



# One Click Away

Children's experience of  
Internet use in Albania

unicef   
for every child



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Internet use in Albania



Supported by:



End Violence  
Against Children  
THE FUND



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The recommended citation for the publication is:

Dunja A, Gjergji O, Gvineria D, Hallkaj E, and Verzivolli I. 2019 *One Click Away: Children's Experience of Internet Use in Albania*. UNICEF in Albania & IPSOS Strategic Marketing, Tirana.

# Acknowledgments

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This report is a joint product of UNICEF Albania, IPSOS Strategic Marketing, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti and individuals involved in the process of conceptualisation of the research, data gathering and analysis, peer review and editing, which has made this complex task a success.

A special thanks to Daniel Kardefelt-Winther from UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, for his everlasting enthusiasm, support and excellent technical guidance throughout the process of the research conceptualisation all the way to report writing.

This publication has been prepared in the framework of the project '**Safer and Better Internet for Children in Albania**', supported by the Fund to End Violence against Children.



# Foreword



The rapid rise of the Internet started very early on an important debate about how the online world affects our lives, social skills and relationships. The Internet removes geographic barriers and brings everyone together regardless of their ability to be in the same specific physical place. The children of the 21st century are at the forefront of those who are affected by this remarkable shift. They are thriving, developing, learning and interacting online, perhaps even more so than in their offline

settings. And so even if the Internet is expensive or unreliable or can only be accessed through shared devices or community provision, children are always finding ways to stay connected. As a result, the Internet has become a tool that, alongside all the benefits it brings, poses challenges to privacy, safety and security, which we need to be aware of and address timely.

The present report—One Click Away—serves this purpose by gathering and presenting scientific evidence on how children use the Internet, what they are learning, the opportunities and risks they face and what parents know and don't know about their children's virtual reality.

By aligning the research methodology with the Global Kids Online framework, UNICEF Albania also contributes to the global evidence generation on children's online experiences and as such helps to shape tailored and strategic responses that will amplify the benefits of the Internet for children while minimising the risks they may encounter.

Finally, I am very pleased to acknowledge the importance of a national discourse that was triggered by the release of the preliminary findings of the present report. Besides traditional partners and duty-bearers involved in the policy-level discussions, UNICEF brought children and adolescents, their parents and care givers, as well as the private sector, to the centre of this important debate, because failing to keep abreast of this technological revolution will equate to losing out on a critical opportunity, one that we cannot afford to miss.

Enjoy your reading,

**DR ROBERTO DE BERNARDI**

UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE IN ALBANIA



# Executive summary

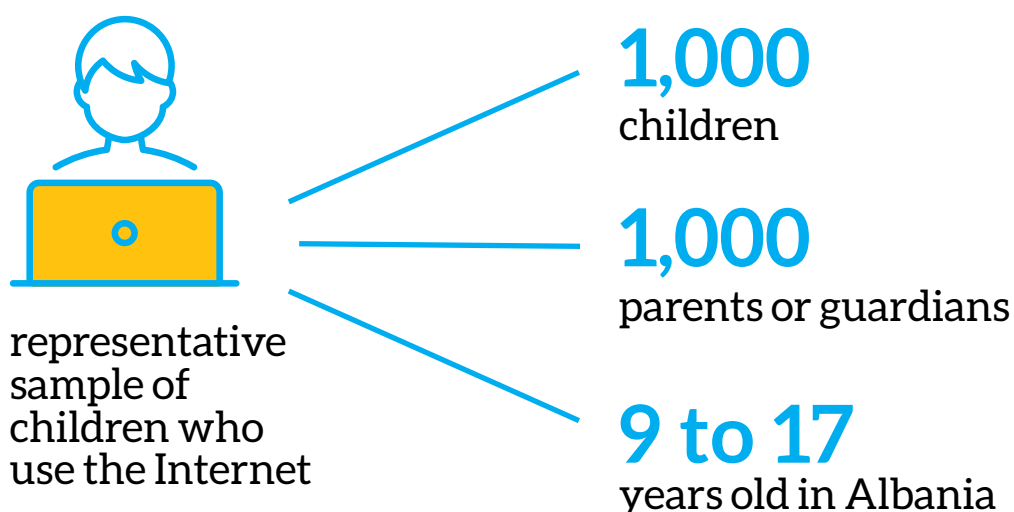
## Survey aim

The present survey conducted by IPSOS and UNICEF Albania forms part of a global research project, Global Kids Online, coordinated by the UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti, the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and the European Union (EU) Kids Online network.

The survey explores the experiences of children across various dimensions of their use of the Internet and generates and sustains a rigorous cross-national comparative evidence base. In addition, the study explores the Internet use of parents and to what extent they mediate their children's online experiences.

## Methodology overview

The survey was conducted with a nationally representative sample of children who use the Internet of age 9 to 17 years in Albania. It included a total of 1,000 children from three different age groups (9–11, 12–14 and 15–17 years) and 1,000 of their parents or guardians. Interviews were conducted in the respondents' households, using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), in the presence of both interviewee and interviewer. The survey is in line with the ethical principles developed by UNICEF that guarantee the safety of the participants and their data and respect for their rights. In order to respect the principle of child privacy and minimise any potential negative impacts of participation in the survey, some sections in the questionnaire were self-administered. The questionnaire was designed along the lines of the above-mentioned dimensions, grouped into five areas: access, opportunities and practices, skills, risks, and vulnerability and protection factors. The data collection tools and procedures were reviewed and approved by an External Ethical Board, commissioned by UNICEF Albania.



## Key findings



### Access to Internet

- Albanian children **start using the Internet** at an **average age of 9.3 years**, while the **younger generation of girls and boys** are more likely to **start using it earlier, at 8 years or less**.
- Almost **8 in 10 children** can **access the Internet whenever they want or need to**.
- **Parental restriction** is the most common reason for **children not to access the Internet always** when they want or need to, especially among the **youngest children (9–11 years)**. The **high cost of Internet connection or mobile data** is the second most common **barrier to Internet access**, and is most common among **children of age 15–17 years**.
- **Home** is the most common place where **95.8% of children access the Internet** at least weekly. Internet is also often used where the child is alone somewhere.
- **Children of age 15–17 years** are **online more often** and in a wider range of places **than younger children**.
- **Smartphones** are the **most commonly used devices for Internet access**, while **more than half of children** have **never used a desktop computer or a tablet** for Internet access.
- Children spend an average of **2.9 hours online on a weekday**, and **3.3 hours online at a weekend**.
- **Three out of ten parents** of surveyed children **do not use the Internet**, while **almost all of their children** are Internet users.



### Online activities and digital skills

- The **most popular activities** that children engage in online are related to **entertainment, learning** and **social interactions**. The least popular activities involve community and civic participation.
- Children's **most developed digital skills** are in the field of **operational skills** and **social relations**, while **creative skills** are the least developed.
- As they **get older**, children engage in a **wider range of activities** and are **more confident in their digital skills**. Younger

**children feel less confident in skills** related to their **social behaviours online**.

- There is a consistent gender gap in terms of online activities and digital skills, with **boys generally engaging more in online activities** and **having better digital skills than girls**.
- **YouTube and Instagram** are the **most popular** websites or applications among children, **followed by Facebook and WhatsApp**.



## Online risks and (potential) harm

- Some **14% of children interviewed** have had **upsetting experiences** over the Internet.
- When something upsetting happens to them on the Internet, **children tend to prefer their peers as a source of support**, and are **very reluctant to speak to teachers or child-care professionals**.
- The **most common content risks** that Albanian children face is their **exposure to real violence**, affecting more than **3 out of 10 children**.
- Children are **exposed to sexual content online mostly involuntarily**, through pop-ups. At the same time, **more than half of children reported seeing sexual content on the Internet because they wanted to**. Only a **small proportion**, mostly **the youngest**, were **upset after seeing sexual content**, while the majority were either indifferent or happy about it.
- **One in four children reported** had **at least one contact online with someone whom they had never met** face-to-face before and almost **2 in 10 reported** meeting in person **someone they had previously known only on the web**. Only a **small portion** of these children were **upset by these face-to-face meetings**.
- **Online bullying** was reported by **fewer than 1 in 10 children**, but this figure is probably an underestimate given the much higher levels of bullying in person.
- **One in ten children** reported at least **one unwanted sexual experience through the Internet**. A **considerable proportion** of those who initiated such an **experience were someone the child already knew**.

- The present study found that exposure to all forms of online risks increases with age. Also, for the most part, **boys are more likely to be exposed to online risks than girls**, though **girls report being more upset by such experiences**.
- **Parental reporting of their children's exposure to online risks is considerably less common than the reporting by the children themselves**, indicating a possible lack of communication and trust between parents and their children.



## Mediation by parents, peers and teachers

- Children report that **most of the parents surveyed do not employ an active parenting approach to their Internet use**, while parents have a more positive view of their supportive engagement.
- **Parents tend to report a higher level of restrictive mediation**, including through the use of **parental controls** and **Internet monitoring**, than do children.
- There is a **gender gap in terms of parental mediation**, with **girls being subject to more restrictive parenting than boys**, including monitoring by their parents.
- As **children grow**, parental mediation of Internet use becomes **less restrictive**.
- Overall, the **use of parental control mechanisms**, such as web filtering software, seems to be at a **low level**.
- **Parents prefer** to receive information on **child online safety through schools and mass media**.

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# 1. Introduction

According to data from the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), in 2018, the population size of Albania was 2,870,324. The country is classified as 'young', with more than one-third of the population younger than 25 years.<sup>1</sup> Data from 2013 indicate that literacy rates among Albanian youth (15–24 years) from 2008 to 2012 was 98.7 percent for males and 98.9 percent for females.<sup>2</sup> Secondary school gross enrolment for adolescents during this period was 89.2 percent.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Electronic and Postal Communications Authority (AKEP) annual report, in 2016, the total number of users in Albania who accessed broadband Internet was around 2.7 million, while the number of active users (those that have used Internet in the last 3 months) was around 1.7 million.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the minimum penetration of the Internet in 2016 was 62.8 percent, but, given the trend, it is likely that this number will keep increasing.<sup>5</sup>

**2,870,324**  
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**25 year**

number of  
active users  
around  
**1.7 million**

Institute of Statistics (INSTAT)

Electronic and Postal  
Communications Authority

1 Institute of Statistics: <http://www.instat.gov.al/en/themes/demography-and-social-indicators/population/publication/2018/population-in-albania-1-january-2018/>

2 Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania\\_statistics.html](https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania_statistics.html)

3 Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania\\_statistics.html](https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania_statistics.html)

4 AKEP. 2016. *Raporti Vjetor i Veprimtarisë së AKEPI-t*. Available at: <https://akep.al/wp-content/uploads/images/stories/AKEP/raporte/RAPORTI-VJETOR-2016-110517.pdf>

5 Available at: <http://www.internetlvestats.com/internet-users/albania/>

Access to and use of the Internet has become a significant part of the lives of not only adults, but also children. With the wide range of possibilities that the Internet offers to children, there are, unfortunately, at the same time increased possibilities for negative online experiences.

**Albania has ratified a significant number of relevant conventions on children's rights with regard to online and offline safety.<sup>6</sup> These ratifications have helped the country approximate its legislation to international standards, as follows:**

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>7</sup> was ratified by Albania in 1992, and its 3<sup>rd</sup> Optional Protocol, on the safety of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC),<sup>8</sup> was ratified on 5 February 2008 without reservation.
- The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) is the first treaty that addresses children's protection from sexual abuse and exploitation in the face of challenges presented by technological developments, and identifies as an offence the solicitation of children for sexual purposes through Information and Communications Technology (ICT), often known as 'grooming'. The convention was ratified by Albania with Law no. 10 071, on 9 February 2009, and entered into force on 1 July 2010.
- The Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) criminalises offences committed through computer systems, including child sexual exploitation, provides law enforcement with effective means to investigate cybercrime and secure electronic evidence, and offers a framework for international police and judicial cooperation in computer-related cases involving crimes against children. Albania ratified this convention with Law no. 8888, on 25 April 2002, and its Additional Protocol by Law no. 9262, on 29 July 2004, 'Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, for the criminalisation of acts of a racist and a xenophobe nature committed through computer systems'.
- Albania was part of the Global Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Online that was launched on 5 December 2012. The participating countries agreed to accomplish four political targets: 1) Enhanced efforts to identify victims and ensure that they

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6 State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights, and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth. 2014. National Report on the Situation of Children's Rights in Albania 2013–2014. Funded by UNICEF.

7 Convention on the Rights of the Child. Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989; entry into force on 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. Ratified by Albania with Law no. 7531 on 11 December 1992.

8 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution A/RES/54/263 of 25 May 2000; entry into force 18 January 2002. Available at: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/mtdsg/volume%20i/chapter%20iv/iv-11-c.en.pdf>

receive the necessary assistance, support and protection; 2) Enhanced efforts to investigate cases of child sexual abuse online and to identify and prosecute offenders; 3) Increased awareness of the risks among children, parents, educators and the community at large; and 4) Reduced availability of child sexual exploitation materials online and the re-victimisation of children.<sup>9</sup> Albania is also part of the We Protect Global Alliance to End Child Sexual Exploitation Online.<sup>10</sup>

- One important development last year was the Recommendation on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment, adopted on 4 July 2018 by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers.<sup>11</sup> The new guidelines recommend member states adopt a comprehensive, strategic approach for respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of the child in a digital environment, rooted in the standards established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Council of Europe's standards, and underpinned by the meaningful participation of children.

### The subsequent relevant steps taken by the Albanian government encompassed the implementation of a range of national laws and strategies, as follows:

- In 2013, Albania made important amendments to its Criminal Code<sup>12</sup> regarding protection of the best interests of the child. Article 1/c of the Principles of the Criminal Code stipulates that "The Criminal Code is based on the constitutional principles of the rule of law, equality under the law, fairness in determining the guilt and sentence, protecting the highest interest of children, and humanism."<sup>13</sup> Another relevant change was an improvement to article 117, on pornography,<sup>14</sup> criminalising the production, distribution, promotion, export, import, sale and publication of pornographic materials in environments with children; the production, import, offering, making available, distribution, broadcasting, use, or possession, and conscious creation of access to child sexual exploitation materials; recruitment, exploitation, coercion or persuasion of a child to participate in pornographic shows, and participation in shows involving children.

9 European Commission. 2013. Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online Report, December 2013. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/global-alliance-against-child-abuse/docs/global\\_alliance\\_report\\_201312\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/global-alliance-against-child-abuse/docs/global_alliance_report_201312_en.pdf)

10 Member countries of the We Protect Global Alliance. Available at: <https://www.weprotect.org/member-countries>

11 Recommendation CM/Rec (2018)7 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Guidelines to Respect, Protect and Fulfil the Rights of the Child in the Digital Environment. Available at: [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016808b79f7](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016808b79f7)

12 Law no. 144/2013, dated 02.05.2013, 'On some additions and amendments to Law No. 7895, dated 27.01.1995 'Criminal Code of Republic of Albania' as amended. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/99777/119208/F646195345/ALB-99777.pdf>

13 Available at: <http://www.eurallius.eu/index.php/en/albanian-legislation/send/10-criminal-code/56-criminal-code-en>

14 Available at: <http://www.eurallius.eu/index.php/en/albanian-legislation/send/10-criminal-code/56-criminal-code-en>

- The Action Plan for Children 2012–2015, approved by Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) no. 182 of 13 March 2012, was an important document for the provision of safe Internet for children. It was planned to be achieved through self-regulating practices for safe Internet shared among relevant stakeholders and through an awareness, education and information campaign.<sup>15</sup>
- Providing safe Internet for children is currently one of the objectives of the Albanian Digital Agenda 2015–2020, approved by DCM no. 284, of 1 April 2015.<sup>16</sup>
- A major step regarding children’s Internet safety was the adoption of Law no. 18/2017 ‘On the Rights and Protection of the Child’,<sup>17</sup> article 3/11, which defines “harmful content for children” as any picture, image and any other material published on the Internet that threatens the dignity and rights of the child. Also, this new law stipulates protection of children from any form of sexual exploitation and abuse (article 26) and from access to materials of harmful or illegal content on the Internet (article 27).
- Protection of children from harmful content is also regulated by Law no. 97/2013, of 4 March 2013, ‘On Audio-visual Media in the Republic of Albania’.<sup>18</sup> Article 4/b stipulates that the activity of audio-visual transmission should especially respect the rights, interests and moral and legal demands for the protection of children. In other articles such as 33e and 46dh, it is required that Audio-visual Media Service Providers do not broadcast programmes with pornographic content, especially if they are unable to provide limited access or parental control. At the moment this only refers to television and radio programmes and has no influence or control over Internet content.
- In 2016, the National Agenda for the Protection of Children’s Rights 2017–2020<sup>19</sup> was set and approved by DCM no. 372, of 26 April 2017. The agenda contains three strategic pillars: 1) Governance in the function of promoting, respecting and protecting children’s rights; 2) Elimination of all forms of violence against children; and 3) Friendly systems and services for children and adolescents. In the second strategic pillar, special focus is placed on the protection of children in the digital and electronic environment by widening the legal framework and by drafting standards for safe online navigation.

