Protecting minors in the online world: evidence of risk and harm and how we should respond

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49th EPRA Meeting, Sarajevo, May 30, 2019

Protecting Minors in the Online World

Defining the problem

- Changing digital environment
- A conceptual framework

Evidence
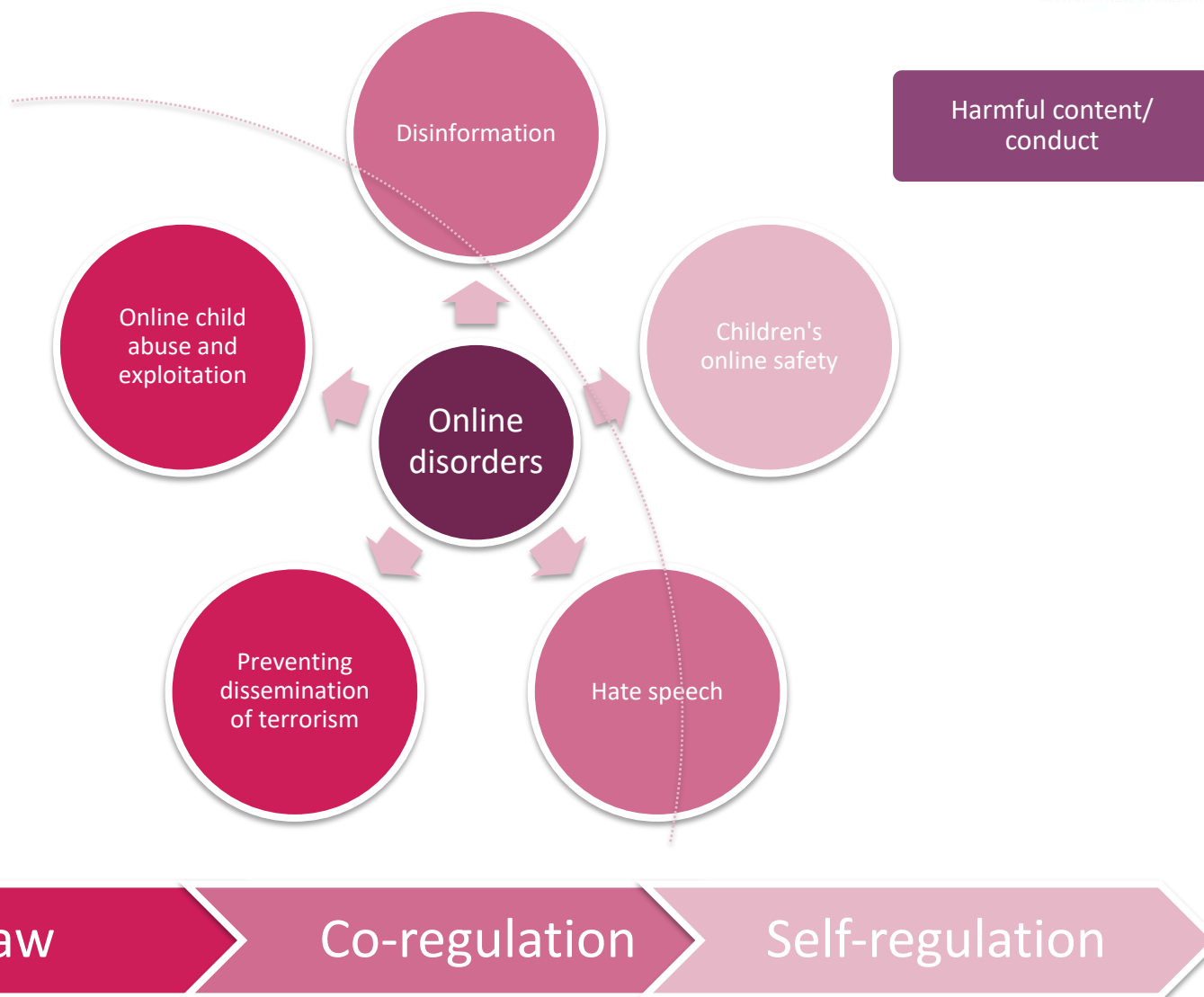
- Typology of risk and harm
- Developing evidence base

Policy Responses

- How to respond?
- Dilemmas
- A rights framework

Defining the Problem(s)

