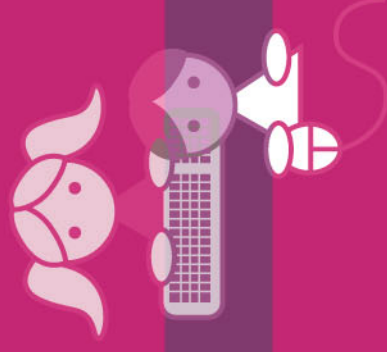




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THE LONDON SCHOOL  
OF ECONOMICS AND  
POLITICAL SCIENCE



# EU Kids Online

[www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)

# EU Kids Online

- A thematic network examining European research on cultural, contextual and risk issues in children's safe use of the internet and new media
- Funded by the EC Safer Internet plus Programme (2006-9)
- Network of 21 research teams: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom
- Aims to compare recent and ongoing empirical research across Europe:
  - To identify and evaluate **available data** on children's use of online technologies
  - To inform the research agenda, noting **gaps in the evidence base**
  - To **compare findings** across Europe, contextualising similarities and differences
  - To produce a best practice guide for **methodological issues and challenges**
  - To develop **policy recommendations** for awareness-raising and media literacy



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## EU Kids Online



National  
International

Adult society

**EU ...**

**Kids ...**

Comparative

Access/use  
Opportunities  
Risks  
Regulation  
Mediation  
Literacy  
Safety

Under 18  
Children  
Youth  
Parents  
Home  
Teachers  
School

**Online ...**

(mainly) Internet  
Mobile  
Games, etc

Offline world



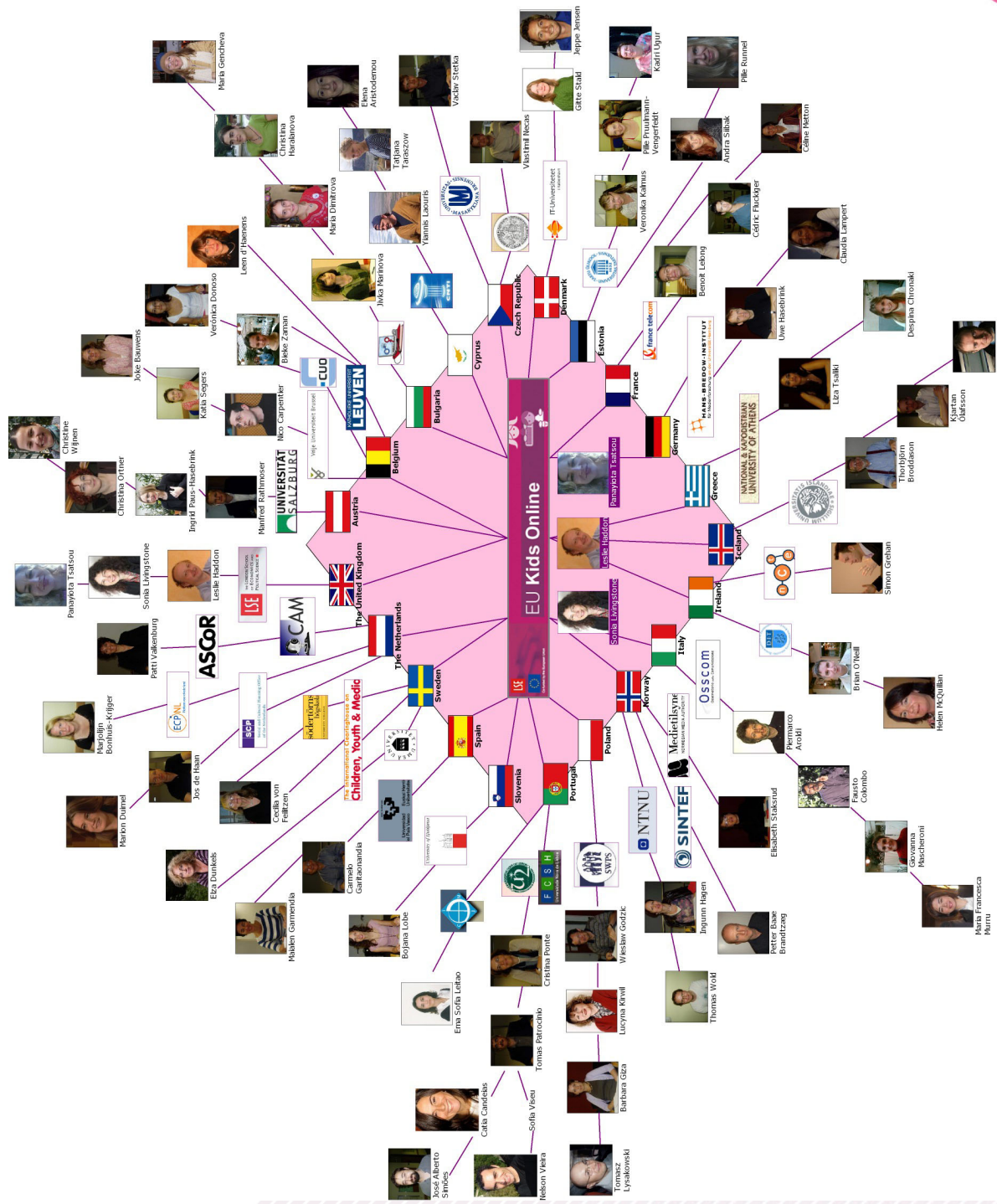
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**EU Kids Online**







