Internet users' experience of harm online: summary of survey research

Conducted by: Kantar Media

Fieldwork: June-July 2018

INQ000615301_0001

Background and Objectives

This research was commissioned by Ofcom. The Information Commissioner's Office provided advice on the research design and analysis.

The main objective of the research was to quantify concerns about, and reported experience of, online harm in four key categories:

- CONTENT that people view, read or listen to online
- INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER USERS
- DATA / PRIVACY
- HACKING / SECURITY

The research also explored knowledge and opinions of the current level of regulation that applies to broadcast and online environments

INQ000615301_0002

Methodology

Sample	• 1,686 internet users aged 16+ in the UK • Quotas set on region, gender, age, and working status using Kantar TNS Omnibus
Data collection	• Face-to-face in-home interviews • Conducted by Kantar Media • Fieldwork from 27th June to 1st July 2018

INQ000615301_0003

Summary of key findings

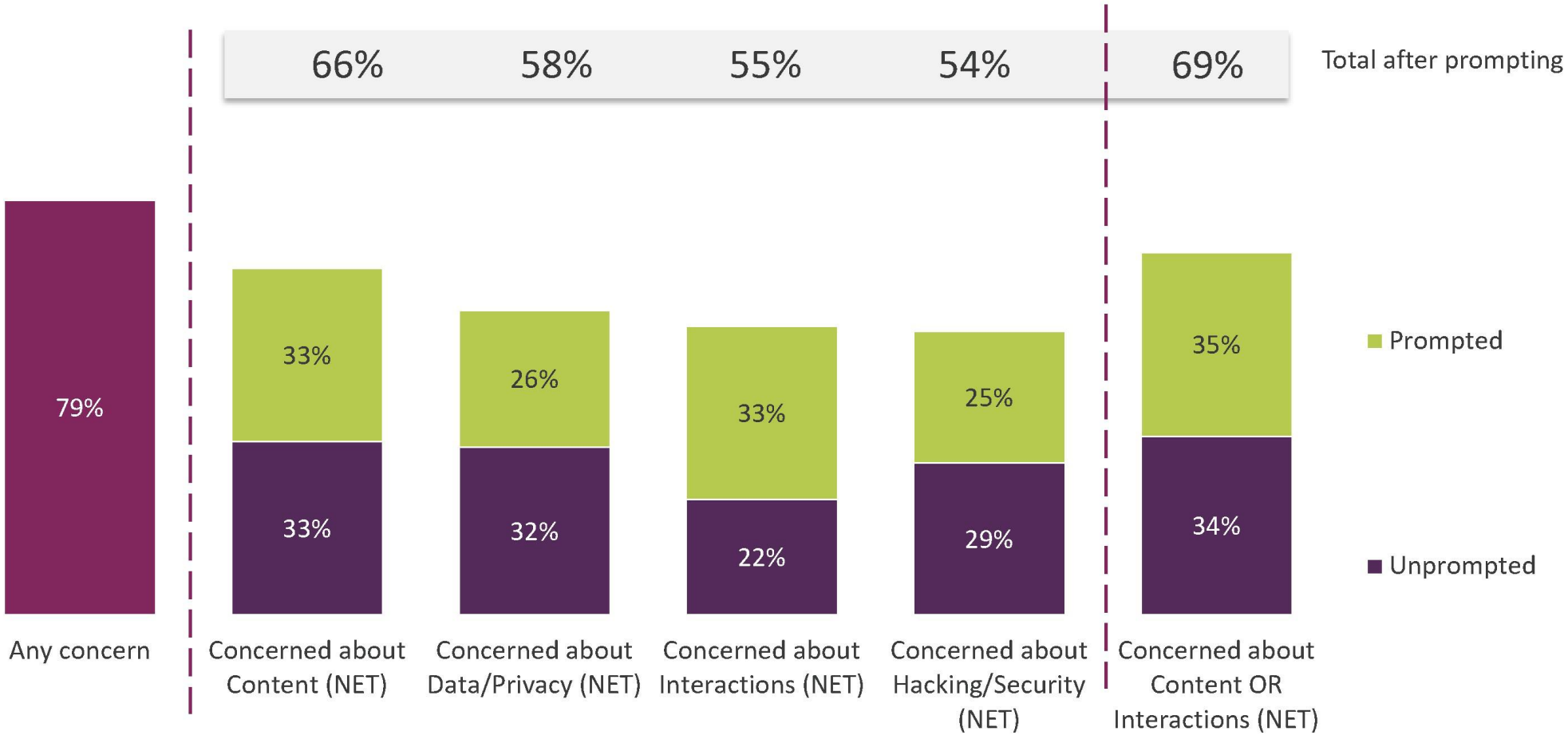
- 79% of UK adult internet users have concern(s) about aspects of going online
    - 66% are concerned about CONTENT that people view, read or listen to online
    - 58% are concerned about DATA / PRIVACY
    - 55% are concerned about INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER USERS
    - 54% are concerned about HACKING / SECURITY
- 45% of UK adult internet users indicated that they have experienced some form of online harm
- 21% of UK adult internet users have taken action to report harmful content
- The broadcast and online regulatory framework is not well understood by a significant proportion of the public
- Views are split on whether current regulations are sufficient, or whether more is required. Few believe regulation should be reduced

Section 1
Concerns about online harm

INQ000615301_0005

8 in 10 adult internet users expressed concerns about the using the internet

Areas of concerns about the internet



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

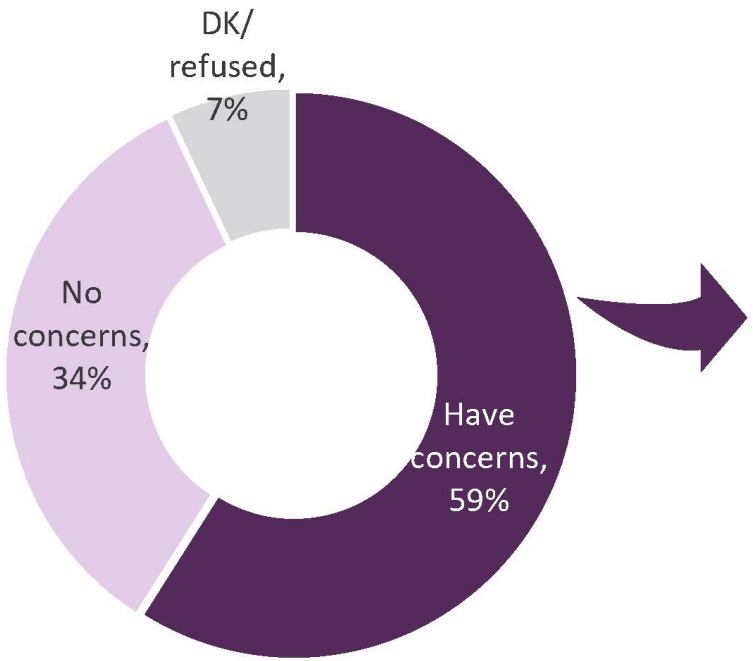
Question: Q2A/Q2B Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? SPONTANEOUS/PROMPTED

Base: All adult internet users in the UK (1686)

Chart shows the 'NET' proportion of all respondents who raised concerns about specific aspects of internet use.

A wide range of concerns were raised – with protection of children a key area

A range of different concerns were cited **UNPROMPTED**



Personal data being processed without knowledge/consent (19%), Loss of privacy (17%), Personal information not stored securely (14%), Spam emails (12%), Targeted advertising (9%), Fear of private or embarrassing information being made public (9%), Government/agency surveillance (8%), Targeted political messages (7%)

= 32% relating to data/privacy

Scams/Fraud/ID theft (22%), Loss or hacking of personal data/ passwords (17%), Viruses/trojans/worms/spyware/malicious software (16%)

= 29% relating to hacking/security

Child exploitation (24%), Unsuitable content for children (15%), Promotion of terrorism/ radicalisation (12%), Sex/pornography (14%), Offensive videos/pictures (11%), Fake news/ disinformation (12%), Violence (11%), Harmful or dangerous content - e.g. encouraging risky behaviour (9%), Hateful speech (11%), Bad language (8%), Offensive language in publications (7%)

= 33% relating to content

Strangers contacting children (14%), Bullying/harassment/trolling (15%), People masquerading as younger people online (13%), Threats/stalking (10%), People impersonating others or being anonymous (10%), Hateful speech from other users (9%), Offensive images from other users (8%), Unsolicited or unwelcome friend/follow/connect requests (8%), Offensive language from other users (8%)

= 22% relating to interactions with other people

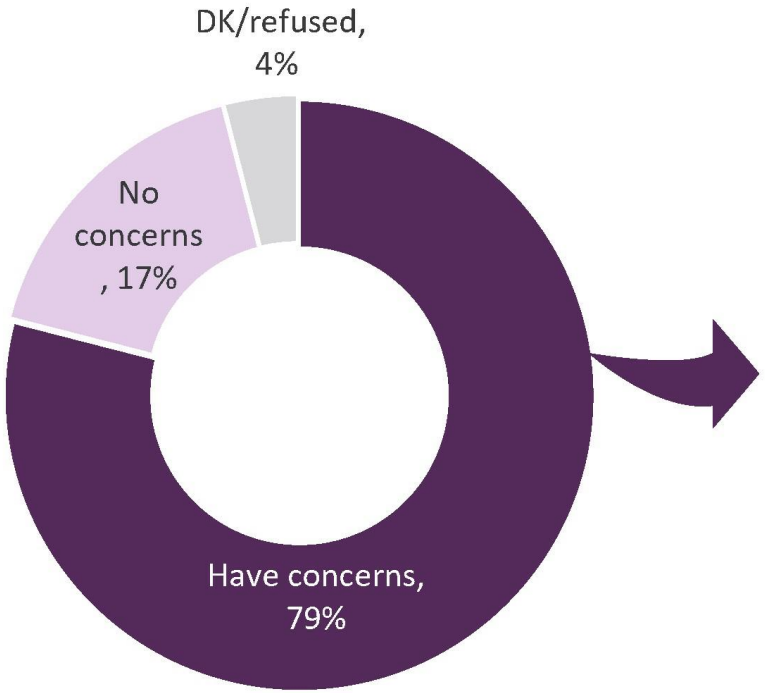
Anti-social behaviours (8%), Spending too much time online (7%), Addictive (7%), Other (6%)

Q.2a Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? [Data capture unprompted, then prompted. **Chart shows totals before prompting.**
Base: UK adult internet users (1,686)

A wide range of concerns were raised – with protection of children a key area

A range of different concerns were cited

AFTER PROMPTING



Personal data being processed without knowledge/consent (39%), Loss of privacy (38%), Personal information not stored securely (31%), Spam emails (30%), Targeted advertising (21%), Fear of private or embarrassing information being made public (21%), Government/agency surveillance (19%), Targeted political messages (17%)

= 58% relating to data/privacy

Scams/Fraud/ID theft (46%), Loss or hacking of personal data/ passwords (39%), Viruses/trojans/worms/spyware/malicious software (37%)

= 54% relating to hacking/security

Child exploitation (53%), Unsuitable content for children (37%), Promotion of terrorism/ radicalisation (37%), Sex/pornography (33%), Offensive videos/pictures (31%), Fake news/ disinformation (29%), Violence (27%), Harmful or dangerous content - e.g. encouraging risky behaviour (27%), Hateful speech (27%), Bad language (20%), Offensive language in publications (19%)

= 66% relating to content

Strangers contacting children (40%), Bullying/harassment/trolling (39%), People masquerading as younger people online (33%), Threats/stalking (28%), People impersonating others or being anonymous (27%), Hateful speech from other users (23%), Offensive images from other users (21%), Unsolicited or unwelcome friend/follow/connect requests (20%), Offensive language from other users (19%)

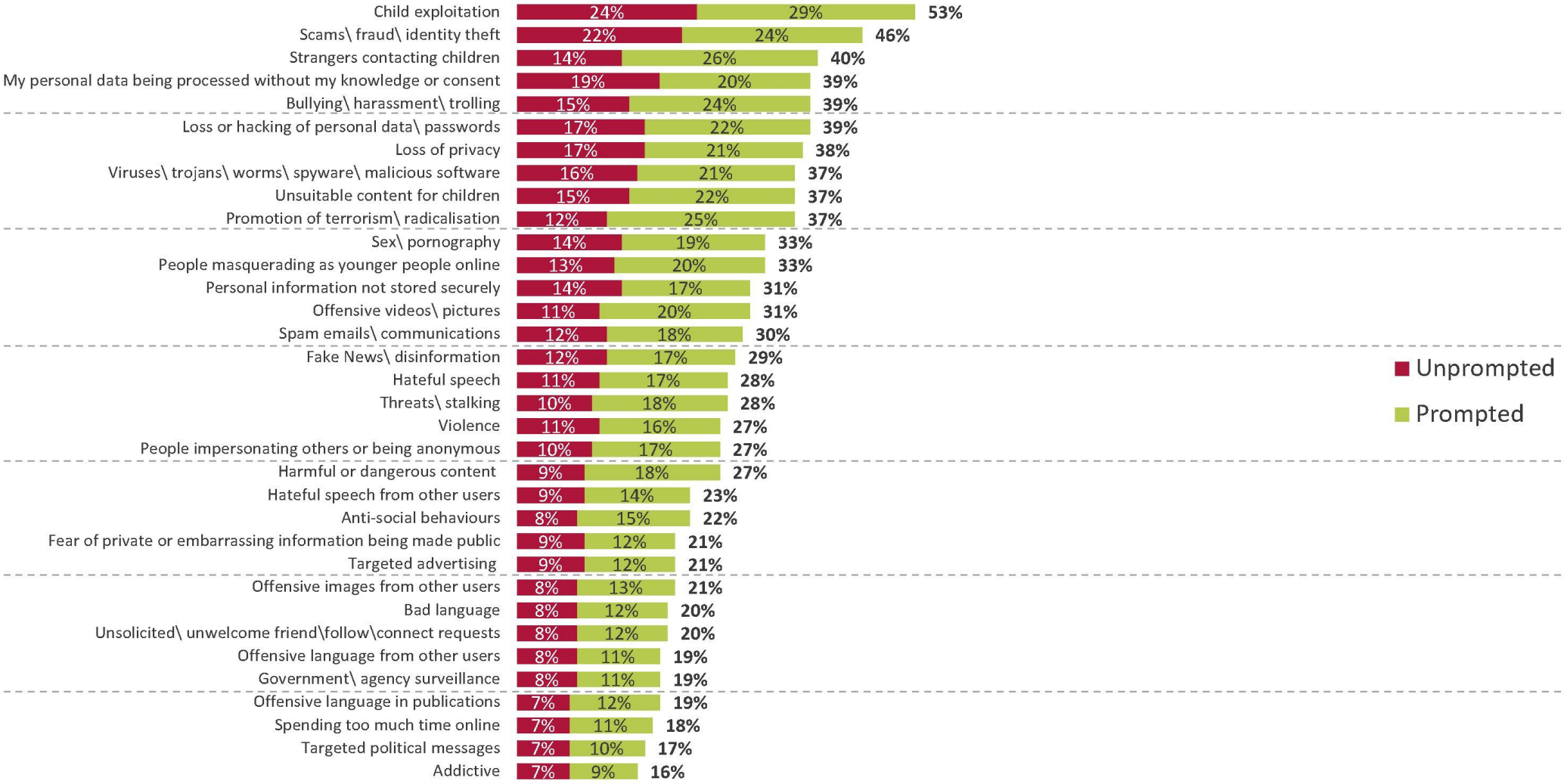
= 55% relating to interactions with other people

Anti-social behaviours (23%), Spending too much time online (18%), Addictive (16%), Other (6%)

Q.2a/b Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? [Data capture unprompted, then prompted. **Chart shows totals after prompting.**
Base: UK adult internet users (1,686)

Summary of concerns – unprompted and prompted

Proportion of internet users expressing a concern



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q2A/Q2B Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? SPONTANEOUS/PROMPTED

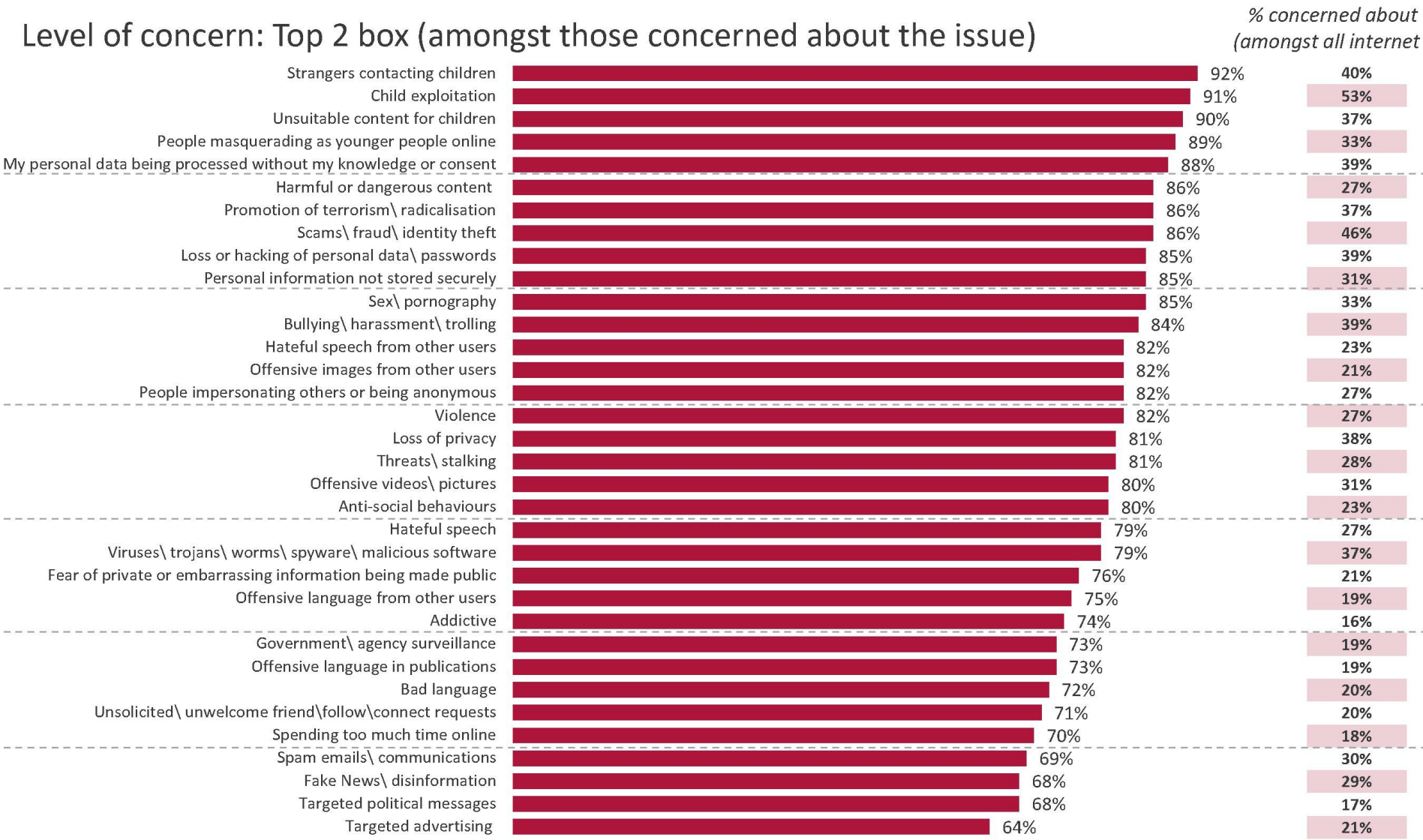
Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

Issues relating to children were of the greatest concern

Ofcom making communications work for everyone

ico. Information Commissioner's Office

Level of concern: Top 2 box (amongst those concerned about the issue)



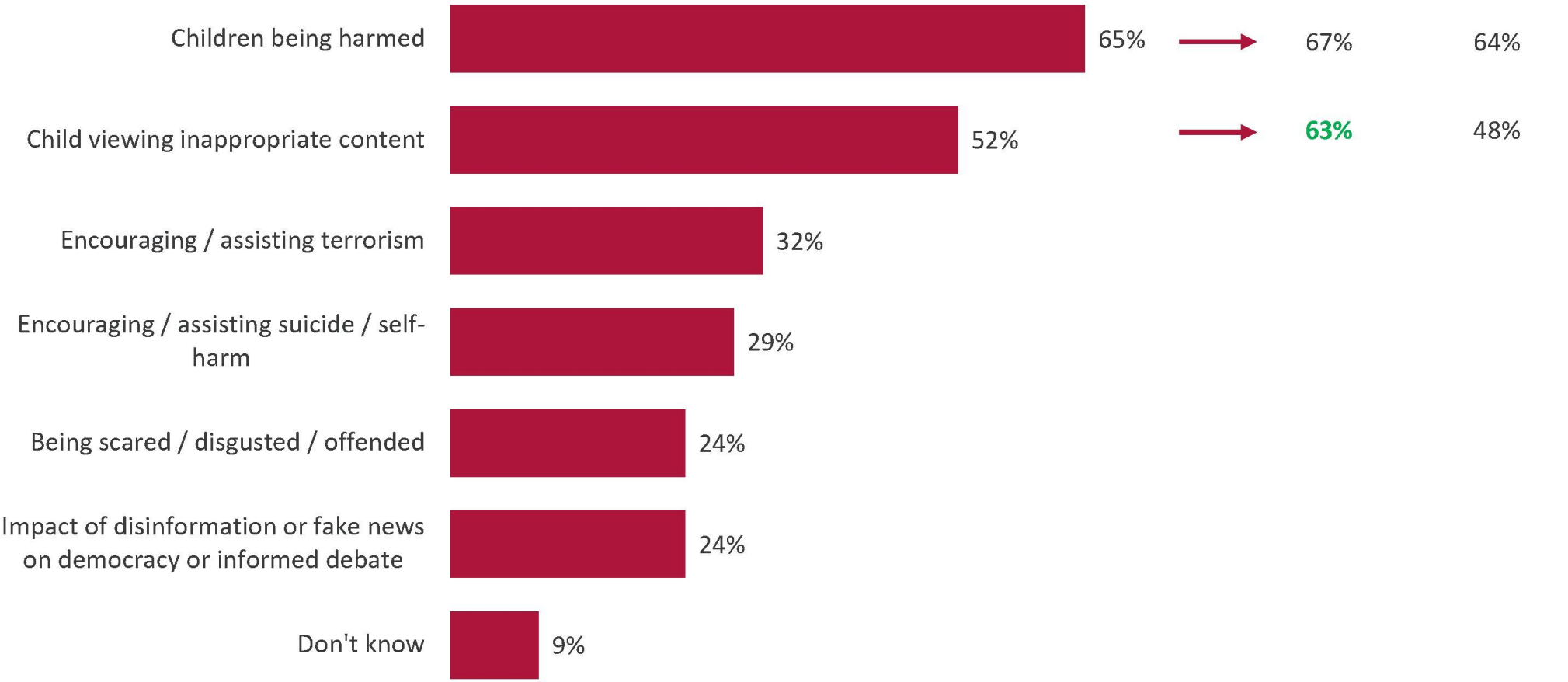
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q3 I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about and I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Not at all Concerned and 5 means Very Concerned how concerned you are about each when using the internet PROMPTED. Q2A/Q2B Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? SPONTANEOUS/PROMPTED

Base: All concerned about area (288-882); All internet users (1686)

The consequences of greatest concern about online content related to the potential harm of children

Consequences of harmful content concerned about



*Codes <5% not charted

Green % significantly higher than total (sig tested to 99%)

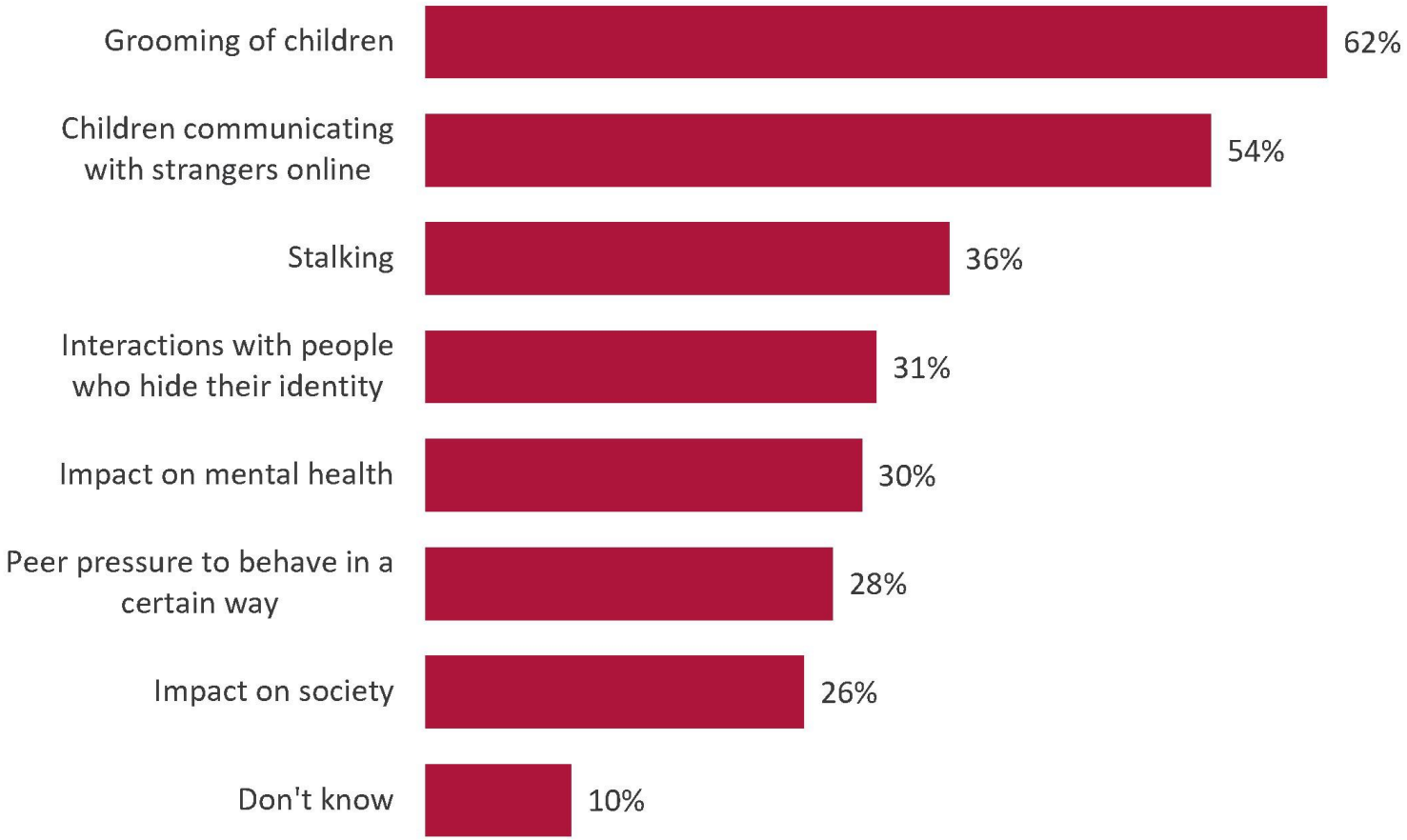
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q4 You mentioned you were concerned about harmful online content. What consequences were you concerned about? SPONTANEOUS

Base: All with concerns around content (1059)

The main consequences that people were concerned about relating to harmful interactions were linked to their potentially negative impact on children

Consequences of harmful interactions concerned about



*Codes <5% not charted

Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q5 You mentioned you were concerned about harmful or offensive online contacts with other individuals. What consequences were you concerned about? SPONTANEOUS

Base: All with concerns around interactions (873)

Amongst those concerned about data/ privacy the consequences that people were most concerned about were fraud or financial loss, and identity theft

Consequences of harmful data/privacy concerned about

Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

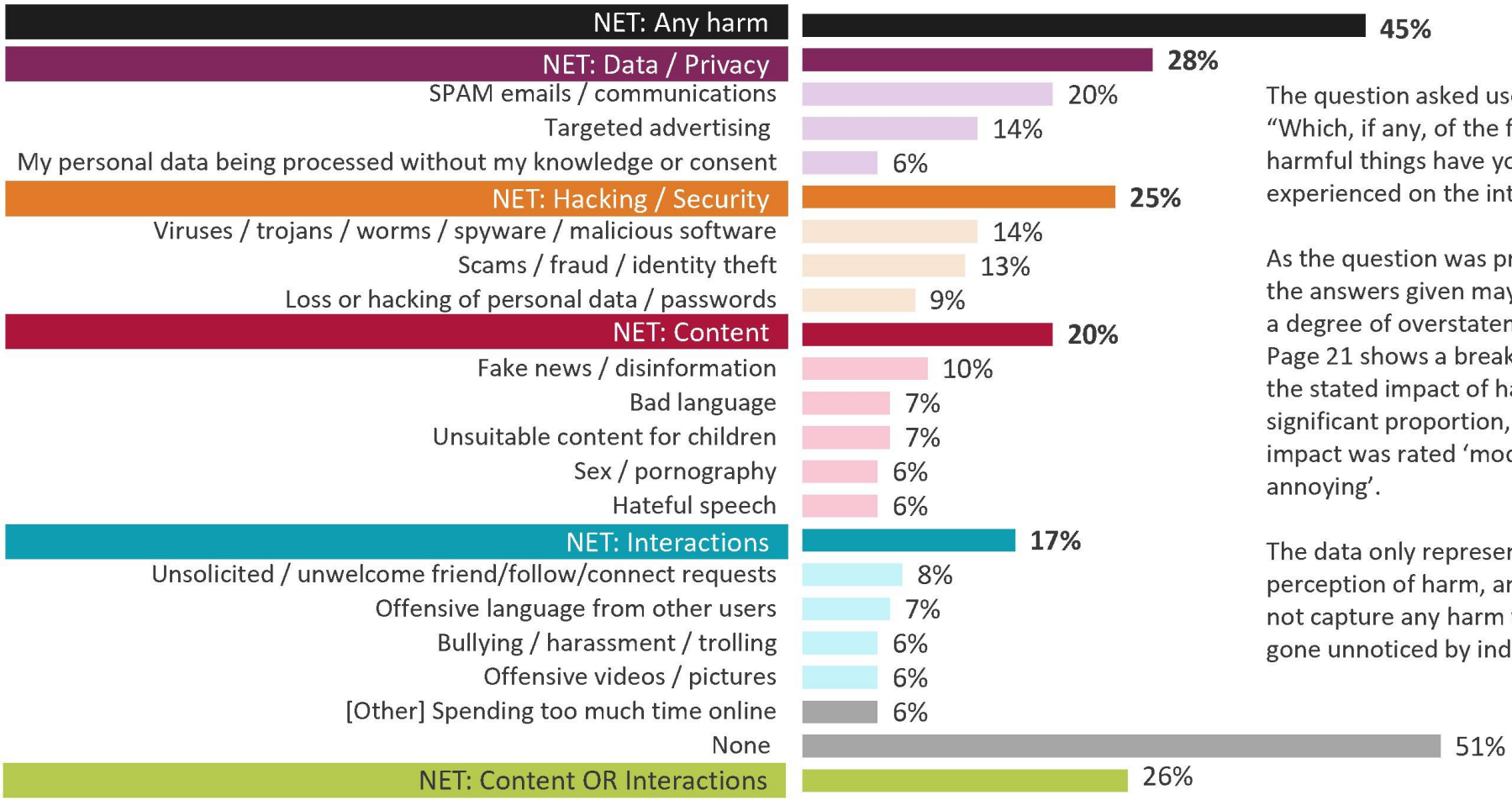
Question: Q6 You mentioned you were concerned about scams, loss or hacking of personal data and\or passwords. What consequences were you concerned about? SPONTANEOUS

Base: All with concerns around data/privacy (921)

Section 2
Reported experience of online harm

Almost half of adult internet users indicated that they had experienced harm online

Online harm experienced



The question asked users "Which, if any, of the following harmful things have you experienced on the internet?"

As the question was prompted the answers given may include a degree of overstatement. Page 21 shows a breakdown of the stated impact of harm. For a significant proportion, the impact was rated 'moderately annoying'.

The data only represents a perception of harm, and does not capture any harm which has gone unnoticed by individuals.

*Answer codes <5% not charted. See data tables for full list. 4% answered 'don't know'.

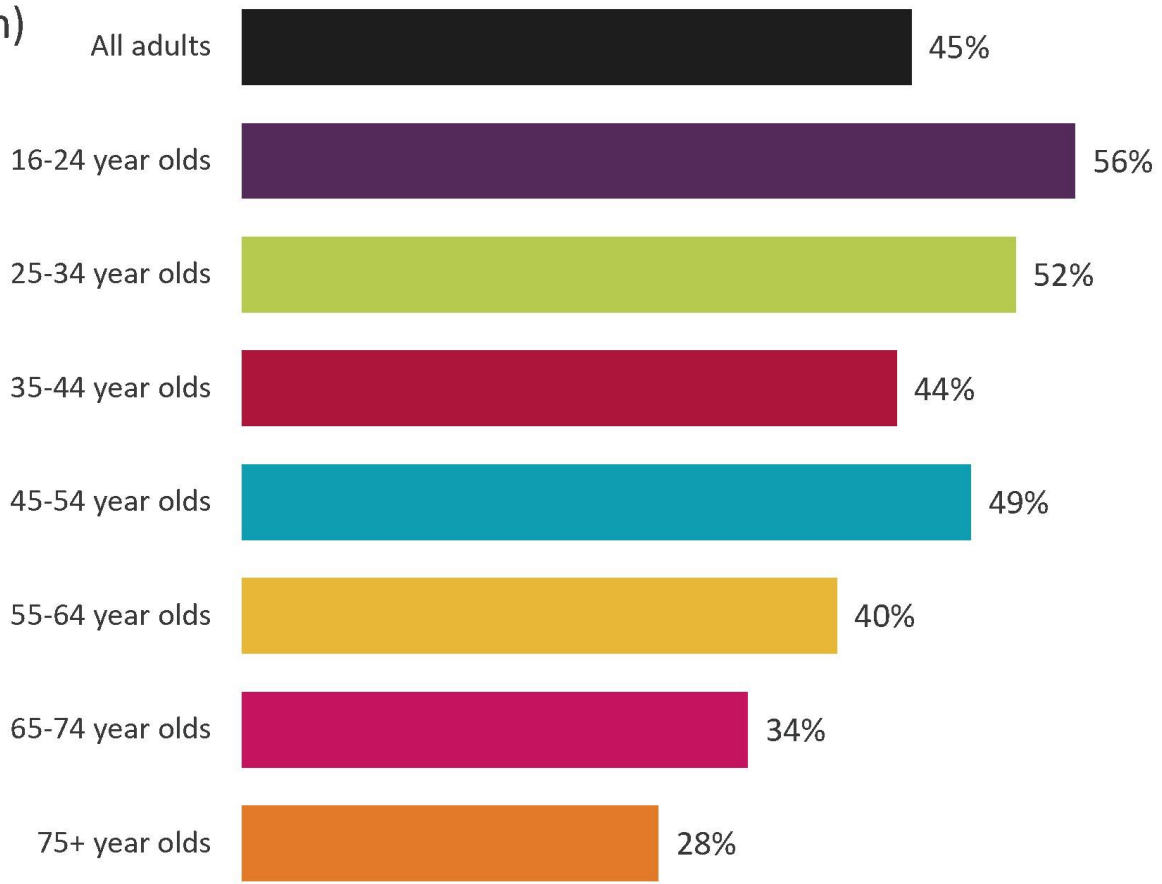
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things you have experienced on the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

The proportion indicating that they had experienced harm was lower amongst over 65s

Online harm experienced (Net: Any harm)



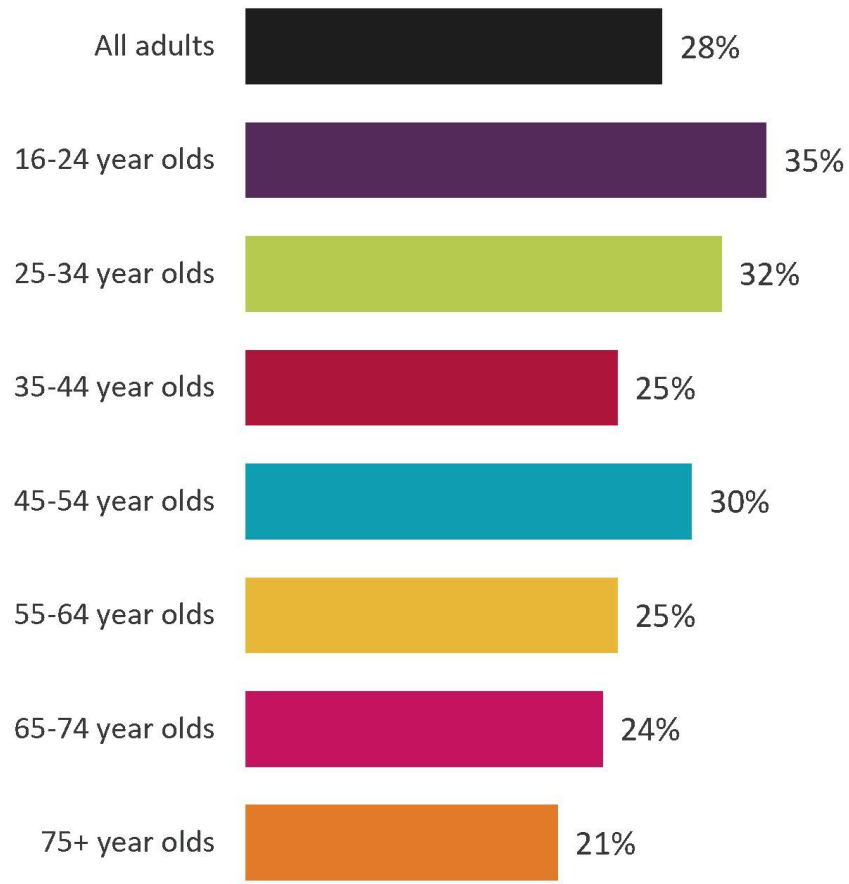
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things you have experienced on the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

Relatively similar proportions of all age groups indicated that they have experienced harm relating to data/privacy

Online harm experienced relating to **data / privacy**



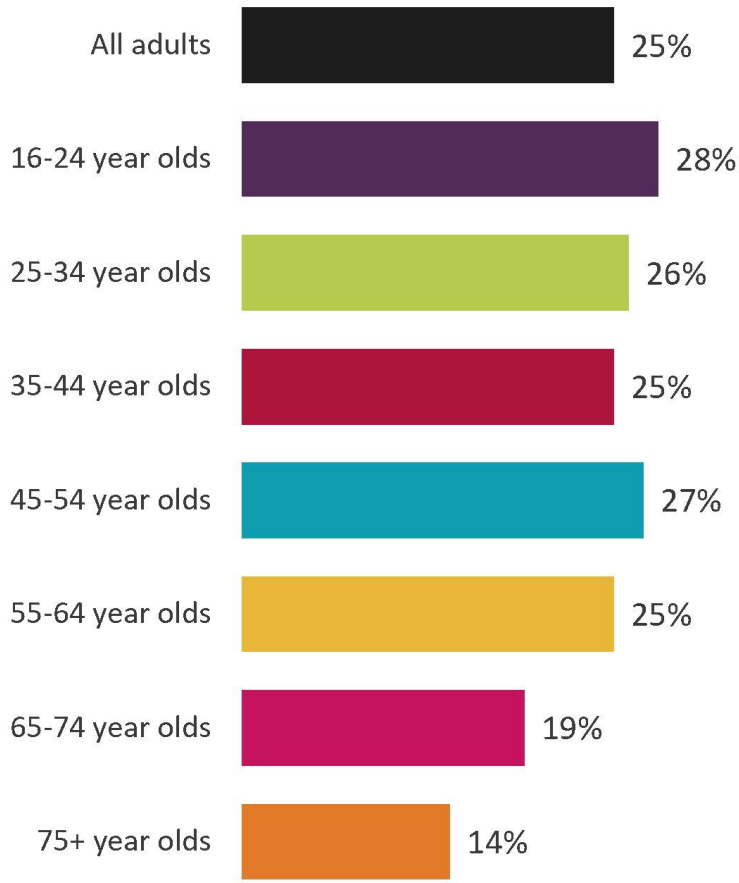
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things you have experienced on the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

Over 65s were slightly less likely to indicate that they had experience of harm related to hacking/security

Online harm experienced relating to **hacking / security**



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things you have experienced on the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

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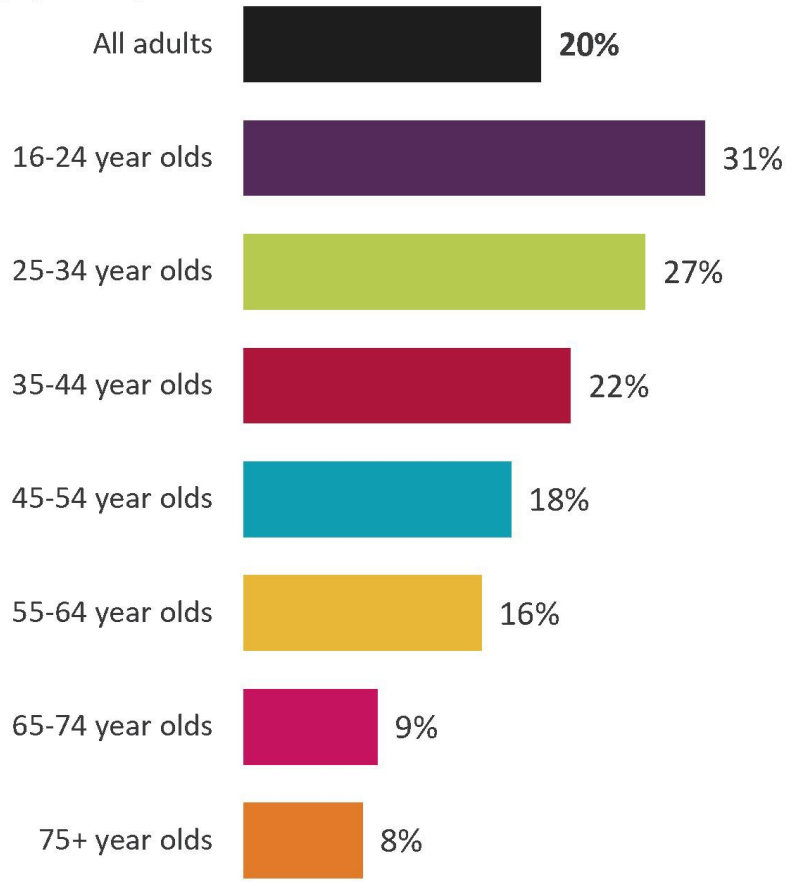
Older people were less likely to indicate that they have experienced harm relating to content

Online harm experienced relating to
content that people view, read or listen to online

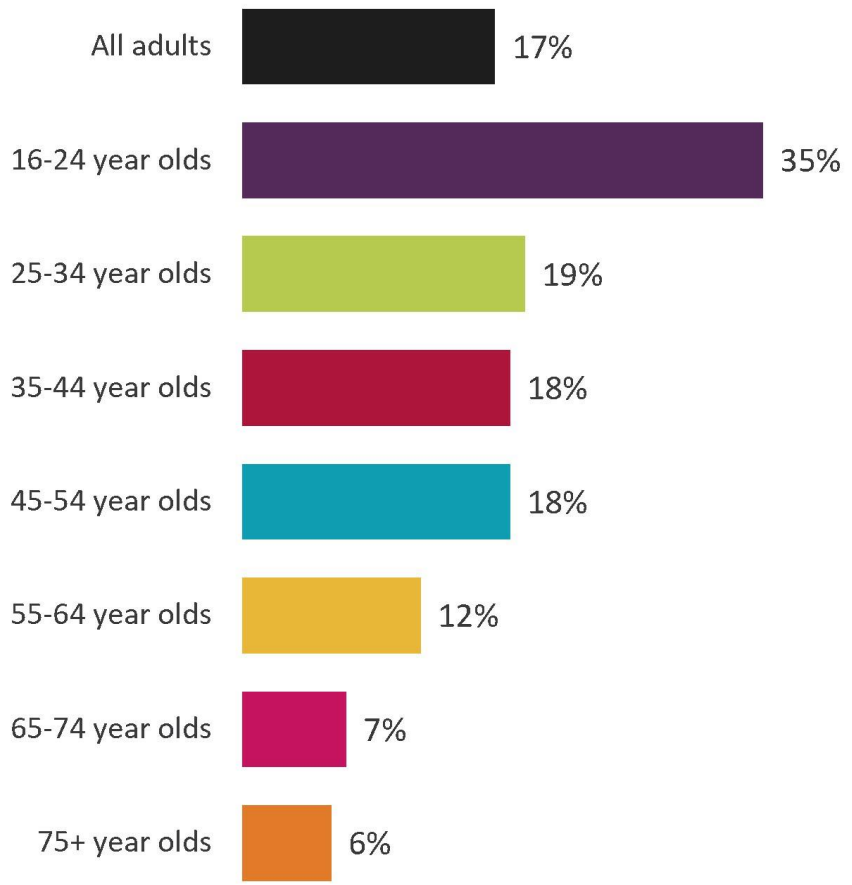


Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)
Question: Q7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things you have experienced on the internet? PROMPTED
Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

INQ000615301_0019

Older people were less likely to indicate that they have experienced harm relating to interactions with other users

Online harm experienced relating to **interactions with other users**



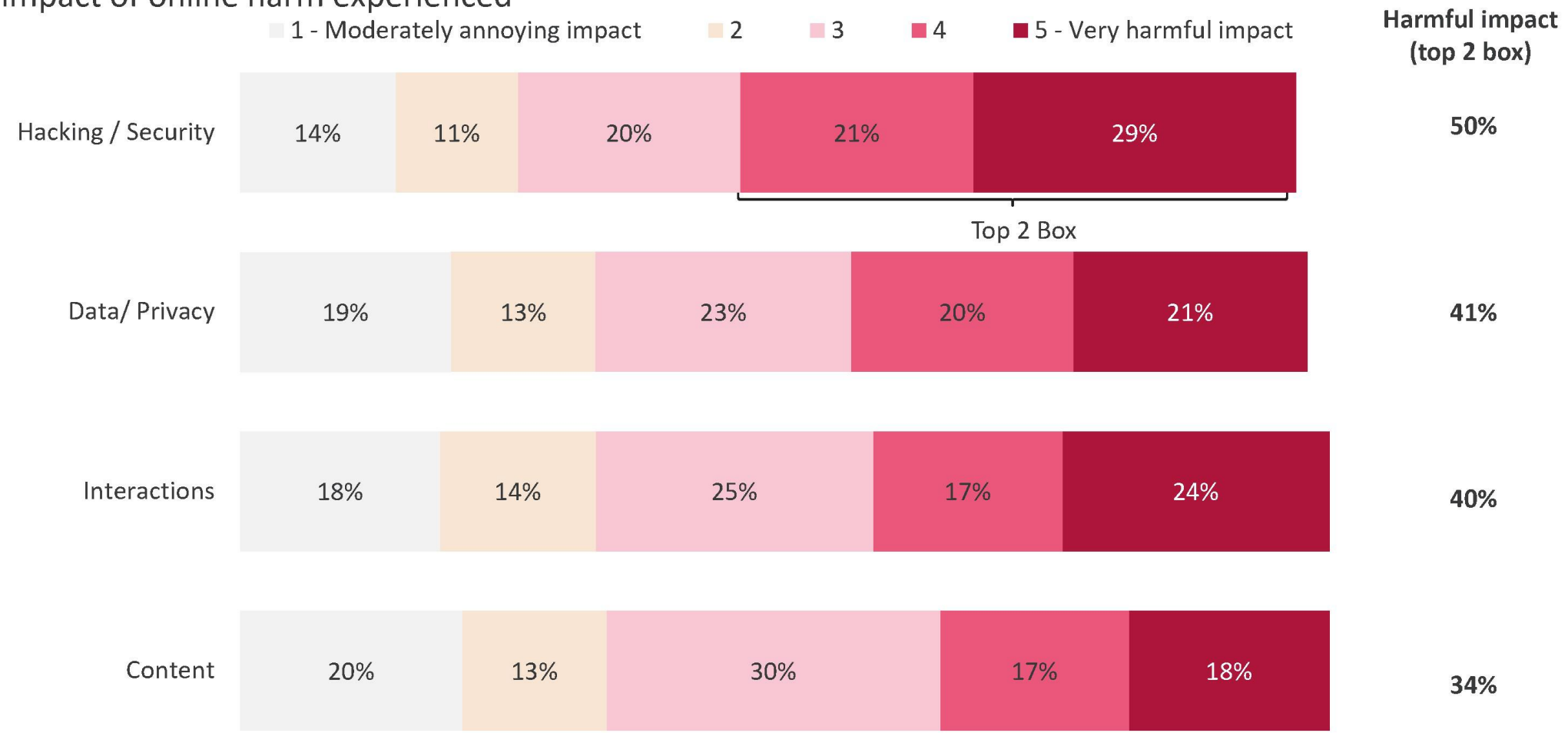
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things you have experienced on the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

When people experienced harm online its impact was varied

Impact of online harm experienced



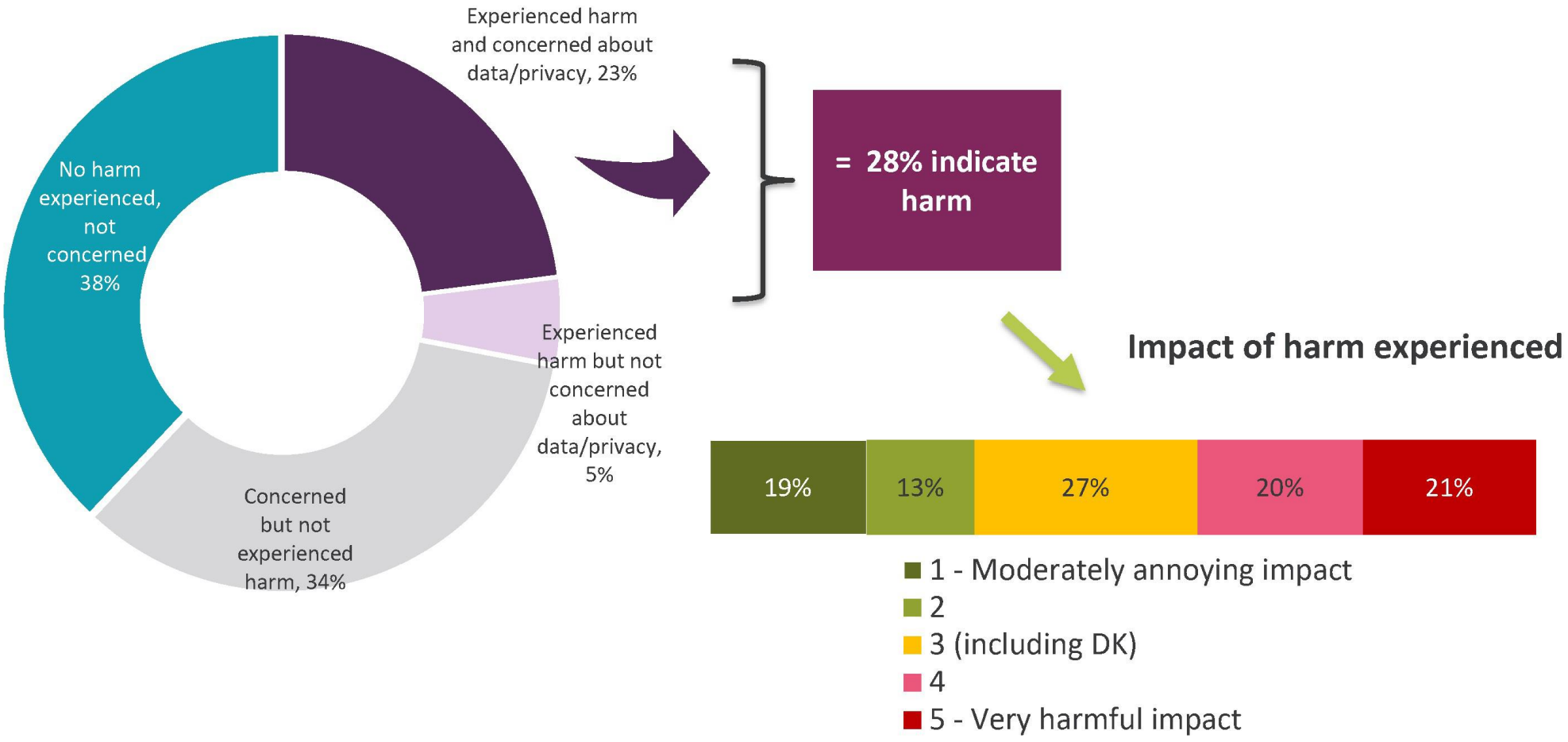
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q9 I am now going to read out the areas you experienced online harm and I would like you to tell me the impact it had on each using a scale of 1 to 5? PROMPTED

Base: All who experienced specific online harm (285-471)

Amongst those who indicated experience of harm relating to data/privacy, 21% rated this as having a very harmful impact

Summary of reported harms and concerns relating to **data / privacy**



Q.2a/b Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? [Data capture unprompted, then prompted. Chart shows totals after prompting].

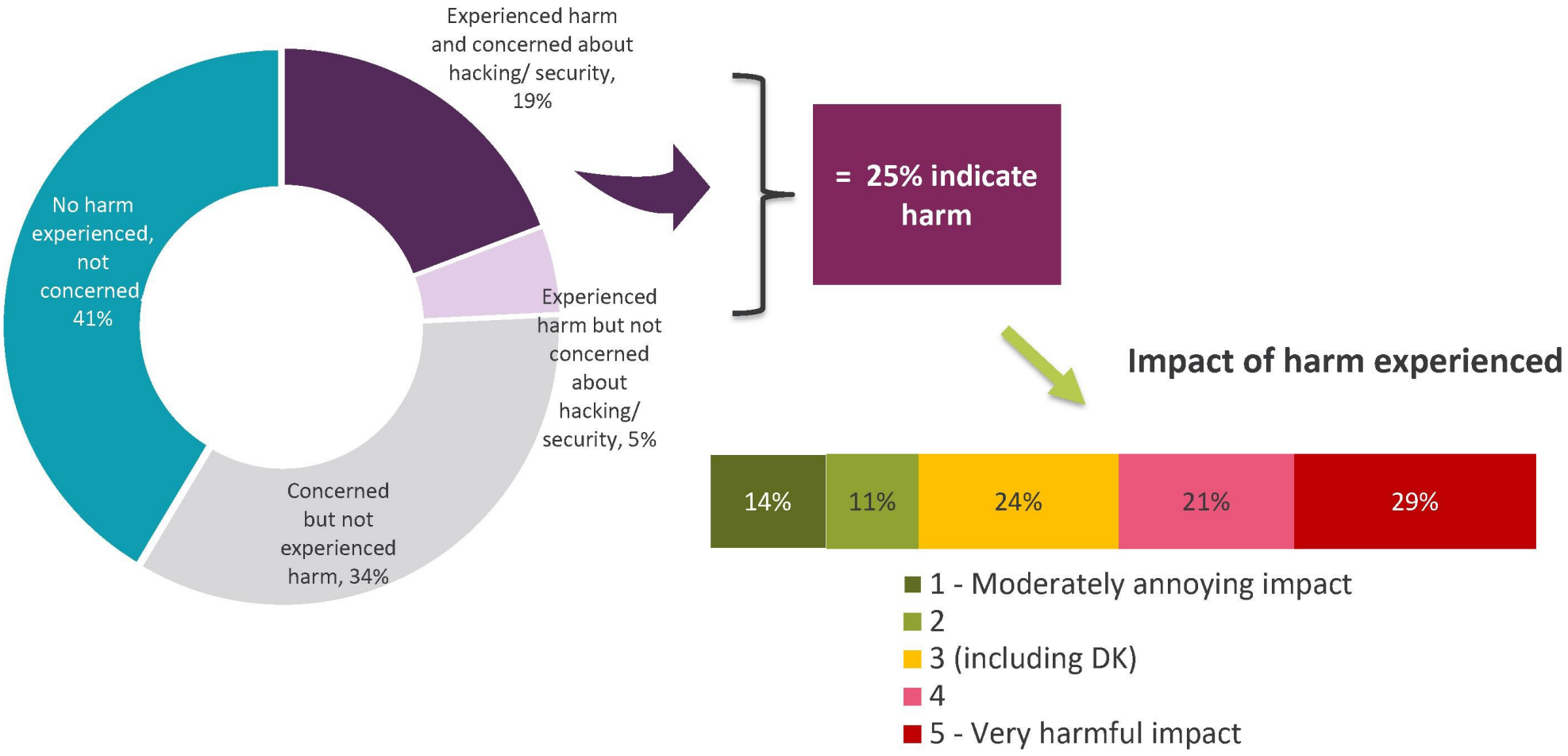
Q.7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things have you experienced on the internet? [Prompted with list]

Q.9 I am now going to read out the areas you experienced online harm and I would like you to tell me the impact it had on each using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Moderately annoying impact and 5 means Very harmful impact.

Base: UK adult internet users (1,686), UK adult intenet users that had experience harm relating to data/privacy (471)

Amongst those who indicated experience of harm relating to hacking/ security, 29% rated this as having a very harmful impact

Summary of reported harms and concerns relating to **hacking / security**



Q.2a/b Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? [Data capture unprompted, then prompted. Chart shows totals after prompting].