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15 Available at: <http://femijet.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Agjenda-kombetare-per-te-drejtat-e-femijeve.pdf>

16 Available at: [http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore\\_zyrtare/2015/PDF-2015/56-2015.pdf](http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore_zyrtare/2015/PDF-2015/56-2015.pdf)

17 Available at: [http://www.amshc.gov.al/web/doc/ligjore/Ligj\\_18-2017\\_Per\\_Te\\_Drejtat\\_dhe\\_Mbrojtjen\\_e\\_Femijes.pdf](http://www.amshc.gov.al/web/doc/ligjore/Ligj_18-2017_Per_Te_Drejtat_dhe_Mbrojtjen_e_Femijes.pdf)

18 Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/99706/119118/F-1658809941/ALB-99706.pdf>

19 Available at: <http://femijet.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Agjenda-kombetare-per-te-drejtat-e-femijeve.pdf>

Although the number of children using the Internet is increasing and child online safety is of great concern, there has been little comprehensive, systematic research in this regard in Albania, and particularly none commissioned by the state. Some data do highlight that bullying, password theft or unintentional pornography viewing is experienced every day by 45 percent of youths between the age of 13 and 18 years, while only 44 percent of children have received information on online safety from parents or from various outlets for reporting online incidents.<sup>20</sup>

As part of the efforts for overall strengthening of the Child Protection system, UNICEF Albania, in 2015, succeeded in initiating several significant shifts in the Albanian legislative landscape, as well as the institutional and technical capacity base, with a view to enhancing the national response to the harmful phenomena of child abuse and sexual exploitation in the virtual space. This was made possible through the Global Programme to Build Capacity to Tackle Online Child Sexual Exploitation, implemented by UNICEF Albania. A major boost for advancing the groundwork was achieved through the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children Fund, which supported a three-year UNICEF programme in May 2017. This programme provides significant interventions aimed at improvement of the overall capacity of all key child protection professionals, enabling them, in turn, to maintain major support to the overall Child Protection system, with a focus on the phenomenon of (online) violence against children.

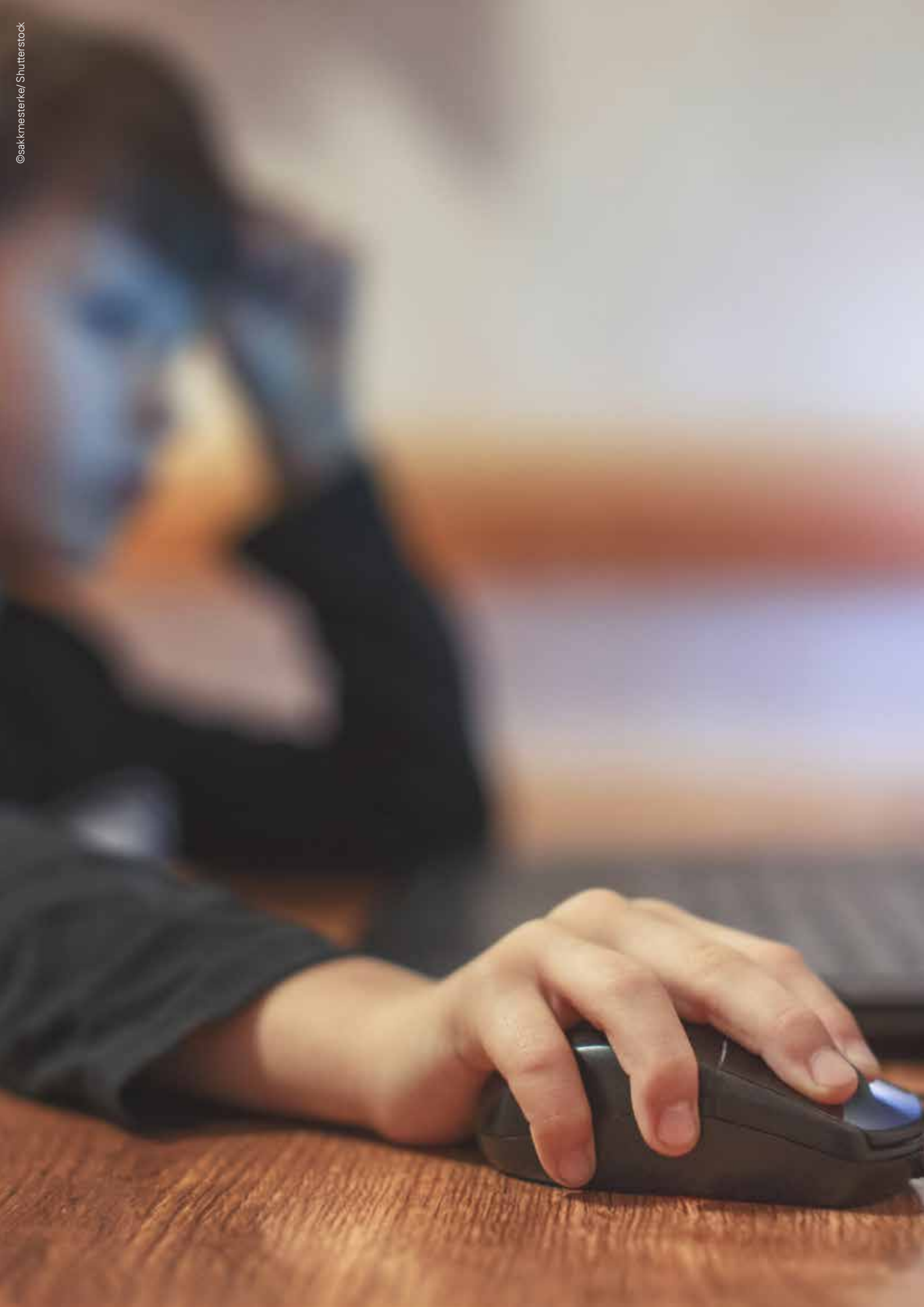
Through this survey, UNICEF Albania joined itself to the Global Kids Online project, developed out of the EU Kids Online project, coordinated by UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti in partnership with the London School of Economics and Political Science and the EU Kids Online network. This project supports national partners to gather data on the nature and the extent of children's Internet use in different countries.<sup>21</sup> This research project, consisting of qualitative and quantitative components, aims to explore children's online experiences on the Internet and generate and sustain a rigorous cross-national evidence base by the creation of a global network of researchers and experts.

The Global Kids Online project developed a global research toolkit enabling academics, governments, civil society and other actors to carry out reliable and standardised national research with children and their parents on the opportunities, risks and protection factors of children's Internet use. Albania is one of the seventeen countries involved in this programme, using the harmonised methodological approach represented by Global Kids Online. It will generate baseline evidence on children's online experiences in Albania for the benefit of key stakeholders, including children. Not only it will allow for the creation of appropriate policies and measures enabling the safety of children on the Internet in the country, but also ensure the comparability of results between the different countries involved.

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20 World Vision. 2014. A Study on Child Online Safety in Albania. Available at: <https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/Internet%20Safety%20OK.pdf>

21 Details on Global Kids Online Project available at: <http://globalkidsonline.net/>



## 2. Survey aim, objectives and methodology

### 2.1 Survey aim and objectives

The survey aims to foster an understanding of the barriers children face in accessing the Internet, together with the opportunities they enjoy from it, to learn of the many things children like to do online, and the skills and competencies they acquire when engaged in these activities. It enables an inquiry into their exposure to online risks and possible harm, as well as the role of parents as mediators and sources of support.

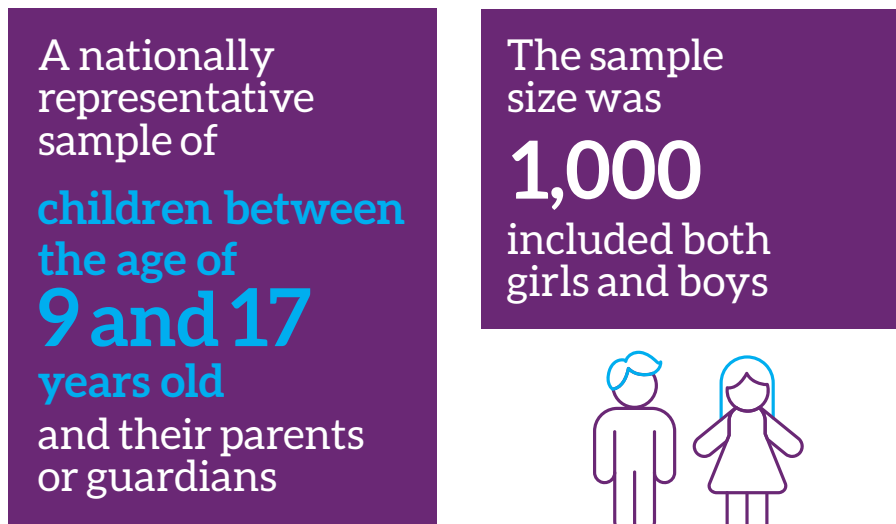
As there are insufficient data available in Albania on children's behaviour and experiences on the Internet, the survey also aims to provide empirical data that will inform a deeper understanding of the Albanian context and, moreover, be a good starting point for implementation of all the steps and strategies needed to improve children's digital skills and safety on the Internet, as well as their general well-being. The data can be used by all key partners of UNICEF, in government and civil society, to inform programme and policy development. Furthermore, implementation of the cross-national methodology of the Global Kids Online project will enable comparisons between Albania and the other countries participating in the programme.

**The main objectives of the survey are to explore children's experiences on the Internet in the following areas:**

- **Access:** How children access and use Internet-enabled devices in their everyday lives.
- **User practices and skills:** What children do online and how, and what they can and cannot do, and what they do and do not know.
- **Opportunities and Risks:** What activities they pursue online, why, and what benefits they report. What type of other experiences they encounter online, and how they consider them.
- **Well-being and rights:** How use of the Internet contributes to or undermines children's well-being.
- **Social factors:** In using the Internet, how children are helped or hindered by their family's position and intervention, and what roles are played by teachers, peers and the community.

## 2.2 Methodology

A nationally representative sample of children of age 9–17 years and their parents or guardians was recruited. The sample size was 1,000 and included both girls and boys. All children were Internet users, defined as having used the Internet at least once in the three months prior to interview.



The survey was based upon a stratified random national representative sample comprising three layers: county (*qark*), type of settlement (urban or rural), and child age group. The sample design was based around the data from the 2011 Population Census. Sample allocation was undertaken proportional to the size of the strata: the number of children of age 9 to 17 years within each. The total number of sampling locations was 106, and ten interviews per sampling point were conducted. The purpose of sample allocation was to optimise the sample plan and minimise sampling error (3.39). Within each household, a child was selected at random to participate in the survey. Parents or guardians who participated in the survey were pre-selected in that the questionnaire was conducted with the parent who was most familiar with the child and his or her Internet use. Where both parents were equally familiar with the child's Internet use, one was selected at random.

The data obtained were subsequently weighted, enabling harmonisation of the sample with the population, minimising distortions from non-responses and other non-sampling errors. A description of the method used for selection of respondents and data collection, and the weighting process can be found in Appendix 2.

A total of 39 interviewers and five supervisors participated in conducting the survey, undergoing training prior to the beginning of the fieldwork. Collecting of data began on 18 May and finished on 26 June 2018. The proportions of the different age groups, genders, regions and type of settlement in which the children are living are reported in Table 1, along with socio-economic data on the parents and guardians.

**Table 1: Gender, age group, region and type of settlement of children, and relation, age group, educational level and Internet use of parent or guardian (%)**

### Children

Total	Gender		Age group (years)			Region			Type of settlement	
	Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17	North	Centre	South	Urban	Rural
100	51.3	48.7	30.1	32.5	37.4	23.6	45.9	30.6	50.2	49.8

### Parents or guardians

Relation			Age of parent (years)				Education level of parent			Internet use by parent	
Mother	Father	Other	Up to 35	36-40	41-45	46+	Primary school or less	Secondary school	College or university	Yes	No
78.7	16.7	4.6	22	30	24	24	43.3	43.6	13.1	68	32

The method of Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) was used for data collection, where both children and parents answered a questionnaire on a tablet. All aspects of the methodology and approaches to survey implementation were developed with child well-being in mind. Thus, the questionnaire was designed for self-administration, i.e. to be filled in without intervention from the interviewer. However, if for some reason it was impossible for a child to complete these questionnaire modules on their own, then the interviewer would read them out, show the child the possible answers and give them the tablet. This approach minimised any chance of the rights of the children being impacted in any way in the study, especially with regard to sensitive questions. Privacy of the child's answers was absolutely guaranteed, and the child was allowed not to answer any question that he or she did not want to answer.

The sections of the questionnaire that were self-administrated by the children included:

- risks, and
- unwanted sexual experiences.

The sections of the questionnaire that the child could choose to fill out on their own or with the interviewer's assistance included:

- opportunities and practices
- digital ecology, and
- skills.

## 2.3 Ethical Consideration

The survey was conducted in compliance with the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis. In addition, ethical standards for research involving children, reflected in the following principles, were also strictly adhered to:

- No conflict of interest was expected nor identified as a part of the survey implementation.
- Informed consent: Parents and caregivers gave written consent for participation of the children in their care in the survey, while children gave verbal consent. Parents and caregivers also gave written consent for their own participation in the survey. These forms provided a brief overview of the research objectives, data collection methods, duration of interview, a statement about voluntary participation, information on data management, and the fact that the interview with children would be held in private in the absence of any other member of the household.
- Confidentiality and anonymity: All participants in the survey were informed that their privacy would be protected, that data collected in the survey would be published in aggregated form only, and that the identity of the children and adults would not be disclosed under any circumstances. The interviews were held in the household of the respondents, and, whenever possible, those with children were held in the absence of any other member of the household.
- Data collection was carried out using CAPI methodology. Collected data were securely stored on IPSOS servers. Once the analysis was completed, the data were transferred to UNICEF for storage.
- No payment or compensation was given to the participants.

Bearing in mind that the survey covers sensitive issues, the data collection tools and procedures were reviewed and approved by an External Ethical Board commissioned by UNICEF Albania.

## 2.4 Study limitations

The survey's sampling design allowed for the selection of children of age 9 to 17 years that had used the Internet in the three months prior to interview. Thus, the findings are not representative of the entire child population of Albania who have ever used the Internet.

The Global Kids Online methodology focuses on breadth rather than depth. While the methodology generates useful baseline statistics, for many topics it does not probe for in-depth insights. This survey therefore provides an excellent overview of most topics relevant to children in a digital age, which is useful for conceptualising in-depth studies on particular topics where data suggest additional research is necessary.

The survey was administered in the child's home, where, on a few occasions, the presence of a parent in the vicinity of the child during the interview was impossible to avoid. In such cases, it is understandable that children may have given socially desirable answers.

Lastly, the child questionnaire was lengthy, sometimes taking up to an hour to complete. Such a length may have compromised the quality of the answers that the children provided due to possible fatigue.





# 3. Access to Internet

This chapter describes how children access the Internet, when they first start using it, the devices they use most often to get online, where they usually access the Internet, how much time they spend online, and any difficulties and restrictions they might face when trying to do so.

## 3.1 First use of the Internet, and access opportunities

The majority of children in Albania start using the Internet for the first time at an average age of 9.3 years (Table 2), which, when compared with the findings of the 2013 study conducted by World Vision, indicates a notable change,<sup>22</sup> with the age of first encounter dropping rapidly. More than one-third (37.2%) of surveyed children stated they had started using the Internet at the age of eight years or younger, with slightly fewer (29.9%) claiming to have started using it at the age of nine or ten. Moreover, those of age 9–11 years are more likely to state (68% did so) that they started Internet use at a younger age than those of older age groups. In addition, Internet use at a younger age is more common among boys (43% report use below the age of 8) than among girls (31% below the age of 8).

