

Online activities

Despite a regular and significant increase during the last decade, Internet usage continues to vary widely across OECD countries and among social groups. In 2018, 97% and above of the adult population accessed the Internet in Denmark, Iceland, and Norway, but 65% did so in Mexico (Figure 8.13). Differences in Internet uptake are linked primarily to age and education, often intertwined with income levels.

In most countries, **Internet uptake by young people is nearly universal, but there are wide differences for older generations.** On average across the OECD, over 97% of 16-24 year-olds used the Internet in 2018 compared to about 67% of 55-74 year-olds. The Internet usage rate among 16-24 year-olds is nearing 100% in most OECD countries, except in Mexico and Turkey (90%), Israel and the United States (85-87%). By contrast, Internet usage among 55-74 year-olds is still very heterogeneous across countries: above 90% in Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway but only 40% in Greece, 31% in Turkey and 28% in Mexico.

Most of online time is devoted to instant messaging and social networking. In countries for which data are available, people aged 14 and above spent more than three hours per day on the Internet in 2016, whereas the duration increases to 4.5 hours a day among young people (aged 14-24) (Figure 8.14). The age gap is even higher in countries where people use the Internet more extensively, such as the Netherlands, Sweden or Portugal. Constant connectivity is changing attitudes and behaviour in people's personal life, with the transfer of part of social relations online and the blurring of work and leisure time.

More than one in ten adolescents across the OECD report having been the victim of cyberbullying, either by message or by picture (Figure 8.15). The highest cyberbullying rates in OECD countries are found in Latvia (almost one in four), as well as in Estonia, Hungary, Ireland and the United Kingdom (Scotland), where more than one in five adolescents report cyberbullying. The lowest rate is in Greece, with only five percent of adolescents report having been victim to cyberbullying.

The digital space can also introduces new risks and stress sources into young people's lives. Just as with traditional forms of bullying, exposure to cyber-bullying – for instance, the rapid creation and sharing of offensive messages or comments, spreading of rumours, exclusion of victims from online groups and other forms of harassment – is associated with a wide range of negative outcomes, including depressive symptoms, substance use, ideation and suicide attempts (OECD Brief Children & Young People's Mental Health in the Digital Age, Shaping the Future).

Teenage girls are more likely than teenage boys to report having been victim to cyberbullying. The gender difference is especially large in Ireland and the United Kingdom, where cyberbullying rates for girls exceed those for boys by more than 10 percentage points. Only in Spain, boys report higher rates of cyber-bullying than girls, by 3 percentage points.

Definition and measurement

Data on internet usage refer to the ICT Access and Usage by Households and Individuals database which provides a selection of indicators, based on the second revision of the OECD Model Survey on ICT Access and Usage by Households and Individuals (<http://oe.cd/hhind>). Internet users are defined for a recall period of three months.

Data on daily time spent on the Internet are from the European Social Survey (ESS), an academically driven cross-national survey that has been conducted across Europe since its establishment in 2001. Every two years, face-to-face interviews are conducted with newly selected, cross-sectional samples. The survey measures the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of diverse populations in more than thirty nations (www.europeansocialsurvey.org/)

Data on cyberbullying refer to the percentage of 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds who, when asked if they had been cyberbullied with messages or with pictures and presented with response options ranging from "Haven't" to "Several times a week", responded "at least once". Adolescents refer to young people aged 11, 13 and 15 attending school. Data are based on the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) World Health Organization Collaborative Cross-National Survey 2013-14 (www.hbsc.org/).

Further reading

- OECD (2019), *Measuring the Digital Transformation: A roadmap for the future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264311992-en>.
- OECD (2019), *Going Digital: Shaping Policies, Improving Lives*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264312012-en>.
- OECD (2019), *How's Life in the Digital Age? Opportunities and Risks of the Digital Transformation for People's Well-being*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264311800-en>.
- OECD (2019), *Children & Young People's Mental Health in the Digital Age, Shaping the Future*, www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/Children-and-Young-People-Mental-Health-in-the-Digital-Age.pdf.

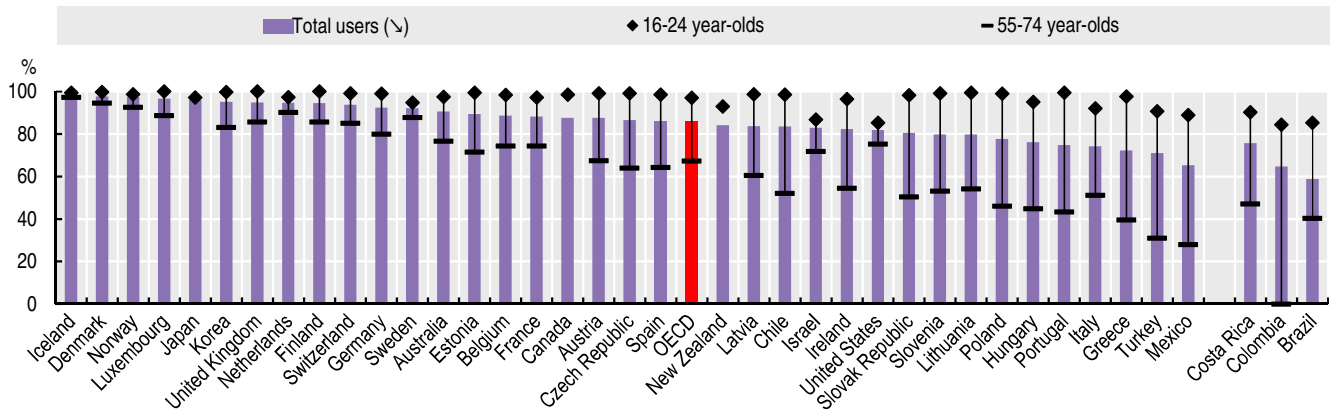
Figure notes

Figure 8.13: Unless otherwise stated, Internet users are defined for a recall period of three months. For Canada and Japan, the recall period is 12 months. Data refer to 2012 for Canada and New Zealand, 2016 for Australia, Israel and Japan, and 2017 for Chile, Korea, Mexico, Switzerland and the United States. OECD data are based on a simple average of the available countries.