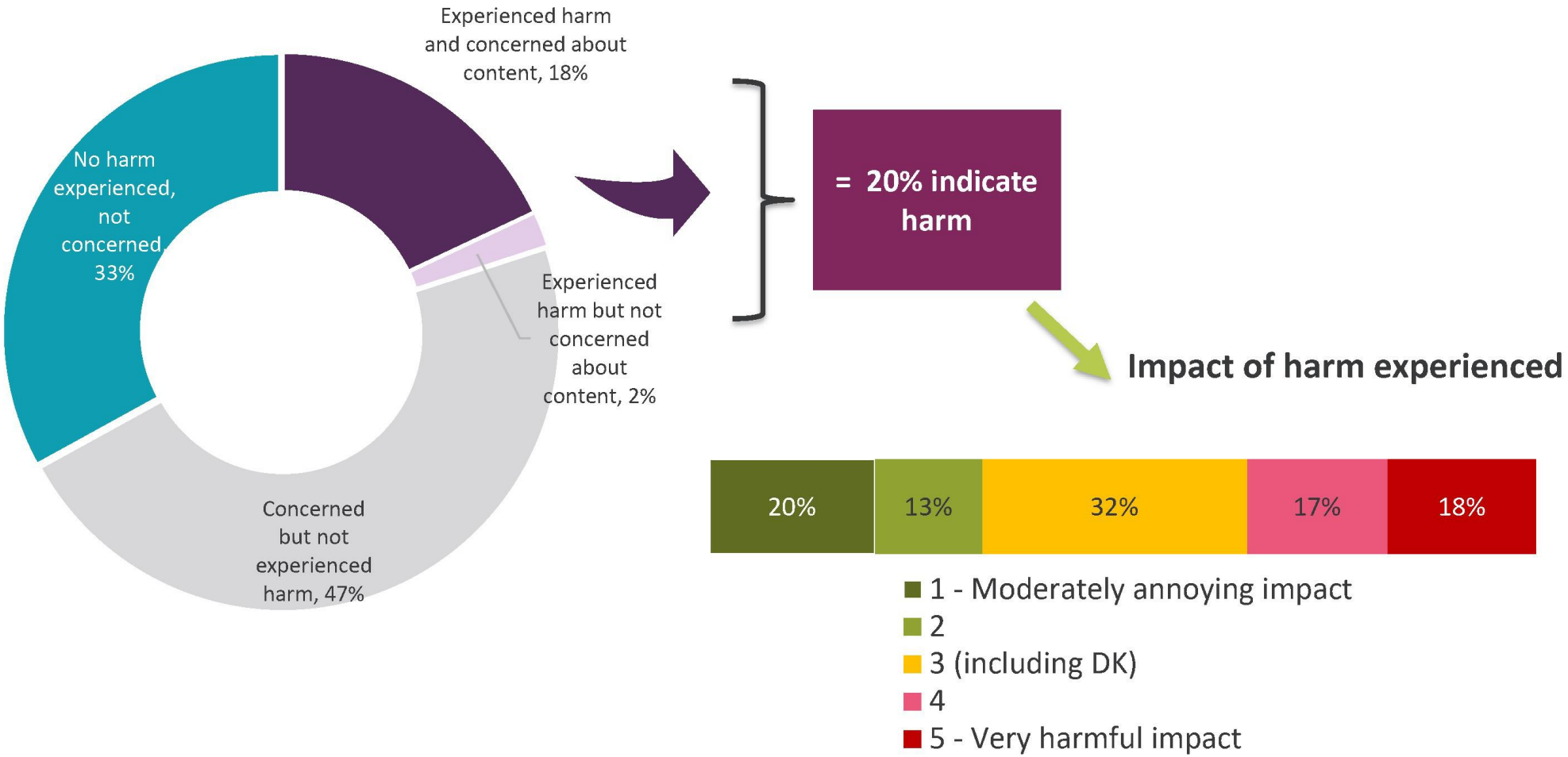
Q.7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things have you experienced on the internet? [Prompted with list]

Q.9 I am now going to read out the areas you experienced online harm and I would like you to tell me the impact it had on each using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Moderately annoying impact and 5 means Very harmful impact.

Base: UK adult internet users (1,686), UK adult intenet users that had experience harm relating to hacking/ security (404)

Amongst those who indicated experience of harm relating to content, 18% rated this as having a very harmful impact

Summary of reported harms and concerns relating to **content that people view, read or listen to online**



Q.2a/b Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? [Data capture unprompted, then prompted. Chart shows totals after prompting].

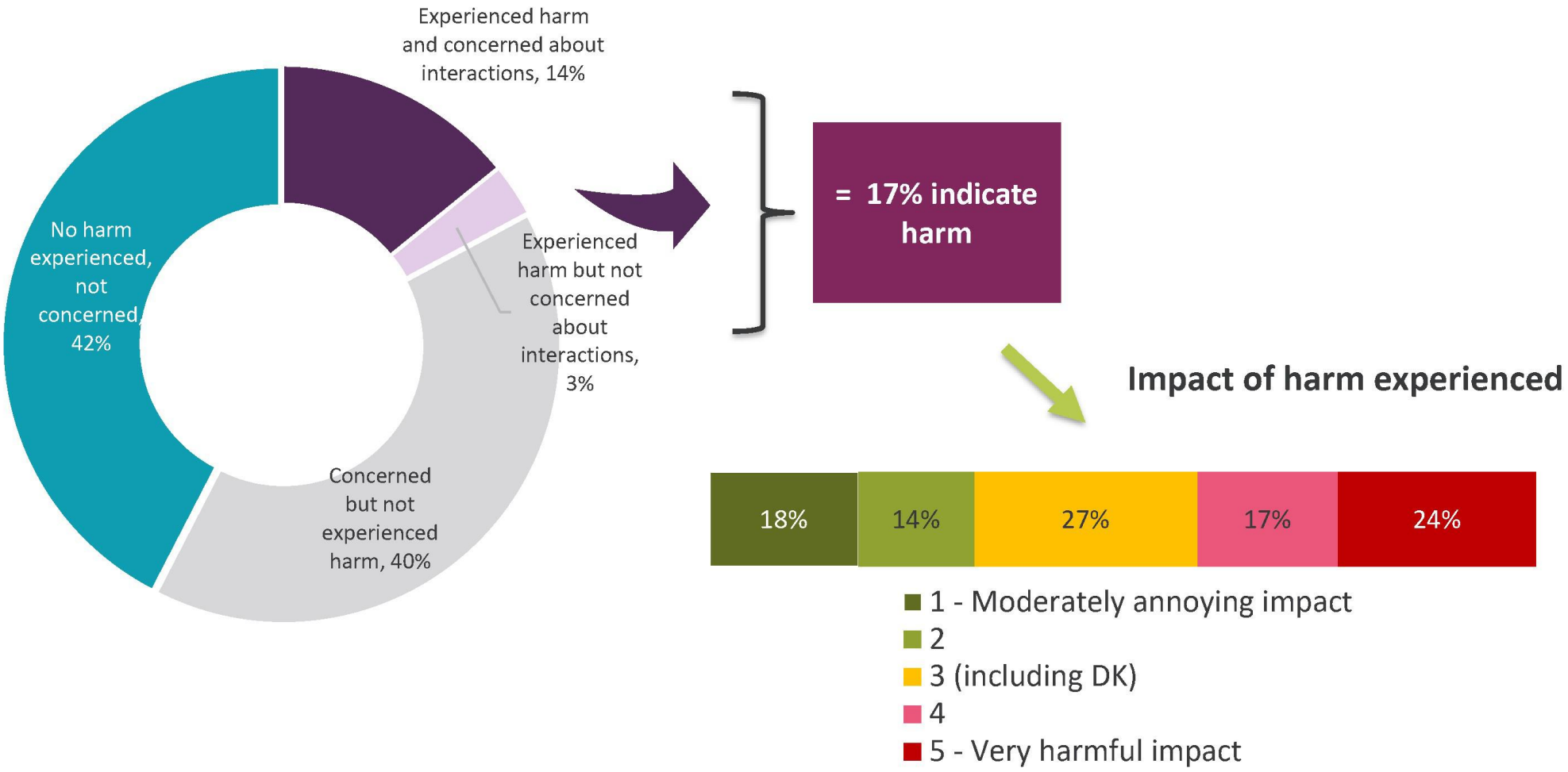
Q.7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things have you experienced on the internet? [Prompted with list]

Q.9 I am now going to read out the areas you experienced online harm and I would like you to tell me the impact it had on each using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Moderately annoying impact and 5 means Very harmful impact.

Base: UK adult internet users (1,686), UK adult intenet users that had experience harm relating to content (328)

Amongst those who indicated experience of harm relating to interactions with other users, 24% rated this as having a very harmful impact

Summary of reported harms and concerns relating to **interactions with other users**



Q.2a/b Which, if any, concerns do you have about the internet? [Data capture unprompted, then prompted. Chart shows totals after prompting].

Q.7 Which, if any, of the following harmful things have you experienced on the internet? [Prompted with list]

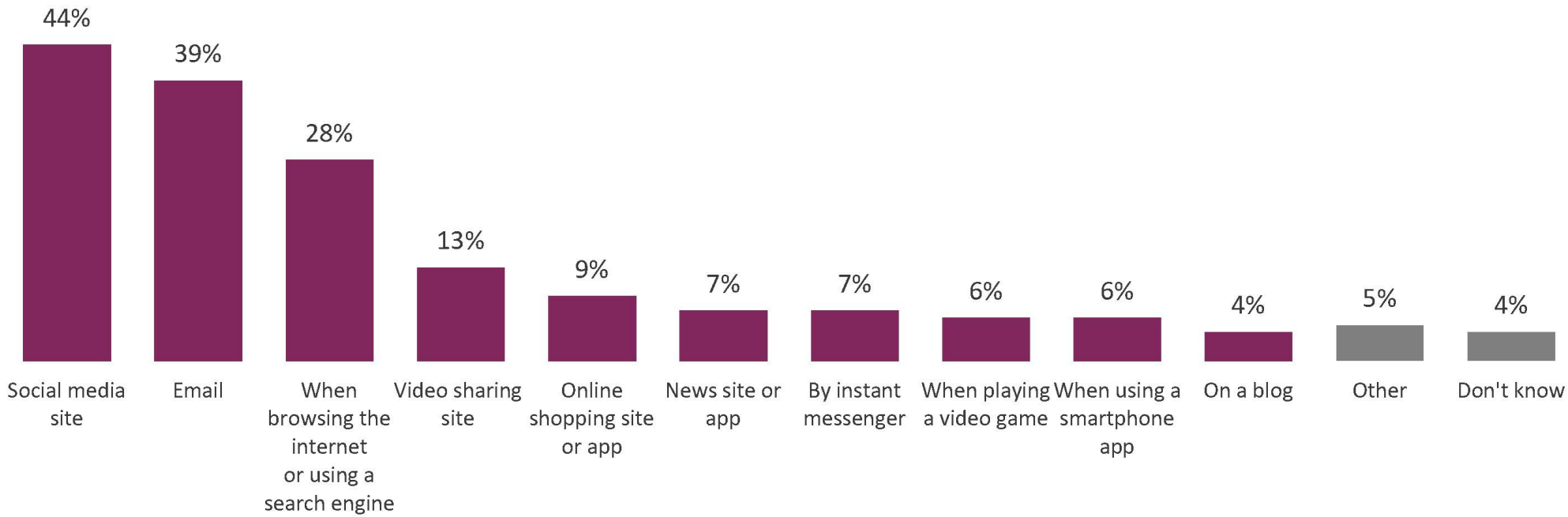
Q.9 I am now going to read out the areas you experienced online harm and I would like you to tell me the impact it had on each using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Moderately annoying impact and 5 means Very harmful impact.

Base: UK adult internet users (1,686), UK adult intenet users that had experience harm relating to interactions with other users (285)

Social media and email are the main sources of reported harm

Places where online harm was experienced

Video sharing sites were mentioned by a similar proportion of adults with children in the home (14%) as those without children in the home (13%).



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)
Question: Q8 And where did you come across this harm? PROMPTED
Base: All who experienced online harm (741)

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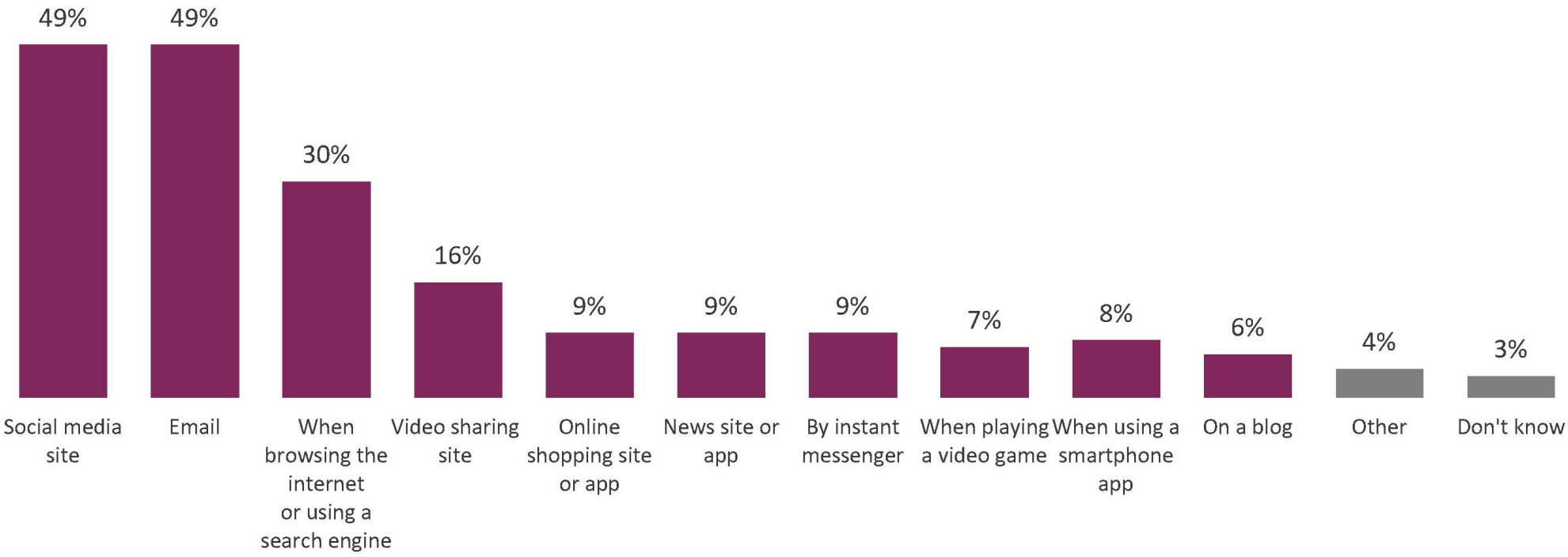
Social media and email are the main sources of reported harm by those who experienced harm relating to data/privacy

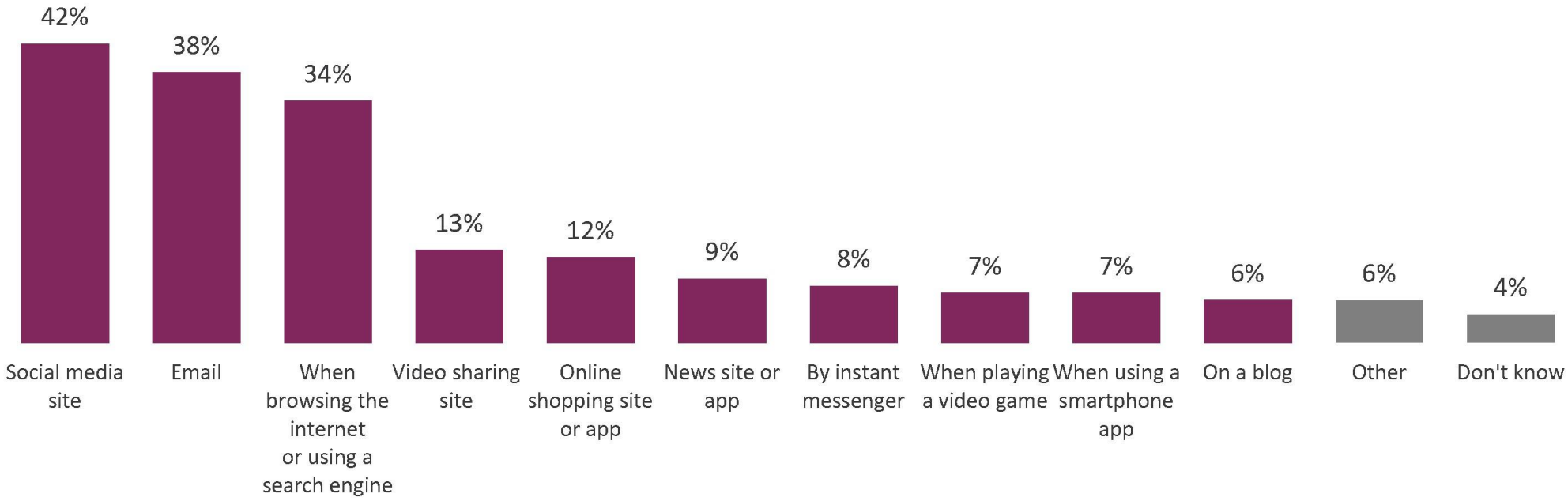
Places where online harm was experienced by those who had experienced **harm relating to data / privacy**



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)
Question: Q8 And where did you come across this harm? PROMPTED
Base: All who experienced online harm relating to DATA/PRIVACY (471)

Social media and email, are the main sources of harm by those who experienced harm relating to hacking/ security

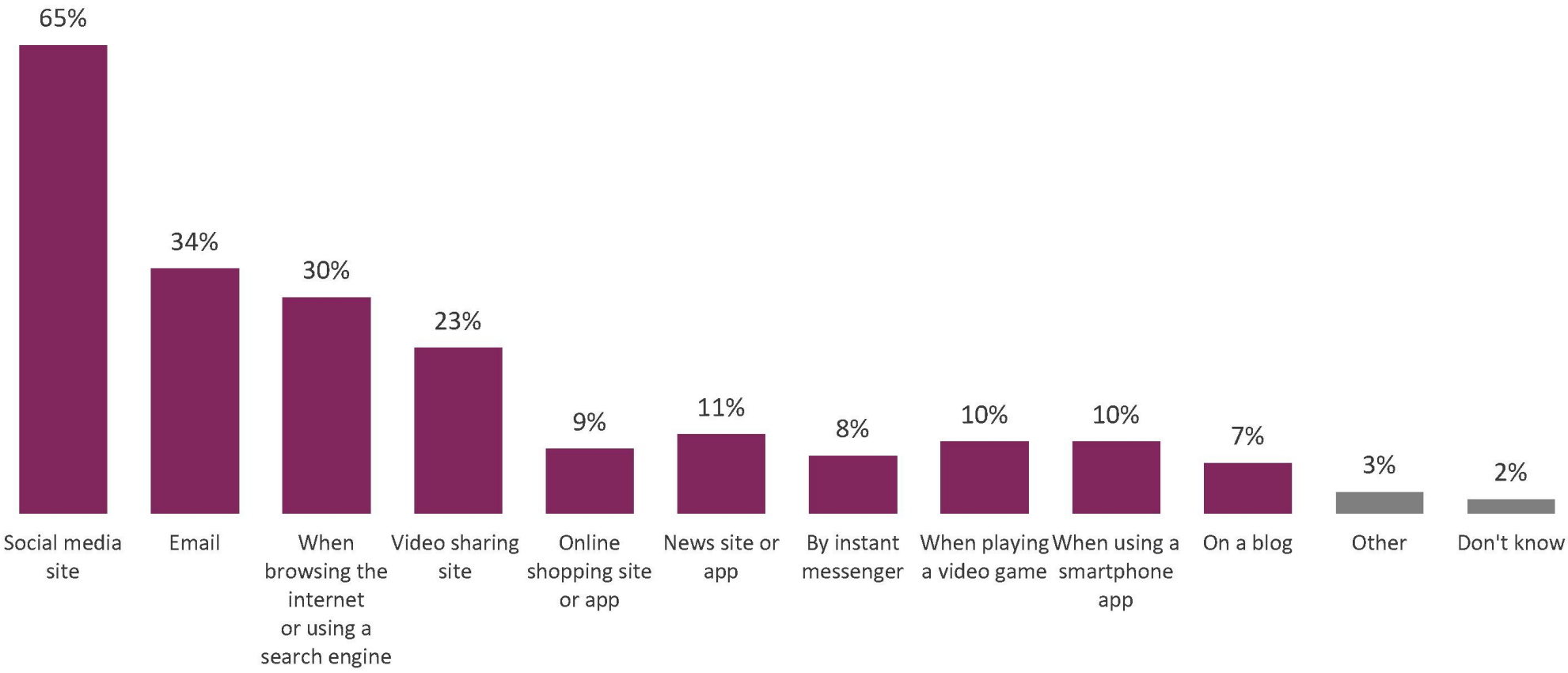
Places where harm was experienced by those who had experienced **harm relating to hacking / security**



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)
Question: Q8 And where did you come across this harm? PROMPTED
Base: All who experienced online harm relating to HACKING/SECURITY (404)

Social media, email and web browsing are the main sources of reported harm by those who experienced harm relating to content

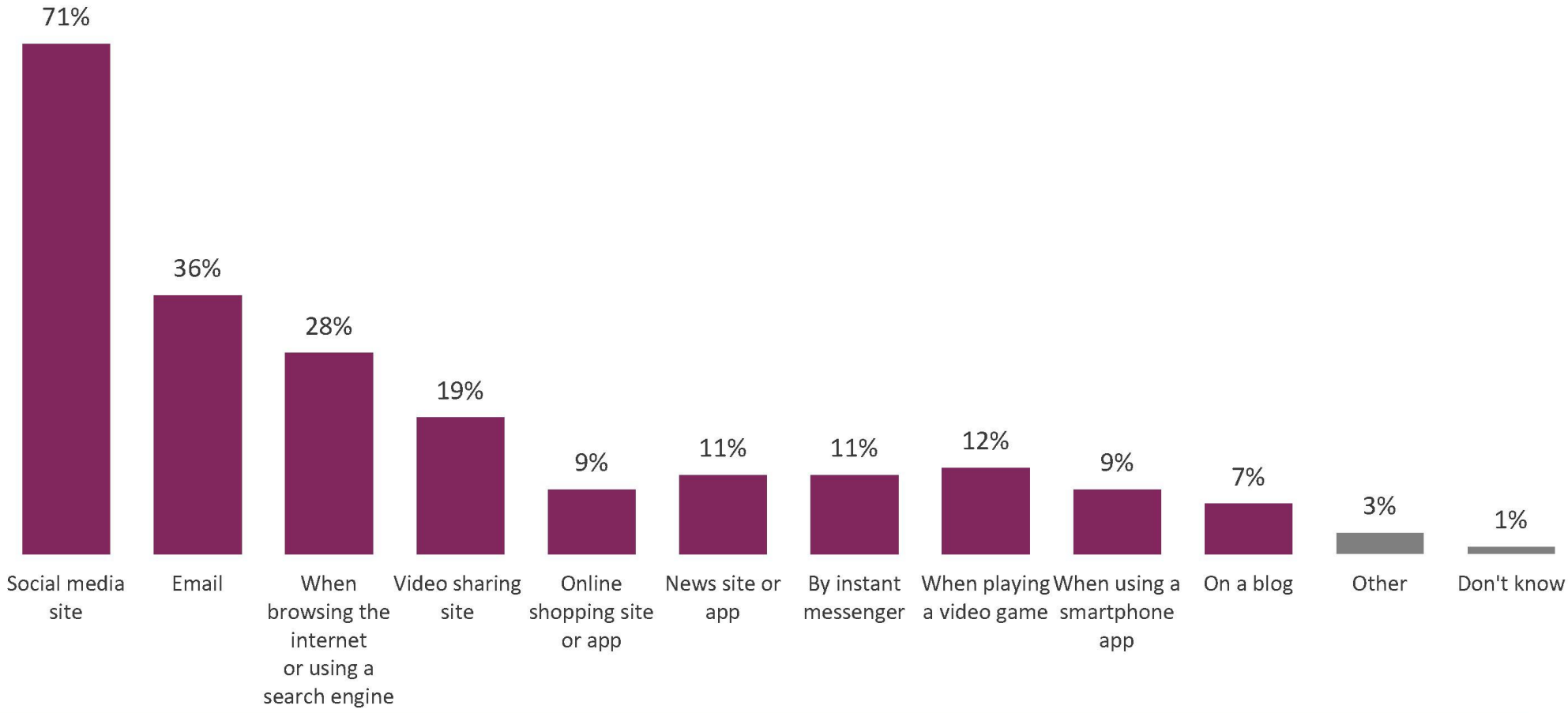
Places where online harm was experienced by those who had experienced **harm relating to content that people view, read or listen to online**



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)
Question: Q8 And where did you come across this harm? PROMPTED
Base: All who experienced online harm relating to CONTENT (328)

Social media is the main source of reported harm by those who experienced harm relating to interactions

Places where online harm was experienced by those who had experienced **harm relating to interactions with other users**



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)
Question: Q8 And where did you come across this harm? PROMPTED
Base: All who experienced online harm relating to INTERACTIONS (285)

Section 3
Attitudes towards reporting online harm

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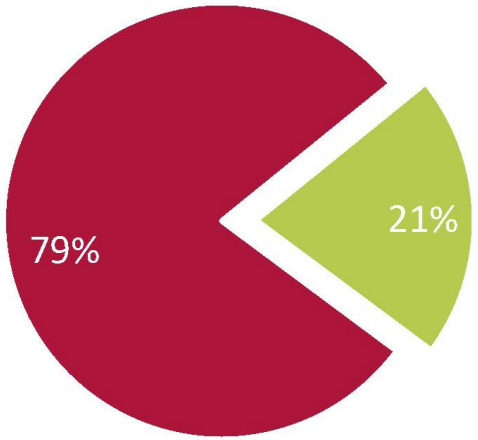
1 in 5 adult internet users has reported offensive, disturbing or harmful content; younger adults were more likely to have done so

Ever reported harmful videos / pictures

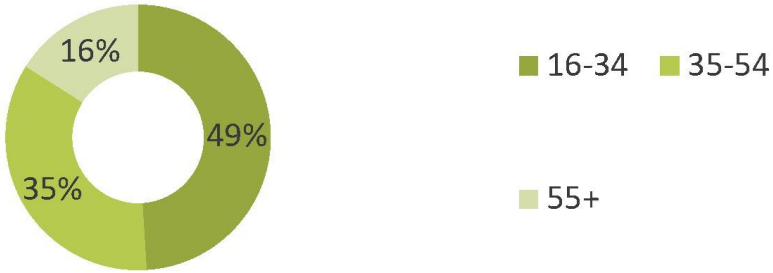
% All internet users



- Yes, reported online harm
- No, didn't report online harm*

**Including Don't know and Refused*

% those who reported harmful content



Younger adults, especially the 16-24 year old age group have the highest propensity to have reported harmful content (40% had done so). This is partially explained by the fact that they are more likely to have experienced harmful content, but may also reflect a greater confidence in, knowledge of, or ability to use reporting functions. We also asked a hypothetical question about action that would be taken if the respondent wished to report offensive, disturbing or harmful content on a social media site; we found that younger people were significantly more likely to report (page 35).

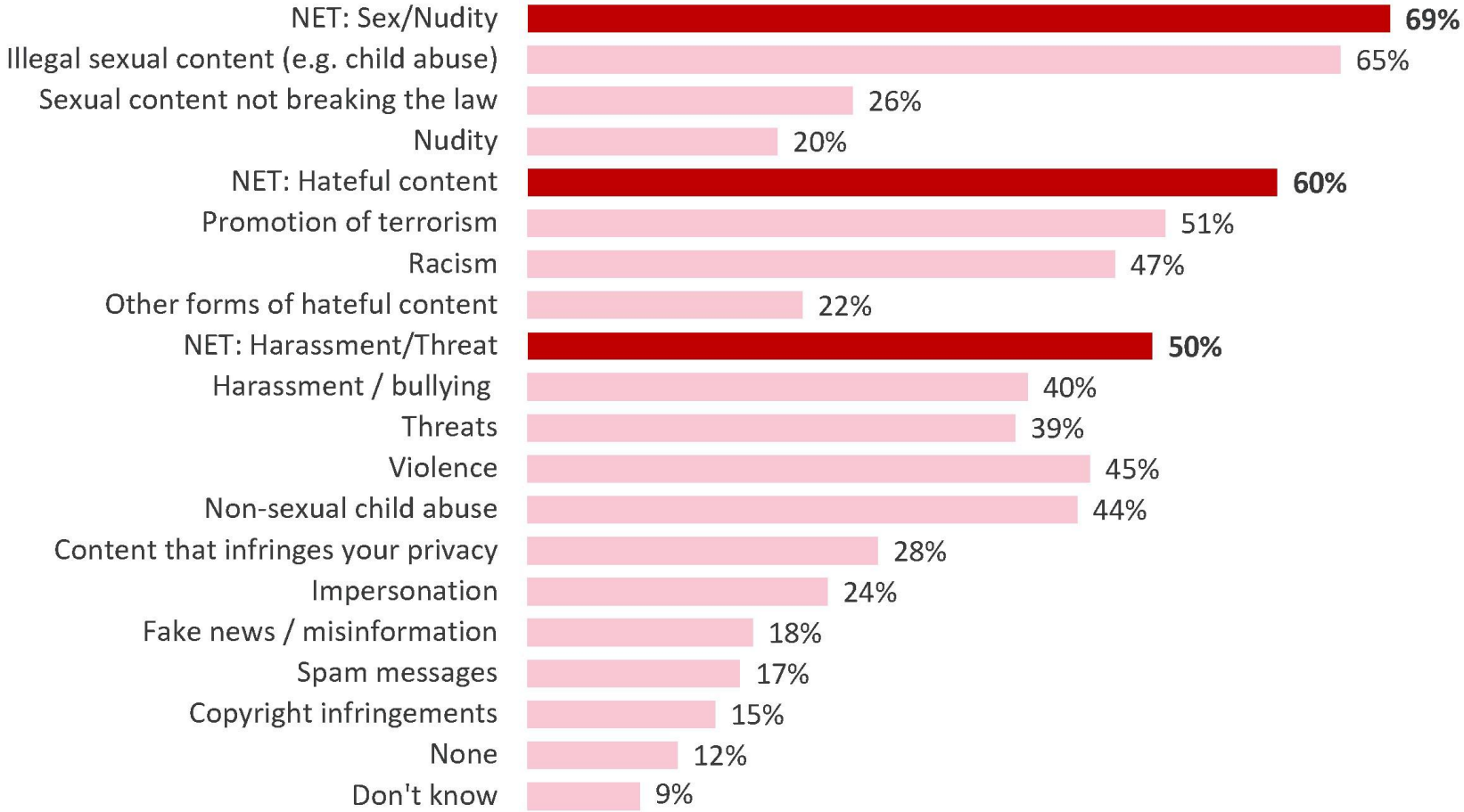
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q17 Have you ever taken action to report a video or picture that was offensive, disturbing or harmful on the internet?

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686), 16-34 (536), 35-54 (518), 55+ (632)

Illegal sexual content is the type of content that adult internet users claimed that they would be most likely to report, followed by promotion of terrorism and racism

Types of content likely to report



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q19 If you saw them, which of these types of content on the internet would you report? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

Older people were generally less likely to say that they would report harmful content

Types of content likely to report

	All internet users	Those with children	Those with no children	16-34	35-54	55+	65+
Base	1686	479	1207	536	518	632	379
Illegal sexual content (e.g. child abuse)	65%	66%	64%	68%	64%	62%	59%
Promotion of terrorism	51%	51%	50%	52%	52%	48%	43%
Racism	47%	51%	45%	51%	49%	41%	37%
Violence	45%	46%	44%	49%	43%	42%	39%
Non-sexual child abuse	44%	43%	44%	43%	45%	44%	40%
Harassment / bullying	40%	44%	38%	43%	40%	37%	31%
Threats	39%	44%	37%	38%	42%	38%	34%
Content that infringes your privacy	28%	25%	29%	28%	24%	31%	28%
Sexual content not breaking the law	26%	27%	25%	25%	26%	26%	24%
Impersonation	24%	23%	24%	24%	22%	26%	22%
Other forms of hateful content	22%	21%	23%	21%	24%	22%	18%
Nudity	20%	23%	19%	22%	18%	21%	17%
Fake news / misinformation	18%	16%	19%	19%	16%	20%	17%
Spam messages	17%	15%	18%	16%	15%	20%	19%
Copyright infringements	15%	15%	15%	15%	14%	16%	14%

Green and red cells denotes significantly higher or lower than those with no children/16-54 or 16-64 (sig tested to 99%)

Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

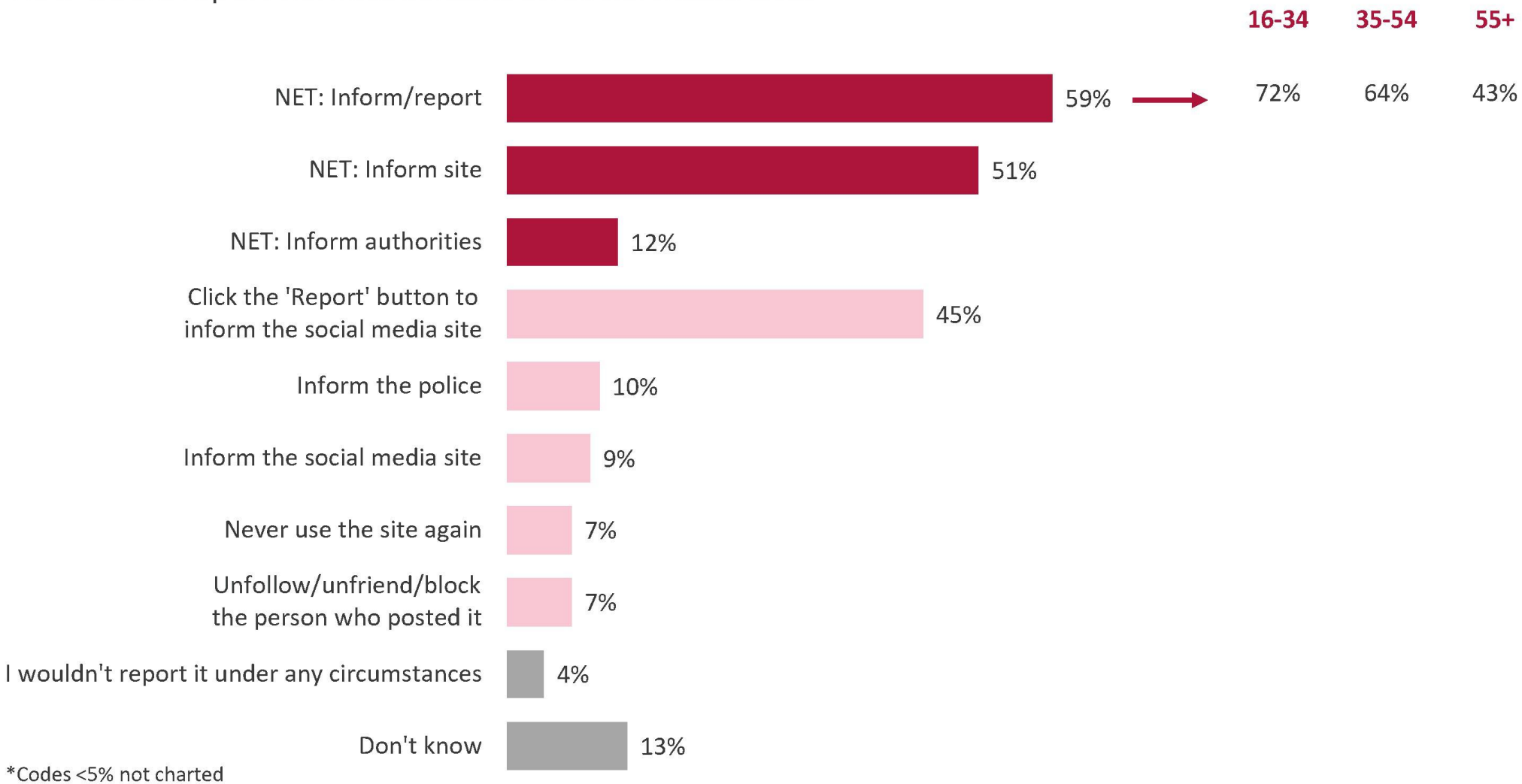
Question: Q19 If you saw them, which of these types of content on the internet would you report? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (n1686), all with children (479), all with no children (n = 1207), 16-34 (536), 35-54 (518), 55+ (632), 65+ (379)

INQ000615301_0034

45% of adults internet users claimed that they would use the “Report” button

How would report harmful content on social media sites



*Codes <5% not charted

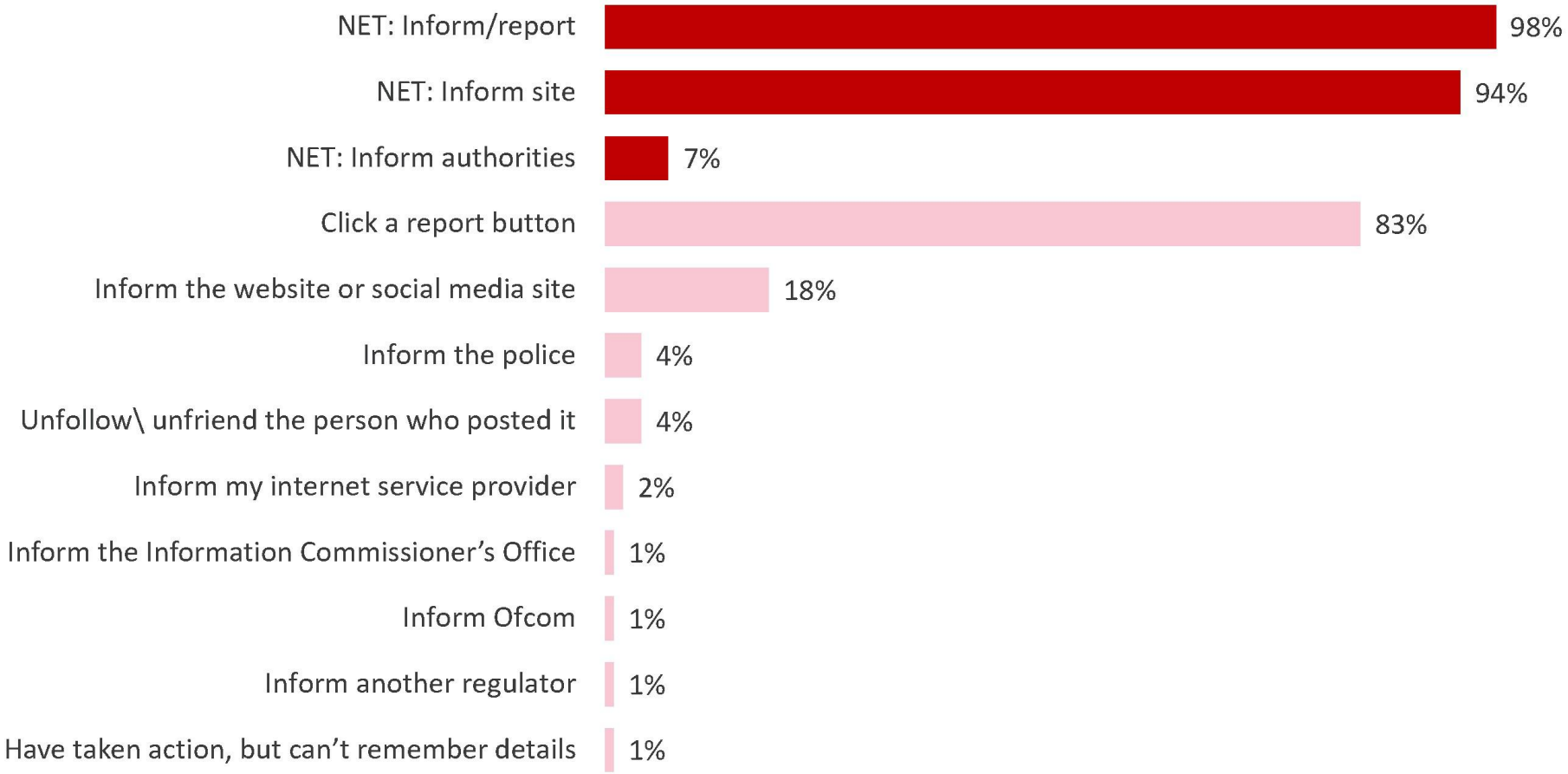
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q16 If you saw a video or picture that was offensive, disturbing or harmful when you were on a social media site and wanted to do something about it, what would you do? SPONTANEOUS

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686); 16-34 (536), 35-54 (518), 55+ (632)

The "Report" button was the predominant way in which offensive, disturbing or harmful content had been reported

Methods of reporting harmful videos / pictures



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

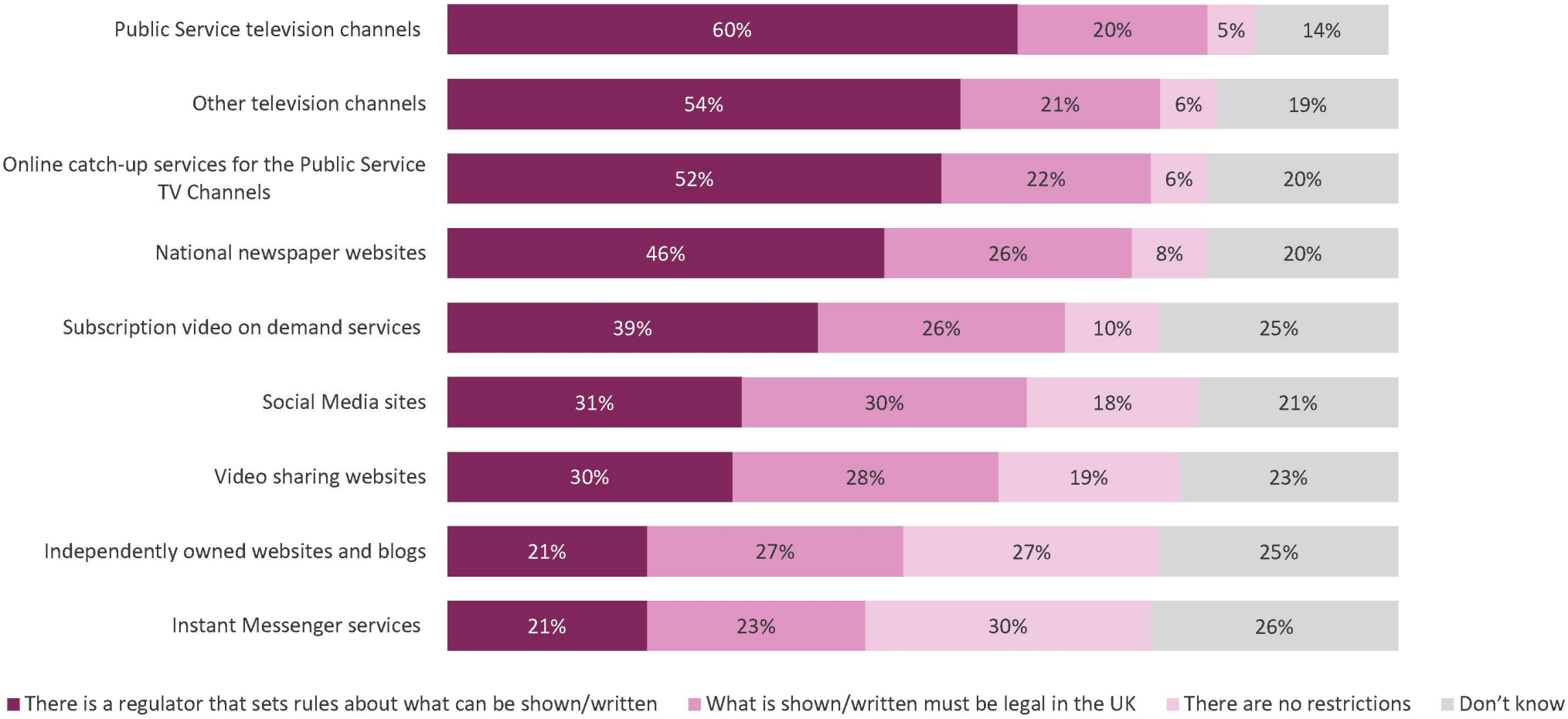
Question: Q18 What did you do? SPONTANEOUS

Base: All who have taken action over experiencing any harm when using the internet (340)

Section 4
Understanding of regulation

There is a mixed understanding of current levels of regulation among UK adults

Perceived regulation of different types of media



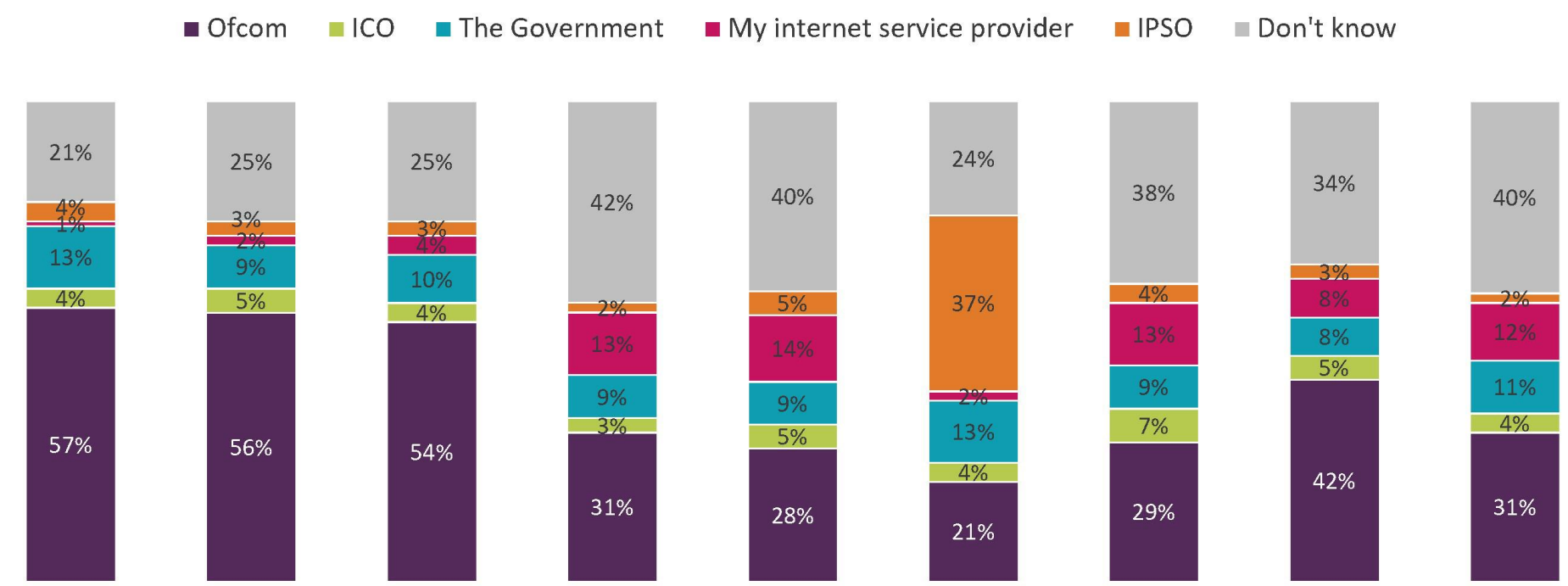
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q22 I'm now going to read out different types of media (for example TV, internet sites, newspapers etc.) and for each please tell me which one statement best describes your understanding of the level of regulation in the UK? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

Perceptions of who the regulator is for different media varies across the population

Perceived regulatory body (amongst those who believed there is a regulator)



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q23 Thinking again about each of the following types of media, who do you think is the regulator? PROMPTED

Base: All who believe there is a regulator (354-1001)

There were mixed views on current level of regulation; over half of internet using adults believe more is needed on social media

Views on level of regulation

Green and red figures denote significantly higher or lower than those without children/16-34 (sig tested to 99%)

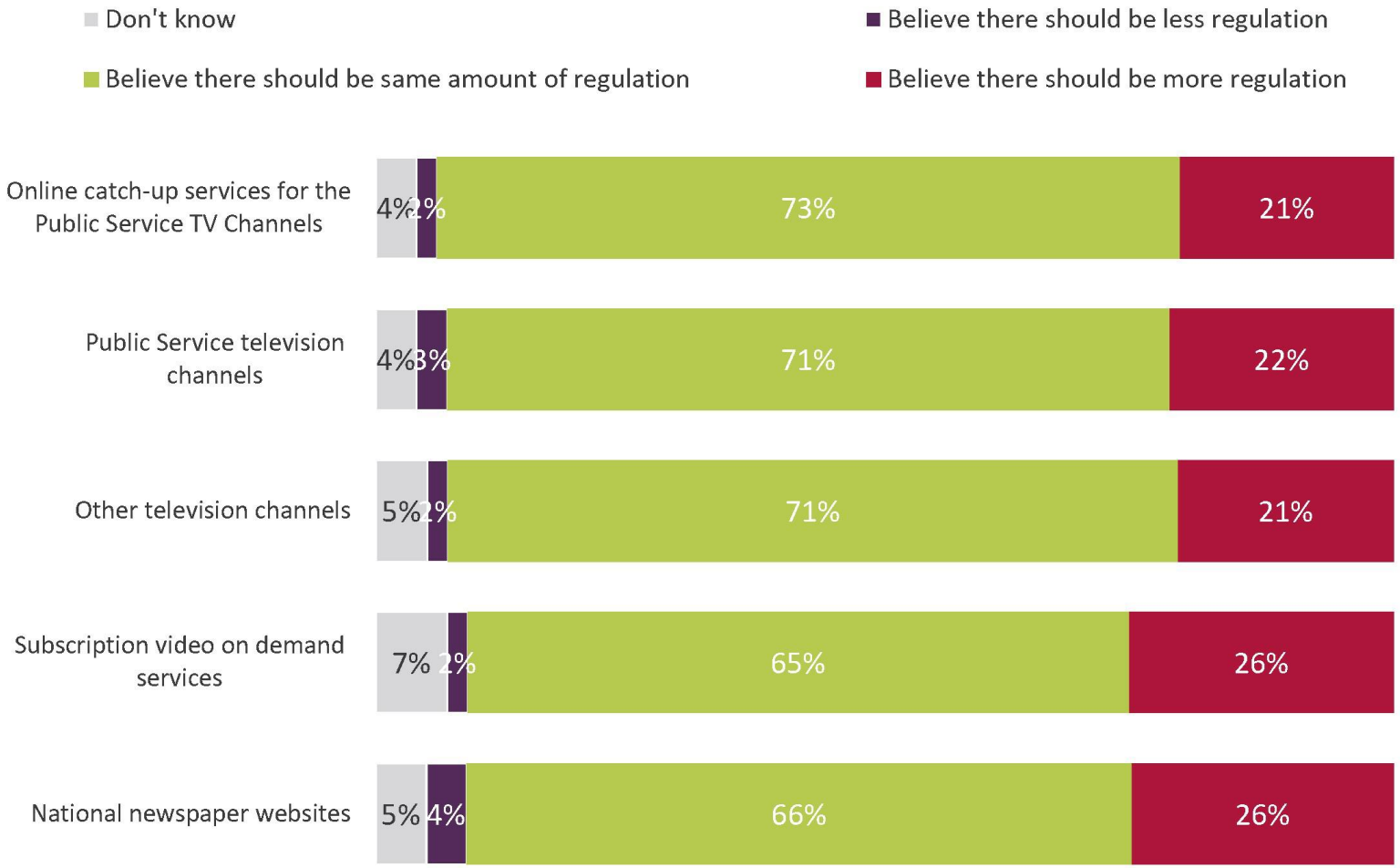
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q24 And for each type of media, do you think that there should be more, less or about the same amount of regulation as there is today? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686); 16-34 (536), 55+ (632)

Amongst those who believe that there is a regulator that sets rules, the majority believe that the status quo is sufficient

Views on level of regulation – by those who believe a regulator exists



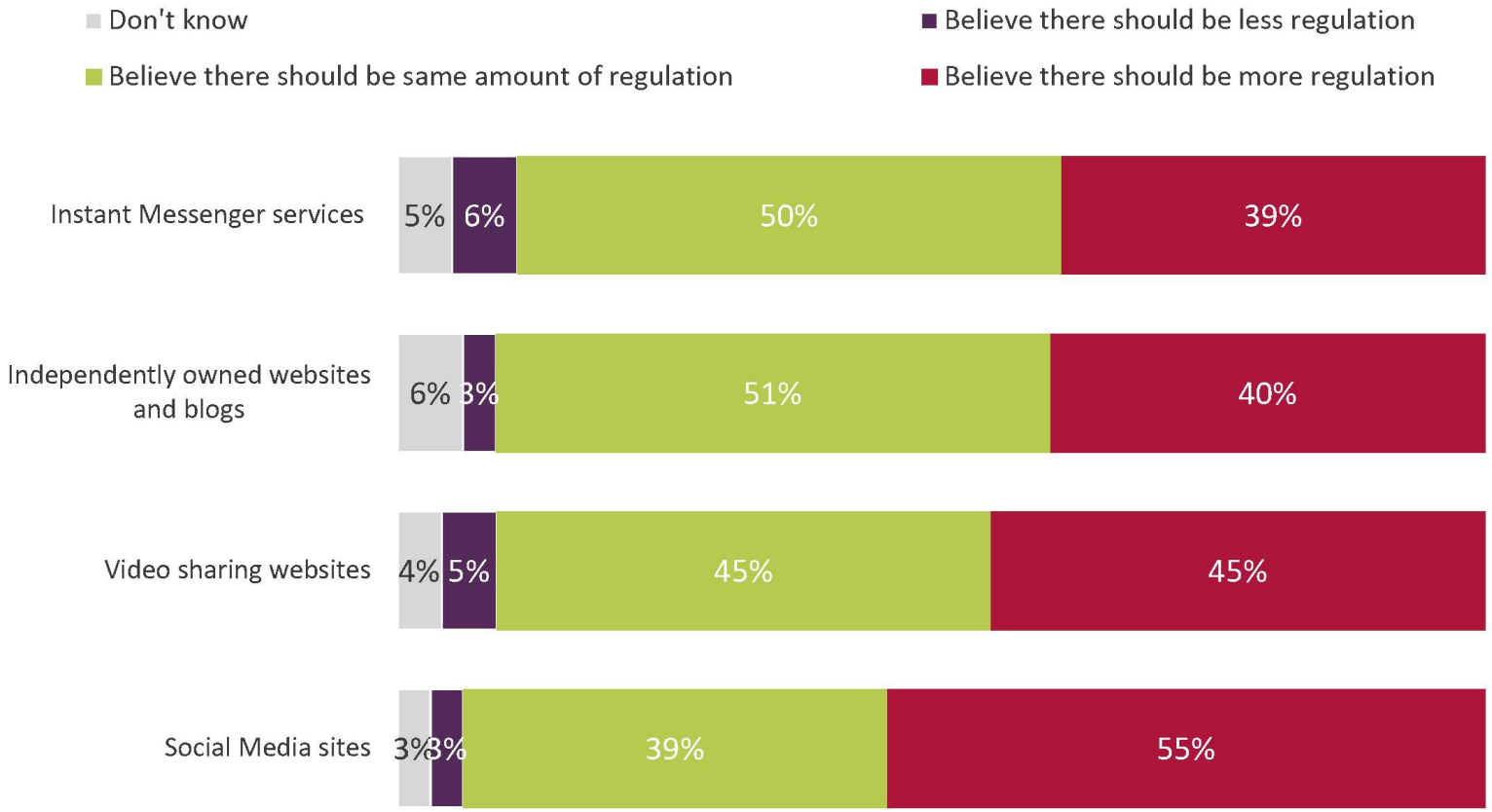
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q24 And for each type of media, do you think that there should be more, less or about the same amount of regulation as there is today? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK who believe a regulator exists for; Online catch-up services for PSB channels (855); Public Service television channels (1,001); Other television channels (893), Subscription video on demand services (646), National newspaper websites (764)

There were mixed views on the current level of regulation among those who believe that there is no regulation apart from the law

Views on level of regulation – by those who believe there is no regulator, but what is shown/written must be legal



Green and red figures denote significantly higher or lower than those without children/16-34 (sig tested to 99%)

Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q24 And for each type of media, do you think that there should be more, less or about the same amount of regulation as there is today? PROMPTED

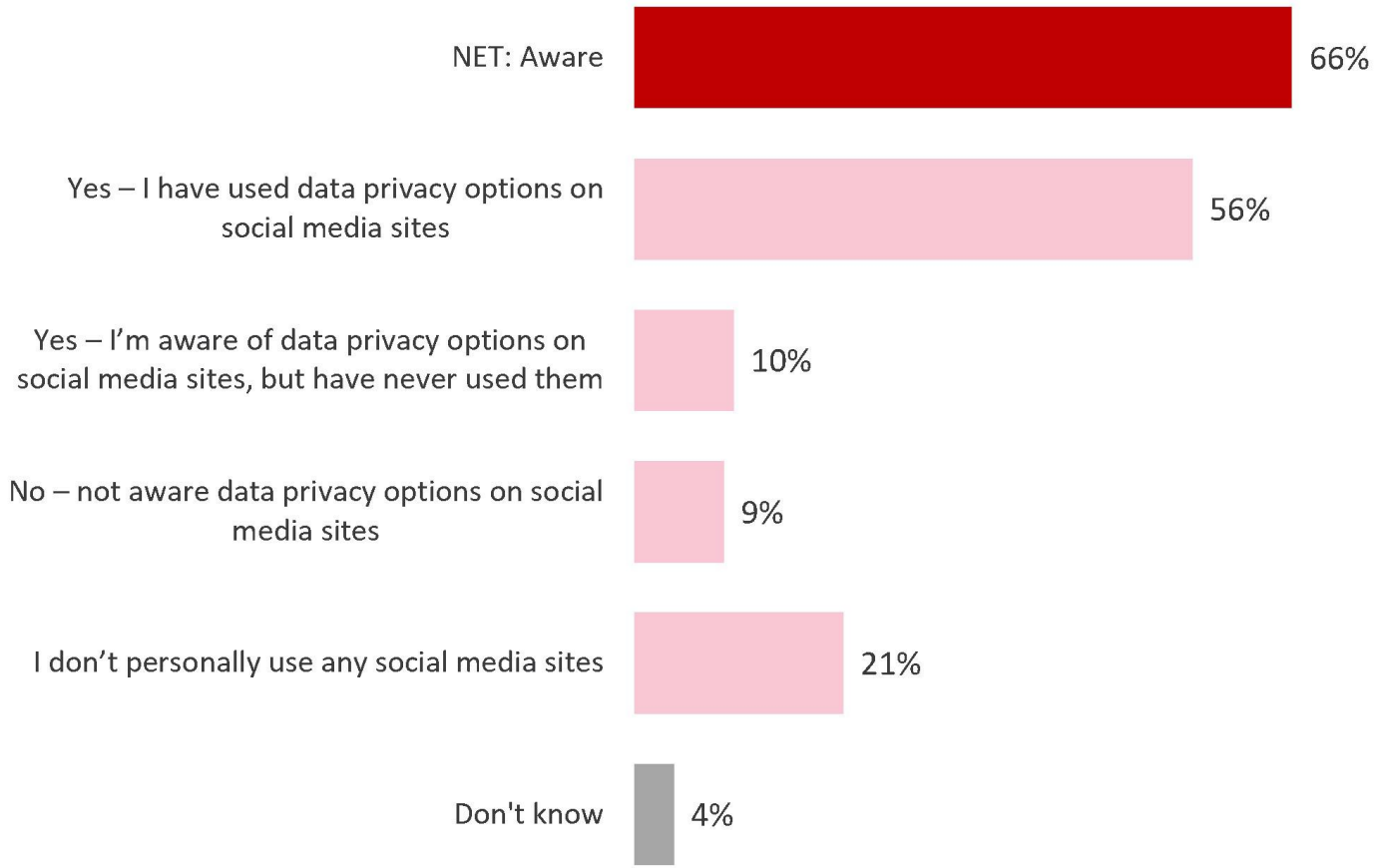
Base: All internet users in the UK who believe that there is no regulation apart from the law; for Instant Messenger Services (390); independently owned websites and blogs (444); Video sharing websites (468), Social media sites (496)