**Table 2: Average age of first Internet use (years)**

Average age	Gender of child		Age group		
	Male	Female	9–11	12–14	15–17
9.3	8.8	9.7	7.3	9.2	10.9

Q: How old were you when you first used the Internet? Base: Child Internet users, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

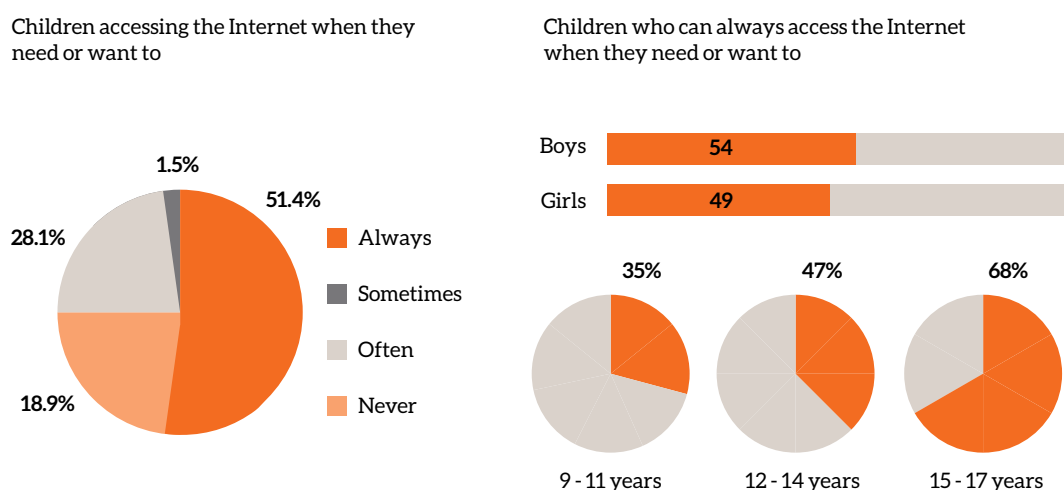
The majority (98.5%) of children interviewed were able to somehow access the Internet when they wanted or needed to, with 79.5 percent accessing it frequently (often, sometimes or always; Figure 1). Boys and older girls report more frequent access to the Internet.

**98.5%**  
of children  
interviewed  
access the  
Internet when  
they wanted  
or needed to

**79.5%**  
of children  
interviewed  
access the  
Internet  
frequently

22 World Vision. 2014. Ibid.

**Figure 1: Internet access frequency (%)**

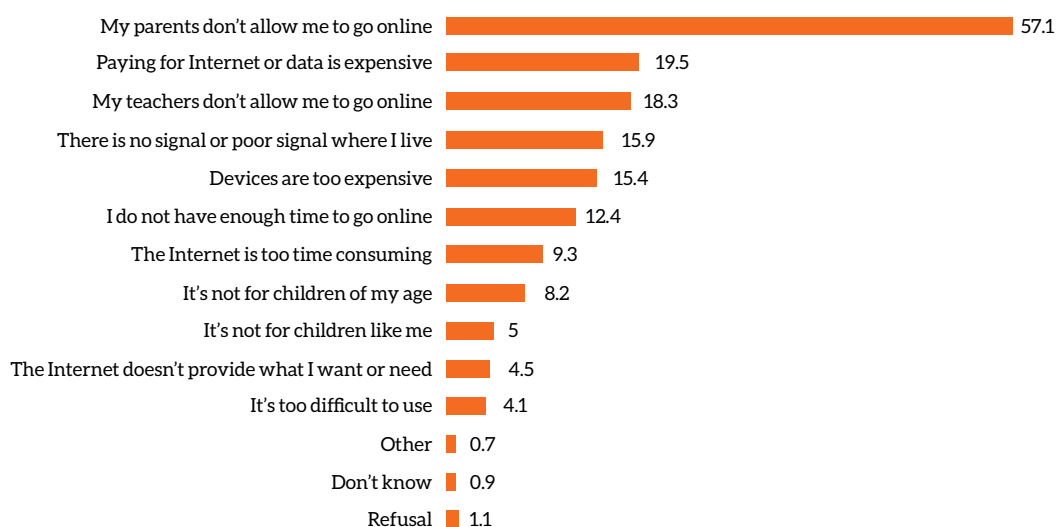


Q: Are you able to access the Internet when you need or want to? Base: Child users of the Internet, age 9–17 years, N=1,000;

Children who experience barriers to Internet access (48.5% of interviewed children) gave the following reasons (Figure 2) for the restrictions: parental prohibition (57.1%), cost of Internet or data (19.5%) and schools' or teachers' restrictions (18.3%). This shows that parents constitute the primary barrier to access for children by a considerable margin. This finding raises the question of why this is the case and what the consequences of restricting access might be in terms of children's rights to participation and information, and their ability to learn digital skills that may be important for their future. It also indicates that if the government wants to improve access to the Internet for children, changing parental attitudes might be more impactful compared to policies that seek to reduce costs of access or improve connectivity.

**"If the government wants to improve access to the internet for children, changing parental attitudes might be more impactful compared to policies that seek to reduce costs of access or improve connectivity"**

**Figure 2: Reasons for limited access to Internet (%)**



Q: When you are unable to access the Internet, what are the reasons? Base: Children who cannot always access the Internet, 48.5% of target population, N=485

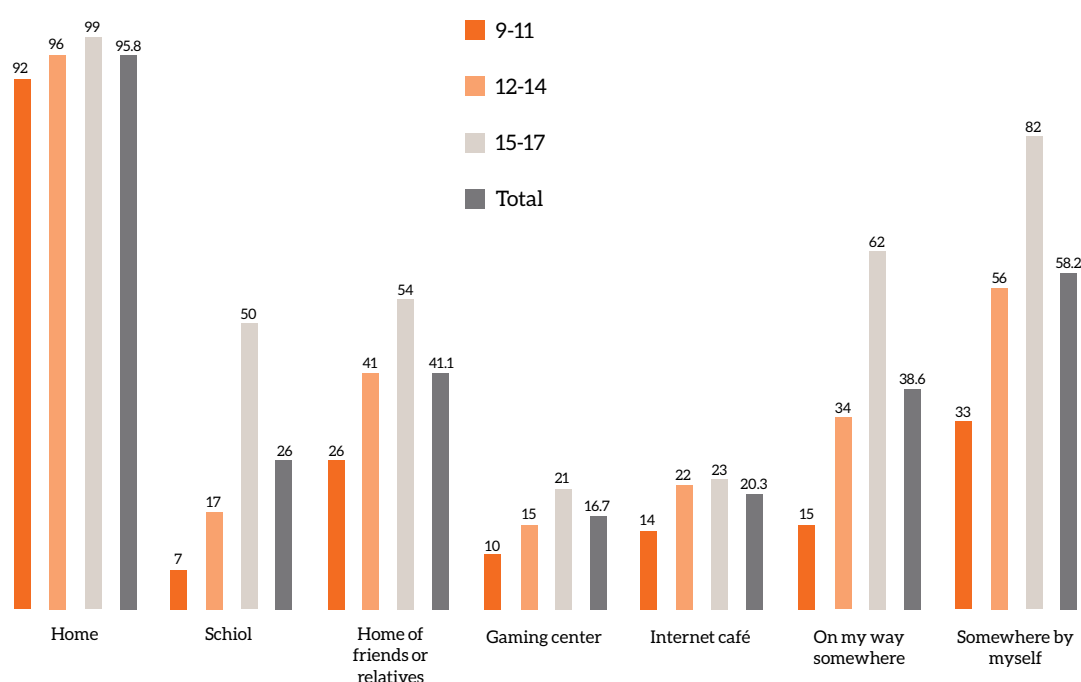
Several statistical differences between socio-demographic groups were noted in terms of barriers to accessing the Internet. Parental prohibition was more common for children of age 9–11 years (69%). This finding makes sense, because younger children require stronger protections than do older children and are often under greater supervision by adults. High costs of Internet or mobile data presented a barrier more often for children of age 15–17 years (27%), perhaps because of their more active use of smartphone devices to go online and hence their paying more for mobile data to access the Internet, along with their becoming increasingly responsible for paying for their own mobile phone subscriptions. Girls were more likely than boys to claim that they do not use the Internet whenever they want because they do not have enough time to be online (17%, compared with only 7% of boys) and that the Internet is too time-consuming (13%, compared with 9.3% of total children interviewed). The full sets of results are reported in Table 11 in Appendix 1.

### 3.2 Places of Internet use

Children in Albania access the Internet most frequently from home, with 95.8 percent doing so at least weekly (Figure 3), a similar pattern of use to that reported in the 2013 World Vision Study<sup>23</sup>, where 84 percent of children reported home as their place of Internet use.

23 Ibid. p. 16.

**Figure 3: Place of Internet use by age group (years; %)**



Q: How often do you go online or use the Internet in the following places? Base: Children who stated they use the Internet at those places: at least weekly.

At the same time, it is evident that the Internet is a powerful companion when the child is somewhere alone, with 58.2 percent of children claiming to use the Internet at least weekly in such a situation. This indicates the opportunities children have to use the Internet in total privacy, which may suggest low levels of caregiver involvement in a child's Internet use, and perhaps more implications for their safety online.

At least once a week, 28 percent of boys use gaming centres for Internet access and 26 percent use Internet cafés, significantly more so than girls (5% and 14%, respectively). For the full set of results see Table 12, Appendix 1.

**"The diversity of places in which children access the Internet, including public places, will need to be factored into policies that aim to make Internet access safe for children"**

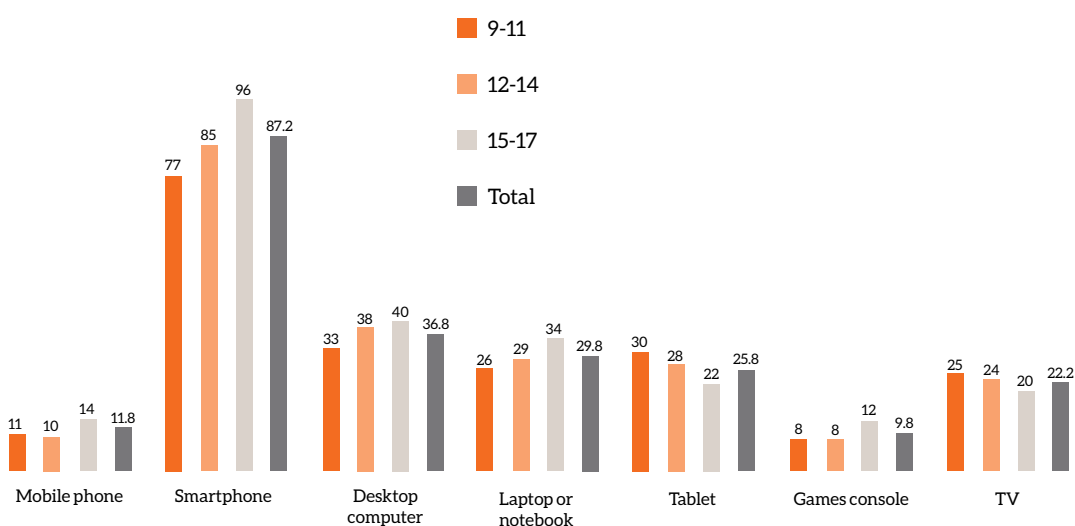
The oldest group of children are online more often and in a wider range of places than younger children. Almost all children (99%) of age 15–17 years use the Internet at least weekly at home, while some 62 percent from this age group claim to use the Internet even in situations where they are going somewhere (in comparison to 38.6% of the total sample), and 82 percent use the Internet at least once a week when they are on their own (significantly above the 58.2% reported for the total sample). The diversity of places in which children access the Internet, including public places, will need to be factored into policies that aim to make Internet access safe for children.

### 3.3 Devices for Internet access

The smartphone is the most commonly used device for Internet access (Figure 4): more than three-quarters (87.2%) of children use a smartphone to access the Internet at least weekly, far more than for any other type of device. For example, more than half of children report having never used a desktop computer or a tablet to access the Internet (50% and 63.8%, respectively; Table 13, Appendix 1). An even higher percentage of children claim never to have used other devices in accessing the Internet, e.g. game console (81.5%), television (74.3%), or a mobile phone that is not a smartphone (80.5%). This possibly indicates a rapidly growing availability of affordable smartphones and the replacement of previously more traditional desktop or laptop computers. Ultimately this finding should be taken into account when addressing children's exposure to the Internet, as smartphones bring their own distinct characteristics when access to Internet is sought (specific set of applications, mobility, discretion, etc.).

**"Children access the Internet mostly through smart phones, and this has to be taken into consideration when addressing the issue from both the perspective of opportunities and risks."**

**Figure 4: Percentage use of different Internet devices at least weekly by different age groups (years)**



Q: When you use the Internet, how often do you use any of these to go online? Base: Children who stated that they use the Internet: at least weekly.

### 3.4 Time spent online

On average, during the day, children spend 3.1 hours online. There is a slight difference between workdays and weekends in the amount of time children spend online. On average, children spend 2.9 hours online on weekdays and 3.3 hours per day at weekends. Time spent online during both weekdays and weekends increases with the age of the child. Although children spend longer hours online at the weekend than on weekdays, Table 3 shows that the already-observed age differences are maintained.

**Table 3: Hours spent online by children, by gender and age**

Time spent online	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Workday	2.9	3.2	2.7	1.8	2.8	3.9
Weekends (per day)	3.3	3.6	3.1	2.2	3	4.5

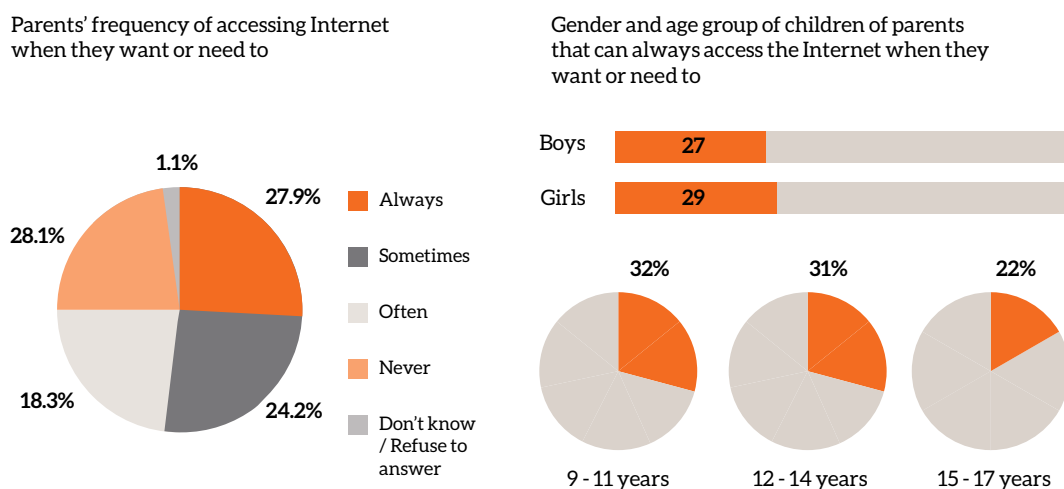
Q: About how long did you spend on the Internet on an ordinary weekday last week (school day or working day)? About how long did you spend on the Internet on an ordinary day last weekend? Base: Child users of the Internet, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

### 3.5 Parents

This section describes how parents access the Internet and whether they encounter some difficulties in doing so. Some 70.4 percent of interviewed parents are Internet users, while around 30 percent never use the Internet, and 37 percent among them are more likely to be parents of children of age 15–17 years (Figure 5).

Compared to surveyed children, fewer parents access the Internet when they want or need to: 27.9 percent of parents compared to 51.4 percent of children interviewed, possibly undermining their ability to support their children online.