Created by the Cyprus partner, Cyprus Neuroscience & Technology Institute  
 Contact: Tatjana Tamasz, tatjana@cniti.org.cy

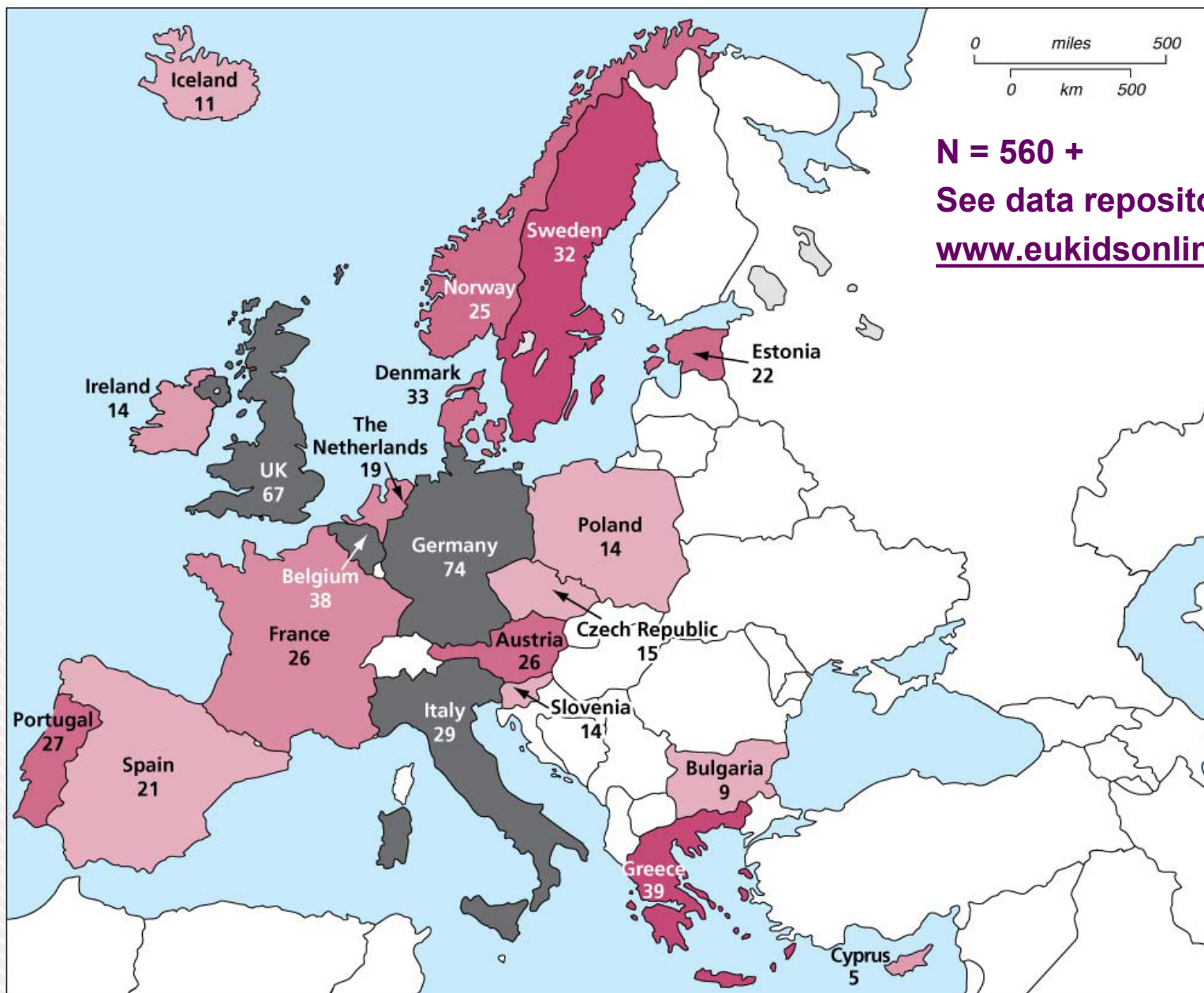


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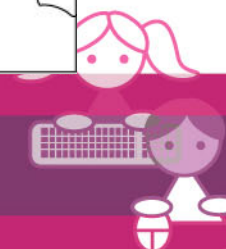
**N = 560 +**  
**See data repository**  
**[www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)**