Section 5
Personal data & data privacy

INQ000615301_0043

Two thirds of adult internet users were aware of data privacy options on social media sites

Awareness and usage of data privacy options on social media sites



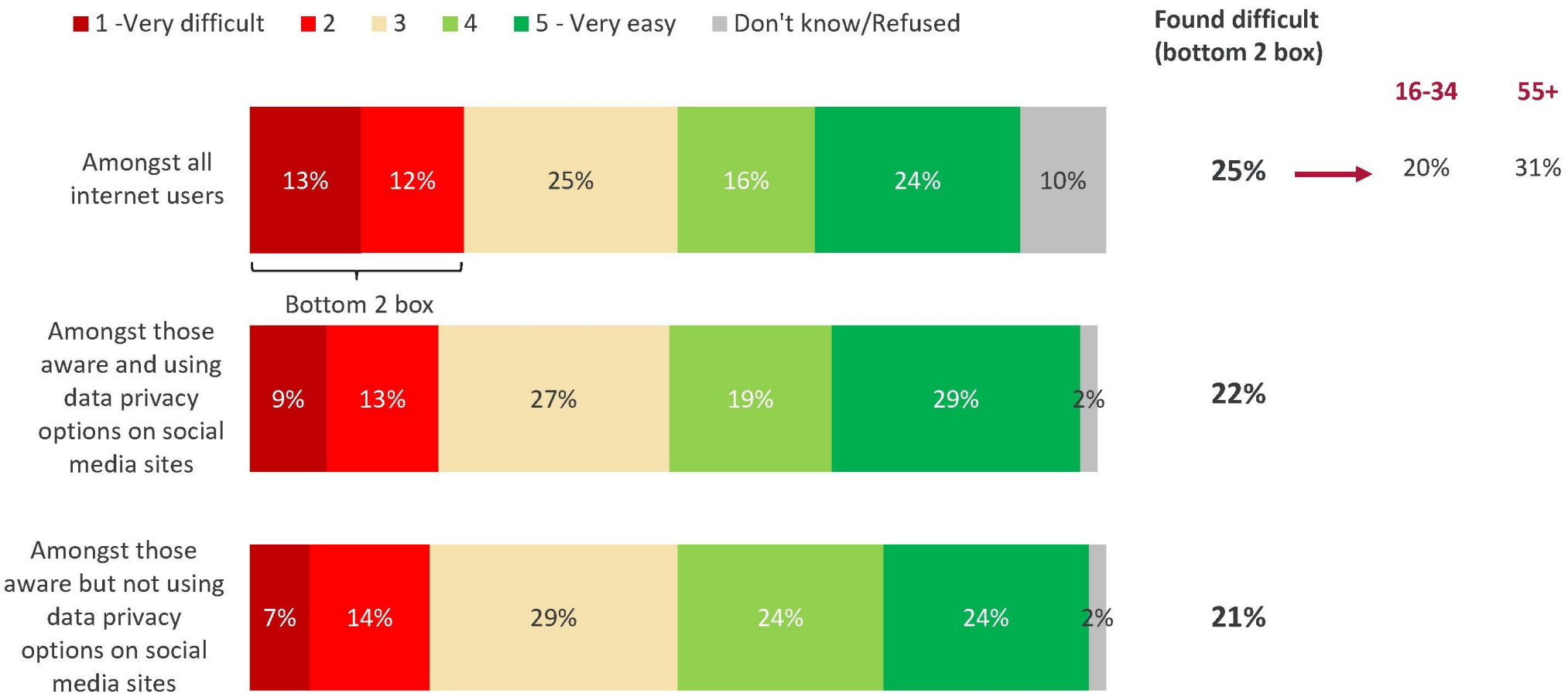
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q11 Before today, were you aware of or have you used any data privacy options on social media sites? These options allow you to choose who your personal data and information is shared with. By personal data we mean anything that you post on the site, the details in your profile and your list of friends or connections PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

A quarter of adult internet users found it difficult to control what happens to their personal data

Ease of controlling personal data on social media



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

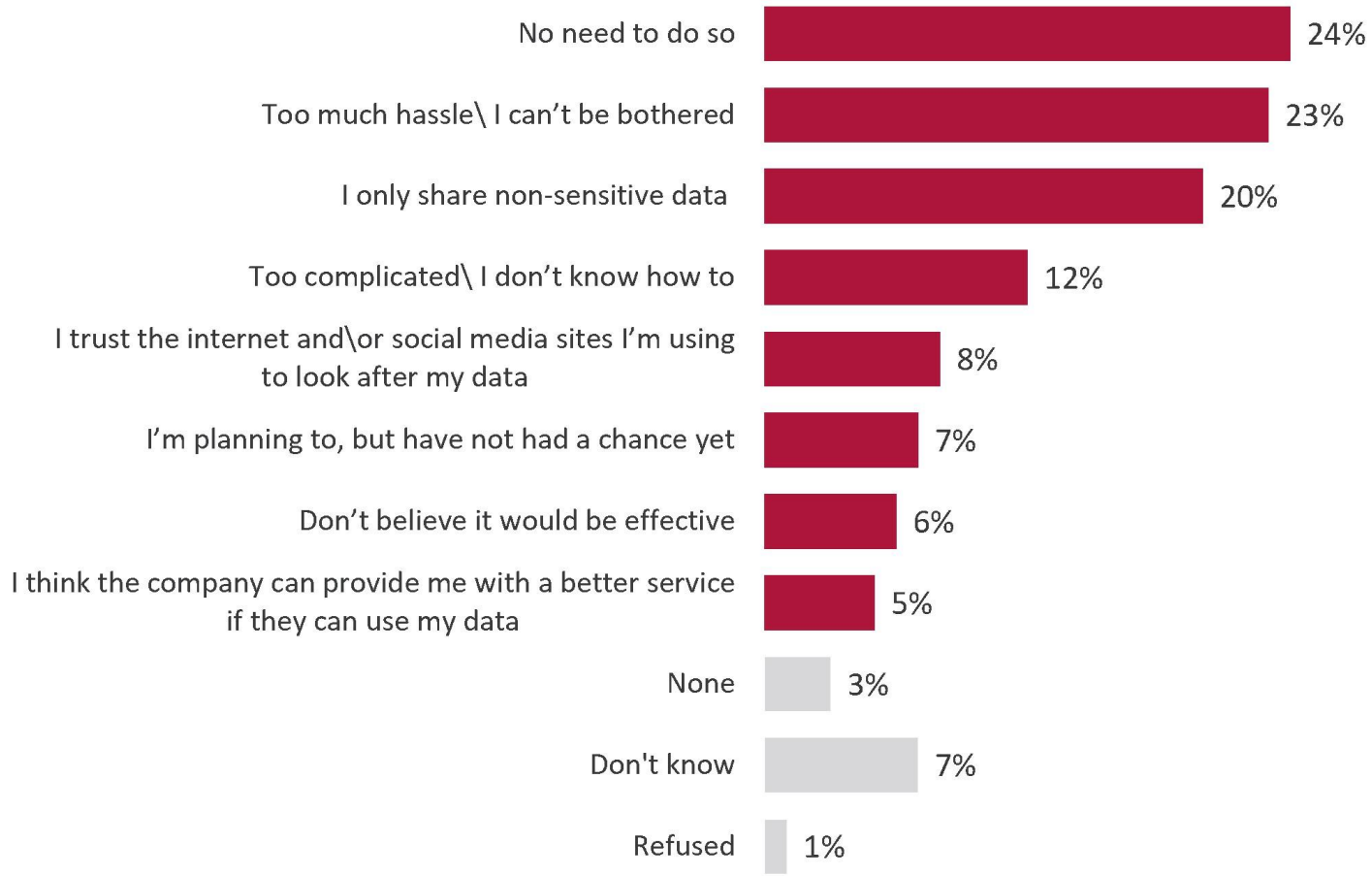
Question: Q12 On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Very difficult and 5 means Very easy, please tell me how easy or difficult you think it is to control what happens to your personal data on the internet and social media sites? PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686); 16-34 (536), 55+ (632)

INQ000615301_0045

The most-cited reasons for not changing privacy settings was that there was no need or it was too much hassle

Barriers to adjusting data privacy options on social media sites



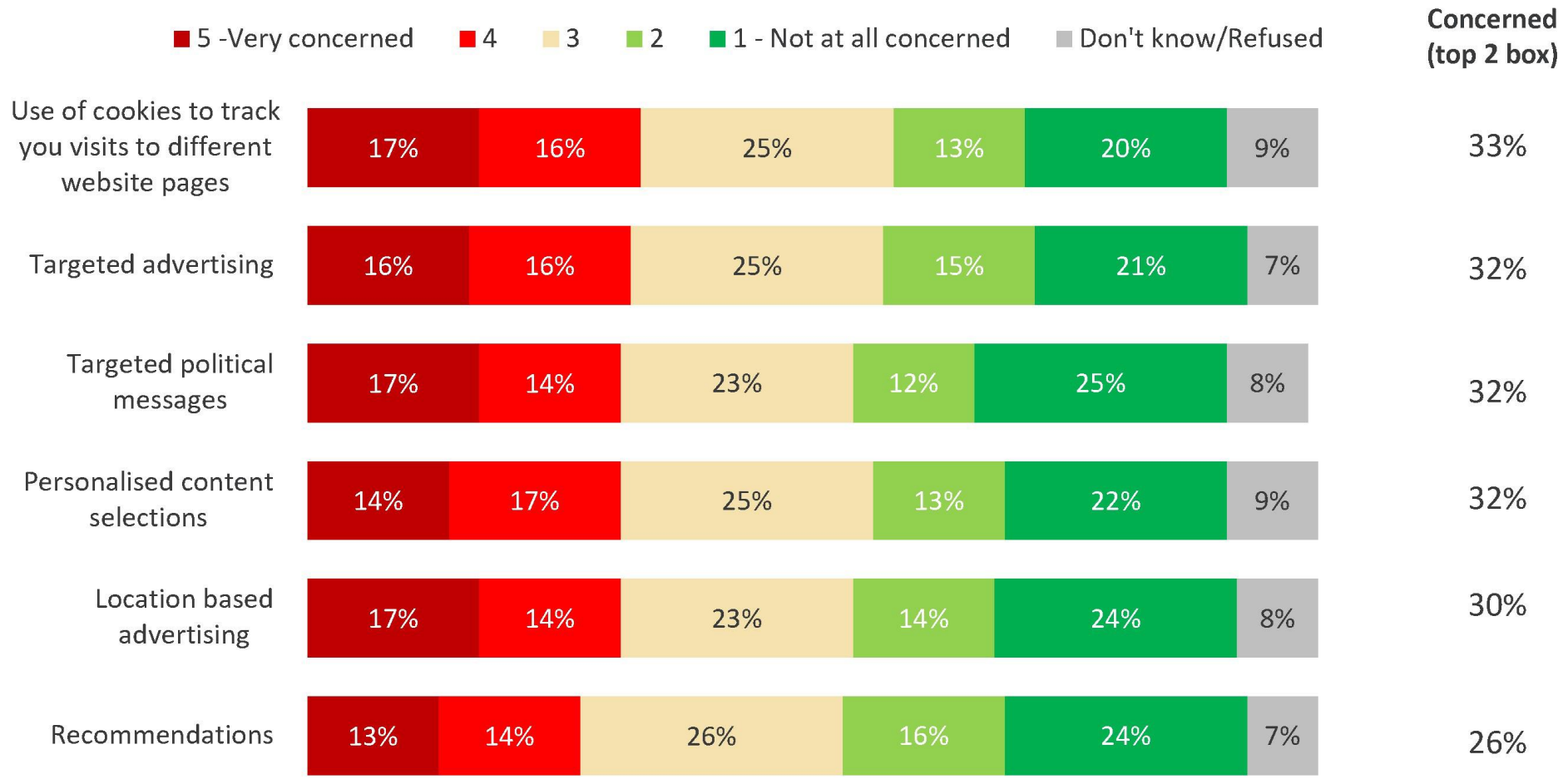
Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q13 Which of the following describe why you haven't adjusted your data privacy options? You can select as many as you like PROMPTED

Base: All aware of but have not adjusted their data privacy options (167)

Level of concern about the ways personal data is used was polarised

Level of concern over personal data: Top 2 box



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

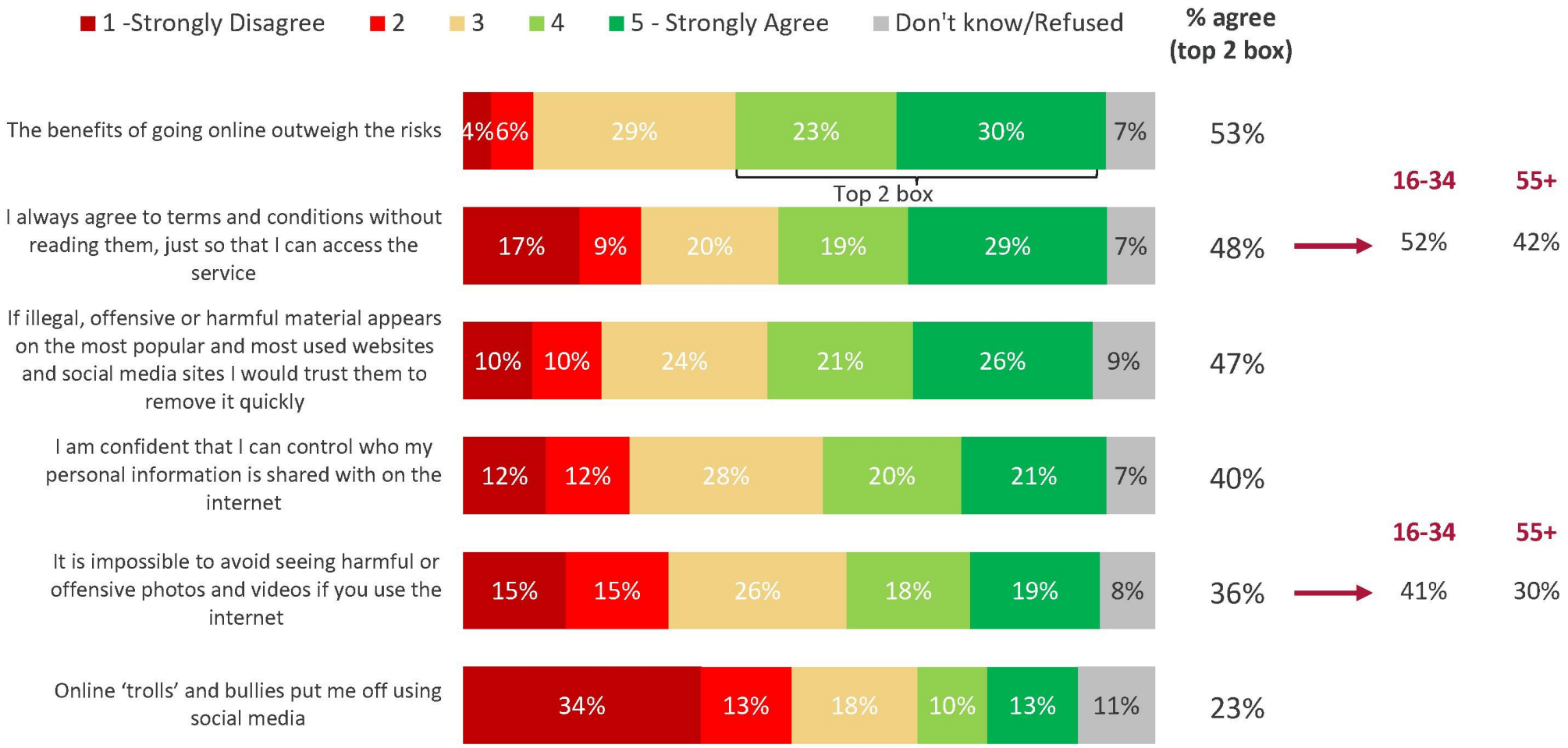
Question: Q14 I am now going to read out different reasons your personal data and information could be used by online companies and I would like you to tell me using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Not at all concerned and 5 means Very concerned how concerned you are for each. PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686)

Section 6
Attitudes

Over a third of adult internet users said it was impossible to avoid harmful or offensive content

Thoughts on harmful impact



Source: Kantar TNS Omnibus 27/06/2018 to 01/07/2018 (Week 26)

Question: Q21 On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements PROMPTED

Base: All internet users in the UK (1686); 16-34 (536), 35-54 (518), 65+ (632)

INQ000615301_0049

Internet users' concerns about and experience of potential online harms

Conducted by: Jigsaw Research

Fieldwork: February-March 2019

Published: May 2019

INQ000615301_0050

Background and Objectives

This research was commissioned by Ofcom with advice on the research design provided by The Information Commissioner's Office.

The main objective of this research is to quantify **concerns about, reported experiences of** and **potential sources** of online harm in three key categories:

- Content that people view, read or listen to online and interactions with other users
- Data/privacy
- Hacking/security

The research also explores awareness and opinions of the current level of regulation that applies to broadcast and online environments

INQ000615301_0051

Contents

Section 1		Concerns about using the internet
	A)	Spontaneous concerns
	B)	Prompted concerns about children and concerns from children themselves
	C)	Prompted concerns more generally (among adult internet users 16+)
Section 2		Reported experience of potential harms
	A)	Incidence of experiences
	B)	Frequency and impact of experiences
Section 3		Sources of potential harm
Section 4		Reporting potentially harmful online experiences
Section 5		Attitudes towards regulation and internet brands

Methodology

Ofcom making communications work for everyone

ico. Information Commissioner's Office

Adult internet users*
(16+)

- 2,057 Face-to-face in-home interviews among internet users aged 16+ in the UK
- Quotas were set on age, gender, region, social grade and urbanity
- Fieldwork from 23rd February to 31st March 2019

Children*
(12-15)

- 1,001 Online interviews among children aged between 12 and 15.
- Quotas were set on age, gender, region and social grade
- Fieldwork from 23rd February to 24th March 2019

*Please note, the above symbols will be shown at the top of each slide to denote which sample the data on the slide refers to.

INQ000615301_0053

Summary – Concerns about using the internet

- We first asked adults whether they had any concerns at all about the internet (including social media, using an app, video, online games and emails). Respondents were not shown any potential harms to choose from at first, so anything they told us was top-of-mind. **In total, 78% of adult internet users have at least one unprompted concern about going online.**

- We then showed adult respondents a list of potential online harms (slide 17) and asked them which, if any, concerned them specifically in relation to children, and then, which concerned them more generally. 12-15 year old research participant were shown a similar list (slide 18), using age-appropriate language and asked to indicate which were of concern. **After prompting, the proportion of adult internet users concerned about at least once aspect of going online increases to 83% in relation to children and 84% more generally. In comparison, 91% of 12-15 year old internet users have at least one concern.**

- **Adults and 12-15 year olds' most commonly mentioned concern is with children's exposure to *bullying, abusive behaviour or threats* (55% and 53% respectively)**. Adults with children in the household are more likely to be concerned about this (62%), as are 12-15 year old girls (60%).

Summary – Concerns about using the internet

- **Adults are most likely to be concerned about potential online harms in relation to children.** However, when asked about the internet more generally, they are most concerned about their *data being stolen* (48%), *scams/frauds* (43%) and their *data being processed without prior consent.*

- **A lot of potential online harms cause a high level of concern, but the issue causing the greatest concern is *material showing child sexual abuse*** (90% of those expressing a concern with this were very concerned in relation to children). This is followed by *content promoting self-harm* (where 85% of those expressing a concern were very concerned in relation to children)

- **However, despite the range of concerns expressed about going online, a majority of internet users believe that the benefits of going online outweigh the risks:**
  - 61% of 12-15 year old internet users agree that the internet makes children's lives better
  - 59% of adult internet users agree that the benefits of going online outweigh the risks
  - However, 36% of 12-15 year old internet users said that online bullies put them off using social media

- **In summary, internet users expressed a wide variety of concerns about going online, which ranged in their level of seriousness.** For the purposes of this report, we are grouping all potential online harms explored in the research together in order to capture what is top of mind for people

Summary – Experience of potential harms

- **Overall, 61% of adult and 79% of 12-15 year old internet users claim that they have had at least one potentially harmful experience online in the past 12 months:**
  - Adults are most likely to have experienced *spam emails** (34%), *fake news* (25%) and *scams/fraud* (22%)
  - 12-15 year olds are most likely to have experienced *offensive language* (39%), *spam emails* (33%) and *unwelcome friend requests* (28%), and 23% have come across *bullying*
  - Those using new websites or apps in the last month are significantly more likely to have experienced a potential harm

- **Among the minority who had experienced it, *material showing child sexual abuse* or *promoting self-harm* has the biggest impact** (58%/46% of adults and 49%/51% of 12-15 year olds experiencing this found it annoying, upsetting or frustrating)
  - *Processing personal data without prior consent* and the *theft of personal data* also have big impacts on adults (54%/50%)
  - Whereas *bullying* has a big impact on 12-15 year olds (51%)

- **Around three in ten (29%) of adult and 38% of 12-15 year old internet users have experienced something that they rated as 'harmful' (annoying, upsetting or frustrating)**

* There may be some crossover with some of the other potential harms mentioned in this report. For example, spam emails may range from being just annoying to potentially harmful (e.g. containing scams and/or offensive content).

Summary – Sources of potential online harm

- **Social media sites, and Facebook in particular, are the most commonly cited sources of potential online harm**
  - A quarter of Facebook users (28% of adult users and 24% of 12-15 year old users) claim to have recently experienced a potential online harm using Facebook

- **23% of adult internet users do not trust websites and social media sites to remove illegal, offensive or harmful material quickly**

- **19% of adults and 25% of 12-15 year olds say that they have taken action to report harmful content they have seen online**

Summary – Attitudes towards regulation

- Online media is seen to be less heavily regulated compared to more traditional media. **A quarter of adult internet users believe there are no regulations or restrictions for social media (26%) or video sharing services (25%)**

- A majority of adult internet users believe existing regulation should be at least maintained, and **there is majority support for increased regulation of social media, video sharing and IM services** (significantly more so than in 2018)

- The media that adult internet users feel should have more regulation – including **Social media sites and video sharing services – are generally the least trusted sites**, even amongst their own users

Section 1
Concerns about the internet
A) Spontaneous Concerns

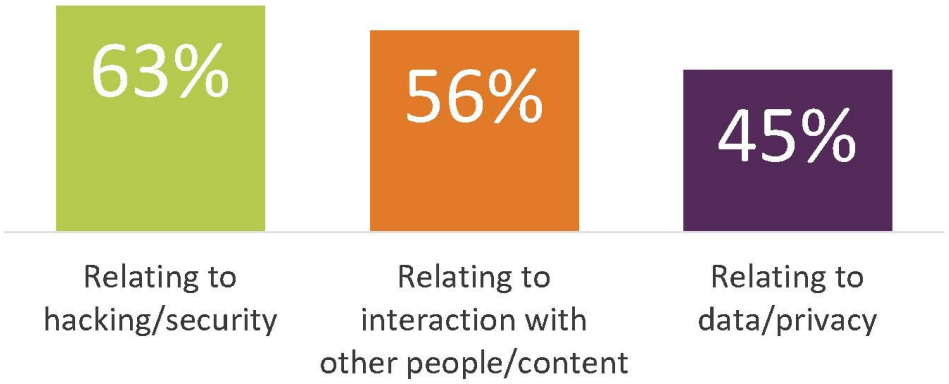
INQ000615301_0059

Over three quarters of UK adults express a concern about the internet without being prompted

Unprompted Concerns

78%

Of adults have **spontaneous** concerns about the internet



Unprompted concerns for adults are higher in 2019 compared to our 2018 research (78% vs. 58%). This is likely to be due to differences in news context and the question wording, with the 2019 survey specifically asking participants to include social media, apps, video streaming, online gaming and emails.

22%*

Of children (12-15) have **spontaneous** concerns about the internet

Of those that are concerned, **spontaneously** they mentioned issues…

**Self-completion methodology likely explains relatively low level of unprompted concern compared to adults.*

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question context: I am now going to ask you a few questions about your opinion on using the internet. Just to confirm, using the internet includes things like visiting a social media site or app, looking at a website or using an app, watching a TV programme or video clip, playing online games or checking emails.

Base: All adult internet users (2057) Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Responses coded into list)

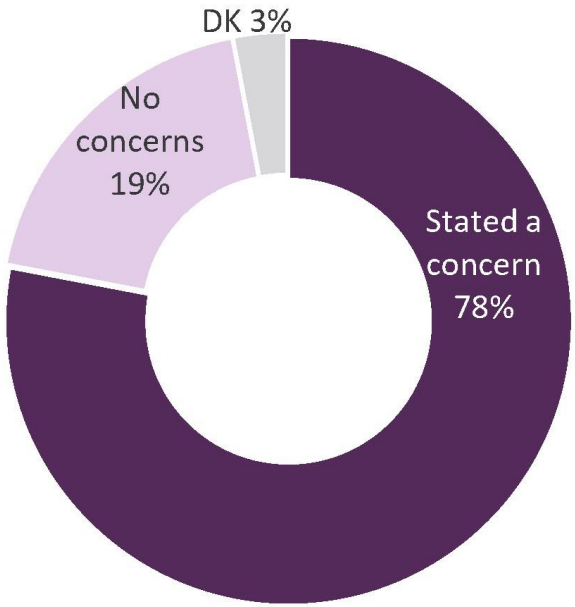
Base: All Children 12-15 (1001) Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Single code response – Yes/no/dk)

Base: Children 12-15 concerned on the internet (210) Question: C1b. What concerns do you have? (Open response)

Concerns related to hacking/security are top of mind for adults – notably scams and personal information being stolen

UNPROMPTED Concerns

What concerns do you have about the internet?



- *Females 81% vs. males 75% any concerns*
- *ABC1 82% vs. C2DE 74% any concerns*
- *Any children in household 83% vs. no children 77% any concerns*
- *84% of 35-54 have any concerns (probably related to children in HH)*

= 63% relating to hacking/security

= 56% relating to interactions with other people and content

= 45% relating to data/privacy

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question context: I am now going to ask you a few questions about your opinion on using the internet. Just to confirm, using the internet includes things like visiting a social media site or app, looking at a website or using an app, watching a TV programme or video clip, playing online games or checking emails.

Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Responses coded into list)

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

INQ000615301_0061

Those aged 35-54, adults with children in the household (HH) and ABC1 social groups have more top of mind concerns about the internet

UNPROMPTED Concerns among adults

	16-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	CHILD IN HH	NO CHILD IN HH	All Adults
Number of spontaneous concerns	**5.3**	**6.1**	**5.6**	**6.0**	**5.4**	**6.2**	**5.5**	**5.7**
Scams/fraud	42%	45%	44%	46%	41%	46%	43%	44%
Personal info being stolen/hacked	33%	41%	38%	39%	36%	38%	38%	38%
Personal info processed without knowledge	31%	34%	34%	35%	30%	32%	33%	33%
Bullying/abusive behaviour/threats	30%	31%	24%	29%	28%	34%	26%	28%
Violent/disturbing content	28%	33%	24%	29%	27%	35%	26%	28%
Private info made public	26%	29%	26%	29%	25%	29%	27%	27%
Material showing child sexual abuse	25%	29%	26%	28%	26%	29%	26%	27%
Viruses etc	27%	28%	25%	29%	24%	29%	26%	26%
Sexual/pornographic content	21%	30%	27%	28%	25%	33%	24%	26%
Spam emails	22%	27%	27%	28%	23%	23%	27%	25%
Collecting data about me in unclear ways	19%	26%	25%	24%	22%	23%	24%	23%
Offensive videos/pictures	19%	26%	22%	23%	23%	28%	21%	23%
Fake News	21%	23%	21%	24%	19%	22%	21%	22%
People pretending to be another person	22%	21%	21%	22%	20%	21%	21%	21%
Harmful/misleading advertising	22%	21%	20%	23%	19%	24%	20%	21%
Unwelcome friend/follow requests	17%	23%	20%	21%	20%	23%	20%	20%
Promotion terrorism/radicalisation	19%	23%	19%	23%	18%	24%	19%	20%
Content promoting self-harm	17%	19%	19%	20%	17%	19%	19%	19%
Hate speech/inciting violence	17%	19%	18%	20%	16%	20%	18%	18%
Stalking/cyberstalking	20%	19%	15%	17%	18%	21%	17%	18%
Offensive language	12%	20%	19%	18%	17%	21%	16%	17%
Trolling	14%	18%	15%	16%	15%	19%	15%	16%
Spending too much time online	10%	11%	13%	12%	10%	11%	12%	11%
Government/agency surveillance	9%	12%	12%	11%	11%	10%	12%	11%

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet?

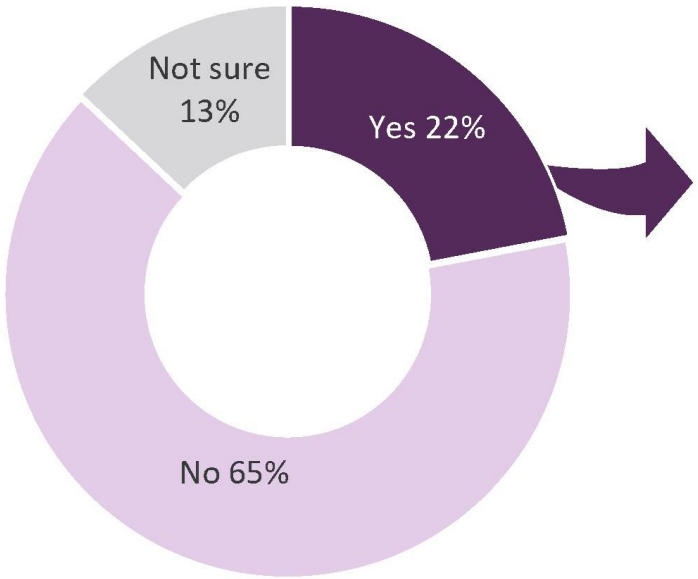
Base: All adult internet users (2057)

Shading indicates significant differences between groups.

One in five 12-15 year olds raised concerns about using the internet without being prompted – notably the theft of personal information and bullying

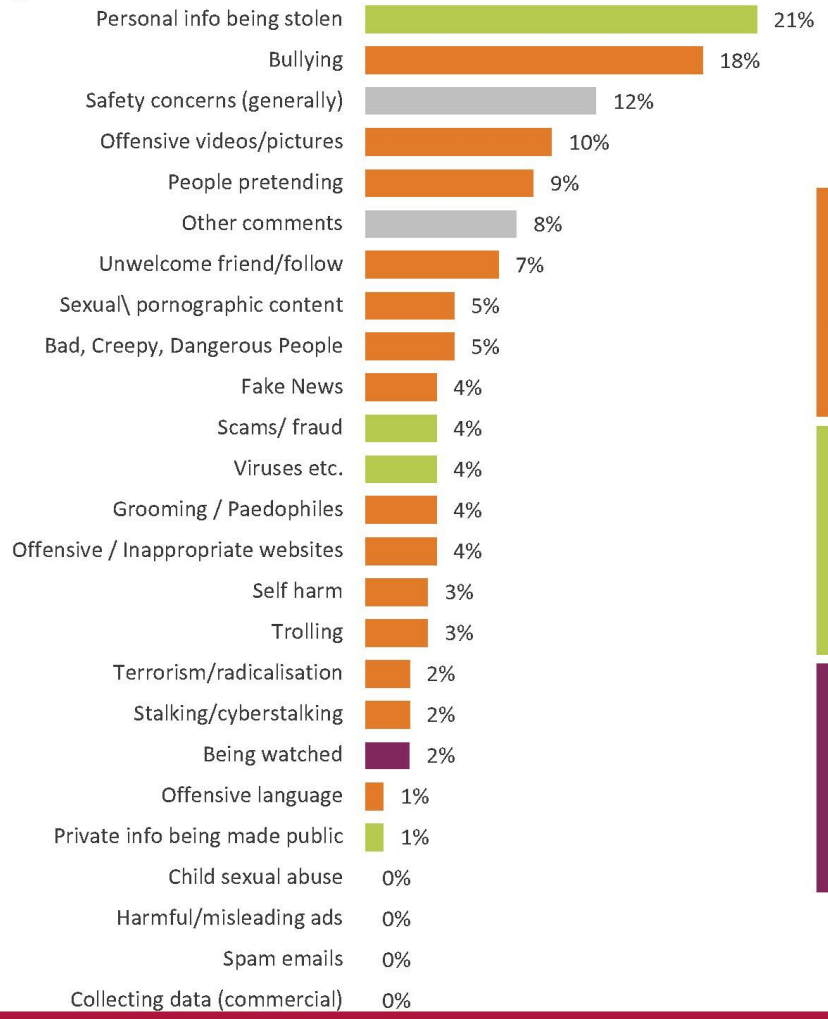
UNPROMPTED Concerns among children aged 12-15

Do you have any concerns about the internet?



Concerns more likely in London (36%), AB (29% vs. DE 16%), 13 year old girls (33%), those who have ever taken action to report potential online harm (32%) and those who are "neither/not confident" internet users (40%)

What concerns do you have?



= 59% relating to interactions with other people and content

= 28% relating to hacking/security

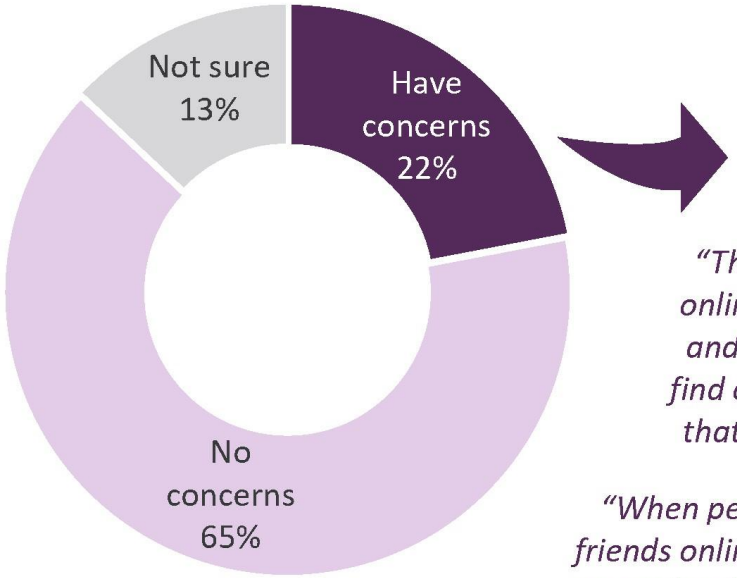
= 3% relating to data/privacy

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question context: **You're now going to see a few questions about your opinion of using the internet.** As a reminder, using the internet includes things like: using social media sites or apps such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram; looking at websites or apps; watching a TV programme or video clip on YouTube or Netflix; playing online games, including through a PlayStation or Xbox; checking emails. Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (1001). C1b. What concerns do you have? UNPROMPTED, open-ended and verbatim comments coded.
Base: all expressing concern n=216

A selection of typical concerns reported by children

UNPROMPTED Concerns among children aged 12-15



"Bullying and making people feel socially excluded or isolated. I think Snap maps is really dangerous for young people and puts their safety at risk"

"I'm worried about people taking my information and that who you think you may be talking to is not who you think"

"That it's not always safe and people can steal your personal information. People can mislead you and not be who they say they are"

"Cyber bullying and people taking my picture from my site without my permission"

"That the information I get online might not be the truth and people might be able to find out information about me that I am unwilling to share"

"I am concerned about people wanting to get my information and people who pretend to be someone else so you will tell them things. I am upset by some of the images I see and sometimes friends show me things that I am not sure about. There are these pranks and things these days that people get you to do and the images can be scary or weird"

"When people try to make friends online and you are not sure who they are. Often they are friends of friends but you're still not sure what kind of person they are"

"I have worries that the person I am talking to is not a child, but someone pretending to be a child I have had messages that are bogus but frightening saying I am wanted by police etc. Bullying, cyber bulling. This happened to me a few times and I reported it to the safeguarding team at school"

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

C1b. What concerns do you have? UNPROMPTED, open-ended and verbatim comments coded.

Base: all children aged 12-15 expressing concern n=216

Section 1 continued
Concerns about the internet
B) Prompted concerns about children online

- Adults' concerns about children going online
- Childrens' own concerns about going online

INQ000615301_0065

Glossary of terms

Full prompted potential harms list used in the Adults survey – with corresponding chart reference text

Full Prompted List (Adults)	Short Text (In charts)
Sexual/ pornographic content	Sexual/pornographic
Material showing child sexual abuse	Child sexual abuse
Offensive language	Offensive language
Offensive videos/pictures	Offensive videos/pictures
Violent/ disturbing content	Violent/disturbing content
Fake News	Fake News
Promotion of terrorism/ radicalisation	Terrorism/radicalisation
Content promoting self-harm e.g. cutting, anorexia, suicide	Self-harm
Harmful or misleading advertising	Harmful/misleading ads
Hate speech / inciting violence	Hate speech
Unwelcome friend/follow requests/unwelcome contact or messages from strangers	Unwelcome friend/follow
Stalking/cyberstalking (harassment from other internet users)	Stalking/cyberstalking
People pretending to be another person	People pretending
Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	Bullying
Trolling (a person who deliberately says something controversial in order to start arguments or cause upset)	Trolling
Spam emails	Spam emails
Government/ agency surveillance	Government surveillance
My personal data being processed without my knowledge/consent	Personal data processed
People or organisations collecting data about me in unclear ways for commercial reasons	Collecting data (commercial)
My personal information being stolen/hacked	Personal info stolen
Scams/ fraud	Scams/ fraud
Private information being made public (e.g. photos)	Private info made public
Viruses/ trojans/ worms/ spyware/ malicious software	Viruses etc.
Spending too much time online	Too much time online
Other (WRITE IN)	

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

INQ000615301_0066

Glossary of terms

Full prompted potential harms list used in the children survey – with corresponding chart reference text

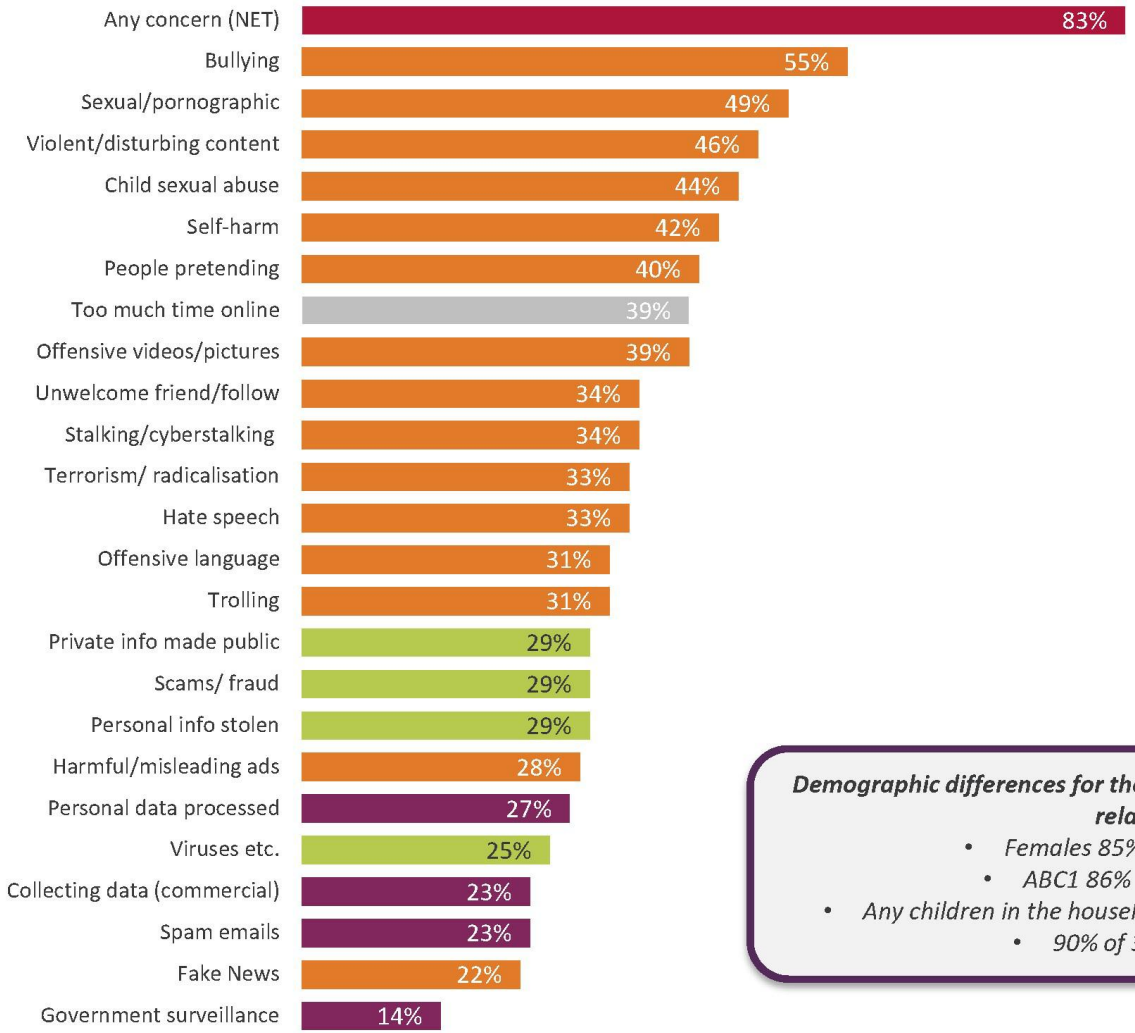
	Full Prompted List (children)	Short Text (In charts)
	Sexual/ pornographic content	Sexual/pornographic
	Images showing child sexual abuse	Child sexual abuse
	Offensive language	Offensive language
	Offensive videos/pictures	Offensive videos/pictures
	Violent/ disturbing content	Violent/disturbing content
	Fake News	Fake News
	Promotion of terrorism/ radicalisation	Terrorism/radicalisation
	Content promoting self-harm e.g. cutting, anorexia, suicide	Self-harm
	Harmful or misleading advertising	Harmful/misleading ads
	Hate speech / inciting violence	Hate speech
	Unwelcome friend/follow requests/unwelcome contact or messages from strangers	Unwelcome friend/follow
	Stalking/cyberstalking (harassment from other internet users)	Stalking/cyberstalking
	People pretending to be another person	People pretending
	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	Bullying
	Trolling (a person who deliberately says something controversial in order to start arguments or cause upset)	Trolling
	Feeling under pressure to send photos or other information about yourself to someone	Pressure to send info/photos
	Spam emails	Spam emails
	Government/ agency surveillance	Government surveillance
	My personal data being processed without my knowledge/consent	Personal data processed
	People or organisations collecting data about me in unclear ways for commercial reasons	Collecting data (commercial)
	My personal information being stolen/hacked	Personal info stolen
	Scams/ fraud	Scams/ fraud
	Private information being made public (e.g. photos)	Private info made public
	Viruses/ trojans/ worms/ spyware/ malicious software	Viruses etc.
	Spending too much time online	Too much time online
	Spending too much money online	Too much money online
	Other (WRITE IN)	

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

INQ000615301_0067

Over eight in ten adults expressed a concern in relation to children online. The majority of these are concerned about types of content and conduct children may be exposed to online.

Concerns in relation to children



Average number of concerns:

8.0

= 80% relating to Content/contact with others

= 44% relating to hacking/security

= 36% relating to data/privacy

Demographic differences for those that have concerns about the internet in relation to children:

- *Females 85% vs. males 81% any concerns*
- *ABC1 86% vs. C2DE 80% any concerns*
- *Any children in the household 91% vs. no children 80% any concerns*
- *90% of 35-54 have any concerns*

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2a) Firstly, which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children?

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

All adults are concerned about bullying, abusive behaviour and threats. Parents generally have more concerns about potential harms affecting children than non-parents.

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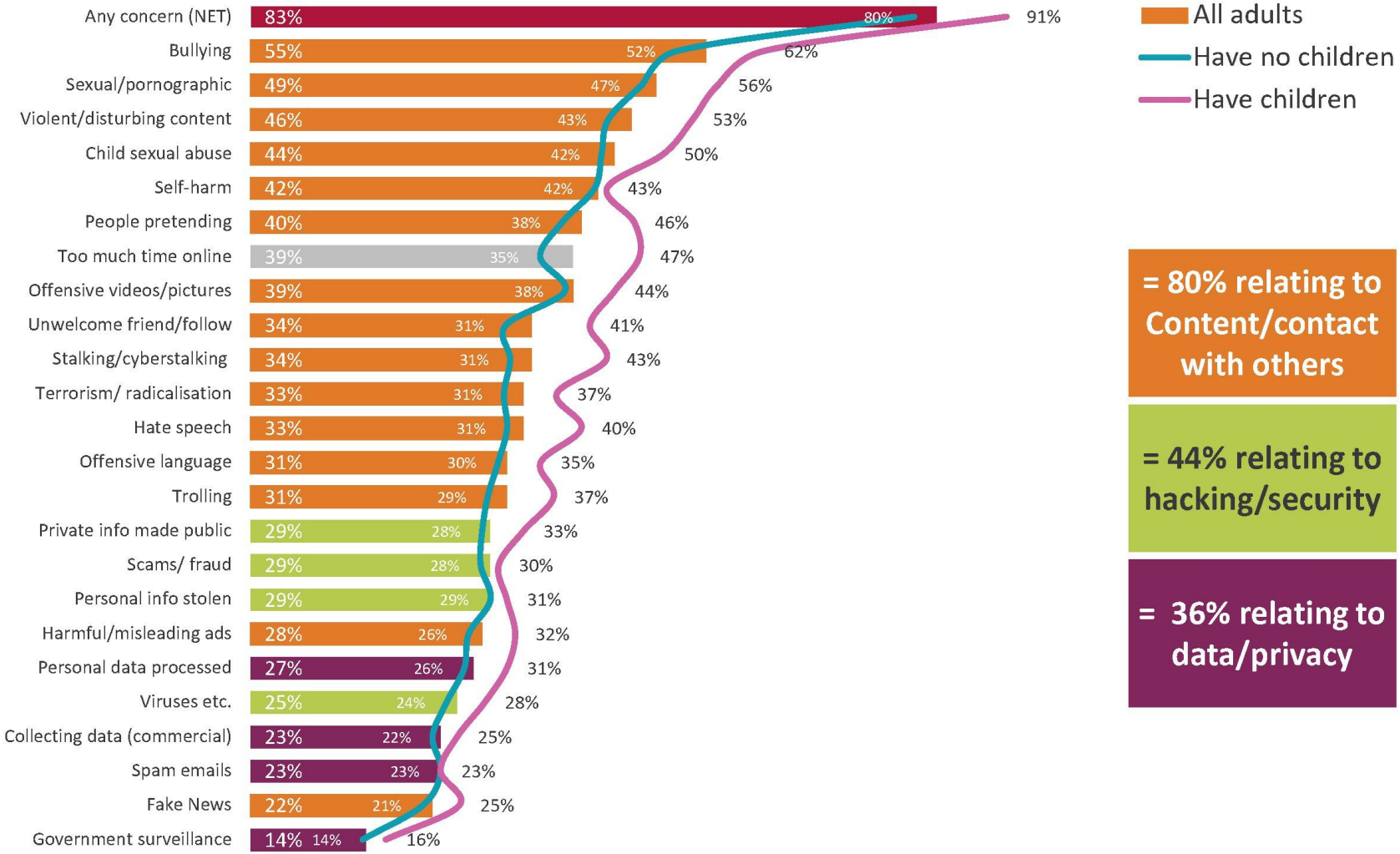
Concerns in relation to children



Average number of concerns:

No Children: 7.6

Have Children: 9.1

= 80% relating to Content/contact with others

= 44% relating to hacking/security

= 36% relating to data/privacy

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2a) Firstly, which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children?

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

When prompted, nine in ten 12-15 year olds have at least one concern. In particular, they're concerned about the conduct of others, especially bullying and people pretending to be others

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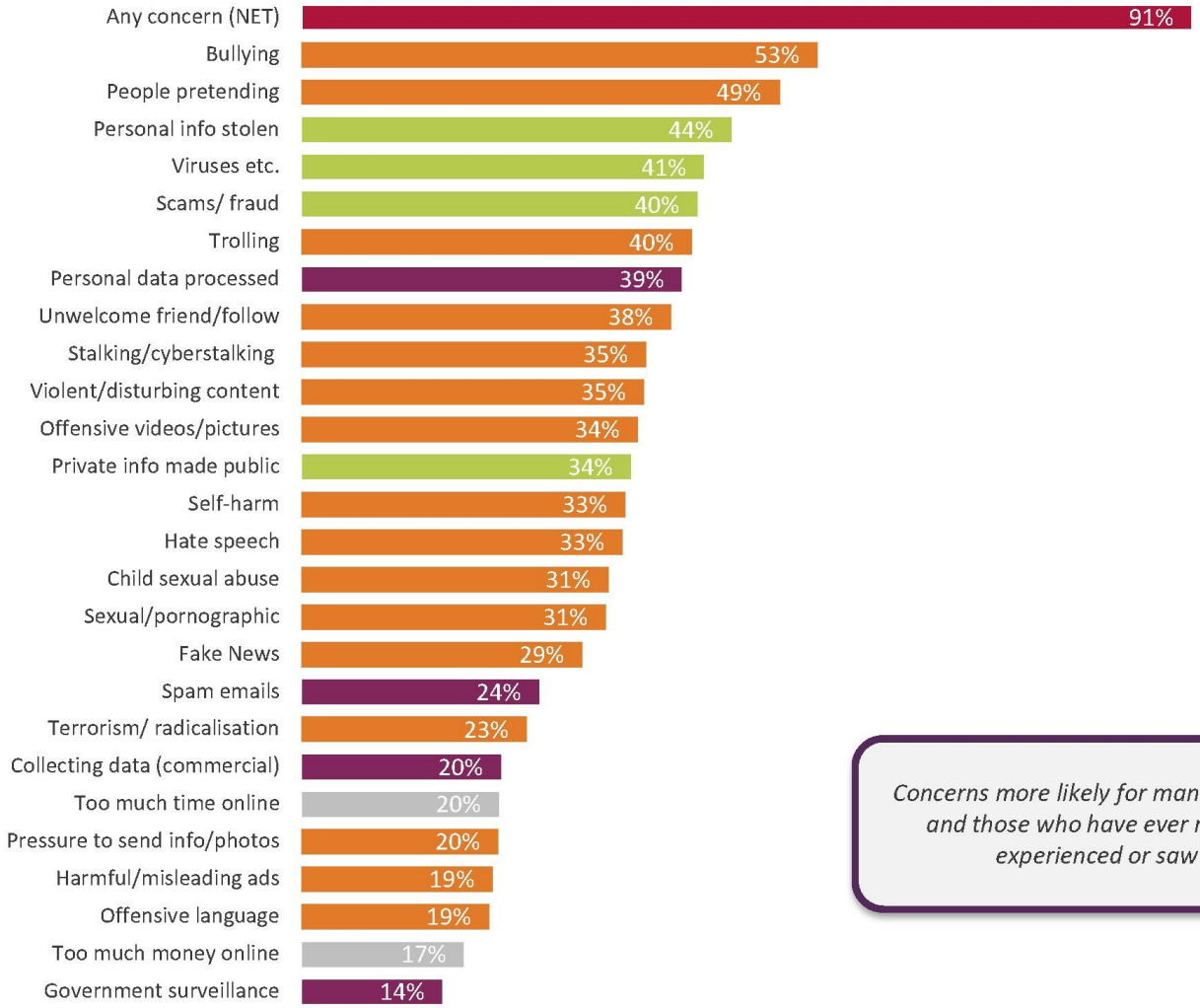
Proportion of children aged 12-15 expressing a concern



Average number of concerns:

8.2

= 87% relating to Content/contact with others

= 73% relating to hacking/security

= 56% relating to data/privacy

Concerns more likely for many elements for girls vs. boys and those who have ever reported something they experienced or saw online in the past

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Girls are more likely to express concerns about the internet than boys

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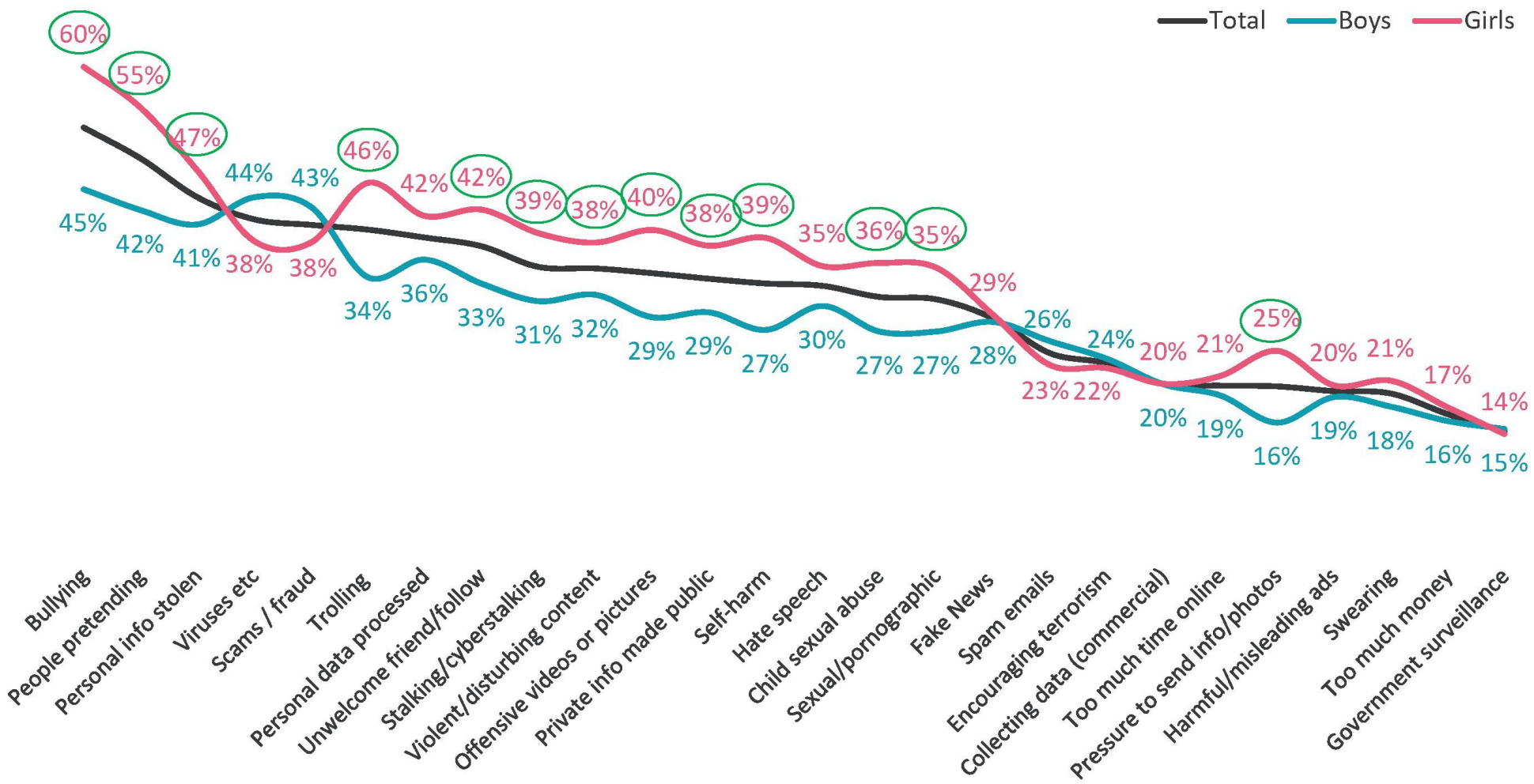
Proportion of children aged 12-15 expressing a concern



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Circles indicate significant differences between boys and girls

When thinking about children, adults are more concerned about content than security. Children themselves are on average more concerned over security. However, there is strong shared concern about bullying

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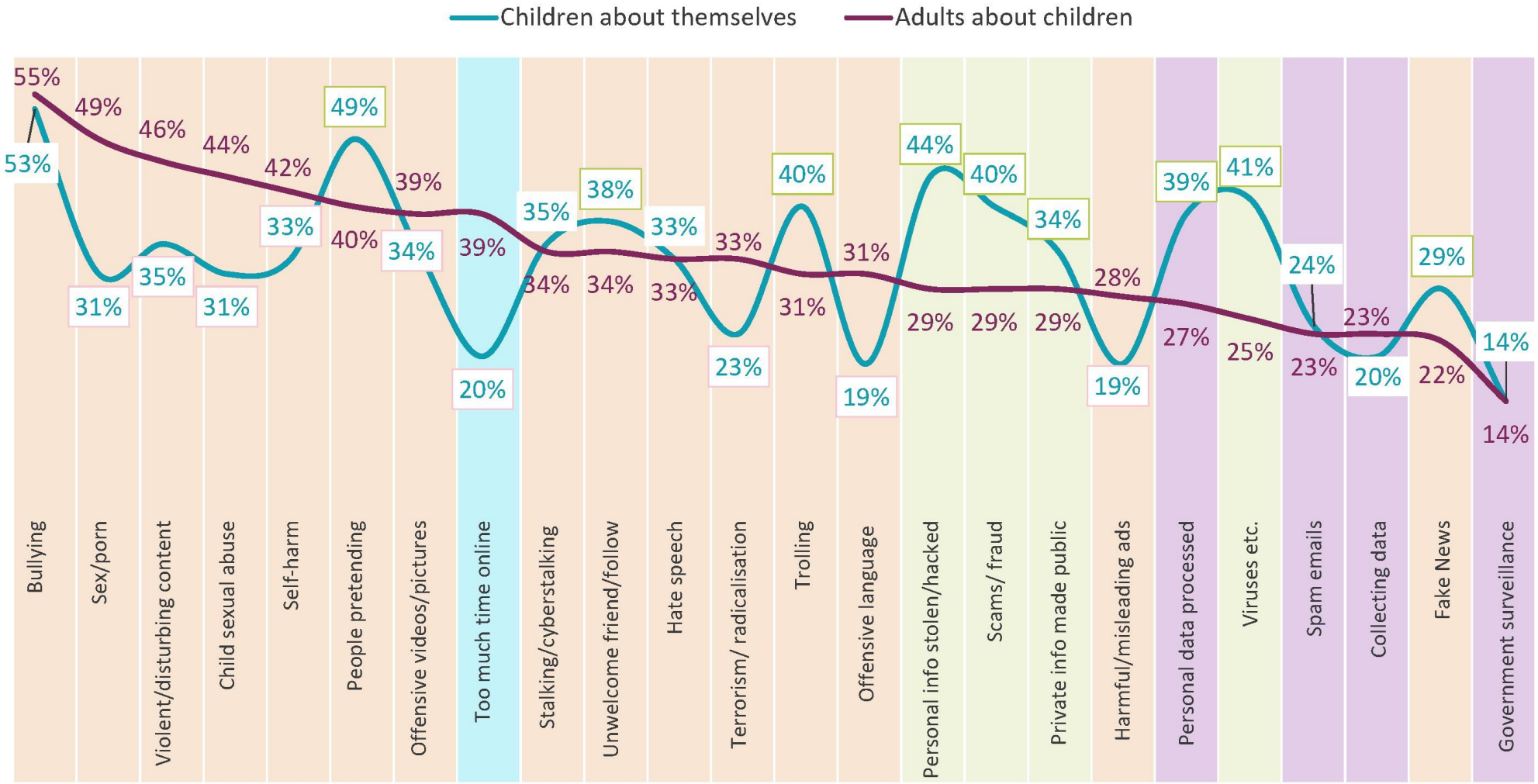
Adult concern re children vs. children concern about themselves (ranked on adults)



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: Which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children? Base: All adult internet users (2057)

C2. Which of the following concern you about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Adults with children in the household are significantly more likely to be concerned for children in relation to most of the harms listed than compared to those with no children

Adults' concern for children vs. childrens' concern about themselves

PROMPTED (ranked on all adults)

	All Children	All Adults	Adults with children in HH	Adults with no children in HH
Bullying, abusive behaviour, threats	53%	55%	62%	52%
Sexual/pornographic content	31%	49%	56%	47%
Violent/disturbing content	35%	46%	53%	43%
Materials showing child sexual abuse	31%	44%	50%	42%
Content promoting self-harm	33%	42%	43%	42%
People pretending to be another person	49%	40%	46%	38%
Too much time online	20%	39%	47%	35%
Offensive videos/pictures	34%	39%	44%	38%
Unwelcome friend/follow	38%	34%	41%	31%
Stalking/cyberstalking	35%	34%	43%	31%
Promotion of terrorism/ radicalisation	23%	33%	37%	31%
Hate speech	33%	33%	40%	31%
Offensive language (children: swearwords or offensive)	19%	31%	35%	30%
Trolling	40%	31%	37%	29%
Private info made public	34%	29%	33%	28%
Scams/ fraud	40%	29%	30%	28%
Personal info stolen/hacked	44%	29%	31%	29%
Harmful/misleading ads (children: contain untrue info)	19%	28%	32%	26%
Personal data processed without knowledge	39%	27%	31%	26%
Viruses etc.	41%	25%	28%	24%
Collecting data (commercial)	20%	23%	25%	22%
Spam emails	24%	23%	23%	23%
Fake News	29%	22%	25%	21%
Government surveillance	14%	14%	16%	14%
Feeling pressure to send photos/info	20%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Spending too much money online	17%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: Which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children? Base: All adult internet users (2057)

C2. Which of the following concern you about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Shading indicates significant differences between groups.

