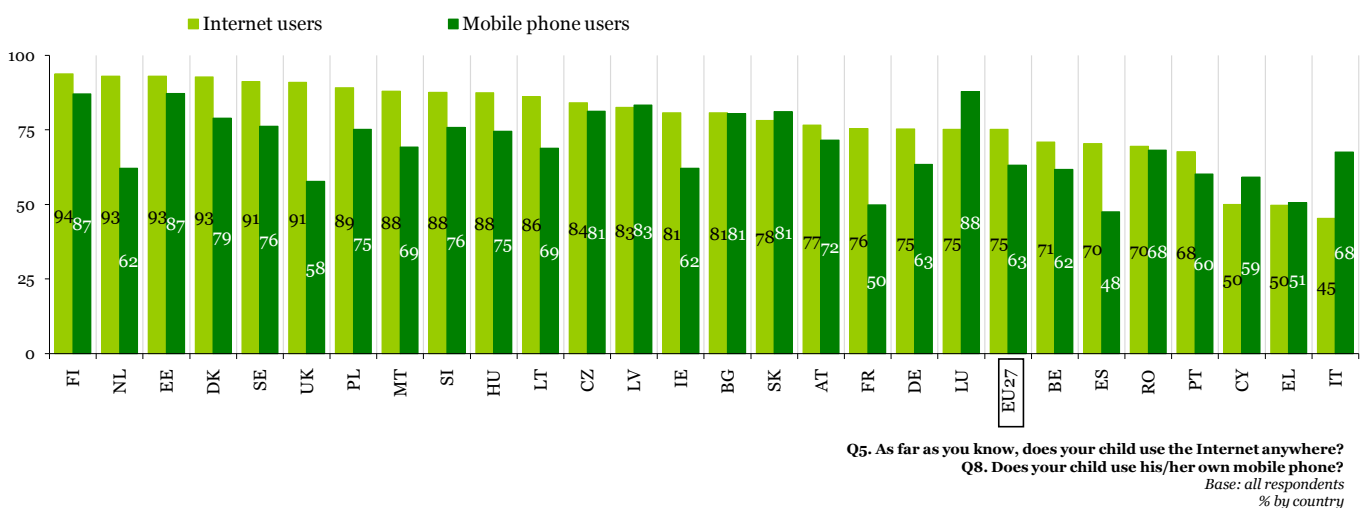
2. Parents' concerns and awareness about the risks online

Almost two-thirds of parents were worried that their child might see sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet. In terms of inappropriate contact, parents were most worried that their child could become a victim of online grooming (60%), followed by their child being bullied online by other children (54%). Parents who did not use the Internet themselves worried the most about these online risks.

Parents in France, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Cyprus worried the most about the risks for their child of using the Internet, while those in Denmark, Sweden and Slovakia worried the least about online risks.

Only a minority of the respondents said their child had asked for help because they had been contacted online by a stranger, had been harassed or bullied online, or because they had found sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet.

2.1 Parents' concerns about online risks

The risks for children when using the Internet and mobile phones include: viewing **inappropriate content**, making contact with **someone who might be intent on grooming**[8] a young person and revealing **personal information**.

Viewing inappropriate content – material available to children online

The largest proportion of parents – two-thirds – were worried that their child might see sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet: 45% were *very* worried about this and 20% *rather* worried. Respondents were less worried that their child might see such images via their mobile phone (37% were *very* worried about this and 14% *rather* worried). A slim majority were also worried that their child might have access to information about self-harm, suicide or anorexia (39% were *very* worried and 16% *rather* worried).

Making contact with someone who might be intent on grooming or bullying

In terms of contact, parents were the most worried about their child becoming a victim of online grooming (60%), followed by the fact that their child could be bullied online by other children (54%) or bullied by others over a mobile phone (49%). Almost half of the parents (46%) were *very* worried about the former and 37%-34% about the latter.

Half of the parents (53%) were worried that their child might become isolated from other people if they spent too much time online – one-third were *very* worried that this might happen.

Revealing personal information – an invasion of privacy (and risk of financial loss)

Parents were the least worried that their child might reveal personal or private information when using the Internet: only a quarter said they were *very* worried about this and 21% were *rather* worried. Equally large proportions of parents answered they were not worried: 24% were *rather not* worried and 25% *not* worried *at all*.

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[8] Online grooming: actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, in order to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual abuse of that child.

Chart 20: When your child uses the Internet or a mobile phone, how worried are you that he or she … ?

■ Very much worried   ■ Rather worried   ■ Rather not worried   ■ Not at all worried   ▫ DK/NA

might see sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	45	20	14	17	4
be victim of online grooming	46	14	13	23	5
might get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	39	16	15	26	5
could be bullied online by other children	37	17	18	23	5
might become isolated from other people if spending too much time online	34	19	16	27	5
might see sexually/violently explicit images via the mobile phone	37	14	13	26	11
could be bullied by other children via the mobile phone	34	15	14	25	11
may give out personal/private information online	26	21	24	25	4

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents
% EU27

Individual country differences

Viewing inappropriate **content** – material available to children online

More than eight out of 10 parents in France (88%), Portugal (84%) and Greece (81%) were worried that their child might see **sexually or violently explicit images** when browsing the Internet. Furthermore, at least two-thirds of the parents in these countries were *very* worried that this might happen (79%, 65% and 68%, respectively). In three more countries, at least half of the parents were *very* worried about this: Cyprus (60%), Latvia (58%) and Spain (51%).

In the Nordic countries – Demark and Sweden – less than one-third of the parents said they were concerned that their child might see inappropriate content online (26% and 31%, respectively), and only one-tenth were *very* worried about this. The proportion of parents who were not at all worried was four times greater in Denmark than the proportion who were *very* worried (41% vs. 10%). Other countries where a large number of parents said they were not at all worried about this risk were: Austria (31%), Lithuania (30%), Sweden (29%), Slovakia (28%) and the UK (27%).

Looking at the concerns about seeing **sexually or violently explicit images via a mobile phone,** similarities can be seen, with the same countries each time appearing at the higher and lower ends of the distribution. However, in all countries, the proportion of parents who were worried about inappropriate content being seen on a mobile phone was smaller than for the Internet. Furthermore, in some countries, a larger proportion of parents gave a "don't know" (or "not applicable") response: e.g. almost a quarter of the Spanish parents said they did not know if they worried about this – children in Spain were, however, the least likely in the EU27 to have their own mobile phone (see section 1.5).

Chart 21: How worried are you that your child might **see sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet**?

■ Very much worried   ■ Rather worried   ■ Rather not worried   ■ Not at all worried   ■ DK/NA
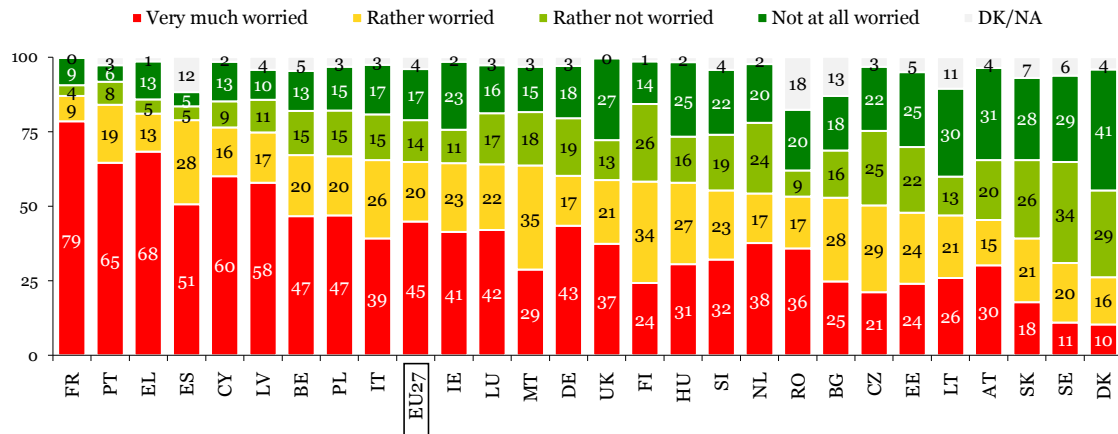
Chart 22: How worried are you that your child might **see sexually/violently explicit images via his/her mobile phone**?
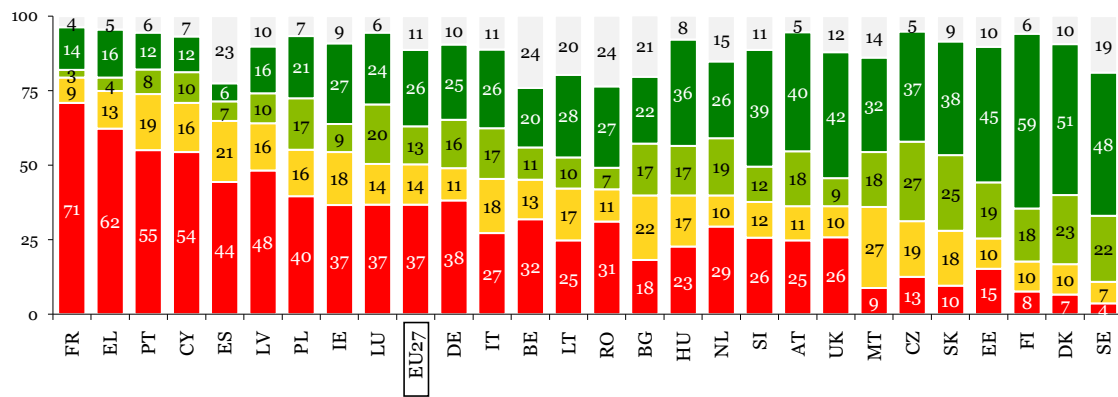
Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she ...
Base: all respondents
% by country

Similarities could also be seen – with the same countries appearing at the higher or lower ends of the distribution – when concerns that children might find **information about self-harm, suicide or anorexia** were compared to the previous statements:

- The French, Portuguese and Greek parents – once again – were the ones most frequently worried that their child might find information about self-harm, suicide or anorexia on the Internet: at least three-quarters were worried about this and more than half were *very* worried.

- Denmark and Sweden were again at the bottom of the distribution – in these countries one in five or less of the parents were worried about their child finding this kind of information on the Internet and less than one-tenth were *very* worried about it.

- Finally, the Danish (55%), Swedish (47%), British (46%) and Austrian (44%) parents were the ones the most likely not to be worried at all about this risk.

Chart 23: How worried are you that your child might **get information about self-harm, suicide or anorexia** when using the Internet/mobile phone?
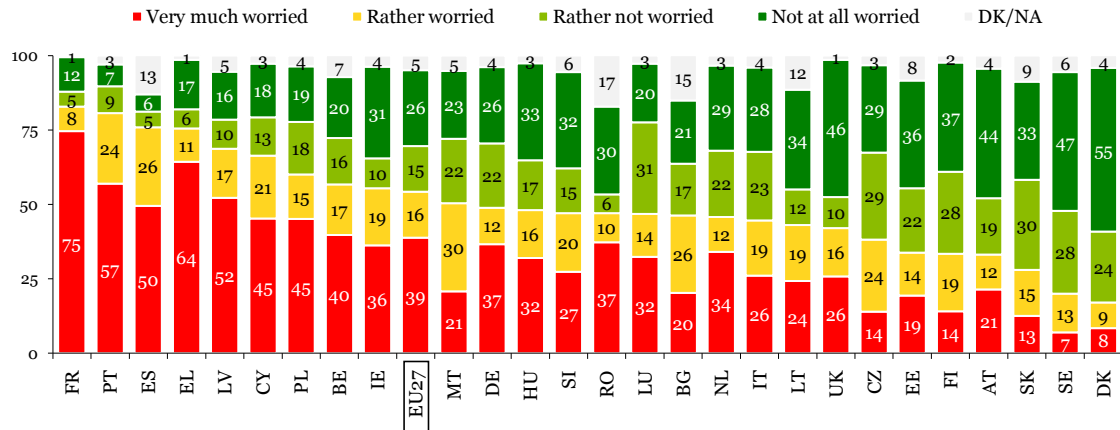
■ Very much worried ■ Rather worried ■ Rather not worried ■ Not at all worried ☐ DK/NA

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents
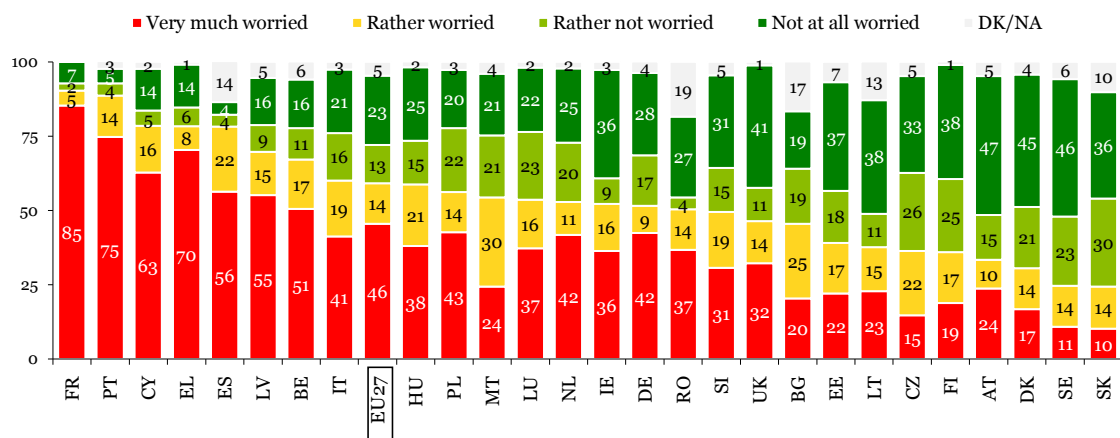*% by country*

Contact – online grooming and bullying

Almost all French and Portuguese parents said they were worried that their child might become a **victim of online grooming** (90% and 89%, respectively). In Cyprus, Greece and Spain, almost 80% of the parents were worried about this and in Latvia and Belgium, the proportion of worried parents was approximately 70%. Furthermore, in all of these countries a majority of the parents were *very* worried about this risk.

In about half of the Member States, not more than half of the parents were worried that their child might become a victim of online grooming: from 24% in Slovakia to 50% in Slovenia. At the bottom of the distribution, next to Slovakia, were Sweden and Denmark with only 25% and 31%, respectively, of concerned parents.

In four Member States more than four out of 10 parents said that they were not at all worried that their child would become a victim of online grooming: Austria (47%), Sweden (46%), Denmark (45%) and the UK (41%).

Chart 24: How worried are you that your child might become a **victim of online grooming**?

■ Very much worried ■ Rather worried ■ Rather not worried ■ Not at all worried ☐ DK/NA

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents
% by country

As with the results for worries about online grooming, more than two-thirds of the French and Greek parents were *very* concerned that their child could be **bullied online by other children** (71% and 67%, respectively) – less than one-sixth of the parents in these countries did not worry about this online risk. Similarly, less than one in five of the parents in Portugal (16%), Cyprus (18%) and Spain

(10%) were not worried about their child being bullied. The proportion of *very worried* parents was, nevertheless, slightly lower in these countries (between 52% and 60%) than in France and Greece.

In Denmark, Sweden, the UK and Austria – once again – more than four out of 10 parents answered that they were not at all worried that their child could be bullied online by other children (between 42% and 46%). Furthermore, in Denmark and Sweden – and in Slovakia – less than a quarter of the parents said they were worried about this (21%-23%) and less than one-tenth were *very* worried (8%-9%).

The country results for parents' worries about their child **being bullied by other children via their mobile phone** showed the same variation across Member States as the question about online bullying.

Chart 25: How worried are you that your child could be **bullied online by other children**?
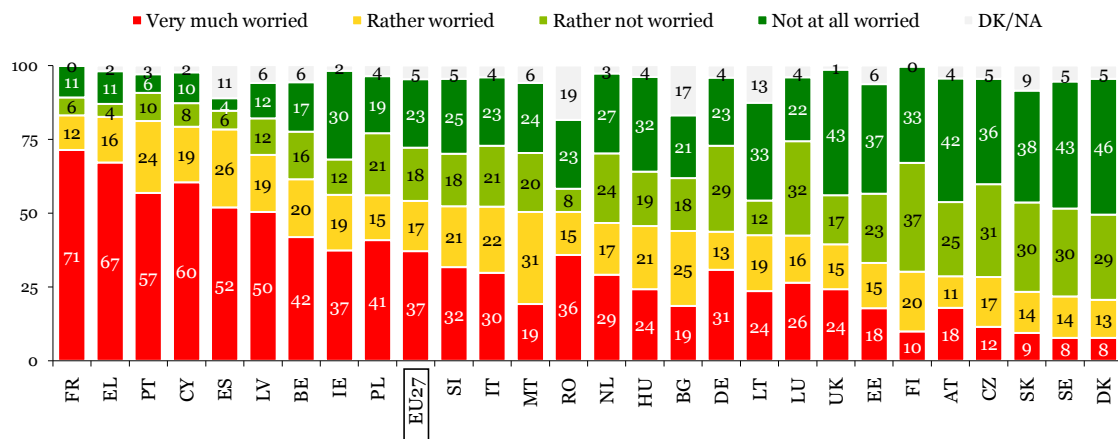
Chart 26: How worried are you that your child could be **bullied by other children via his/her mobile phone**?
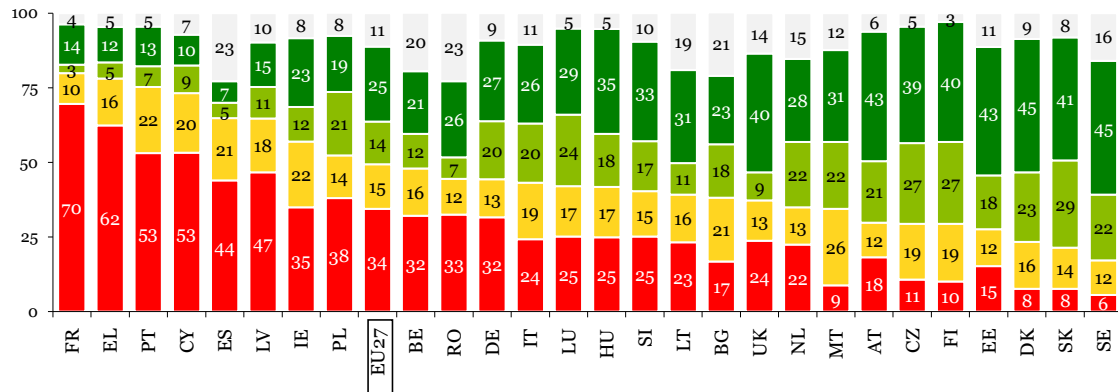
Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she ...
Base: all respondents
% by country

Similarities could again be seen with the same countries appearing at the higher or lower ends of the distribution regarding concerns that children might **become isolated from other people when spending too much time online** and the previous statements about inappropriate contact:

- Approximately three-quarters of the parents in Portugal, France, Greece and Cyprus worried that their child might become isolated from other people if they spent too much time online.

- Only in the four countries listed above did more than half of the parents say they were *very* worried (between 54% and 66%).

- Less than a quarter of the parents in Denmark and Sweden were worried that their child might become isolated if they used the Internet too much (both 23%).

- Furthermore, half of the parents in Denmark and Sweden were not at all worried about their child becoming isolated – and the same was true for parents in the UK and Austria (both 48%).