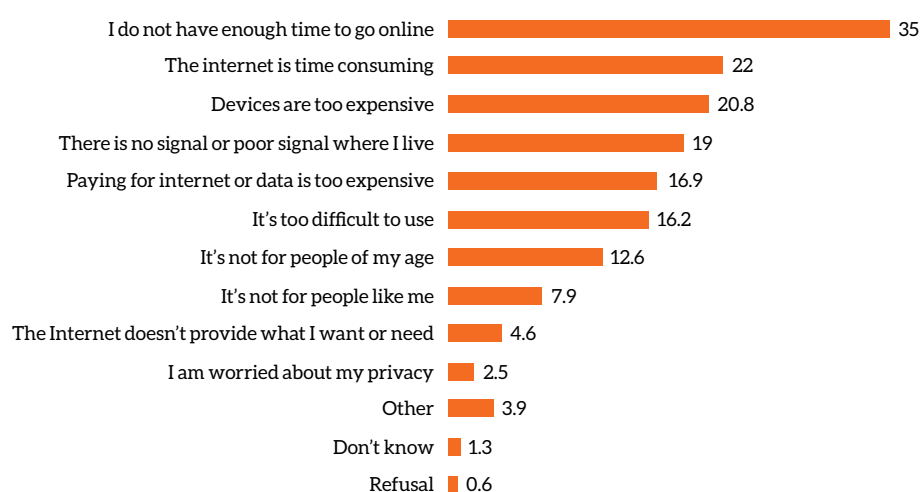
**Figure 5: Parents' frequency of Internet access (%)**



Q: Are you able to access the Internet when you want to or need to? Base: Parents, total target population, N=1,000.

Among surveyed parents who are unable to access the Internet at all times (71%), lack of time and economic reasons seem to be the key factors for not doing so (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Reasons for parents' limited access to the Internet (%)**



Q: When you are unable to access the Internet, what are the reasons? Base: Parents who are unable to always access the Internet, 71% of target population, N=710



## 4. Online activities and digital skills

This chapter describes how children use the Internet, which activities they practise online and the applications and websites they like and visit more often. It also looks at children's and parents' online competencies, in terms of what they feel they are good at online and what they find difficult. The results are based on the perceptions of children and parents of their confidence in digital skills required to use the Internet.

### 4.1 Online activities

The Internet offers a huge range of opportunities for children in the areas of learning, communication, creativity and entertainment. The children reported that the most popular activities that they practised weekly or more often while surfing the Internet relate to entertainment, learning and social interactions. With regard to entertainment, children mostly reported watching video clips (89.7%), using online applications (75.3%) and listening to music online (69.6%). With regard to social interactions, they reported talking to family and friends who live far away (79.3%) or nearby (75.9%) and visiting social network sites (76.3%). The second most frequent usage of Internet is for school-related purposes (79.7%), with girls reporting higher usage than boys.

Children are using the Internet to a very small extent for community and civic participation activities, such as signing a petition (3.6%) or getting involved in a campaign or protest (4.3%) or getting involved in local organisations or charities (6.7%). This is possibly due to a low civic and community engagement of children and young people in their 'offline world', pointing to an area that requires more attention from schools and community organisations.

The range of different activities that children engage in increases with age, as illustrated in Table 4, where the activities in which more than one-third of children engage are highlighted (grey). This is probably related to the increase in Internet access that is observed in older children but may also reflect an increase in curiosity for new opportunities as children consolidate their digital skills with age.

Overall, boys engage more than girls in most of the activities outlined in Table 4, except for studying and information-seeking activities. Activities that reflect the greatest gender differences and are more popular with boys include using social media (boys, 86%; girls, 67%), playing online games (boys, 64%; girls, 50%) and posting photos or comments online (boys, 57%; girls, 41%).

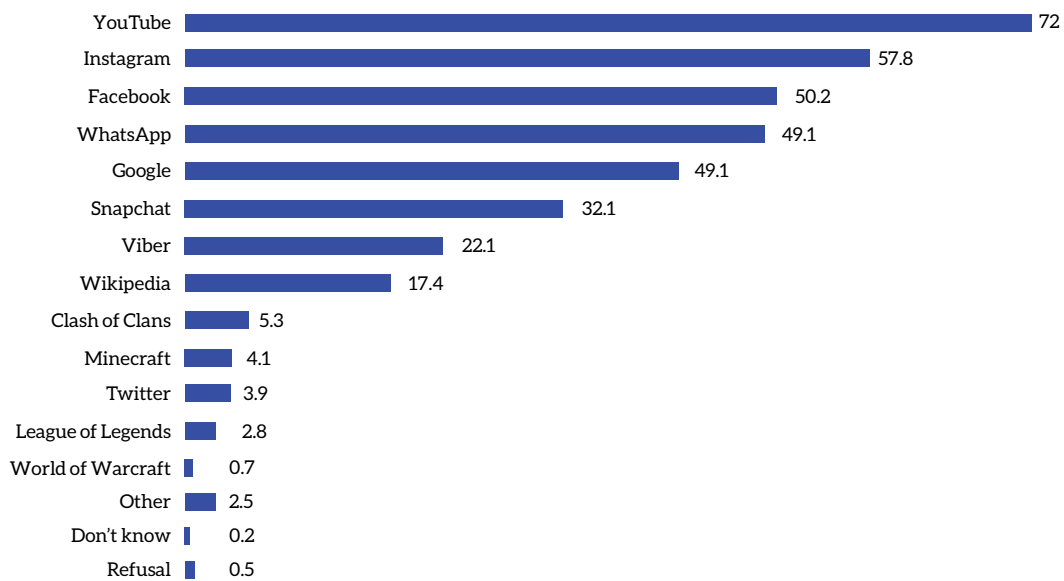
**Table 4. Frequency of activities practised weekly or more often, by gender and age group (%)**

Activity	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Watched video clips	89.7	91	89	88	90	93
Used the Internet for school work	79.7	76	84	68	88	82
Talked to distant family or friends	79.3	82	76	60	81	93
Visited a social network site	76.3	86	67	53	80	93
Talked to nearby family or friends	75.9	80	72	55	76	93
Used apps	75.3	80	71	60	78	86
Watched TV shows or movies	73.7	74	73	64	76	79
Learned by searching online	71.3	71	71	58	72	83
Listened to music	69.6	72	67	58	69	79
Used instant messaging	68.8	72	66	44	66	91
Played online games	57.5	64	50	59	59	56
Talked to people from different backgrounds	52.2	56	49	42	56	57
Posted photos or comments online	49.3	57	41	23	53	67
Helped someone who wanted to go online	39.3	44	36	23	40	51
Looked for health information	33.3	29	39	19	33	45
Looked for news online	30.1	29	31	10	27	49
Looked for work or study information	25.4	23	28	14	26	34
Created and uploaded my own video or music to share with others	23.2	27	20	16	20	31
Accessed or participated in a site where other people have the same interests as me	22.5	26	19	11	21	33
Looked for resources or events about my local neighbourhood	19.4	20	20	11	23	23
Visited a chat room to meet new people	12.7	17	8	5	11	22
Created a blog or story online	9	11	7	5	9	13
Got involved in a local organisation or charity	6.7	7	7	3	7	10
Got involved in a campaign or protest	4.3	6	3	2	3	7
Signed a petition online	3.6	6	3	1	2	5

Q: How often you have done these things ONLINE in the past month? Base: Child users of the Internet, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

When asked about the websites or apps that they use most, children pointed to YouTube and Instagram, followed by Facebook, WhatsApp, Google and Snapchat (Figure 7). These results corroborate the findings reported above that children mostly engage in entertainment, social communication and learning activities online.

**Figure 7: Most popular websites or apps among children (%)**



Q: Which websites or apps do you use most often? Base: Total target population of children aged 9–17 years, Internet users, N=1,000

Instagram and Facebook are a lot more popular among boys, as are games such as Clash of Clans and League of Legends. In general, older children are more inclined to prefer social networking websites and applications than are younger children (see Table 14, Appendix 1).

## 4.2 Digital skills

When comparing different sets of skills, results show that children are most confident in skills that help them operate within the digital environment (installing apps, saving photos and opening new tabs in browsers) and have fairly high confidence with respect to skills related to social interactions online (knowing how to remove people from contact lists, knowing what information to share and not share) (Table 5). These results can be explained by the types of activities that children mostly engage in, such as watching videos, using apps and communicating with family or friends through the Internet, and therefore suggest a direct relationship between activities performed online and the digital skills possessed by children. The most reported skill relates to installing an application on mobile devices, reported by eight out of ten children (80.1%), which is to be expected given that the smartphone is the device used most to access the Internet. On the other hand, children are less confident about their creative skills, possibly the result of less exposure of children to such types of activities. This finding perhaps indicates that children need more incentives and guidance to engage in creative activities and improve their relevant digital skills.

«There is a need to provide incentives and guidance for children to engage in creative online activities and improve relevant digital skills.»

Overall, children's level of confidence in all digital skills increases with age, as illustrated in Table 5 by the highlighting of digital skills in which more than a third of children are confident. This finding may be explained by the fact that as they get older children engage in a wider range of activities and spend more time online.

**Table 5: Children and parents who report being fairly or very confident in a digital skill (%)**

Skill	Parents	Children	Age group (years)		
			9-11	12-14	15-17
I know how to install apps on a mobile device	54.6	80.1	66	79	91
I know how to remove people from my contact list	70.2	71.8	44	78	89
I know how to save a photo that I find online	55.7	66.7	43	69	84
I know when I should and shouldn't share information online	68.7	64.6	33	71	85
I know how to open a new tab in browser	54.5	63.0	48	60	77
I find it easy to find a website I have visited before	53.6	61.1	43	63	74
I understand which information I should and shouldn't share	62.6	59.6	31	63	80
I know how to open downloaded files	44.3	54.4	28	55	74
I know how to change my privacy settings	47.3	53.7	19	54	82
I find it easy to choose the best keywords for online searches	48.6	48.6	30	48	65
I know how to post online video or music that I have created	37.3	46.1	25	46	63
I know how to edit online content that others have created	24.2	45.4	25	40	66
I find it easy to check if the information I find online is true	32.9	36.2	17	35	52
I know how to block pop-ups that I don't want	26.5	34.5	18	31	51
I find it easy to decide if a website can be trusted	29.9	34.2	16	32	50
I know how to use a programming language	18.0	24.3	8	23	37
I know how to design a website	11.5	20.2	10	16	32

Q: Thinking about how you use the Internet, how true are these things true for you? Base: Child (N=1,000) and parent (N=680) Internet users. Percentage of fairly true + very true answers

Thus, the more children engage in online activities, the higher the level of digital skills they acquire. This should be taken into consideration by parents and public authorities that may have a preference for restrictive approaches to Internet use by children and thus may considerably limit the opportunities that children have to develop their digital skills. Similarly, the digital skills of boys are generally higher than those of girls, demonstrating a gender disparity in online activities and Internet-related skills, and which needs to inform policies and activities aiming to increase digital literacy and skills among all children.

**« Limiting access and use of Internet by children also means that children will have fewer opportunities to develop their digital skills. »**

**« Policies and activities that aim to increase digital literacy and skills of children need to address the gap between boys and girls in their online activities and digital skills. »**

In terms of online social skills, younger children are the least confident in their online social behaviours. More than half (60%) of 9–11-year-olds reported that they did not understand what information they should and should not share online or when to do so (59%), while a little less than half (49%) did not know how to remove people from their contact lists. Only a few (21%) felt confident about knowing how to behave appropriately in different online situations, or how to change who they share content with (24%). This might be a cause for concern since many younger children engage in social activities online without sufficient knowledge or the skill set to feel safe. Meanwhile, the majority of 15–17-year-olds reported being confident in their awareness of how to perform such activities, indicating that this is knowledge that develops with age.

**«Attention should be paid to younger children's engagement in social online activities, as they possess insufficient knowledge and skills with regard to online social behaviours »**

A little more than one-third of children (36.2%) stated that it was easy for them to check whether information they found on the Internet was true, and that they found it easy to decide if a website could be trusted (34.2%). This is a critical skill enabling children to discern fake news, which is a growing and concerning phenomenon. It may be worth considering early intervention to teach children critical fact checking skills and information literacy through both formal and non-formal education.

For most skills, children are more confident in their abilities than their parents (see Table 5). Only with regard to social skills are parents on a par with, or more confident than, their children, perhaps because some of these social skills resemble those necessary in real life social relationships. This finding on parental social skills could inform the development of parental programmes tapping into their skills in guiding children in online experiences, with particular focus on the younger children.



## 5. Online risks and (potential) harm

The present report has so far dealt with the range of opportunities that the Internet offers to children and young people. However, it is important to emphasise that access to the Internet has increased the exposure of children to a range of risks to their safety and well-being. The report explores the risks related to potentially harmful content and contact with people through the Internet, such as talking to strangers online or meeting face-to-face people who were first encountered in the digital space.

Exposure to risk does not automatically or always mean that a child is harmed. This is an important approach UNICEF is trying to establish, because often conversations around online risks are adult-driven with little regard for a child's perception of their online experiences. Therefore, for each child exposed to risk, the report attempts to trace if this has led to any, including potential, harm. In this way it will be possible to determine which risks might be truly harmful for children, and whether some risks that adults usually worry about may be exaggerated. The analysis aims to provide better evidence for policy makers and care givers to tailor their prevention strategies to address truly harmful practices while allowing, and not blocking needlessly, other avenues that children are eager to explore.

**“Not all risks represent harm. Restricting Internet access does not necessarily serve the preventive purpose and in fact may negatively affect a child's digital literacy development”**

### 5.1 Experiences of harm

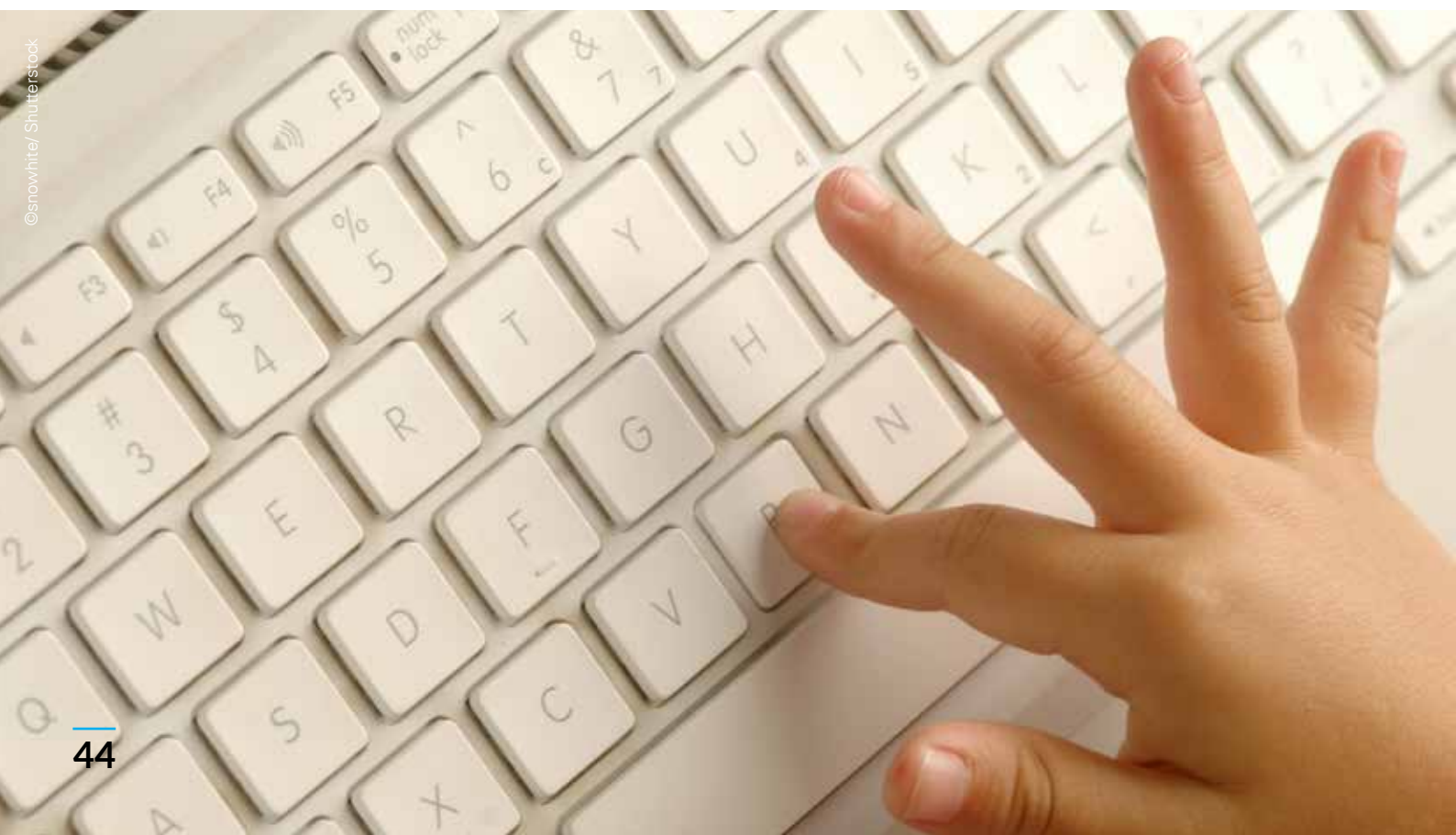
To gain a general understanding of whether the children have experienced harm online, they were asked whether anything that happened online bothered or upset them, that is whether they had experienced something that made them feel anxious or frightened. Fourteen percent of children reported they had felt this way in the past twelve months, with negligible differences between boys and girls (Figure 8). This is a relatively small number given the level of concern adults often have with regard to their children's online safety. The findings show that older children are more often bothered than younger children by something that they experienced online, which is to be expected given the degree of independence and overall Internet access that increase with age. When asked to rate how upset they were by this unpleasant experience, 49.3 percent of the fourteen percent who reported such an

experience were only a little upset by it, 23.8 percent were somewhat upset, and only 18.8 percent were very upset (26 children in total reported being very upset). A larger proportion of girls reported being very upset (25%) compared to boys (14%), indicating that children's experience of the Internet is gendered, which will have implications for the design and implementation of the required interventions.