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# The evidence base *and key gaps*

- Mostly national studies, funded by Governments (though EC funds aid *comparisons*)
- Over half of all research is online; *little reaches formal publication*
- Research on access, use, interests & activities in all countries, but needs *updating*
- Most research on teenagers, *not younger*; some on parents, teachers, etc.
- Most is quantitative; *less qualitative/ mixed methods* (except for young children)
- Nearly all is on fixed internet, not on *mobile, gaming or other platforms*
- Regarding risk, more research is on content risks (pornography, violence, hate, etc)
- *Too little on contact, commercial, suicide, anorexia, drugs, gambling, privacy risks*
- Little known of *parental regulation* or of children's *psychological coping* with risk
- Little research on *use and effectiveness of safety strategies* (e.g. filtering)



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## EU Kids Online



# Best Practice Research Guide

## I. Designing the research

- How do I design a project with multiple data sources?
- How should qualitative research be evaluated?
- How young a child can one work with?

## II. Sampling and recruitment

- How do you sample children for quantitative research?
- What are the ethical issues involved in researching children?

## III. Methods of data collection

- How do I ask questions about time use?
- What's the best way of asking children sensitive questions?
- What do I need to know to do research with children online?

## IV. Approaches to data analysis

- How do I bring qualitative/quantitative data together?
- How do I compare data from parents and children?

## V. Reporting the findings

- How do I report my data?
- How can I ensure my findings are not misunderstood?

*For each of 39 FAQs:*

- *Problem statement*
- *Common practice*
- *Pitfalls to avoid*
- *Examples good practice*
- *Sources online*



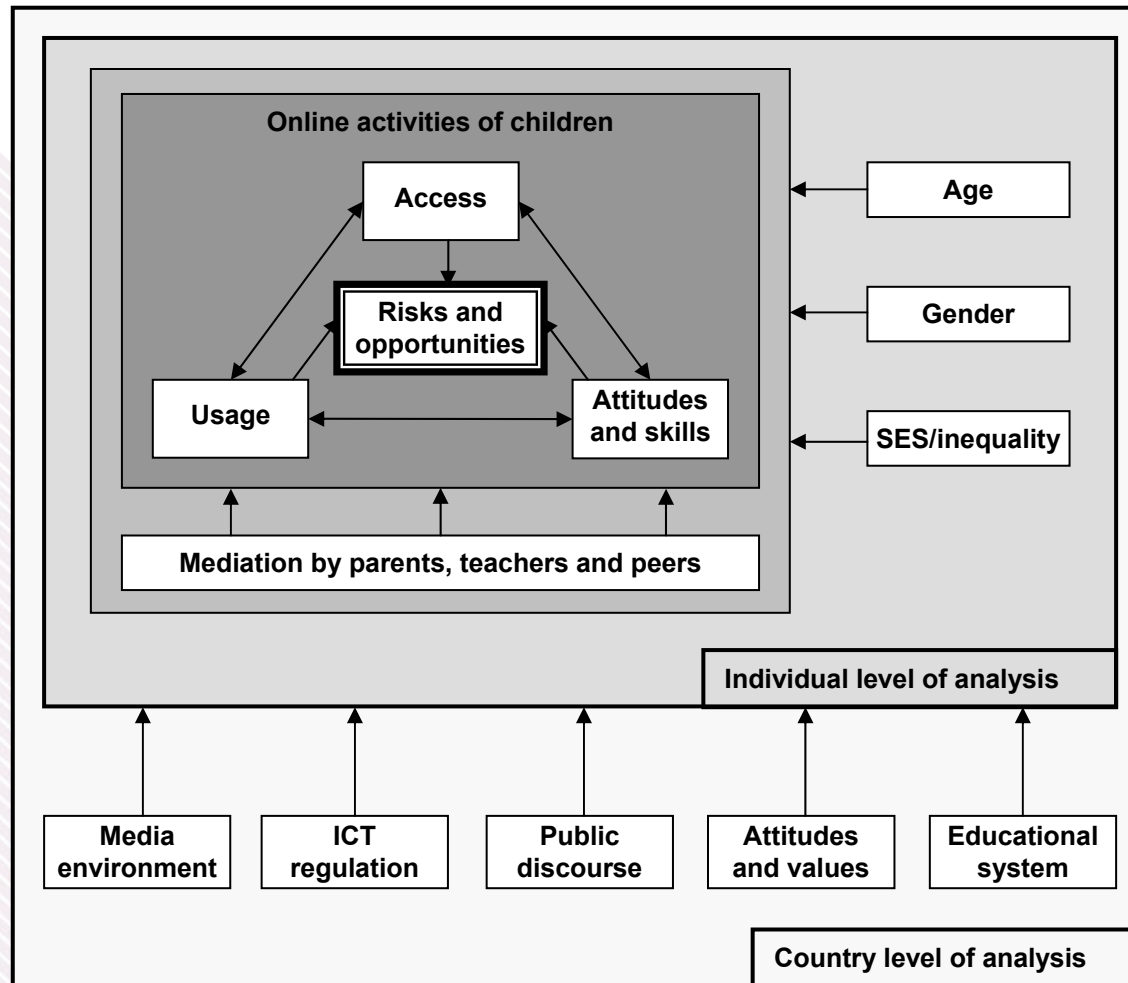
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# Structure of the research field