Disinformation

Harmful content/ conduct

Online child abuse and exploitation

Children's online safety

Online disorders

Preventing dissemination of terrorism

Hate speech

Illegal content/ conduct

Law → Co-regulation → Self-regulation

Conceptual Framework

The *Individual* Level of the child's digital experiences

Conceptual Framework
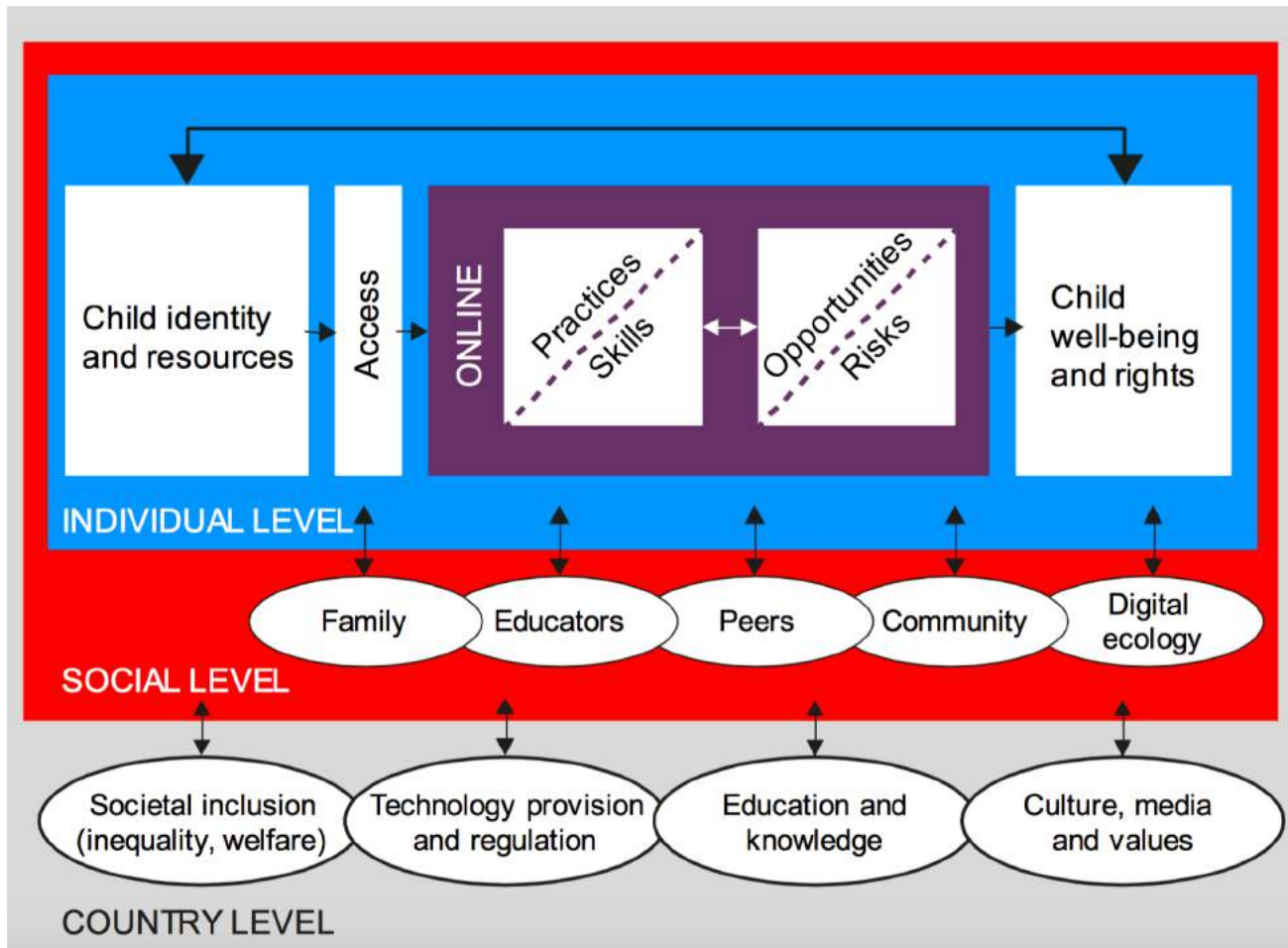
www.eukidsonline.net
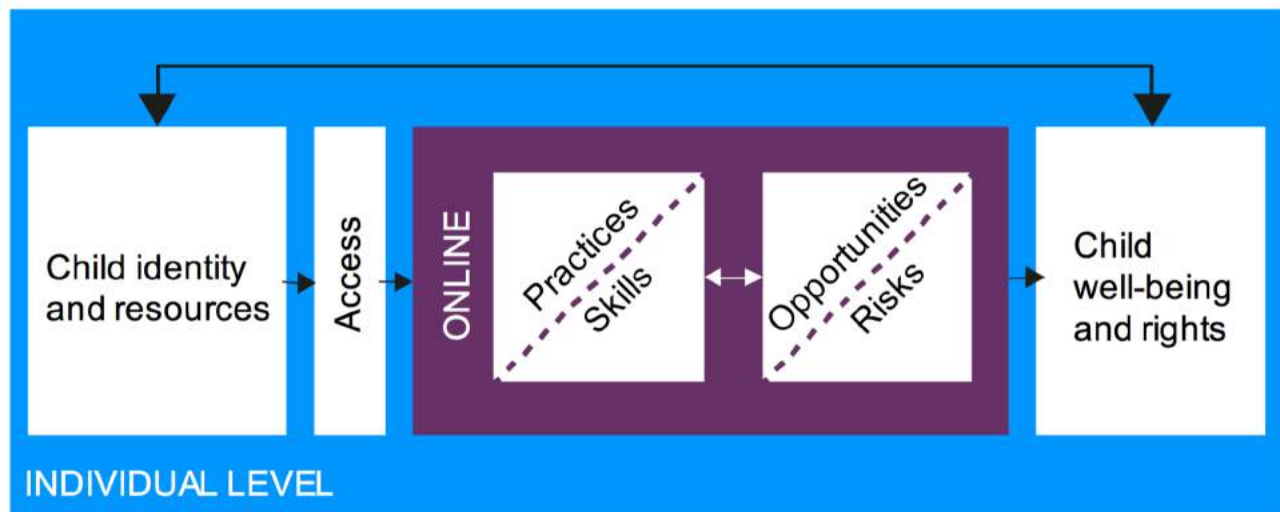
The *Social* Level of the digital environment
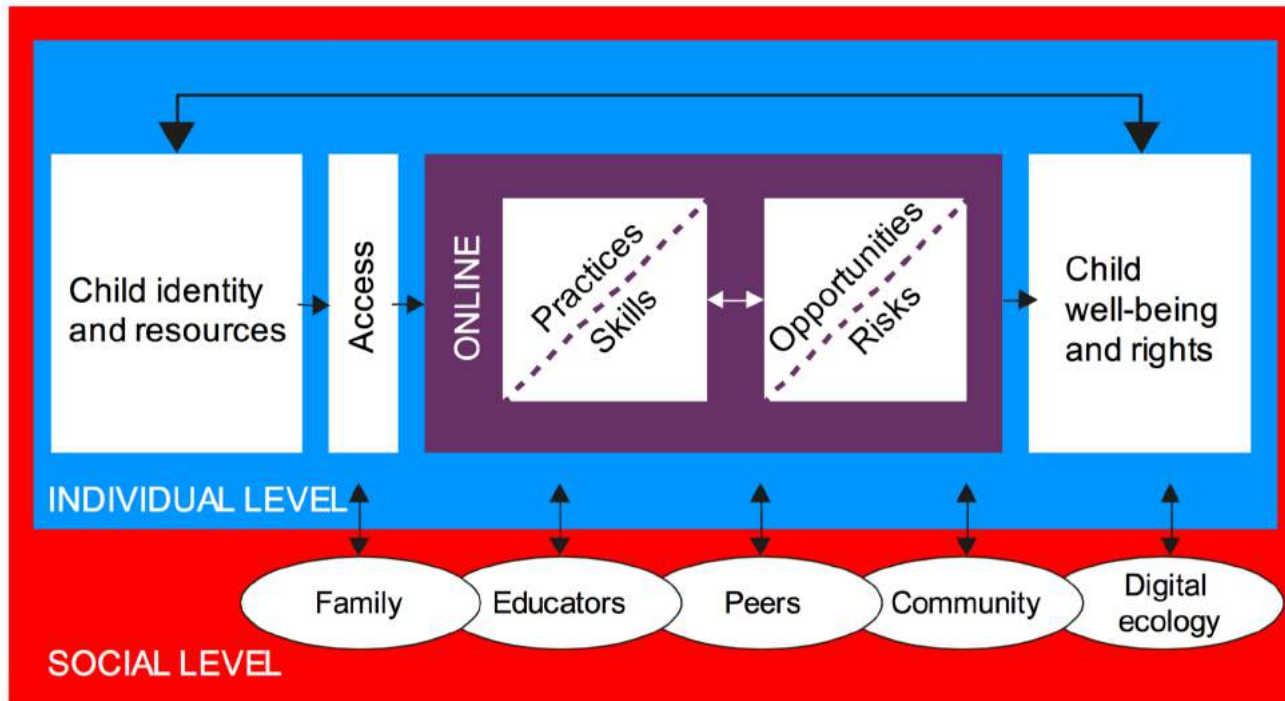
Conceptual Framework