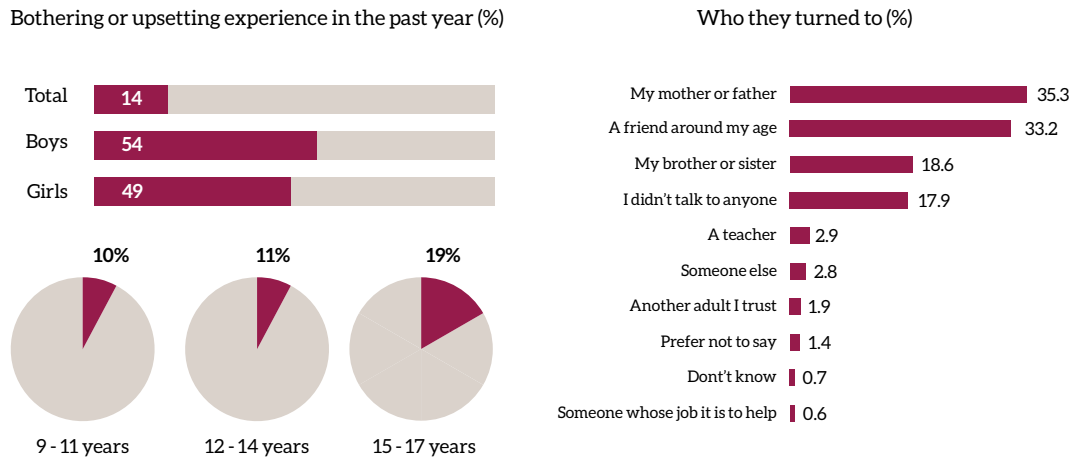
**“Children’s experience of the Internet is gendered, which will have implications on the design and implementation of the required interventions.”**

When asked who they turned to when something upsetting happened online, children reported that the main source of support are their peers, including friends and siblings (51.8%), followed by parents (35.3%). Children of age 9–11 years turn to their parents (64%) more often than do older children (12–14-year-olds, 26%; 15–17-year-olds, 28%). Children of 15–17 years of age turn to siblings and peers 59 percent of the time, a higher level than that reported by other groups (9–11-year-olds, 36%; 12–14-year-olds, 52%; see Table 15, Appendix 1).

It is worth pointing out that few children (only 2.9%) are willing to speak to teachers or someone else whose job it is to support children (0.6%). This is a critical finding with two possible explanations: 1, the overall school environment and trust that children have in child-care workers is far from ideal; and 2) teachers and child-care workers are not seen by children as someone who can help them with issues related to personal matters or the Internet. In either case, the situation is not promising and requires urgent attention.



**Figure 8: Percentage of children upset while on the Internet, and to whom they turned**



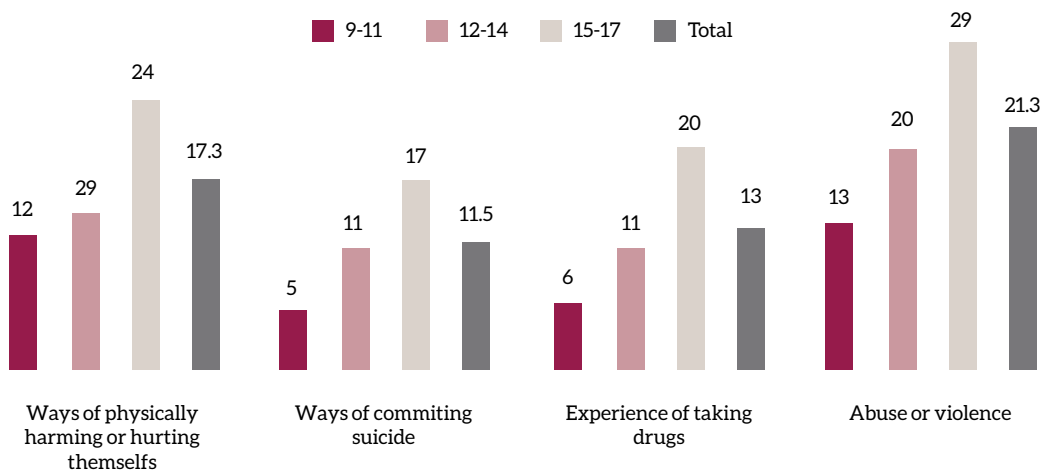
Q: In the PAST YEAR, has anything happened online that bothered or upset you in some way? e.g. made you feel uncomfortable, scared or that you shouldn't have seen it. Base: Total target population of 9–17-year-old child Internet users; N=1,000

Q: The last time something happened online that bothered or upset you, did you talk to any of these people about it? Base: Those who had harmful experience in the past year; 14% of target population, N=140

## 5.2 Exposure to harmful content online

Children were asked about exposure to negative and potentially harmful content encountered during their navigation of the Internet. The most common content risk for Albanian Children is exposure to content that relates to abuse or violence (21.3%), followed by content related to self-harm (17.3%) (Figure 9).

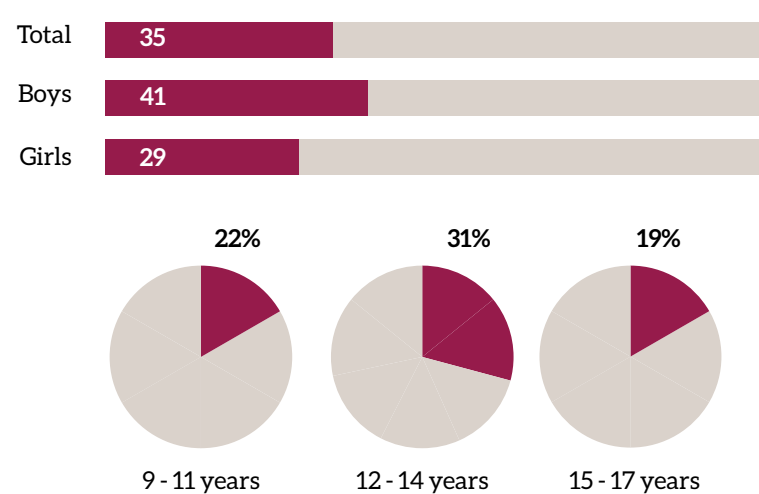
**Figure 9: Exposure to harmful content of children of different age groups (years; %)**



Q: In the PAST YEAR, have you seen websites or online discussions where people talk about the following issues? Base: Total target population of 9–17-year-old child Internet users

In terms of content depicting real violence, more than one-third of children (35%) stated that over the past twelve months they have seen materials on the Internet depicting scenes of real violence (Figure 10). Overall, the exposure to all types of harmful content online, as expected, increases with age, with the older 15–17-year-old children being the most exposed age group (Figure 10). This could be because older children have easier access, spend more time online and engage in a wider range of online activities, thus increasing the likelihood of being exposed to both positive and negative content. Similarly to what is already observed, there are gender differences with boys being exposed more than girls to content risks online.

**Figure 10: Exposure to real violence content (%)**



*Q: In the PASTYEAR, have you EVER seen images or videos of REAL violence online? Base: Total target population of child Internet users of age 9–17 years, N=1,000*

Seven out of ten children (71.5%) with this experience saw such content only occasionally while less than two out of ten (16.7%) stated that it happened often (data not shown). Nearly two-thirds (63%) of children who saw depictions of real violence reported that they were upset by it, and it seems that gender plays a significant role here again, with boys (55%) being less upset than girls (76%).

**5.2.1 Meeting new people through the Internet**

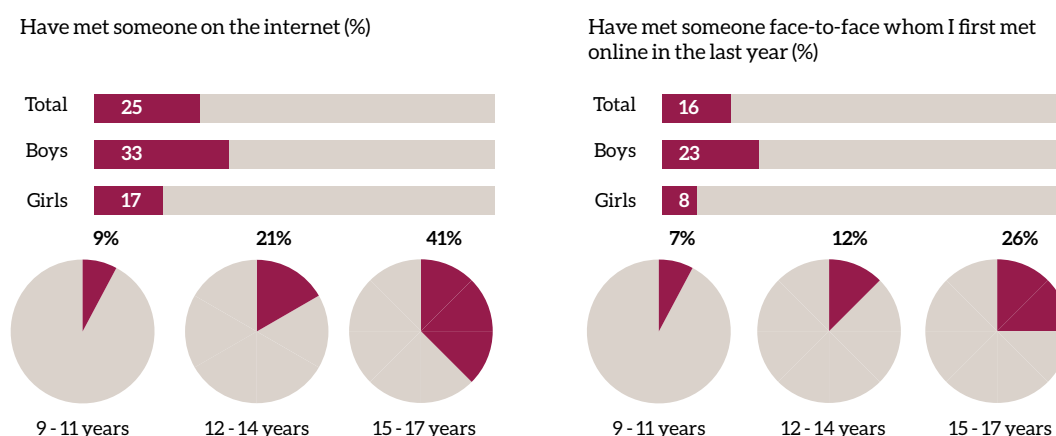
The report reveals the level of children’s exposure to contact risks with regard to meeting strangers online and also face-to-face. When asked whether they had come into contact with people online whom they did not know, one in four children (25%) reported having had at least one contact online with someone whom they had never met face-to-face, while 16 percent reported meeting someone in person whom

they had first met on the Internet in the previous year (Figure 11). Meeting strangers online and then face-to-face is significantly more likely for boys and older girls. This finding may be explained by the fact that boys and older girls are more exposed to the Internet, spend more time online and engage in a wider range of activities, and are possibly more prone to risk-taking behaviours.

Of the children who reported meeting in person someone they first met online, the majority (81 %) reported feeling either happy or neutral about the meeting, and only one in ten (8.6%) reported feeling a little or quite upset by it. Also, older children reported feeling more upset by these real-life encounters with their virtual friends, which makes sense as older children are more than four times more likely than younger children to meet someone face-to-face that they first met online. However, it is important to note that most children are happy with this experience, possibly linked with them exploring hobbies and interests, as well as expanding their network of acquaintances. Exploring new terrain and meeting new people always contains an element of risk, but it transpires that those experiences are not necessarily harmful but rather enjoyable, quite the contrary to what adults sometimes fear.

**“Most of children who had met people face-to-face who they had first met online report feeling happy about the encounter, which is in contrast with the high level of concern reported by parents over such encounters.”**

**Figure 11: Percentage of children of different age groups who had first met new people online**



Q: Have you ever had contact on the Internet with someone you have not met face-to-face before? In the PAST YEAR, have you at least once met anyone face-to-face that you first got to know on the Internet? Base: Total population of children of age 9–17, Internet users, N=1,000

### 5.2.2 Cyberbullying and hate speech

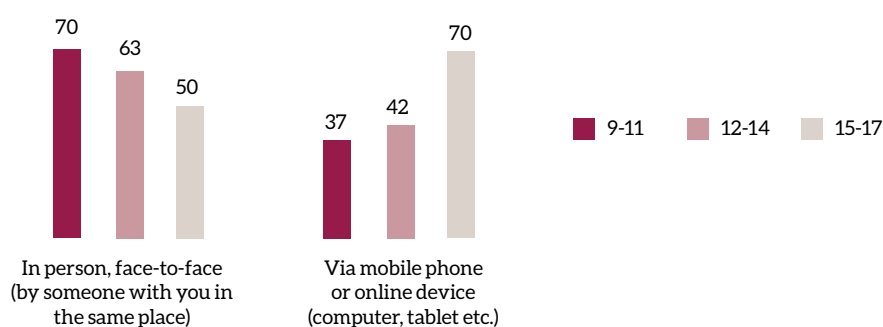
Another contact risk is that of cyberbullying. Among the children surveyed, this was found to be an uncommon experience since only 6.4 percent reported having been mistreated, harassed or made fun of repeatedly by someone during the past twelve months (8%, boys; 5%, girls). However, among those who reported being bullied, children were more likely to be bullied in person (61.7%) rather than over a digital device (47.9%). Overall there seems to be an under-reporting of bullying as a previous study had shown that 19.4 percent of children of 10–18 years of age were subject to bullying in 2017<sup>24</sup>, indicating differences in how the question was understood by the children.

**Overall there seems to be an under-reporting of bullying as a previous study had shown that 19.4 percent of children of 10–18 years of age were subject to bullying in 2017, indicating differences in how the question was understood by the children.**

Younger children are more likely than older children to report bullying in person, while older children are more likely to report cyberbullying (Figure 12). This difference is probably due to the fact that older children use the Internet and digital devices more often, and for longer, than older children, increasing the likelihood of harmful contacts being experienced online.

When asked about hate speech, more than one-third (36.6%) of children reported that they had been upset at least once because of hateful or degrading messages online. This was more common among children of age 15–17 years (45%), and least common among 9–11-year-olds (27%; Table 16, Appendix 1).

**Figure 12: Percentage of children of different age group (years) who have been bullied in person and via a digital device**



Q: If someone has treated you this way how has it happened? Base: 6.4% of children who reported being mistreated, harassed or made fun of repeatedly.

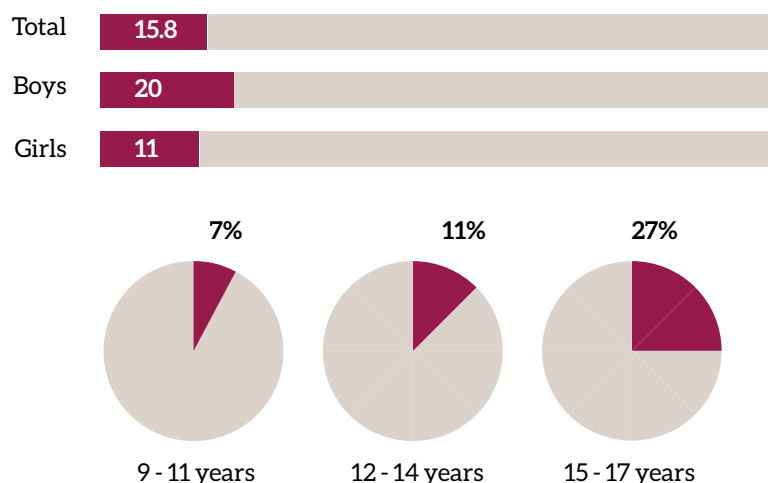
24 Dragoti E., Ismaili E. 2017. National Survey on Bullying and Violent Extremism in the Education System of Albania.

### 5.3 Exposure to sexual content

When asked about their exposure to sexual content online over the past year, 15.8 percent of children reported having seen images of a sexual nature online (Figure 13). The percentage is much lower than the level reported in the 2013 study by World Vision where 44 percent of children reported seeing sexual images every day, possibly representing an under-reporting due to the methodology used during the present study, which did not interview children outside of their household, increasing the likelihood of a socially desirable response.

Older children (15–17-year-olds, 27%) and boys (20%) more likely to report seeing sexual images online than are younger children (9–11-year-olds, 7%) and girls (11%), confirming the previous observation concerning the exposure to content risk of these groups of children.