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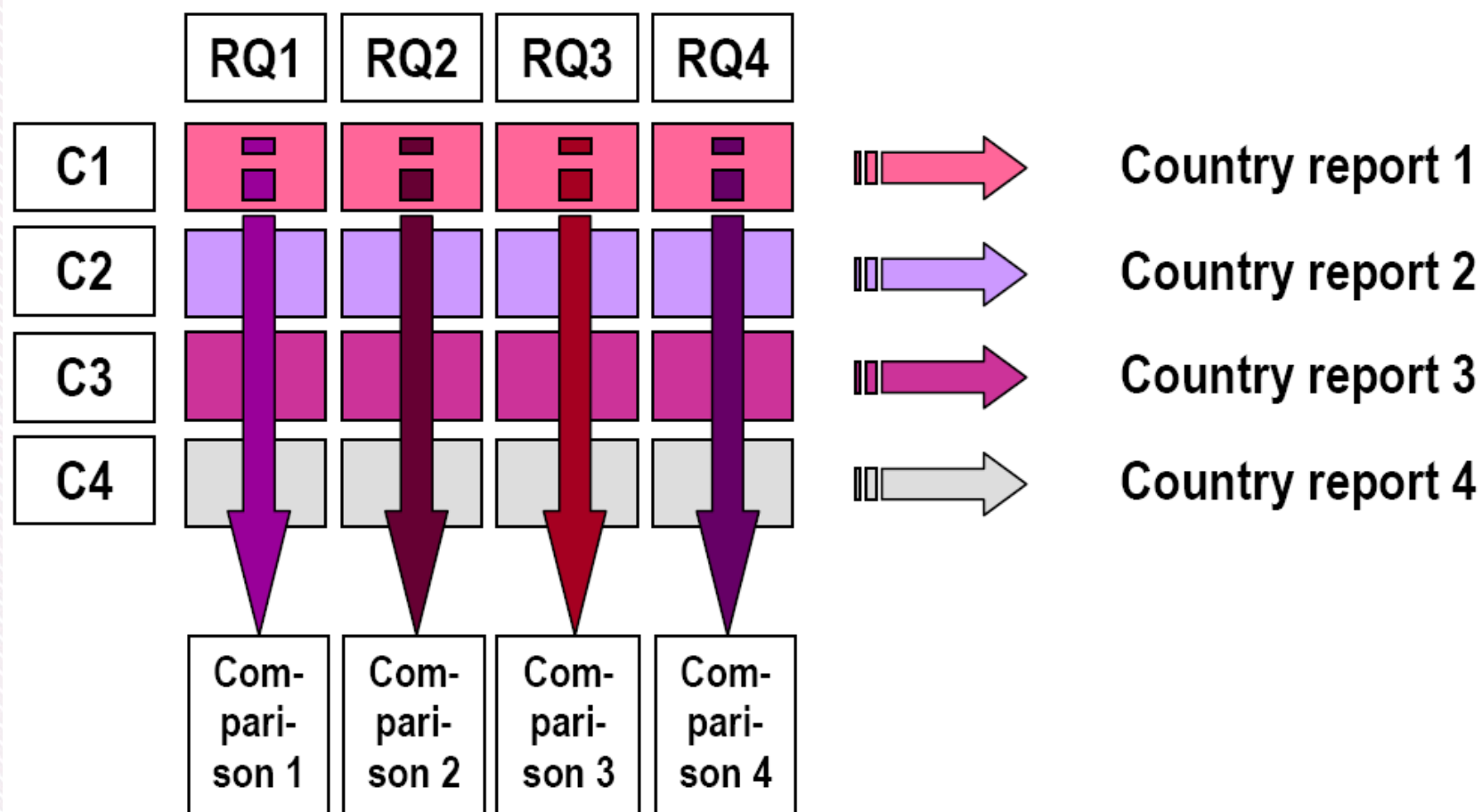