The *National* Level for a comparative perspective

Risks & Opportunities Classification

		Content: Child as recipient	Contact: Child as participant	Conduct: Child as actor
OPPORTUNITIES	**Education learning and digital literacy**	Educational resources	Contact with others who share one's interests	Self-initiated or collaborative learning
	Participation and civic engagement	Global information	Exchange among interest groups	Concrete forms of civic engagement
	Creativity and self-expression	Diversity of resources	Being invited/ inspired to create or participate	User-generated content creation
	Identity and social connection	Advice (personal/ health/ sexual etc)	Social networking, shared experiences with others	Expression of identity
RISKS	**Commercial**	Advertising, spam, sponsorship	Tracking/ harvesting personal information	Gambling, illegal downloads, hacking
	Aggressive	Violent/ gruesome/ hateful content	Being bullied, harassed or stalked	Bullying or harassing another
	Sexual	Pornographic/harmful sexual content	Meeting strangers, being groomed	Creating/ uploading pornographic material
	Values	Racist, biased info/ advice (eg, drugs)	Self-harm, unwelcome persuasion	Providing advice eg, suicide/ pro-anorexia

Source: *EU Kids Online* (2009)

www.eukidsonline.net

The Evidence Base

LOOKING AT TRENDS

Looking at trends:
evidence from EUKO and NCGM

www.eukidsonline.net

Net Children Go Mobile

Risks compared 2010 and 2014 - 7 countries

Category	2014	2010
Gone to meet online contacts	13	9
Had contact with someone not met before	29	32
Received sexual messages	12	14
Seen sexual images online	20	18
Cyberbullied	12	8
Online experiences that bothered children	17	13
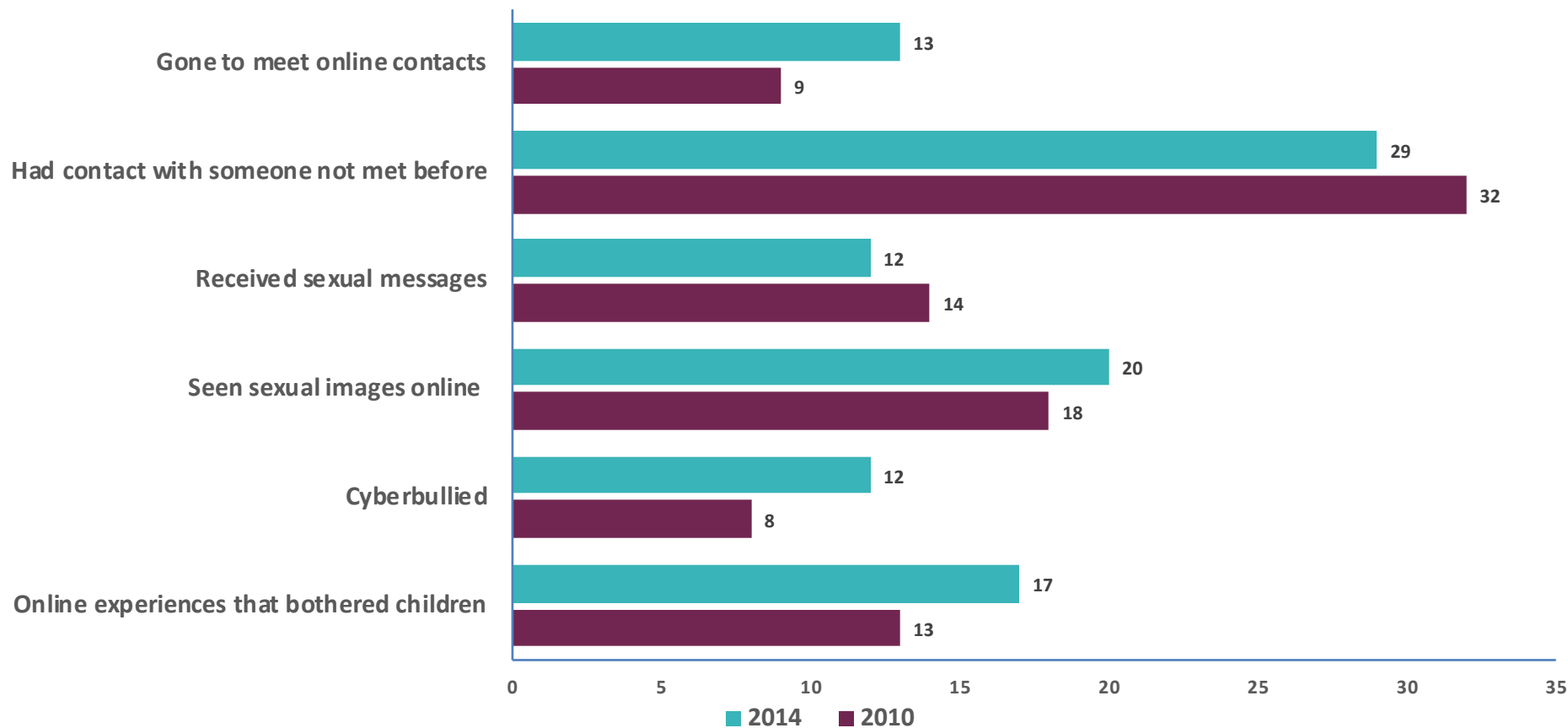
Source: *EU Kids Online and Net Children Go Mobile*

Looking at trends: evidence from EUKO and NCGM

Negative UGC 2010 and 2014 compared (7 countries)

Seen websites where people discuss ways of physically harming or hurting themselves
- 2014: 11
- 2010: 7

Seen websites where people discuss ways of committing suicide
- 2014: 6
- 2010: 4