Chart 27: How worried are you that your child might **become isolated from other people when spending too much time online**?

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents
% by country

Invasion of children's and family's **privacy** by giving out personal information

In a majority of the Member States, not more than half of the parents were worried that their child might **reveal personal or private information over the Internet** – proportions ranged from less than one-tenth in Sweden (8%) to 51% in Italy. Furthermore, in all of these countries less than a quarter of the respondents said they were *very* worried – ranging from 2% in Sweden to 22% in Italy and Germany.

In Latvia and Belgium, a slim majority of the parents was worried that their child might reveal personal or private information online (58% and 54%, respectively) and almost three out of 10 parents were *very* worried about this (29% and 27%, respectively). Parents in Portugal, France, Spain, Cyprus and Greece were, nevertheless, again the most worried: between 69% and 77% of the parents in these countries were worried that their child might reveal such information online and between 39% and 52% were *very* worried about this.

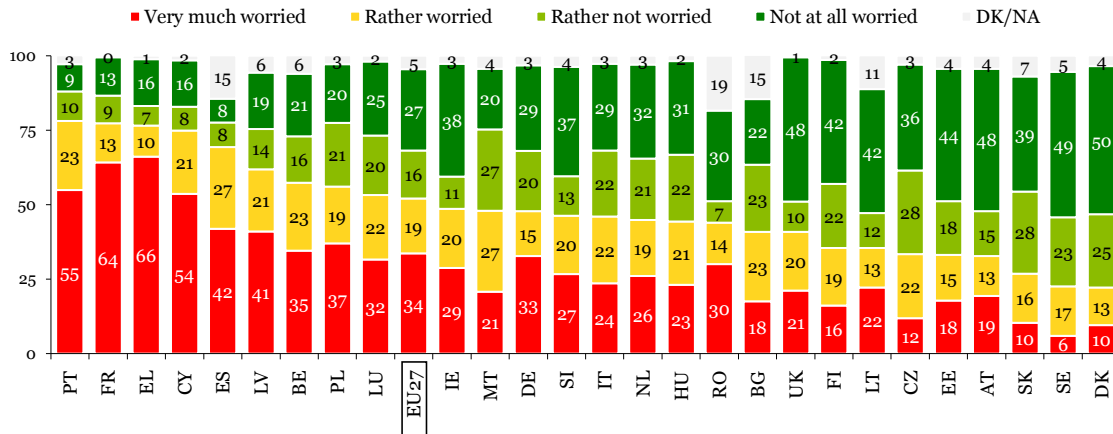**Chart 28:** How worried are you that your child might **give out personal/private information online**?
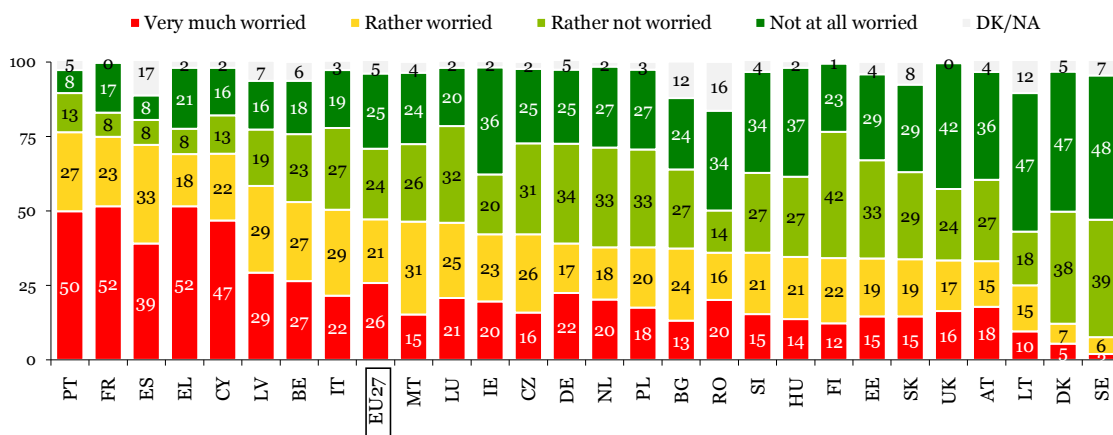

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents
% by country

Individual country differences – most important concerns

The table on the following page shows – for each country – the *online risks* that parents were most worried about; these risks listed in the survey were sorted based on the proportion of parents who said to be "very worried" or "rather worried".

A first glance shows that parents in all of the EU Member States have similar worries about the online risks faced by their child when using the Internet and a mobile phone:

- viewing sexually or violently explicit images when browsing the Internet,
- making contact with someone who might be intent on grooming a young person,
- being bullied online by other children, and
- getting access to information about self-harm, suicide or anorexia.

Parents were especially worried that their child might see **sexually or violently explicit images** – this online risk appeared among the three most mentioned concerns in all EU Member States. As noted previously, parents in France (88%), Portugal (84%) and Greece (81%) were the most worried that their child might view inappropriate content. However, this online risk was also among the most mentioned concerns in, for example, Sweden, even though only three out of 10 parents (31%) worried about this risk.

That a child might become a **victim of online grooming** also appeared among the three most important concerns in almost all of the Member States. For example, two-thirds (64%) of the Maltese parents were worried that their child might view inappropriate content when browsing the Internet (in 1st position), followed by 54% who were worried that that child might become a victim of online grooming (2nd position) and half who were concerned that their child might find information about self-harm, suicide or anorexia (3rd position). Parents in Ireland, Lithuania and Slovakia appeared to worry slightly less about online grooming, as this risk did not appear in the top three most important concerns in these countries.

Table 3: When your child uses the Internet or a mobile phone, how worried are you that he/she … ?
(three most mentioned concerns)

BE	%	BG	%	CZ	%
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	67	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	53	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	50
Victim of online grooming	67	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	46	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	38
Bullied online by other children	62	Victim of online grooming	46	Victim of online grooming	36

DK	%	DE	%	EE	%
Victim of online grooming	31	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	60	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	48
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	26	Victim of online grooming	52	Victim of online grooming	39
Bullied via the mobile phone	23	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	49	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	34

EL	%	ES	%	FR	%
Bullied online by other children	83	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	79	Victim of online grooming	90
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	81	Bullied online by other children	78	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	87
Victim of online grooming	78	Victim of online grooming	78	Bullied online by other children	83

IE	%	IT	%	CY	%
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	64	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	65	Bullied online by other children	79
Bullied online by other children	56	Victim of online grooming	60	Victim of online grooming	78
Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	55	Bullied online by other children	52	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	76

LV	%	LT	%	LU	%
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	75	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	47	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	64
Victim of online grooming	70	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	43	Victim of online grooming	54
Bullied online by other children	70	Bullied online by other children	43	Become isolated	53

HU	%	MT	%	NL	%
Victim of online grooming	59	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	64	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	54
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	58	Victim of online grooming	54	Victim of online grooming	53
Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	48	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	50	Bullied online by other children	47

AT	%	PL	%	PT	%
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	45	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	67	Victim of online grooming	89
See sexually/violently explicit images on the mobile phone	36	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	60	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	84
Victim of online grooming	33	Victim of online grooming	56	Bullied online by other children	81

RO	%	SI	%	SK	%
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	53	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	55	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	39
Victim of online grooming	51	Bullied online by other children	52	Give out personal information	34
Bullied online by other children	51	Victim of online grooming	50	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	28

FI	%	SE	%	UK	%
See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	58	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	31	See sexually/violently explicit images on the Internet	59
Victim of online grooming	36	Victim of online grooming	25	Victim of online grooming	46
Become isolated	35	Become isolated	23	Get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	42

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents; % "very worried" or "rather worried" shown by country

Online risks and parents' and children's Internet usage

Parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use it, most frequently answered that they were *very worried* about the risks that their child faced when using the Internet and mobile phones (i.e. viewing inappropriate content, making contact with someone who might be intent on grooming a young person and revealing personal information). Parents who did not use the Internet and who also said that their child did not use it, were only slightly less worried about the risks that their child might face one day.

Parents who did use the Internet worried the least about online risks – independent of whether their child actually used the Internet or if they were talking about a hypothetical situation in which their child would start using the Internet.

For example, while only one-third of the Internet-using parents worried that their child might become isolated when spending too much time online, slightly more than four out of 10 parents who did not use the Internet worried about this (43% of the parents whose child used the Internet and 41% of the parents whose child did not use it).

Finally, parents whose child did not have their own mobile phone were more likely to be *very* worried that their child – if they had a mobile phone – might see sexually or violently explicit images on it (41% vs. 30%-35% of parents who child did have a mobile phone) or that they might be bullied by other children via their phone (37% vs. 27%-34%).

Table 4: When your child uses the Internet or a mobile phone, how worried are you that he/she … ?

	might see sexually/ violently explicit images on the Internet	might see sexually/ violently explicit images via the mobile phone	might get information about self-harm, suicide, anorexia	be victim of online grooming	could be bullied online by other children	could be bullied by other children via the mobile phone	might become isolated from other people	may give out personal information online
Internet use								
Neither parent nor child	48%	42%	44%	50%	45%	41%	40%	31%
Only child	52%	46%	48%	55%	47%	43%	41%	34%
Only parent	45%	36%	37%	46%	37%	35%	32%	26%
Parent as well as child	44%	35%	38%	44%	35%	33%	32%	24%
Owns a mobile phone								
Yes – no Internet access		35%			34%			
Yes – with access		35%			30%			
Yes – unknown type		30%			27%			
No mobile phone		41%			37%			

Q9. How worried are you that when your child is using the Internet or mobile phone, he/she …
Base: all respondents
% "very worried" shown

Socio-demographic considerations

Certain socio-demographic groups tended to more frequently answer that they were *very worried* about the risks for their child when using the Internet and mobile phones (i.e. viewing inappropriate content, making contact with someone who might be intent on grooming a young person and revealing personal information):

• mothers, older parents and those with several children
• parents answering the question with reference to their 6-10 year-old or their 11-14 year-old
• the less educated ones
• manual workers and those not working
• respondents living in rural areas.

For example, while four out of 10 parents answering a question about their 15-17 year-old were *very* worried that they might become a victim of online grooming, almost half of the parents talking about their 6-10 year old or their 11-14 year-old were *very* worried about this (both 48%). Similarly, half of both the manual workers and the non-working parents were *very* worried that their child might see sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet, compared to only 43% of the self-employed respondents and employees.

For more details, see annex tables 22b through 29b.

2.2 Has your child asked for help?

The proportion of children who had asked their parent (the one interviewed) for help when a problem (of any kind) occurred using the Internet was the largest in Denmark (48%), followed by Finland (46%), Slovenia and Cyprus (both 45%). Children in the UK, on the other hand, were very unlikely to have asked their parents for help with an Internet-related problem – only 15% of British parents said their child had asked for help. Other countries where children were less likely to have asked for help were Ireland (18%) and Bulgaria (24%).

Chart 29: Has your child asked for your help when a problem occurred using the Internet?
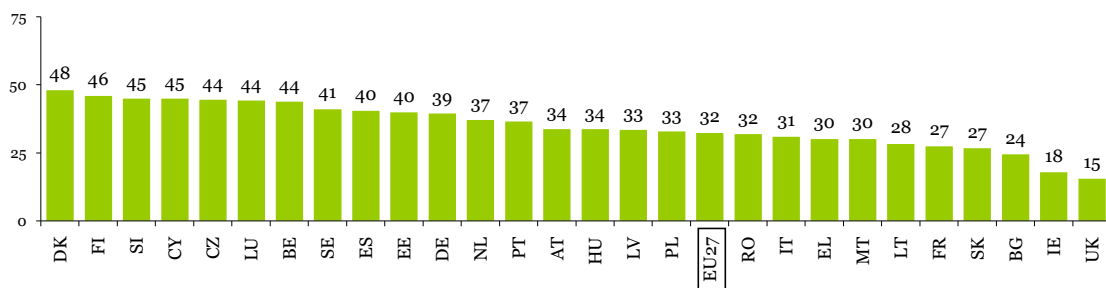
Q12. Has your child ever asked for your help concerning a situation on the Internet that s/he could not handle?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Yes" shown by country

Asking for help for specific problems

Parents who answered that their child had asked for help were then asked for details about the context. Those children who had asked for help were most likely to have done so because they had a technical problem, such as a virus on the computer, or when they were browsing the Internet looking for information (46% and 40%, respectively).

Only a minority of the respondents said their child had asked for help because they had been contacted online by a stranger (4%), had been harassed (4%) or bullied online (3%), or because they had found sexually or violently explicit images on the Internet (4%). In total, slightly more than one-tenth of the children (12%) encountered one or more of the above-mentioned risks (see further).

Around one in five of the parents (22%) said that their child asked for help relating to another problem than the ones listed in the survey.

Chart 30: In which situation did your child ask for your help?
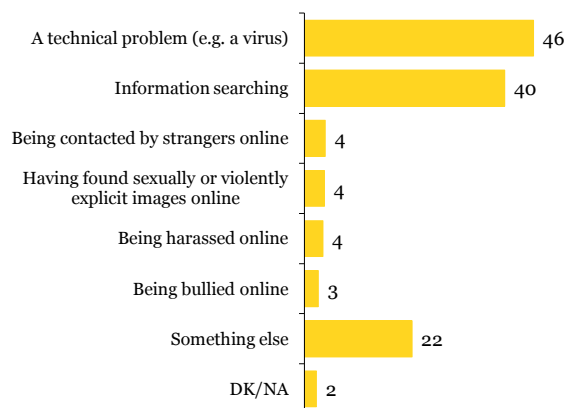
Q13. What was the situation in which your child asked your help:
Base: parents whose child asked for help
% of "Mentioned" shown, EU27

The *individual country results* showed that children in Hungary (75%), followed by those in Italy (71%), the Czech Republic (68%) and Finland (66%), were the most likely to have asked their parents for **help with a technical problem**. Children in Greece and Ireland, on the other hand, where four times less likely to have asked for help with a technical problem (16% and 18%, respectively). Other countries at the lower end of the scale were the UK and Portugal with, respectively, 26% and 29%, of children asking for technical assistance.
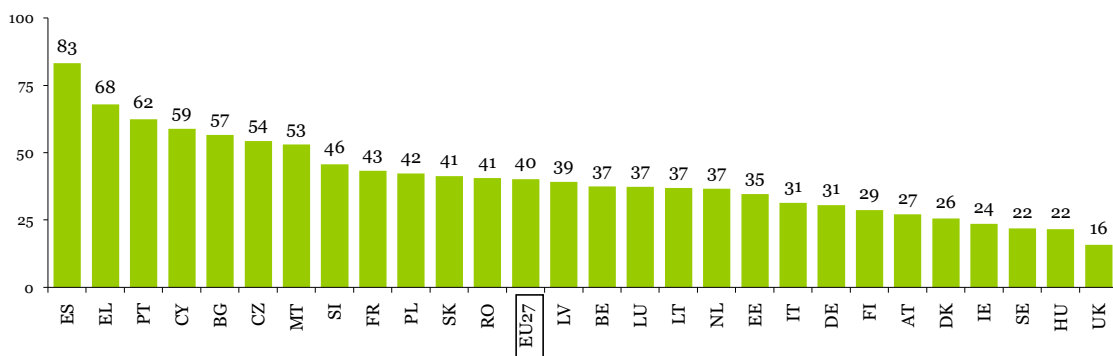
Chart 31: Children asking for help in case of a technical problem (e.g. a virus)
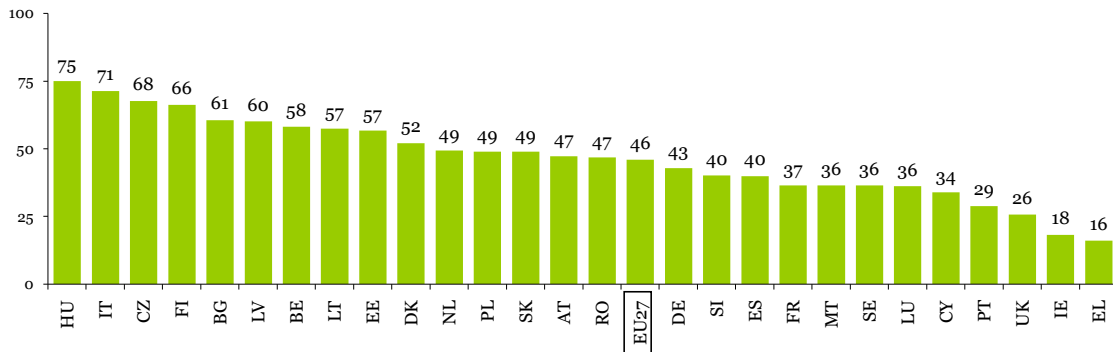
Q13. What was the situation in which your child asked your help:
Base: parents whose child asked for help
% of "Yes" shown by country

Children in Greece, who asked for help from their parents, were the least likely to have done so because they had a technical problem, but they were among the most likely to have done so when **searching the Internet for information** (68%). The opposite was observed for Hungarian children: while they were the most likely to have asked for help with a technical problem, they were among the least likely to have done so when searching the Internet (16%). It was, however, Spanish parents who most often answered that their child asked for help looking for information online (83%), and British children who were the least likely to do so (16%).

Chart 32: Children asking for help when searching the Internet

Q13. What was the situation in which your child asked your help:
Base: parents whose child asked for help
% of "Yes" shown by country

The following chart looks at the proportion of children who asked their parents for help because they were **contacted by a stranger, were bullied or harassed online or saw violently or sexually explicit images online**. Almost three out of 10 Dutch parents (28%) and a quarter of the parents in the UK (24%) said that, when their child asked for their help, this was because they had encountered one of the abovementioned problems. In Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Portugal, on the other hand, less than one in 20 parents mentioned this kind of problem.

Chart 33: Children asking for help when being contacted by a stranger, having found violently or sexually explicit images, being bullied or harassed

Children asking for help and parents' Internet use

Not surprisingly, the proportion of children who had asked their parent (the one interviewed) for help when a problem (of any kind) occurred using the Internet was lower for parents who did not use the Internet themselves (11% vs. 30% of the frequent Internet users and 38% of the occasional Internet users). Furthermore, in terms of the context in which a child asked for help, parents who did not use the Internet were less often asked to help with a technical problem, such as a virus on the computer (46% and 40%, respectively).

Table 5: In which situation did your child ask for your help?

	Children asking for help	*In which situation did your child ask for your help?*						
		Technical problem	Searching for information	Contacted by a stranger	Violently/ sexually explicit images	Harassed online	Bullied online	Something else
Parents' Internet use								
Non-users	11%	26%	37%	8%	3%	1%	7%	20%
Occasional users	30%	46%	41%	4%	3%	3%	3%	23%
Frequent users	38%	47%	40%	4%	5%	4%	3%	21%

Socio-demographic considerations

Certain socio-demographic groups were more likely to have been asked for help with an Internet-related problem:

- fathers (37% vs. 30% of mothers)
- the 25-39 year-olds (37% vs. 29% of the over 54 year-olds)
- parents with fewer children (33% for parents with one child vs. 28% for parents with three children)
- interviewees answering questions about a 6-10 year-old (40% vs. 25% for 15-17 year-olds)
- the more highly-educated parents (38% vs. 25% in the lowest educational category)
- those living in metropolitan and urban areas (35% in metropolitan areas and 33% in urban areas vs. 30% in rural areas)
- the self-employed and employees (33% and 34%, respectively, vs. 30% of manual workers and 29% of the non-working parents).