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# Comparative analysis



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# Cross-national comparisons

- First, an important caveat about data quality and availability . . .
- Second, a thank you to all my EU Kids Online colleague who worked on this
- Third, a reminder that detailed findings are in our report – [www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)

## Findings for access and use (based on re-analysis of Eurobarometer 2005/6)

- The more parents are likely to use the internet, the more the children are too – by country, by household i.e. parents encourage, and are encouraged by children
- It is teenagers, not children in general, who are the digital pioneers – teens use the internet more than their parents, but under 11s do not (and so parents may guide)
- Children equally likely to use the internet at home and at school (and these are positively correlated across countries)
- A ‘ladder of opportunities’: information search, then games and communication (not time-wasting but motivational), en route to interactive then creative/ civic uses



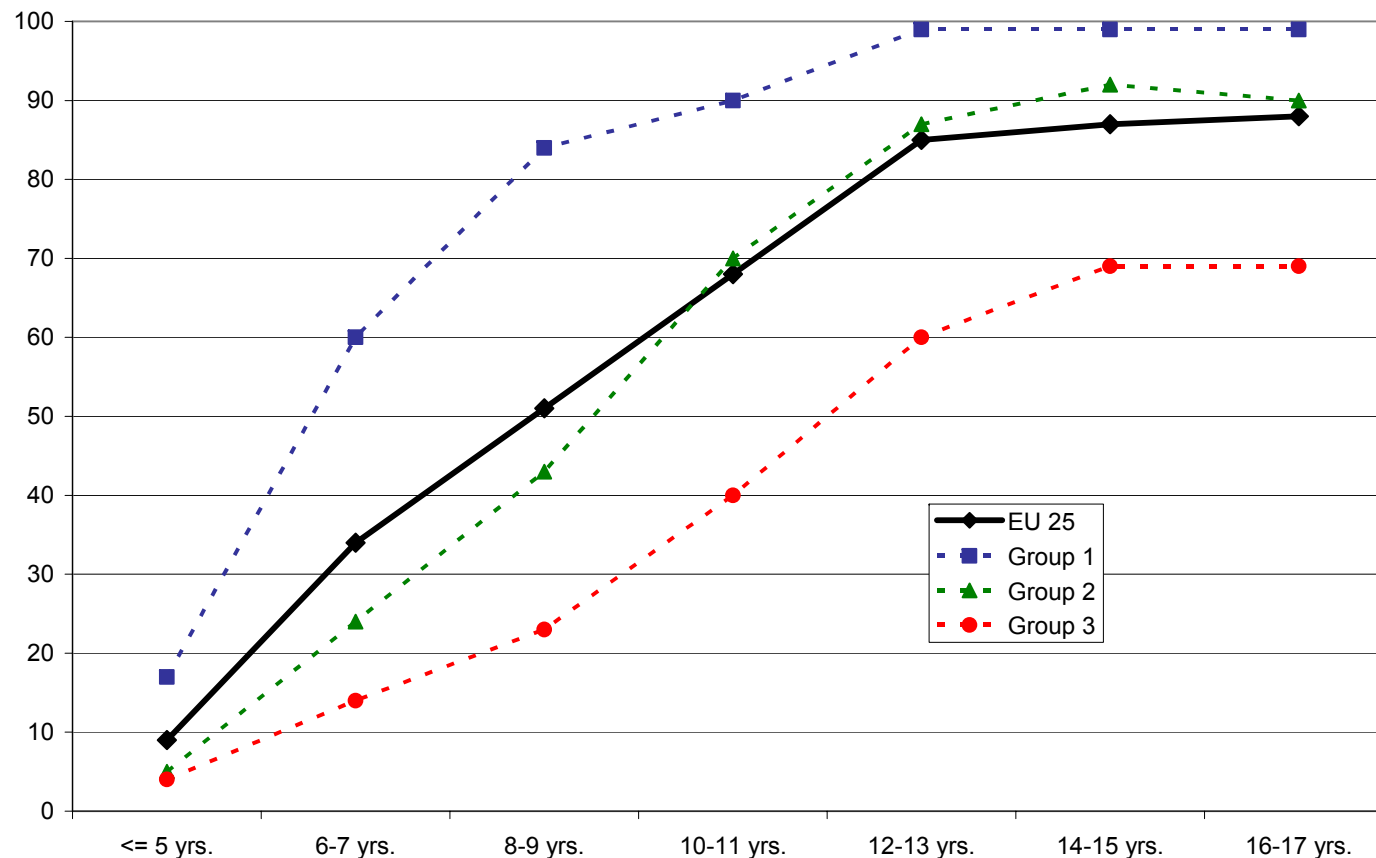
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# Children online at home, by age