Seen websites where people promote eating disorders (such
- 2014: 13
- 2010: 9

Seen websites where people publish hate messages that attack certain groups
- 2014: 20
- 2010: 13

Seen websites where people talk about or share their experiences of taking drugs
- 2014: 10
- 2010: 7

Legend: 2014, 2010

Source: *EU Kids Online and Net Children Go Mobile*

New Survey in 2019

Data collection underway or completed:

Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland
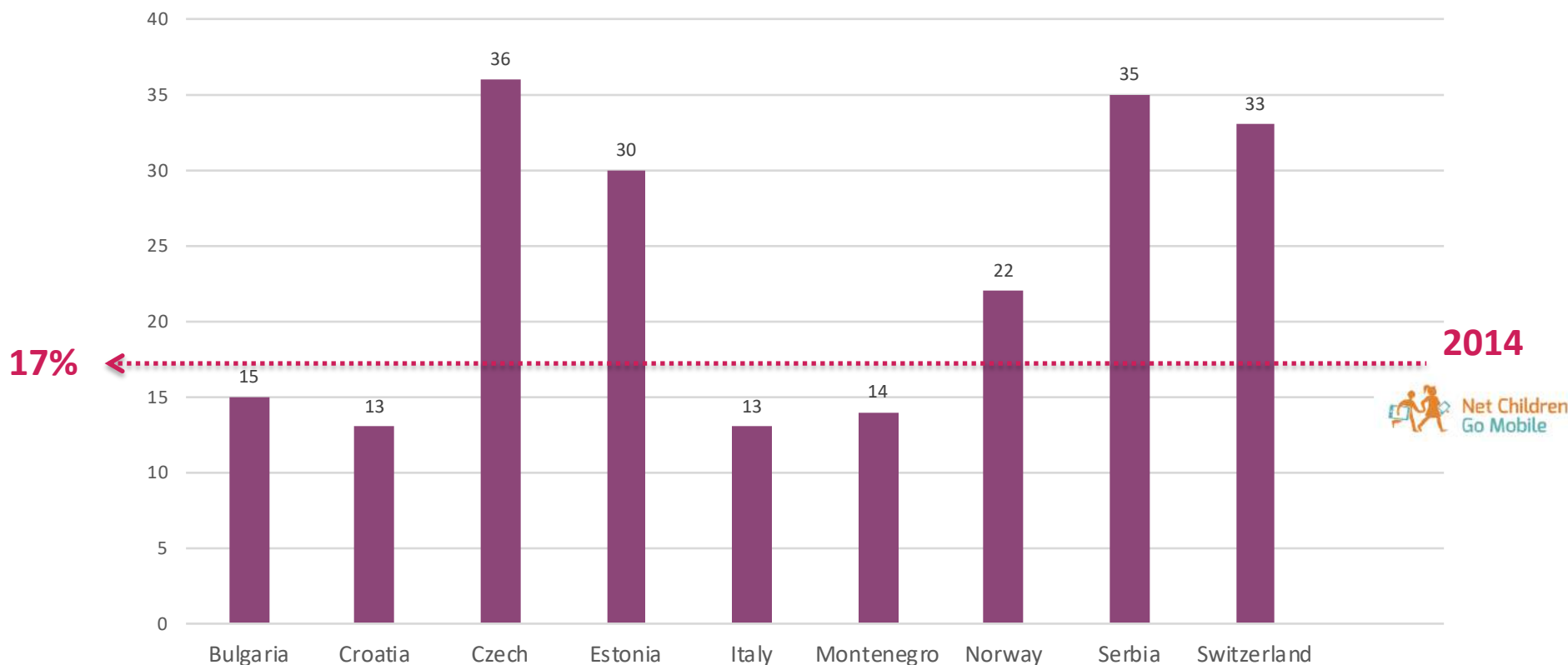
More coming!

New Topics

Cyberhate
Discrimination and violent extremism
Cyber-bystanders
Digital citizenship
e-health
Internet of things

Recent EU Kids Online data (2018-2019)

www.eukidsonline.net

Online experiences that bothered children

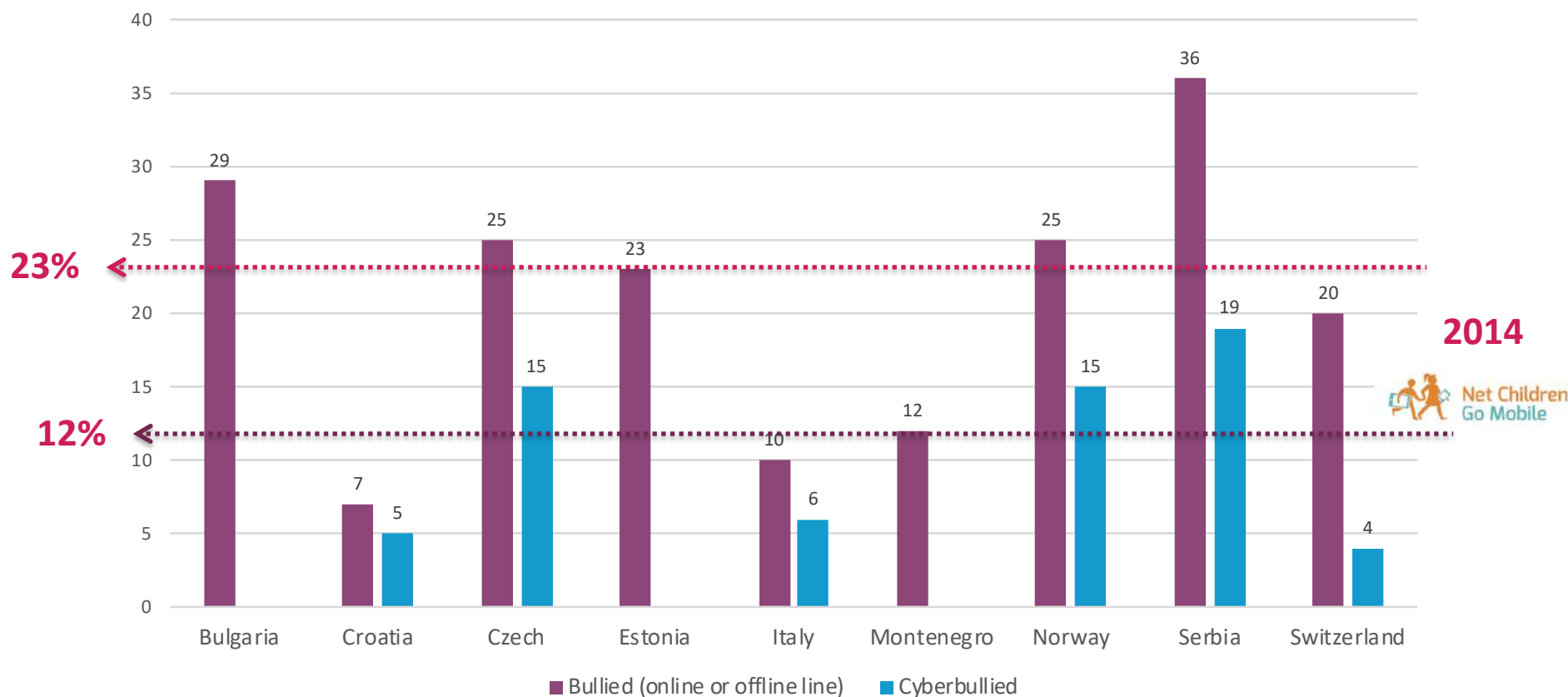| Country	Value
Bulgaria	15
Croatia	13
Czech	36
Estonia	30
Italy	13
Montenegro	14
Norway	22
Serbia	35
Switzerland	33