INQ000615301_0073

Most issues highlighted cause a significant level of concern. In particular, adults are most concerned about child sexual abuse, self harm and sexual/ pornographic content

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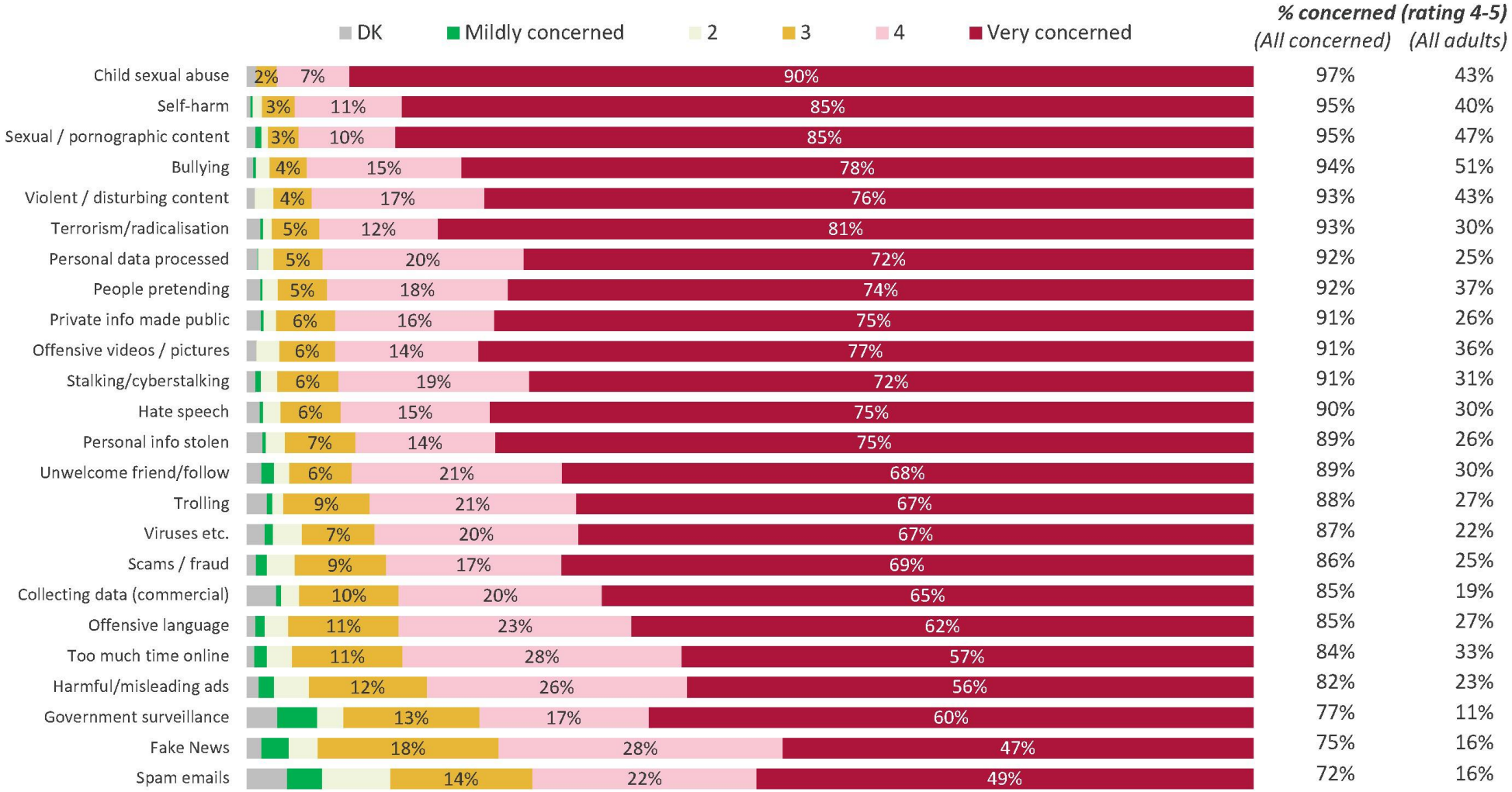
Level of concern (among adults concerned about each) in relation to children



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C3a) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about in relation to children. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each.

Base: All adult internet users (2057) who are concerned about each element (bases vary 271-1088)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

However, levels of concern tend to be lower among 12-15 year olds than compared to the adults. They are most concerned about images of child sexual abuse.

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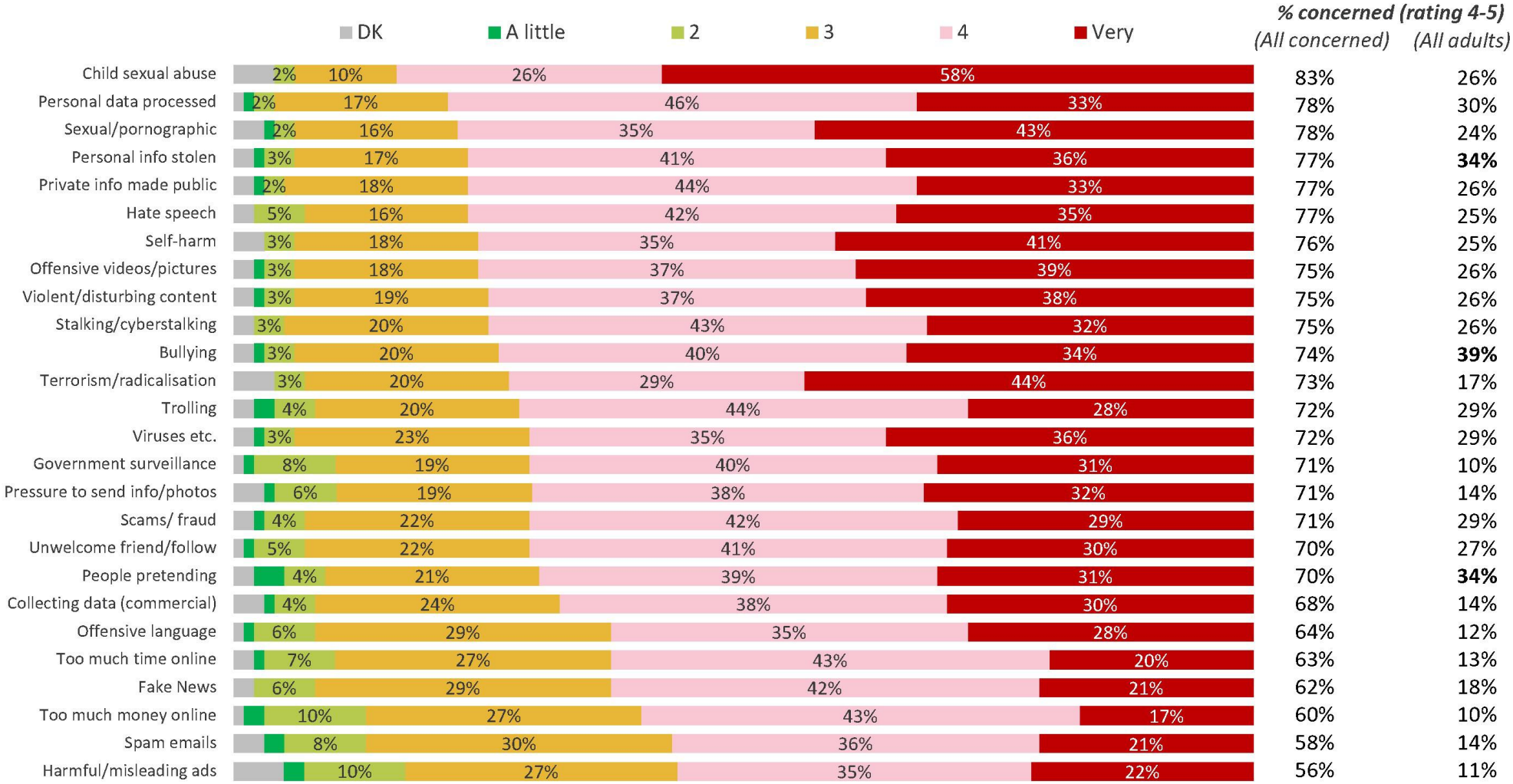
Level of concern (among children aged 12-15 who are concerned about each)



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C3) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each.

Base: All children 12-15 (1001) who are concerned about each element (bases vary 144-528)

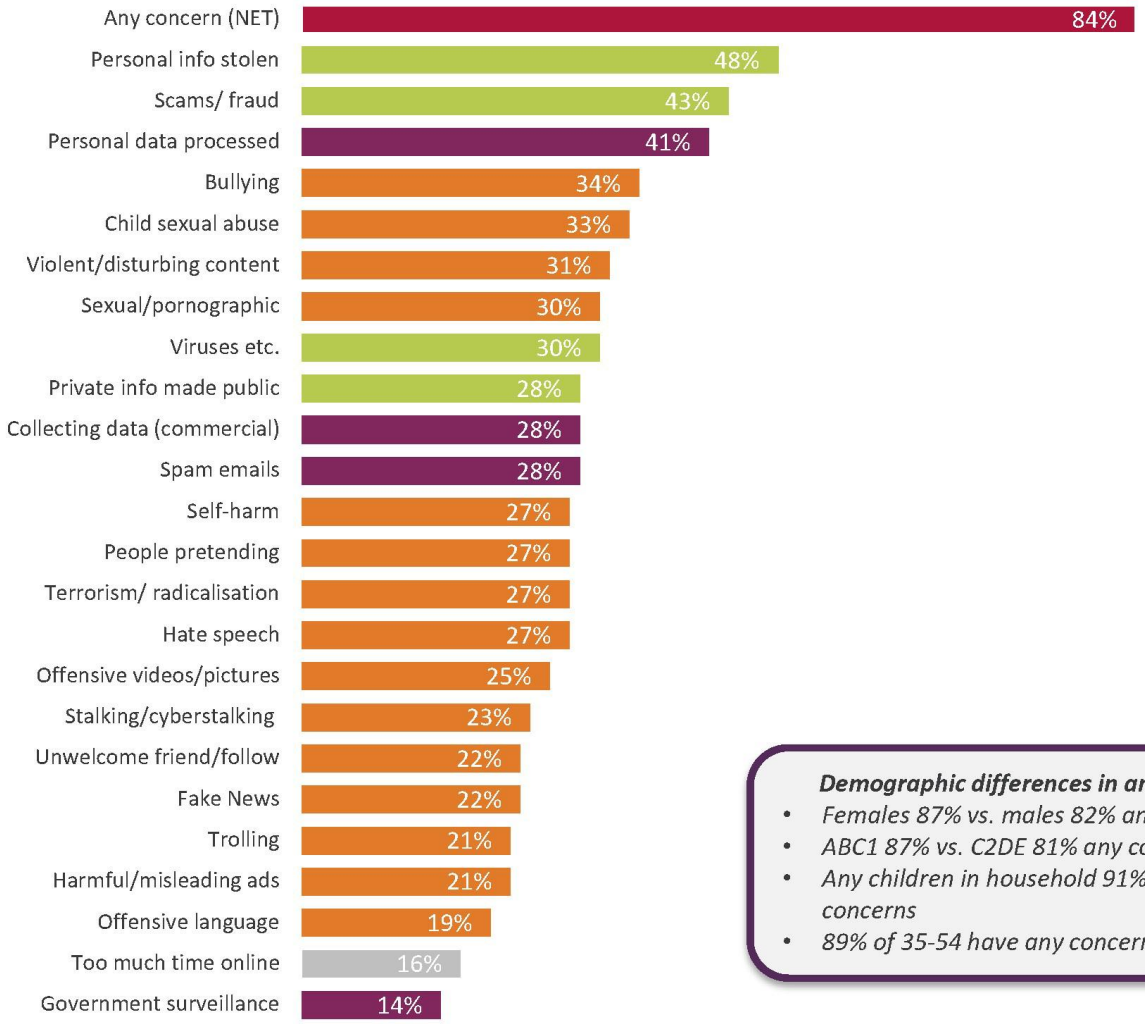
NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Section 1 continued
Concerns about the internet
C) Prompted concerns about the internet more generally (among adult internet users 16+)

INQ000615301_0076

More generally, adults are most likely to be concerned about their personal information being stolen, as well as scams /frauds

Concerns generally among adults



= 69% relating to hacking/security

= 68% relating to Content/contact with others

= 57% relating to data/privacy

Demographic differences in any concerns about the internet generally:

- *Females 87% vs. males 82% any concerns*
- *ABC1 87% vs. C2DE 81% any concerns*
- *Any children in household 91% vs. no children in household 82% any concerns*
- *89% of 35-54 have any concerns*

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally?

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Adults are more concerned about most potential online harms in relation to children, especially bullying and the suitability of online content. They are more concerned about data protection and scams/fraud in relation to themselves

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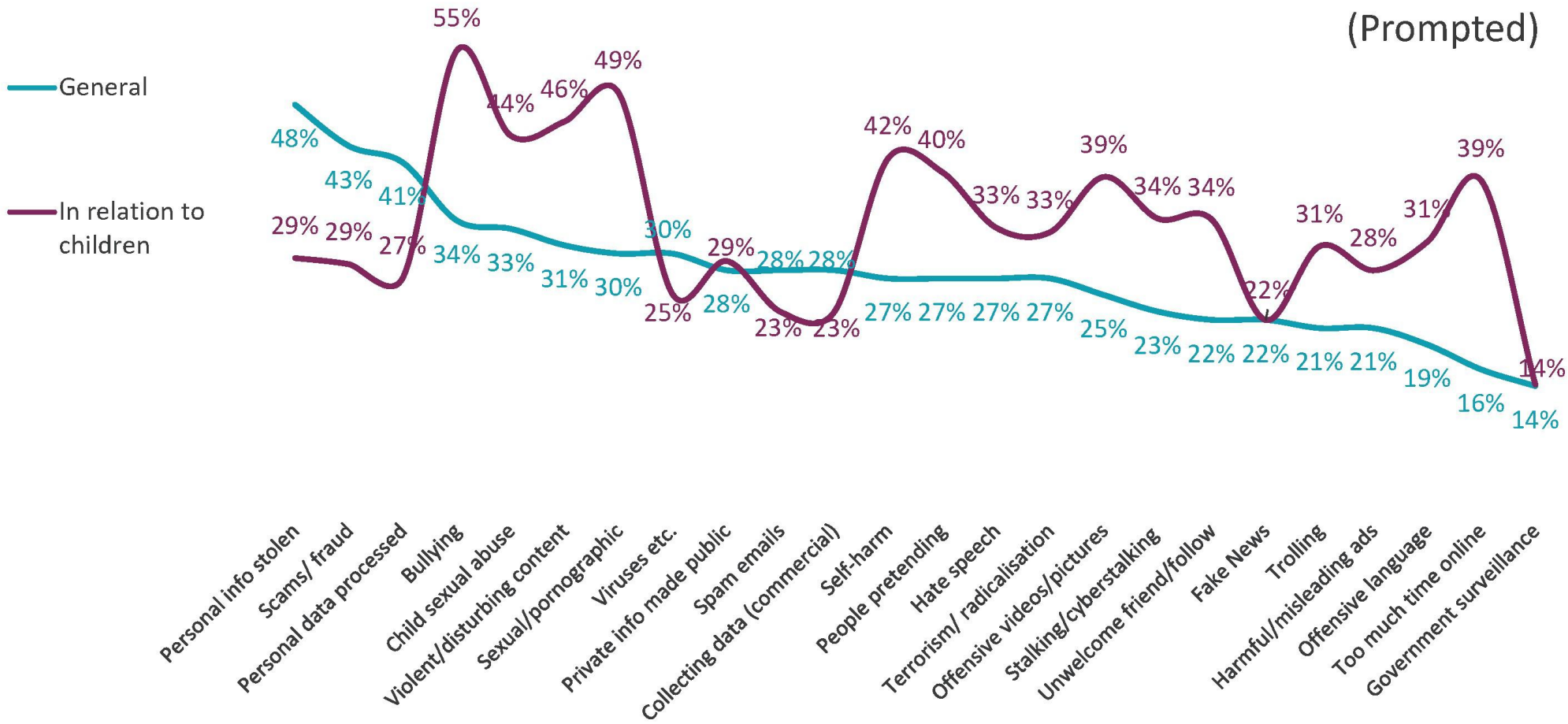
Concern regarding children vs. general concern (any concern among adults)

(Prompted)



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

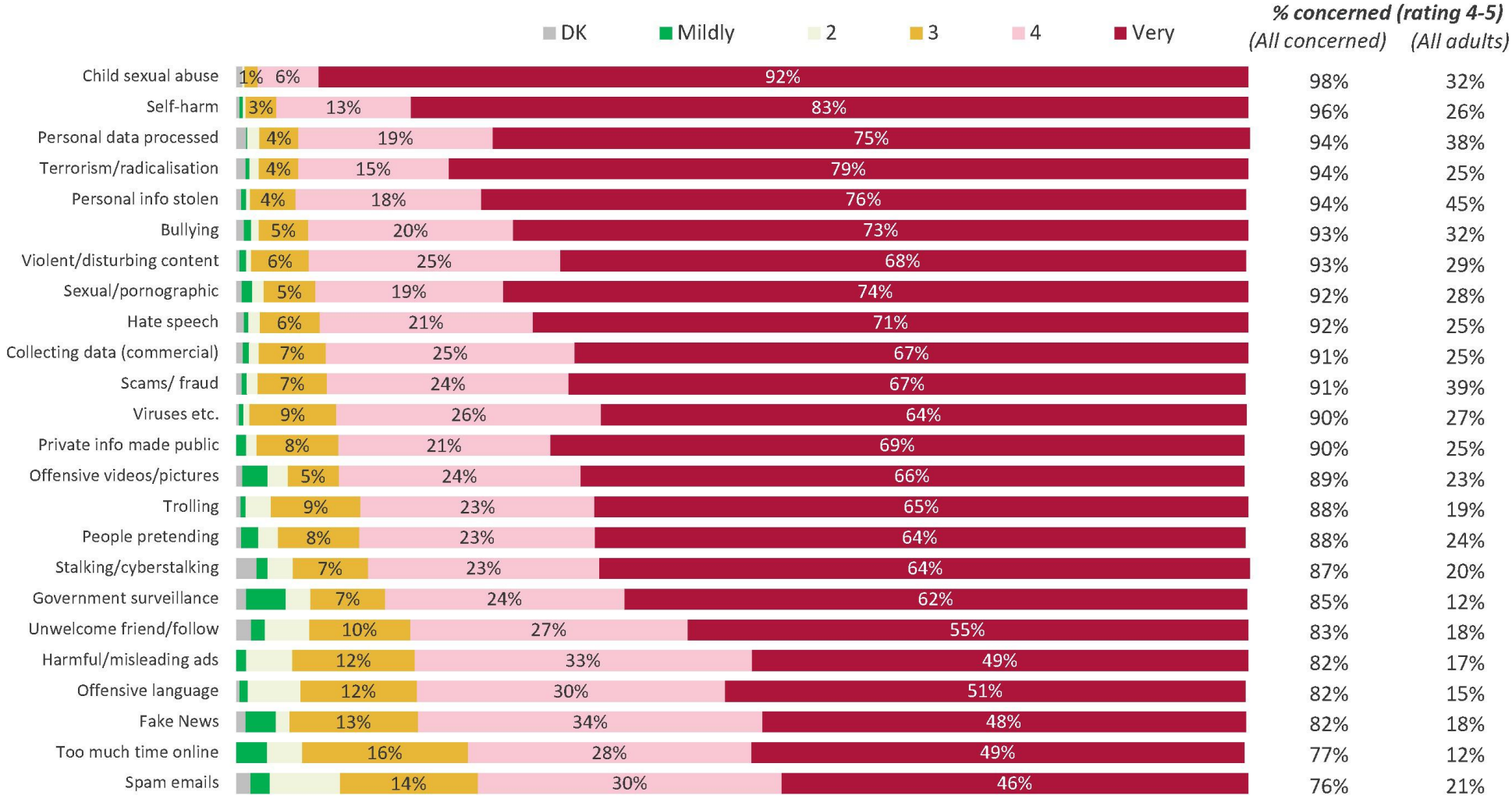
Question: C2a) Firstly, which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children? C2b) And which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally?

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Almost all of those who said they are concerned by material showing child sexual abuse on the internet are VERY concerned by it

Level of concern (among adults who are concerned about each) generally



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

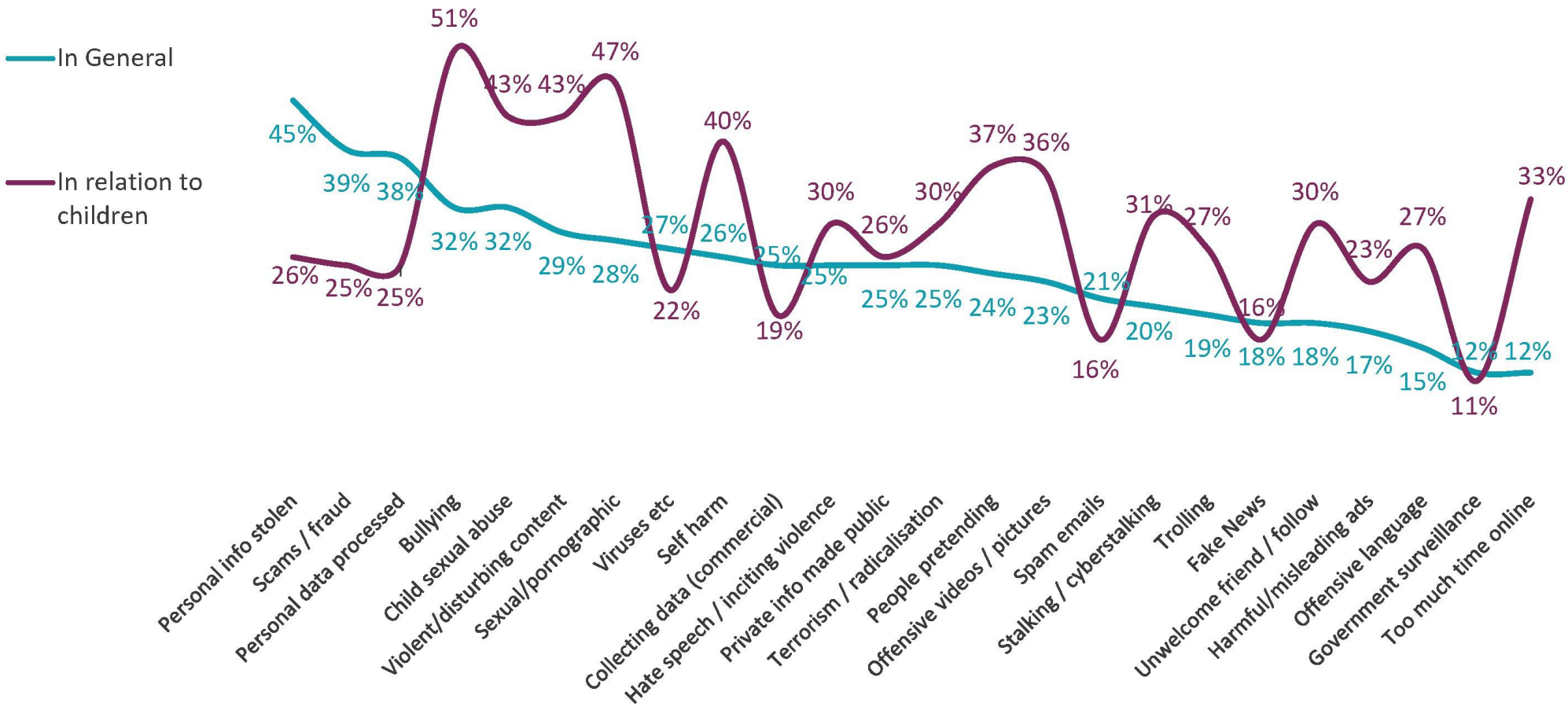
Question: C3b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each

Base: All adult internet users (2057) who are concerned about each element (bases vary 321-987)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Adults are more concerned about all aspects of potential online harm in relation to children, especially bullying and the suitability of online content. They are more concerned about data protection and scams/fraud in relation to themselves

Level of **4-5 concern** among the Total Adult Sample (ranked on concern generally)



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C3a) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about in relation to children. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each. C3b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each

Base: All adult internet users (2057) NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Section 2
Reported experience of potential harms
A) Incidence of experiences

INQ000615301_0081

Three in five adults and eight in ten 12-15 year olds claim to have had potentially harmful experiences online in the last 12 months

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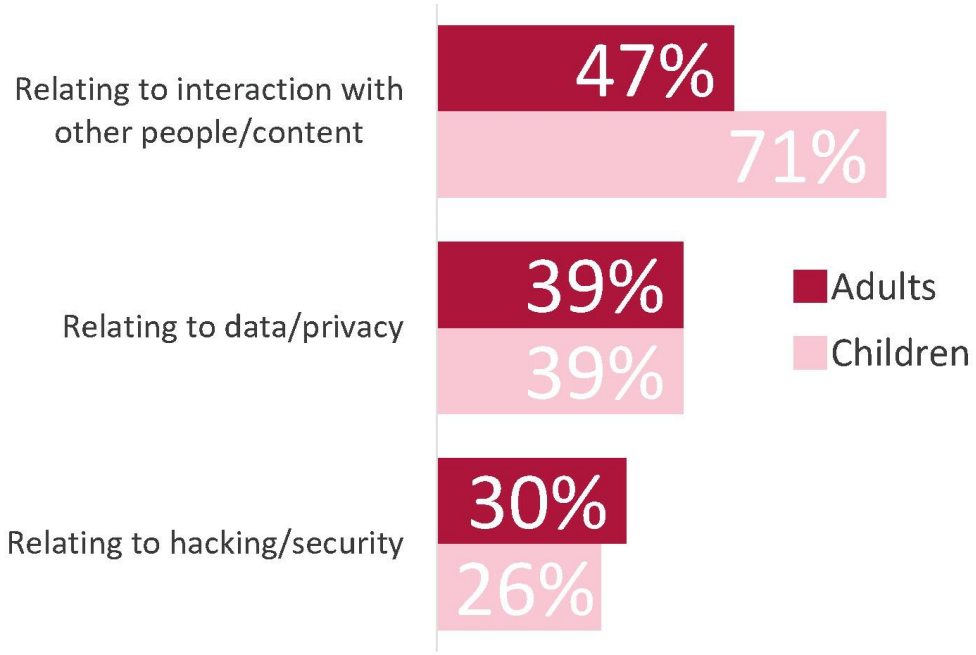
Experienced potential online harm

61%

Of adults have had **potentially harmful online experiences** in the last 12 months

79%

Of children (12-15) had **potentially harmful online experiences** in the last 12 months

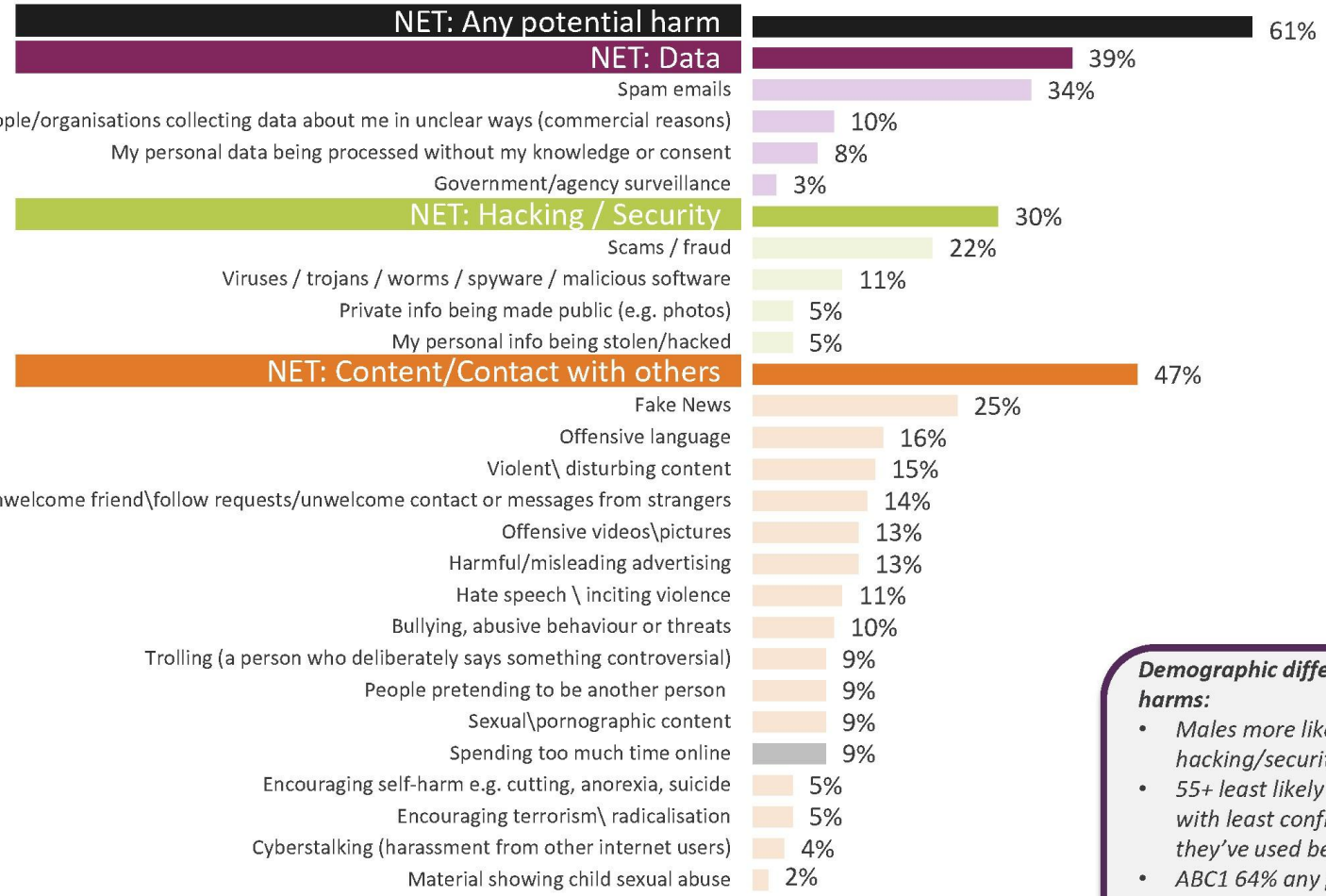


Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All adult internet users (2057) All children 12-15 (1002)

INQ000615301_0082

Spam emails, fake news and scams/fraud are the most likely potential online harms to be experienced by adults

Potential online harm experienced



37% answered "none of these" and 1% answered 'don't know'.

In 2019, the question asked users "Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months?" (These things were not necessarily classified by respondents as harmful…)

(In 2018, the question was somewhat different: "Which, if any, of the following **harmful things** have you experienced on the internet?")

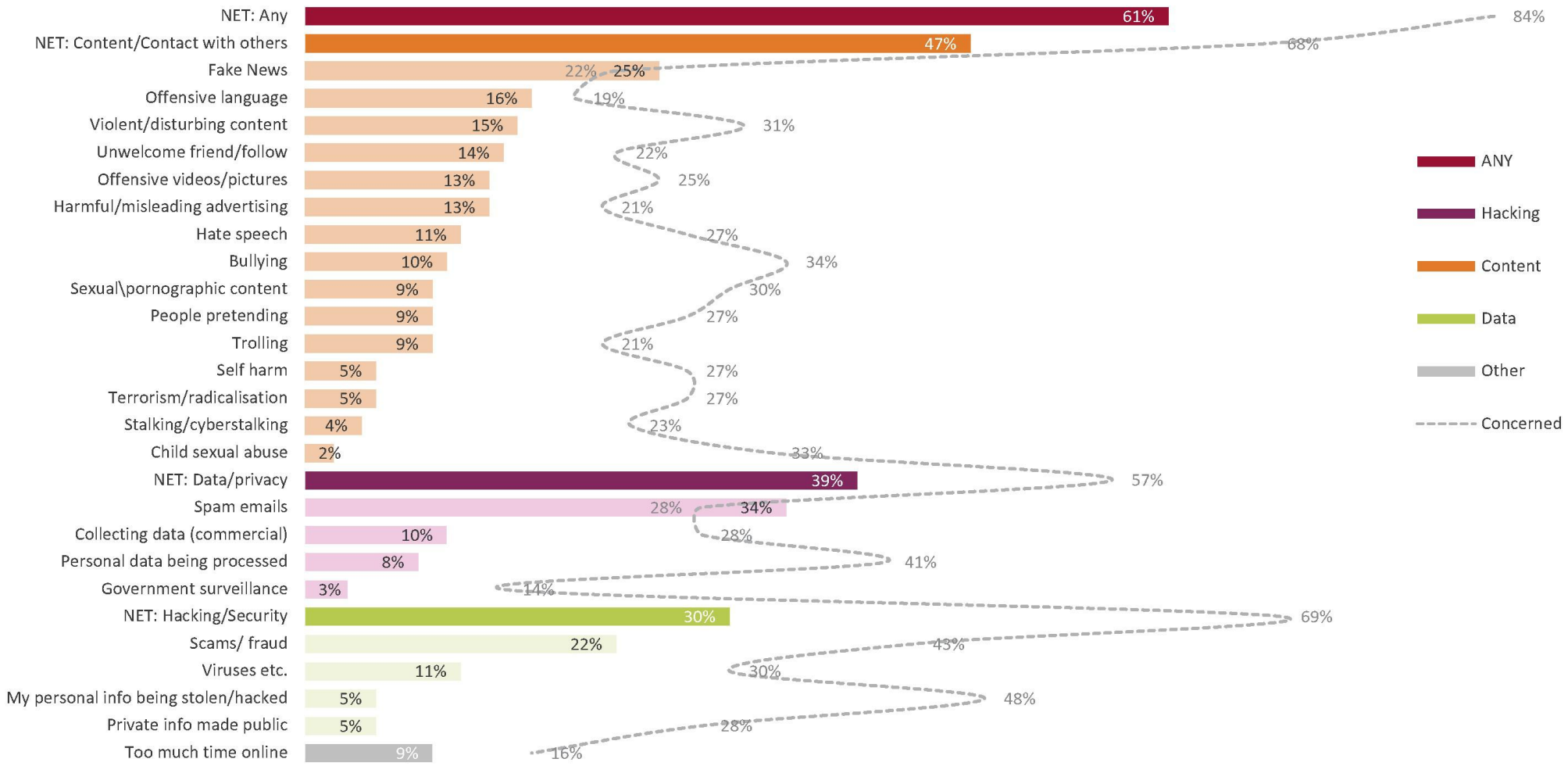
Demographic difference among adults' experience of online harms:

- *Males more likely than females any potential harms around hacking/security (33% vs. 28%)*
- *55+ least likely any potential harm (49% vs. 61% total) along with least confident (41%) and those who only used sites/apps they've used before (56%)*
- *ABC1 64% any potential harm vs. 57% C2DE*
- *children in HH 68% any potential harm vs. 58% no children in HH*

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All adult internet users (2057)
NB Further analysis of the reported sources of experience suggest that the proportion claiming to have seen material showing child sexual abuse is likely to be over-stated, and may include, for example, news reports about the issue. NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Fake news and spam emails are the only potential harms where a greater proportion of respondents have experienced them than are concerned about them

Experience vs. general concern among adults (prompted)



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

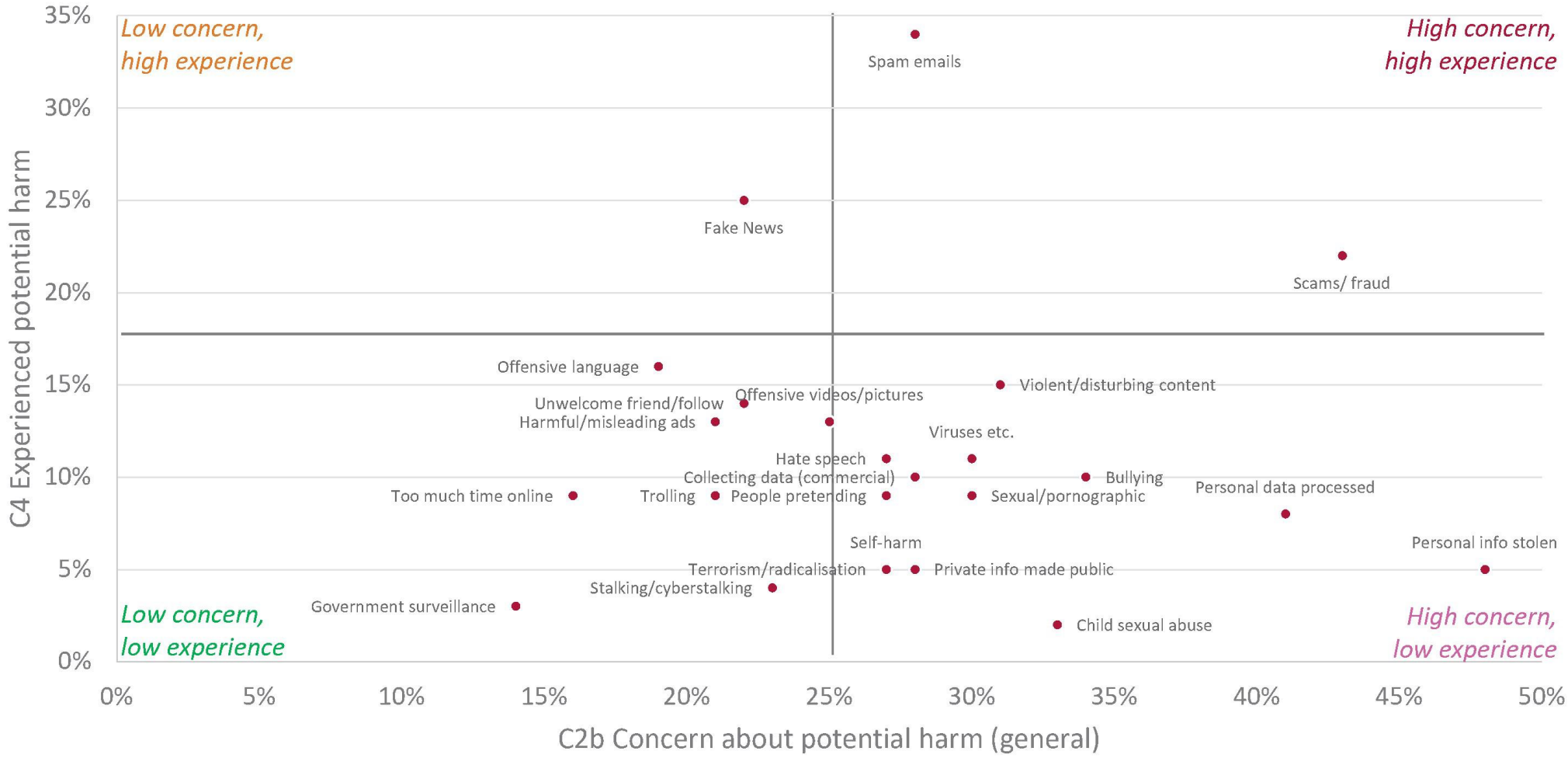
Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally? C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Spam emails and scams/fraud both have relatively high levels of experience and concern

Relationship between concern (general) and actual experience of potential harm among adults



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

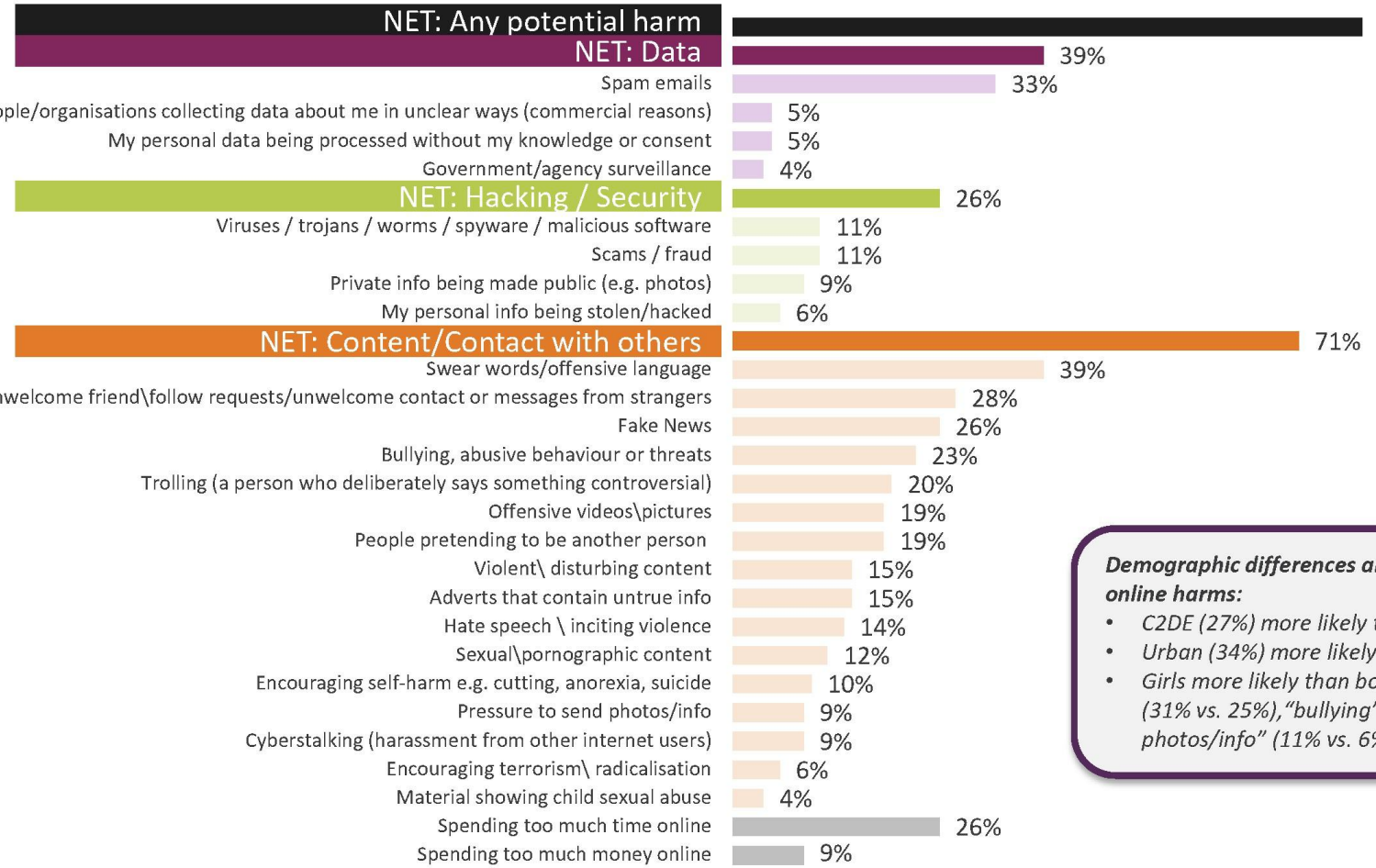
Question: C2b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. PROMPTED C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Offensive language is the most common potential harm that is experienced by 12-15 year olds, followed by spam emails, unwelcome friend requests and fake news. Just under a quarter have come across bullying

Potential online harms experienced by 12-15 year olds



In 2019, the question asked users "Which, if any, of the following things have you experienced or seen on the internet in the last 12 months?" (These things were not necessarily classified by respondents as harmful…)

Demographic differences among children who have experienced online harms:

- *C2DE (27%) more likely to say "bullying" than ABC1 (19%)*
- *Urban (34%) more likely to say "spam email" than Rural (25%)*
- *Girls more likely than boys to say "unwelcome friend/follow" (31% vs. 25%), "bullying" (26% vs. 19%) or "pressure to send photos/info" (11% vs. 6%)*

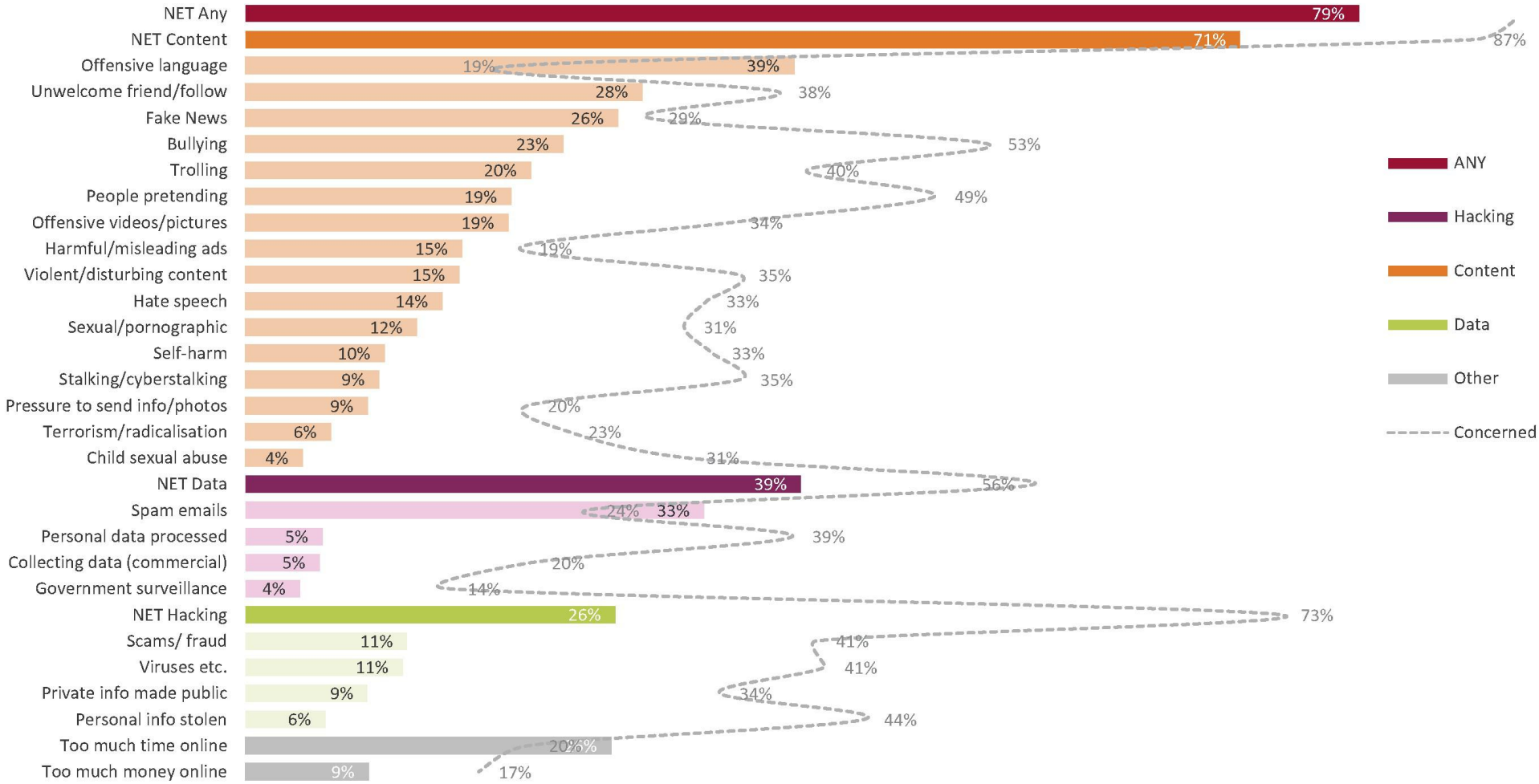
19% answered "none of these" and 1% answered 'don't know'.

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you experienced or seen on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All children 12-15 (1001)
NB Further analysis of the reported sources of experience suggest that the proportion claiming to have seen material showing child sexual abuse is likely to be over-stated, and may include, for example, news reports about the issue. NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

INQ000615301_0086

Four in ten children have experienced offensive language online in the last 12 months, significantly more than the proportion that are concerned about it

Experience vs. concern among children aged 12-15 (prompted)



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

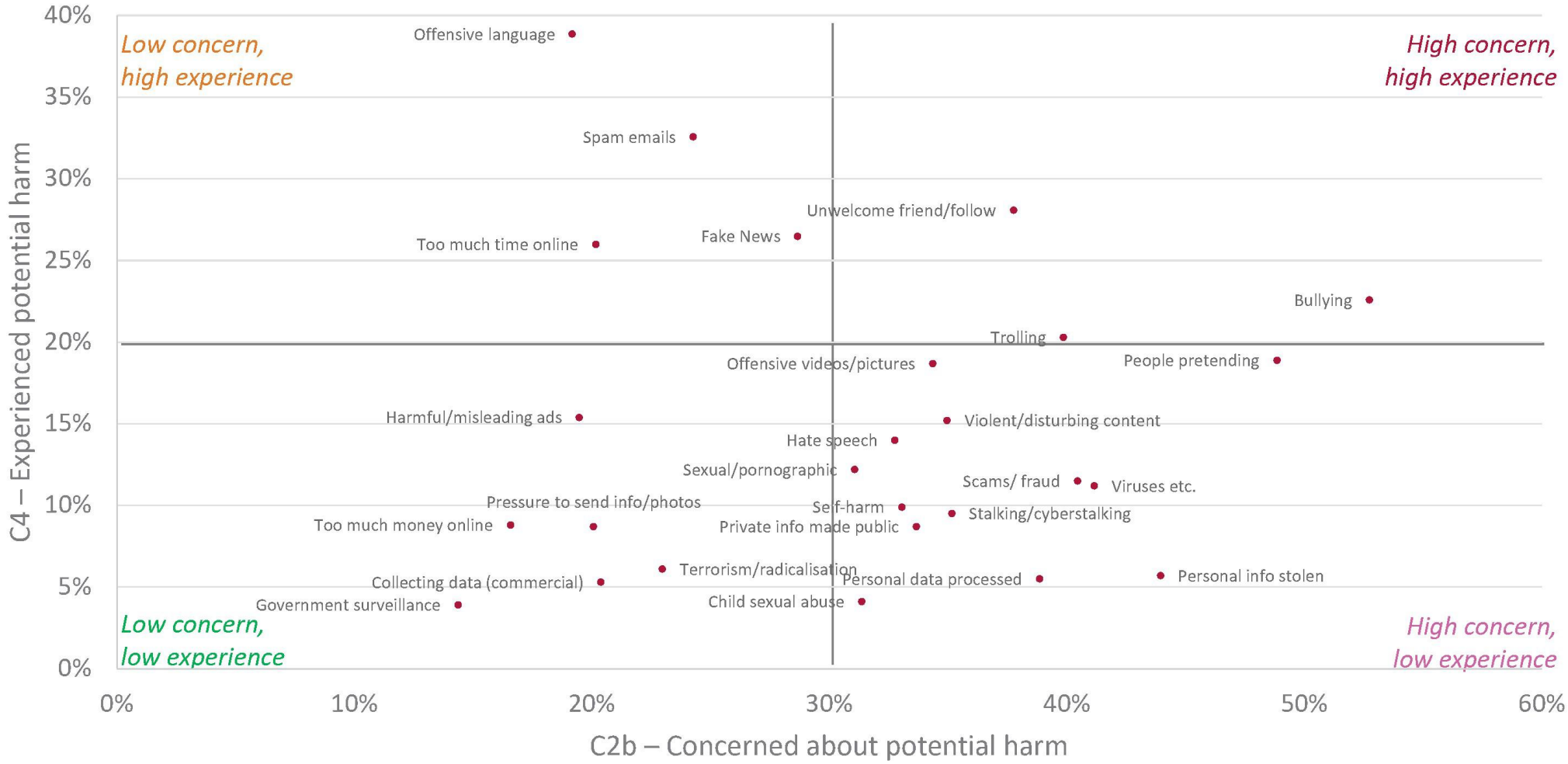
Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All children (1002)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Unwelcome friend requests, bullying and trolling are all relatively frequently experienced and are of high concern amongst 12-15 year olds

Relationship between concern and actual experience of potential harm



Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

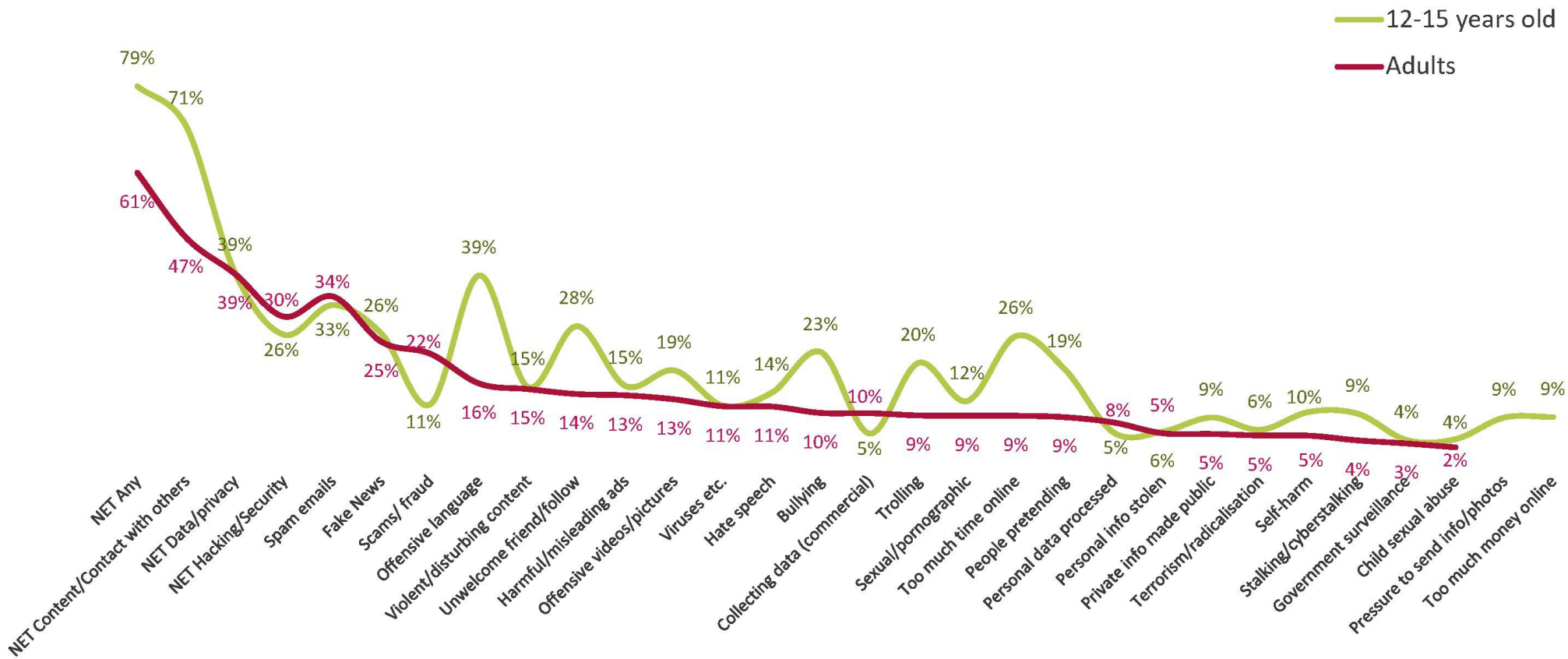
Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

12-15 year olds are significantly more likely to have experienced any potential harms than adults

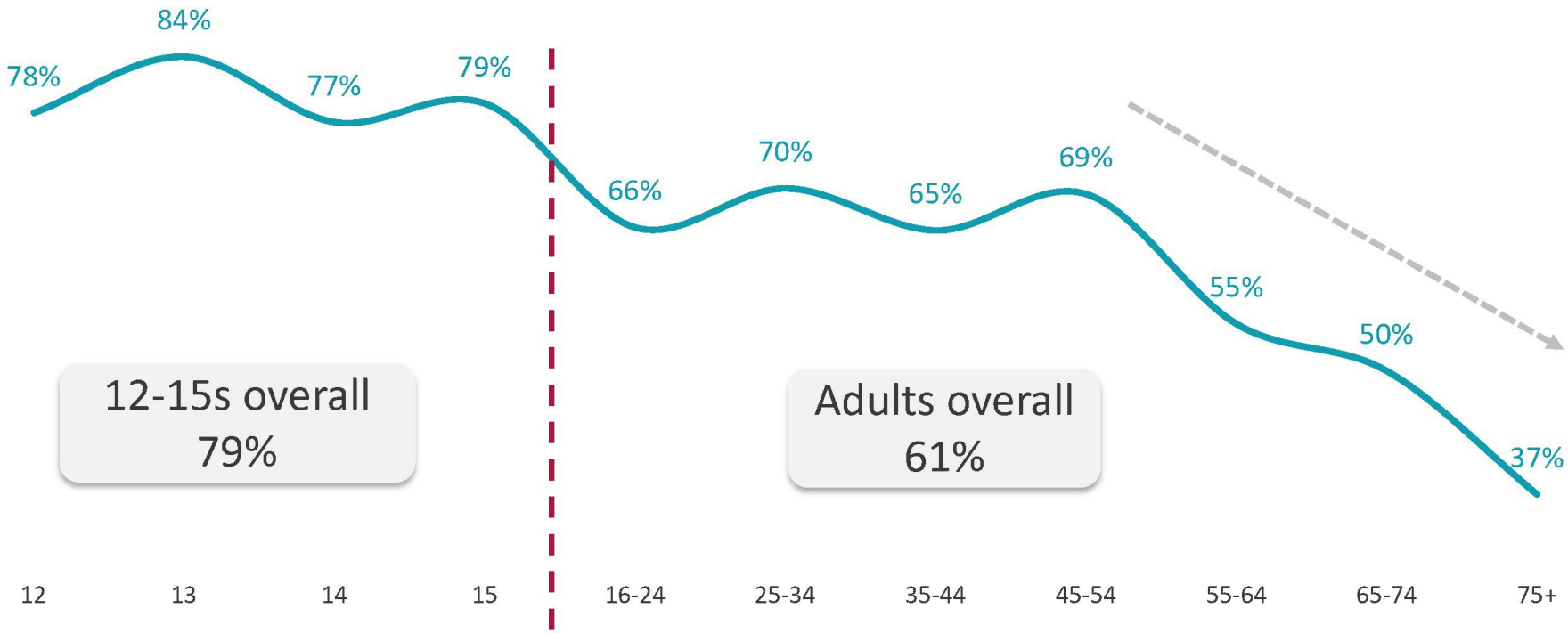
Potential harms Experienced – Adults vs children



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months?
Base: All adult internet users (2057) All children 12-15 (1001)
NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

12-15 year olds are significantly more likely to have experienced a potential harm than adults. The incidence of experiencing potential harm quickly drops after the age of 55

Experienced **any potential harm** in the last year



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.