> 80% BE, DK, EE, NL, SE, UK

> 50% AT, CZ, DE, FR, IE, PL, SI

< 50% BL, CY, ES, GR, IT, PT

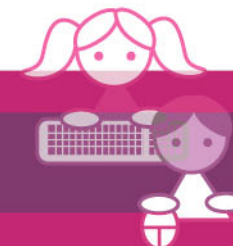
- Plateau at 12 yrs, not steady rise
- High use countries - younger online
- Little research on younger children



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# Varieties of online risk

	Commercial	Aggressive	Sexual	Values
<b>Content</b> <i>Child as recipient</i>	Advertising, spam, sponsorship	Violent/ gruesome/ hateful content	Pornographic/ unwelcome sexual content	Racist, biased or misleading info/ advice (drugs etc)
<b>Contact</b> <i>Child as participant</i>	Tracking/ harvesting personal info	Being bullied, harassed or stalked	Meeting strangers, being groomed	Self-harm, unwelcome persuasion
<b>Conduct</b> <i>Child as actor</i>	Gambling, hacking, illegal downloads	Bullying or harassing another	Creating and uploading porn material	Providing advice e.g. suicide/ pro-anorexic



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# Cross-national similarities in risk

Despite national variations, the rank ordering of frequencies is clear:

- Disclosing personal information (around 1 in 2 online teens)
- Exposure to pornography (around 4 in 10 across Europe)
- Exposure to violent or hateful content (around 1 in 3)
- Being bullied/harassed (1 in 5 or 6)
- Receiving unwanted sexual comments (1 in 10 in DE, IE, PT; 1 in 3 or 4 in IS, NO, UK, SE; rising to 1 in 2 in PL)
- Meeting an online contact offline (around 9% overall, rising to 1 in 5 in PL, SE, CZ)
- Overall, distress/threat reported by 15-20% online teens



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# Demographic similarities in risk

- Teens encounter more risks, because do more; unknown how younger kids cope
- Lower SES children encounter more risks also
- Boys - more porn, violent content, meetings, give out personal info
- Girls – chat with strangers, unwanted sexual comments, asked for personal info
- Both – harassment, bullying
- Parental mediation – prefer social to technical approaches (effective?)
- Less mediation for boys, teens, lower SES (compare with risk incidence)
- It seems likely that internet-related skills increase with age (self-protection?)
- Boys claims higher levels of skill than girls (untested)
- Growing evidence of array of coping strategies, though unknown whether effective



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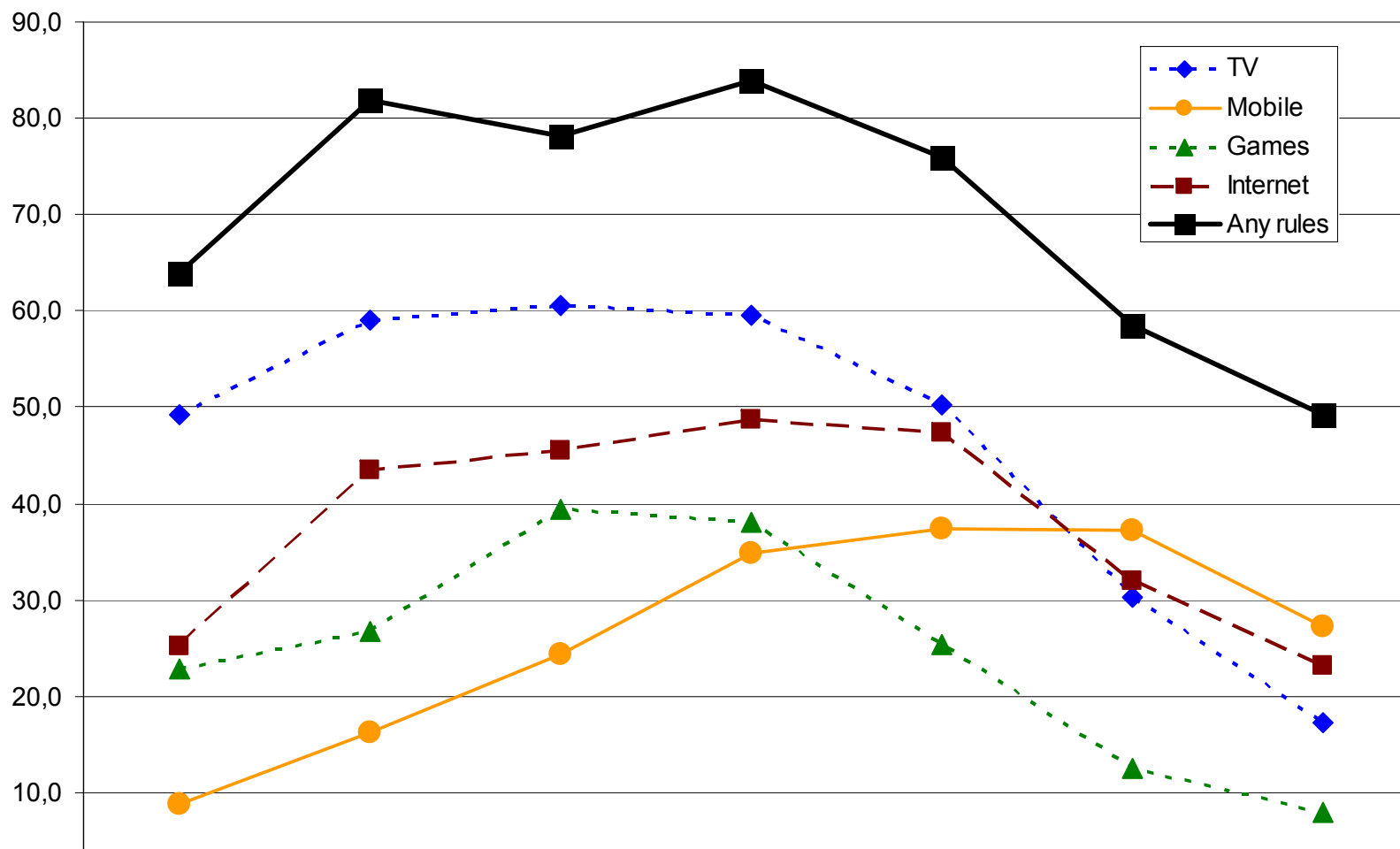