17% 2014

Net Children Go Mobile

Question: In the PAST YEAR, has anything EVER happened online that bothered or upset you in some way (e.g., made you feel upset, uncomfortable, scared or that you shouldn't have seen it)?

Recent EU Kids Online data (2018-2019)

www.eukidsonline.net

Experienced Bullying

23%

12%

2014

Net Children Go Mobile

Country	Bullied (online or offline line)	Cyberbullied
Bulgaria	29	
Croatia	7	5
Czech	25	15
Estonia	23	
Italy	10	6
Montenegro	12	
Norway	25	15
Serbia	36	19
Switzerland	20	4

■ Bullied (online or offline line) ■ Cyberbullied

Question: In the PAST YEAR, has anyone EVER treated you in such a hurtful or nasty way?

Recent EU Kids Online data (2018-2019)

www.eukidsonline.net

Seen sexual images (online or offline)

Country	Value
Bulgaria	35
Croatia	28
Czech	43
Estonia	25
Italy	31
Montenegro	29
Norway	40
Serbia	65
Switzerland	35

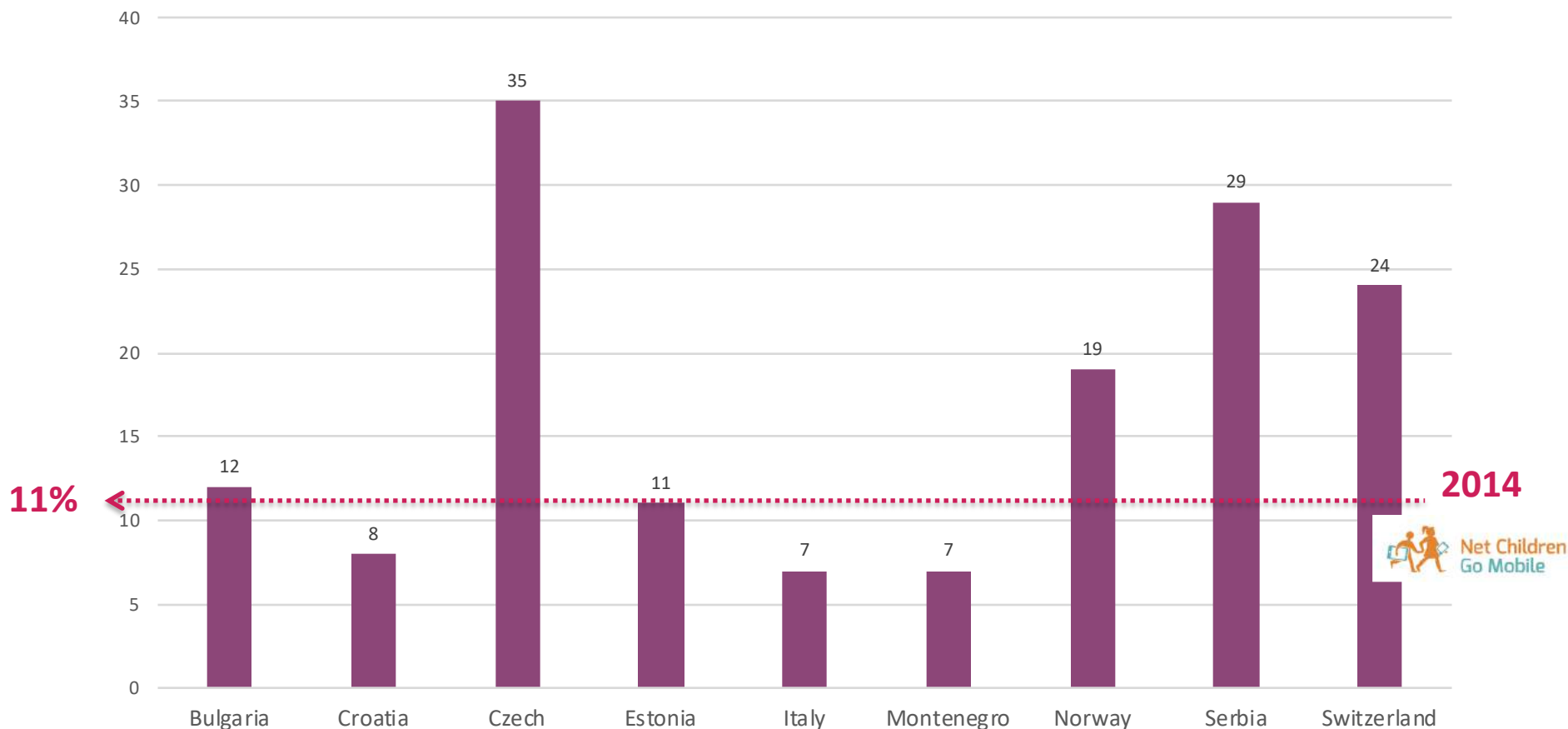17% ·············· 2014

Net Children Go Mobile

Question: In the PAST YEAR, how often have you seen images of this kind in any of the following ways?
(Via a mobile phone, computer, tablet or any other online device.)