Base: All adult internet users (2057) All children 12-15 (1001)

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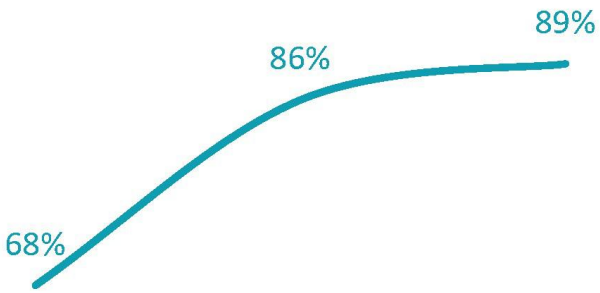
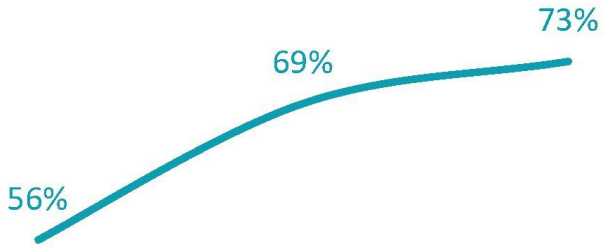
Those using lots of new websites or apps in the last month are significantly more likely to have experienced a potential harm – across both 12-15 year olds and adults

Experienced **any potential harm** in the last year



12-15s overall
79%

Do not use any new websites/apps | Used 1-2 new websites/apps in past month | Used lots new websites/apps in past month



Adults overall
61%

Do not use any new websites/apps | Used 1-2 new websites/apps in past month | Used lots new sites/apps in past month

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.

B3) In the last month, when you have gone online, have you…

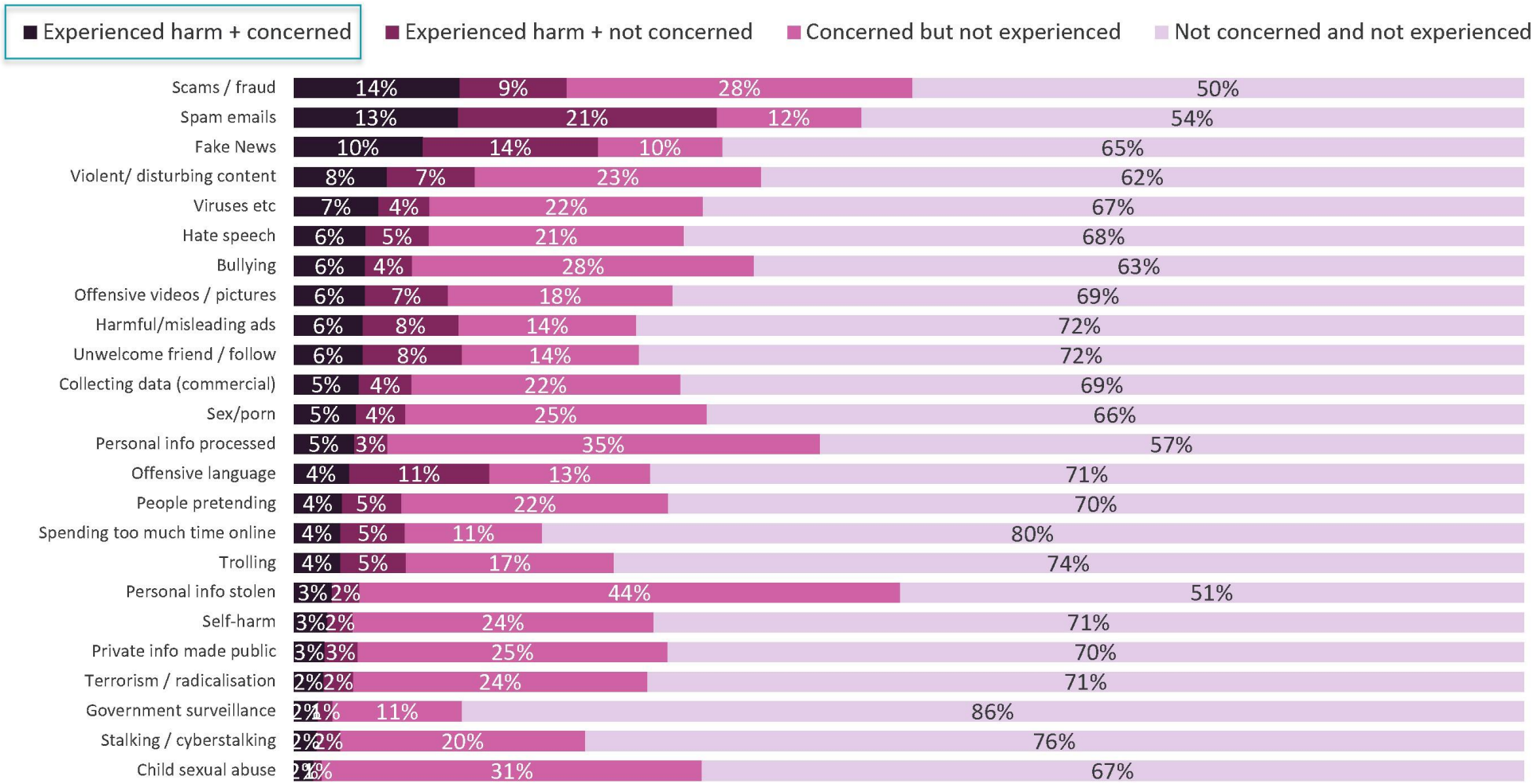
Base: All adult internet users (2057) All children 12-15 (1001)

INQ000615301_0091

Section 2 continued
Reported experience of potential harms
B) Frequency and impact of experiences

Scams, spam and fake news are the most likely to have been experienced and to be concerned about

Incidence of experiencing/being concerned about potential online harms among adults



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each. C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months?

Base: All adult internet users (2057) NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Going online too much is the most frequently reported type of potential harm, then offensive language, spam and fake news.

Frequency of experiencing harm when using the internet, among adults

	(All experienced & concerned)	DK/REF	Less often	Monthly/most months	Weekly/most weeks	Daily/most days	*% at least weekly*	*% at least monthly*
4%	Too much time online (n=61*)	6%	7%	10%	32%	46%	78%	87%
4%	Offensive language (n=89*)	4%	19%	16%	30%	31%	61%	77%
13%	Spam emails (n=247)	4%	22%	15%	22%	38%	60%	75%
10%	Fake News (n=184)	7%	19%	19%	23%	32%	55%	74%
6%	Harmful/misleading ads (n=107)	7%	27%	21%	29%	16%	45%	66%
6%	Offensive videos/pictures (n=119)	3%	37%	21%	26%	13%	39%	60%
5%	Collecting data (commercial) (n=97*)	14%	32%	18%	18%	17%	35%	53%
6%	Bullying (n=108)	8%	43%	15%	13%	21%	34%	49%
8%	Violent/disturbing content (n=155)	7%	31%	28%	27%	6%	34%	62%
5%	Sexual/pornographic (n=98*)	6%	44%	17%	27%	6%	33%	50%
4%	Trolling (n=73*)	11%	34%	22%	17%	16%	33%	55%
6%	Hate speech (n=103)	14%	44%	14%	20%	8%	28%	43%
6%	Unwelcome friend/follow (n=118)	6%	40%	28%	16%	10%	26%	54%
2%	Government surveillance (n=29*)	50%	16%	11%	11%	11%	23%	34%
5%	Personal data processed (n=85*)	21%	39%	19%	8%	13%	21%	39%
2%	Stalking/cyberstalking (n=40*)	17%	52%	11%	15%	5%	20%	31%
4%	People pretending (n=81*)	17%	48%	15%	11%	9%	20%	35%
14%	Scams/ fraud (n=286)	7%	54%	19%	13%	7%	20%	39%
2%	Terrorism/radicalisation (n=47*)	15%	46%	24%	10%	5%	15%	39%
3%	Self-harm (n=52*)	25%	46%	17%	8%	4%	13%	29%
7%	Viruses etc. (n=122)	15%	59%	14%	9%	3%	12%	26%
2%	Child sexual abuse (n=31*)	33%	42%	14%	9%	3%	11%	25%
3%	Private info made public (n=36*)	21%	57%	12%	5%	6%	11%	23%
3%	Personal info stolen (n=46*)	22%	75%	4%			0%	4%

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases on chart)

* Warning – low base size. NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Material showing child sexual abuse has the most severe impact on the small minority who reported having experienced it, along with the theft of personal information and material promoting self-harm

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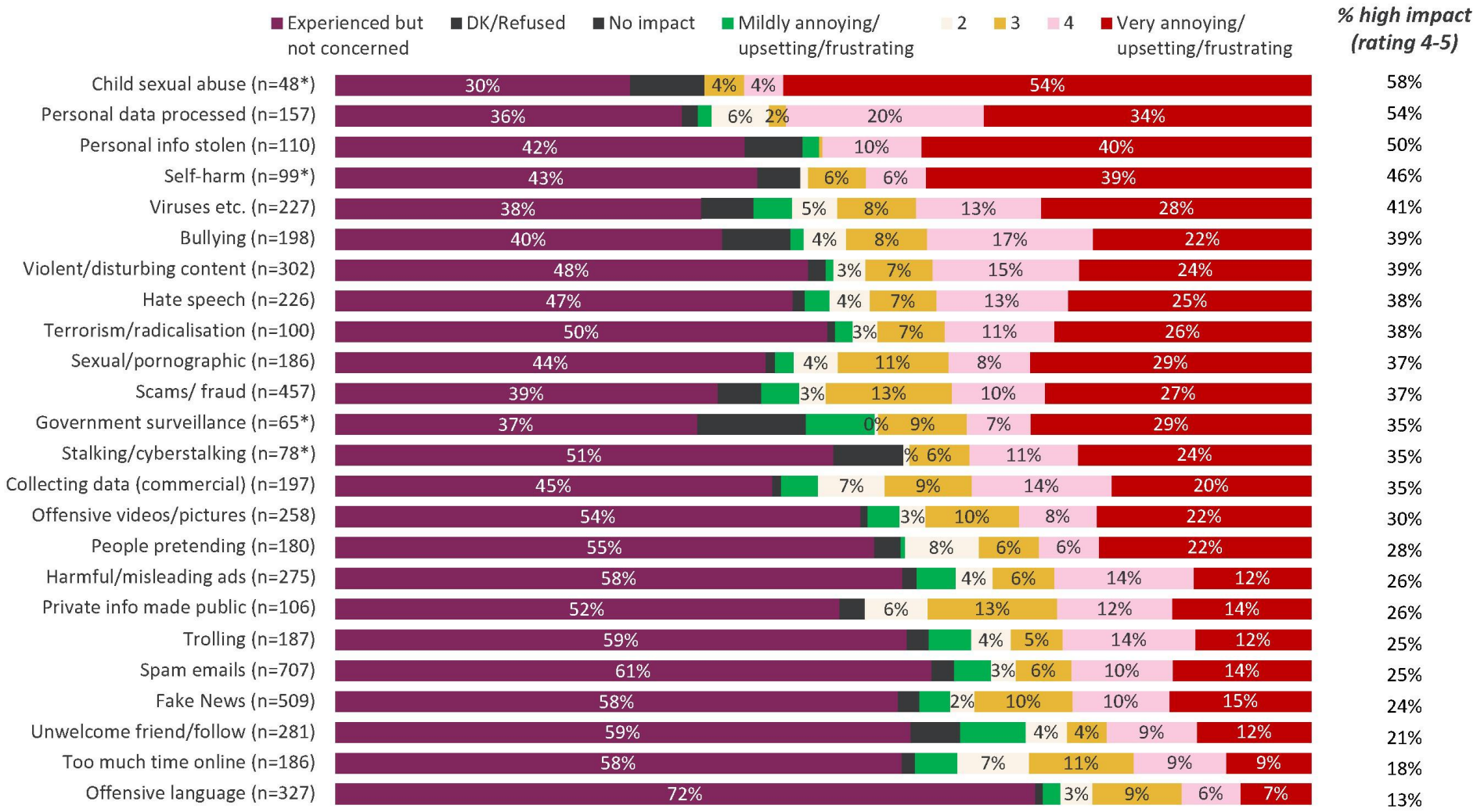
Level of impact experiences have had (among adults who have experienced harm)



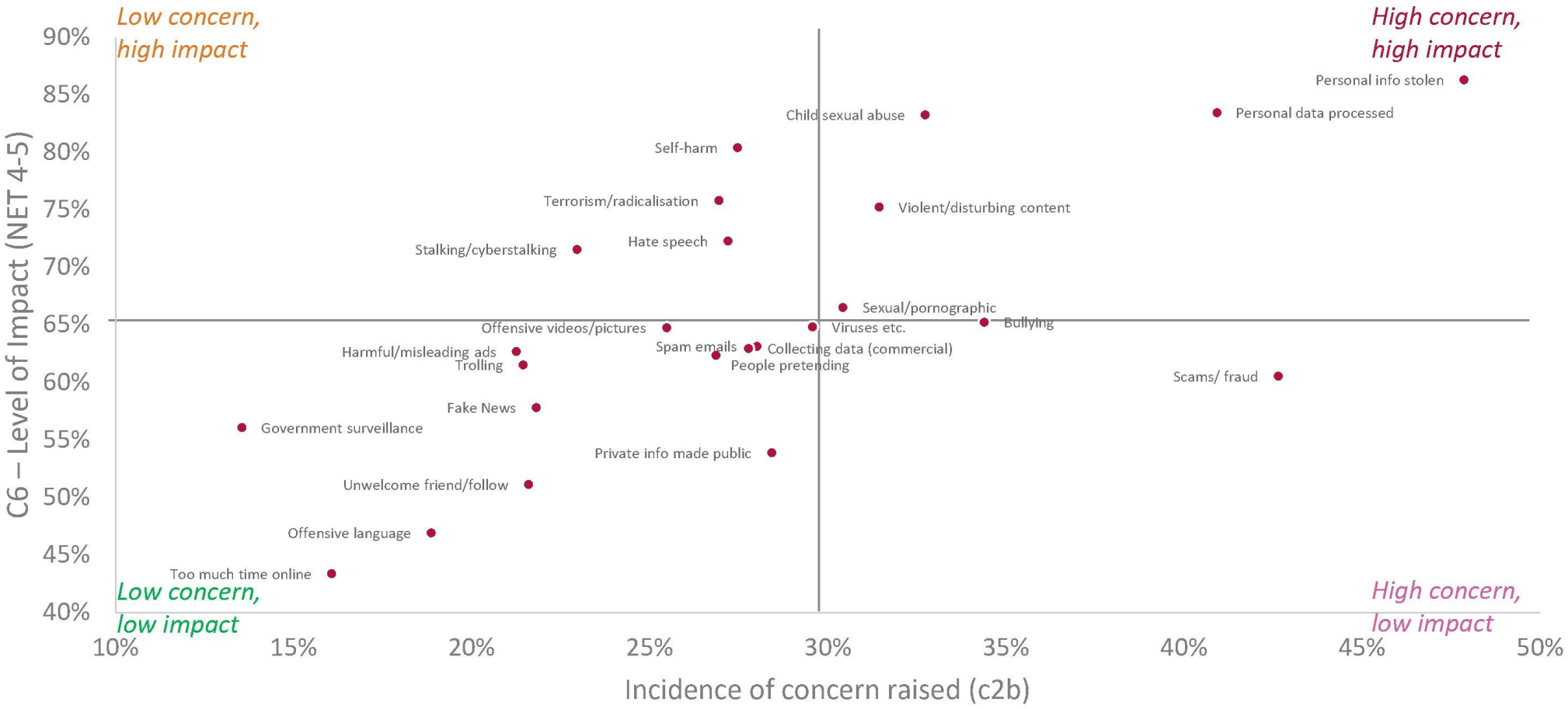
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced [potential harm] (bases shown on chart) * Warning – low base size, findings are indicative only.

Potential harms with the highest levels of concern tend to have the greatest impact upon those who have experienced them

Impact vs. Incidence of concern raised among adults



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

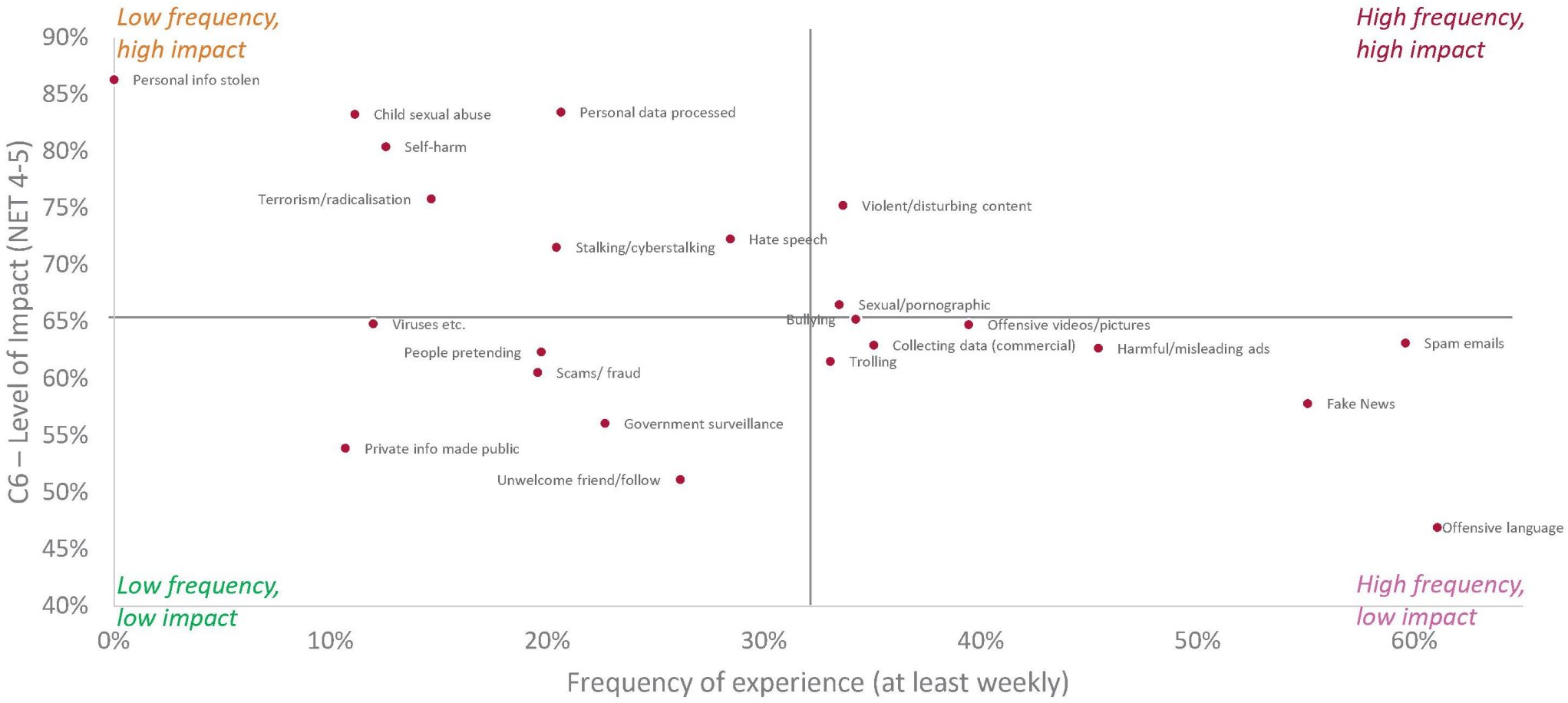
Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally? Base: All adult internet users (2057)

C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating.

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases vary)

Despite the high frequency of offensive language, the level of impact is lower than the other potential harms

Impact vs. Frequency of harms among adults



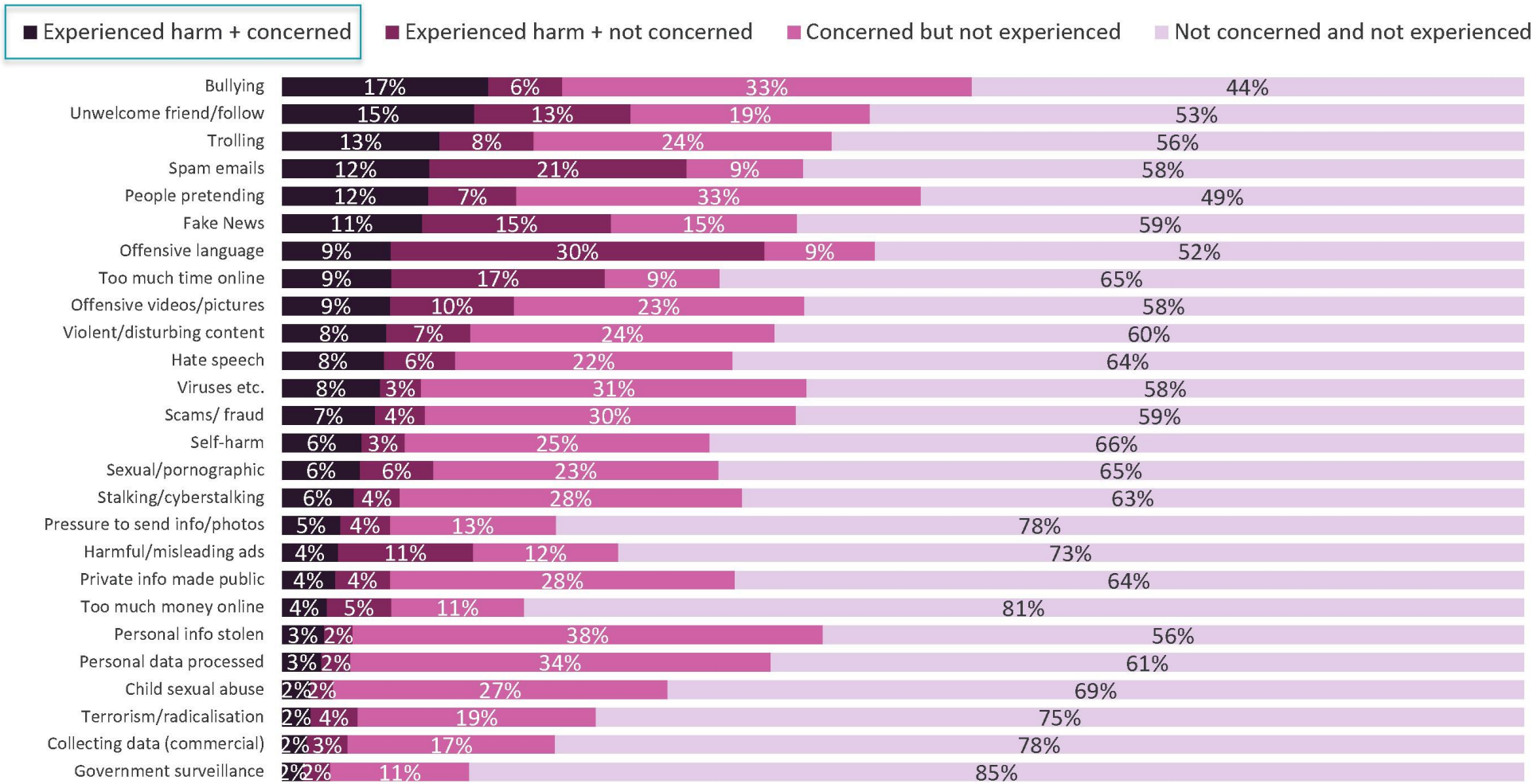
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet? C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating.

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases 73-286)

Bullying and unwelcome friend/follow requests are the most likely to have been experienced and concerned about by 12-15 year olds

Incidence of experiencing/being concerned about potential online harms among children aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

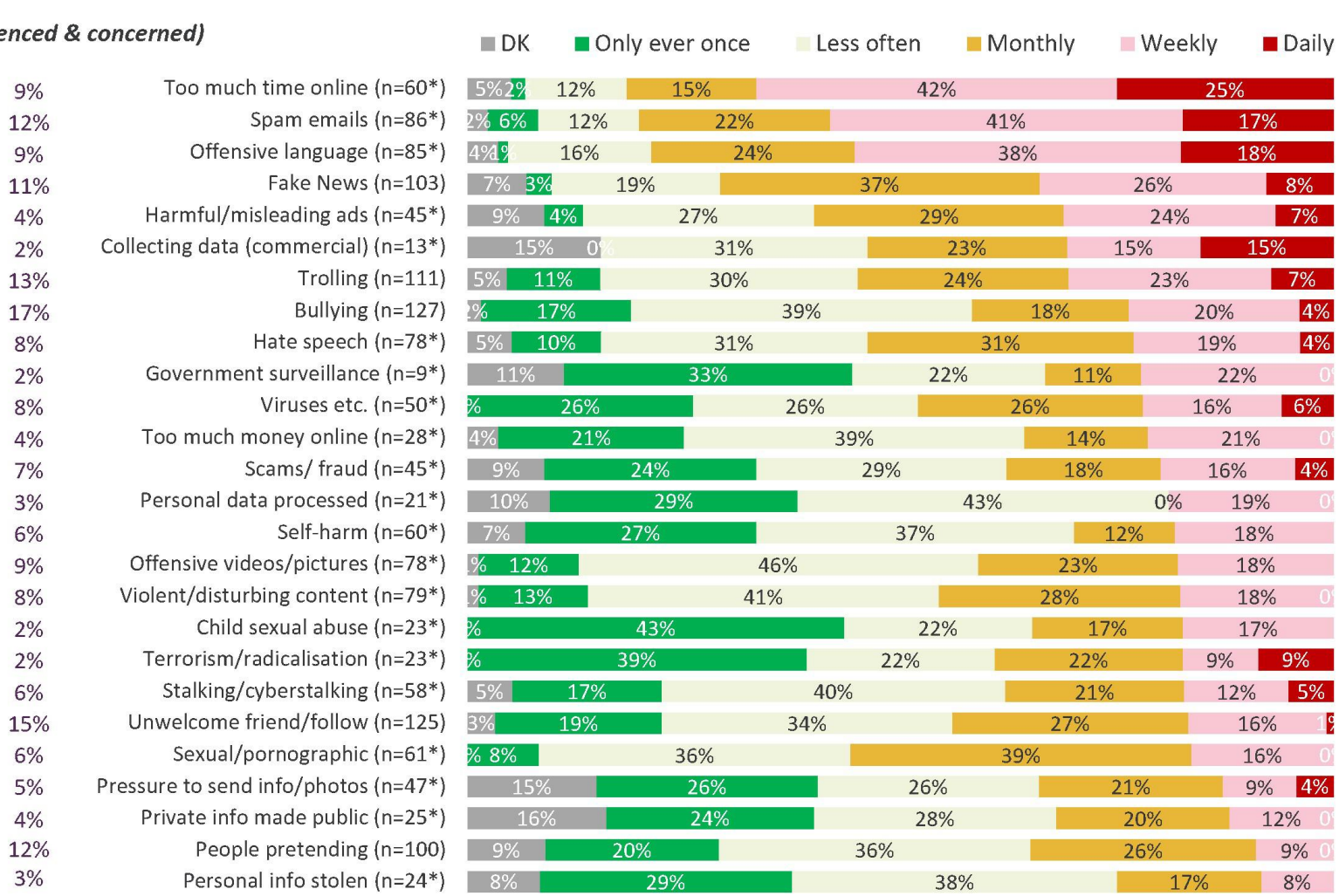
Question: C2b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each. C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months?

Base: All children 12-15 (1001). NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Frequency of experiencing potential harms is generally lower amongst 12-15 year olds than adults. Too much time online is the most commonly reported issue

Frequency of harm experienced when using the internet, among children aged 12-15

(All experienced & concerned)



		% at least weekly	% at least monthly
9%	Too much time online (n=60*)	67%	82%
12%	Spam emails (n=86*)	58%	80%
9%	Offensive language (n=85*)	55%	79%
11%	Fake News (n=103)	34%	71%
4%	Harmful/misleading ads (n=45*)	31%	60%
2%	Collecting data (commercial) (n=13*)	31%	54%
13%	Trolling (n=111)	31%	55%
17%	Bullying (n=127)	24%	42%
8%	Hate speech (n=78*)	23%	54%
2%	Government surveillance (n=9*)	22%	33%
8%	Viruses etc. (n=50*)	22%	48%
4%	Too much money online (n=28*)	21%	36%
7%	Scams/ fraud (n=45*)	20%	38%
3%	Personal data processed (n=21*)	19%	19%
6%	Self-harm (n=60*)	18%	30%
9%	Offensive videos/pictures (n=78*)	18%	41%
8%	Violent/disturbing content (n=79*)	18%	46%
2%	Child sexual abuse (n=23*)	17%	35%
2%	Terrorism/radicalisation (n=23*)	17%	39%
6%	Stalking/cyberstalking (n=58*)	17%	38%
15%	Unwelcome friend/follow (n=125)	17%	44%
6%	Sexual/pornographic (n=61*)	16%	56%
5%	Pressure to send info/photos (n=47*)	13%	34%
4%	Private info made public (n=25*)	12%	32%
12%	People pretending (n=100)	9%	35%
3%	Personal info stolen (n=24*)	8%	25%

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet?

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases on chart) * Warning – low base size

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Bullying is the potential harm that impacts 12-15 year olds the most, along with content showing self-harm and, for the small minority who reported experiencing it, child sexual abuse.

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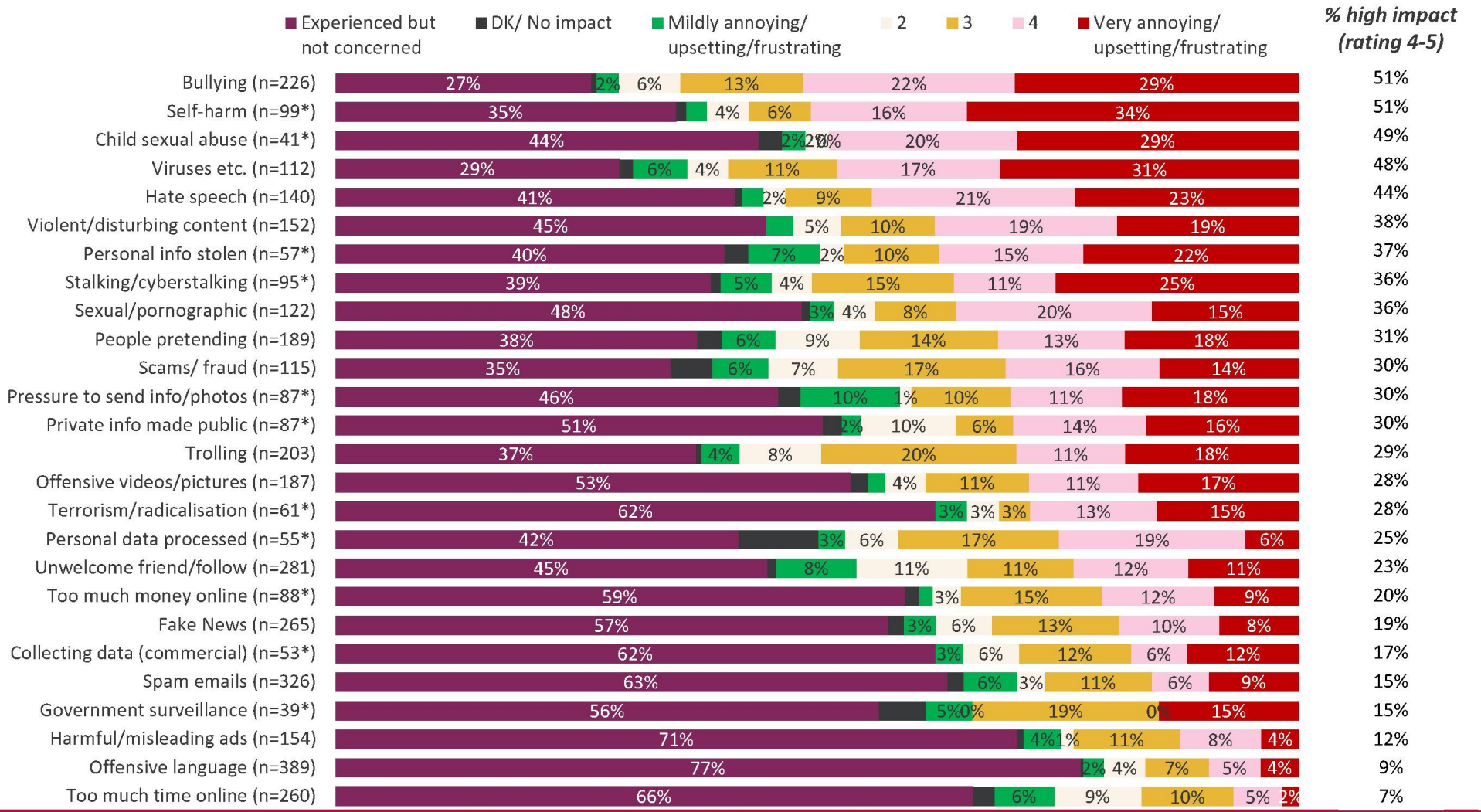
Level of impact experiences have had (among children aged 12-15 who have experienced harm)



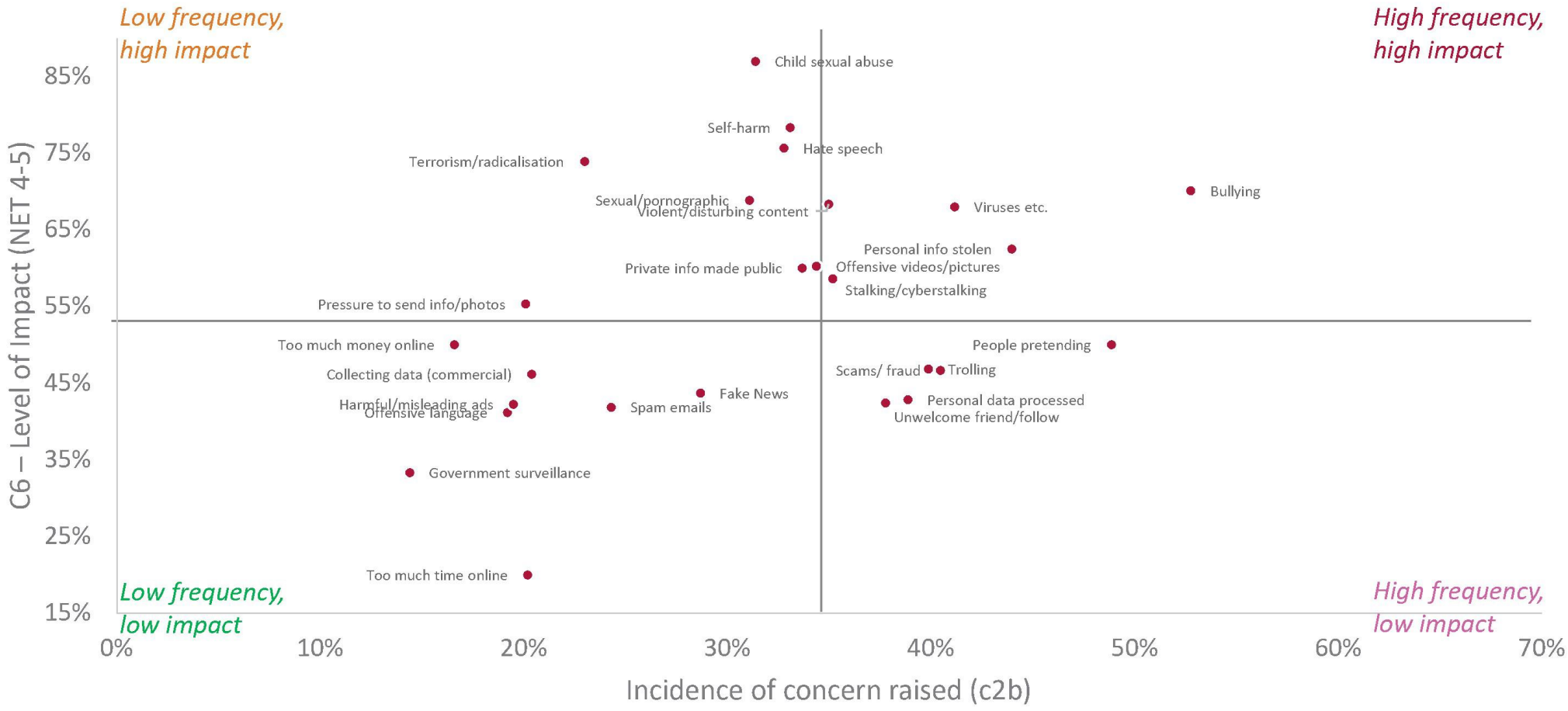
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced [potential harm] (bases 78-127)

Compared to adults, the impact of each concern among 12-15s is not as strongly correlated with the frequency of it being raised. Online bullying has a relatively high impact and frequency

Impact vs. Incidence of concern raised, among children aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases vary). NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Despite the low frequency of experience, material showing child sexual abuse and self-harm have the greatest level of impact

Impact vs. Frequency of harm experienced, among children aged 12-15

Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet? C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases vary)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

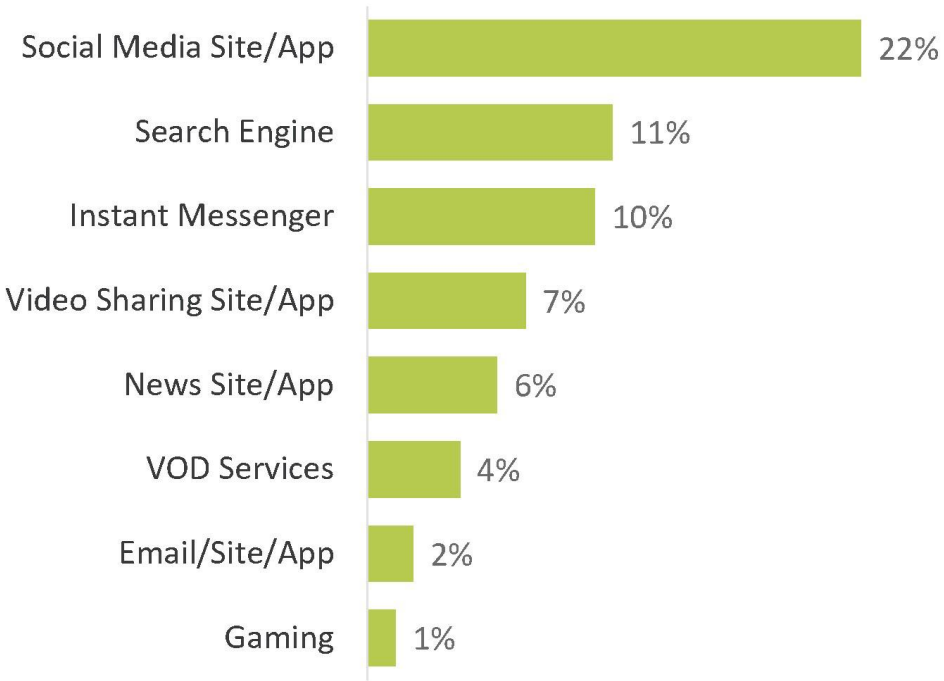
Section 3
Sources of potential online harm

Across adults and 12-15 year olds, social media sites are the most commonly cited sources of potential online harm

Sources of potential online harm among adults and children aged 12-15

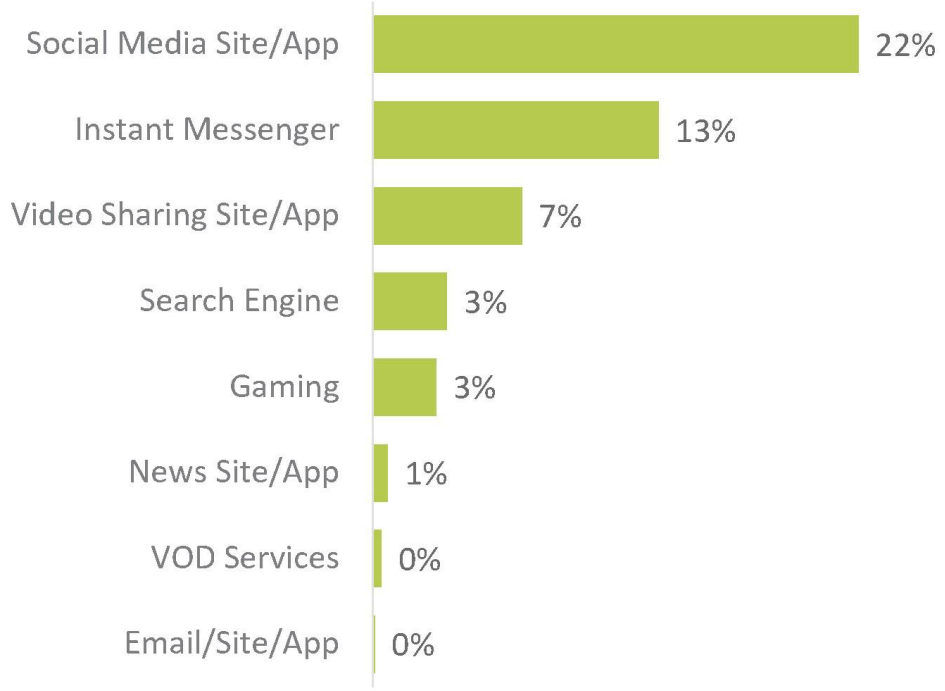
61%

Of adults have **experienced** potential online harms in the last 12 months



79%

Of children (12-15) **experienced** potential online harms in the last 12 months



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (potential harm)?

Base: All adult internet users (2057) All 12-15s (1001)

INQ000615301_0104

Adults experience online harms via a range of sources, but social media sites/apps are the most commonly identified for most types of potential harms

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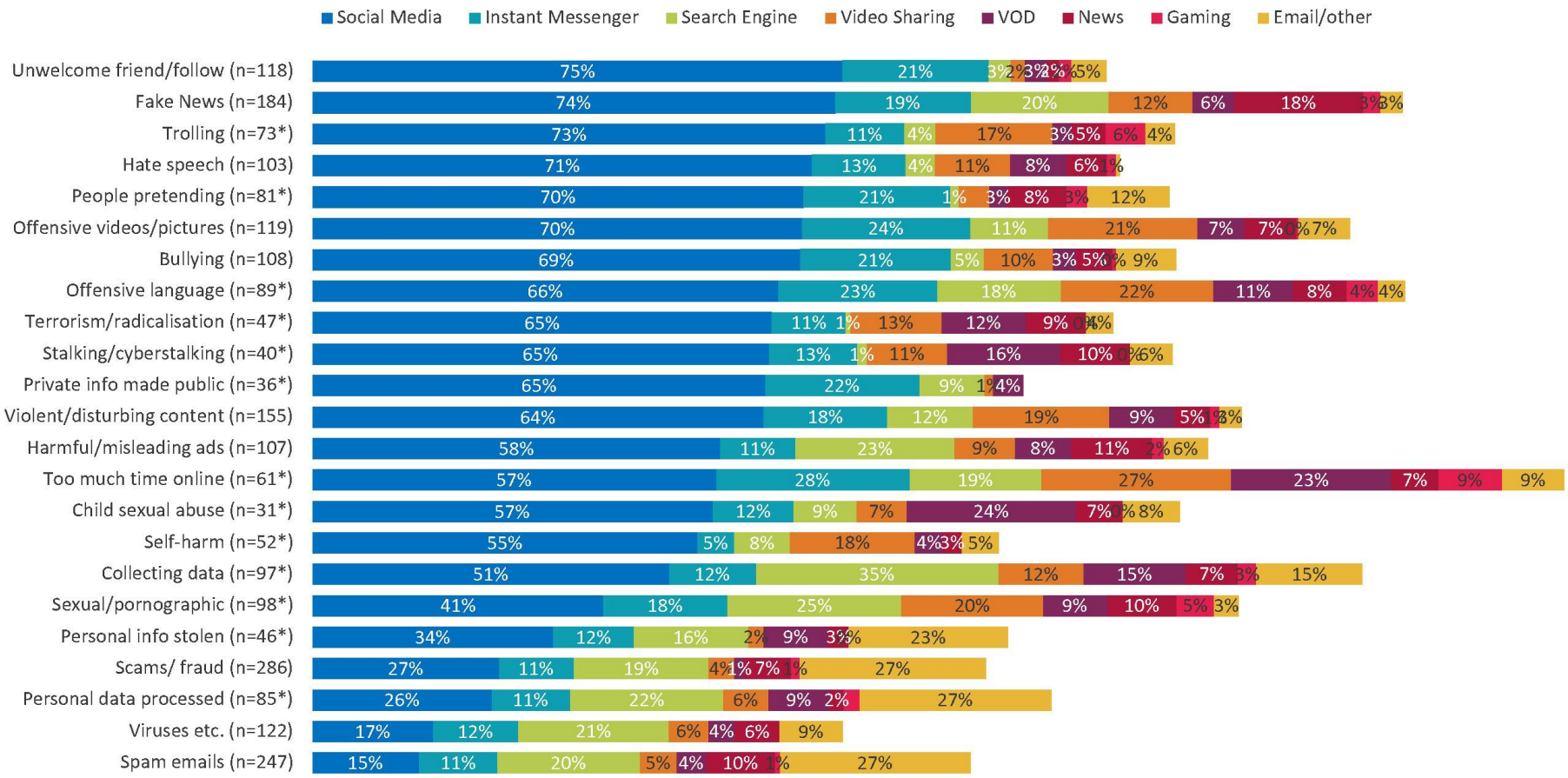
Places where potential online harm was experienced, among adults who have experienced harm and are concerned about harm



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

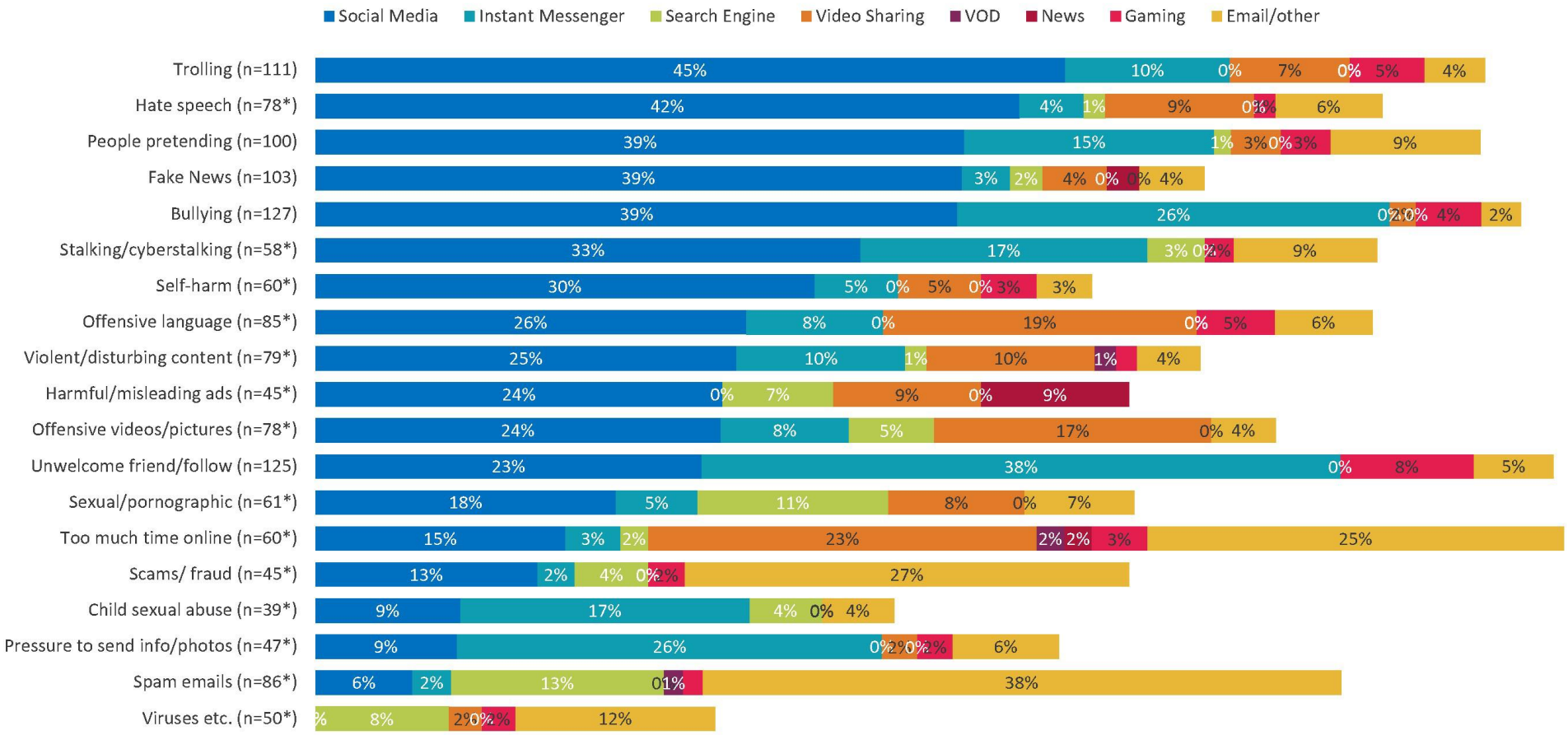
Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (potential harm)?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases 73-286)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms. NB. Regarding child sexual abuse, some respondents may have been thinking about programmes on covering this topic such as documentaries or dramas. NB. Smaller "other" sources, harms with a base size under 30 and DK are not shown.

The same is true for 12-15 year olds, with social media sites/ apps being the most common source for most of the potential harms

Places where potential online harm was experienced, among children aged 12-15 who have experienced harm and are concerned about harm



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (potential harm)?

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases 78-127)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms. NB. Smaller "other" sources, harms with a base size under 30 and DK are not shown.

Facebook is the most frequently mentioned source for most of the potential harms in our research

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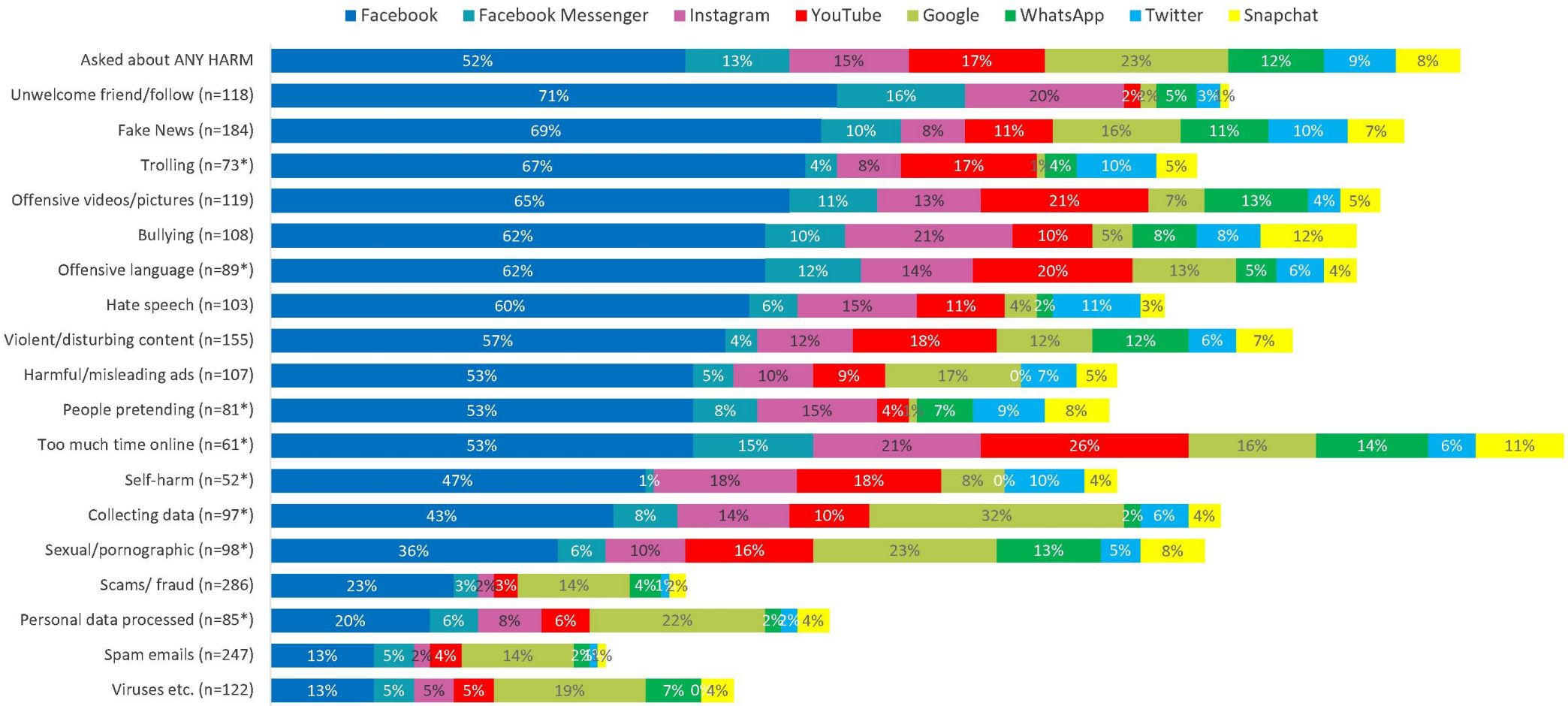
Places where potential online harm was experienced, among adults who have experienced harm and are concerned about harm



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

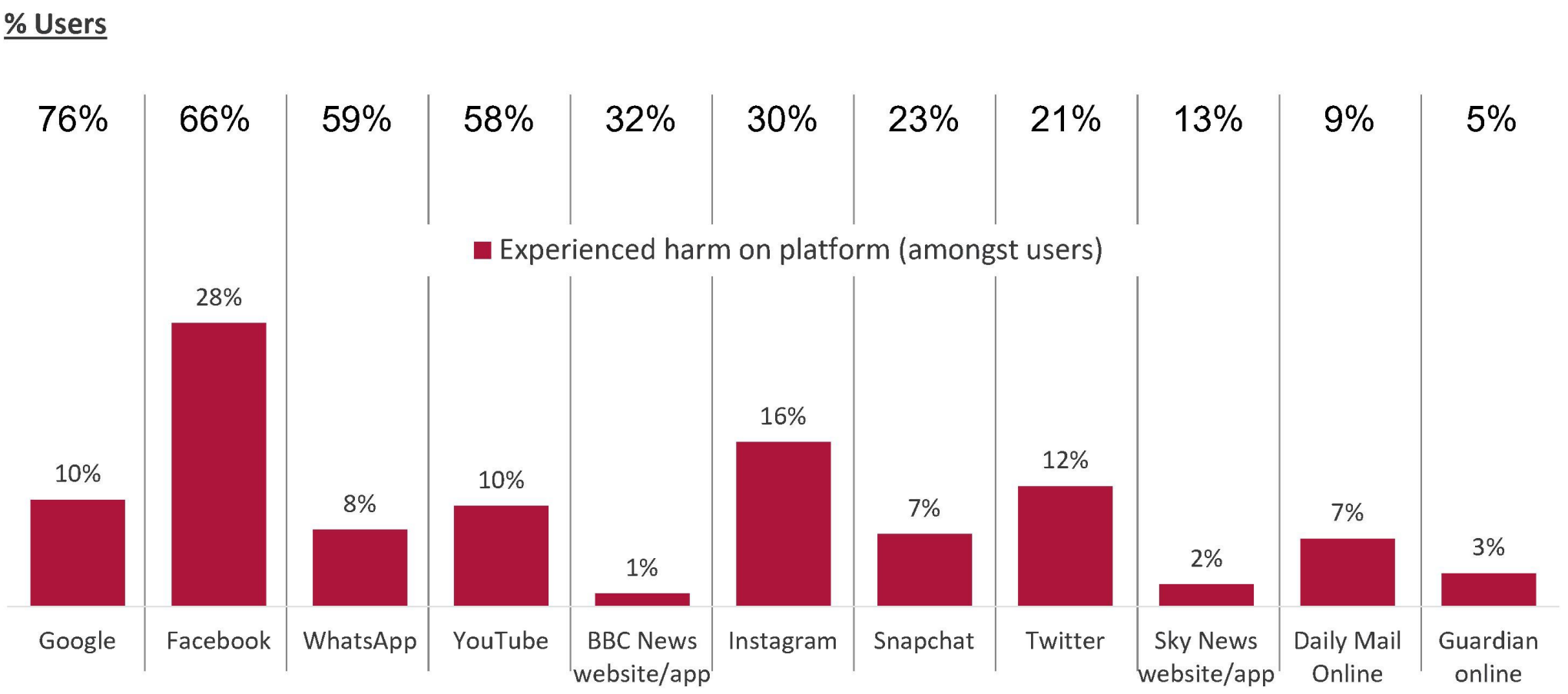
Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (potential harm)?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases vary)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms. NB. Smaller "other" sources, harms with a base size under 50 and DK are not shown.