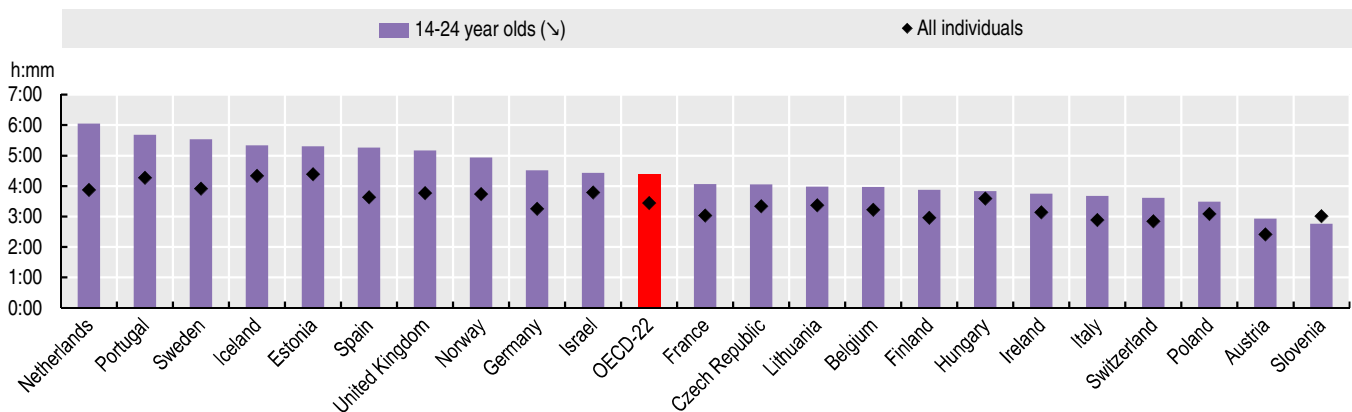
Figure 8.15: OECD excludes Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (French), United Kingdom (England), United Kingdom (Scotland), and United Kingdom (Wales).

8.13. There are large variations in Internet use across generations

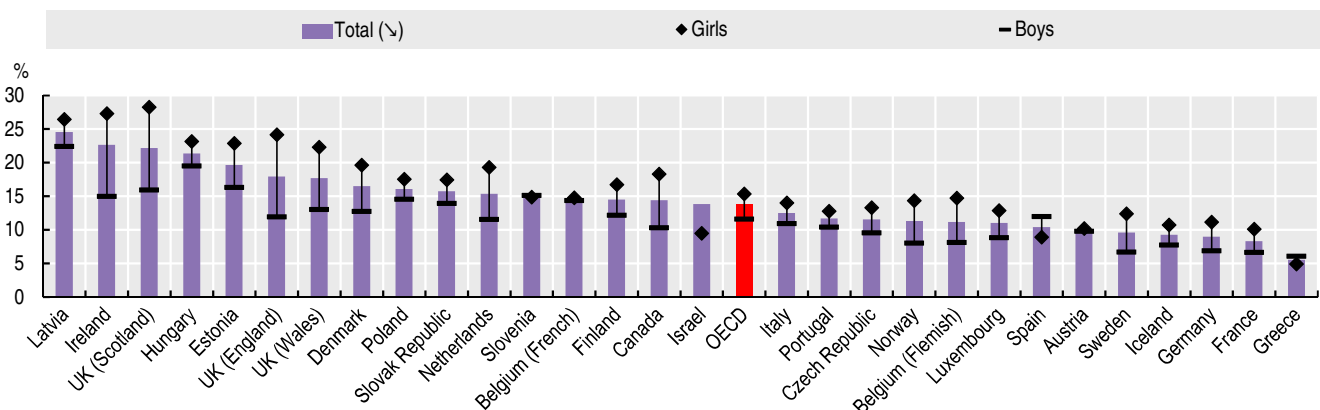
Internet users by age, as a percentage of the population in each age group, 2018

Source: OECD, ICT Access and Usage by Households and Individuals (database), <http://oe.cd/hhind> (accessed February 2019).StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933939826>**8.14. Young people spend more than four hours per day online**

Daily time spent on the Internet by young people and all individuals, 2016

Source: OECD (2019), *Measuring the Digital Transformation: A roadmap for the future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264311992-en>; OECD calculations based on The European Social Survey microdata (2016 edition).StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933939845>**8.15. Teenage girls report more often to be victims of cyberbullying than boys**

Percentage of 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds who report having been cyberbullied by messages or pictures at least once, by gender, 2014

Source: OECD Child Well-being Data Portal, <http://oe.cd/child-well-being>; OECD Secretariat calculations based on the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC), World Health Organization Collaborative Cross-National Survey 2013-14, www.hbsc.org/.StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933939864>



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