**Figure 13: Exposure to sexual content in the last year (%)**



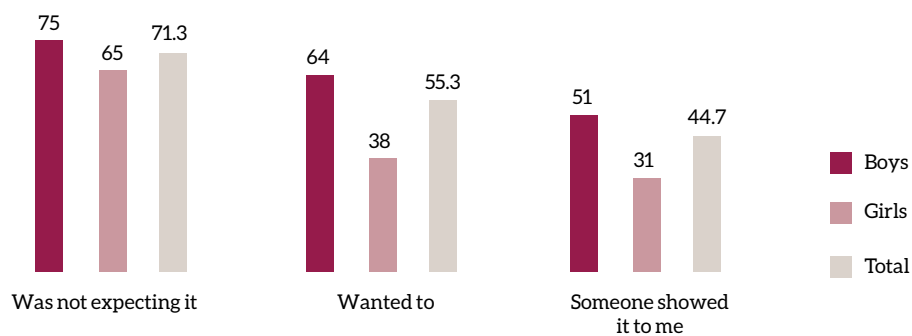
Q: In the PAST YEAR, have you seen any sexually explicit images on the Internet? Base: Total target population of children age 9–17 years, Internet users, N=1,000

To understand how children come across sexual content online, the study asked those who reported seeing sexual images online how this happened (Figure 14). Results show that most of the children were exposed to such images when they did not expect it (71.3%). Such a situation presents a challenge, and perhaps more should be done working with Internet providers to ensure that online sexual content that children may be involuntarily exposed to through social media, pop-ups or advertisement, are monitored and regulated.

**“More should be done working with Internet operators to monitor and regulate involuntary exposure of children to sexual content online.”**

At the same time, more than half of children (55.3%) had seen such images because they wanted to and had looked for them, and almost half (44.7%) because someone else, a peer or sibling, had shown them. Boys were much more likely than girls to report that they saw sexual content because they wanted to (64%, boys; 38%, girls), as well as seeing sexual content because someone had shown it to them (51%, boys; 31%, girls). This might reflect increasing curiosity and awareness of sexuality, especially for boys and older girls, who might voluntarily look for sexual content and information online (Table 17, Appendix 1).

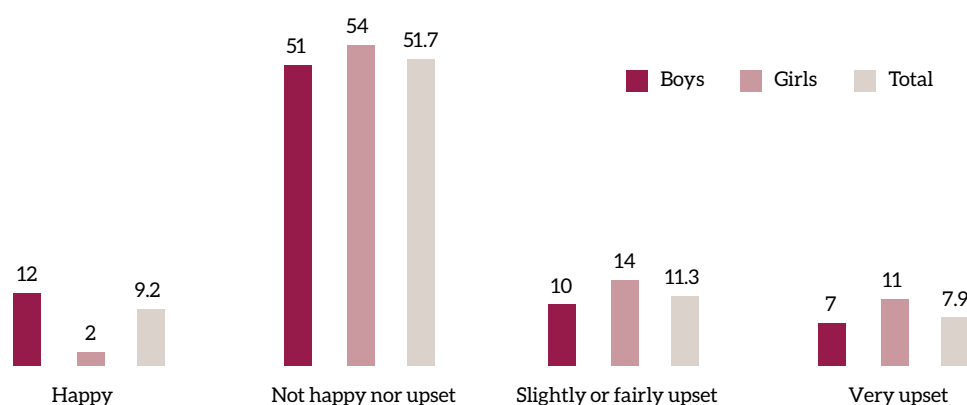
**Figure 14: How children came across sexual content online, by gender (%)**



Q: Thinking about the LAST YEAR, have any of these things happened? I have seen sexual content (images, photos or videos of naked persons or persons exposing parts of the body where the genital or intimate organs are shown) online; Base: those who have seen images on the Internet that are obviously sexual in the PAST YEAR; 16% of target population, N=158

Children were asked how they felt after seeing sexual images online (Figure 15). Understanding children’s perceptions and feeling is crucial because online risks do not always equate with harm and may sometimes result in positive experiences for children. Results show that the majority of children (51.7%) were indifferent to these images and felt neither happy nor upset. A small proportion (total 7.9%) of girls (11%) and boys (7%) reported being very upset by these contents, while some children (9.2%), mostly boys, reported being happy about seeing them (girls 2% and boys 12%). Younger children were far more likely to report being upset from exposure to sexual content than were older children (Table 18, Appendix 1). These results underline the need for parents and educators to provide children with age-appropriate education about sex and the tools to assess the accuracy and intent of the content they see online. Introducing parental control mechanisms through discussion with children could also be a way to prevent involuntary exposure to such content.

**Figure 15: Children's reaction to seeing sexual images online, by gender (%)**



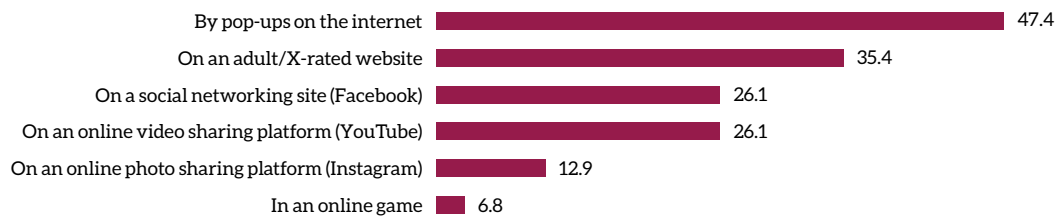
Q: If you have seen images of this kind, how did you feel about what you saw? Base: those who have been exposed to sexual content in the ways listed; 14% of target population, N=137

Children were more likely to have seen sexual content online on a mobile phone or other digital device (88%) compared to on television or film (68%), though the percentage of children seeing sexual images on television or film is considerable (Table 19, Appendix 1). Boys were more likely to have seen sexual content on television, while girls more likely to have seen it on a digital device.

Younger children were less likely to come across sexual images on television or film compared to older children, but this was not the case for online devices where children across all age groups were equally likely to see sexual images (89% of 9–11-year-olds; 90% of 12–14-year-olds; 87% of 15–17-year-olds). This finding suggests that parents may have better developed content regulation practices for television and film, but not for digital devices. Alternatively, since most children report seeing such content unexpectedly, it might be that the digital environment is not yet as well regulated as television or film.

Children who saw images of a sexual nature online on a mobile phone, computer, tablet or other device, reported that they appeared most often on pop-ups (47.4%), confirming the finding that most of the children are exposed involuntarily to sexual content online. Results show that popular platforms such as YouTube (26.1%) and social media platforms such as Facebook (17%) or Instagram (12.9%) contain sexual images to which children are exposed, despite their policies to exclude sexually explicit content (Figure 16). These results may be explained by a growing number of sexually explicit images being shared and becoming popular on social media.

**Figure 16: Children exposed to sexual content online in the last year through different means (%)**



Q: Did you see the images of this kind on any of the following? Base: Those who saw sexual images on a mobile phone, computer, tablet or any other device, N=121

## 5.4 Unwanted sexual experiences

This section reports findings on unwanted online sexual experiences of children, which can be seen as a precursor to their sexual abuse or exploitation (Table 6). The most commonly reported experience was of children being asked to provide sexual information about themselves (3.1 %). While only a few children experienced this, it is still cause for concern due to the serious nature of this experience. Importantly, around 1.2 percent of children were victims of revenge porn, where sexual images or videos that they produced and shared privately were shared with other people. This situation could potentially constitute a criminal offence. Furthermore, around 1.2 percent of children were blackmailed because of the sexual images they shared, which is also a criminal offence. Given that these experiences occur in Albania, it is important that children are made aware of the existing legislation around these offences so that they inform the police if they are being blackmailed. Equally, it is critical that the police are properly trained and equipped to respond to such reports by children.

**“Children need to be made aware of the existing legislation around online child sexual abuse so that they will inform the police if they were to be blackmailed. Equally, it is critical that the police are properly trained and equipped to respond to such reports.”**

**Table 6: Children who experienced unwanted online sexual experiences (%)**

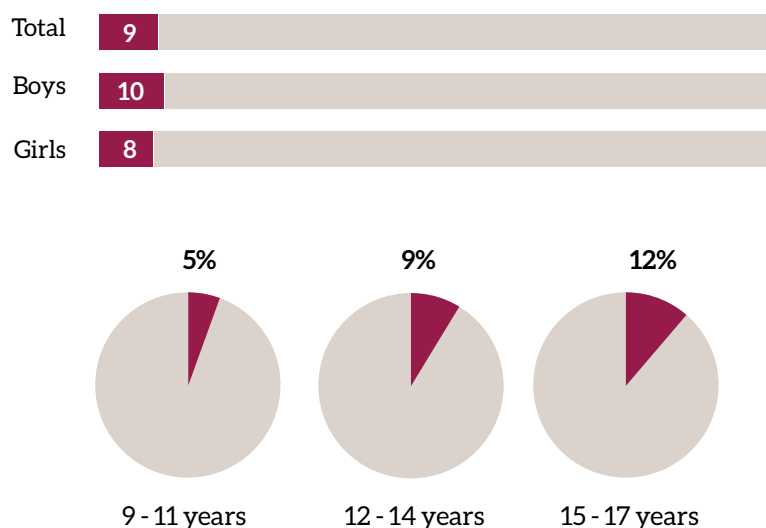
Experience	%	No.	Prefer not to say
I have been asked for sexual information about myself, when I did not want to answer such questions.	3.1	31	1.2
I have shared sexual information, images or videos of myself because someone gave me money in return	2.5	25	1.0
I have been asked by someone on the Internet to talk about sexual acts when I did not want to.	2.1	21	1.2
I have shared sexual information, images, or videos of myself because someone forced me to do so, or threatened me or someone I care about.	2.0	20	0.6
I have been asked on the Internet for a photo or video showing my private parts when I did not want to.	2.0	20	1.1
I have been asked by someone on the Internet to do something sexual when I did not want to.	1.7	17	0.8
Sexual images or videos of myself that I produced and that I previously sent to someone privately were published or shared with other people.	1.2	12	0.6
I have been forced by someone else to watch sexual images or videos online.	0.9	9	1
I was blackmailed, because of sexual images or videos of myself that I sent to someone.	1.2	12	0.4

Q: In the PAST YEAR, have any of these happened to you on the Internet at least once? Base: Total target population of child Internet users, N=1,000

As many as one in ten children (9%) reported at least one of the listed unwanted sexual experiences over the Internet during the previous year (Figure 17), with older children (12% of 15–17-year-olds) being more affected by this than younger children. It is important to emphasise that not all these situations may lead to harm and that children may have the possibility to say no to such requests, even when it comes from adults or people they trust. Nonetheless, the numbers show that exposure of Albanian children to the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation is sufficiently high to require the child protection system to increase its readiness to respond to these risks.

**“Exposure of Albanian children to the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation online is sufficiently high to require the child protection system to increase its readiness to respond to these risks.”**

**Figure 17: Children who experienced at least one unwanted online sexual experience (%)**

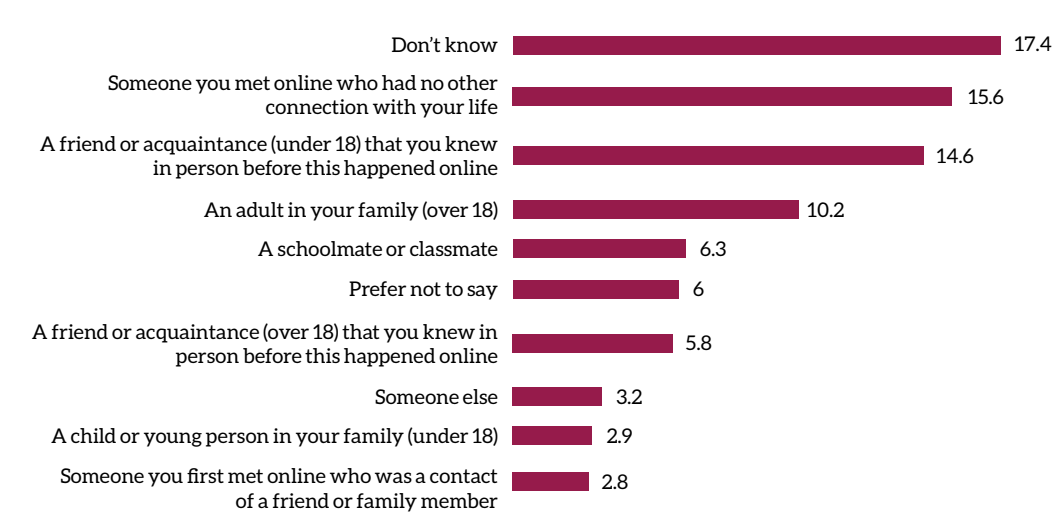


Q: In the PAST YEAR, have any of these happened to you on the Internet at least once? Base: Total population of children of age 9–17 years, Internet users, N=1,000

Children were asked about the person who had involved children in an unwanted sexual experience online (Figure 18). Most of the situations involved someone the child did not know or who had no connection with the child (17.4% and 15.6%, respectively). However, a considerable portion of these acts of unwanted sexual solicitation were initiated by someone the child knew, such as a former girlfriend or boyfriend (15.3%), or an adult in the children’s family (10.2%). These result show that while the Internet may be exposing children to more risks as they may come into contact with online sexual predators, at the same time it can also serve to exacerbate sexual abuse or exploitation happening in the lives of children by people in their circle of trust.

**“Internet can exacerbate sexual abuse or exploitation happening in the lives of children by individuals in their circle of trust.”**

**Figure 18: Children involved in unwanted sexual experiences through the following persons (%)**



Q: Who was the person who did this? Base: Total number of incidents, N=166

When asked about how they felt in these situations, 56.8 percent of children reported that these incidents did not upset them, though 32.4 percent did report being upset. Girls (41 %) reported such an upsetting experience more frequently than boys (25%; Table 20, Appendix 1).

Children are more likely to turn for support from friends or older siblings. However, those who turned to their parents, older sisters and teachers felt more supported. **None of the children that reported an unwanted sexual experience turned to the national child help line ALO 116 111 for support.** This can be explained by the fact that children may prefer the support of someone they know and that person is part of their close social circle, including their peers and siblings. Nonetheless, it would require further research to understand why children are not using the national helpline in these cases and to highlight the need for the Helpline to become more visible and more accessible to children who risk being subject to sexual abuse and exploitation online.

**Table 7: Children who felt supported when reporting to someone**

Person to whom the child reported an incident	% of children who felt supported
Father, step or foster father	80
Older sister	79
Teacher or educator	74
Mother, step or foster mother	73
Friend or acquaintance	69
Another adult you trust	68
Older brother	55
Younger brother or sister	29
Other adult relatives	22
Someone else	0
Child Helpline ALO 116111	0

Q: Have you told anyone about what happened? Did you feel you received the support you needed?

Base: Unwanted sexual experiences that happened during the PAST YEAR, N=166

## 5.5 Parental perception of online risks for children

Parents' worries over their child's well-being are present at different levels for different aspects of their lives (Table 8). Most often parents worry about their child's school achievement and health (67.7% and 62.1%, respectively). With regard to concerns over child safety over the Internet, the most reported worry has to do with their child seeing inappropriate content on the Internet (45.6%) and that a stranger might contact them online (45.4%). This shows a certain gap between parental concerns and children's perception of these online experiences, as most of the children are not upset, either by content that adults deem inappropriate for them or by encountering new people online.

**Table 8: Worries parents have for their children**

Issue	Percent
How my child is doing at school	67.7
My child's health	62.1
<b>My child seeing inappropriate content on the Internet</b>	45.6
Other children treating my child in a hurtful or nasty way	45.6
A stranger contacting my child over the Internet	45.4
My child becoming a victim of crime	42.7
My child's interest in alcohol, tobacco, taking drugs	40.4
My child revealing personal information online	39.9
My child's sexual activities	38.6
My child getting involved in gambling	36.9
My child getting into trouble with the police	36.6
My child leaving the country	34.4

Q: Thinking about your child, which of these things, if any, do you worry about a lot? Base: Total population of parents, N=1,000

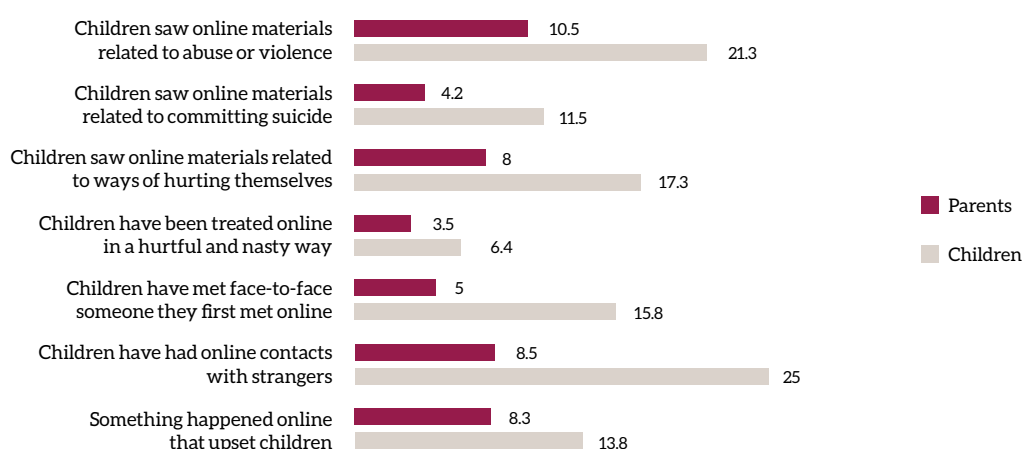
Overall, the level of reporting by parents on children's experience of online risks is considerably lower than the level reported by the children themselves (Figure 19). This finding indicates a possible lack of awareness among parents of the negative and disturbing situations that their children encounter on the Internet.