Just over a quarter (28%) of Facebook users claim to have experienced a potential online harm while using Facebook

Percentage of adults who have experienced potential harm on a platform they use



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

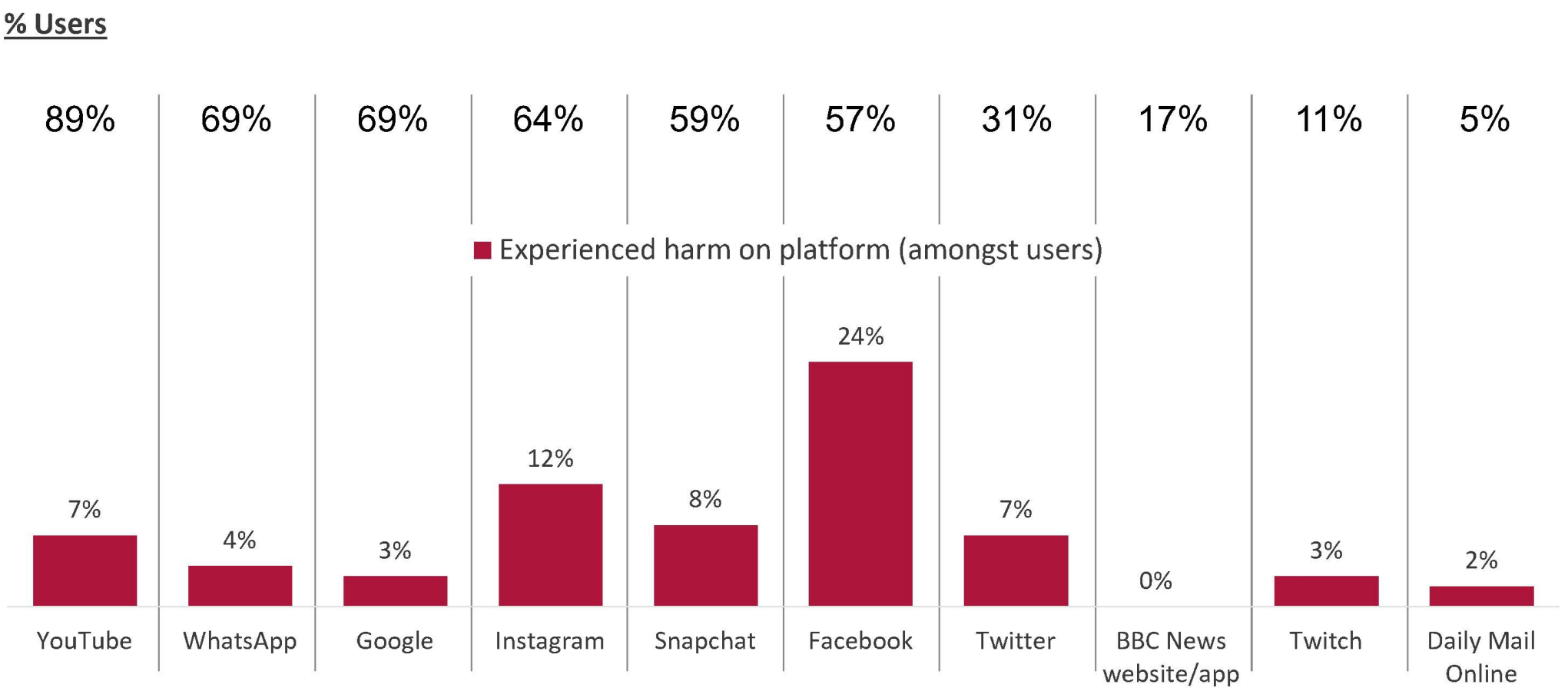
Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (potential harm)?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases 73-286)

E4. Which, if any, of the following sites or apps do you use nowadays? Base: All adult internet users (2005)

A quarter (24%) of 12-15 year olds using Facebook claim they have experienced at least one potential harm when using the platform

Percentage of children aged 12-15 who have experienced potential harm on a platform they use



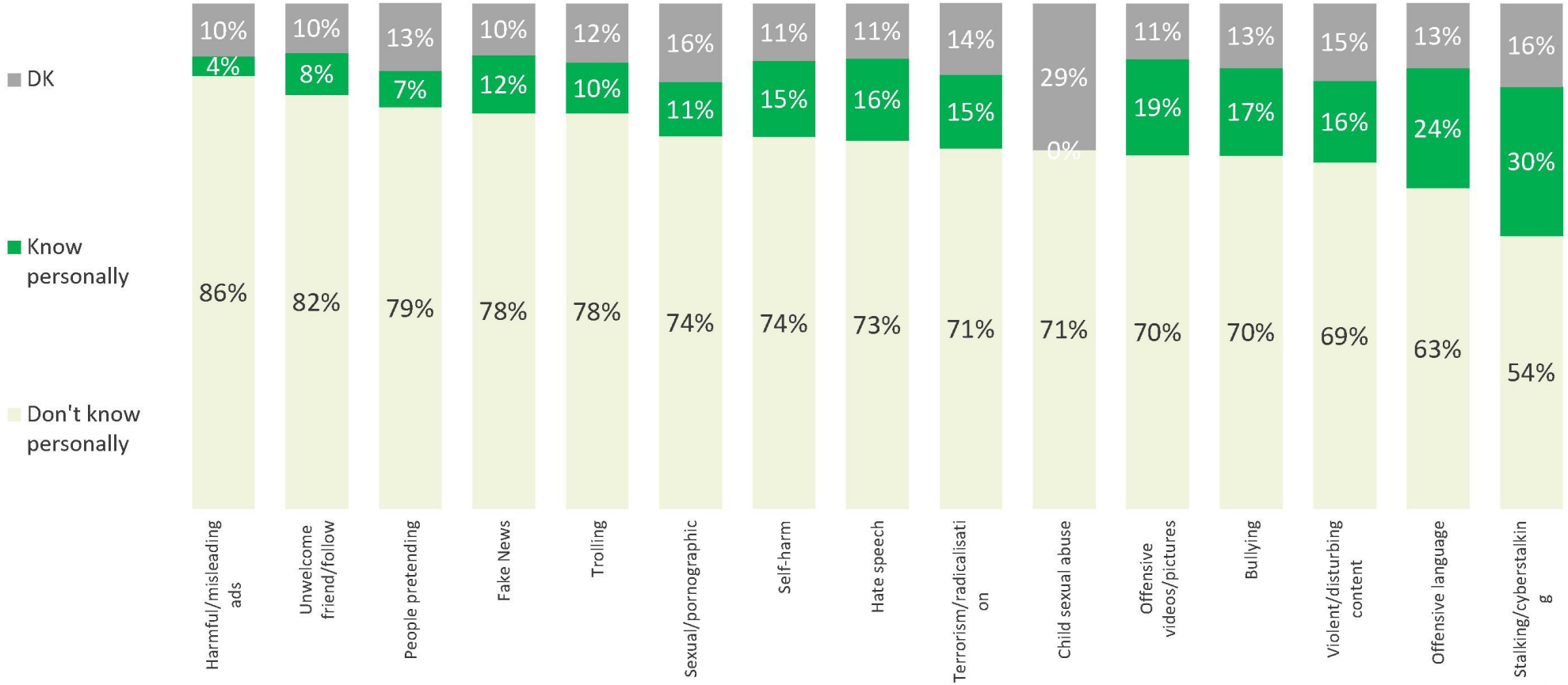
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (potential harm)?

B6. Which, if any, of the following sites or apps do you use nowadays? Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

All most recent potential online harms experienced by adults are most likely to be from someone they don't know personally

Individual responsible for potential harm experienced, among adults who have experienced harm and are concerned about harm



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

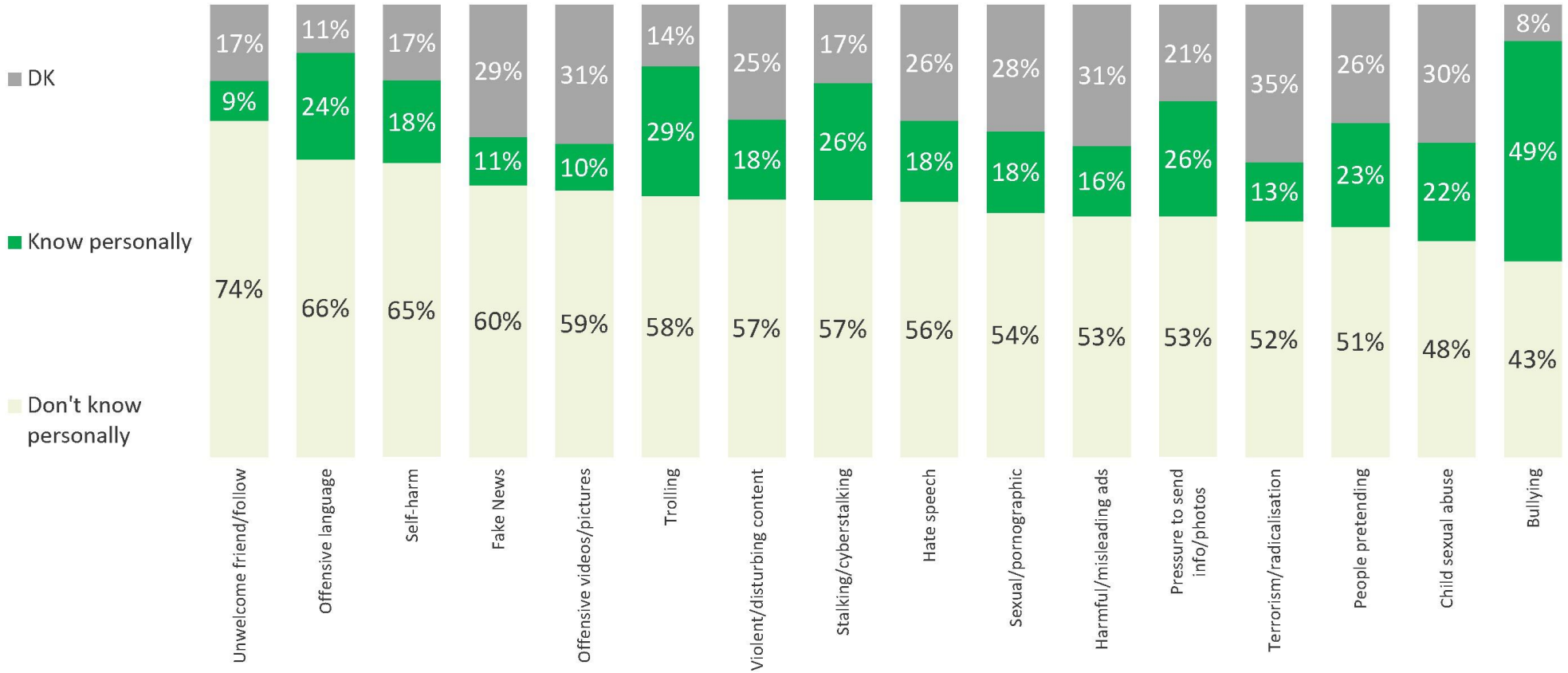
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? C8) And did your most recent experience of [INSERT CODE FROM C4] come from someone you know personally or someone you don't know personally?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases 73-286)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Almost all most recent potential online harms experienced by children are most likely to be from someone they don't know personally

Individual responsible for potential harm experienced, among children aged 12-15 who have experienced harm and are concerned about harm



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? C8) And did your most recent experience of [INSERT CODE FROM C4] come from someone you know personally or someone you don't know personally?

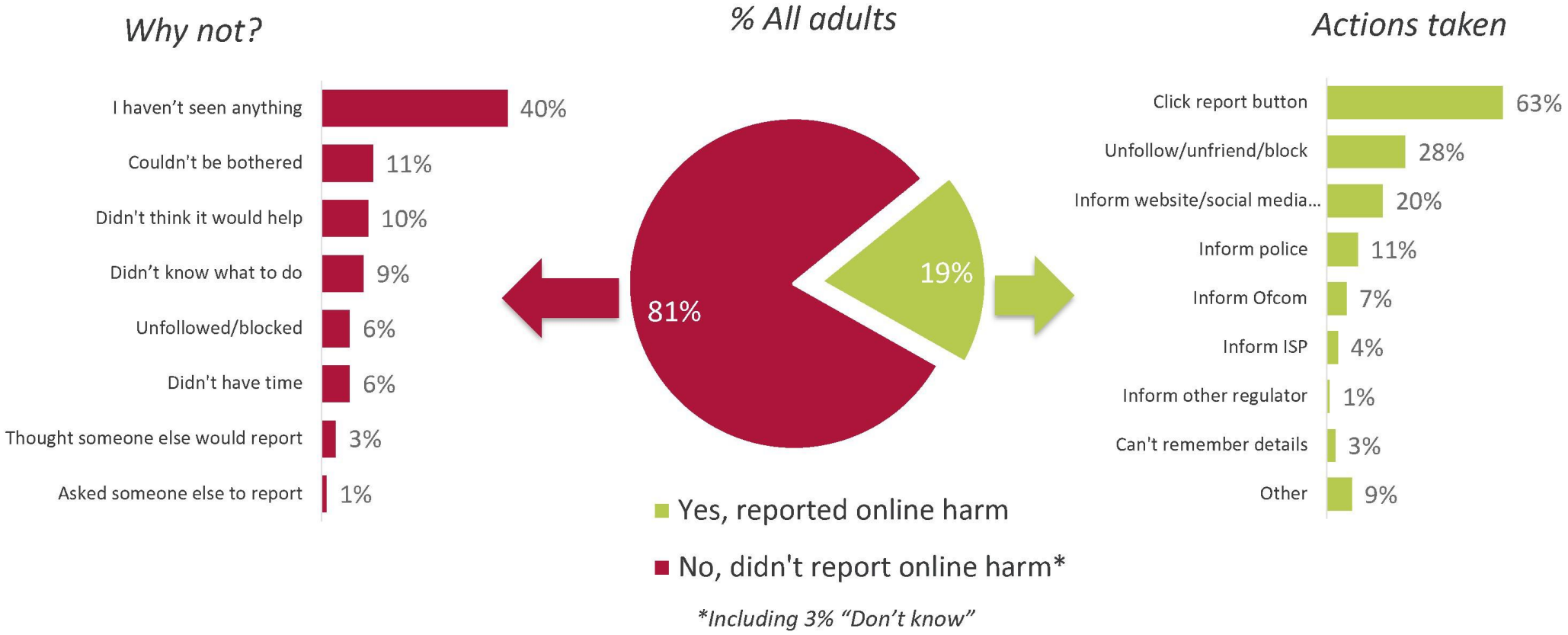
Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about [potential harm] (bases 78-127)

NB. Refer to page 16-17 for full descriptions of concerns/potential harms

Section 4
Reporting potentially harmful online experiences

A fifth (19%) of adults have taken action to report potentially harmful content they have seen online, with the majority of these (63%) clicking the report button

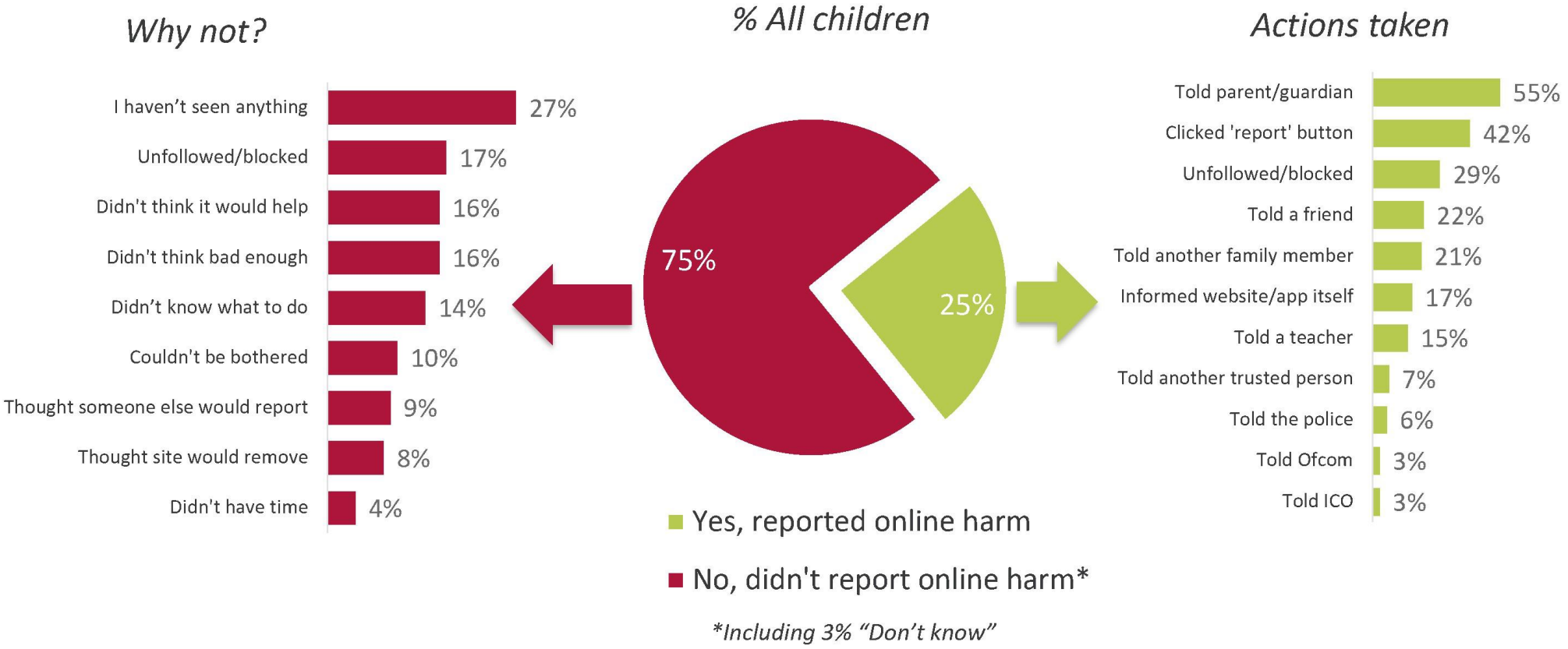
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D2) What did you do? D3) Why haven't you reported anything that you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All adult internet users (2057), those who reported (376), those who have not reported (1631)

A quarter of 12-15 year olds have taken action to report potentially harmful content they have seen online. The most likely actions are to tell a parent/ guardian followed by clicking the report button

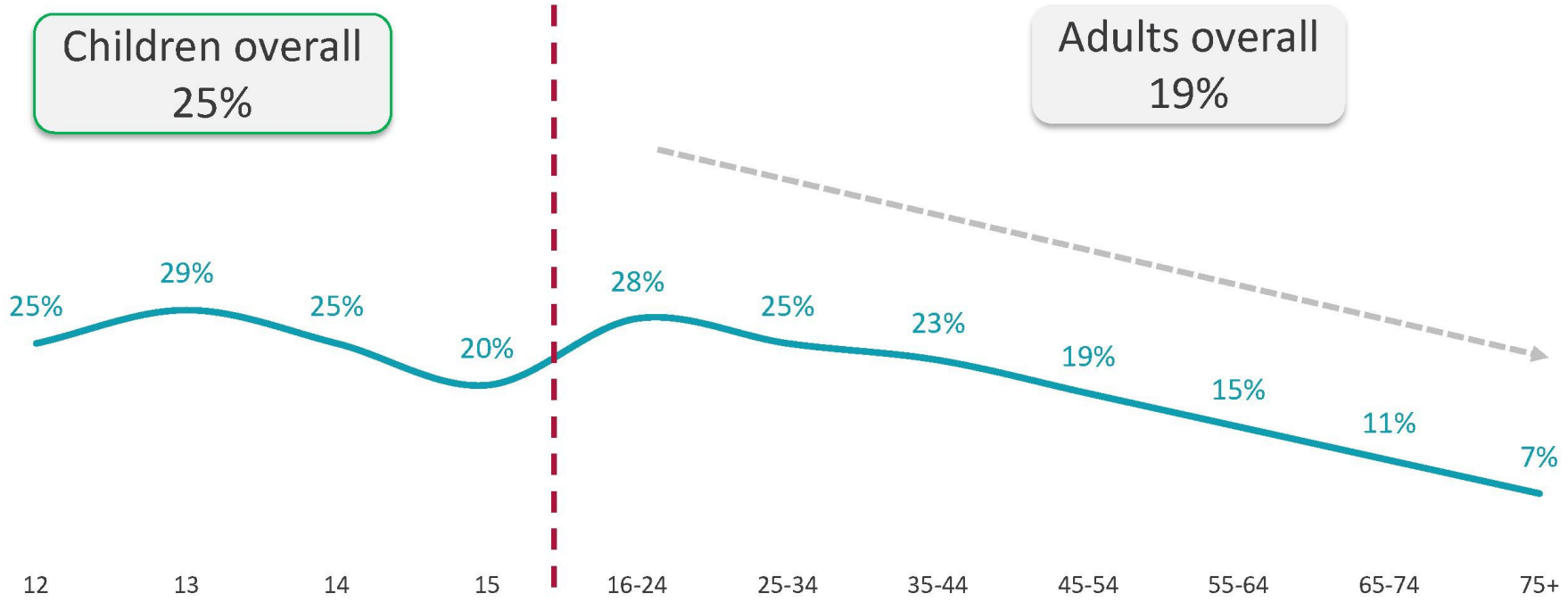
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D2) What did you do? D3) Why haven't you reported anything that you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All children 12-15 (1001), those who reported (247), those who have not reported (728)

A quarter of 12-15 year olds have ever reported offensive material they've seen online. Incidence of adults reporting potential harms drops significantly with age

Ever reported something seen online that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

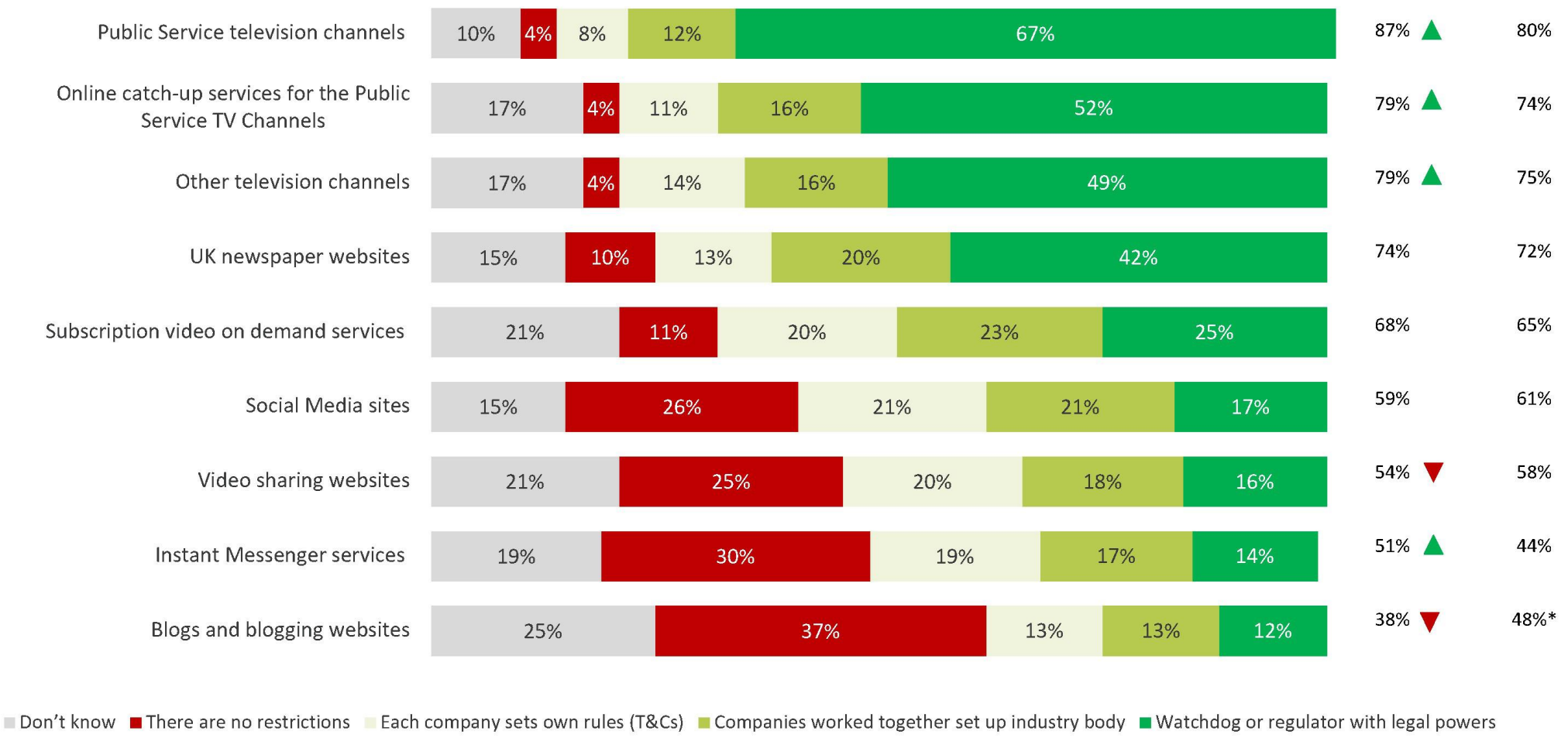
Question: D1 Have you ever reported something you have seen online that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? This could include telling a person, using a 'report' button or emailing/messaging a website or social media site. Base: All adult internet users (2057), All children 12-15 (1001)

Section 4
Attitudes towards regulation and internet brands

INQ000615301_0116

Online media is perceived to be less regulated compared to traditional media. Around a quarter believe there are no regulations or restrictions for social media or video sharing services

Perceived regulation of different types of media, among adults



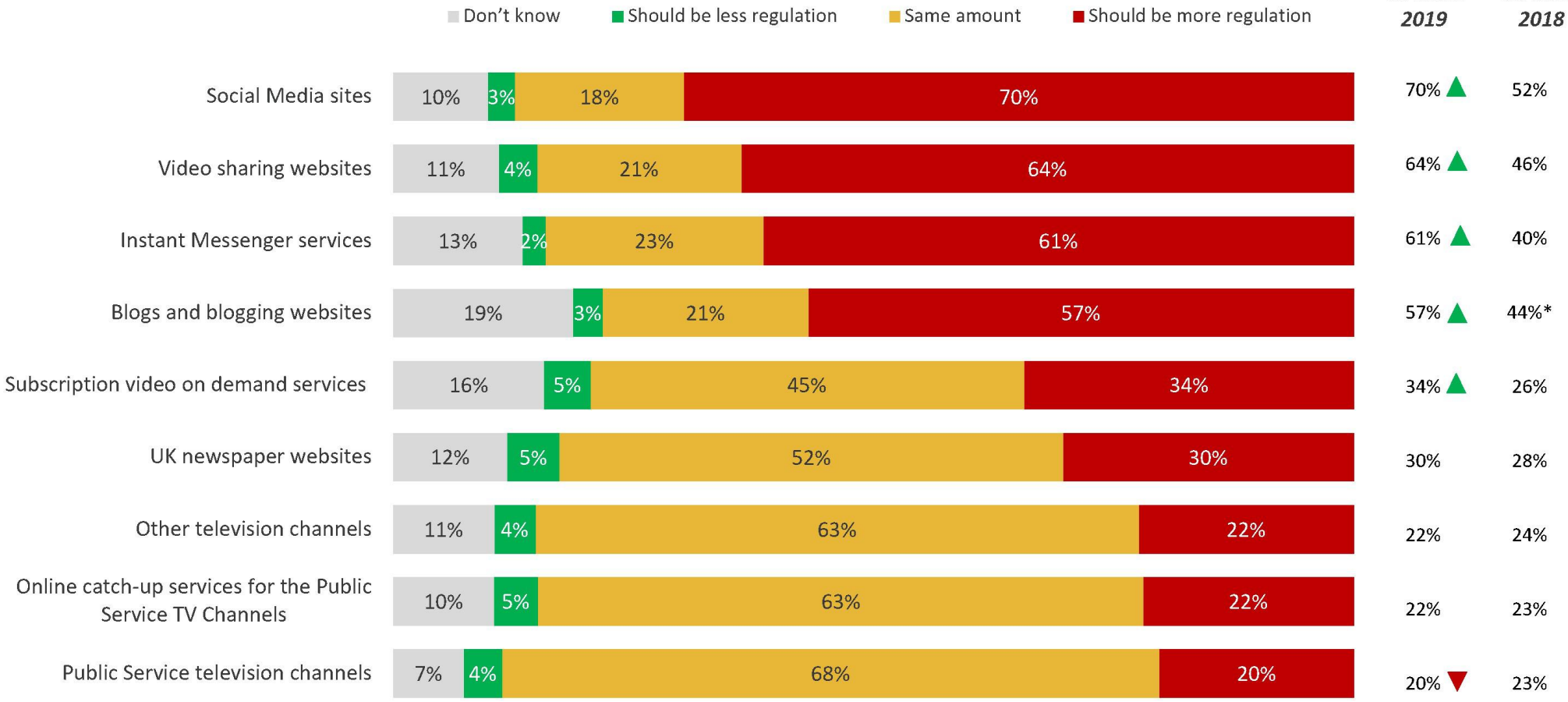
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E2) I'm now going to read out different types of media (for example TV, internet sites, newspapers etc.) and for each please tell me which one statement best describes your understanding of the level of regulation in the UK?

Base: All adult internet users 2019 (2057), 2018 (1686). *wording in 2018 "Independently owned websites and blogs"

A large majority of adults believe existing regulation should be at least maintained, and there is a majority support for increased social media, video sharing, IM services and blog site regulation (significantly more so than in 2018).

Desired regulation of different types of media, among adults



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E3) And for each type of media, do you think that there should be more, less or about the same amount of regulation as there is today?

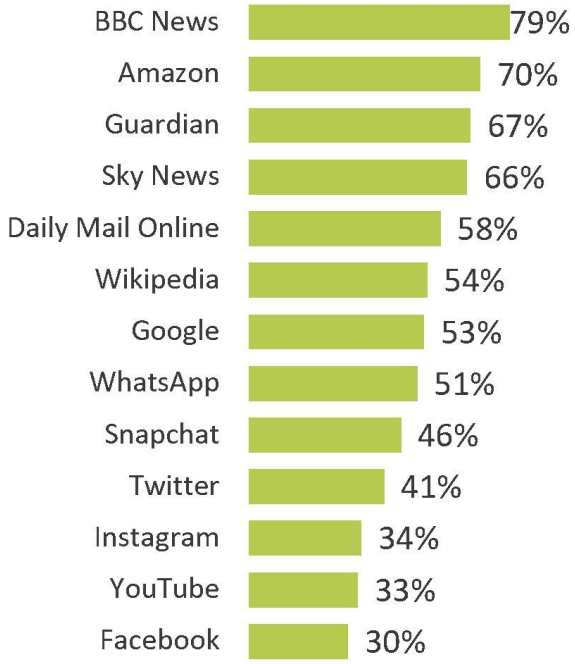
Base: All adult internet users 2019 (2057), 2018 (1686). *wording in 2018 "Independently owned websites and blogs"

Arrows indicate significant differences between 2018 and 2019.

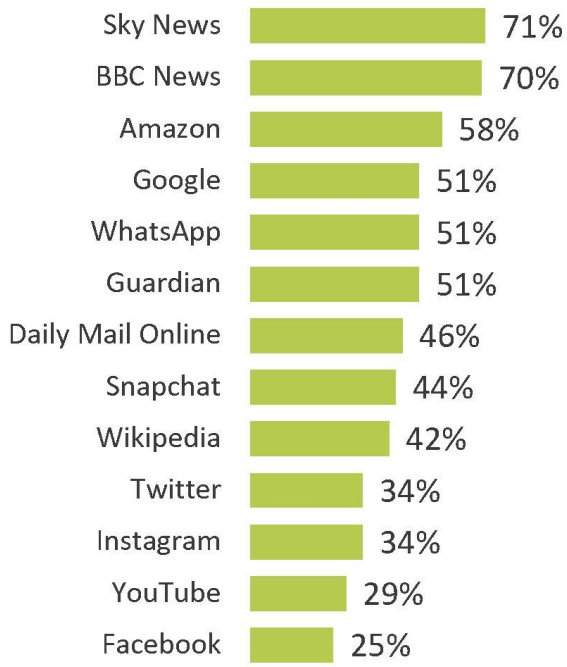
Social media and video sharing sites have relatively low levels of trust compared to other online platform brands

% agreeing they trust (4-5) brand for…
For **all answering** about each brand (among adult **users**)

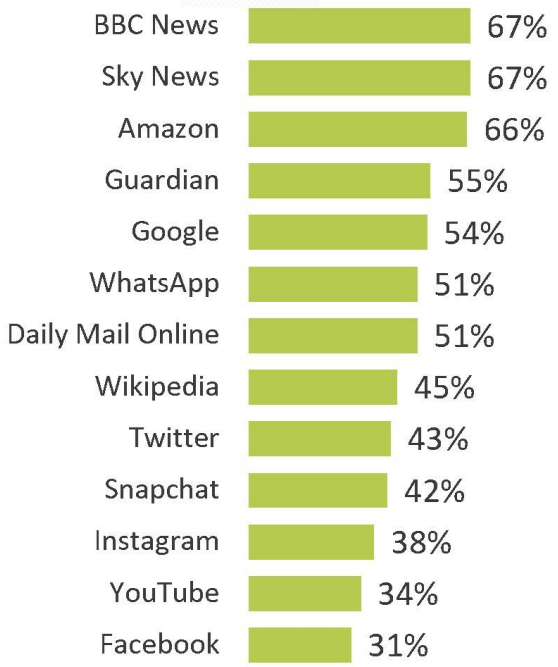
Protecting you from offensive content



Not providing misleading information



Using your data responsibly/protecting your personal data



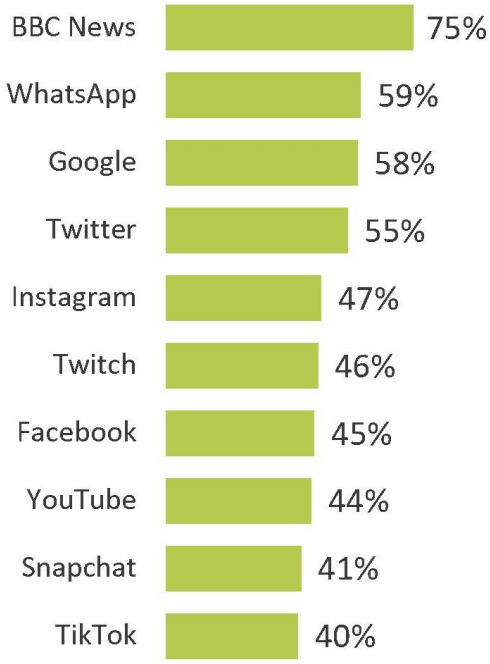
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E5) Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you "do not trust it at all" and 5 means you "trust it a great deal", please tell me how much you trust (brand) when it comes to…Base: all adults randomly selected to answer about brand and using that brand: Facebook (557), Instagram (234), Wikipedia (214), Snapchat (198), Google (607), BBC News (253), Amazon (420), Sky News (89), Twitter (158), Mail Online (61*), Guardian (45*), YouTube (433), WhatsApp (506)
*CAUTION LOW BASE

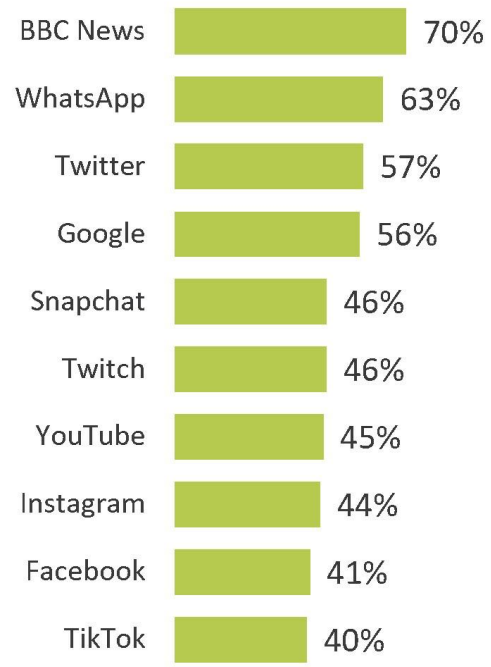
12-15 year olds are also least likely to trust social media and video sharing sites.

% agreeing they trust (4-5) brand for…
For **all answering** about each brand (among **users** aged 12-15)

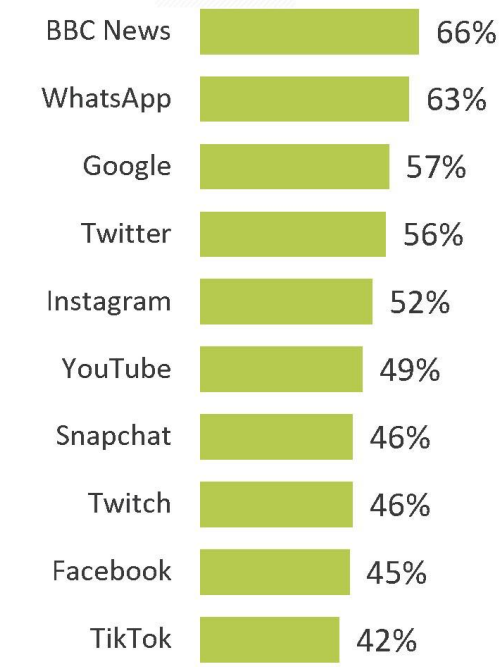
Protecting you from offensive content



Not providing misleading information



Using your data responsibly/protecting your personal data



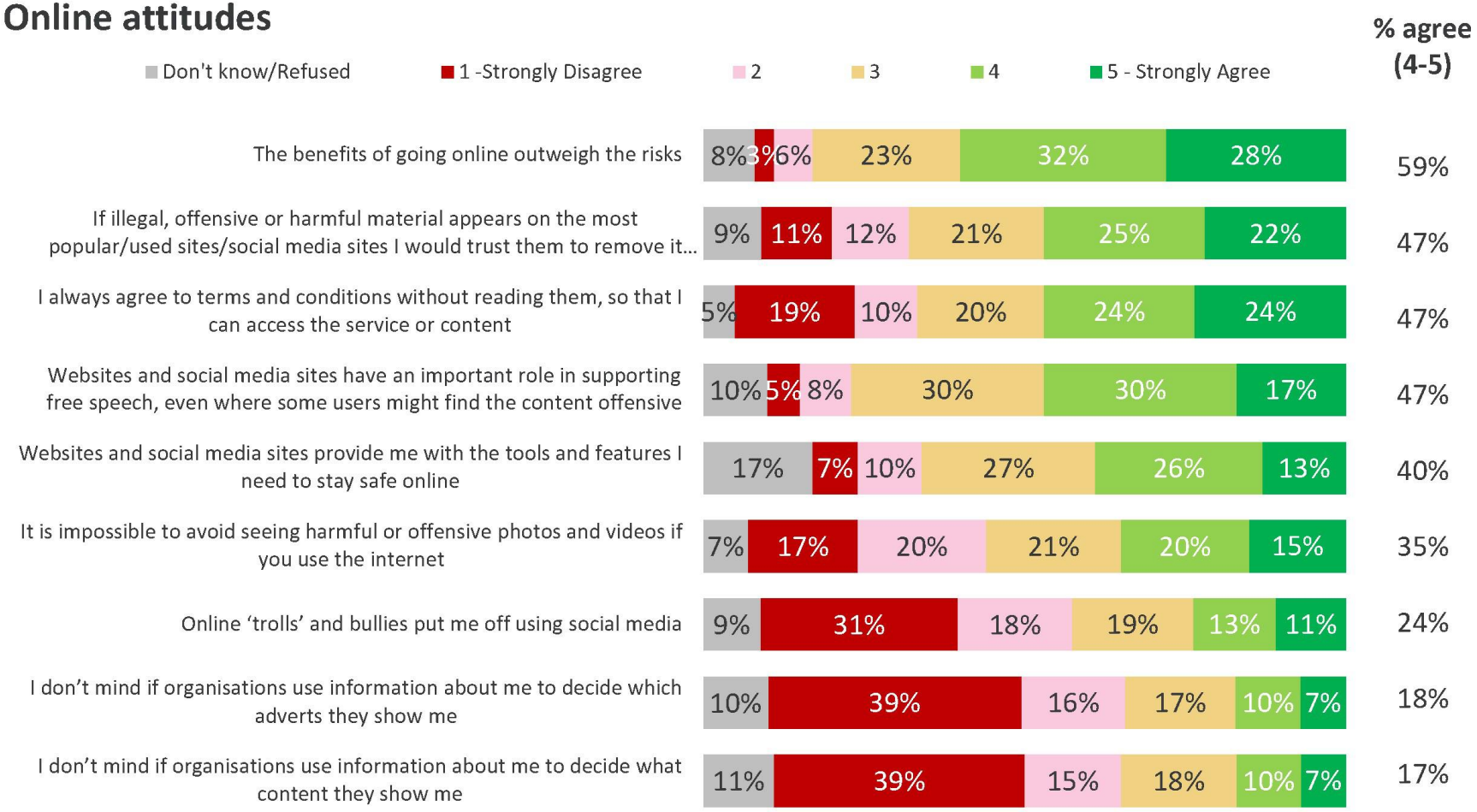
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E5) Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you "do not trust it at all" and 5 means you "trust it a great deal", please tell me how much you trust (brand) when it comes to…

Base: all children randomly selected to answer about brand and using that brand: Facebook (236), Instagram (288), Twitch (48*), Snapchat (274), Twitter (144), TikTok (60*), You Tube (405), WhatsApp (312), Google (314), BBC News (79). *CAUTION LOW BASE

Despite the concerns raised, the majority agree that the benefits of going online outweigh the risks

Online attitudes



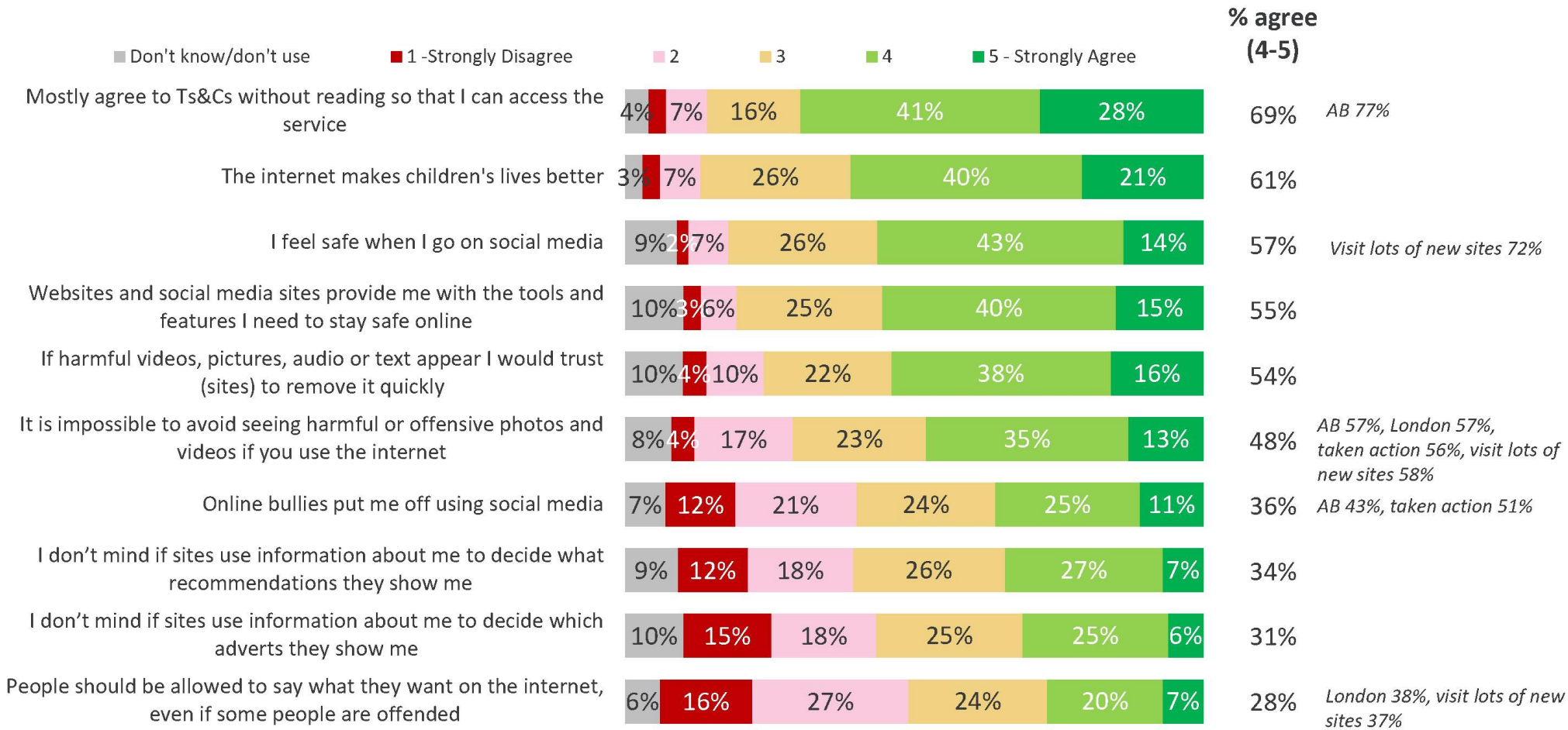
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All adult internet users (2057)

Six in ten 12-15 year olds agree that the internet makes children's lives better.

Online attitudes



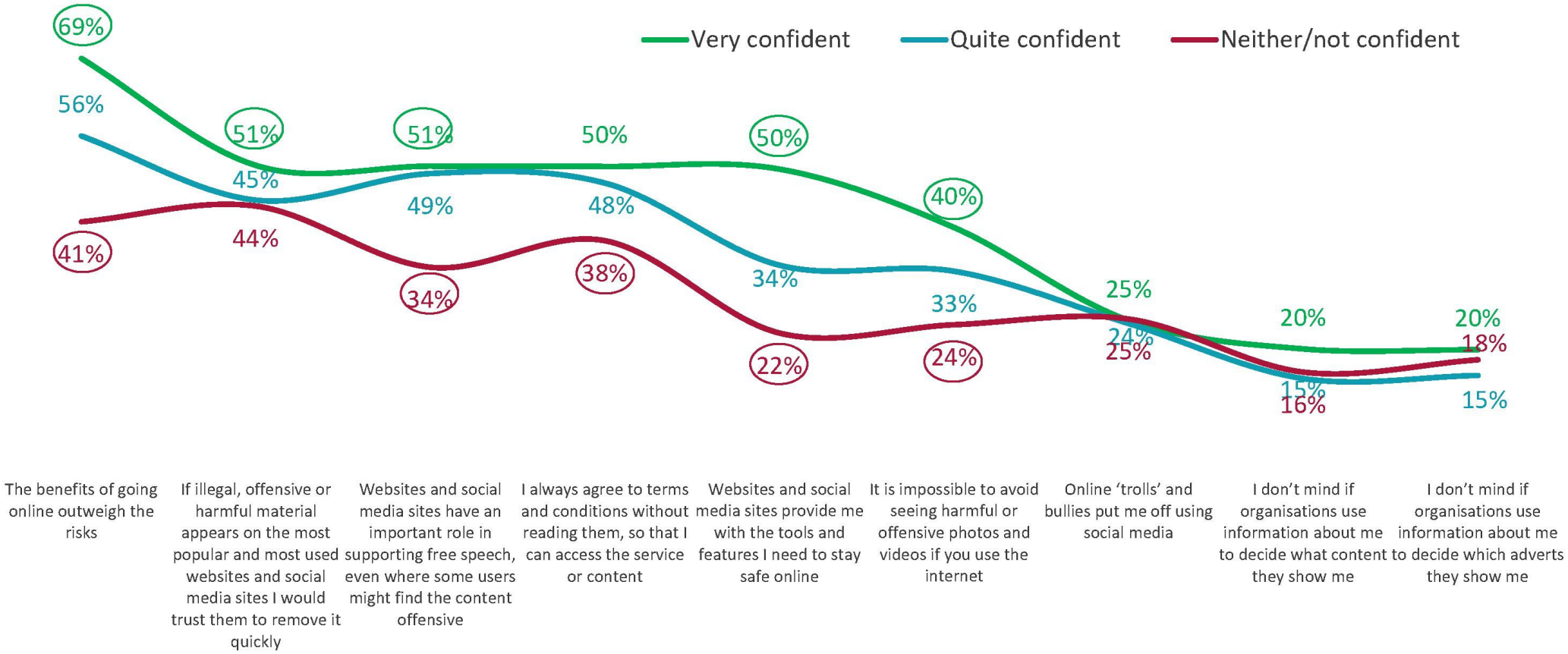
Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

Among adults, there is a clear link between perceived level of internet confidence and most attitudes regarding positivity about going online and trusting websites

Online attitudes



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

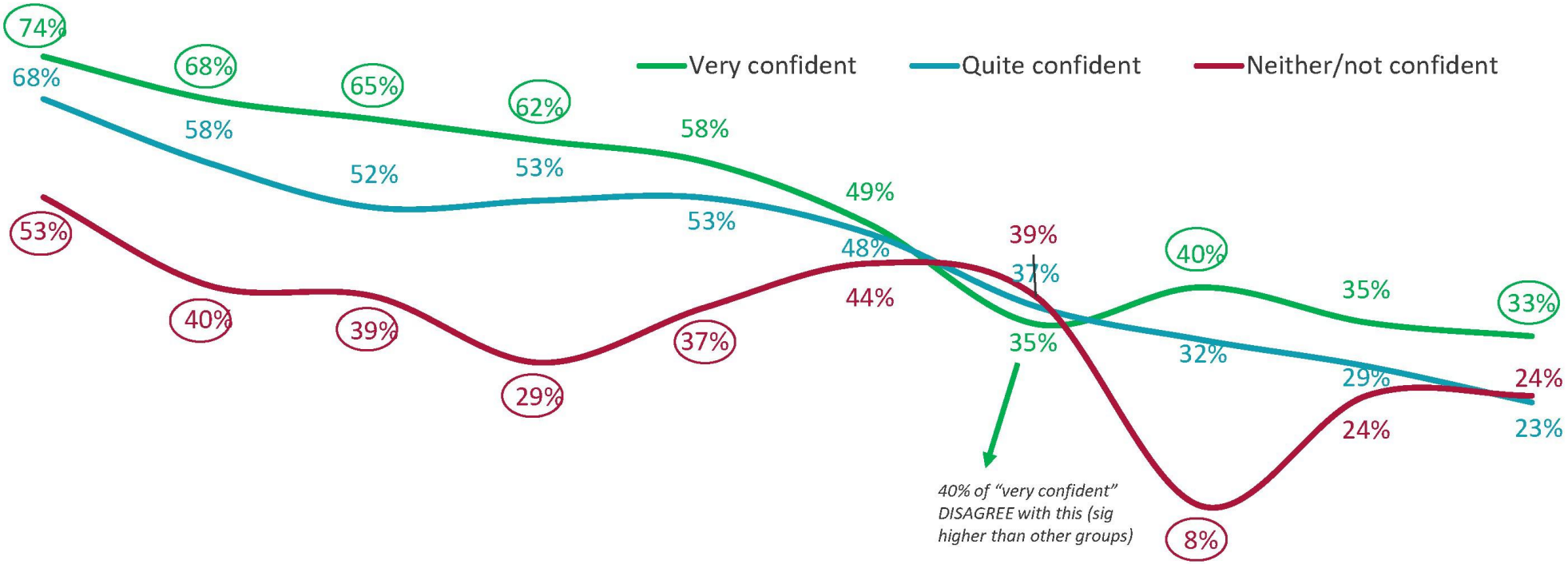
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All adults (2057). Very confident internet users (685), Quite confident (129), Neither/not confident (219)

Circles indicate significant differences between very confident internet users and not confident internet users.

Among children, there is a clear link between perceived level of internet confidence and most attitudes

Online attitudes



Source: Ofcom-ICO Research, 2019

Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All children 12-15 (1001). Very confident internet users (447), Quite confident (491), Neither/not confident (62*) *CAUTION LOW BASE

Circles indicate significant differences between very confident internet users and not confident internet users.

Internet users' experience of potential online harms: summary of survey research

Conducted by: Jigsaw Research

Fieldwork: January/February 2020

INQ000615301_0125

Background and Objectives

This research was commissioned by Ofcom with advice on research design provided by The Information Commissioner's Office.

The main objective of the research was to quantify concerns about, reported experiences of and potential sources of online harm in three key categories:

- CONTENT that people view, read or listen to online and INTERACTIONS with other users
- DATA / PRIVACY
- HACKING / SECURITY

The research also explored knowledge and opinions of the current level of regulation that applies to online environments

Similar research was undertaken by Ofcom and the ICO during February/March 2019

INQ000615301_0126

Contents

Section 1		Concerns about using the internet
	A)	Spontaneous concerns
	B)	Prompted concerns about children and concerns from children themselves
	C)	Prompted concerns more generally (amongst adult internet users 16+)
Section 2		Recorded experience of potential harms
	A)	Incidence of experience
	B)	Frequency and impact of experiences
Section 3		Sources of potential harm
Section 4		Reporting potentially harmful online experiences
Section 5		Attitudes towards regulation and internet brands
Section 6		Technical Appendix

INQ000615301_0127

Methodology

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Adults (16+)

- 2,080 face-to-face in-home interviews with internet users aged 16+ in the UK
- Quotas set on age, gender, region, social grade and urbanity
- Fieldwork from 3rd January to 9th February 2020

Children (12-15)

- 2,001 online interviews with children aged between 12 and 15.
- Quotas set on age, gender, region and social grade
- Fieldwork from 7th January to 11th February 2020

There were fewer high profile controversies about social media during the 2020 fieldwork period than in 2019, with the news focusing on the aftermath of the general election and Brexit. This contrasts with the 2019 fieldwork period, when Molly Russell's death, the Christchurch attacks and the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica investigation were all prevalent in the news.

We think that this might have had an impact on 2020 results – for example, with the average number of concerns reducing.

Sources of potential harm - definitions

The Social media, instant messaging, video sharing and gaming platform 'nets' have been based on usage of the following services:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook
Google Hangouts
Instagram
LinkedIn
Pinterest
Reddit
Snapchat
TikTok
Tumblr
Twitch
Twitter
Viber
WhatsApp
Another social media platform (RESPONDENTS ALLOWED TO WRITE IN OTHERS)

INSTANT MESSENGER (IM)

Discord
Facebook messenger
Google Hangouts
iMessage
Snapchat
TeamSpeak
Telegram
Viber
WhatsApp
Another instant messenger (IM) (RESPONDENTS ALLOWED TO WRITE IN OTHERS)

VIDEO SHARING

YouTube
Vimeo
Daily motion
LiveLeak
Mixer
Twitch
Instabib.tv
Another video sharing site (RESPONDENTS ALLOWED TO WRITE IN OTHERS)

GAMING

Nintendo online
PlayStation network
Steam
Xbox live
Another gaming platform (RESPONDENTS ALLOWED TO WRITE IN OTHERS)

Summary – Concerns about using the internet

- We first asked adults whether they had any concerns at all about the internet (including social media, using an app, video, online games and emails). Respondents were not shown any potential harms to choose from at first, so anything they told us was top-of-mind. **In total, 81% (+3% vs. 2019) of adult internet users have at least one unprompted concern**

- We then showed adult respondents a list of potential online harms (slide 20) and asked them which, if any, concerned them specifically in relation to children, and then which concerned them more generally. 12-15 year old research participants were shown a similar list (slide 21), using age-appropriate language and asked to indicate which were of concern. **After prompting, the proportion of adult internet users concerned about at least once aspect of going online increases to 83% (unchanged) in relation to children and 86% (+2%) more generally. In comparison, 89% (-2%) of 12-15 year old internet users have at least one concern about going online.**

- **However, individual adult concerns in relation to children, and more generally, have both dropped compared to 2019** (from 8 to 7 concerns in relation to children and 7 to 6 generally). This is possibly due to the timing of the fieldwork – i.e. immediately after the election, when the news agenda was focussed on Brexit / during a time when there were fewer high-profile controversies on social media
    - *NB: It is worth noting that 2020 scores remain higher than those reported in 2018**

- **As in 2019, adults and 12-15 year olds' highest level of concern is around children's exposure to bullying, abusive behaviour or threats (45% and 52% respectively).** Adults with children in the household are especially concerned about this (54%), as are female 12-15's (59%).

*Ofcom/ICO undertook similar research during 2018, using an omnibus approach: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/120852/Internet-harm-research-2018-report.pdf

Summary – Concerns about using the internet

- Adults remain more concerned about potential online harms in relation to children than about the internet more generally. **However, when asked about the internet more generally, adults are more concerned about their personal information being stolen (43%), scams/frauds (42%) and their data being processed without prior consent (37%).**

- Most issues cause a significant level of concern, but **the issue causing the greatest concern is material showing child sexual abuse (83% of those expressing a concern with this were very concerned in relation to children).**

Summary – Experience of potential harms

- **62% (+1% vs. 2019) of adult and 81% (+2%) of 12-15 year old internet users have had at least one potentially harmful experience online in the past 12 months.**
  - Adults are most likely to have experienced spam emails* (32%), scams/fraud (22%) and fake news (16%)
  - 12-15 year olds are most likely to have experienced offensive language (39%), spam (31%) and unwelcome friend requests (29%). A quarter have experienced bullying (26%) or trolling (24%)
    - As expected, increased time online increases the exposure to potential harms

- **Going online too much is the most frequently experienced potential harm** (78% of adults and 53% of 12-15 year olds who are concerned and experienced it in the last year said it occurred at least weekly), **but less frequent experiences have the greatest impact**
  - Theft of personal information has the most severe impact on adults (59% found it very/fairly annoying, upsetting or frustrating), along with non-consensual use of personal data (48%)
  - Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats has the biggest impact on 12-15 year olds (51%), along with viruses (46%), hate speech (42%) and content promoting self-harm (40%)

- **34% (+5%) of adult and 41% (+3%) of 12-15 year old internet users have experienced something that impacts them** (i.e. something they found very/fairly annoying, upsetting or frustrating)

*There may be some crossover with some of the other potential harms mentioned in this report. For example, spam emails may range from being just annoying to potentially harmful (e.g. containing scams and/or offensive content).