Recent EU Kids Online data (2018-2019)

www.eukidsonline.net

Received sexual messages (11-17 yrs)

11% ┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄ **2014**

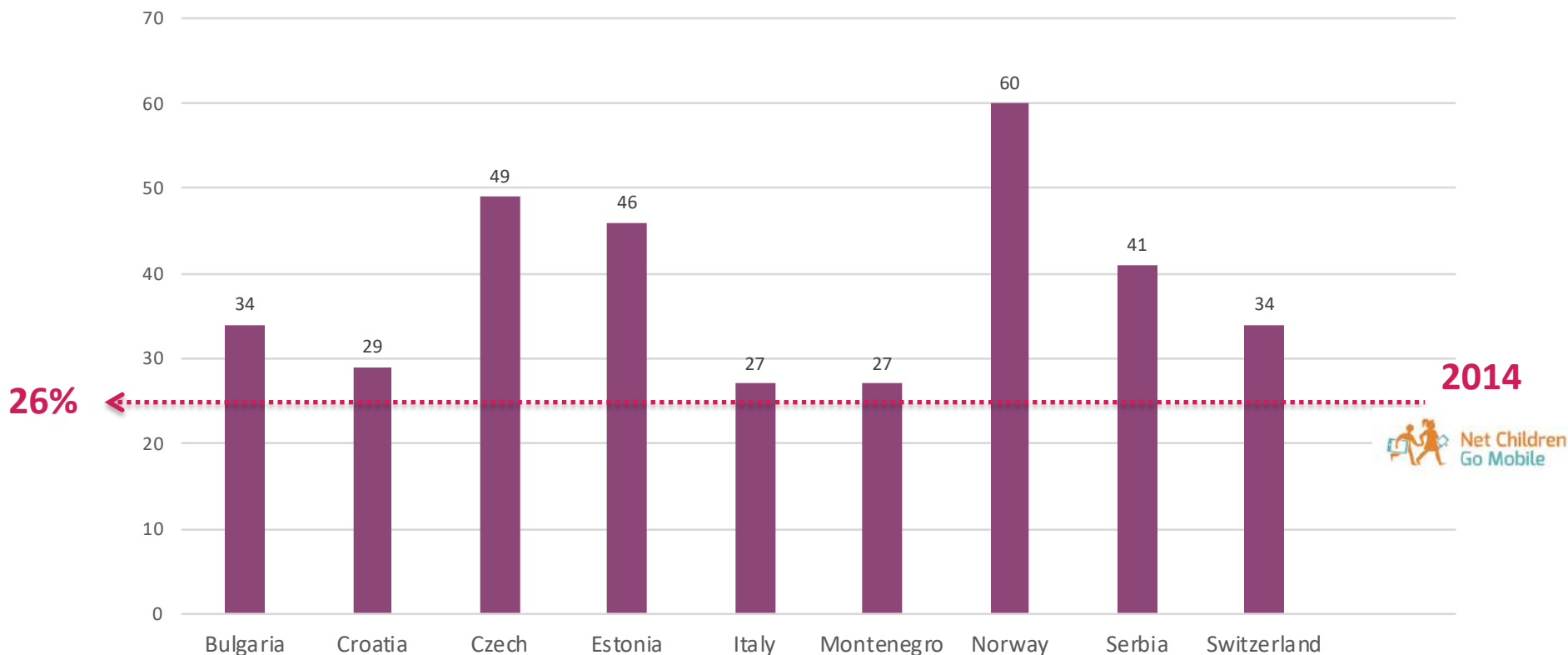| Country	Value
Bulgaria	12
Croatia	8
Czech	35
Estonia	11
Italy	7
Montenegro	7
Norway	19
Serbia	29
Switzerland	24

Net Children Go Mobile

Question: In the PAST YEAR, have you EVER RECEIVED any sexual messages? This could be words, pictures or videos?

Recent EU Kids Online data (2018-2019)

www.eukidsonline.net

Been in contact online with someone not met before

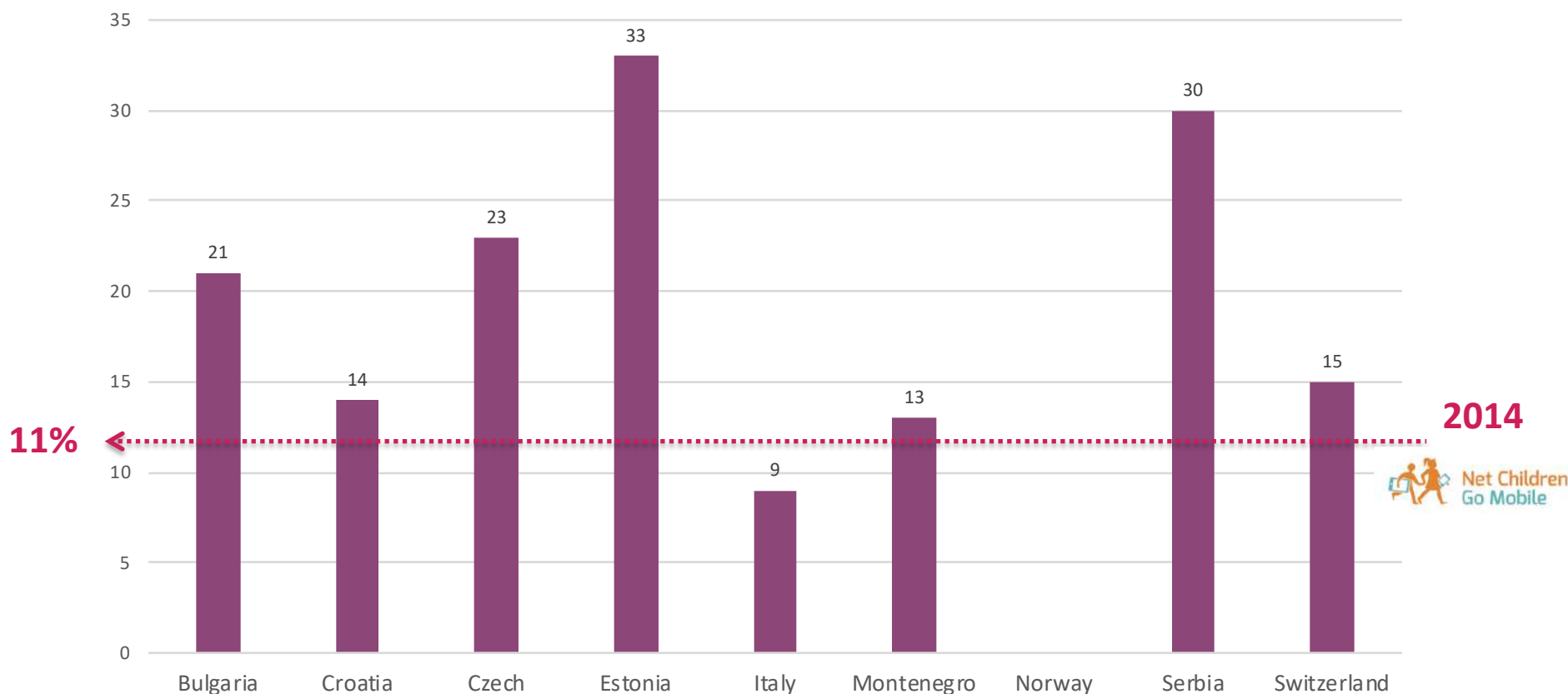| Country	Value
Bulgaria	34
Croatia	29
Czech	49
Estonia	46
Italy	27
Montenegro	27
Norway	60
Serbia	41
Switzerland	34