However, some differences were also seen when looking at the context in which children asked for help; for example:

- fathers were more often asked for help with a technical problem (54% vs. 42% of women)
- younger parents were most often asked for help when children were browsing the Internet looking for information (41% of the 25-39 year-olds vs. 32% of the over 54 year-olds)
- the less educated parents were less often asked for because their child had a technical problem (28% vs. 46% average) or when they were browsing the Internet looking for information (37% vs. 40% average), but they were more frequently asked for help relating to another problem than the ones listed in the survey (31% vs. 21% average).
- older children who asked their parents for help more often did so because they were contacted by a stranger, were bullied or harassed online or saw violently or sexually explicit images online (e.g. 7% of the 15-17 year-olds asked their parents for help because they were harassed online compared to 1% of the 6-10 year-olds).

For more details, see annex tables 32b and 33b.

3. Parental supervision of children's Internet use

*Six out of 10 parents took care that they – always or very frequently – **stayed nearby when their child used the Internet**. Parents were the least likely to regularly **check the messages in their child's email or IM account** (24%). Parents in the UK, Portugal, Italy and Spain were the most likely to supervise or check their child's Internet-related activities, while parents in Lithuania and Estonia were the most likely to say they never did so.*

*Parents in all countries mentioned that they have various **rules and restrictions when their child used the Internet**. Parents in Italy, Portugal and Ireland were more likely than others to set certain rules for their child when using the Internet, while respondents in the eastern European countries – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia – were the least likely to specify various rules that applied when their child used the Internet. The smallest proportion said that their child was not allowed to download or play music, films or games (38%) and use email or IM tools (37%).*
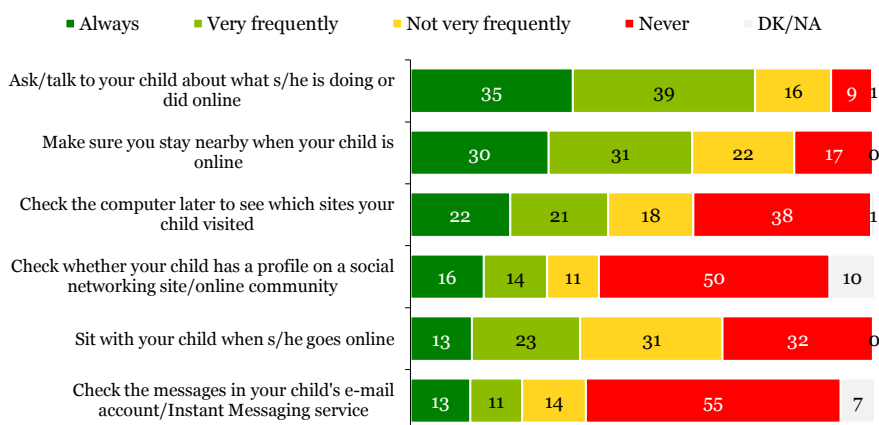
*Half of the parents had installed **filtering software** on the computer that their child used at home. **Monitoring software** was not as popular, but was still used by almost four out of 10 parents. Younger parents, those with younger children or more children were more likely to use filtering and/or monitoring software. More than six out of 10 parents – who did not use such software – simply saw no need for using it since they trusted their child with the Internet.*

3.1 Strategies for supervising children's use of the Internet

Three-quarters of the parents – with a child who accessed the Internet at home[9] – said that they always or very frequently talked with their son or daughter about their online activities. A majority of the parents (61%) took care that they – always or very frequently – stayed nearby when their child used the Internet, while slightly more than one-third (36%) even sat next to their child at that time.

Note: It should be pointed out that the level of parental supervision might be slightly over-represented in the sample. Since parents do not want to come across as bad parents, they might have answered in a "socially acceptable" way to this question; this may explain why so many of them said they regularly supervise their child's use of the Internet.

Chart 34: What do parents do when their child uses the Internet at home?

Legend: ■ Always ■ Very frequently ■ Not very frequently ■ Never ■ DK/NA

	Always	Very frequently	Not very frequently	Never	DK/NA
Ask/talk to your child about what s/he is doing or did online	35	39	16	9	1
Make sure you stay nearby when your child is online	30	31	22	17	0
Check the computer later to see which sites your child visited	22	21	18	38	1
Check whether your child has a profile on a social networking site/online community	16	14	11	50	10
Sit with your child when s/he goes online	13	23	31	32	0
Check the messages in your child's e-mail account/Instant Messaging service	13	11	14	55	7

Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home; % EU27

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[9] The results in this section focus only on parents with a child who accessed the Internet at home.

Slightly more than one-fifth of the parents (22%) said that they always checked the computer to see which websites their child had visited and a similar proportion (21%) said they did this very frequently. Almost twice as many parents, however, said they never did this (38%). A majority of the parents also said that they never checked the messages in their child's e-mail account or IM service (55%) or whether their child had a profile on a social networking site (50%). Three out of 10 parents admitted always or very frequently checking whether their child had a social networking profile and a quarter checked the messages in their child's email account.

Individual country differences

In all EU27 Member States (except the Czech Republic) at least half of the parents – with a child who accessed the Internet at home – very frequently or always **talked to their child about what he or she was doing online**: from 50% in Estonia to 87% in the UK. In the Czech Republic, slightly less than half of the parents said they talked this frequently to their child about what they did online (47%).

Spain, Germany, Ireland and Portugal joined the UK at the higher end of the scale (between 80% and 85% selected the "always" or "very frequently" responses); however, it was the Greek and Cypriot parents who most frequently said that they *always* talked to their child about what he or she had been doing online (53% and 50%, respectively).

In four countries, one-sixth or more of the parents answered that they never talked to their child about what he or she had been doing online: Estonia (18%), Slovakia (20%), France and the Czech Republic (both 21%).

Chart 35: How often do you **ask/talk to your child about what he/she is doing or did online**?
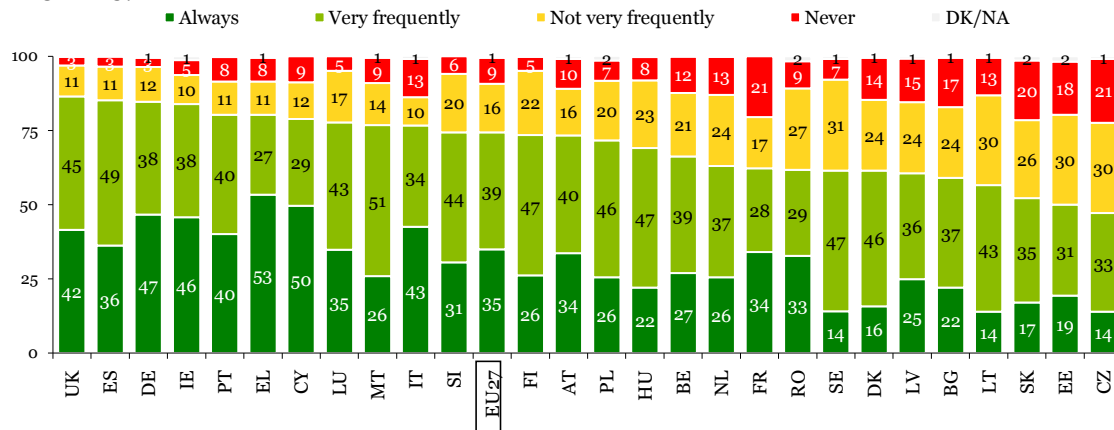
Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home
% by country

Parents in the UK, Spain, Germany, Ireland and Portugal – together with those in Italy and Poland – were also the most likely to answer that they always or very frequently **stayed nearby when their child used the Internet** at home (between 66% and 79%). The Czech parents were again found at the bottom of the distribution (34%); however, Estonian and Lithuanian parents were as unlikely to stay nearby when their child used the Internet (26% and 32%, respectively).

While in only four countries one-sixth or more of the parents said that they never talked to their child about what he or she had been doing online; in more than half of the countries more than one-sixth of the parents said that they never stayed nearby when their child used the Internet. The proportion of parents who never stayed nearby when their child used the Internet was the highest in the Czech Republic (35%), Estonia and Denmark (both 34%).

Chart 36: How often do you **stay nearby when your child uses the Internet**?

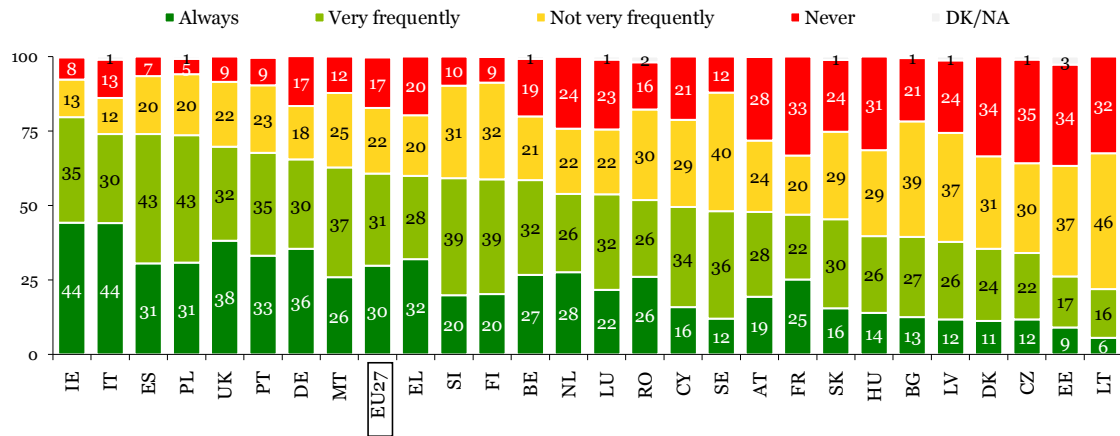■ Always   ■ Very frequently   ■ Not very frequently   ■ Never   □ DK/NA

Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home
% by country

Only in Portugal and Spain did more than half of the parents always or very frequently **sat with their child when he or she was using the Internet** (60% and 57%, respectively). However, while only 16% of the Spanish parents said they always sat with their child; twice as many Portuguese parents said this was the case (30%). The proportion of parents who always sat next to their child when he or she was using the Internet was as high in Greece (29%).

In Estonia, Latvia, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, on the other hand, less than one-sixth of the parents always or very frequently sat with their child while he or she was online (between 14% and 17%). Furthermore, while one in two Swedish parents sat with their child once in a while and only one-third never did so, in Estonia, the Netherlands, Latvia and Denmark, more than four out of 10 parents never sat with their child when he or she was online (between 45% and 60%). The proportion of parents who never sat with their child was as high in France and Austria (both 57%).

Chart 37: How often do you **sit with your child when he/she uses the Internet**?

■ Always   ■ Very frequently   ■ Not very frequently   ■ Never   □ DK/NA
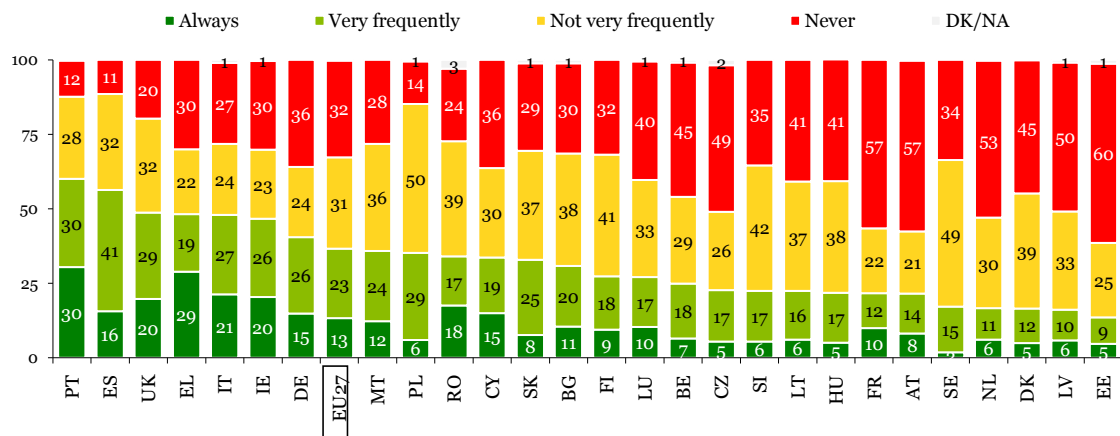

Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home
% by country

Less than a quarter of the parents in Sweden (19%), Denmark (20%), Hungary (21%) and Estonia (22%) answered that they always or very frequently **checked the computer after their child had used it to see which websites were visited**, and a slim majority of the parents in these countries said they never did this (between 52% and 59%).

In Portugal, Germany and Spain, on the other hand, a slim majority of the parents said they always or very frequently checked the history file of websites visited after their child had gone online (60%, 55% and 54%, respectively) and less than one-third never did this (24%, 32% and 26%, respectively).

Chart 38: How often do you **check the computer later to see which sites you child visited**?
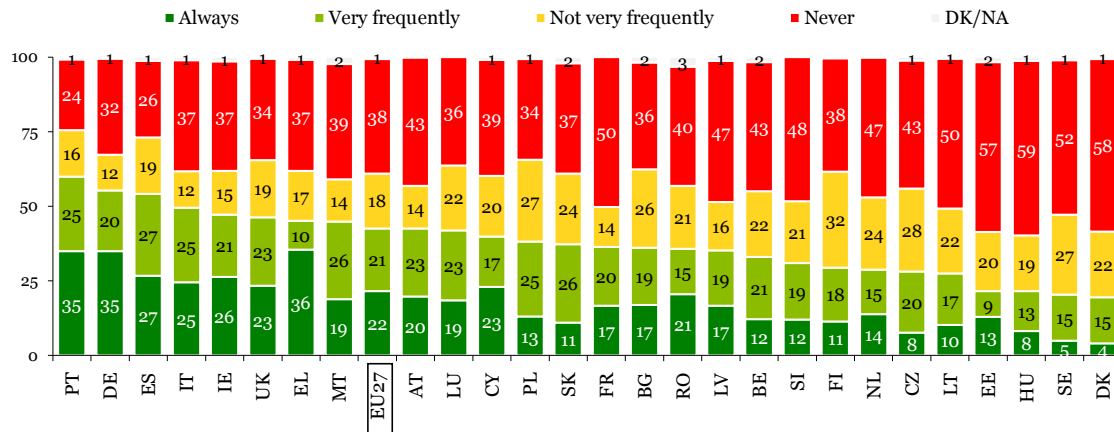
■ Always   ■ Very frequently   ■ Not very frequently   ■ Never   ■ DK/NA

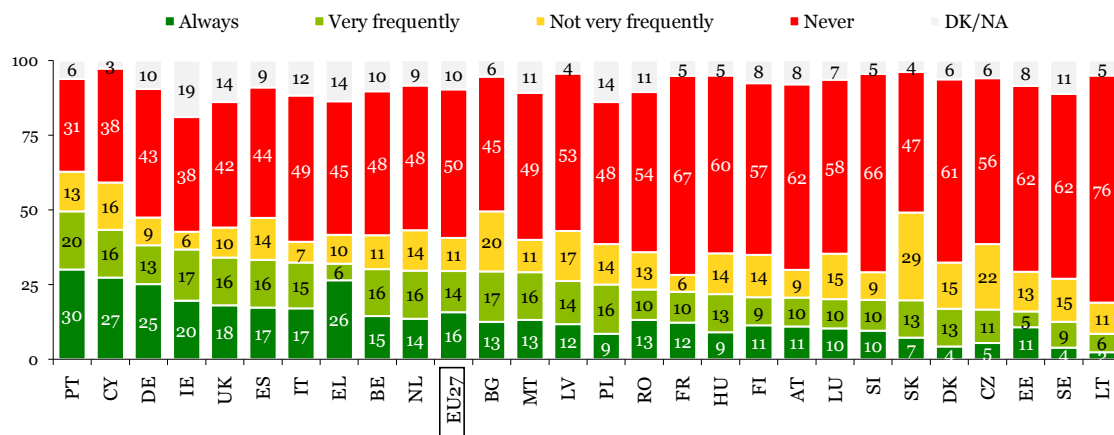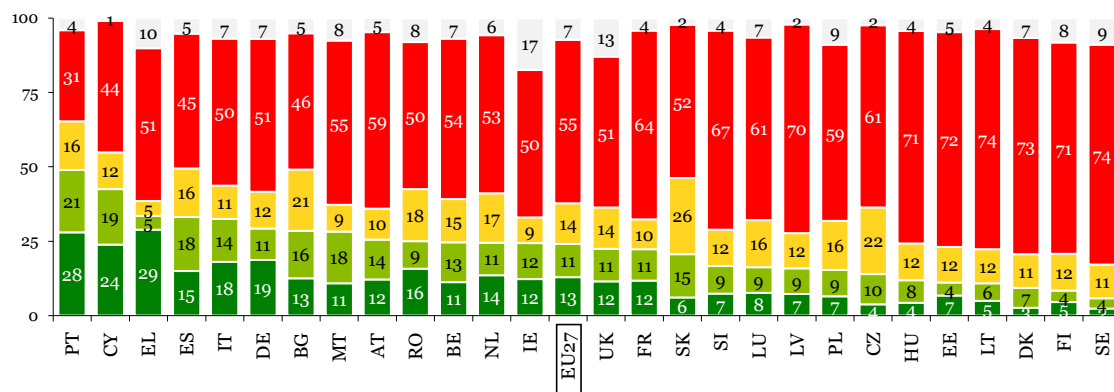|	PT	DE	ES	IT	IE	UK	EL	MT	EU27	AT	LU	CY	PL	SK	FR	BG	RO	LV	BE	SI	FI	NL	CZ	LT	EE	HU	SE	DK
DK/NA	1	1	1	1	1		2	1				1	1	2		2	3	1	2				1	1	2	1	1	
Never	24	32	26	37	37	34	37	39	38	43	36	39	34	37	50	36	40	47	43	48	38	47	43	50	57	59	52	58
Not very frequently	16	12	19	12	15	19	17	14	18	14	22	20	27	24	14	26	21	16	22	21	32	24	28	22	20	19	27	22
Very frequently	25	20	27	25	21	23	10	26	21	23	23	17	25	26	20	19	15	19	21	19	18	15	20	17	9	13	15	15
Always	35	35	27	25	26	23	36	19	22	20	19	23	13	11	17	17	21	17	12	12	11	14	8	10	13	8	5	

Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home
% by country

Similar to the results obtained for the EU27 overall, parents in almost all Member States were the least likely to regularly **check whether their child had a profile on a social networking site** or to **check the messages in their child's email or IM account**. Furthermore, a relative majority of the parents in all of the EU27 Member States never checked if their child had created a profile on a social networking site (from 31% in Portugal to 76% in Lithuania). An equally large or even higher proportion of parents never checked email or IM of their child (from 31% in Portugal to 74% in Lithuania and Sweden).

Chart 39: How often do you **check whether your child has a profile on a social networking site/online community**?