Summary – Sources of potential harm

- Social media sites remain the most commonly cited sources of harm
- 79% of adult internet users would like websites to do more to keep them and others safe
- Only 56% of 12-15 year olds feel safe when they go on social media and 41% are put off using social media by online bullies
- 78% of 12-15 year olds know how to change the privacy settings on social media accounts and 68% have actually done so

Summary – Reporting of harmful experiences

- **19% (unchanged) of adults and 29% (+4%) of 12-15 year olds have taken action to report harmful content they have seen online**
  - Clicking on the report button (69%, +6%) is the most common action taken by adults, followed by blocking (22%, -6%) and informing the site (15%, -5%)
    - 16-34's, females and those with children in the household are most likely to report
  - 12-15 year olds are more likely to tell a parent (50%, -5%) or click on the report button (39%, -3%), followed by blocking (25%, -4%)

- **Nearly 2 in 3 adult and 12-15 year old 'reporters' had seen the harmful content they reported on social media**
  - 57% of adults and 33% of 12-15 year olds had seen the harmful content on Facebook
  - 25% of 12-15 year olds had seen the harmful content on Instagram

- **Respondents thought that the harmful content was removed in almost half of cases where it was reported (46% of adult and 12-15 year olds cases)**

- **58% of adult 'reporters' were satisfied with the outcome of their complaint**
  - NB: 12-15 year olds did not answer this question

Summary – Attitudes towards regulation

- **A higher proportion of adults think regulations are now in place for the following platforms:**
  - SVoD - 76% (2020) vs. 68% (2019)
  - Social media - 74% vs. 59%
  - IM - 66% vs. 51%
  - Video sharing sites - 62% vs. 54%
    - 16-54s and those with children in the household are most likely to think regulations in place
      - *This is possibly due to platforms being more publicly proactive about ways to mitigate harms experienced by users*

- **Although high proportions of adults think these platforms are already regulated, there is high levels of support for increased regulation, especially for:**
  - Social media – 66% (2020) vs. 70% (2019)
  - Video sharing sites - 57% vs. 64%
  - IM - 56% vs. 61%
    - Females with kids in the household most likely to support more regulation

- **The media that adult internet users feel should have more regulation – including social media sites and video sharing services – are generally the least trusted sites**

- **Overall, internet users have mixed views about going online:**
  - 59% (-2%) of 12-15 year old internet users agree that the internet makes children's lives better
  - 66% (+7%) of adult internet users agree that the benefits of going online outweigh the risks
    - However, 47% (-3%) of adults are concerned about how their info is used by organisations

INQ000615301_0135

Section 1
Concerns about the internet
A) Spontaneous Concerns

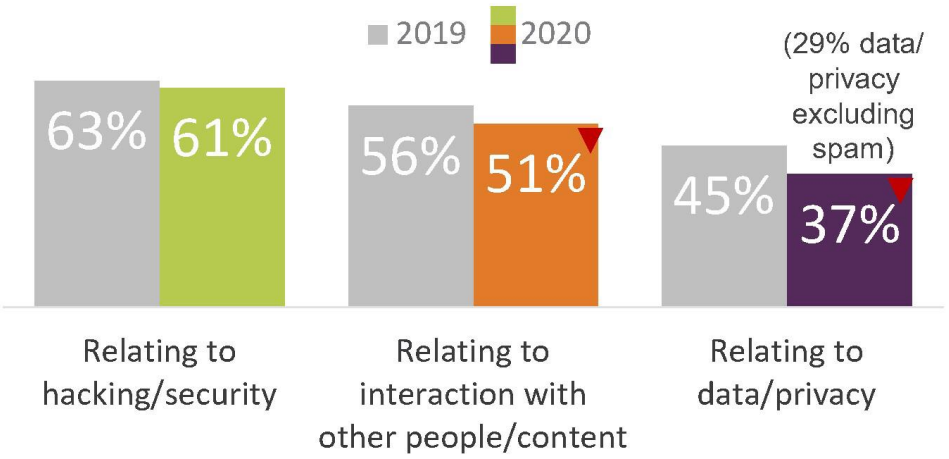
INQ000615301_0136

Without being prompted, four fifths (81%) of UK adults express a concern about the internet

Unprompted Concerns

81% (2019 78%)

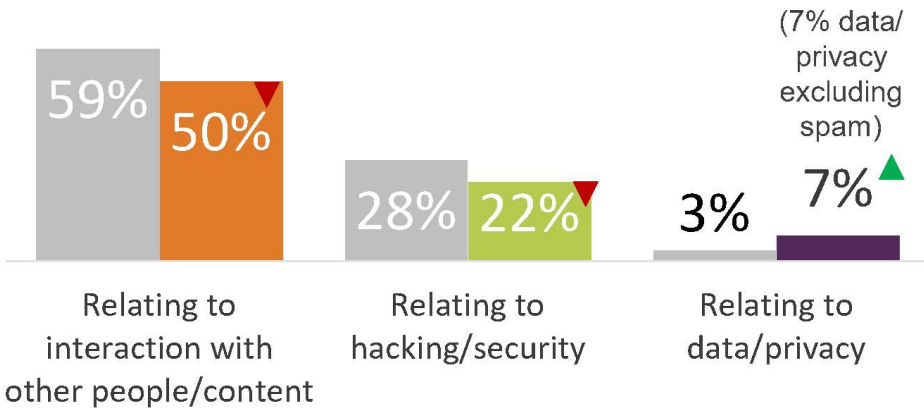
Of adults have **spontaneous** concerns about the internet



27%* (2019 22%)

Of children (12-15) have **spontaneous** concerns about the internet

Of those that are concerned, **spontaneously** they mentioned…



**Self-completion methodology likely explains relatively low level of unprompted concern compared to adults.*

Significantly higher/lower ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question context: I am now going to ask you a few questions about your opinion on using the internet. Just to confirm, using the internet includes things like visiting a social media site or app, looking at a website or using an app, watching a TV programme or video clip, playing online games or checking emails.

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080), 2019 (2057) Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Responses coded into list)

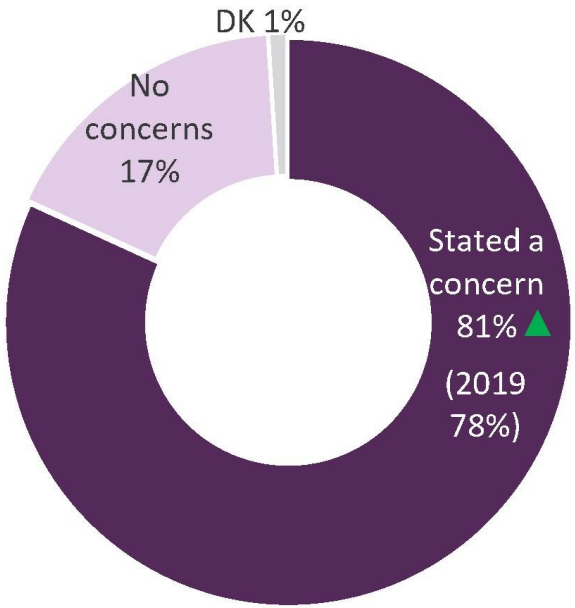
Base: All Children 12-15 (2001) Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Single code response – Yes/no/dk)

Base: Children 12-15 concerned on the internet 2019 (210) 2020 (532) Question: C1b. What concerns do you have? (Open response)

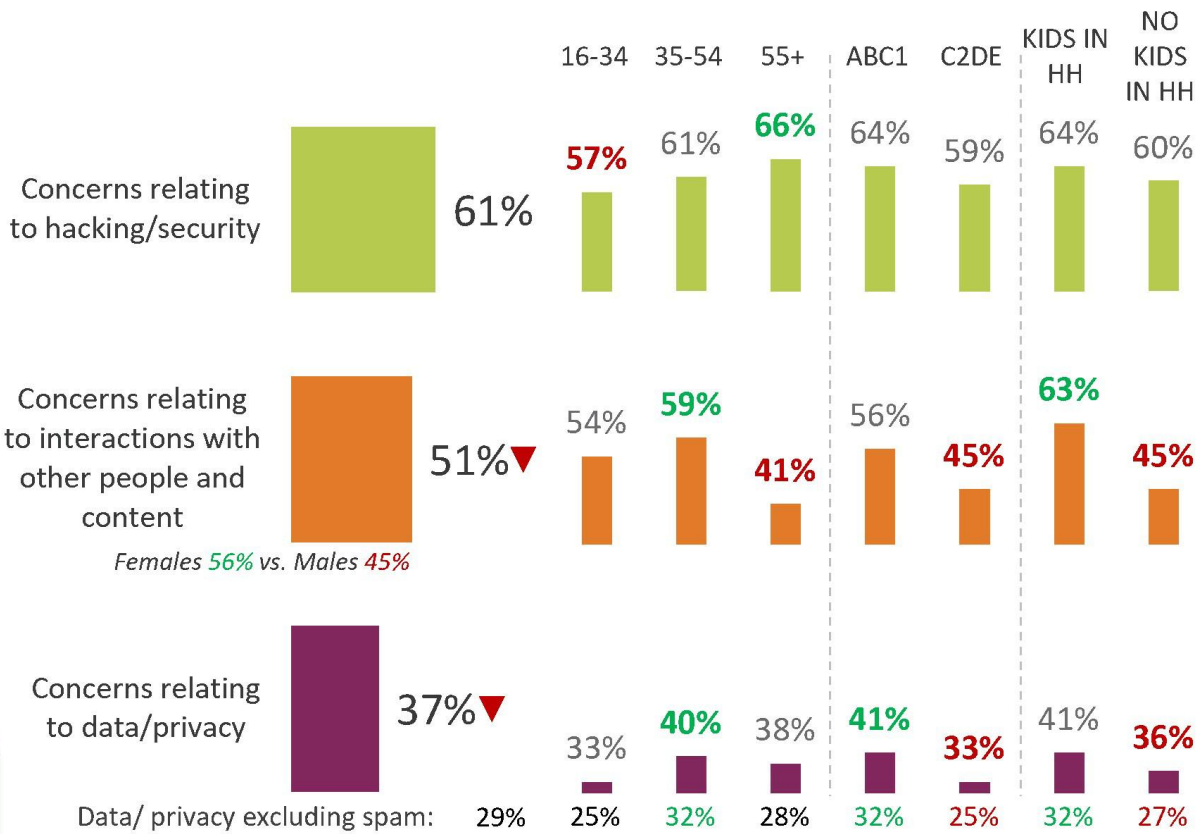
Elements related to hacking/security are top of mind for adults – particularly amongst those aged 55+

UNPROMPTED Concerns

What concerns do you have about the internet?



Significant subgroup differences in % having concerns
Females 84% vs. males 79%
ABC1 84% vs. C2DE 79%
Children in HH 85% vs. no children 80%
Taken action to report content 92% vs. not taken action 78%



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question context: I am now going to ask you a few questions about your opinion on using the internet. Just to confirm, using the internet includes things like visiting a social media site or app, looking at a website or using an app, watching a TV programme or video clip, playing online games or checking emails.

Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Responses coded into list). Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

Those aged 35-54, with kids in the HH, ABC1s and females are likely to have more top of mind concerns

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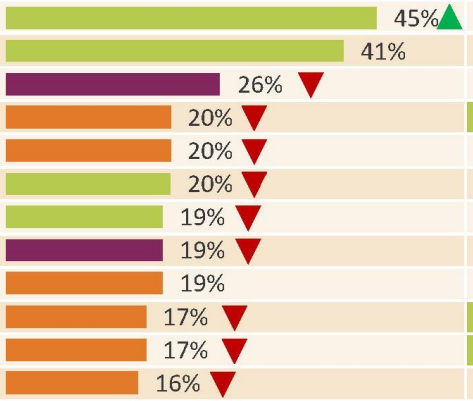
▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2019

UNPROMPTED Concerns (ranked on all adults)



What concerns do you have? ALL ADULTS	16-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	KIDS IN HH	NO KIDS IN HH	MALE	FEMALE
Personal info being stolen/hacked 45% ▲	42%	45%	47%	46%	43%	48%	43%	42%	48%
Scams/fraud 41%	38%	39%	45%	43%	39%	43%	40%	38%	44%
Personal info used without knowledge* 26% ▼	22%	27%	27%	29%	22%	28%	24%	23%	28%
Violent/disturbing content 20% ▼	21%	26%	14%	23%	17%	27%	17%	17%	24%
Sexual/pornographic content 20% ▼	18%	26%	15%	23%	16%	25%	17%	15%	24%
Viruses etc 20% ▼	19%	21%	18%	23%	16%	21%	18%	21%	18%
Private info made public 19% ▼	19%	21%	18%	21%	17%	24%	17%	19%	20%
Spam emails 19% ▼	19%	19%	21%	22%	16%	19%	20%	19%	20%
Fake News* 19%	19%	22%	16%	23%	14%	20%	18%	19%	18%
Bullying/abusive behaviour/threats 17% ▼	20%	20%	12%	20%	14%	20%	15%	15%	19%
People pretending to be another person 17% ▼	21%	18%	12%	20%	14%	22%	14%	13%	20%
Child sexual abuse imagery* 16% ▼	16%	22%	12%	19%	13%	22%	13%	14%	18%
Offensive videos/pictures 16% ▼	15%	23%	12%	20%	13%	20%	14%	15%	17%
Stalking/cyberstalking 15% ▼	17%	18%	10%	18%	11%	17%	13%	12%	17%
Collecting data about me in unclear ways... 13% ▼	11%	15%	13%	16%	10%	15%	12%	13%	13%
Harmful/misleading advertising 13% ▼	15%	14%	10%	16%	9%	15%	11%	13%	12%
Promotion terrorism/radicalisation 13% ▼	14%	15%	10%	16%	10%	17%	11%	13%	13%
Unwelcome friend/follow requests 12% ▼	12%	15%	9%	13%	11%	15%	11%	8%	16%
Trolling 12% ▼	14%	15%	7%	14%	10%	16%	10%	9%	14%
Hate speech/inciting violence 11% ▼	11%	15%	7%	13%	8%	14%	9%	11%	11%
Offensive language 11% ▼	8%	15%	8%	14%	7%	12%	10%	8%	13%
Spending too much time online 11%	13%	11%	10%	13%	10%	12%	10%	9%	13%
Content promoting self-harm 10% ▼	10%	12%	7%	11%	8%	12%	9%	9%	10%
Spending too much money online** 8%	10%	8%	6%	8%	8%	10%	7%	6%	10%
Cyber-flashing** 8%	10%	10%	4%	10%	6%	10%	7%	7%	8%
Fake images/videos** 8%	8%	9%	6%	9%	5%	9%	6%	7%	8%
Government/agency surveillance 7% ▼	7%	8%	6%	8%	5%	7%	7%	9%	5%
Feeling pressure to send photos/info** 6%	7%	8%	4%	7%	5%	10%	4%	6%	7%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet?

Base: All adult internet users (2080)

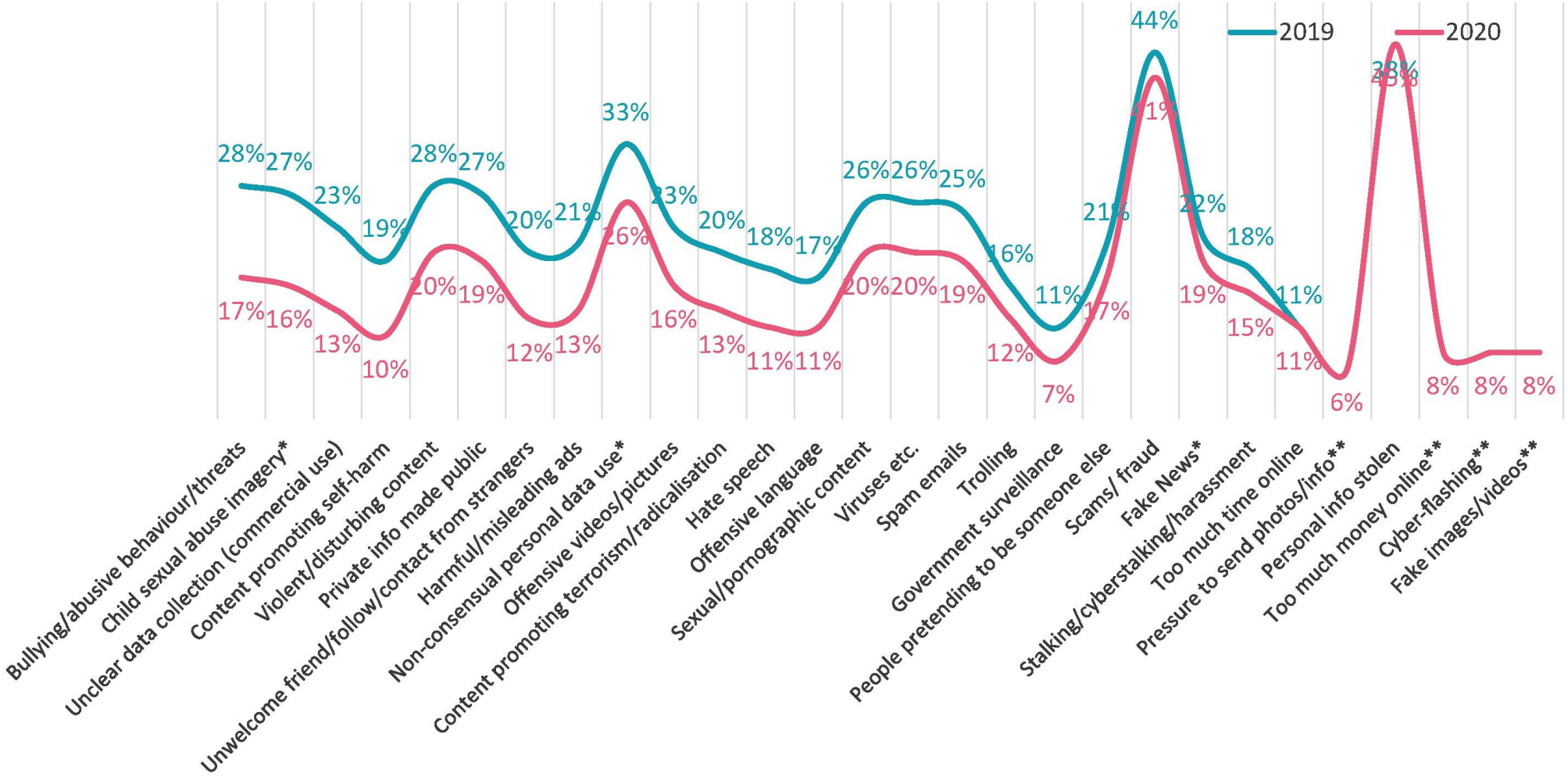
Highlighting denotes significant differences between subgroups

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

INQ000615301_0139

Individual concerns are generally lower than in 2019

UNPROMPTED Concerns (ranked on largest difference)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet?

Base: All adult internet users (2080)

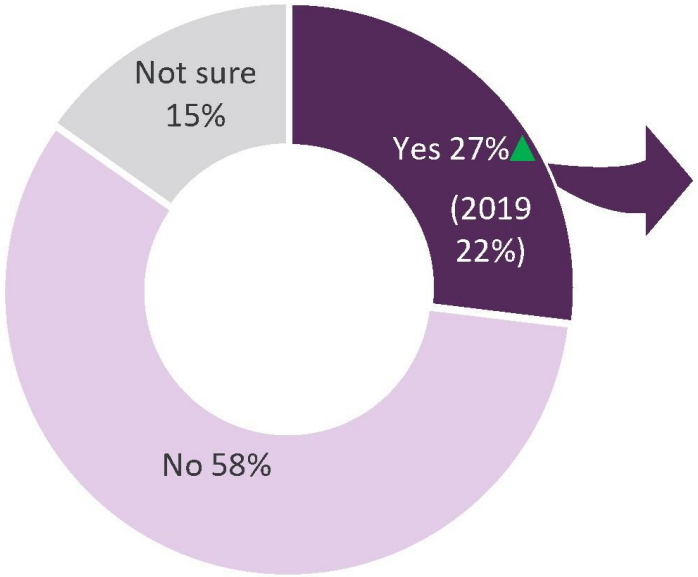
Highlighting denotes significant differences between subgroups

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

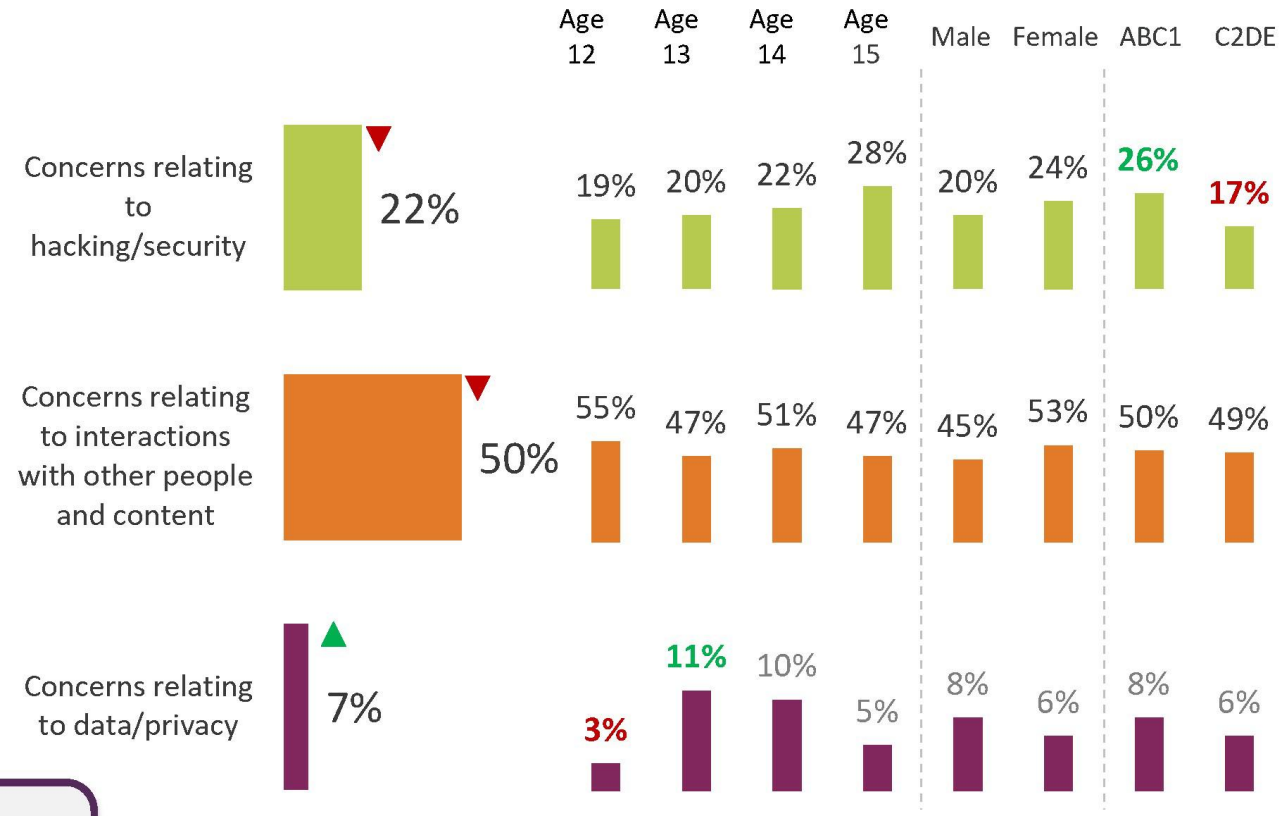
3 in 10 12-15 year olds said they had spontaneous concerns about using the internet – notably interactions with other people and content

UNPROMPTED Concerns

Do you have any concerns about the internet?



What concerns do you have?



Significant subgroup differences in % having concerns
Girls 31% vs. Boys 25%
Visited lots of new sites/apps 38% vs. only used sites/apps used before 25%
Experienced a potential harm 33% vs no harm experienced 6%

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020. Question context: **You're now going to see a few questions about your opinion of using the internet.** As a reminder, using the internet includes things like: using social media sites or apps such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram; looking at websites or apps; watching a TV programme or video clip on YouTube or Netflix; playing online games, including through a PlayStation or Xbox; checking emails. Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (2001). C1b. What concerns do you have? UNPROMPTED, open-ended and verbatim comments coded. Base: all expressing concern n=532

The most common spontaneous concerns amongst 12-15 year olds relate to bullying and personal information being stolen

UNPROMPTED Concerns

What concerns do you have?	ALL AGED 12-15 YEARS	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Male	Female	ABC1	C2DE
Bullying	25%	29%	21%	27%	23%	25%	25%	24%	26%
Personal info being stolen	16%	15%	14%	14%	18%	15%	16%	17%	14%
People pretending to be another person	11%	14%	13%	12%	5%	7%	13%	10%	11%
Safety concerns (generally)	11%	9%	11%	9%	14%	12%	10%	12%	9%
Unwelcome friend/follow	10%	10%	12%	8%	9%	8%	11%	12%	6%
People being mean / insulting	6%	7%	8%	8%	2%	5%	7%	6%	6%
Personal data processed without consent	4%	2%	7%	5%	3%	5%	4%	5%	3%
Scams/fraud	4%	3%	2%	3%	7%	3%	4%	5%	3%
Bad/creepy/dangerous people	4%	4%	4%	6%	1%	3%	4%	3%	5%
Offensive videos / pictures	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%
Private info being made public	3%	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%	4%	4%	1%
Being watched	3%	1%	4%	5%	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%
People or organisations collecting data about...	3%	1%	4%	5%	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Data protection	2%	1%	3%	1%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Trolling (a person who deliberately says...	2%	3%	3%	0%	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%
Paedophiles	2%	2%	2%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Sexual / pornographic content	2%	1%	1%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Viruses/trojans/worms/spyware/malicious...	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%
Hate speech / inciting violence	2%	1%	0%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Offensive / inappropriate websites	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%

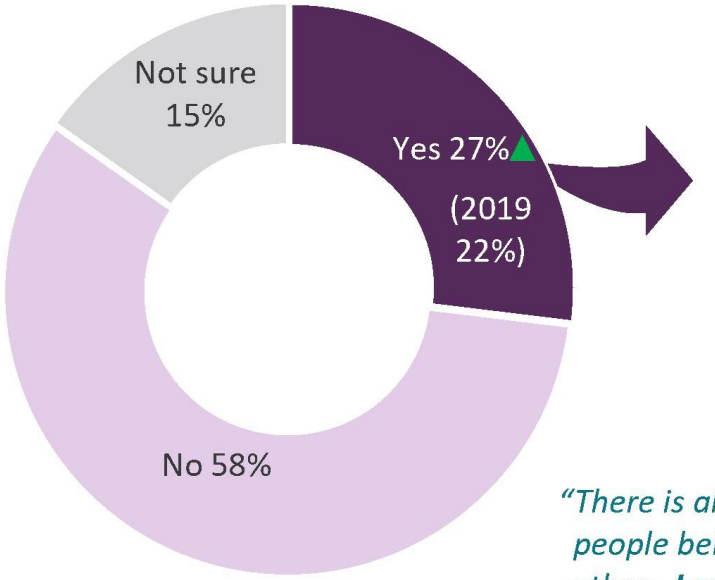
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020. Question context: **You're now going to see a few questions about your opinion of using the internet.** As a reminder, using the internet includes things like: using social media sites or apps such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram; looking at websites or apps; watching a TV programme or video clip on YouTube or Netflix; playing online games, including through a PlayStation or Xbox; checking emails. Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (2001). C1b. What concerns do you have? UNPROMPTED, open-ended and verbatim comments coded. Base: all expressing concern n=532. *NO SIG TESTING DONE VS. 2019 AS DATA IS CODED FROM OPEN ENDED SO NOT ENTIRELY COMPARING LIKE WITH LIKE

A selection of concerns voiced by children

UNPROMPTED Concerns

Do you have any concerns about the internet?



*"Bullying of other children online and **when my friends tell me they have been bullied online and some talk about killing themselves**. It makes me sad and worried about them"*

*"Sometimes it can used to bully people or **if you have a photo taken people can be horrible**"*

"Getting hacked. People screenshotting messages. People tracking where I am. Believing scams. Apps not accepting my age, so have to put higher one in. Buying things by accident"

*"There is always bullying and people being mean to each other - **I am not allowed to talk to anyone I don't know but sometimes people I don't know are added to groups on WhatsApp**"*

"Contact from people I don't know. Mean things being said to me or nasty photos or comments being posted."

*"I worry that people will say something nasty about stuff I post online or that they will know personal information about me, like where I live or go to school. I also **worry that someone will approach me and say something inappropriate or that they may not be who they say they are**."*

*"I am concerned that people online who I don't know are not who they say they are. But also the people who I do know and talk to in real life can be completely different on social media. **It can get very bitchy and rumours spread like lightning. You can turn up to school one day and everyone is talking about something that you know did not happen. Or happened completely differently. Or you aren't sure if it happened or not.** Loads of drama happens all the time because of it. Sometimes you feel you have to be on social media just so you can stay in the loop"*

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C1a. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

C1b. What concerns do you have? UNPROMPTED, open-ended and verbatim comments coded.

Base: all expressing concern n=532

Section 1 continued Concerns about the internet

B) Prompted concerns about children online

- Adults' concerns about children going online
- Children's own concerns about going online

Glossary of terms

List used in the Adults survey – with corresponding chart reference text

	Full Prompted List (Adults)	Short Text (In charts)
	Sexual\ pornographic content	Sexual/pornographic content
	Imagery or videos of child sexual exploitation or abuse*	child sexual abuse imagery
	Offensive language	Offensive language
	Offensive videos\pictures	Offensive videos/pictures
	Violent\ disturbing content	Violent/disturbing content
	Fake News i.e. stories that are false or made up, written deliberately to mislead*	Fake News
	Promotion of terrorism\ radicalisation	Content promoting terrorism/radicalisation
	Content promoting self-harm e.g. cutting, anorexia, suicide	Content promoting self-harm
	Harmful or misleading advertising	Harmful/misleading ads
	Hate speech \ inciting violence	Hate speech
	Unwelcome friend\follow requests/unwelcome contact or messages from strangers	Unwelcome friend/follow/contact from strangers
	Stalking/cyberstalking (harassment from other internet users)	Stalking/cyberstalking/harassment
	People pretending to be another person	People pretending to be someone else
	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	Bullying/abusive behaviour/threats
	Trolling (a person who deliberately says something controversial in order to start arguments or cause upset)	Trolling
	Feeling under pressure to send photos or other information about yourself to someone**	Pressure to send photos/info
	Cyber-flashing i.e. receiving unwanted sexual or nude images or videos from another person**	Cyber-flashing
	Fake images/fake videos e.g. deep fake videos**	Fake images/videos
	Spam emails	Spam emails
	Government\ agency surveillance	Government surveillance
	My personal data being used without my knowledge/consent*	Non-consensual personal data use
	People or organisations collecting data about me in unclear ways for commercial reasons	Unclear data collection (commercial use)
	My personal information being stolen/hacked	Personal info stolen
	Scams/ fraud	Scams/ fraud
	Private information being made public (e.g. photos)	Private info made public
	Viruses/ trojans/ worms/ spyware/ malicious software	Viruses etc.
	Spending too much time online	Too much time online
	Spending too much money online/spending money you did not mean to**	Too much money online
	Other (WRITE IN)	

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" March 2019

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

INQ000615301_0145

Glossary of terms

List used in the children survey – with corresponding chart reference text

Full Prompted List (children)	Short Text (In charts)
Sexual\ pornographic content	Sexual/pornographic content
Imagery or videos of child sexual exploitation or abuse*	child sexual abuse imagery
Swear words or offensive language	Offensive language
Offensive videos\pictures	Offensive videos/pictures
Violent\ disturbing content	Violent/disturbing content
Fake News i.e. stories that are false or made up, written deliberately to mislead*	Fake News
Promotion of terrorism\ radicalisation	Content promoting terrorism/radicalisation
Content promoting self-harm e.g. cutting, anorexia, suicide	Content promoting self-harm
Adverts that contain untrue information	Harmful/misleading ads
Hate speech \ inciting violence	Hate speech
Unwelcome friend\follow requests/unwelcome contact or messages from strangers	Unwelcome friend/follow/contact from strangers
Stalking/cyberstalking (harassment from other internet users)	Stalking/cyberstalking/harassment
People pretending to be another person	People pretending to be someone else
Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
Trolling (a person who deliberately says something controversial in order to start arguments or cause upset)	Trolling
Feeling under pressure to send photos or other information about yourself to someone	Pressure to send info/photos
Cyber-flashing, i.e. receiving sexual or nude images or videos that you have not asked for from another person, for instance via Apple AirDrop or on messaging or social media apps**	Cyber-flashing
Fake images/fake videos, e.g. deep fakes**	Fake images/videos
Spam emails	Spam emails
Government\ agency surveillance	Government surveillance
My personal data being processed without my knowledge/consent	Non-consensual personal data use
People or organisations collecting data about me in unclear ways to make money	Unclear data collection (commercial use)
My personal information being stolen/hacked	Personal info stolen
Scams/ fraud	Scams/ fraud
Private information being made public (e.g. photos)	Private info made public
Viruses/ trojans/ worms/ spyware/ malicious software	Viruses etc.
Spending too much time online	Too much time online
Spending too much money online	Too much money online
Other (WRITE IN)	

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" March 2019

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

As in 2019, 8 in 10 adults expressed a concern in relation to children on the internet. The majority of these are concerned about the types of content and interactions children may be exposed to online

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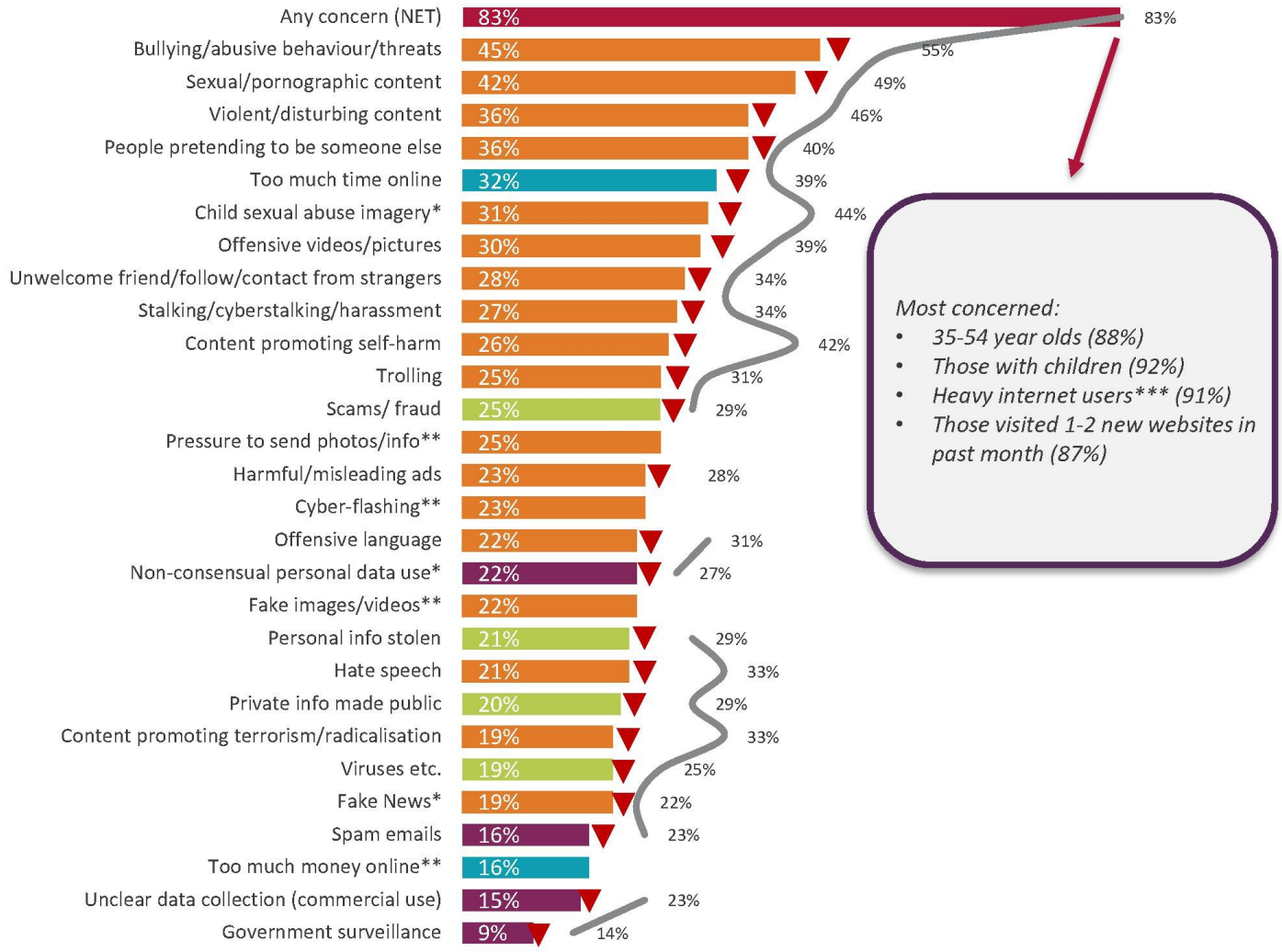
Concerns in relation to children



Average number of concerns:

7.0

(2019 8.0)

Most concerned:

- *35-54 year olds (88%)*
- *Those with children (92%)*
- *Heavy internet users*** (91%)*
- *Those visited 1-2 new websites in past month (87%)*

= 76% (2019 80%) relating to Content/contact with others

= 38% (2019 44%) relating to hacking/security

= 31% (2019 36%) relating to data/privacy

Data/ privacy – excluding spam: 26%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2a) Firstly, which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children?

Base: All adult internet users (2080), those with children in household (691), those with no children in household (1379)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020. ***Heavy Internet users 5+ hours weekdays AND 10+ hours weekends

Both parents and non-parents are especially concerned about bullying, abusive behaviour and threats. Parents generally have more concerns about the potential harms affecting children

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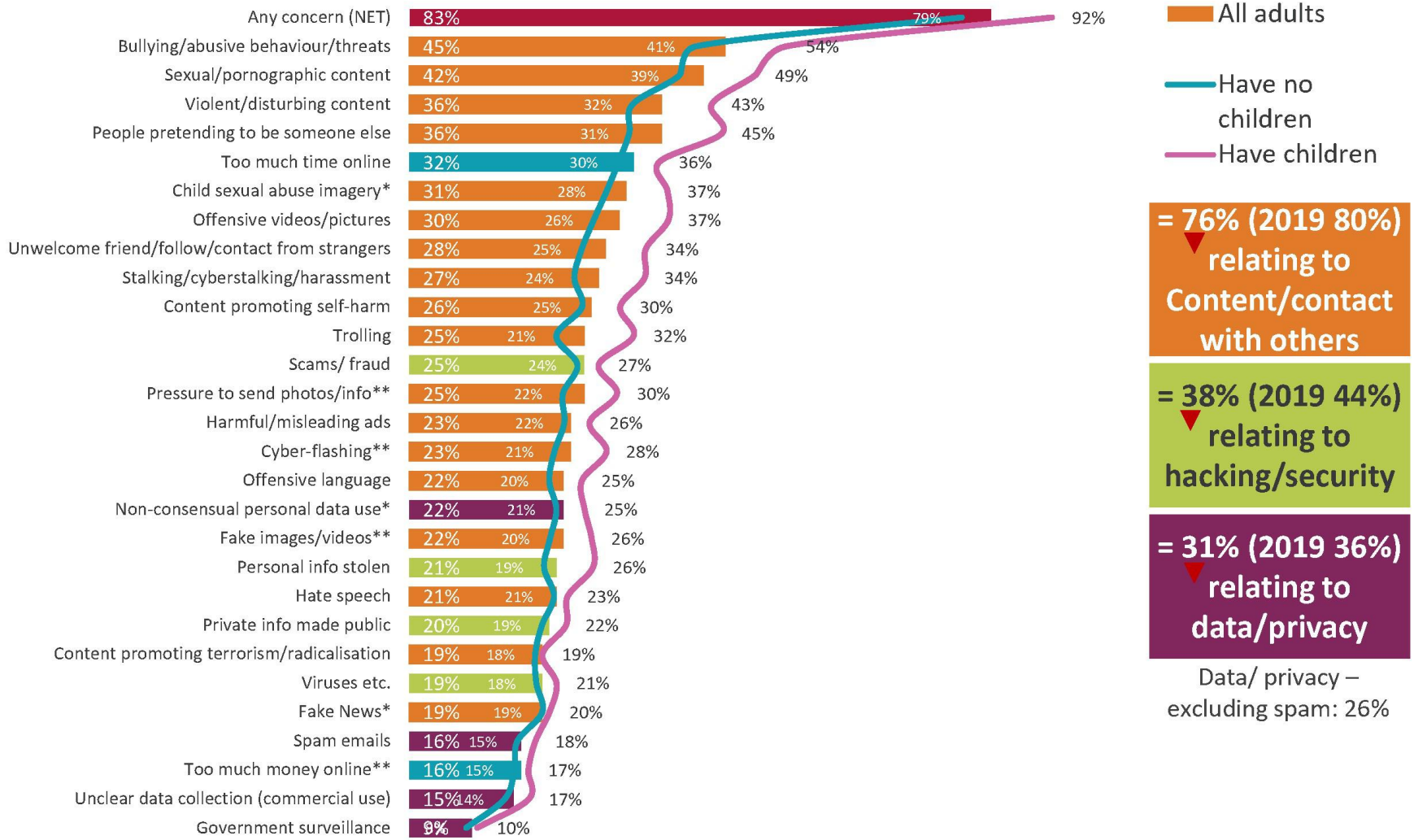
Concerns in relation to children



Average number of concerns:

No Children: 6.4

Have Children: 8.1

= 76% (2019 80%) relating to Content/contact with others

= 38% (2019 44%) relating to hacking/security

= 31% (2019 36%) relating to data/privacy

Data/ privacy – excluding spam: 26%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2a) Firstly, which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children?

Base: All adult internet users (2080), those with children in household (691), those with no children in household (1379)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020.

As in 2019, 9 in 10 12-15 year olds have at least one concern. In particular, they're concerned about the conduct of others, especially bullying and people pretending to be other people

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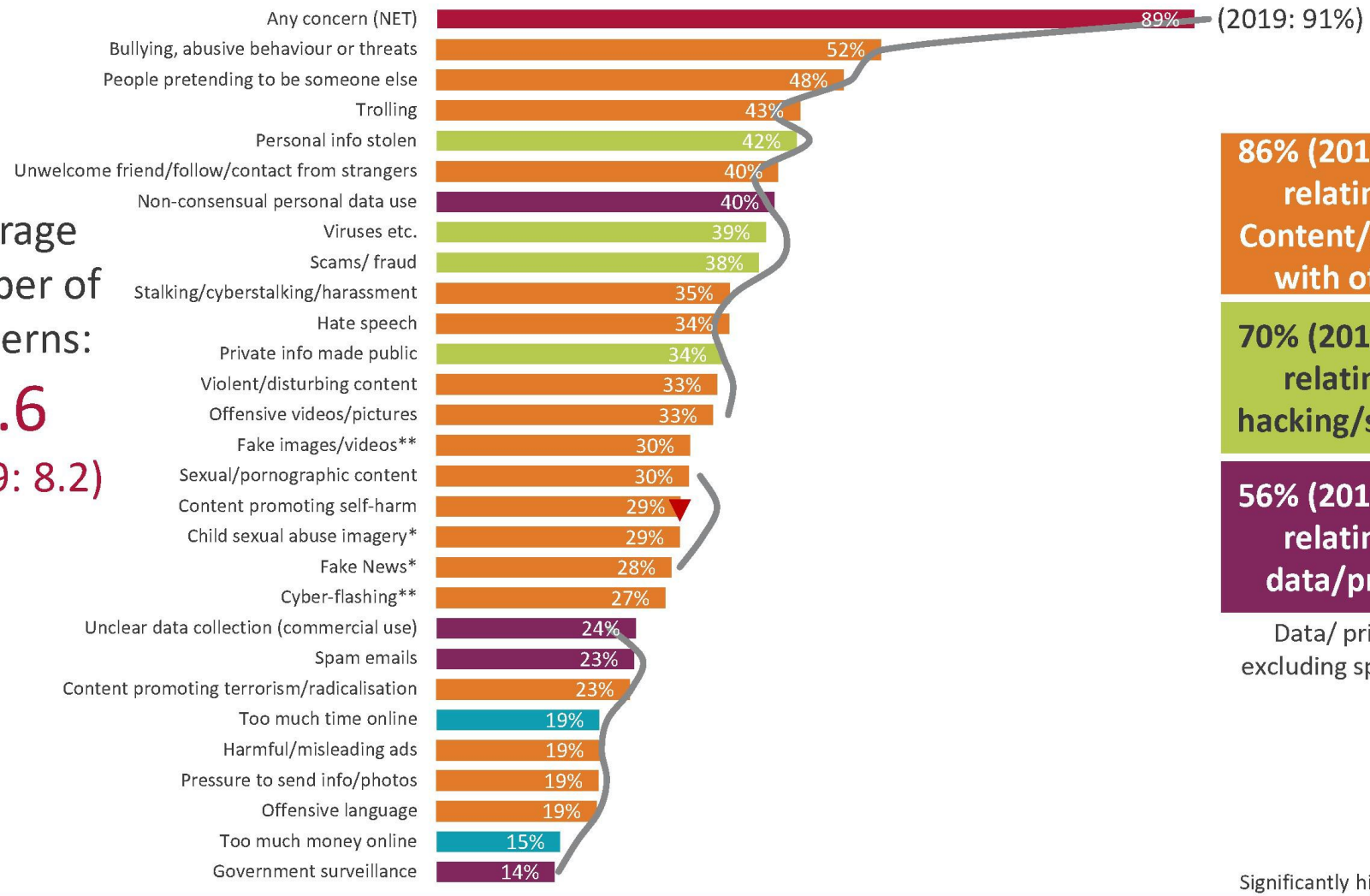
Proportion of children expressing a concern



Average number of concerns:

8.6

(2019: 8.2)

86% (2019: 87%) relating to Content/contact with others

70% (2019: 73%) relating to hacking/security

56% (2019: 56%) relating to data/privacy

Data/ privacy – excluding spam: 49%

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020.

Girls are more likely to express concerns about the internet than boys, significantly so in many areas

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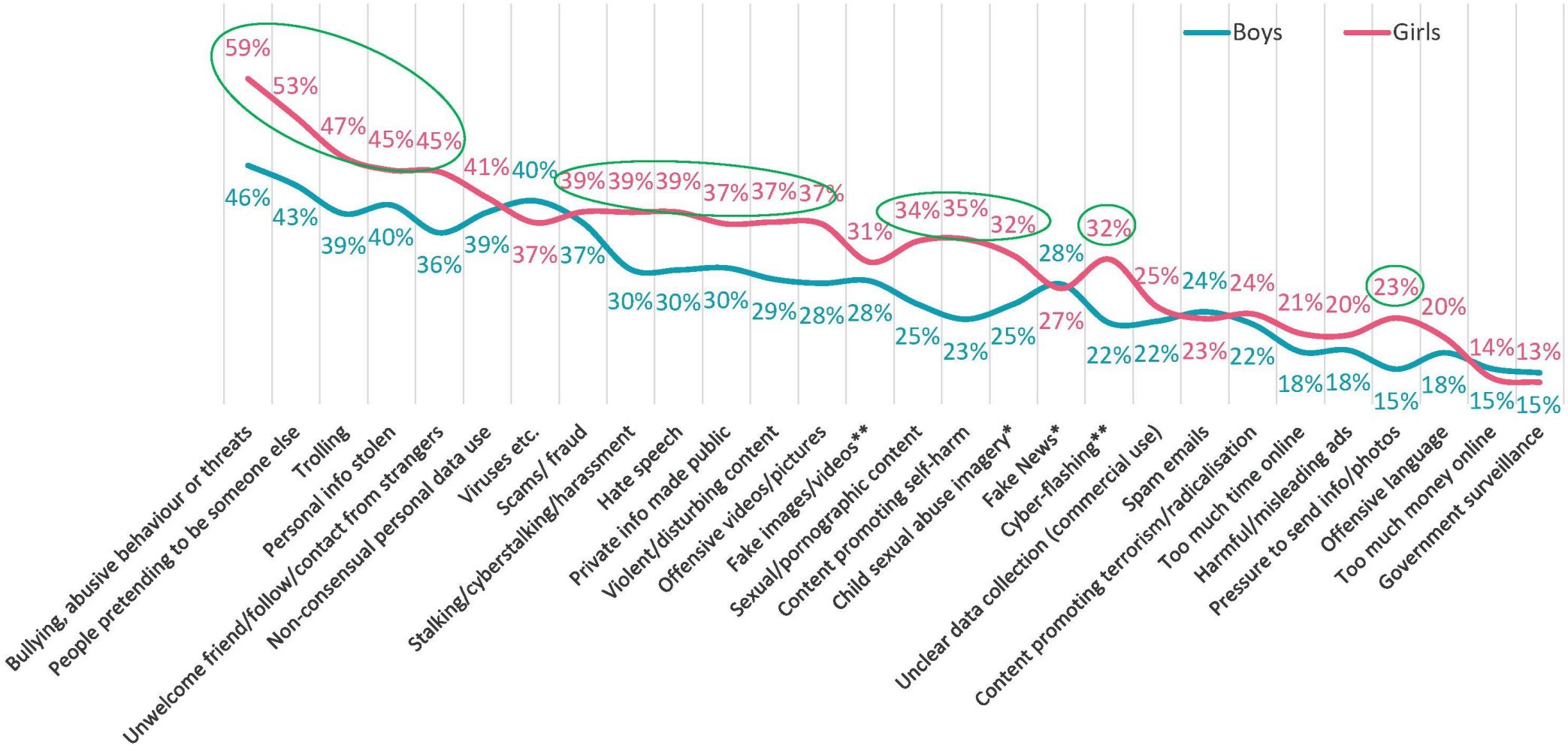
Proportion of children expressing a concern



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020.

14 and 15 year olds are slightly more likely to express concerns about the internet, except for unwelcome friend/follow requests

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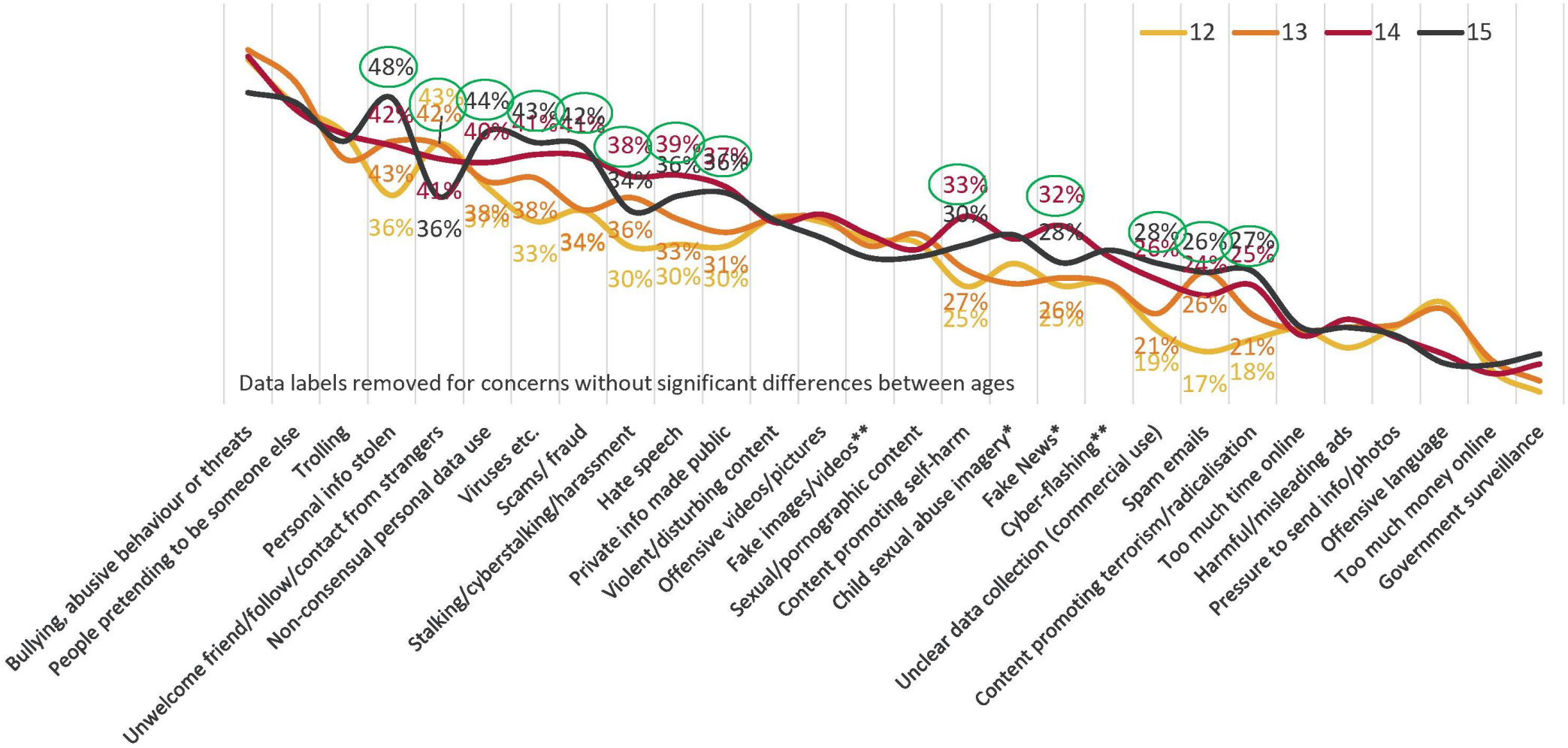
Proportion of children expressing a concern



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

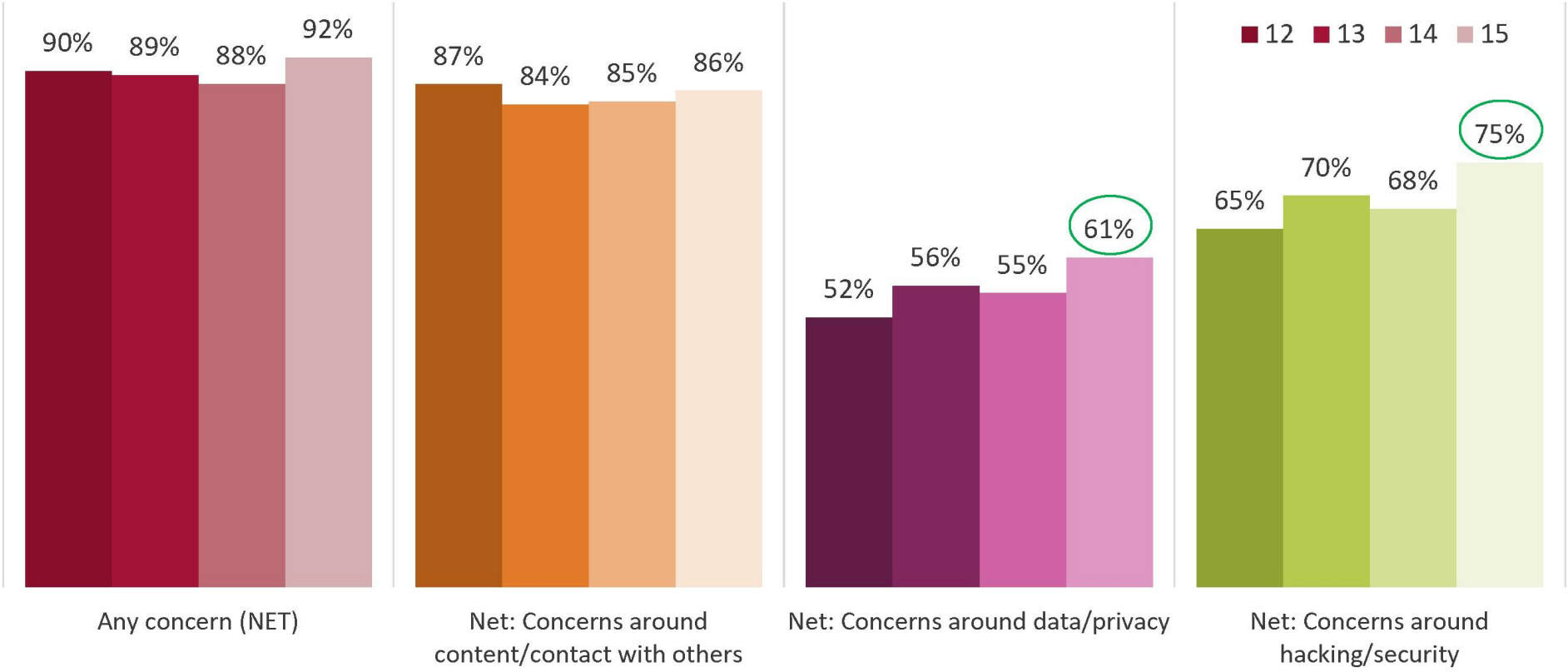
Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020.