## EU Kids Online





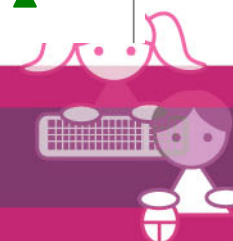
# Regulation gap (Parental rules, Eurobarometer)



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# Countries by internet use and risk

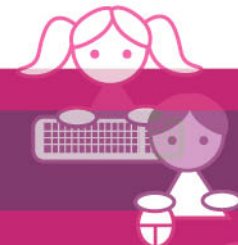
Online risk	Children's internet use		
	Low	Medium	High
Low	Cyprus Italy	France Germany	
Medium	Greece Portugal Spain	Austria Ireland	Belgium Denmark Sweden
High	Bulgaria	Czech Republic Poland Slovenia	Estonia Netherlands Norway UK



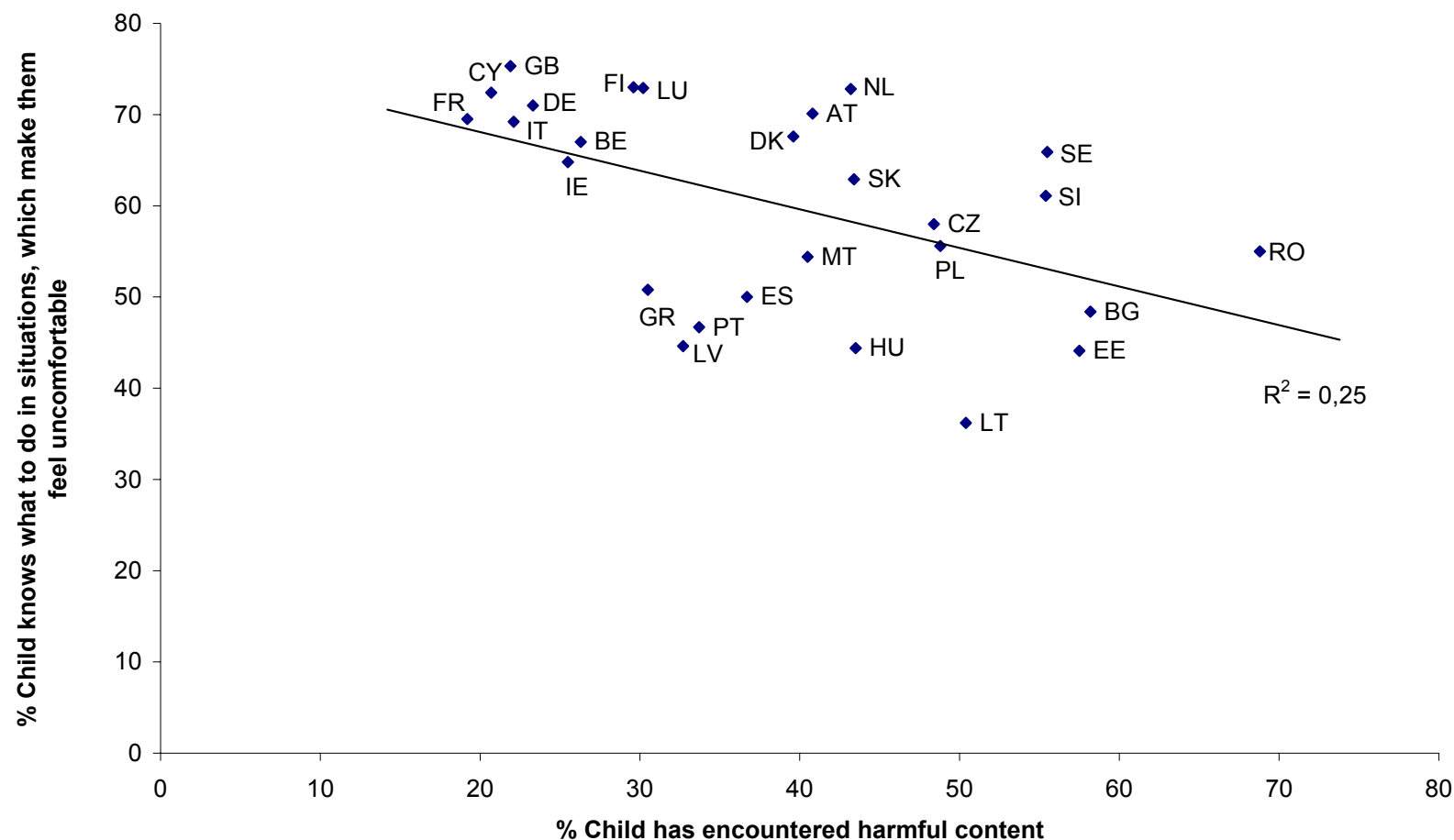
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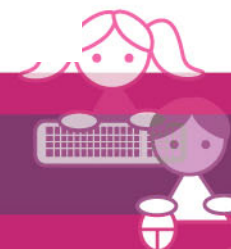
# More risk, less coping (Eurobarometer)



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# Explaining cross-national differences

## Media environment, esp. internet diffusion

- Internet diffusion increases access/use and risks, opportunities, parental rules
- Seems that gender and SES differences get less as diffusion increases
- Possibly, a strong public service broadcaster (online) encourages beneficial use

## ICT regulation

- Higher internet access appears linked to more regulation (inc. self-regulation)
- Need more awareness-raising in 'new use, new risk' countries (esp. if high use)

