

Technology Adoption and Strategy Considerations

In order to determine the feasibility of implementing technological upgrades or tech-empowered strategies to their operations, child protection organisations need to consider the readiness of target locales to embrace changes.

This will involve an examination of local infrastructure and technological adoption.

Globally

The growth of internet penetration* and smartphone usage has grown steadily.

54.4%

of people in the world are connected to the internet

34.4%

use a smartphone



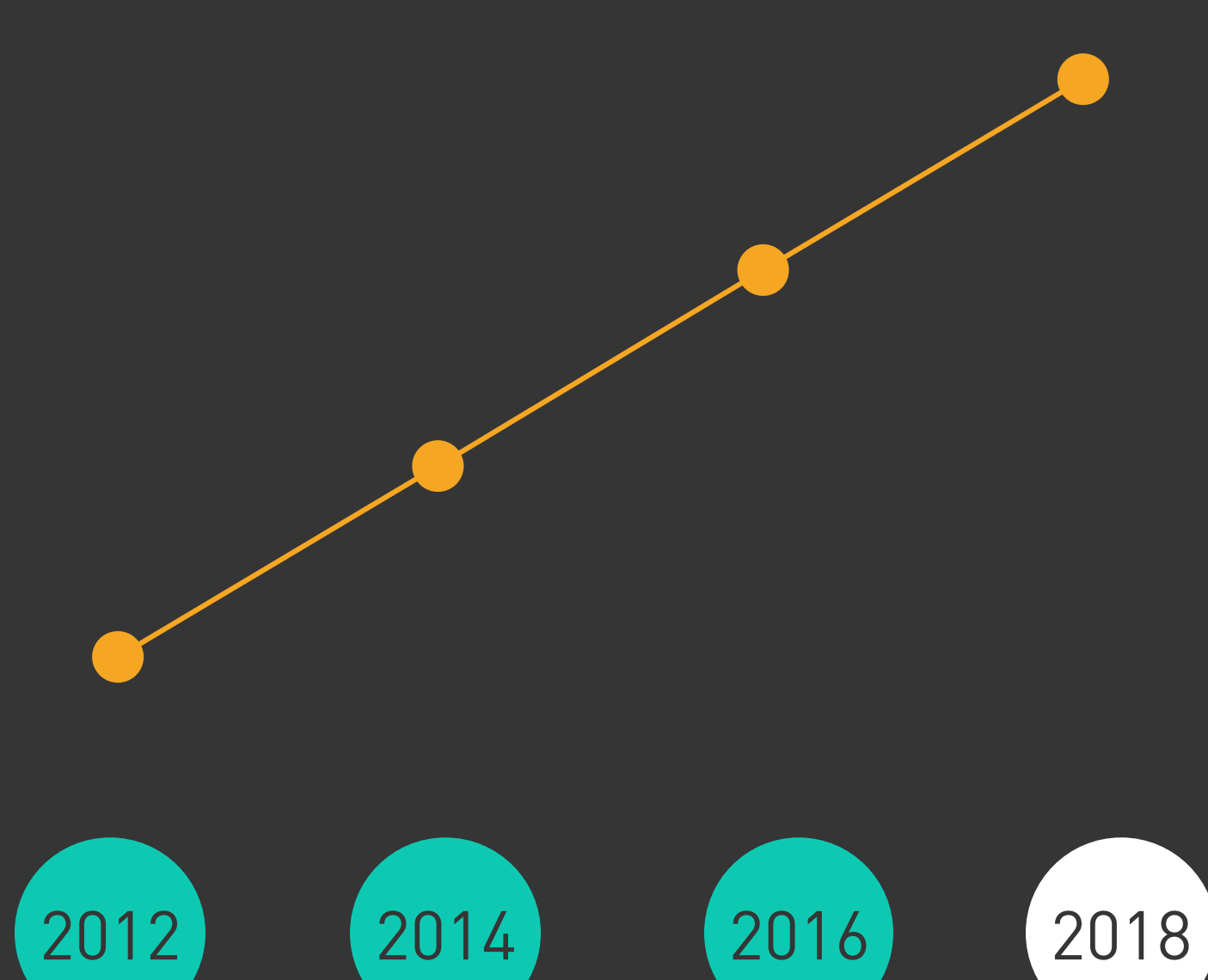
Disparities exist across continents - Africa's average internet penetration is at a low of 35.2% while in Europe this is 85.2%. Within continents, penetration rates vary at the national and local levels.

*Internet penetration: the proportion of a population that uses the internet.

Central and South East Europe

All of Europe has also experienced a growth in internet and smartphone usage. Central and South East Europe as a region performs only slightly worse on internet and phone statistics compared to the rest of Europe.

Proportion of internet and smartphone users in Central and South East Europe



The internet penetration in this region is found within the ranges of 65% and 90%, though the mean is about 75.8% based on 2017 figures. Here are the statistics for some countries:

| | | Internet Penetration | Smartphone Penetration |
|----------|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| Bulgaria | | 66.3% | - |
| Croatia | | 90.9% | - |
| Greece | | 70.1% | 63.4% (2018) |
| Hungary | | 88.6% | 54.7% (2018) |
| Romania | | 70.5% | 50.6% (2017) |

A 2014 study commissioned by the European Commission found high levels of mobile subscriptions in the whole of Europe (close to one subscription per person at minimum), this region has fewer mobile broadband subscriptions on average, at less than 50 subscriptions per 100 population.

Applications

Armed with this knowledge of the technology adoption in Europe and its South East, child protection organisations may roll out feasible programs which utilise the existing tech platforms to enhance their work.

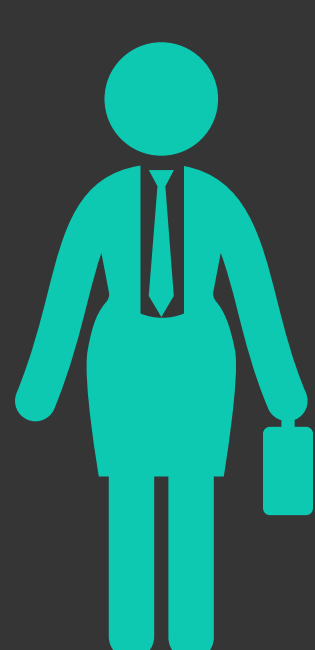


Mobile usage is high but any existing data on smartphone and mobile (cellular) broadband subscription suggests that their use is relatively low.

---> For any public communication plan to be rolled out (e.g. reporting channels, information campaigns, and data collection), it should be:

- non-dependent on mobile broadband and smartphones
- built on more 'basic' or mobile technologies such as calls and SMS, and fixed broadband accessed via computers, or phones through wifi.

A high internet penetration with a disproportionate mobile broadband subscription ---> a significant proportion of internet users access the internet using a fixed internet connection ---> confirming our earlier hypothesis.



Social workers have an established internet infrastructure to exploit ---> the region is ready for an electronic and internet-accessible information management system which will allow social workers to access and gather data on the move.

+ Their use along with issued smart devices may have a large impact on workers' efficiency.

We can diversify channels for reporting child-related matters (e.g. abuse), increase the reach of disseminated information, and launch effective awareness campaigns.



This infographic is part of the thematic package on the topic of Technology and Child Protection. Other materials in this package include quick bites on technology-enabled case management as well as new dimensions of engaging with children with the help of technology.

For more information and to get in touch with child protection professionals, visit us at childhub.org

Produced by Ser Jay Tan in 2018



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