■ Always   ■ Very frequently   ■ Not very frequently   ■ Never   ■ DK/NA

	PT	CY	DE	IE	UK	ES	IT	EL	BE	NL	EU27	BG	MT	LV	PL	RO	FR	HU	FI	AT	LU	SI	SK	DK	CZ	EE	SE	LT
DK/NA	6	3	10	19	14	9	12	14	10	9	10	6	11	4	14	11	5	5	8	8	7	5	4	6	6	8	11	5
Never	31	38	43	38	42	44	49	45	48	48	50	45	49	53	48	54	67	60	57	62	58	66	47	61	56	62	62	76
Not very frequently	13	16	9	6	10	14	7	10	11	14	11	20	11	17	14	13	6	14	14	9	15	9	29	15	22	13	15	11
Very frequently	20	16	13	17	16	16	15	6	16	16	16	17	13	14	16	10	10	13	9	10	10	10	13	13	11	5	9	6
Always	30	27	25	20	18	17	17	26	15	14	16	13	13	12	9	13	12	9	11	11	10	10	7	4	5	11	4	

Chart 40: How often do you **check the messages in your child's e-mail / IM service**?

	PT	CY	EL	ES	IT	DE	BG	MT	AT	RO	BE	NL	IE	EU27	UK	FR	SK	SI	LU	LV	PL	CZ	HU	EE	LT	DK	FI	SE
DK/NA	4	1	10	5	7	7	5	8	5	8	7	6	17		7	13	4	2	4	7	2	4	5	4	7		8	9
Never	31	44	51	45	50	51	46	55	59	50	54	53	50	55	51	64	52	67	61	70	59	61	71	72	74	73	71	74
Not very frequently	16	12	5	16	11	12	21	9	10	18	15	17	9	14	14	10	26	12	16	12	16	22	12	12	12	11	12	11
Very frequently	21	19	5	18	14	11	16	18	14	9	13	11	12	11	11	11	15	9	9	7	9	10	8	4	6	11	4	4
Always	28	24	29	15	18	19	13	11	12	16	11	14	12	13	12	12	6	7	8	7	7	4	4	7	5		5	

Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home
% by country

After looking at the individual country results regarding the strategies for parental supervision of their child's use of the Internet, two conclusions can be drawn:

- parents in the UK and some southern European countries – Portugal, Italy and Spain – were more likely than others to regularly supervise their child's use of the Internet (e.g. stay nearby or sit next to their child) and to check what their child had done online (e.g. check the history file of websites visited or e-mail account)
- parents in Lithuania and Estonia, on the other hand, were each time among the most likely to answer that they never supervised or checked their child's Internet-related activities.

Parental supervision and parents' Internet use

Parents who were Internet users themselves said they operated more control over their child's use of the Internet – this was as expected, since most strategies for parental supervision assume that parents know how to use the Internet, e.g. how to check their child's Internet history.

Not many differences were observed when looking at the frequency of parents' Internet use. Nevertheless, parents who only occasionally used the Internet were slightly more liable to stay nearby (65% vs. 60% of frequent Internet users) or sit next to their child when they were online (40% vs. 36%).

Table 6: What do parents do when their child uses the Internet at home?

	Ask/talk to your child about what they do or did online	Make sure you stay nearby when your child is online	Sit with your child when they go online	Check the computer later to see which sites your child visited	Check whether your child has a profile on a social networking site	Check the messages in your child's e-mail account/ IM service
Parents' internet use						
Non-users	60%	44%	28%	24%	17%	18%
Occasional users	75%	65%	40%	44%	29%	26%
Frequent users	76%	60%	36%	44%	31%	24%

Q6. When your child uses the Internet at home, what do you usually do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from their own computer or from the family's computer at home
% "always" or "very frequently" shown

Socio-demographic considerations

Mothers more frequently talked to their child about what they had been doing online (77% of mothers selected the "always" or "very frequently" compared to 67% of fathers) and more frequently stayed nearby when their child used the Internet (63% vs. 55%). Fathers and mothers did not differ much in the likelihood of their checking what their child had done online (e.g. check the history file or e-mail account).

Parents with a different level of education did not differ in the likelihood of supervising their child's Internet behaviour (e.g. approximately six out of 10 parents in all educational groups answered that they always or very frequently stayed nearby when their child used the Internet). Parents with a lower level of educational attainment were, nevertheless, slightly more likely to check their child's online activities. For example, one-third of the least-educated parents said they regularly checked the messages in their child's e-mail or IM account compared to only slightly more than one-fifth of parents in the highest educational category (22%).

Manual workers were generally the least likely to supervise and check their child's Internet-related activities: they less frequently talked to their child about what they did online (69% selected the "always" or "very frequently" vs. 74% on average), less often stayed nearby when their child used the Internet (56% vs. 61% average) and less frequently checked whether their child had created a profile on a social networking site (26% vs. 30% average). It was, nevertheless, the self-employed and employees who least frequently checked their child's Internet history (42% vs. 45% of manual workers and non-working parents) or their email and IM accounts (23%-24% vs. 26%).

The 15-17 year-olds were subject to less parental supervision than the 11-14 year-olds and the 6-10 year-olds, but this reduction was more noticeable in the supervision of a child's usage as opposed to the monitoring of online activities (e.g. checking the history file or e-mail account). For example, only 16% of the parents who answered the question about their 15-17 year-old said that they regularly sat next to them when they were online, compared to six out of 10 parents who were referring to their 6-10 year-old. The corresponding proportion for checking messages in their child's e-mail or IM account were 17% vs. 26%, respectively. Since younger parents more often answered the question about a younger child, the children's age specific patterns for setting rules for children's Internet use were repeated when looking at the parents' age groups.

Parents did not distinguish between boys or girls regarding their strategies for supervising their child's Internet behaviour. Furthermore, almost no differences were observed when looking at the number of children in the household or when looking at the place of residence.

For more details, see annex tables 4b through 9b.

3.2 Setting rules for children's use of the Internet

Another safety measure that parents with children that use the Internet can take is to set conditions about what they can or cannot do on the Internet. Parents were first asked whether there were any rules or restrictions about their child's use of the Internet using an open-ended question format, i.e. parents were not given a list of possible answers to choose from, but were asked to list all the activities that were "not allowed". In a second step, a similar question was asked using a closed question format – e.g. I will list a number of online activities, please tell for each if you allow them or not? In this case, nine specific online activity were treated as seperate questions items, so respondents had the option to answer "not allowed" or "allowed" to each option. The results in this section focus solely on parents who said that their child used the Internet.

When asked as an "open question", a quarter of the parents spontaneously said that there were no rules or restrictions about their child's use of the Internet. All the other parents listed one or more rules that applied when their child used the Internet. For example, one in 10 parents said that their child was not allowed to use chat rooms or to visit certain websites, and one-sixth said that their son or daughter was not allowed to download or play games. By far the largest proportion of parents (43%) said that their child was not allowed to create a profile in an online community.

Chart 41: Which online activities are not allowed?
(Sponteneous)

Activity	%
No restrictions	25
Creating a profile in an online community	43
Downloading/playing games	17
Buying online	17
Spending a lot of time online	14
Using instant messaging tools	14
Downloading/playing films	12
Downloading/playing music	11
Giving out personal information	10
Accessing certain websites	10
Using chat rooms	9
Using email	7
Talking to people they don't know in real life	6
DK/NA	7

Q7. When your child is online, are there things that s/he is not allowed to do?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Mentioned", EU27

The proportion of parents who spontaneously said that no rules were set for their child's Internet use was the largest in Lithuania (60%), followed by Cyprus and the Czech Republic (both 52%). All but one of the New Member States (NMS) had a proportion of parents above the EU27 average of 25% who said that there were no restrictions for Internet use, while 10 of the EU15 countries scored lower than that average. Poland was the exception in the NMS, with a
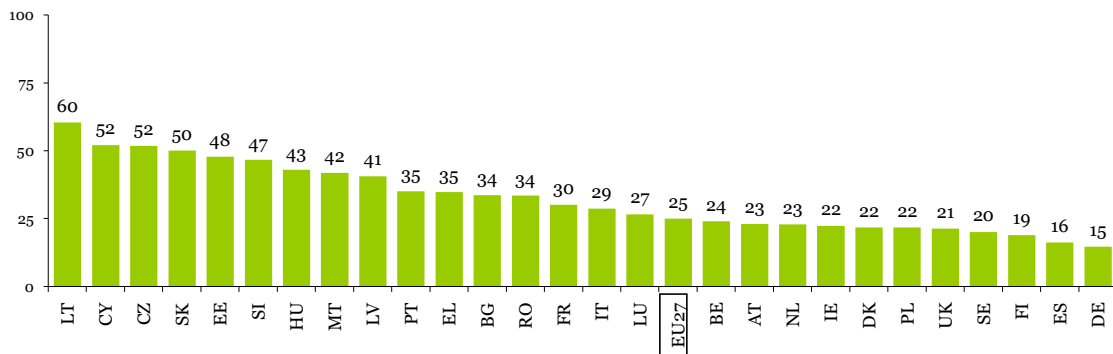
slightly lower proportion than the EU27 average (22%). The most significant exceptions among the EU15 countries were Portugal and Greece, with 35% of parents saying that no rules were set.

Chart 42: Proportion of parents who set no restrictions when their child uses the Internet

Although a quarter of the parents said that no rules where set when their child used the Internet and not so many parents spontaneously mentioned certain online activities that were not allowed, when parents were asked about specific online activities (in the format of a "closed question"), a significantly higher number of parents said that restrictions were in place. For example, although none of the parents spontaneously mentioned that their child was not allowed to reveal personal information when using the Internet, when specifically asked if they allowed this or not, almost all parents (92%) said this was banned.

Approximately eight out of 10 parents – when presented with closed questions – listed online shopping (84%), talking to people that their child did not know in real life (83%) and spending a lot of time online (79%) as activities that were not allowed for their child.

Slightly more than six out of 10 parents said that their child was not allowed to create a profile in an online community (63%) or to use chat rooms (61%), and half of the parents had rules against visiting certain websites (e.g. with inappropriate sexual content).

Chart 43: Which online activities are not allowed?
(Closed question)
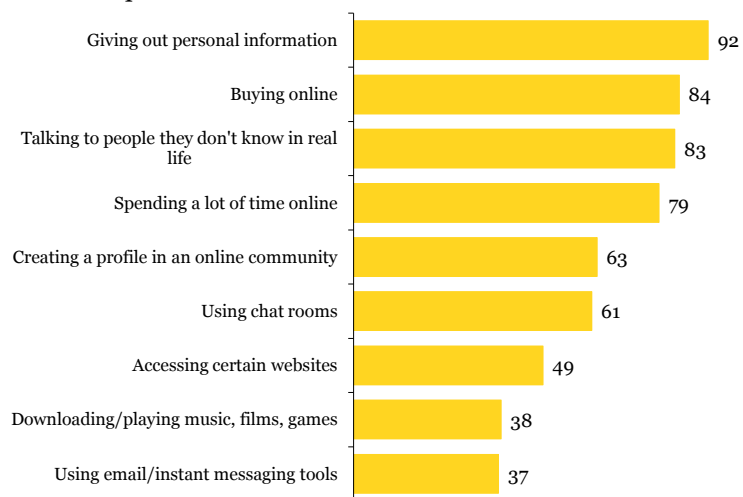
The smallest proportion of parents – but still more than one-third – said that their child was not allowed to download or play music, films or games (38%) and use email or instant messaging (IM) tools (37%).

That more parents answered that restrictions were in place when answering the closed question than when responding to the open-ended question can be explained by a number of factors, such as:

- Using the open-ended question format, most parents listed only one or two online activities that were not allowed – this, however, does not mean that these were the only activities that

were not allowed. Parents probably listed the most important or most evident activities that were not allowed or they mentioned those activities which they thought of first (*top-of-mind*).

- The open-ended question measured the actual situation – what specific rules were in place for a child of a certain age and with a certain level of experience using the Internet. The closed question, on the other hand, added a hypothetical element to the question about restrictions. For example, children might have been too young to know how to download music, so parents will not have mentioned this as a restriction in the open-ended question. However, when specifically asked whether downloading music was allowed (using the closed-question format), parents might say that this activity would not be allowed – talking about a hypothetical situation in which their child would learn how to download music.

Individual country differences

A large majority of parents in all EU27 Member States responded that they did not allow their child **to disclose personal information** when using the Internet – ranging from 75% in the Czech Republic to 98% in Finland and Ireland. Only in four countries did less than eight out of 10 parents say they had a rule against revealing personal information: the Czech Republic (75%), Latvia (77%), Estonia (77%) and Belgium (78%). The fact that almost all parents had rules against divulging personal information might explain why not so many parents in a majority of the Member States were worried that their child might reveal personal information over the Internet (see section 2.1).
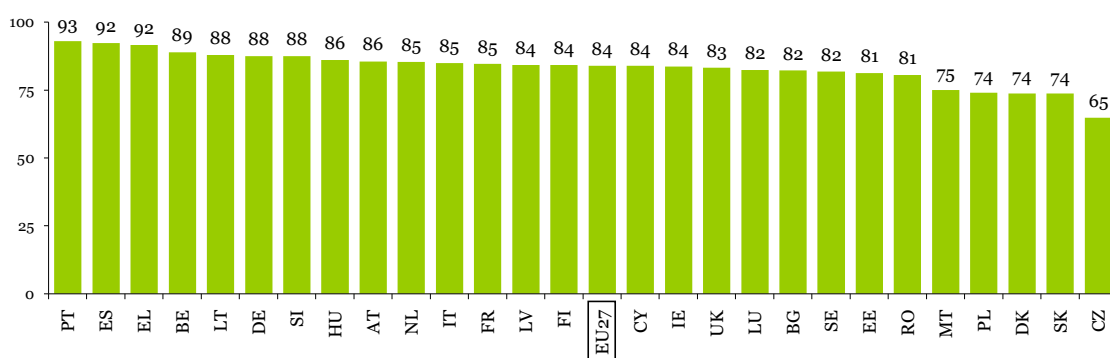
Chart 44: Not allowed to **give out personal information**
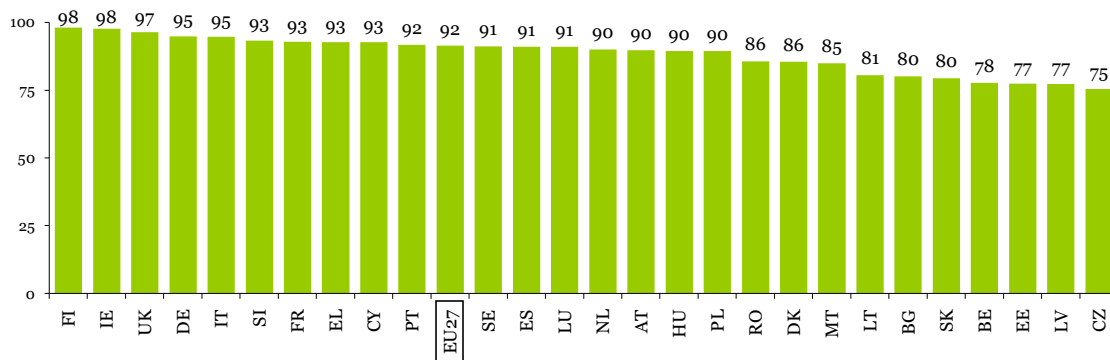
Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

Rules against **buying things online** were most often mentioned in Portugal (93%), Spain and Greece (both 92%). In Malta, Poland, Denmark and Slovakia, on the other hand, only three-quarters of the parents said that their child was not allowed to shop online. It was the Czech parents, however, who were the least likely to answer that they did not allow this (65%).
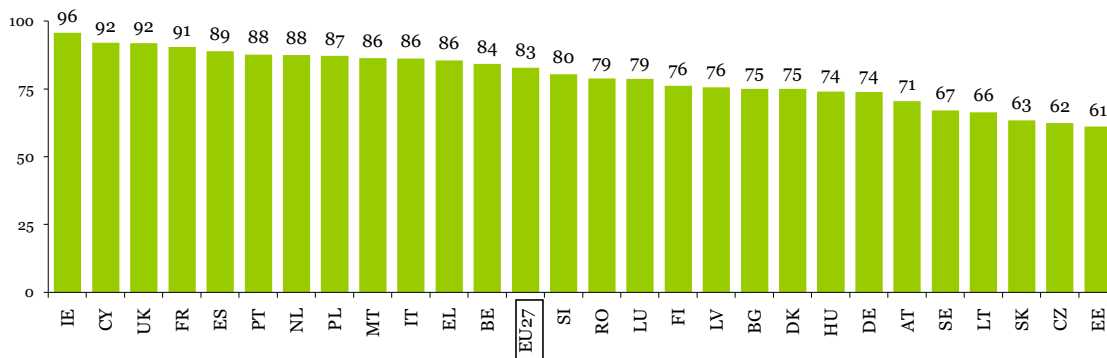
Chart 45: Not allowed to **buy online**

Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

"Don't talk to strangers" was also a common rule in all EU Member States: the proportion of parents who said they did not allow this ranged from 61% in Estonia to 96% in Ireland. Parents in the Czech Republic and Slovakia were – once again – found at the lower end of the distribution with 62% and 63%, respectively, of parents saying that they had rules to stop their child talking online to people that they did not know in real life.
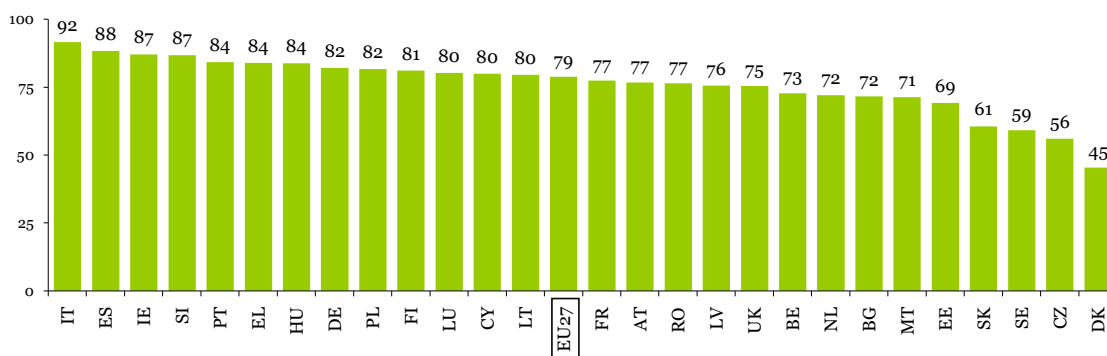
Chart 46: Not allowed to **talk to people they don't know in real life**

Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
*% of "Not allowed" shown by country*

Although 92% of the parents in Italy and 87%-88% in Spain, Ireland and Slovenia had imposed **time restrictions** on their child's Internet use, only half as many parents in Denmark had set such rules (45%). Slovak, Swedish and Czech parents were also less likely to set such time restrictions (61%, 59% and 56%, respectively) – in these countries parents were also among the least likely to worry that their child might become isolated when spending too much time online (see section 2.1). In all other Member States, between 69% and 84% of the parents did not allow their child to spend a lot of time online.