## Public discourse

- Media coverage gives disproportionate attention to risks over benefits
- Most coverage on sexual/pornographic content, esp. in BE, GR, ES, UK

## Attitudes and values

- 'Catholic Europe': less use/risk, less individualistic values, focus on TV rules;
- 'Protestant Europe', more use/risk, more individualism, focus on internet rules

## Education system

- More internet use associated with higher general education in the country



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# EU Kids Online



# Next steps for EU Kids Online

- Report on comparative research contexts (December 2008)  
(To include a content analysis of media coverage of children/internet)
- Towards evidence-based policy – report on policy implications (June 2009)
- Final report (June 2009)
- Final conference in London, June 2009 – do come!
- Please help - if you know of new studies for the online repository, please tell us
- To receive our electronic updates, sign up at [www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)



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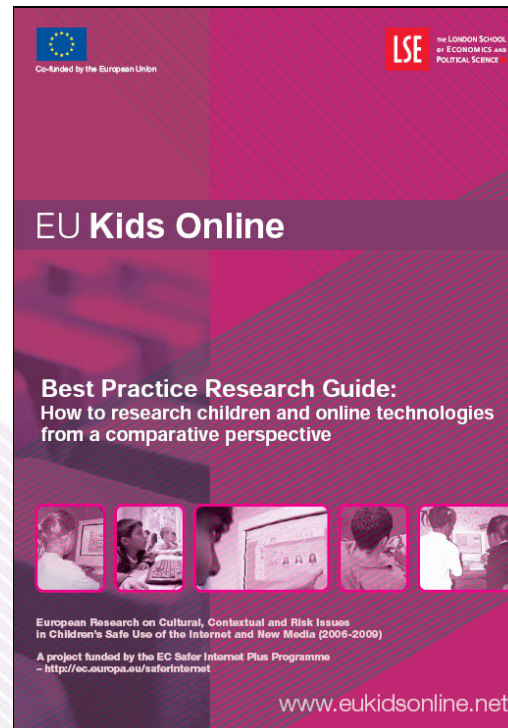


# Thank you

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