Only one-third of parents are aware of their children's online contacts with someone they do not know, or that their children met someone in person that they first met online, when compared to the number of children that reported such contacts.

Similarly, surveyed parents stated that their children face harmful content to a lesser degree than reported by the children. Only one out of ten parents (10.5%) reported that their child saw content related to violence or abuse, while the number of children who reported such an experience is double that figure. A similar pattern is observed for parental awareness of children's experience of online content related to suicide or self-harm.

Parents of boys and of older girls (age 15–17 years) stated more often that such experiences happened to their children, in line with findings from the children themselves (see Table 21, Appendix 1).

**Figure 19: Harmful online experiences according to parents and children (%)**



Q: As far as you are aware, in the PAST YEAR, has anything happened online that bothered or upset your child in some way (e.g. made them feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that they shouldn't have seen it)? As far as you are aware, in the PAST YEAR, have any of these things happened to your child on the Internet? Base: Total surveyed population of parents, N=1,000

Parents were asked about their knowledge of their children's exposure to sexual content and unwanted sexual experiences online (Table 9). The results indicate that, even though the parents worry about their children's behaviour and experiences on the Internet, they are still unaware of the frequency with which these experiences occur. Some 5.5 percent of parents stated that their children had been exposed to

images with a sexual context, while one in ten did not know whether their children had had such an experience. Meanwhile, parents of young boys and children of age 15–17 years (20%) were more likely to state that they did not know whether their children had had such experiences. In general, parents underestimate the prevalence of these experiences, even though they constitute their major concern with regard to their children’s experience in the digital space.

**Table 9: Parental perception of their children’s exposure to negative online sexual experiences (%)**

Variable	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9–11	12–14	15–17
Child has seen images on the Internet that are obviously sexual	5.5	7	4	3	5	8
Child has been asked for sexual information about themselves	1.5	1	2	0	1	3
Child has been asked to talk about sexual acts with someone on the Internet when they did not want to	1.0	1	1		2	1
Child has been asked by someone on the Internet to do something sexual when they did not want to	2.0	2	2	1	2	3

Q: As far as you are aware, in the PAST YEAR, have any of these things happened to your child on the Internet at least once? Base: Parents of total population of children of age 9–17 years, Internet users, N=1,000





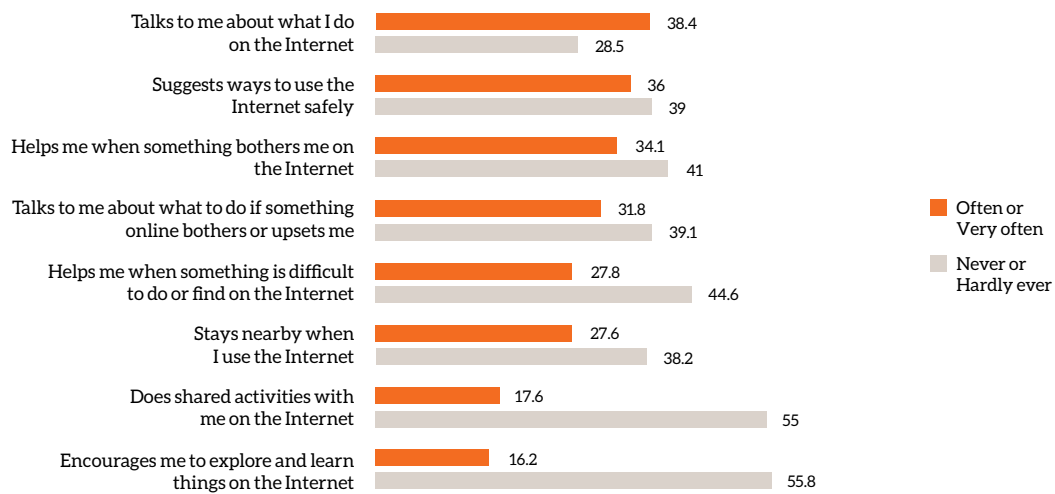
## 6. Parental mediation of children's online experience

This section describes the importance of parents in children's well-being and online safety. As parents are the ones generally expected to both enable their children's Internet use and protect them from harm, particular attention is given to the way in which the children's experiences of the Internet are mediated. The present report explores two common ways in which parents do mediate children's experiences in the digital space, with active and restrictive approaches. Active digital parenting means that parents encourage their child to explore and learn things on the Internet, suggest ways in which to use the Internet and engage in common activities with other children online. Restrictive digital parenting focuses more on establishing rules and forbidding children's engagement in certain activities online, including through parental controls and monitoring of their Internet activities. The chapter explores how these two approaches possibly affect children's online experiences.

### 6.1 Active parental mediation

When children were asked how much their parents engage in active mediation with regard to their Internet activity, the general perception they report is that most parents do not employ an active, supporting parental approach to Internet use (Figure 20). The most common form of support is talking to children about their online activities (38.4%) and suggesting ways to use the Internet safely (36%), while activities related to joint exploration and learning of new things online was reported by less than a fifth of the surveyed parents.

**Figure 20: Children's perception of parental active mediation of Internet use (%)**



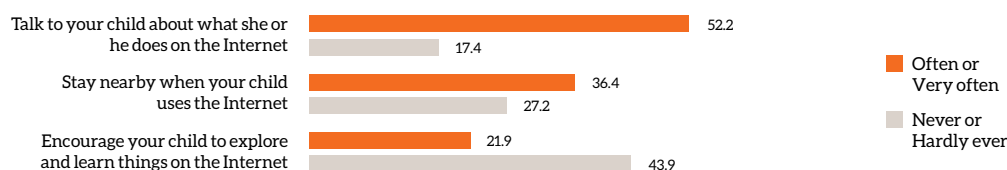
Q: When you use the Internet does your parent or caregiver do the following? Base: Child users of the Internet, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

Children of age 9–11 years are more likely to report that parents help them with difficult things online or when something on the Internet bothers them. More girls reported that their parents frequently or very frequently stayed with them while they use the Internet (38%, compared to 18% for boys) or talked to them about what to do if they were upset by something online (39%, compared to 25%; Table 22, Appendix 1). Whether or not this is a sign of active digital parenting in favour of girls is difficult to conclude. However, when drawn together with other findings, the element of control is higher for girls in almost all aspects of their digital experiences and development.

Parents, however, have a considerably better impression of their own degree of supportive engagement in children's activities online. More than half of the parents surveyed (52.2%) stated that they often talk with their children about their Internet activities and more than one-third that they often or very often stay nearby when children are on the Internet (36.4%), which are higher percentages than those reported by children (38.4% and 27.6%, respectively; Figure 21). This discrepancy can be explained by a lack of genuine communication between parents and children, especially around the possible support children may require, impeding children and parents from establishing a common understanding and expectations around a parental supportive role for children's online activities.

**“Genuine communication between parents and children, especially around the possible support children may require, enables them to establish a common understanding and expectations around a parental supportive role for children's online activities.”**

**Figure 21: Parental reporting of active mediation in their children's Internet use (%)**



Q: When your child uses the Internet, how often do you do these things? Base: Parents of children of age 9–17 years who are Internet users, N=1,000

## 6.2 Restrictive parental mediation

This section reports the findings on parental restrictive mediation or, in other words, whether parents prohibit or restrict their children from engaging in certain online activities.

Children are more likely than parents are to report that they can perform activities on the Internet without particular parental permission or supervision (Table 23, Appendix 1). More than three-quarters (78.2%) of children surveyed stated that they can watch video clips at any time, and 71.5 percent that they can download music or films anytime. Children of age 9–11 years are more likely to be forbidden from engaging in certain activities by their parents compared to older children (Table 10). This is true for all activities except for watching clips on YouTube, explained by a certain practice among parents which use YouTube clips to satisfy their children. Children of age 15–17 years were more likely than others to state that they can do all such activities whenever they want, which is understandable as parental restrictive mediation is expected to weaken as children grow older and acquire more skills and self-confidence to navigate the Internet.

**Table 10: Children who can perform activities only with parental permission or are not allowed to do the following (%)**

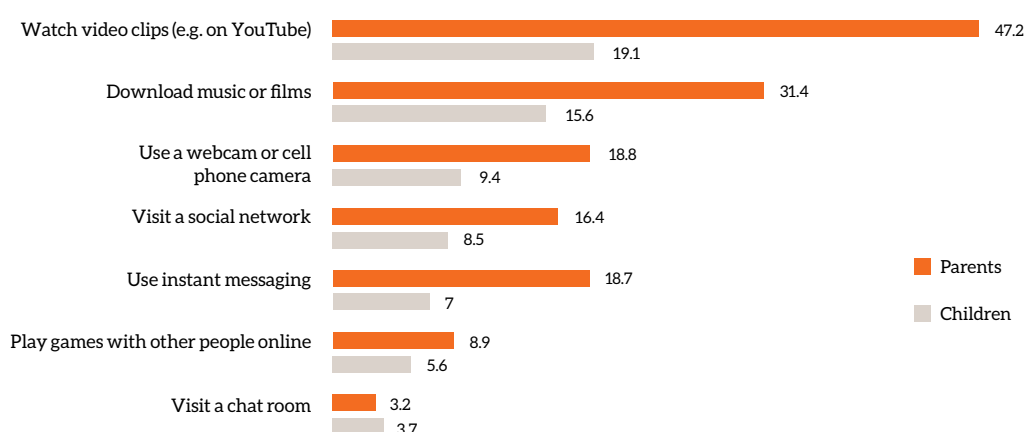
Activity	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9–11	12–14	15–17
Use a webcam or cell phone camera	36.8	32	42	61	37	18
Download music or films	21.6	17	26	41	20	8
Visit a social networking site	29.3	23	37	51	31	10
Watch video clips (e.g. on YouTube)	19.3	15	23	38	19	6
Play games with other people online	28.5	23	33	39	35	14
Visit a chat room	29.1	25	34	36	35	18
Use instant messaging	27.2	22	33	43	31	11

Q: For each of these activities, please indicate if your parent(s) or carer(s) CURRENTLY let you perform them whenever you want or let you do them but only with their permission or supervision, or never let you do them. Base: Children who state that they can do the following activities only with permission of the parents

Results also show that girls are subject to more restrictive mediation by their parents as they are more likely to report needing parental permission or not being allowed at all to engage in certain activities. Here again, the findings solidify the theory that children's digital development is seriously influenced by gender norms.

Children and parents seem to have different perceptions of whether a child is allowed to do something online or not. For all activities that were included in the survey, parents are more likely to report that they do not allow their children to do a certain activity online at all or without their permission, compared to the levels reported by their children (Figure 22). This discordance could be explained by a lack of communication and common understanding between children and their parents around the rules for Internet use, or by the fact that parents want to appear more responsible in their responses.

**Figure 22: Children who are never allowed to engage in the following activities online, according to children and parents (%)**



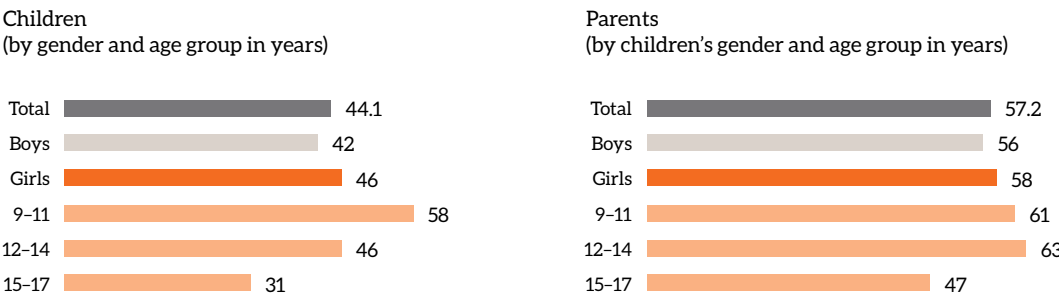
Q (child): For each of the following activities, please indicate whether your parent(s) or carer(s) CURRENTLY let you perform them whenever you want, or let you do them but only with their permission or supervision, or NEVER let you do them? Base: Child users of the Internet, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

Q (parent): For each of these activities, please indicate if you CURRENTLY let your child perform them whenever she or he wants, or let her or him perform them but only with your permission, can never do it, or you do not know whether they do it? Base: Parents of children of age 9–17 years, N=1,000

More parents of girls and 9–11-year-old boys than those of boys and girls of other age groups stated that their children were either not allowed to or could do some activities only under supervision that correspond with the children’s responses (Table 24, Appendix 1).

When asked whether they were setting rules about when and how long children can stay online, we observe a similar pattern with parents reporting more restrictive mediation than children believe is the case (Figure 23). Also, girls and younger children are more likely to report that their parents set time limits to their Internet use.

**Figure 23: Children’s time limits for Internet, according to children and parents (%)**



Q (child): Does your parent or carer make use of any of the following controls? Rules on how long or when I’m allowed to go online; Base: Total target population of children, N=1,000

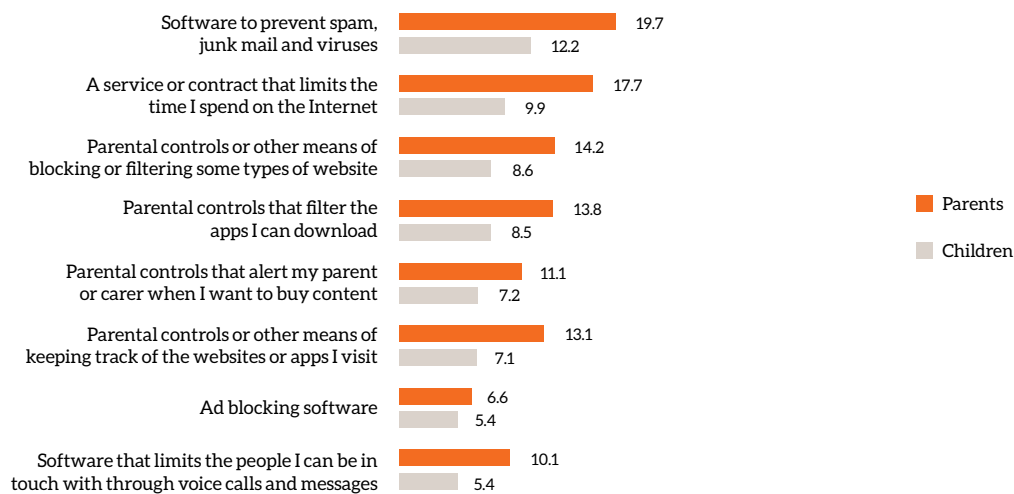
Q (parent): Do you or another parent or carer make use of any of the following? Rules on how long or when my child is allowed to go online; Base: Total target population of parents, Internet users, N=680

### 6.2.1 Parental controls

Parental controls refer to any specialised software (such as filters) for the limitation and supervision of children’s Internet use. Parents reported a more extensive use of technical tools for the control of Internet use by their children compared to the responses of the children (Figure 24). This difference may be a consequence of parents wanting to be portrayed as responsible and having control, or of the fact that children do not know that their parents are using particular forms of control. However, when all responses are observed together, use of parental controls by parents seems to be at a low level, which may be due to lack of the parents’ awareness of the existence and potential benefits of parental controls. While this may provide an opportunity for Internet providers to reach out to parents and inform them about available parental controls, it should not become a recipe for over-controlling parenting, but rather an approach accompanied by active parenting and increased communication with children over what constitutes inappropriate content and behaviour.