26% — 2014

Net Children Go Mobile

Question: Have you EVER had contact on the internet with someone you have not met face-to-face before?
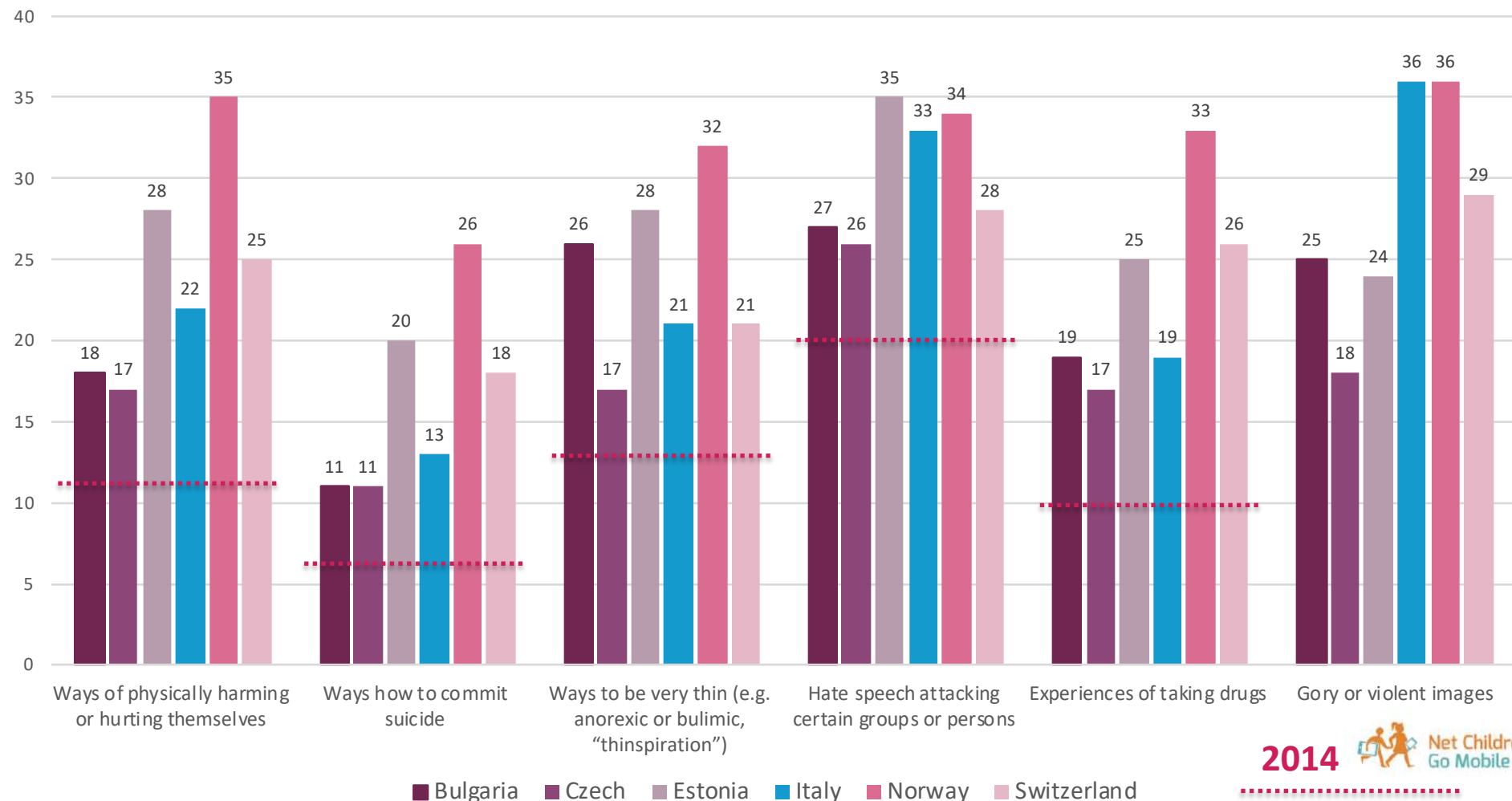
Recent EU Kids Online data (2018-2019)

Gone to meet online contacts

Bar chart showing percentages by country:
- Bulgaria: 21
- Croatia: 14
- Czech: 23
- Estonia: 33
- Italy: 9
- Montenegro: 13
- Norway: (no value)
- Serbia: 30
- Switzerland: 15

11% — dotted line — **2014**

Net Children Go Mobile

Question: In the PAST YEAR, have you EVER met anyone face-to-face that you first got to know on the internet?

Potentially harmful user-generated content

www.eukidsonline.net

Legend: Bulgaria, Czech, Estonia, Italy, Norway, Switzerland

Categories:
- Ways of physically harming or hurting themselves: Bulgaria 18, Czech 17, Estonia 28, Italy 22, Norway 35, Switzerland 25
- Ways how to commit suicide: Bulgaria 11, Czech 11, Estonia 20, Italy 13, Norway 26, Switzerland 18
- Ways to be very thin (e.g. anorexic or bulimic, "thinspiration"): Bulgaria 26, Czech 17, Estonia 28, Italy 21, Norway 32, Switzerland 21
- Hate speech attacking certain groups or persons: Bulgaria 27, Czech 26, Estonia 35, Italy 33, Norway 34, Switzerland 28
- Experiences of taking drugs: Bulgaria 19, Czech 17, Estonia 25, Italy 19, Norway 33, Switzerland 26
- Gory or violent images: Bulgaria 25, Czech 18, Estonia 24, Italy 36, Norway 36, Switzerland 29

2014 Net Children Go Mobile

Question: In the PAST YEAR, have you seen online content or online discussions where people talk about or show any of these things?