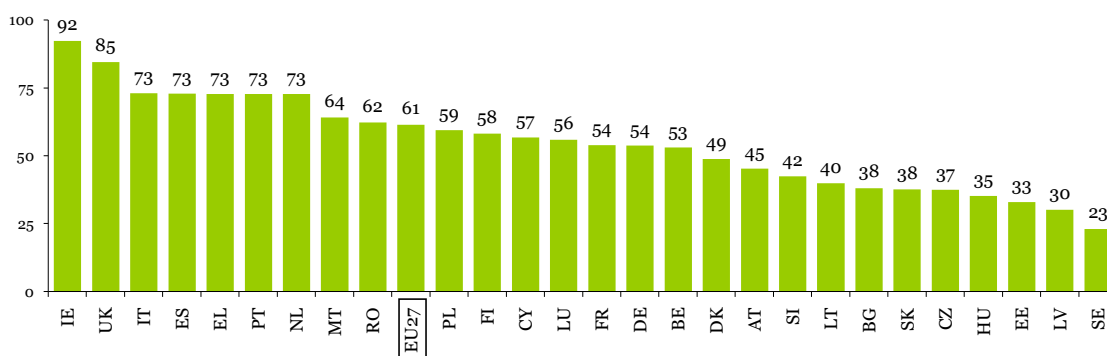**Chart 47:** Not allowed to **spend a lot of time online**

Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

Three-quarters of the parents in Spain (77%) and Italy (75%) said that their child was not allowed to **create a profile in an online community**. In France, Luxembourg and Ireland, slightly more than seven out of 10 parents did not allow this. Latvian parents, on the other hand, were more than three times less likely to mention such a rule – 22%. Other countries at the lower end of the distribution were Estonia (30%), Sweden and the Czech Republic (both 39%).

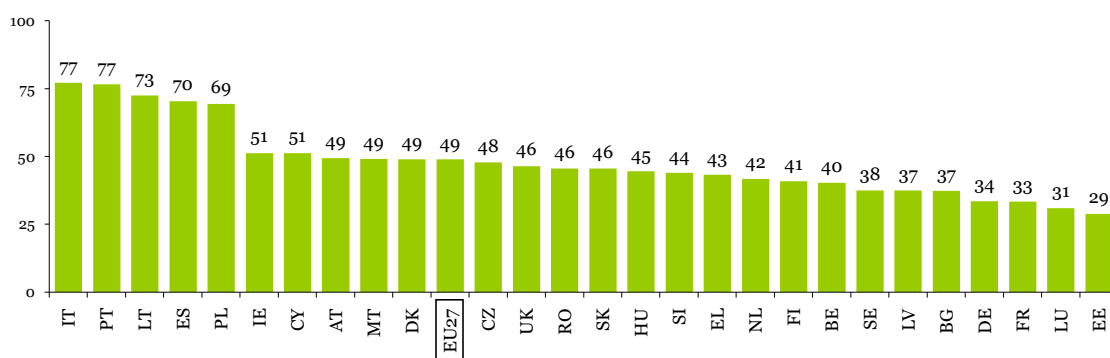**Chart 48:** Not allowed to **create a profile in an online community**
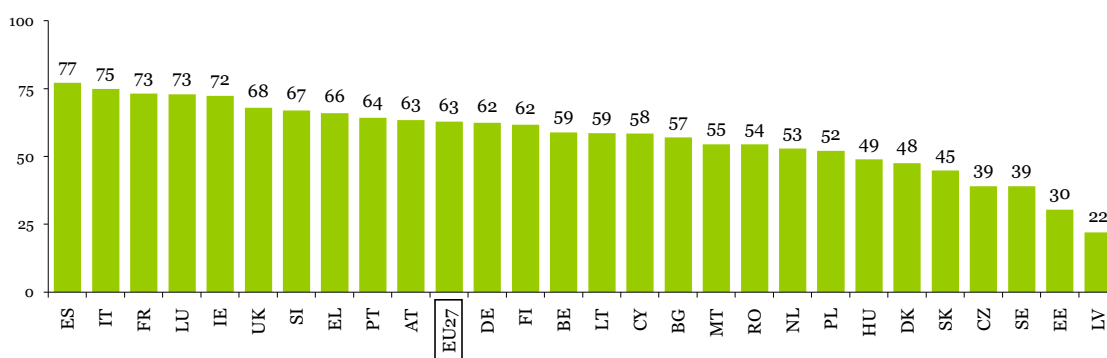
Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

Spanish and Italian parents were also among the most likely to have rules against their child **visiting chat rooms** – 73% said their child was not allowed to talk to people in such "online" rooms. It was, however, the Irish and British parents who were the most likely to have set such restrictions (92% and 85%, respectively). Similar to the results for the creation of a profile in an online community, parents in Sweden, Latvia and Estonia were the ones least often mentioning such restrictions: only a quarter of Swedish, and approximately three out of 10 Latvian and Estonian, parents did not allow their child to visit chart rooms.

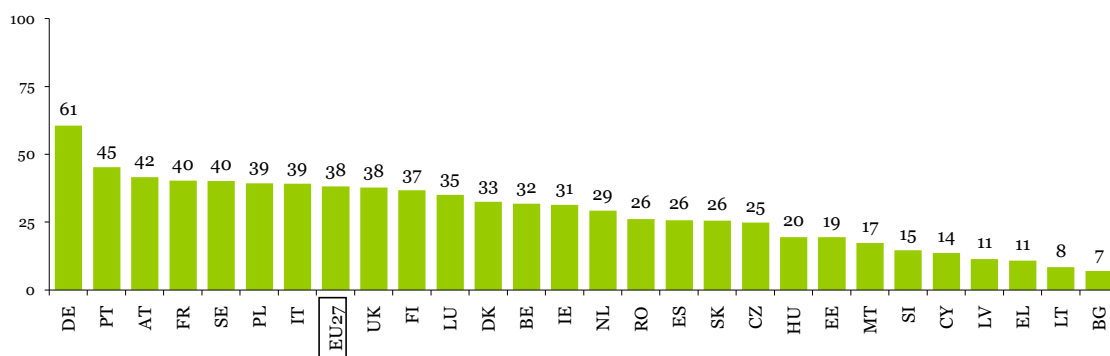**Chart 49:** Not allowed to **visit chat rooms**

Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

Seven out of 10 or more parents in Poland (69%), Spain (70%), Lithuania (73%), Portugal and Italy (both 77%) had established rules to stop their child **visiting certain websites**. In all other countries, however, only between three out of 10 and half of the parents had such rules: from 29% in Estonia to 51% in Ireland and Cyprus.

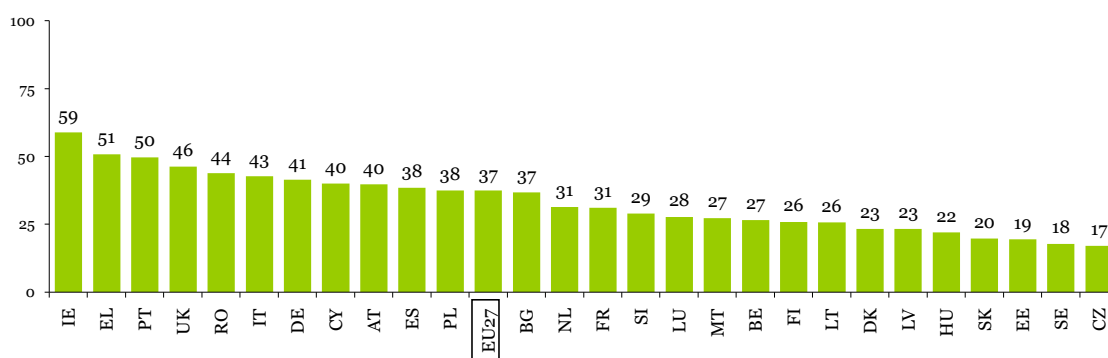**Chart 50:** Not allowed to **visit certain websites**

Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to
their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

Parents in almost all Member States were less likely to have rules against **downloading and playing music, films and games**. Less than one-tenth of the parents in Bulgaria (7%) and Lithuania (8%), and one-tenth of the parents in Greece and Latvia (both 11%) answered that their child was not allowed to download or play music, films and games. Parents in Germany were six times more likely to have rules against downloading (61%). Other countries at the higher end of the scale were Portugal (45%), Austria (42%), France and Sweden (both 40%). In Germany, France and Sweden, parents were more likely to have rules against downloading and playing music, films and games than against visiting certain websites (and, for Sweden, against the use of chat rooms).

Chart 51: Not allowed to **download or play music, films, games**

Q7A. Some parents are restricting activities, while others are letting their allowing more activities to
their children online. I will list activities, and please tell for each if you allow them or not:
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet
% of "Not allowed" shown by country

Six out of 10 Irish, and half of the Greek and Portuguese, parents answered that their child was not allowed to **use e-mail or IM tools**, compared to only one-sixth of the parents in the Czech Republic (17%), Sweden (18%) and Estonia (19%). In a majority of the Member States, less than one-third of the parents did not allow their child to use e-mail or IM. In almost all Member States this online activity was the least frequently mentioned, or second least frequently mentioned (after downloading), as "not allowed".

Chart 52: Not allowed to **use e-mail or IM tools**

After looking at the individual country results for the rules that parents established about what their children could and could not do when using the Internet, a few conclusions can be drawn:

- parents in all countries mentioned that they have various rules and restrictions when their child used the Internet
- nevertheless, parents in some countries (e.g. Italy, Portugal and Ireland) were more likely than others to set such rules for their child's use of the Internet
- respondents in some eastern European countries – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia – were the least likely to specify rules that applied when their child used the Internet.

Setting rules for Internet use and parents' Internet use

Parents who were occasional Internet users (i.e. not using it every day) were the most likely to have various rules and restrictions for each of the online activities – that their child might be involved with – listed in the survey: for example, 43% of these parents did not allow their child to use email or IM, compared to 34% of the frequent Internet users and 39% of the parents who did not use the facility.

Parents who did not use the Internet themselves were the least likely to say that disclosing personal information, making purchases online and downloading/playing music, film or games were not allowed. Frequent Internet users, on the other hand, were the ones least likely to have rules concerning: spending a lot of time online, creating a profile in an online community, accessing certain websites and using email or IM. For example, three-quarters of the frequent Internet users (76%) said their child was not allowed to spend a lot of time online, compared to 80% of the non-users and 83% of the occasional users. The proportions of non-users and frequent Internet users who established rules for not talking to strangers and using chat rooms were almost the same.

Table 7: Which online activities are not allowed?

	Disclosing personal information	Making purchases online	Talking to people they don't know in real life	Spending a lot of time online	Creating a profile in an online community	Using chat rooms	Accessing certain websites	Downloading /playing music, films, games	Using email/ IM tools
Parents' Internet use									
Non-users	86%	81%	81%	80%	64%	58%	51%	32%	39%
Occasional users	93%	85%	85%	83%	66%	65%	53%	40%	43%
Frequent users	92%	84%	82%	76%	61%	60%	46%	38%	34%

Socio-demographic considerations

Mothers were slightly more likely to answer that each of the online activities listed was not allowed. The largest difference was found for time restrictions about their child's Internet uses: 81% of the interviewed mothers said they had imposed time restrictions on their child's Internet use, compared to three-quarters (73%) of the fathers.

For most restrictions on online activities, parents did not distinguish between boys and girls; the largest differences were observed for buying online (86% of the girls were not allowed to shop online vs. 82% of the boys) and downloading and playing music, films and game (40% for girls and 36% for boys). Similarly, almost no differences were observed when looking at the number of children in the household; although it did appear that parents with less children were more likely to have imposed restrictions on visiting certain websites (51% of parents with one child vs. 44% of those with three children) and using email or IM (39% vs. 34%, respectively).

Younger parents and those parents answering questions about a younger child were the most likely to say that they had imposed restrictions on their child's Internet use – for each of the online activities listed, they more frequently said that such activities were prohibited. For example, more than eight out of 10 parents answering question about their 6-10 year-old (84%) answered they had rules against visiting chat rooms, compared to 61% of the parents talking about their 11-14 year-old and 40% of those referring to their 15-17 year-old. The children's age specific patterns for setting rules for children's Internet use were repeated when looking at the parents' age groups. Note: earlier in the report, we explained that younger parents more often answered questions about a younger child.

For the other socio-demographic variables, fewer differences were found in the number and type of restrictions that parents had imposed on their child's Internet use. The more significant differences were, for example, that:

- The less educated parents were more likely to have rules to prohibit their child visiting certain websites, downloading and playing music, films and game, and using email or IM (e.g. 42% of the parents in the highest educational category did not allow their child to visit certain websites compared to 52% of the parents in the lowest educational category).

- Manual workers were less likely than their counterparts in other occupational groups to have rules against their child visiting chat rooms (54% vs. 61% average), the self-employed were the least liable to have rules about downloading and playing music, films and games (32% vs. 38% average), and employees were the least apt to have placed restriction on the websites that their child could visit (47% vs. 49% average).

- Parents living in metropolitan areas were the least likely to have rules against creating a profile in an online community (59% vs. 64% in urban areas and 63% in rural areas), parents in the rural areas were the least likely to have rules about visiting certain websites (44% vs. 50% in metropolitan areas and 44% in rural areas). Finally, parents in the metropolitan and rural areas were both less likely than those in urban areas to have rules against using chat rooms (58%-59% vs. 65%).
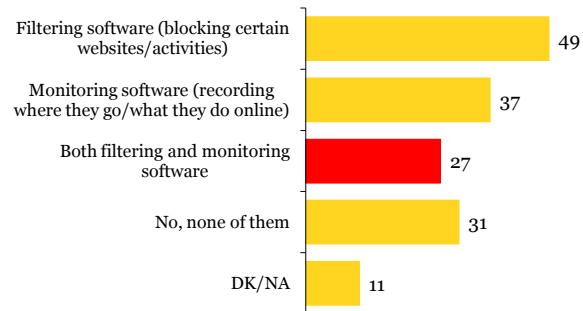
For more details, see annex tables 12b through 20b.

3.3 The use of filtering and monitoring software

Another option for parents to regulate their children's Internet use is the use of software that either filters (i.e. blocks certain websites or activities) or monitors (i.e. records Internet activity).

Half of the parents – with a child who accessed the Internet at home[10] – responded that they had installed filtering software on the computer that their child used at home. Monitoring software was not so popular, but was still used by almost four out of 10 parents (37%). In total, slightly more than a quarter of the parents (27%) said they used both filtering and monitoring software.

Chart 53: Use of monitoring and filtering software

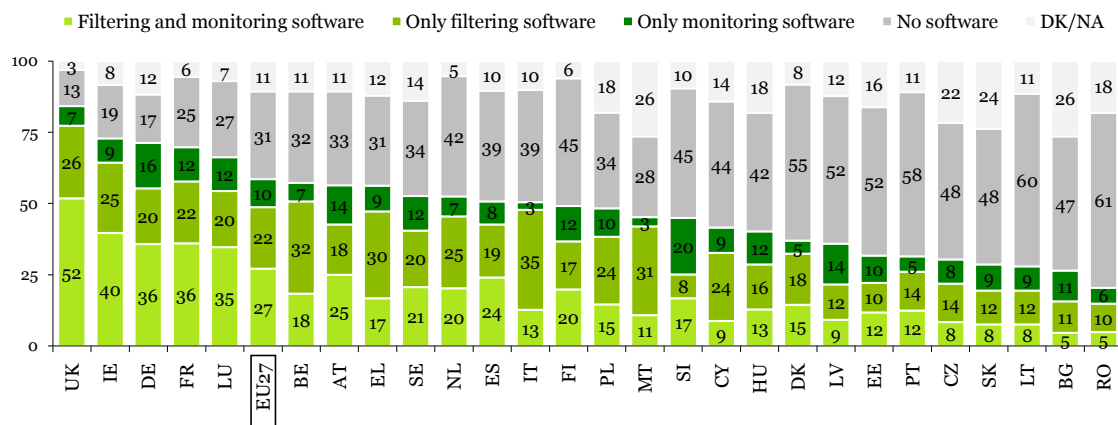|	
Filtering software (blocking certain websites/activities)	49
Monitoring software (recording where they go/what they do online)	37
Both filtering and monitoring software	27
No, none of them	31
DK/NA	11

Q10. Does the computer – that your child uses at home –
have installed any of the following software?
*Base: parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own
computer or from the family's computer at home
% of "Mentioned" shown, EU27*

Three out of 10 parents said they did not have filtering or monitoring software on their home computer, and another 11% said they did not know if such software was installed.

There was *considerable variation across countries* in the use of such software. More than half of the British parents (52%) answered that they had installed both monitoring and filtering software on the computer that their child used at home, compared to only 5% of the parents in Romania and Bulgaria. In Romania – and in Lithuania and Portugal – approximately six out of 10 parents said they did not have filtering or monitoring software on their home computer. In Bulgaria – and in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Malta – more than one-fifth of parents did not know if such software was installed on their home computer (between 22% an 26%).

In all countries, except Slovenia, filtering software was more popular than that used for monitoring. For example, less than one-sixth of the parents in Italy (16%) had installed monitoring software – either on its own or alongside filtering software – on the computer that their child used at home, while almost three times as many parents had a filter installed (48%). In Slovenia, on the other hand, 37% of the parents had installed monitoring software, but only a quarter (25%) used filtering software – either on its own or alongside monitoring software.

Chart 54: Use of monitoring and filtering software

Legend: ■ Filtering and monitoring software ■ Only filtering software ■ Only monitoring software ■ No software ■ DK/NA

	UK	IE	DE	FR	LU	EU27	BE	AT	EL	SE	NL	ES	IT	FI	PL	MT	SI	CY	HU	DK	LV	EE	PT	CZ	SK	LT	BG	RO
DK/NA	3	8	12	6	7	11	11	11	12	14	5	10	10	6	18	26	10	14	18	8	12	16	11	22	24	11	26	18
No software	13	19	17	25	27	31	32	33	31	34	42	39	39	45	34	28	45	44	42	55	52	52	58	48	48	60	47	61
Only monitoring software	7	9	16	12		10	7	14	9	12	7	8	3	12	10	3	20	9	12	5	14	10	5	8	9	9	11	6
Only filtering software	26	25	20	22	20	22	32	18	30	20	25	19	35	17	24	31	8	24	16	18	12	10	14	14	12	12	11	10
Filtering and monitoring software	52	40	36	36	35	27	18	25	17	21	20	24	13	20	15	11	17	9	13	15	9	12	12	8	8	8	5	5

Q10. Does the computer – that your child uses at home – have installed any of the following software?
*Base : parents whose child uses the Internet from his/her own computer or from the family's computer at home
% by country*

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[10] The results in this section focus only on parents with a child who accessed the Internet at home.

Reasons for not using monitoring or filtering software

More than six out of 10 parents – who did not use filtering or monitoring software – simply saw no need for such software since they trusted their child on the Internet. Fourteen percent of the parents who did not use filtering or monitoring software did not know how to obtain or use it. Only a minority (3%) did not use such software because they did not believe in its efficiency.

Finally, an equally large proportion of the parents gave some other reason for not using filtering or monitoring software on the computer that their child used at home.

The *individual country results* showed that in almost all countries a majority of the parents – who did not use filtering or monitoring software – believed there was no need to do so since they trusted their child on the Internet: from 53% in Greece to 80% in Hungary. In Ireland, Cyprus, Romania, the UK and Malta, between 36% and 48% of the parents gave this as the reason for not using the software.