**“Parental controls should not become a recipe for over-controlling parenting but should be accompanied by active parenting and increased communication with children over what constitutes inappropriate content and behaviour.”**

**Figure 24: Parental controls over children’s Internet use, according to children and parents (%)**



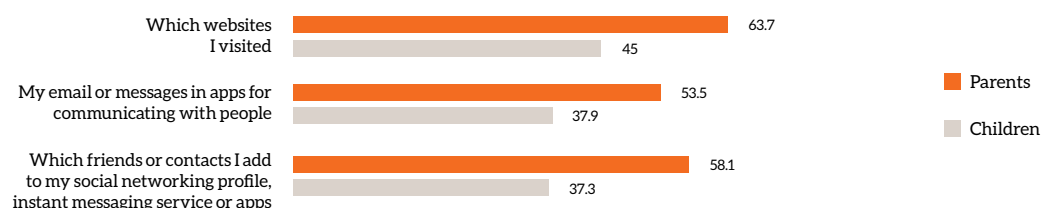
Q (child): Does your parent or carer make use of any of the following parental controls? Base: Child users of the Internet, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

Q (parent): Do you or another parent or carer make use of any of the following? Base: Total target population of parents, Internet users, N=680

### 6.2.2 Parental monitoring

Parental monitoring refers to the strategies applied by parents for tracking online activities of their children. Similar to the set of observations on parental mediation reported above, parents report a higher use of monitoring of online activities than do children (Figure 25). Around two-thirds of parents reported monitoring their children’s activity online, including the websites their children visited, their digital communication, as well as their social network. On the other hand, only around four in ten children reported being aware of such monitoring activities. This can be explained by the fact that children may not be aware of what their parents are monitoring, as well as from a desire from parents to appear responsible through their answers. Similar to what was observed for all forms of restrictive parenting, girls and children of age 9–14 years are more likely to state that their parents monitor their other online activities (see Table 25, Appendix 1).

**Figure 25: How children are subject to parental monitoring, often or very often, according to children and parents (%)**



Q (child): When you use the Internet, how often does your parent or carer check the following things afterwards? Base: Child Internet users, age 9–17 years, N=1,000

Q (parent): When your child uses the Internet, how often do you (or other parent or carer) check the following things afterwards? Base: Population of parents who are Internet users, 68% of target population, N=680

## 6.3 Support for parents

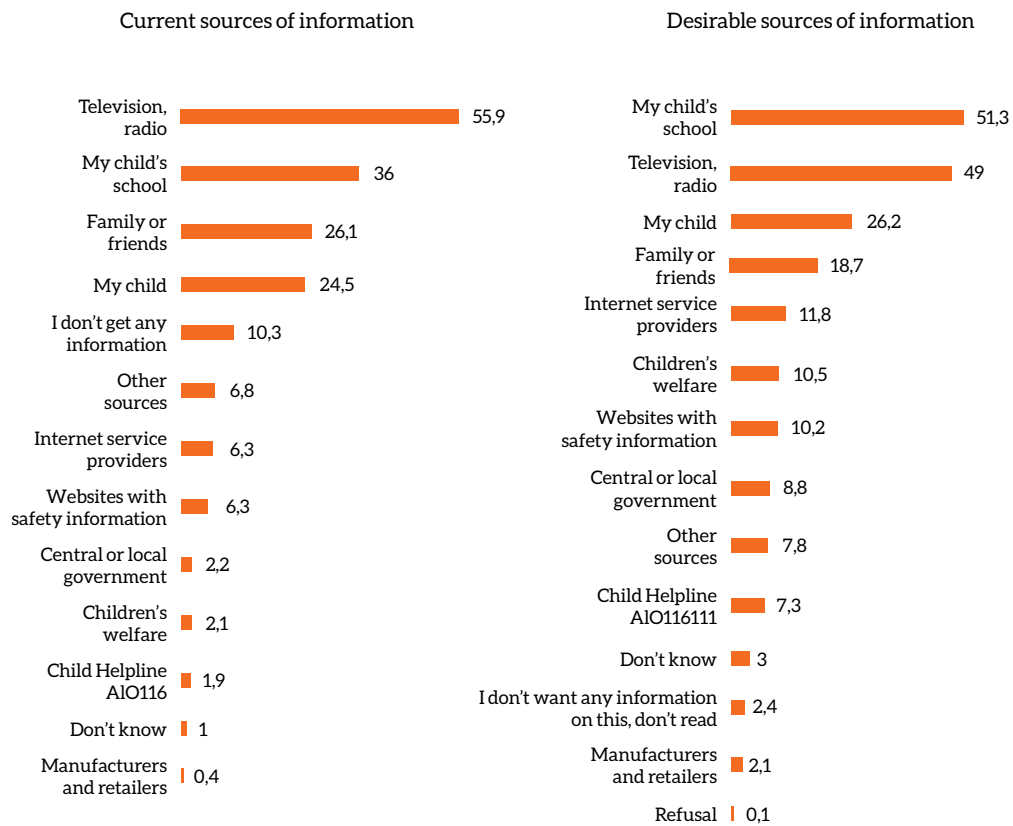
At the time the survey was undertaken, the main source of information from which parents were informed on how to help and support children, as well as keep them safe online, was the mass media (55.9%; Figure 26), followed by their children’s school (36%). Some 26.1 percent of parents were informed through informal channels, from their children or family members. Meanwhile, 10.3 percent of parents had not received any information on how to help or support their child on the Internet.

When asked about where they would like to get information on how to support their children in the digital space, most parents identified schools as the preferred institution (51.3%), followed by mass media (49%), and their children (26.2%). These findings provide valuable information that should inform policies that aim to increase the level of knowledge of parents around online safety for children as to what would be the preferred and most effective channels of communication for reaching parents.

**“Policies that aim to inform parents on online safety for children should take into consideration the preferences of parents for certain channels of communication.”**

Somewhat surprisingly, and of importance, responsible government institutions, specialised child protection and welfare professionals, and non-governmental organisations, came very low on the list of desired sources of information identified by parents. This is an important indication of the insufficient outreach of these groups, or lack of trust, or both.

**Figure 26: Current and desirable sources of information on children's safety on the Internet (%)**



Q: In general, where do you get information and advice on how to help and support your child on the Internet and keep her or him safe?

Q: In general, where would you like to get information and advice on how to help and support your child on the Internet and keep her or him safe in the future? Base: Population of parents, N=1,000





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# Appendix: Tables

**Table 11: Reasons for limited access to Internet, by child's gender and age (%)**

Reason	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
My parents don't allow me to access it	57.1	54	60	69	59	34
Paying for Internet or data (too expensive)	19.5	20	19	13	22	27
My teachers don't allow me to	18.3	23	14	16	18	22
There is no signal or poor signal where I live	15.9	19	13	10	19	21
Devices (cell phone, computer, tablet) are too expensive	15.4	14	17	19	16	9
I do not have enough time to go online	12.4	7	17	11	13	14
The Internet is too time consuming	9.3	5	13	7	8	14
It's not for people my age (a child)	8.2	6	11	13	8	1
It's not for people like me (a child)	5.0	3	7	8	5	1
The Internet doesn't provide what I want or need	4.5	4	5	5	3	6
It's difficult to use	4.1	5	4	5	3	3
I am worried about my privacy	0.8	0	1	1	1	1
Other	0.7	1	1	0		2
Don't know	0.9	1	1		1	2
Refusal	1.1	2		1	1	2

Q: When you are unable to access the Internet, what are the reasons? Base: Total target population of children

**Table 12: Places of Internet use, by child's gender and age (%)**

Place	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
At school	26.0	31	22	7	17	50
At home	95.8	96	95	92	96	99
In the home of friends or relatives	41.1	44	37	26	41	54
In a gaming centre	16.7	28	5	10	15	21
In an Internet cafe	20.3	26	14	14	22	23
When I am on my way somewhere	38.6	46	31	15	34	62
When I am somewhere by myself	58.2	64	52	33	56	82

Q: How often do you go online or use the Internet at the following places? Base: Total target Population

**Table 13: How often different devices are used to access the Internet (%)**

Device	Never	Hardly ever	At least every month	At least every week	Daily or almost daily	Several times each day	Almost all the time	Don't know	Refusal
Cell phone that is not a smartphone	80.5	4.5	3.0	4.0	3.6	2.9	1.3	0.1	
Smartphone	9.6	1.1	1.9	10.0	28.1	27.0	22.1	0.3	
Desktop computer	50.0	5.8	7.3	13.2	13.5	7.2	2.9	0.1	
Laptop or notebook computer	57.4	5.7	6.8	9.4	10.5	7.6	2.3	0.1	0.1
Tablet	63.8	6.0	4.2	8.1	9.6	5.5	2.6	0.1	
Games console	81.5	5.0	3.3	4.5	3.1	1.4	0.8	0.1	0.2
Television	74.3	2.0	1.5	5.0	8.8	5.5	2.9		

Q: When you use the Internet, how often do you use any of these to go online? Base: Total target population of children

**Table 14: Websites or apps used by children, by gender and age (%)**

Website or app	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
YouTube	72.0	72	72	75	71	70
Instagram	57.8	67	48	25	62	80
Facebook	50.2	63	37	33	54	61
WhatsApp	49.1	48	50	28	43	72
Google	41.9	40	44	40	42	43
Snapchat	32.1	30	34	15	30	47
Viber	22.1	23	21	13	19	32
Wikipedia	17.4	16	19	10	23	19
Clash of clans	5.3	8	2	7	7	3
Minecraft	4.1	6	2	7	3	3
Twitter	3.9	6	2	2	4	5
League of Legends	2.8	5	1	2	3	3
World of Warcraft	0.7	1	0	0	1	1
Other	2.5	4	1	2	3	2
Don't know	0.2	0	0	1		
Refusal	0.5	1	0	1	1	

Q: Which websites or apps do you mostly use currently? Base: Total target population of children

**Table 15: Children's level of being upset by exposure to harmful content online, by gender and age (%)**

Level	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
A bit upset	49.3	55	42	62	32	52
Fairly upset	23.8	21	27	23	31	21
Very upset	18.8	14	25	15	25	17
Don't know	5.0	5	5		9	5
Prefer not to say	3.1	6			3	5

Q: The last time something like that happened online, how did you feel about it? Base: Children that reported that something happened online that bothered or upset them in some way (14% of target population)

**Table 16: How often children felt upset by hateful and degrading messages online, by gender and age (%)**

Frequency	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Hardly ever	53.9	53	55	58	57	48
Sometimes	26.2	29	23	17	29	31
Often	8.4	7	10	7	6	12
Very often	2.0	2	2	3	1	2
Prefer not to say	1.0	0	2	1	0	1
Don't know	4.6	6	3	8	4	2
Refusal	3.9	3	5	6	3	3

Q: How often do you feel upset because of hateful or degrading messages or comments online that are directed to you? Base: Total target population of children

**Table 17: Ways in which children were exposed to sexual content, by gender and age (%)**

Means of exposure	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
I have seen sexual content online because I wanted to	55.3	64	38	45	44	61
I have seen sexual content online when I wasn't expecting it	71.3	75	65	64	66	75
I have seen sexual content online because someone else showed it to me	44.7	51	31	36	36	50

Q: Thinking about the last year, has any of these things happened? Base: In the past year, those who have seen any images on the Internet that are obviously sexual (16% of target population)

**Table 18: How children felt after seeing sexual content online, by gender (%)**

Feeling	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
Happy	9.2	12	2
Not happy or upset	51.7	51	54
Bit upset	8.3	6	12
Fairly upset	3.0	4	2
Very upset	7.9	7	11
Don't know	9.5	7	14
Prefer not to say	10.4	13	4

Q: If you have seen images of this kind (sexual content), how did you feel about what you saw? Base: If "yes" on previous three questions (14% of target population)

**Table 19: Means by which children saw sexual content online, by gender and age (%)**

Means	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
In a magazine or book	9.7	12	4	7	10	10
On television, film	67.8	72	59	56	71	69
Via a mobile phone, computer, tablet	87.6	86	90	87	90	87

Q: The last time you saw images of this kind, where did you see them? Base: If "yes" on previous three questions (14% of target population)

**Table 20: How children felt after seeing sexual content, by gender and age (%)**

Level of feeling upset	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Not at all	32.0	41	20	33	33	31
A little bit	24.8	28	21		23	32
A fair amount	17.8	16	21		29	13
Very	14.5	10	21		8	24
Prefer not to say	10.8	5	18	67	8	

Q: Did you feel upset by this experience? Base: Those who were asked for sexual information about themselves (3% of target population)

**Table 21: Parents' awareness of children's experience of online risks, by child's gender and age (%)**

Online risk	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Had contact on the Internet with someone that my child had not met face-to-face before?	8.5	12	5	4	7	13
Been treated in a hurtful or nasty way on the Internet by someone?	3.5	4	3	2	4	4
Treated someone else in a hurtful or nasty way on the Internet?	1.6	2	1	2	2	1
My child met someone in person that they first got to know on the Internet?	5	5	4	3	4	7
Ways of physically harming or hurting themselves	8	10	6	7	8	9
Ways of committing suicide	4.2	5	3	4	3	5
Hate messages that attack certain groups or individuals	7.9	10	6	4	8	11
Experiences of taking drugs	5.9	8	3	2	5	10
Abuse or violence	10.5	13	7	5	11	15
Gambling (online gambling)	3.7	6	1	2	3	6

Q: As far as you are aware, in the past year, have any of these things happened to your child on the Internet? Q: As far as you are aware, in the past year, has your child seen a website or an online discussion where people talk about any of these things? Base: Total target population of parents

**Table 22: Parental active mediation as reported by children, by child's gender and age (%)**

Mediation	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Encourages me to explore and learn things	16.2	16	16	14	18	16
Suggests ways to use the Internet safely	36.0	32	41	40	40	29
Talks to me about what I do on the Internet	38.4	34	43	40	46	31
Stays nearby when I use the Internet	27.6	18	38	35	32	18
Does shared activities together with me	17.6	15	21	23	17	13
Talks to me about what to do if something online bothers or upsets me	31.8	25	39	34	36	27
Helps me when something is difficult to do or find on the Internet	27.8	24	31	40	28	17
Helps me when something bothers me on the Internet	34.1	28	41	40	38	25
Talks to me about the commercial activities I am exposed to online	13.1	12	14	13	13	12

Q: When you use the Internet does your parent or caregiver do the following (often or very often)? Base: Total target population of children

**Table 23: Activities that children can do at any time, by gender and age (%)**

Activity	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Use a webcam	56.2	62	50	27	56	79
Download music or films	71.5	77	66	46	75	89
Visit a social networking site	59.1	71	47	27	61	84
Watch video clips	78.2	83	74	59	80	93
Play games with other people online	42.0	58	25	27	36	59
Visit a chat room	22.5	30	14	5	18	40
Use instant messaging	56.9	65	48	24	57	83

Q: For each of these things, please indicate if your parent(s) or carer(s) CURRENTLY let you perform them whenever you want? Base: Total target population of children

**Table 24: Activities that parents prohibit their children from engaging in, by child's gender and age (%)**

Activity	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Use a webcam	18.7	18	20	30	21	7
Download music or films	8.9	7	11	19	6	3
Visit a social networking site	16.4	12	22	33	16	4
Watch video clips	3.2	2	4	7	2	1
Play games with other people online	31.4	19	45	44	35	18
Visit a chat room	47.2	39	56	63	51	31
Use instant messaging	18.8	13	24	34	18	7
Read or watch news online	16.9	14	20	31	16	6
Use the Internet for school work	4.3	4	4	10	2	2
Spend time in a virtual world	36.9	29	45	49	43	22
Share photos, videos or music online with others	25.0	18	32	45	24	10

Q: For each of these actions, please indicate if you CURRENTLY never let her or him perform them? Base: Total target population of parents

**Table 25: Parental monitoring activities practised often or very often, by child's gender and age (%)**

Monitoring activity	Total	Gender		Age group (years)		
		Male	Female	9-11	12-14	15-17
Which friends or contacts they add to their social networking profile or instant messaging service	29.7	28	31	36	33	19
Emails, or messages in apps for communicating with people	25.8	22	30	35	29	11
Websites they visited	32.3	29	36	44	36	15

Q: When your child uses the Internet, how often do you (or other parent or carer) check the following things afterwards? Base: Total target population of parents