How to respond?

www.eukidsonline.net

- Children's rights need to be specified in terms of '***provision***', '***participation***' as well as '***protection***' (the '3Ps')

- The potential of online services – for good and/or for bad – is realised by ***children's communicative practices*** (Hasebrink 2016)

- An effective protection response needs to ***pivot towards children's well-being and rights***

A rights-based framework

Aspects of communicative practices	Related to service providers		Related to communication	
	Standardised services („content")	Individual relation to service provider („contract")	Communication partner ("contact")	Child's communication practices ("conduct")
Role of the child	Recipient	Market participant	Communication participant	Communicator
Provision				
Protection				
Participation				

Provision of appropriate positive content

Protection against harmful content

Listening to children's needs with regard to content

(Source: Hasebrink & Lampert 2016)

Key points

- A *robust evidence base* is more important than ever to inform policy making

- Networks such as EU Kids Online offer *vital national capacity* and a *key resource for NRAs*

- A *partnership approach* is always best even if the methodology needs more work

EU Kids Online
Findings · methods · recommendations

Draft resolution- May 2019

United Nations

E/CN.15/2019/L.3/Rev.1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
24 May 2019

English only

**Commission on Crime Prevention
and Criminal Justice**
Twenty-eighth session
Vienna, 20–24 May 2019
Agenda item 8
**World crime trends and emerging issues and
responses in the field of crime prevention and
criminal justice**

Recognizing the importance of international, regional and bilateral multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives which advance the effective protection and promotion of the rights of the child and the elimination of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online, and which conduct research aimed at establishing a rigorous evidence base around children's use of the internet and, in this regard, noting the efforts of, inter alia, the WePROTECT Global Alliance and Global Kids Online,
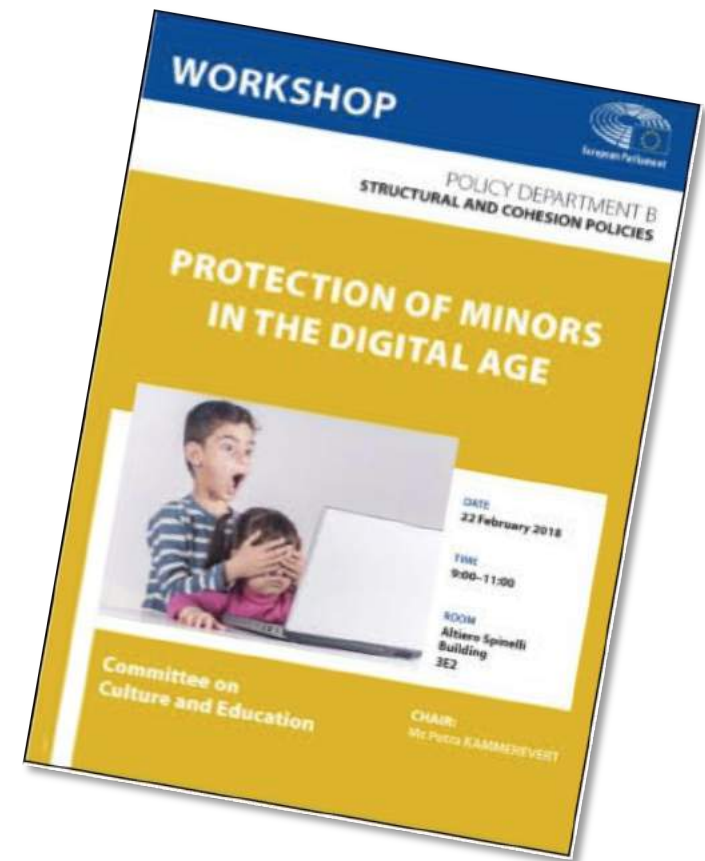
Further Reading:
Protecting Minors in the Online World

European Parliament CULT Committee – Protection of Minors in the Digital Age (2018)

a. "Child safety online – definition of the problem" (O'Neill)

b. "Solutions and policy dilemmas regarding minors' protection online" (Lievens)

c. "Recommendations for EU policy developments on the protection of minors in the digital age" (Livingstone)

WORKSHOP

POLICY DEPARTMENT B
STRUCTURAL AND COHESION POLICIES

PROTECTION OF MINORS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

DATE
22 February 2018

TIME
9:00–11:00

ROOM
Altiero Spinelli Building
3E2

Committee on Culture and Education

CHAIR:
Mr Petra KAMMEREVERT

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL_IDA(2018)602016

References

Livingstone, S., Mascheroni, G., Olafsson, K., Haddon, L., Ólafsson, K., & Haddon, L. (2014). *Children's online risks and opportunities: Comparative findings from EU Kids Online and Net Children Go Mobile*. London, LSE: EU Kids Online, LSE. Retrieved from http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/60513/

Mascheroni, G., & Ólafsson, K. (2018). Access and use, risks and opportunities of the internet for Italian children, (January), 1–6. Retrieved from www.eukidsonline.net

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Mascheroni, G., & Cuman, A. (2014). *Net Children Go Mobile. Final Report*. Milano.

Byrne, J., Kardefelt-Winther, D., Livingstone, S., & Stoilova, M. (2016). *GLOBAL KIDS ONLINE : Research synthesis*. Retrieved from www.globalkidsonline.net/synthesis

O'Neill, B. (2018). *Research for CULT Committee – Child safety online: definition of the problem*. Brussels. Retrieved from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2018/602016/IPOL_IDA(2018)602016_EN.pdf

Lievens, E., Livingstone, S. M., McLaughlin, S., O'Neill, B., Verdoodt, V., O'Neill, B., … Lievens, E. (2018). Children's rights and digital technologies. In T. Liefaard & U. Kilkelly (Eds.), *International Children's Rights Law* (pp. 487–513). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4184-6_16

THANK YOU!

Better Internet for Kids

**The Better Internet for Kids
Policy Map**

Implementing the European Strategy for a Better
Internet for Children in European Member States

March 2018

Brian O'Neill

Thuy Dinh

WORKSHOP

POLICY DEPARTMENT B
STRUCTURAL AND COHESION POLICIES

**PROTECTION OF MINORS
IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

DATE
22 February 2018

TIME
9:00–11:00

ROOM
Altiero Spinelli
Building
3E2

**Committee on
Culture and Education**

CHAIR:

Email: Brian.oneill@dit.ie

Web: www.eukidsonline.net

https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/