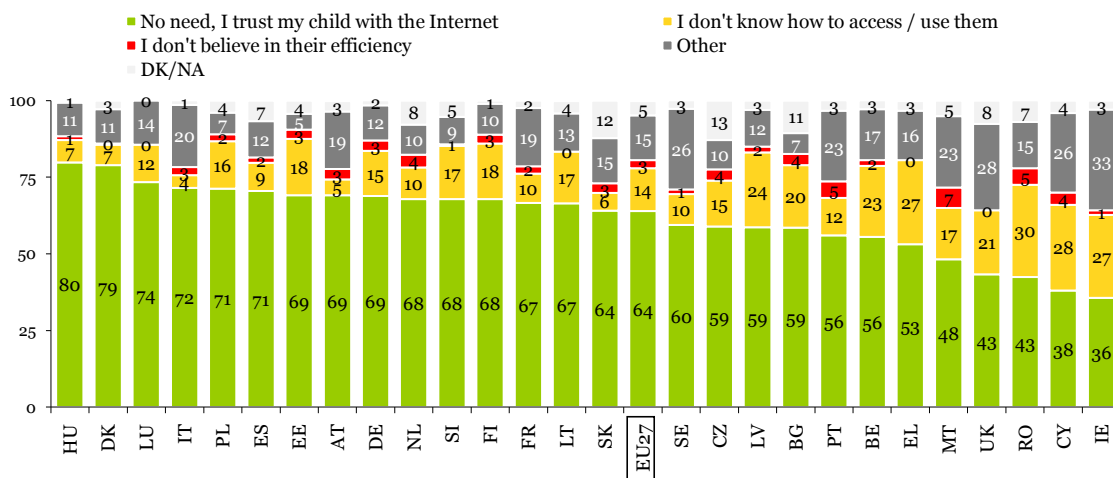**Chart 55: Reasons for not using filtering or monitoring software**
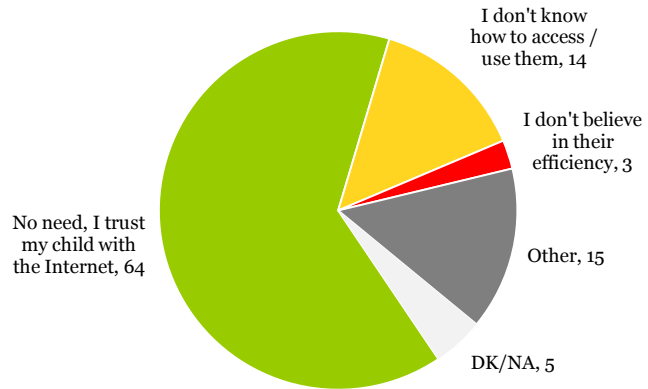
Q11. Why did you choose not to use filtering or monitoring software?
Base: parents who do not use filtering or monitoring software
%, EU27

Finally, in all Member States, only a minority of the parents said they did not use such software because they did not believe in its efficiency. Only in Malta did more than one in 20 parents select this reason (7%), while in Romania and Portugal one in 20 parents did not believe in the efficiency of the software.

Furthermore, parents in Romania, Cyprus, Ireland and Greece were the most likely to admit not knowing how to obtain or use filtering or monitoring software (between 27% and 30%). By comparison, in Italy, Austria and Slovakia only one in 20 parents who did not use filtering or monitoring software said that this was because they did not know how to obtain or use such software.

Finally, the proportion of parents who gave some other reason for not using filtering or monitoring software on the computer that their child used at home ranged from 5% in Estonia to 33% in Ireland.

Chart 56: Reasons for not using filtering or monitoring software

Q11. Why did you choose not to use filtering or monitoring software?
Base: parents who do not use filtering or monitoring software
% by country

Using filtering and monitoring software and parents' Internet use

Using filtering and monitoring software

Parents who used the Internet frequently (i.e. every day) were the most likely to answer that they had installed filtering and/or monitoring software on the computer that their child used at home (53% and 40%, respectively). The corresponding proportions for occasional Internet users were slightly lower: 44% and 35%, respectively. Respondents who did not use the Internet were the ones who least often said that such software was installed; however, almost one-third of the parents who did not use the Internet (32%) did not know if filtering or monitoring software was installed on the computer that their child used at home.

Reasons for not using filtering and monitoring software

Almost two-thirds of the parents who used the Internet said that they did not need to use filtering or monitoring software since they trusted their child on the Internet (65% of frequent Internet users and 64% of occasional users) compared to 59% of the parents who did not use the Internet. The latter were more likely to admit that they did not know how to use or obtain such software (18% vs. 13%-14% of the Internet users).

Table 8: Use of filtering and monitoring software

	Using filtering and/or monitoring software				*Reasons for not using filtering or monitoring software*				
	Filtering software	Monitoring software	No, none of them	DK/NA	No need, I trust my child	I don't know how to access/ use them	I don't believe in their efficiency	Other	DK/NA
Parents' Internet use									
Non-users	24%	18%	38%	32%	59%	18%	2%	10%	12%
Occasional users	44%	35%	32%	13%	64%	14%	2%	15%	5%
Frequent users	53%	40%	29%	8%	65%	13%	3%	15%	4%

<div align="center">

Q10. Does the computer – that your child uses at home – have installed any of the following software?
Base: parents whose child uses the Internet at home
% "Mentioned" shown

Q11. Why did you choose not to use filtering or monitoring software?
Base: parents who do not use filtering or monitoring software

</div>

Socio-demographic considerations

Using filtering and monitoring software

Younger parents, those with younger children or with more children were more likely to answer that filtering and/or monitoring software was installed on their home computer. For example, more than half of the parents reporting about their 6-10 year-old or their 11-14 year-old had installed filtering software (54% and 51%, respectively) and four out of 10 had installed monitoring software (both 41%) – the corresponding proportions for parents referring to questions about their 15-17 year-old were, respectively, 41% and 29%.

Parents with a higher level of educational attainment were more likely to have installed filtering software (43% in the lowest educational category vs. 48%-50% for respondents in the other educational categories), although no differences between the educational categories were observed for monitoring software (between 36% and 38% across all educational categories).

Manual workers, on the other hand, were the least likely to use filtering software (37% vs. 49% average); however, the proportion of parents in the different occupational groups did not differ so much (between 33% and 39% across all groups). The opposite was observed when comparing respondents living in cities and in rural areas: parents living in the latter areas more frequently said that they had installed monitoring software (41% vs. 33% in metropolitan areas and 35% in urban areas), but the differences in the proportion who had installed filtering software were smaller (between 47% and 52% in all groups).

Furthermore, certain socio-demographic groups were less likely to know whether filtering or monitoring software was installed on the computer their child used at home: mothers (13% vs. 5% of fathers), the over 54 year-olds (15% vs. 11% average), parents with the lowest level of education (14% vs. 8% of those with the highest level of education), manual workers and those not working (both 16% vs. 8% of the self-employed).

For more details, see annex table 30b.

<u>Reasons for not using filtering and monitoring software</u>

Not much variation was observed in the proportion of parents who did not use monitoring or filtering software because they did not believe in the efficiency of such software. More variation was observed, however, when the other reasons for not using such software were examined.

Fathers, parents of older children the 40-54 year-olds, higher educated parents, employees and manual workers more frequently said that they did not need to use filtering or monitoring software as they trusted their child on the Internet. For example, almost three-quarters of the parents talking about their 15-17 year-old – who did not use filtering or monitoring software – simply saw no need to do that since they trusted their child on the Internet; the corresponding proportion for parents answering questions about their 6-10 year-old was 54%.

Women, parents with younger children or with more than one child, the 25-39 year-olds, the less highly-educated parents and the self-employed, on the other hand, were more likely to admit that they did not know how to use or obtain the software. For example, 18% of the parents in the lowest educational category who did not use filtering or monitoring software did not know how to obtain or use it, compared to 13% of the parents in the highest educational category.

For more details, see annex table 31b.

4. Awareness and information about safety measures

*Parents in all of the EU27 Member States most often thought of the police when asked **where or to whom they would report illegal or harmful content** seen on the Internet – 92% gave this response.*

*For each of the proposed **measures or actions to improve Internet safety and effective use of the Internet by children** – e.g. more awareness raising campaigns about online risks or more advice for parents about the websites that children visit, a large majority of the parents surveyed agreed that it would contribute to this cause. The countries with the highest level of support were Portugal, Ireland, Malta, Cyprus and Greece, while those with the lowest support were Denmark, the Czech Republic, Austria, Estonia and Slovakia.*

Parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use it, were the most likely to think that each of the proposed measures or actions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child.

*There was a great similarity across Member States, with many parents opting for similar **sources of advice about safe Internet use** (family and friends, news media, different websites or ISPs). These choices would be at the expense of potential contact with their child's school to discuss safe Internet use and with associations or organisations dealing with Internet safety issues.*

4.1 Reporting illegal or harmful content seen on the Internet

Parents most often thought of the **police** when asked where, or to whom, they would report illegal or harmful content seen on the Internet – 92% gave this response.

Four out of 10 parents (38%) would report such content to a **hotline** set up for this purpose and one-third mentioned a non-profit organisation or other associations[11].

Finally, a quarter of the parents (23%) said they would report this somewhere else than the options listed in the survey.

Chart 57: Where or to whom would you report illegal content?
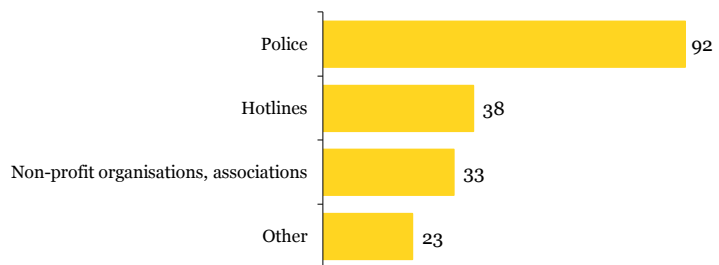
Police	92
Hotlines	38
Non-profit organisations, associations	33
Other	23

Q16. Where or to whom would you report illegal content
(like child abuse material)?
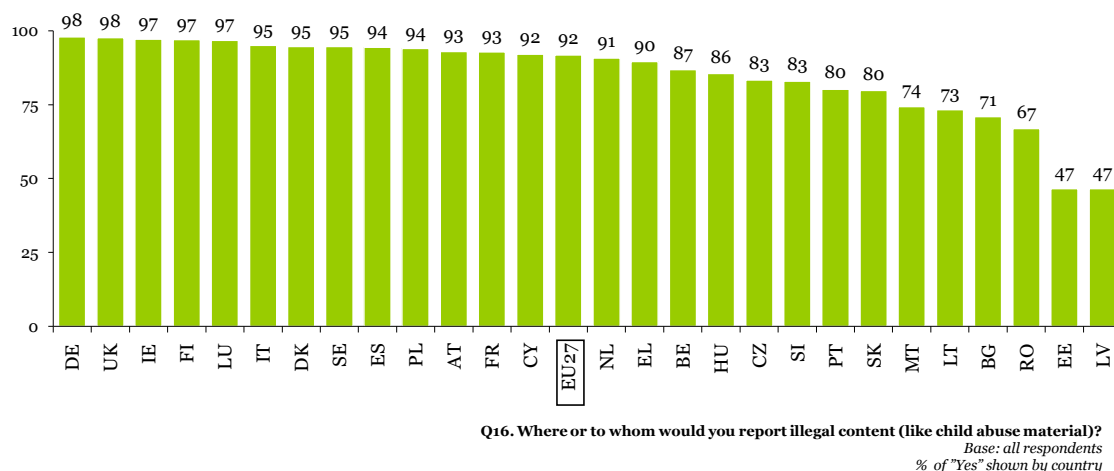*Base: all respondents*
% of "Yes" shown, EU27

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[11] Although this question was also asked in the Eurobarometer survey "*Safer Internet*" (2004/05), those results and the ones from the current survey could not be compared because of the different question wording. In 2004/05, parents were asked where – or to whom – they would report illegal content seen online using an open-ended question format, i.e. they were not given a list of possible answers to choose from. In the current survey, on the other hand, parents were asked if they would report to (a) the police; (b) a hotline; (c) non-profit organisations; (d) someone else – treating each of these instances as separate question items, so respondents had an option to answer yes or no on each option. The latter question format, as a consequence, measured a higher level of awareness about the possibility to report illegal content to a hotline than the original question used in the 2004/05 survey.

Individual country differences

Virtually all parents in Germany, the UK, Ireland, Finland and Luxembourg (between 97% and 98%) would notify **the police** about illegal or harmful content they found on the Internet. Latvian and Estonian parents were the least likely to answer they would do this – slightly less than half of the interviewees mentioned this option (both 47%).
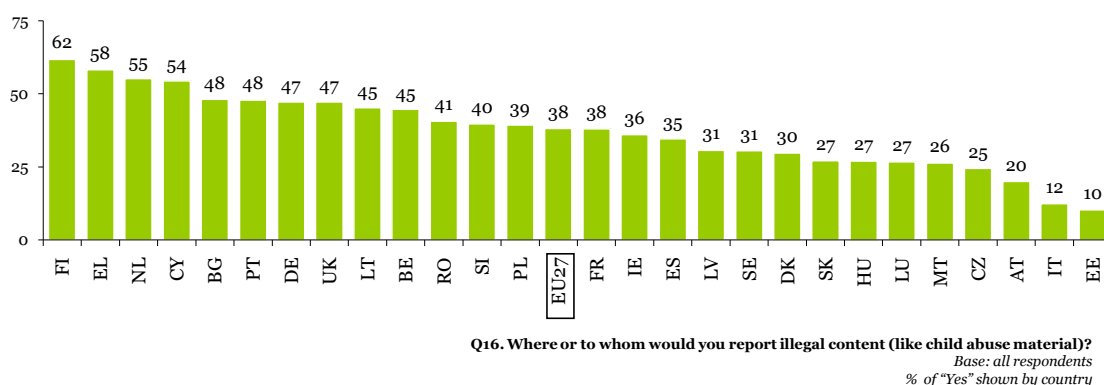
Although the proportion of parents willing to report illegal content to the police in the other NMS was significantly higher than in Latvia and Estonia (from 67% in Romania to 94% in Poland) – most of these countries were found at the lower end of the ranking.

Chart 58: *Reporting illegal content to the police*

Q16. Where or to whom would you report illegal content (like child abuse material)?
Base: all respondents
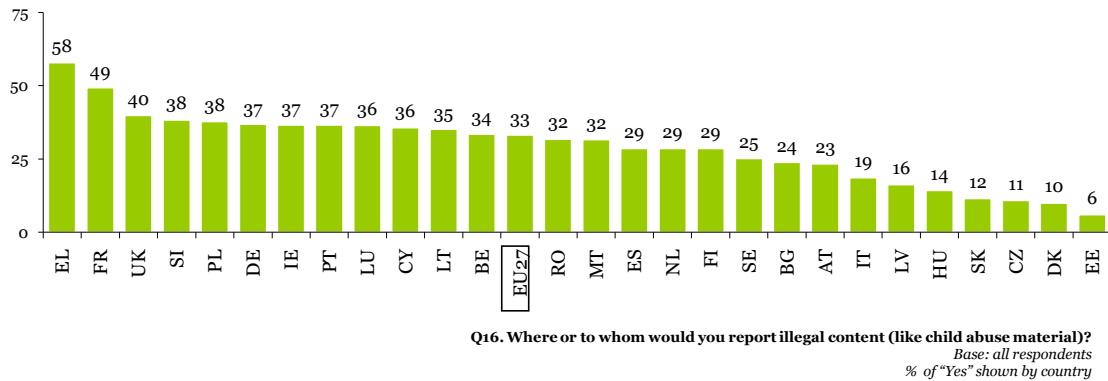*% of "Yes" shown by country*

In only four countries did more than half of the parents say they would call or contact **a hotline** for reporting illegal content on the Internet: Finland (62%), Greece (58%), the Netherlands (55%) and Cyprus (54%). In more than half of the countries less than four out of 10 parents had the same intention: ranging from 10%-12% in Estonia and Italy to 39% in Poland.
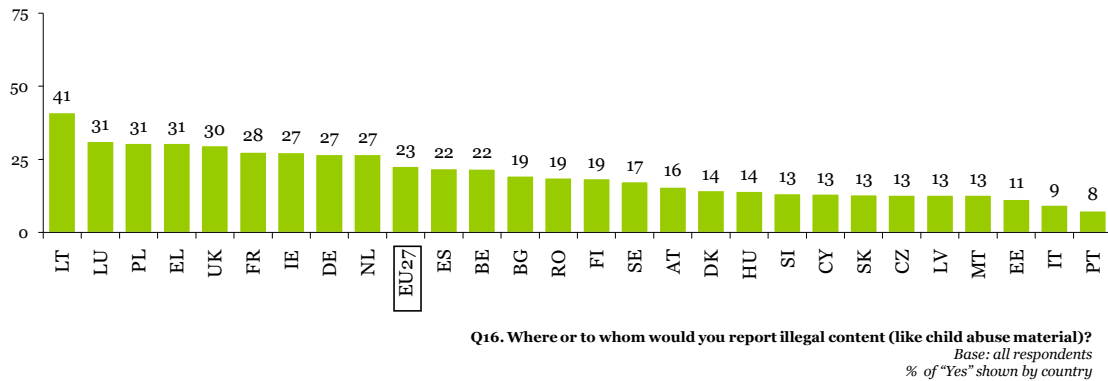
Chart 59: *Reporting illegal content to a hotline*

Q16. Where or to whom would you report illegal content (like child abuse material)?
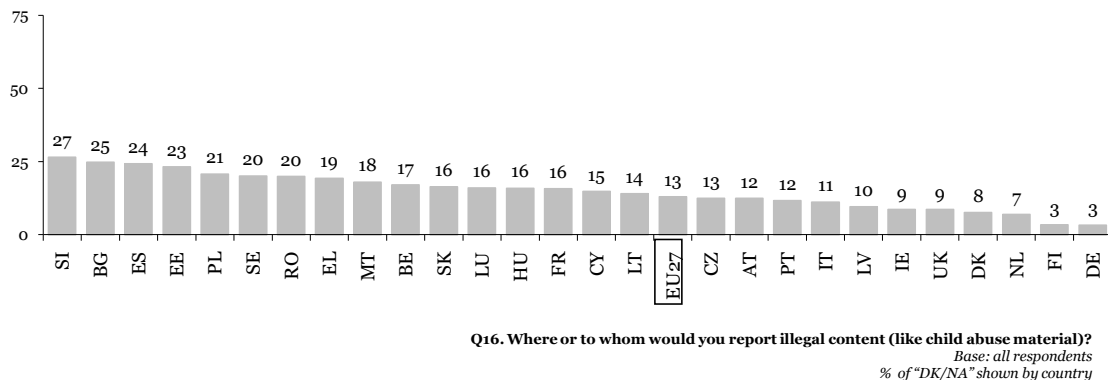*Base: all respondents*
% of "Yes" shown by country

The Estonian interviewees were also the least likely to say they would report illegal or harmful content found on the Internet to a **non-profit organisation or some other association**, while Greek respondents were again the most likely to do so (6% vs. 58%). Other countries where parents were likely to contact a non-profit organisation were France (49%) and the UK (40%), while parents in Denmark (10%), the Czech Republic (11%) and Slovakia (12%) were very unlikely to do so.

Chart 60: *Reporting illegal content to non-profit organisations or associations*

Q16. Where or to whom would you report illegal content (like child abuse material)?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

The proportion of parents who answered they would notify **someone else** about illegal content found on the Internet ranged from less than one-tenth in Portugal and Italy (8% and 9%, respectively) to four-tenths in Lithuania (41%).

Chart 61: *Reporting illegal content somewhere else or to someone else*

Q16. Where or to whom would you report illegal content (like child abuse material)?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

Although a large majority of the respondents would report – or at least knew they could report – illegal content to the police, this was not the case for reporting such content to hotlines and non-profit organisations or associations: more than one-tenth of the parents did not know they could notify a hotline or non-profit organisation about illegal content. The following chart looks at the proportion of "don't know" responses for reporting illegal content to a hotline set up for this purpose. Although virtually all of the parents in Germany and Finland knew they could contact a hotline, more than one-fifth of the parents in Slovenia (27%), Bulgaria (25%), Spain (24%), Estonia (23%) and Poland (21%) were not aware that this was possible.

Chart 62: *Proportion of "don't know" responses for hotlines for reporting illegal content*

Q16. Where or to whom would you report illegal content (like child abuse material)?
Base: all respondents
% of "DK/NA" shown by country

Socio-demographic considerations and differences in terms of parents' and children's Internet use

Parents who did not use the Internet were more likely not to know how they could report illegal or harmful content seen on the Internet. For example, almost one-fifth of the parents who did not use the Internet did not know they could report illegal content to a hotline set up for this purpose compared to 12% of the parents who did use the Internet.

Between 90% and 95% in all of the socio-demographic groups would report illegal content to the police. Some greater differences were found in the intention to report such content to a hotline or non-profit organisation:

- parents between 25-39 years-of-age and parents answering question about their 6-10 year-old were the most likely to answer that they would report illegal content seen on the Internet to a hotline (43% and 40%, respectively, vs. 38% average)
- those parents with a lower level of education and those living in rural areas were more likely to mention non-profit organisations or other associations (35% of respondents with the lowest level of education or living in a rural area vs. 30% of respondents in the highest educational category or living in a metropolitan area)
- the self-employed parents were the least likely to answer they would report to a hotline (34% vs. 38% average) or a non-profit organisation (29% vs. 33%).

For more details, see annex table 36b.

4.2 Towards a safer and more effective use of the Internet

For each of the proposed measures or actions that could improve the safe and effective use of the Internet by children, a large majority of the parents surveyed agreed that it would be beneficial.

Relatively speaking, parents most often thought that a greater amount and better quality of teaching and guidance about Internet usage in school would contribute to its safer and more effective use by children (88%), while they gave the least credence to training sessions organised for parents by NGOs, the government or local authorities (70%).

Chart 63: What would contribute to safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
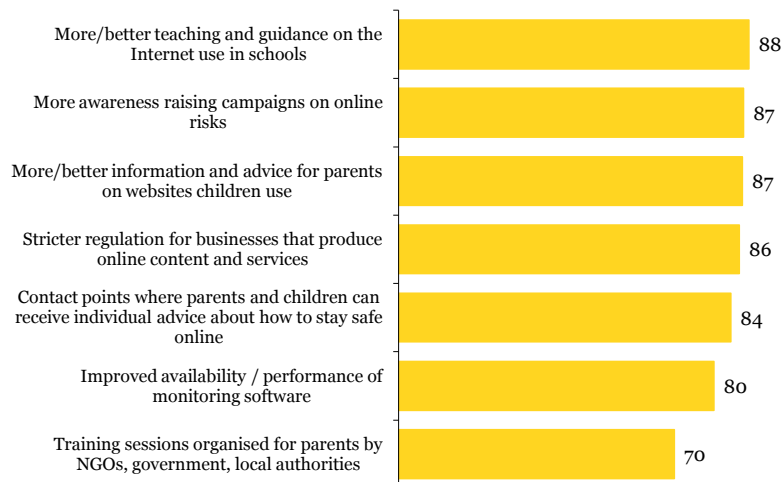
More/better teaching and guidance on the Internet use in schools	88
More awareness raising campaigns on online risks	87
More/better information and advice for parents on websites children use	87
Stricter regulation for businesses that produce online content and services	86
Contact points where parents and children can receive individual advice about how to stay safe online	84
Improved availability / performance of monitoring software	80
Training sessions organised for parents by NGOs, government, local authorities	70

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
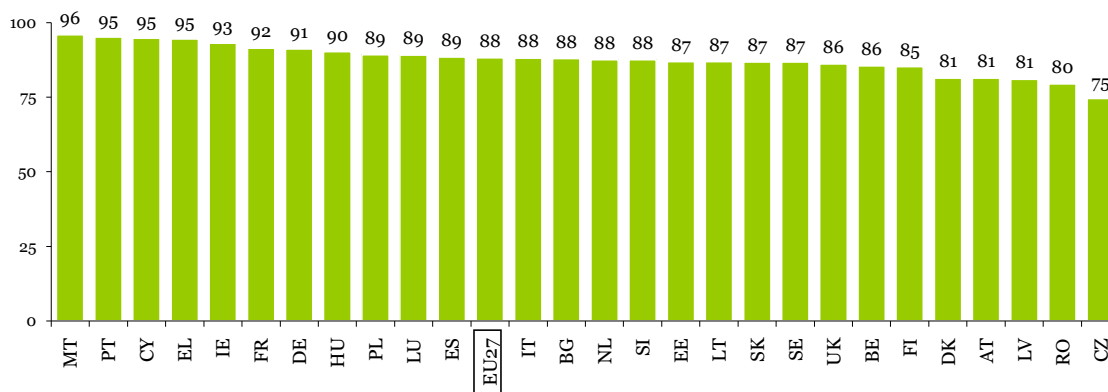*% of "Would contribute" shown, EU27*

Between 80% and 87% of the parents answered that the other five measures would contribute to safer and more effective Internet use, i.e.:

- more awareness raising campaigns about online risks (87%),
- more and better information and advice for parents about the websites that children use (87%),
- stricter regulation for businesses that produce online content and provide online services (86%),
- contact points where parents and children can ask advice about safe Internet use (84%), and
- improvements in the availability and performance of monitoring and filtering software (80%).

Individual country differences

Almost all of the parents in Malta (96%), Portugal, Cyprus and Greece (all 95%) thought **that more and better teaching and guidance in schools about the use of the Internet** would contribute to its safer and more effective use by their child. Parents in the Czech Republic, followed by those in Denmark, Austria, Latvia and Romania, were the least likely to think that better guidance in school would contribute to safer Internet use; nevertheless, three-quarters of the parents in the Czech Republic and eight out of 10 in the three latter countries still believed in the effectiveness of such a measure.
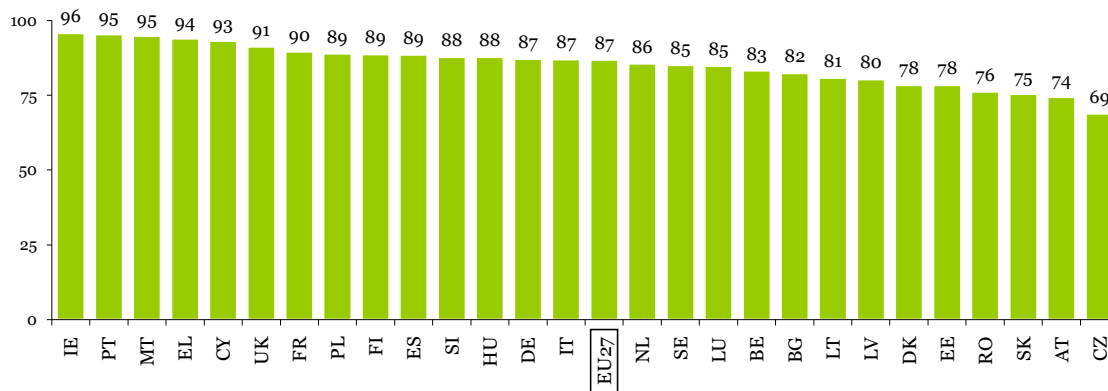
Chart 64: *More/better teaching and guidance on Internet use in schools*

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% of "Would contribute" shown by country

A large majority of parents in all countries also agreed that **more awareness raising campaigns about online risks** would help them and their children to use the Internet more safely. In only six countries did less than eight out of 10 parents think that such campaigns would be beneficial: the Czech Republic (69%), Austria (74%), Slovakia (75%), Romania (76%), Estonia and Denmark (both 78%) – these countries were also found at bottom of the country ranking regarding the support for better teaching on Internet usage at schools (see chart above).

Chart 65: *More awareness raising campaigns on online risks*

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% of "Would contribute" shown by country

Almost identical results in terms of support were also found for the next three actions:

- **more and better information and advice for parents about websites that children use most frequently**,
- **stricter regulation for businesses that produce online content and provide online services**, and
- **contact points where parents and children can ask advice about safe Internet use**.

The countries with the highest level of support were again Ireland, Portugal, Malta, Greece and Cyprus: between 90% and 97% of the parents believed that these actions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child.

In only a minority of the countries did less than eight out of 10 parents agree that these actions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child – however, the countries with such lower support were again the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Estonia and Denmark.

Chart 66: *More/better information and advice for parents on the websites that children use*

Chart 67: *Stricter regulation for businesses that produce online content and services*
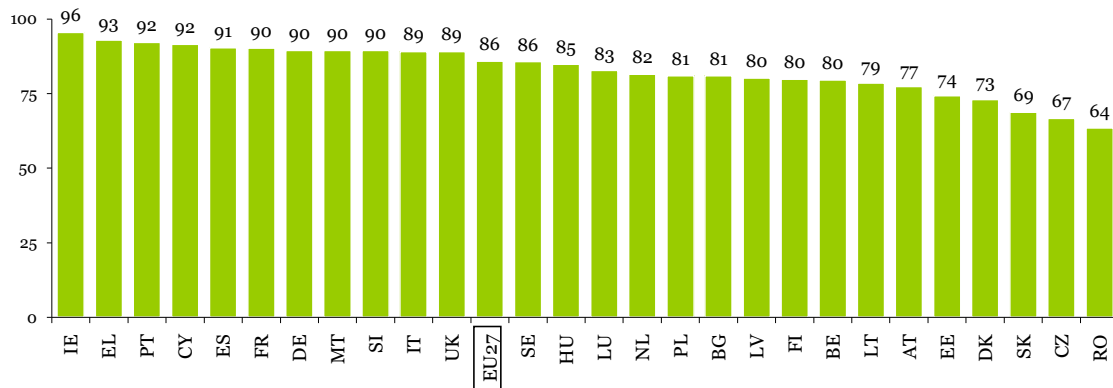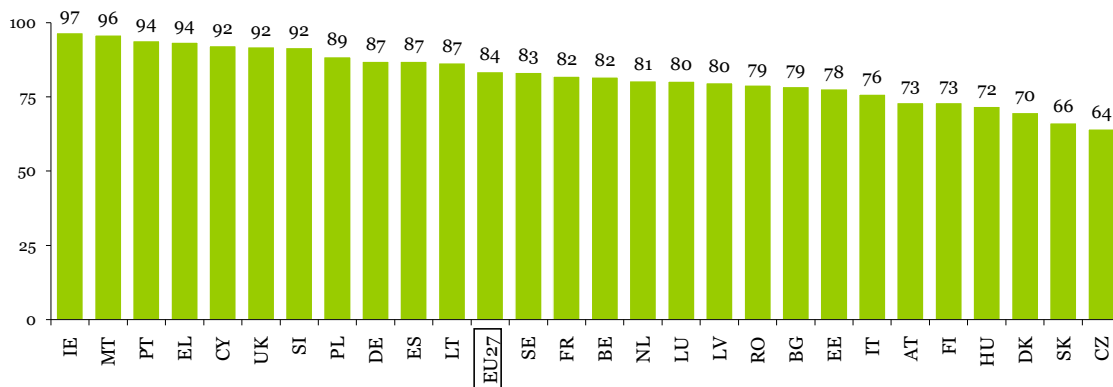

Chart 68: *Contact points where parents and children can receive individual advice about how to use the Internet safely*

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% of "Would contribute" shown by country

Parents in Ireland were among the most likely to answer that they had installed monitoring software on the computer that their child used at home. Furthermore, when asking parents who had not installed such software, why they had not done so, it was also the Irish who were most likely to answer that they did not know how to obtain or use the software (see section 3.3). Both findings help explain why almost all parents in Ireland (95%) agreed that **improvements in the availability or the performance of monitoring software** would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet by their child. In sharp contrast, only a slim majority in Denmark (55%), the Czech Republic (56%) and Slovakia (57%) thought that this measure would contribute to safer use of the Internet.
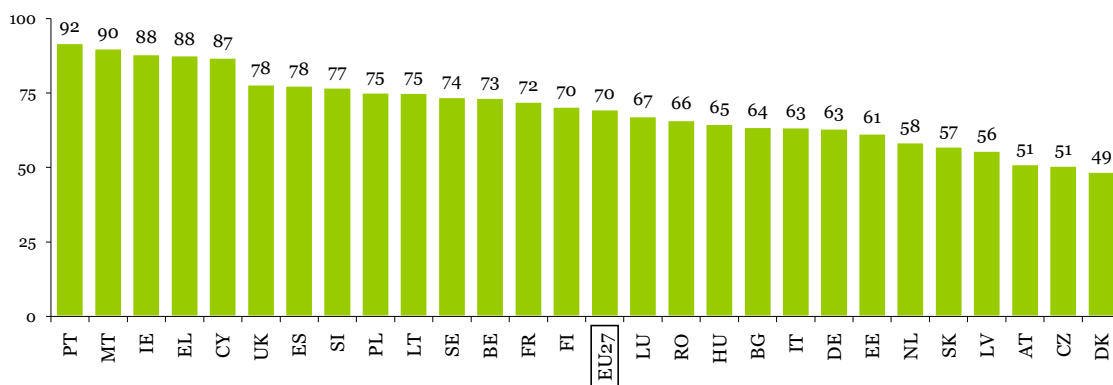
Chart 69: *Improved availability or performance of monitoring software*
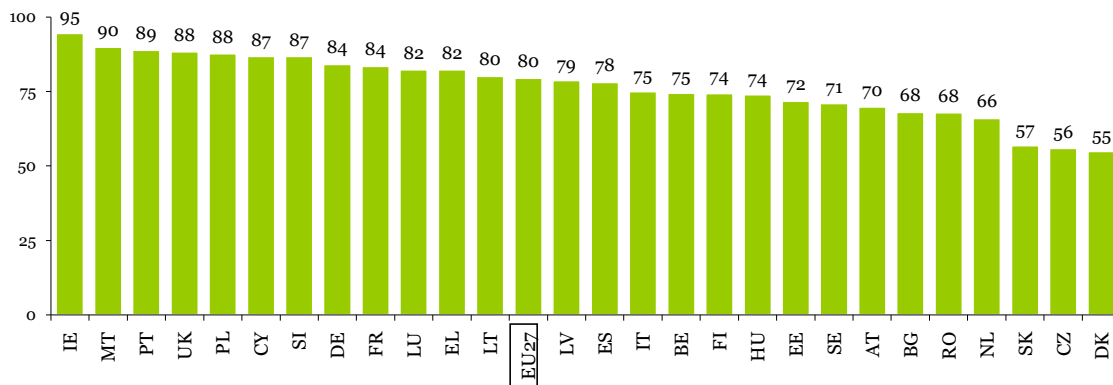
Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% of "Would contribute" shown by country

In comparison with the previous actions, the individual country results for **training sessions organised by NGOs, governments or local authorities** showed the largest variations. Although approximately nine out of 10 Portuguese (92%), Maltese (90%), Irish (88%), Greek (88%) and Cypriot parents (87%) thought that such training sessions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet by their child, only half of the Danish, Czech and Austrian parents shared this opinion.

Chart 70: *Training sessions organised for parents by NGOs, government, local authorities*
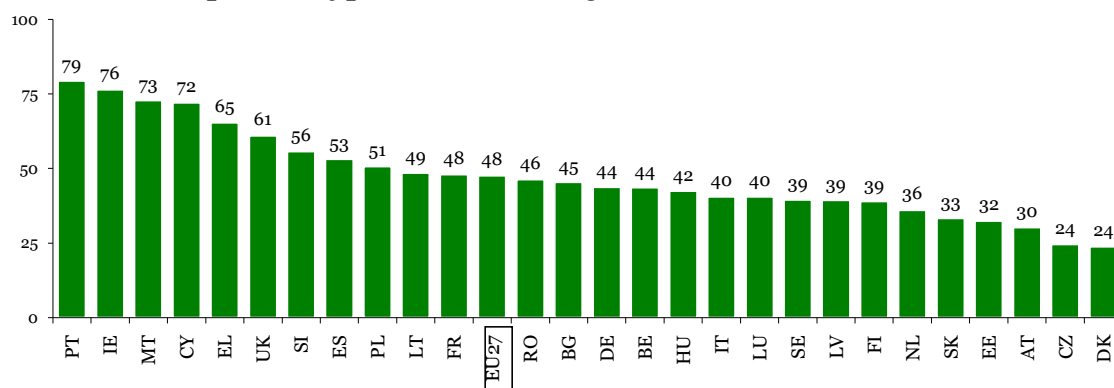

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% of "Would contribute" shown by country

The previous charts showed that in almost all Member States – similar to the results obtained for the EU27 overall – a large majority of the parents each time agreed that the measure proposed to them would improve the safe and effective use of the Internet by their child. We calculated the proportion of parents who thought that each of the eight measures would be beneficial (see next chart).

The countries with the highest level of support for each of the proposed actions were Portugal, Ireland, Malta, Cyprus and Greece: in these countries between 65% and 79% of the parents believed that each of these actions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child (or in other words, they supported all of the proposed actions).

The countries with the lowest levels of support were Denmark, the Czech Republic, Austria, Estonia and Slovakia: in these countries not more than one-third of the parents thought that each of these actions would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child (between 24% and 33%).

Chart 71: *Proportion of parents answering that each measure would contribute*

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% by country

Difference in support for the various measures dependent on parents' and children's use of the Internet

Parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use the facility, more often answered that more and better teaching and guidance about Internet use in school, training sessions for parents organised by NGOs and contact points where children and parents could go for individual support would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet by their child. For example, eight out of 10 parents in this group thought that training sessions for parents organised by NGOs would be helpful, while only slightly more than two-thirds of those parents who did use the Internet thought the same.

Interviewees who did not use the Internet, and who said that their child did not use it, were the least likely to think that any of the proposed measures or actions would contribute to a safer use of the Internet. The last column of the following table shows that these parents were also the least likely to believe that each of the measures would contribute: 43% compared to 58% of the parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use it.

Table 9: What would contribute to safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?

	More/better teaching and guidance on Internet use in schools	More/better information and advice for parents on websites children use	Training sessions organised for parents by NGOs, government, local authorities	Improved availability/ performance of filtering & monitoring software	Stricter regulation for businesses that produce online content, services	More awareness-raising campaigns about online risks	Contact points where parents and children can receive individual advice	*Proportion who said that each measure would contribute*
Internet use								
Neither parent nor child	83%	80%	65%	67%	79%	78%	76%	43%
Only child	92%	88%	80%	78%	85%	87%	90%	58%
Only parent	88%	87%	67%	80%	88%	86%	81%	45%
Parent as well as child	89%	87%	69%	81%	86%	88%	85%	47%

Q14. Which of the following do you think would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for your child?
Base: all respondents
% of "Would contribute" shown

Socio-demographic considerations

Mothers, younger parents and those with four or more children were the most likely to answer that each of the proposed actions or measures would contribute to a safer and more effective use of the Internet for their child. For example, 49% of the mothers believed that this was the case compared to 43% of the fathers.

Parents answering questions about a younger child were particularly likely to say that improvements in the availability and performance of monitoring software would contribute to a safer and more efficient use of the Internet by their child (80%-82% for a 6-14 year-old vs. 76% for a 15-17 year-old) – as was seen earlier, parents with younger children were more likely to use such software (see section 3.3).

Respondents with the lowest levels of educational attainment were more likely to answer that training sessions for parents organised by NGOs and contact points would contribute to a safer use of the Internet. The most educated respondents, on the other hand, gave more support to more and better information and advice for parents about the websites that children visit, more awareness-raising campaigns about online risks and an improvement in the availability and performance of monitoring and filtering software. For example, 87% respondents in the highest educational category thought that more and better information and advice about the websites that children visited would be helpful, while only 83% of the parents in the lowest educational category thought the same.

The place of residence had no impact on the level of support for the different measures to increase safer Internet use for children. Respondents in the different occupational categories only differed in their support for the improved availability and performance of monitoring and filtering software: while three-quarters (76%) of the non-working respondents thought improving such software would contribute to safer Internet use for their child, this proportion was slightly higher in the other occupation groups (80%-81%).

For more details, see annex table 34b.

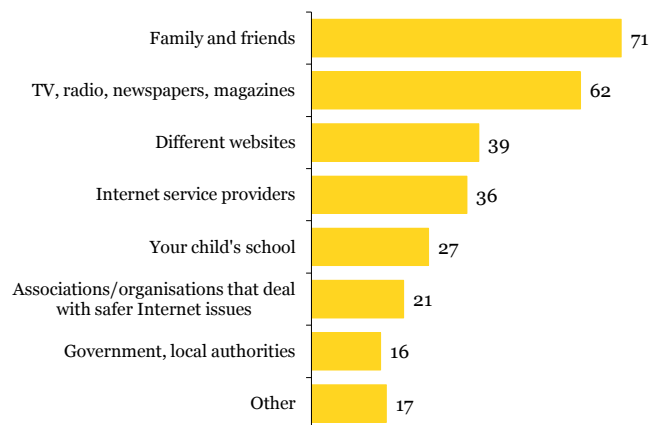## 4.3 Where to get information about the safer use of the Internet

Family and friends were the most popular source of information or advice for parents about filtering and monitoring tools and the safe use of the Internet: 71% of parents had turned to family and friends to discuss Internet safety issues. That source was followed in popularity by **TV, radio, newspapers and magazines** – selected by 62% of the parents.

Four out of 10 parents had browsed the Internet and found information or advice about safer Internet usage on **different (various) websites**, and a similar proportion (36%) counted on **Internet service providers** (ISPs) to get such information.

Slightly more than a quarter of the parents (27%) answered they had received information or advice about safer Internet use at their **child's school**, while a fifth (21%) got their information from **associations or organisations dealing with Internet safety issues**.

A smaller group of respondents said

Chart 72: Sources for information and advice about safety tools and safe use of the Internet

Source	%
Family and friends	71
TV, radio, newspapers, magazines	62
Different websites	39
Internet service providers	36
Your child's school	27
Associations/organisations that deal with safer Internet issues	21
Government, local authorities	16
Other	17

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown, EU27

they got their information about Internet safety tools from **the local authorities or government** (16%). Finally, 17% of respondents said they received information or advice from a **source other than the ones listed**.

Individual country differences

In all of the EU Member States, parents most frequently selected the same two sources for information and advice about safety tools and a safer use of the Internet: (a) family and friends, and (b) TV, radio, newspapers and magazines.

A majority of respondents in all EU27 Member States selected **family and friends** as their source for information and advice about filtering and monitoring tools and the safe use of the Internet. The proportion selecting this source ranged from a slim majority of parents in Romania (55%), the Czech Republic (58%) and Slovakia (59%) to approximately eight out of 10 parents in Hungary, Germany, Sweden, Ireland and France (between 79% and 83%).

In almost all Member States, more than half of the parents had read or heard information about safer use of the Internet on **TV or the radio**, or had read about it in **newspapers or magazines**. Finnish and Luxembourgish respondents (both 73%), followed by those from France (71%), were the ones making the most use of these information sources. Respondents from Hungary were the least likely to have been informed in this way (33%). Furthermore, Hungary, Romania (45%), Spain (47%) and Austria (49%) were the only countries where less than half of the parents mentioned these channels.

In 21 of the 27 EU Member States, **family and friends** were selected by the largest group of respondents – followed by TV, radio, newspapers and magazines (in 2nd position). In Finland, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Italy and the Czech Republic, on the other hand, these two sources were as important – selected by the same proportion of parents. In Slovakia, the proportion of parents selecting TV, radio and newspapers was slightly higher than the proportion mentioning family and friends.

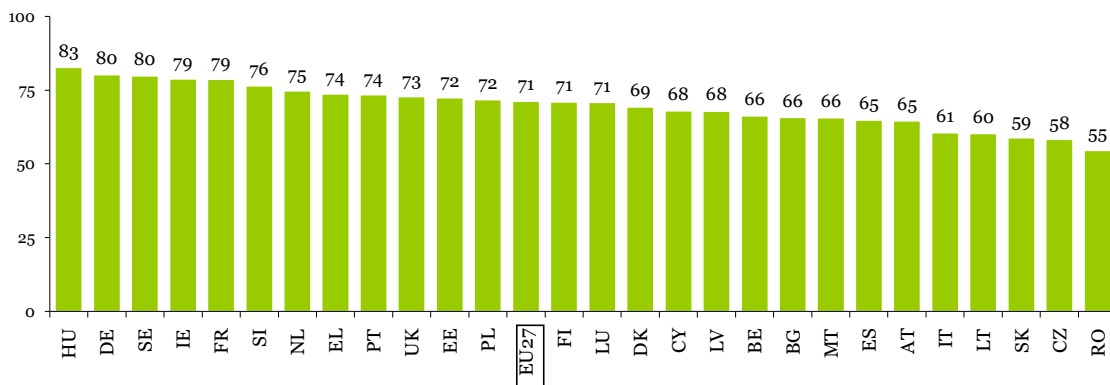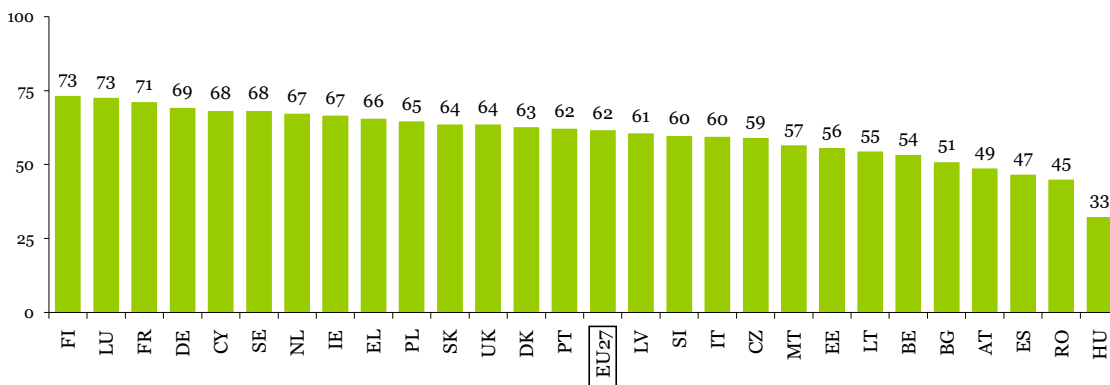**Chart 73:** *Family and friends*

Chart 74: *TV, radio, newspapers, magazines*

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

A majority of Finnish (61%), Dutch (54%) and Slovenian (52%) parents said they used **various websites** when looking for more information about safety tools and safe use of the Internet. Dutch parents were not only among the most likely to have used the Internet for this purpose, they were also among the most liable to select **ISPs** as their source for advice about safe Internet use – 56% named this source, compared to 60% of the parents in the UK (the highest EU27 figure).

Parents in Cyprus and Austria were the least likely to say they informed themselves about safe Internet use issues by visiting various websites (23% and 24%, respectively). Although the Internet itself was the third most popular source for information about safe Internet use in a majority of the countries, in half of the countries less than one-third of the parents used it as a source of information: from 23% in Cyprus to 32% in Portugal, Bulgaria and Denmark.

Similar to the results regarding getting information from various websites, in a majority of the countries less than one-third of the interviewees said they got information about safe Internet use from ISPs. In Bulgaria, Malta, Italy and Poland, even less than a quarter of the parents counted on this source for advice (between 18% and 24%).
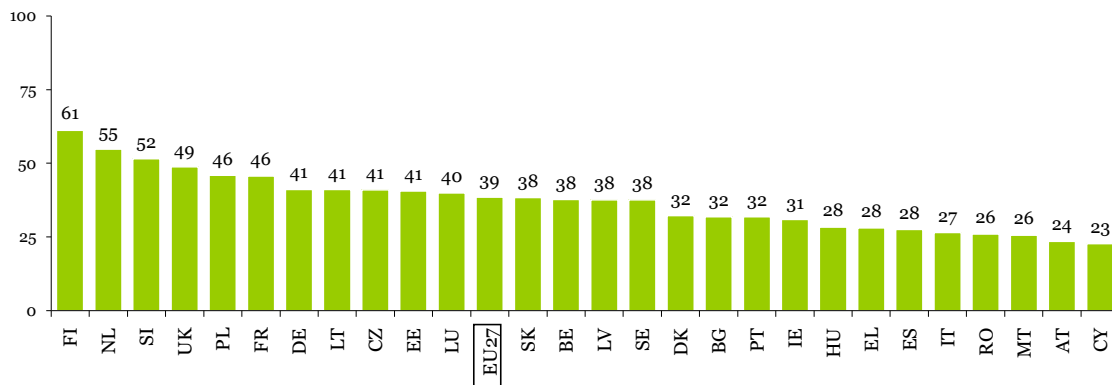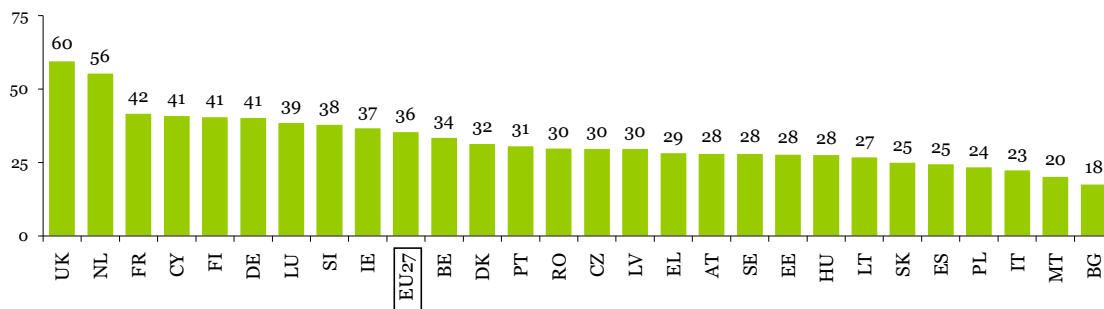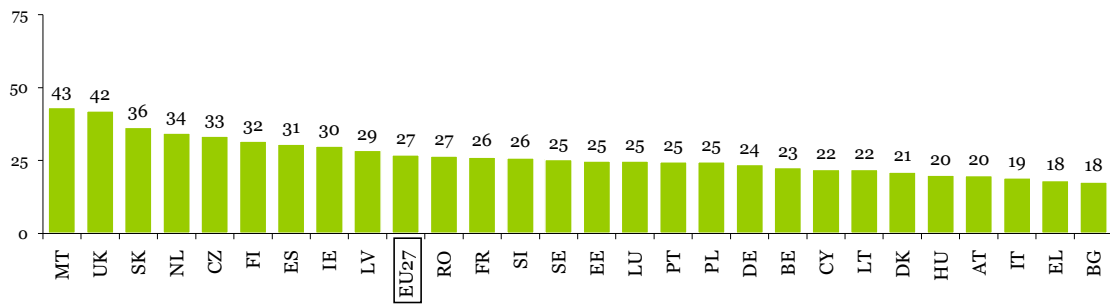
Chart 75: *Different websites*

Chart 76: *Internet service providers (ISPs)*

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

British children were not only the most likely to have access to the Internet at their school, British parents – together with those in Malta – were also the most likely to have received information about filtering and monitoring tools and safe Internet usage at **their child's school** (42% and 43%, respectively). The opposite could be seen for parents and children in Bulgaria, Greece and Italy: children in these countries were unlikely to have access to the Internet at their school and parents were the least likely to have received information about safe Internet use at their child's school (18%-19%).
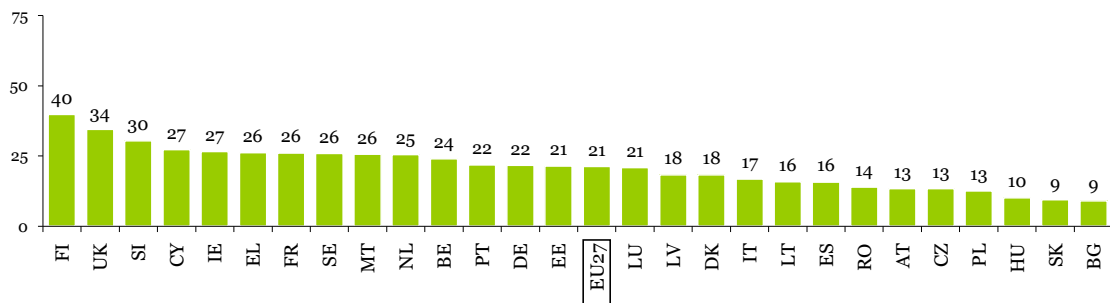
Chart 77: *Your child's school*

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

Less than half of the parents in all of the EU Member States said they got information about safe Internet use from **associations or organisations dealing with Internet safety issues**. Four out of 10 Finnish parents and one-third of the British parents mentioned these organisations as a source for advice – the highest EU27 figures. Parents in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Hungary, however, were four times less likely than the Finnish parents to mention organisations dealing with Internet safety issues (9%-10% vs. 40%). Other countries at the lower end of the scale were Poland, the Czech Republic and Austria (all 13%).
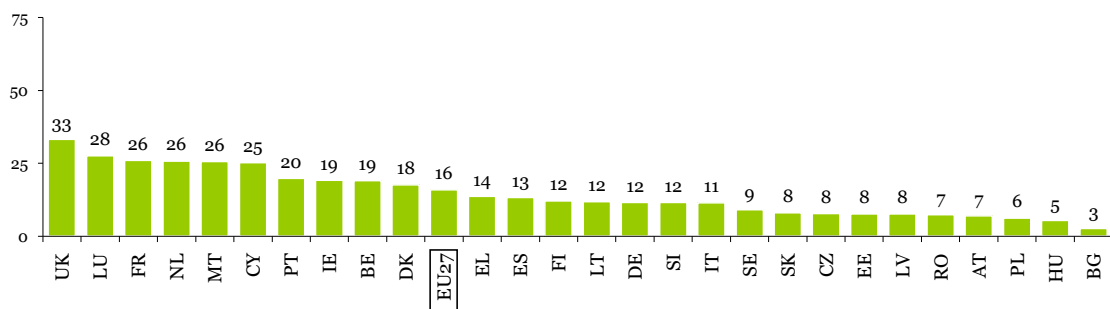
Chart 77: *Associations and organisations dealing with Internet safety issues*

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

The proportion of parents who said that they received information about safe Internet use from their **government or local authority** ranged from 3% in Bulgaria to 33% in the UK. This source of advice was the least important in almost all of the Member States. The exceptions were the UK, Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands, Malta and Cyprus – in these countries at least a quarter had received information or advice from the government or local authorities, and as such these were as important, or more important, as a source of advice about safe Internet use as the associations and organisations dealing with Internet safety issues.

Chart 78: *Government, local authorities*

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% of "Yes" shown by country

Differences in the sources for information dependent on children's and parents use of the Internet

In regard to sources of information and advice about filtering and monitoring tools and the safe use of the Internet, the analysis by parents' and children's Internet use showed that:

- Not surprisingly, interviewees who did not use the Internet, and who said that their child did not use it, were the least likely to have received information from any of the sources listed in the survey.

- Parents who did not use the Internet themselves, but who said that their child did use it, were also less likely to mention each of the listed information sources; the exception being their child's school – one-third of these parents said they got information about safe Internet use at their child's school compared to 23%-28% of the Internet using parents.

- The largest differences between occasional and frequent Internet users were found for information found by visiting various websites and that received from ISPs. While almost half of the frequent Internet users found information through websites (49%) and ISPs (44%), only one-third of the occasional Internet users mentioned these (32% for both sources).

Table 10: Sources for information and advice about safety tools and safe use of the Internet

	Family and friends	TV, radio, newspapers, magazines	Various websites	ISPs	Your child's school	Associations dealing with safe Internet usage	Government or local authorities	Other
Internet use								
Neither parent nor child	53%	58%	13%	14%	21%	12%	12%	9%
Only child	65%	57%	20%	18%	34%	17%	14%	11%
Only parent	67%	62%	35%	31%	23%	23%	16%	17%
Parent as well as child	75%	63%	45%	42%	28%	22%	17%	19%
Frequency of parents' Internet use								
Non-users	59%	57%	17%	16%	28%	15%	13%	10%
Occasional users	75%	62%	32%	32%	29%	20%	16%	16%
Frequent users	73%	63%	49%	44%	26%	24%	17%	20%

Q15. Where do you get your information and advice on safety tools and safe usage of the Internet from?
Base: all respondents
% "yes" shown

Socio-demographics considerations

In regard to sources of information and advice about filtering and monitoring tools and the safe use of the Internet, the analysis by socio-demographic groups showed that:

- Mothers were more likely to select family and friends (73% vs. 67% of fathers) and their child's school (29% vs. 22%) as a source for information; fathers had a greater tendency to mention various websites (46% vs. 36% of mothers) and ISPs (42% vs. 33%).

- Parents in the oldest age category were prone to select the government or local authorities as a source for information (19% vs. 15%-16% for parents between 25 and 54 years-of-age), but they were less likely to choose various websites (33% vs. 38%-40%) and family and friends (58% vs. 72%).

- Respondents with the lowest level of educational attainment were more liable to select their child's school as a source for information about safe Internet use (30% vs. 25% of the most educated respondents), but they were less likely to choose various websites (26% vs. 41%), ISPs (25% vs. 37%) and organisations dealing with Internet safety (17% vs. 20%).

- The place of residence had little impact on the sources used to get information about the safe use of the Internet; respondents living in metropolitan areas, however, were slightly less likely to select their child's school (23% vs. 29% of rural residents) as source.

- Three out of 10 manual workers and those without paid work selected their child's school as the place where they received information about safe Internet use compared to 24%-26% of the self-employed and employees. The manual workers and non-working respondents were, on the other hand, less likely to have searched the Internet (34%-36% vs. 41% of employees) or have contacted their ISP for information about filtering and monitoring tools (31%-34% vs. 38% of the employees).

- Regarding the child's gender and age, there were again fewer differences regarding their parents' sources for information about safe use of the Internet; however, parents answering question about their 11-14 year-old were more likely to select their child's school (32% vs. 23% for a 6-10 year-old and 26% for a 15-17 year-old).

- Parents with more children in the family were more likely to select any of the sources for information and advice listed in the survey (e.g. a quarter of the parents with one child selected their child's school as a source of information; this proportion increased to 38% for parents with four or more children).

For more details, see annex table 35b.