15 year olds are significantly more concerned than 12 year olds about data/privacy and hacking/security

Proportion of children expressing a concern



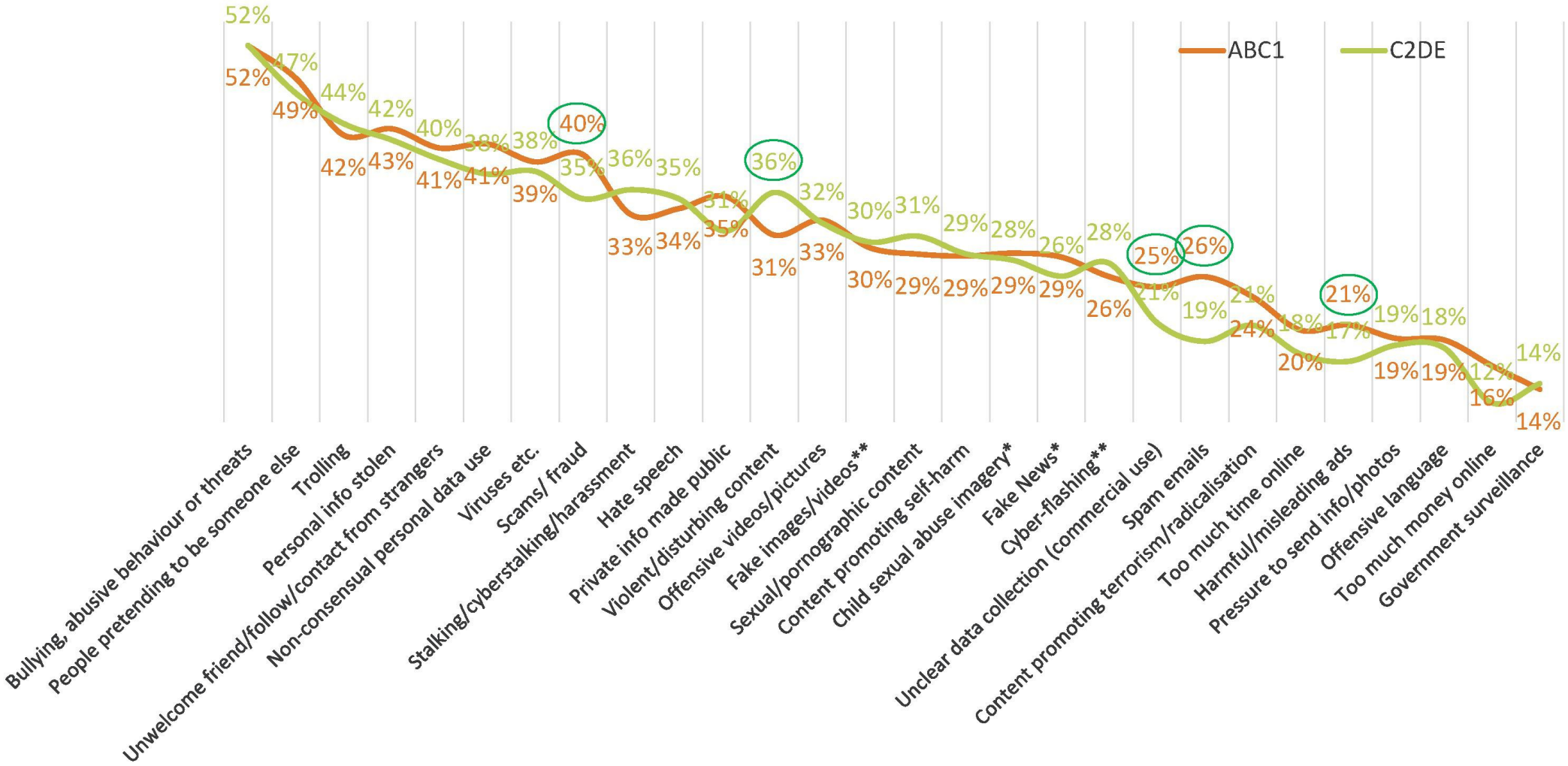
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

SEG tends not to have a big impact on how likely a user was to express concerns

Proportion of children expressing a concern



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

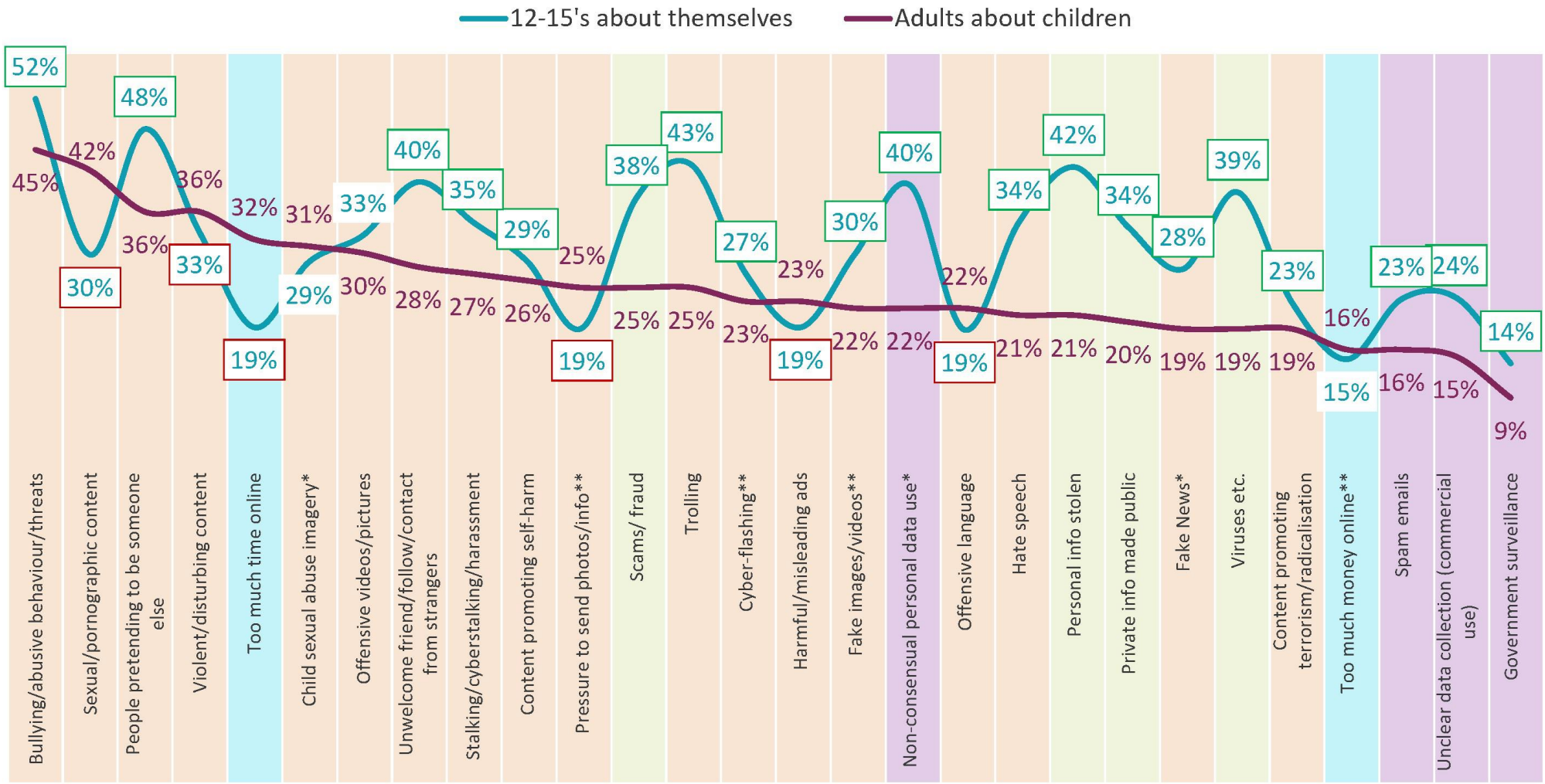
Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020.

Children generally express higher levels of concern for themselves compared with adults on their behalf; notable exceptions being too much time online, sex/pornographic content and pressure to send photos

Adult concern re children vs. children concern about themselves (ranked on adults)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2a. Which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children? Base: All adult internet users (2080)

C2. Which of the following concern you about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Adults with children in the HH are significantly more likely to be concerned for children in relation to most of the potential harms listed

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Adults concern for children vs. children concern about themselves

PROMPTED (ranked on all adults)

	All Children	All Adults	Adults with children in HH	Adults with no children in HH
Bullying/abusive behaviour/threats	52%	45%	54%	41%
Sexual/pornographic content	30%	42%	49%	39%
Violent/disturbing content	33%	36%	43%	32%
People pretending to be someone else	48%	36%	45%	31%
Too much time online	19%	32%	36%	30%
Child sexual abuse imagery *	29%	31%	37%	28%
Offensive videos/pictures	33%	30%	37%	26%
Unwelcome friend/follow/contact from strangers	40%	28%	34%	25%
Stalking/cyberstalking/harassment	35%	27%	34%	24%
Content promoting self-harm	29%	26%	30%	25%
Scams/ fraud	38%	25%	27%	24%
Trolling	43%	25%	32%	21%
Pressure to send photos/info**	19%	25%	30%	22%
Harmful/misleading ads (children: contain untrue info)	19%	23%	26%	22%
Cyber-flashing**	27%	23%	28%	21%
Non-consensual personal data use*	40%	22%	25%	21%
Fake images/videos**	30%	22%	26%	20%
Offensive language (children: swearwords or offensive)	19%	22%	25%	20%
Personal info stolen	42%	21%	26%	19%
Hate speech	34%	21%	23%	21%
Private info made public	34%	20%	22%	19%
Fake News*	28%	19%	20%	19%
Content promoting terrorism/radicalisation	23%	19%	19%	18%
Viruses etc.	39%	19%	21%	18%
Too much money online**	15%	16%	17%	15%
Spam emails	23%	16%	18%	15%
Unclear data collection (commercial use)	24%	15%	17%	14%
Government surveillance	14%	9%	10%	8%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: Which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children? Base: All adult internet users (2080)

C2. Which of the following concern you about the internet ? Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

At a total level, bullying is of concern for more than half of both adults and children. Data misuse (personal info stolen, scams, fraud) is of greater concern to adults

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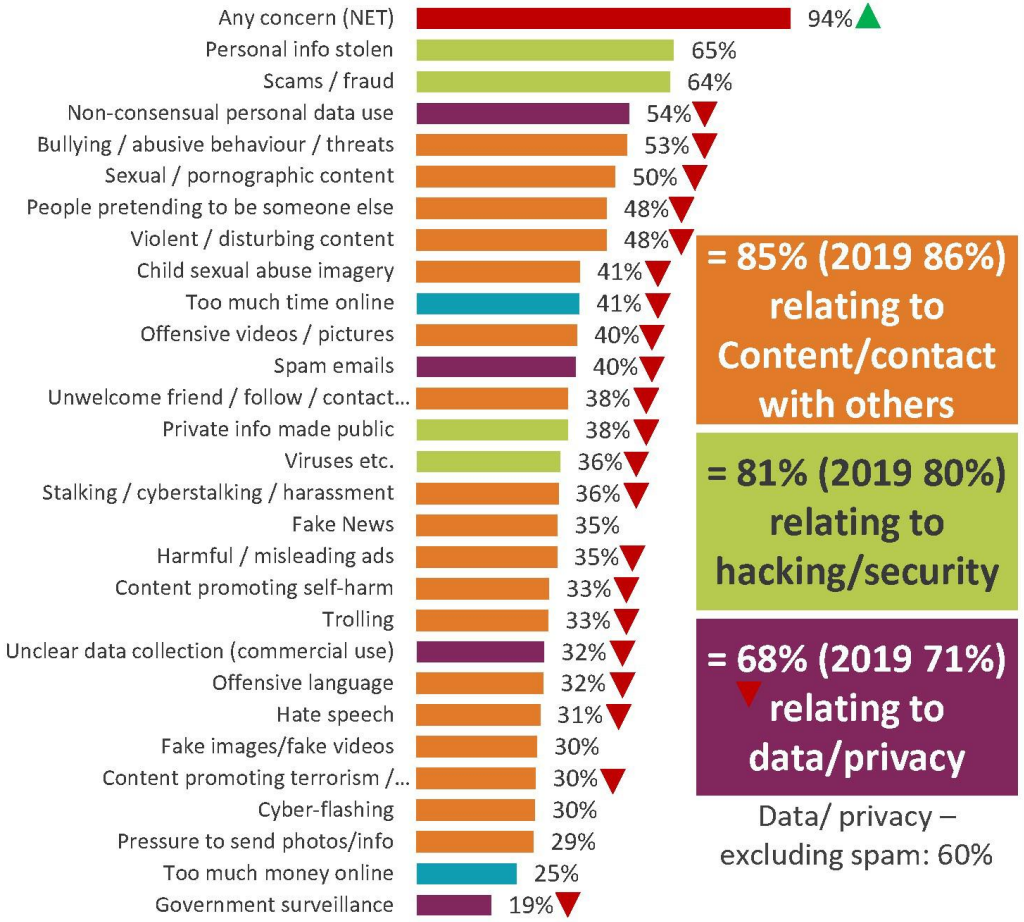
*Total concerns

Adults



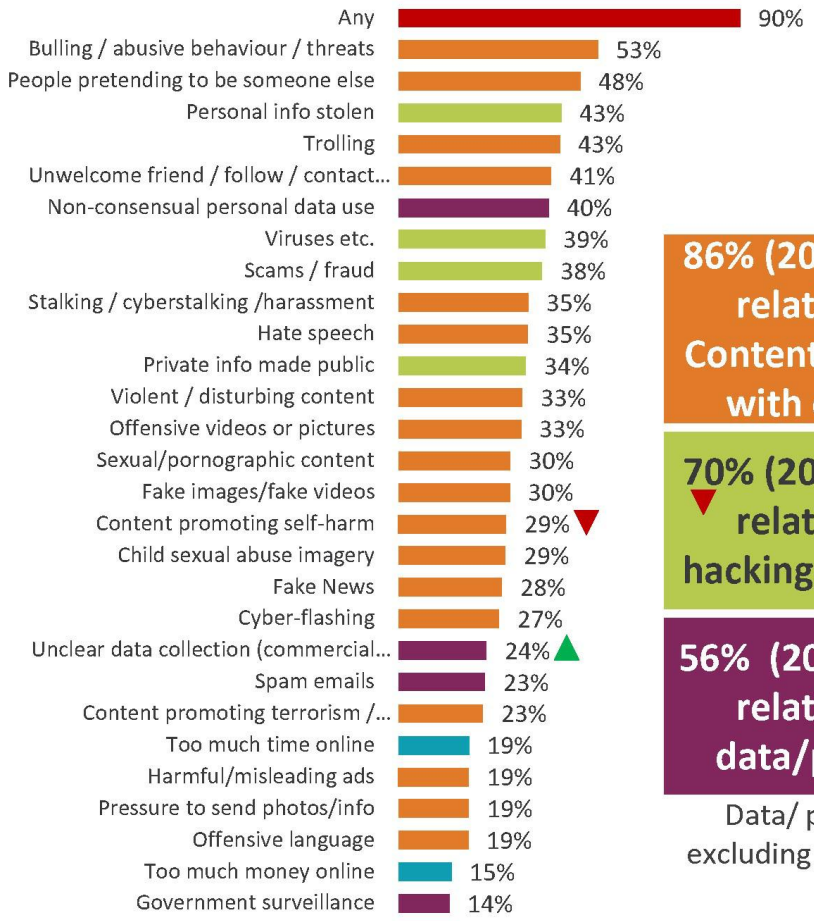
= 85% (2019 86%) relating to Content/contact with others

= 81% (2019 80%) relating to hacking/security

= 68% (2019 71%) relating to data/privacy

Data/ privacy – excluding spam: 60%

Children aged 12-15



86% (2019: 87%) relating to Content/contact with others

70% (2019: 74%) relating to hacking/security

56% (2019: 56%) relating to data/privacy

Data/ privacy – excluding spam: 49%

Significantly higher/lower than 2019

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

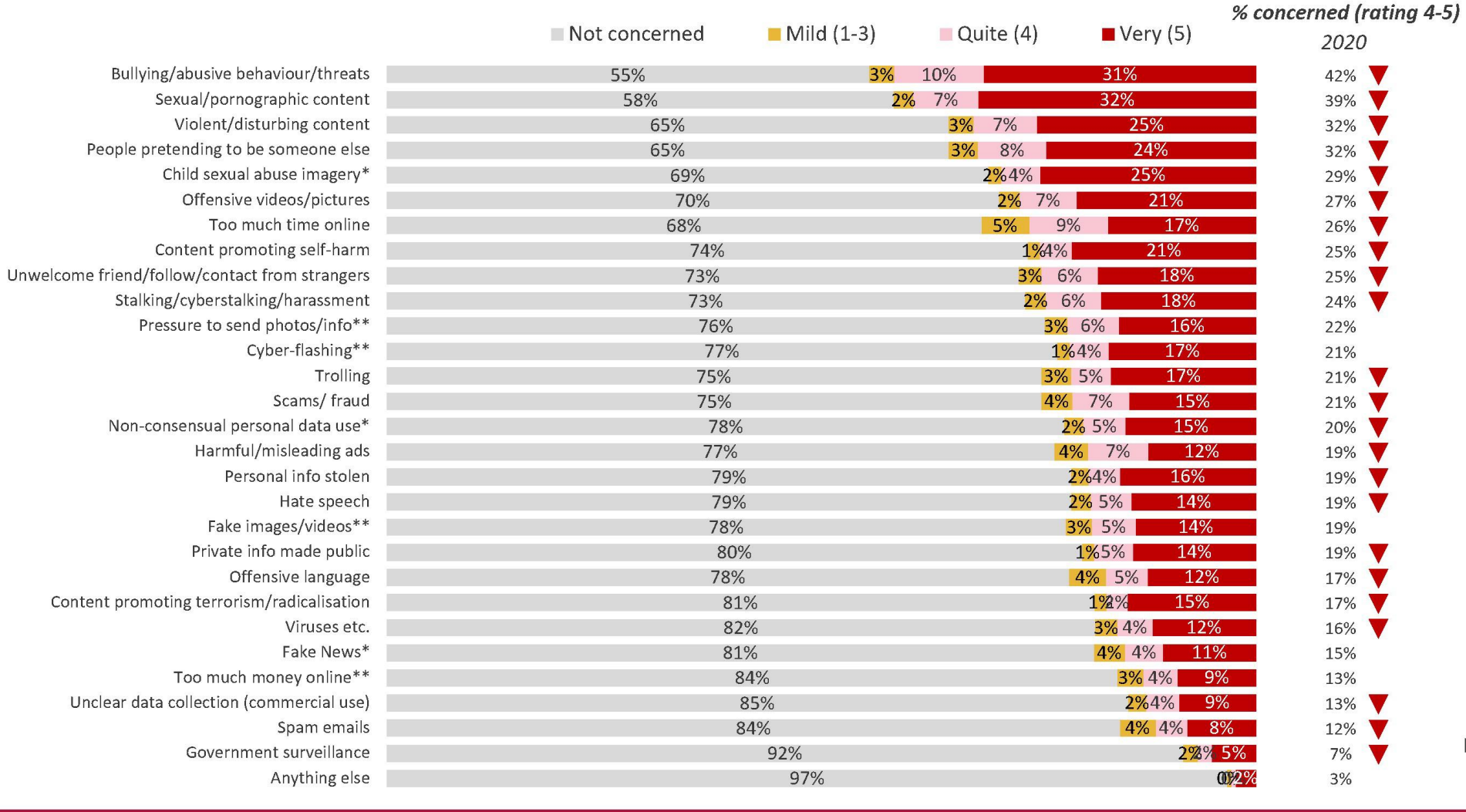
Question: C1. Do you have any concerns about the internet ? (Responses coded into list). C2a/b Which of the following concern you in relation to children/more generally. C4. Which if any of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last year?

Base: All adult internet users 2020. *TOTAL CONCERNS IS ANY UNPROMPTED, PROMPTED IN RELATION TO CHILDREN OR GENERALLY

Base: All children 12-15 2020. *TOTAL CONCERNS IS ANY UNPROMPTED OR PROMPTED IN RELATION TO THEMSELVES

Adults are most concerned about bullying and sexual/ pornographic content in relation to children – followed by violent/disturbing content and people pretending to be someone else

Level of concern (amongst total adult sample) in relation to children



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

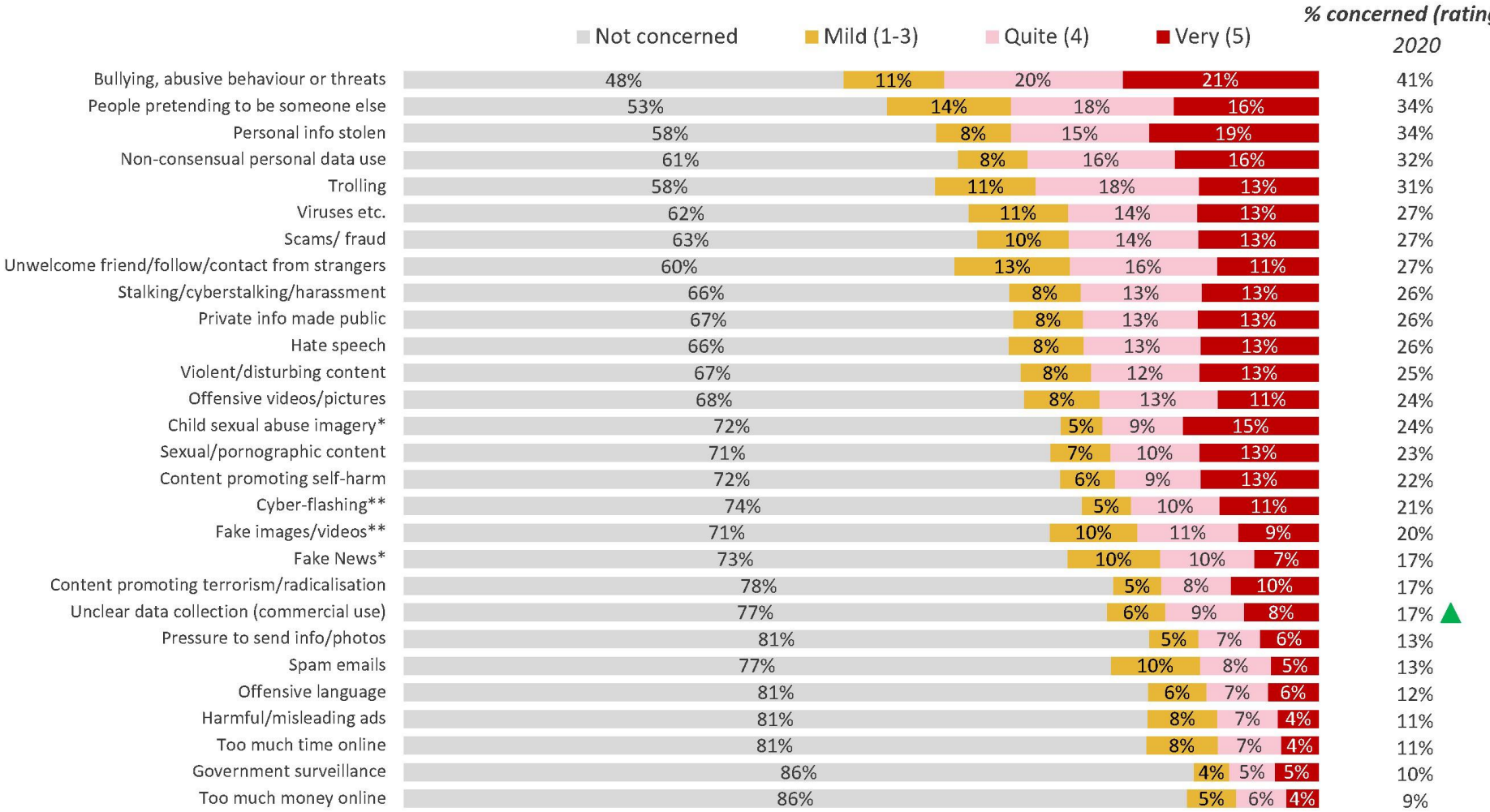
Question: C3a) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about in relation to children. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each.

Base: All adult internet users (2080).

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Notable that children have less strong concerns for themselves vs. adult concerns about children. They are most concerned about bullying, people pretending to be someone else and personal information theft

Level of concern (amongst all children 12-15)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C3) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each.

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Most issues highlighted cause a significant level of concern. In particular, adults are concerned about child sexual abuse images, sexual/ pornographic content and content promoting self harm

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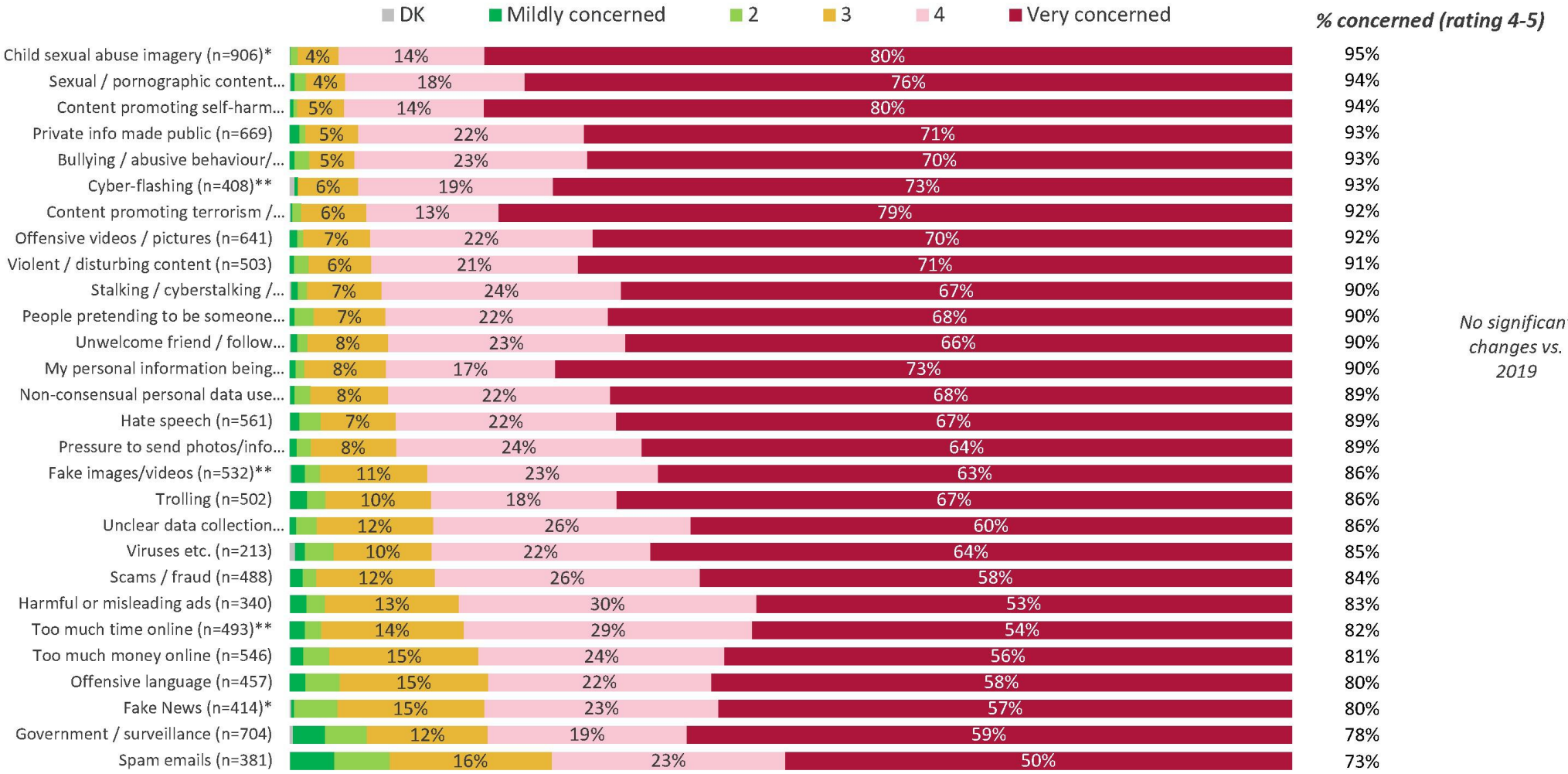
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲▼

Level of concern (amongst those concerned about each) in relation to children



No significant changes vs. 2019

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C3a) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about in relation to children. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each.

Base: All adult internet users (2080) who are concerned about each element (bases as shown)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Levels of concern tend to be lower amongst 12-15 year olds (compared to the adults). They are most concerned about images of child sexual abuse and content promoting self-harm

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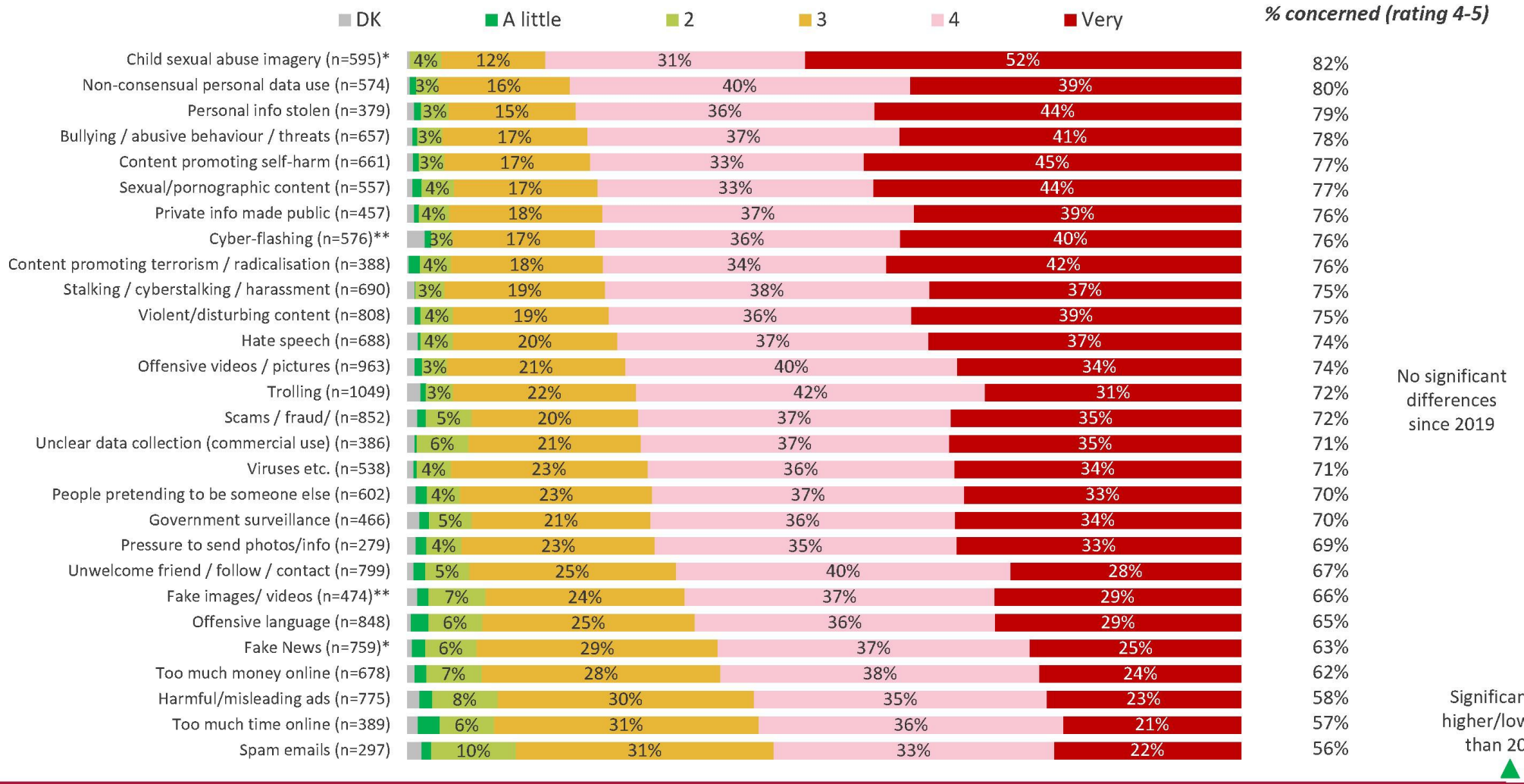
Level of concern (amongst those concerned about each) children about themselves



No significant differences since 2019

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C3) I am now going to read out the areas you are concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each.

Base: All children 12-15 (2001) who are concerned about each element (bases as shown)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Section 1
Concerns about using the internet
C) Prompted concerns more generally (amongst adult internet users 16+)

INQ000615301_0161

As in 2019, adults have a higher level of concern in relation to the protection of their personal data, as well as scams /frauds. However, the average no. of concerns and most levels of concern have fallen, likely because of the different news environment at the time of fieldwork

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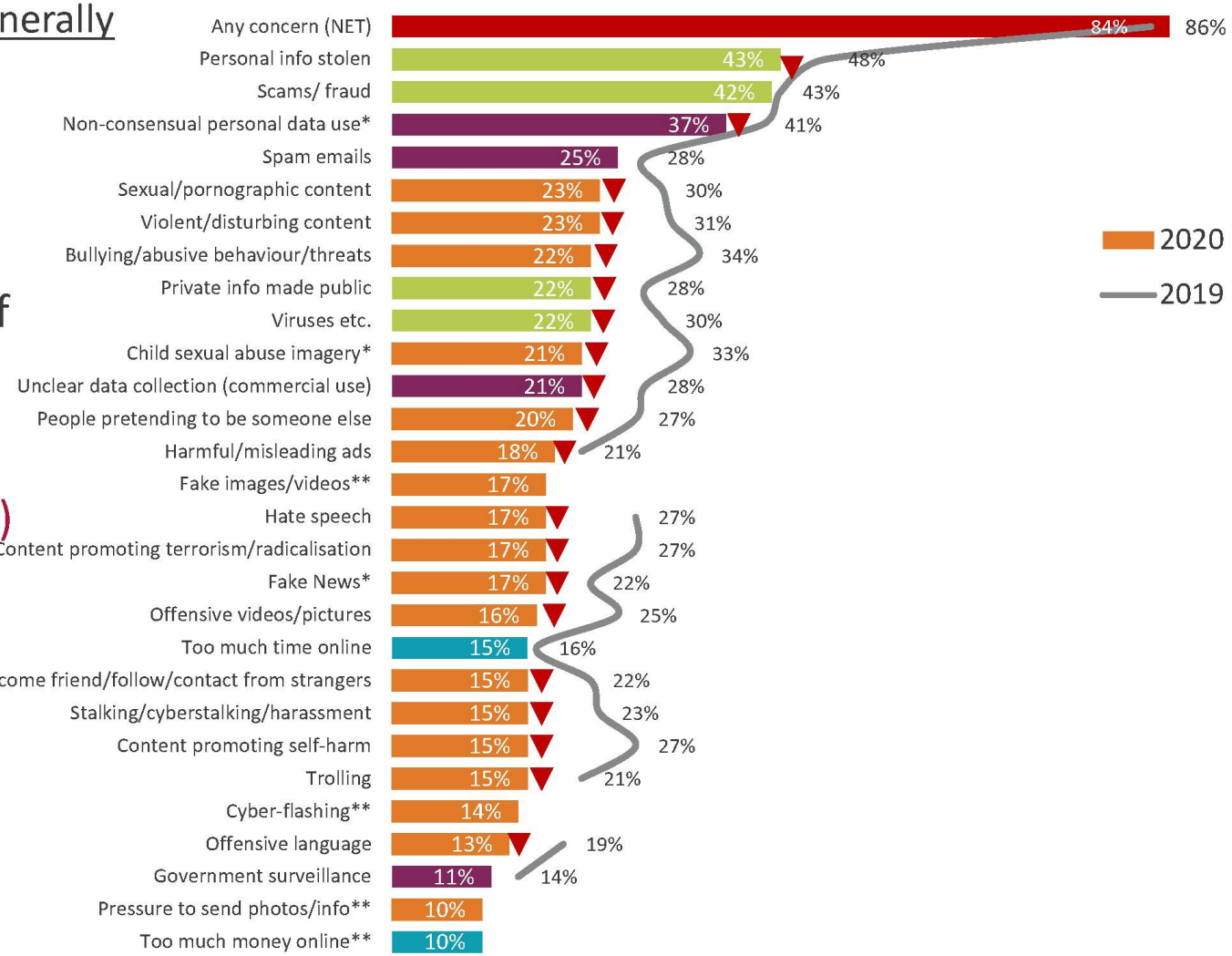
Concerns generally



Average number of concerns:

5.6

(2019: 6.7)

▼ = 64% (2019 69%) relating to hacking/security

▼ = 62% (2019 68%) relating to Content/contact with others

= 53% (2019 57%) relating to data/privacy

Data/ privacy – excluding spam: 46%

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

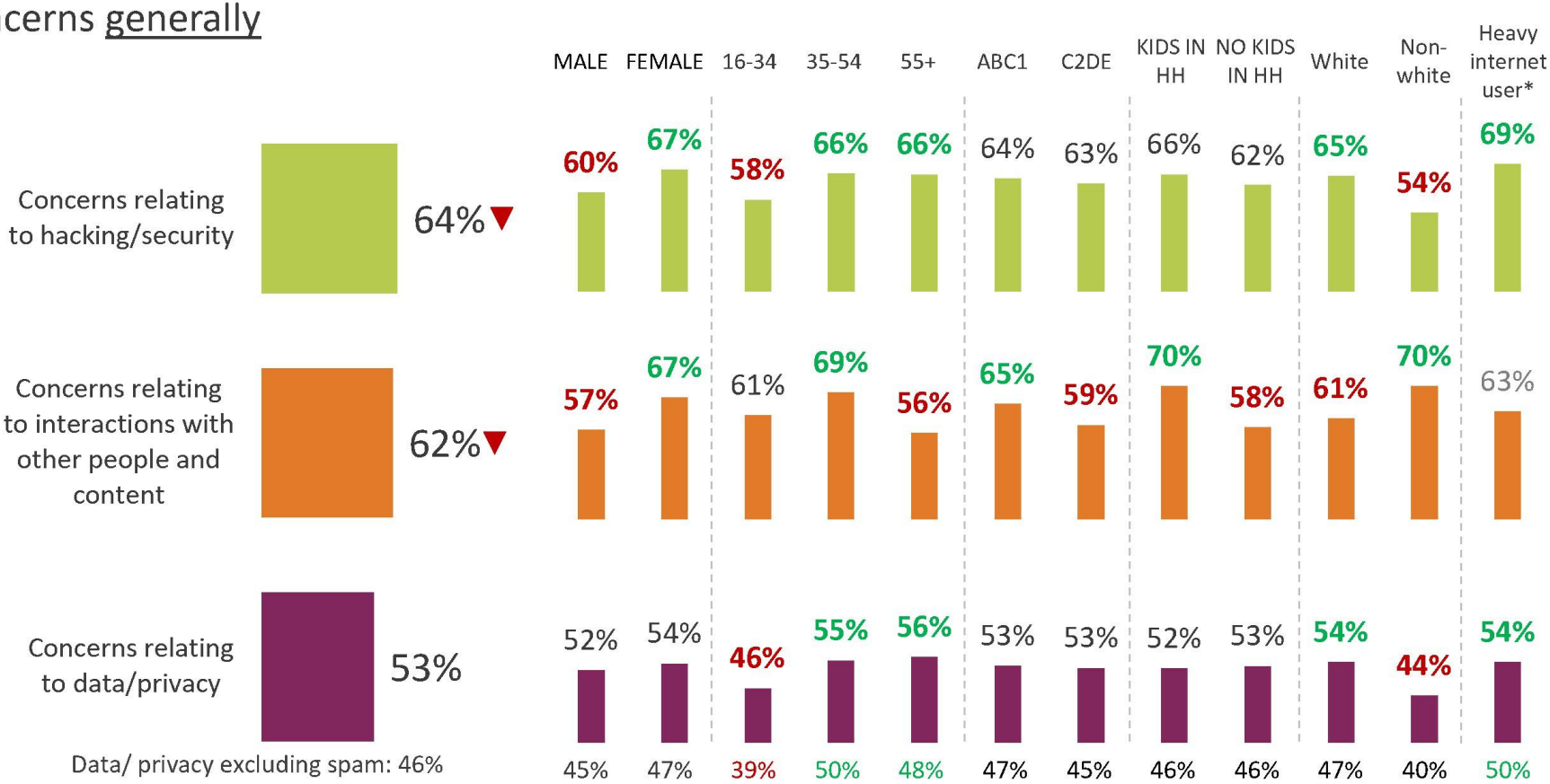
Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080), 2019 (2057)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Females are more concerned about hacking/security and interactions with other people. 35+ are more concerned about hacking/security and data/privacy issues

Concerns generally



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

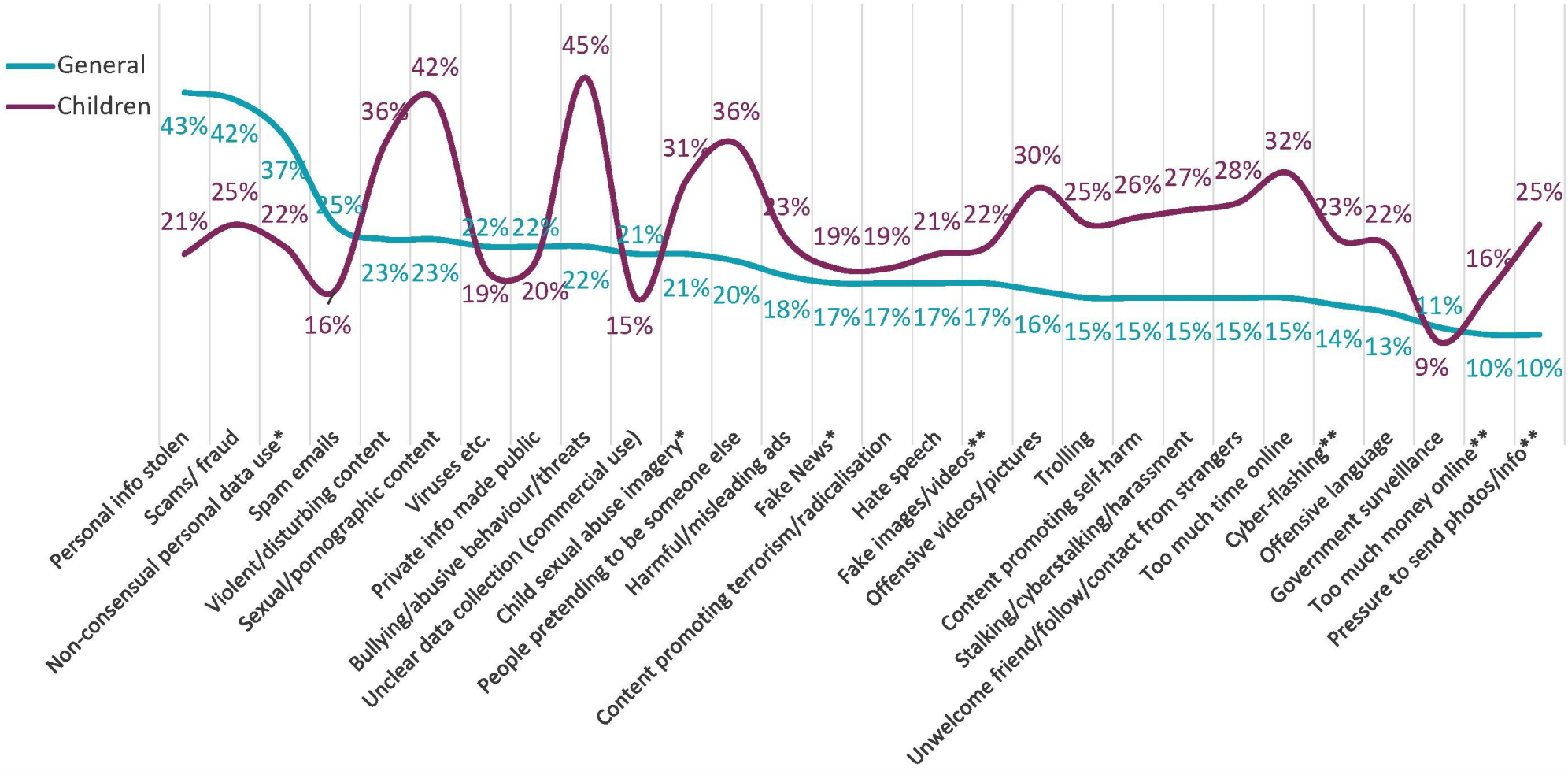
Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080), 2019 (2057)

*Heavy internet user 5+ hours weekdays AND 10+ hours weekends

Adults are more concerned about most potential online harms in relation to children, especially bullying and the suitability of online content. They are more concerned about data protection and scams/fraud in relation to themselves

Concern re children vs. general concern (any concern)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

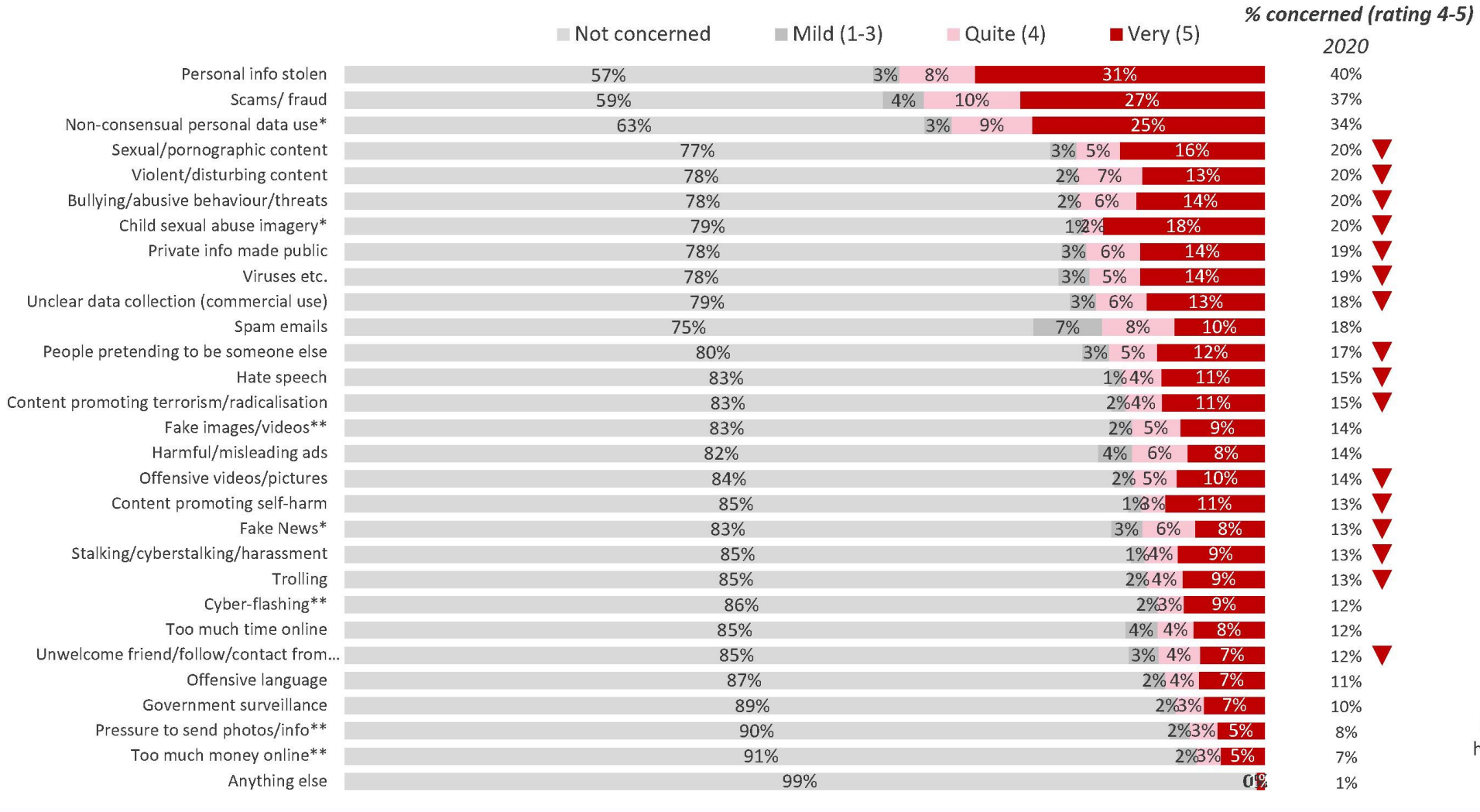
Question: C2a) Firstly, which, if any, of the following concern you in relation to children? C2b) And which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

As noted in 2019, if an issue has been selected as a concern, then adults are very/quite concerned about it

Level of concern (amongst total sample) generally



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C3b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each

Base: All adult internet users (2080)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Despite a reduction since 2019, almost all of those who said they are concerned by child sexual abuse material on the internet are VERY concerned by it

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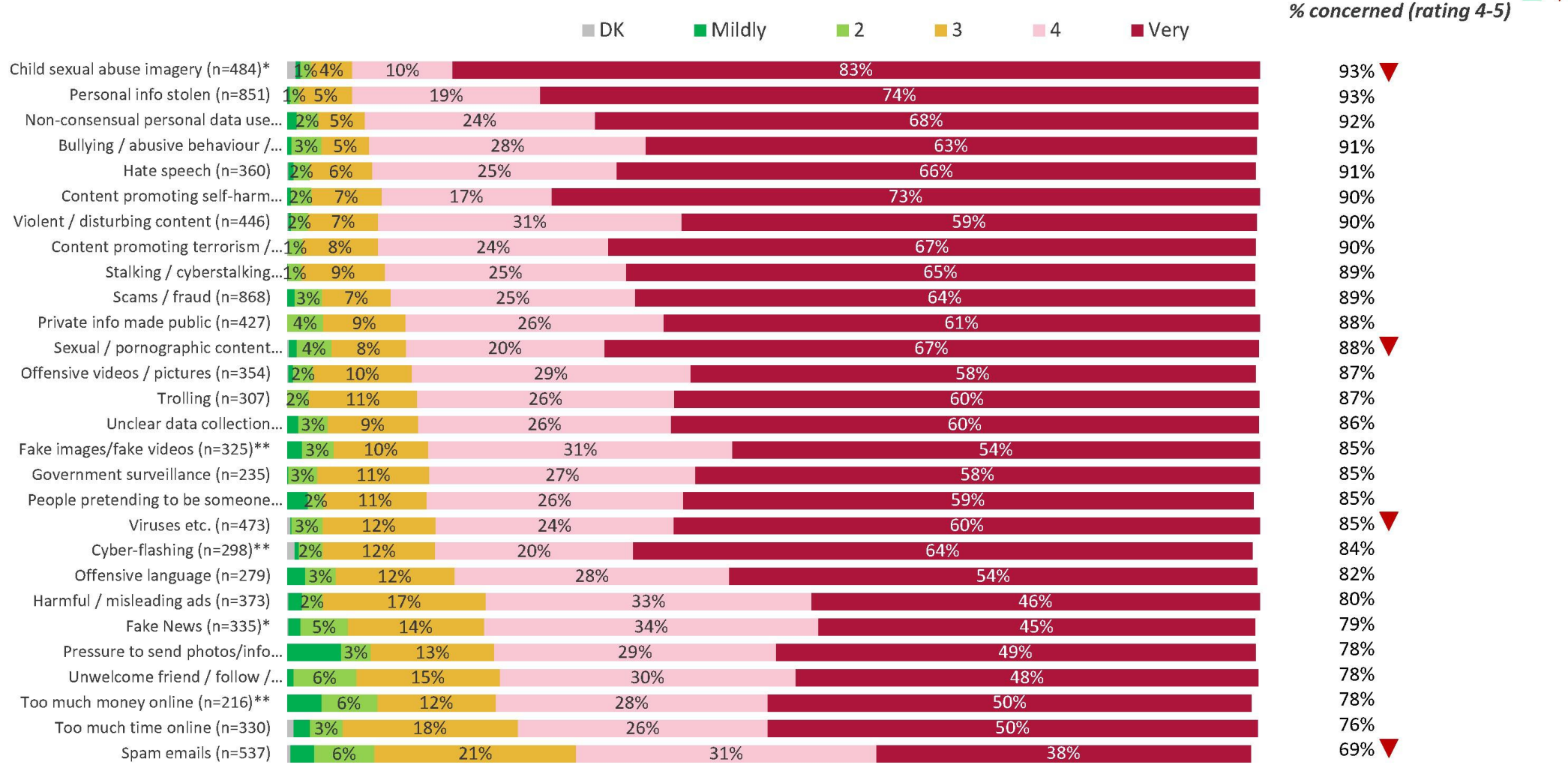
Level of concern (amongst those concerned about each) generally

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C3b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each

Base: All adult internet users (2080) who are concerned about each element (bases as shown)
*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Section 2
Reported experience of potential harms
A) Incidence of experiences

As in 2019, 3 in 5 adults and 4 in 5 12-15 year olds say they have had potentially harmful experiences online in the last 12 months. Experiences relating to interactions with other people or content remain much higher amongst children

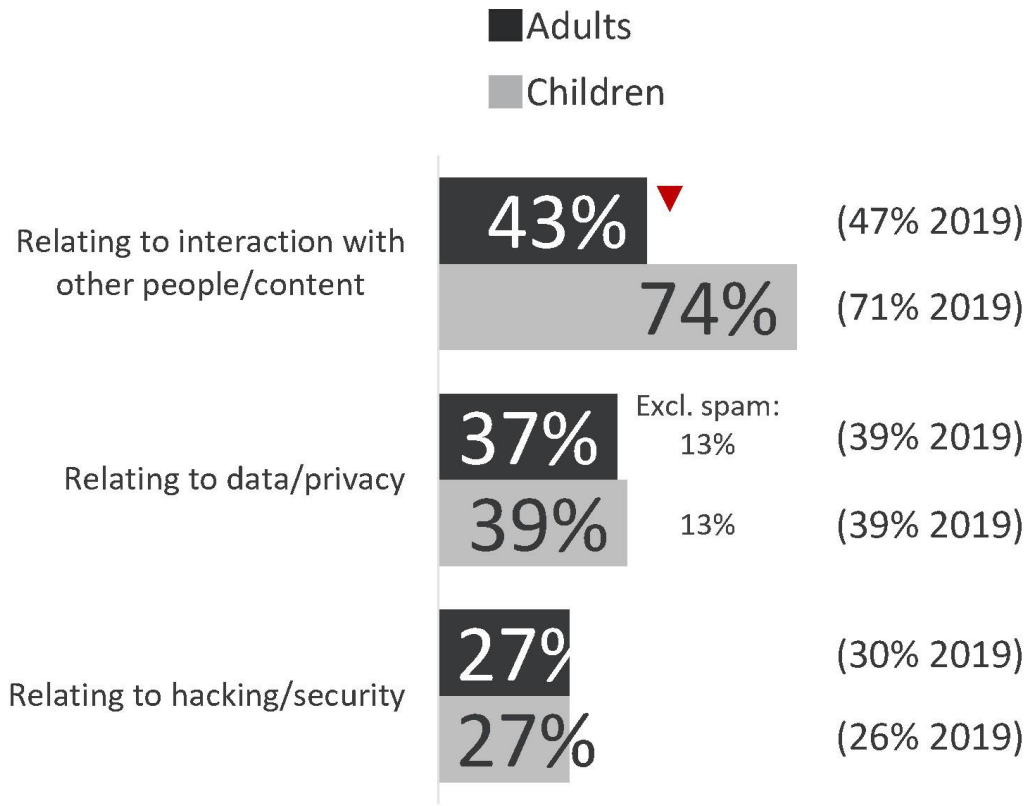
Experienced potential online harm

62% (61% 2019)

Of adults have had **potentially harmful online experiences** in the last 12 months

81% (79% 2019)

Of children (12-15) had **potentially harmful online experiences** in the last 12 months



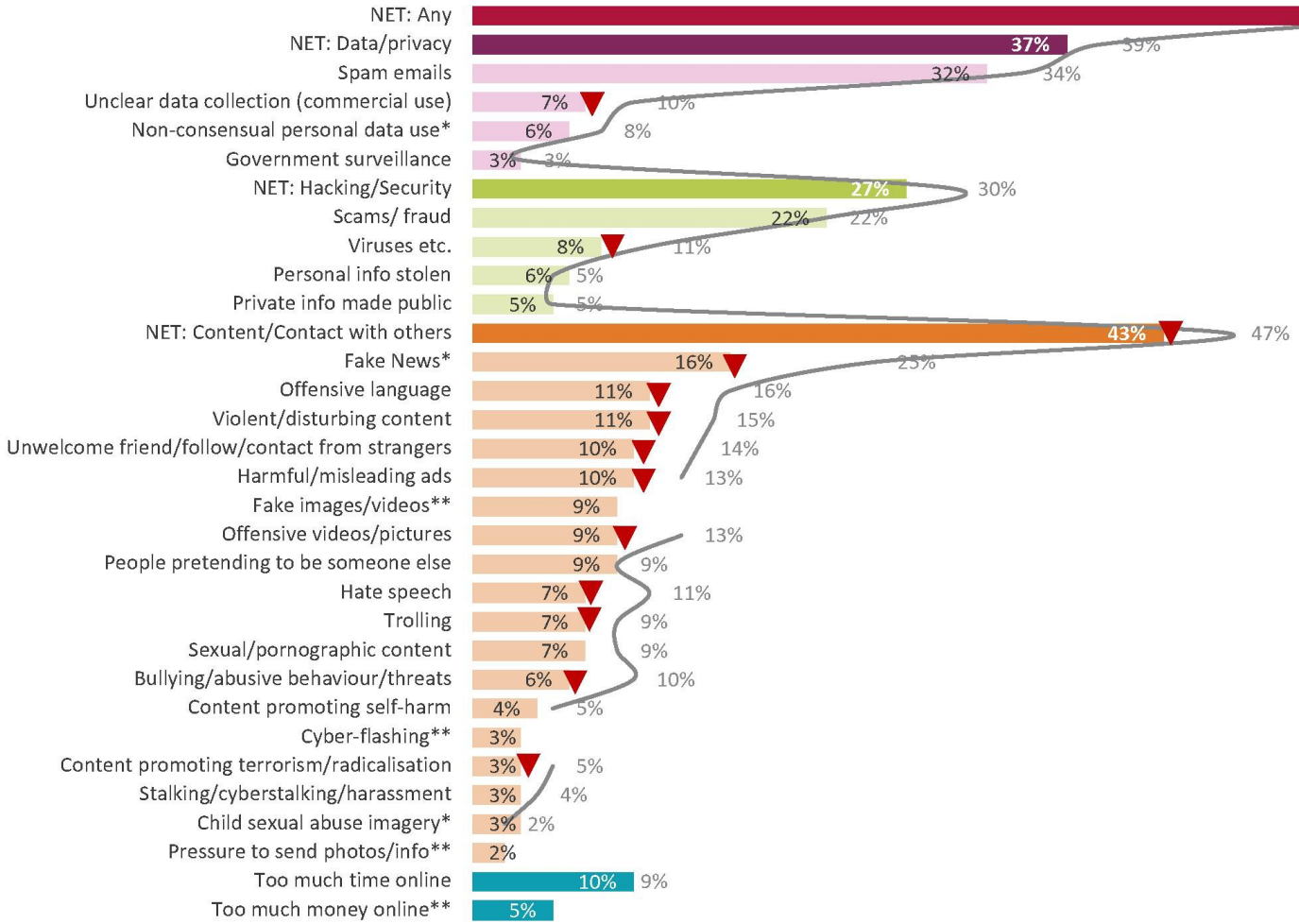
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" March 2019
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057) All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1002)

INQ000615301_0168

Spam emails, scams/fraud and fake news are the most likely to be experienced by adults. Potential online harms experienced are generally lower in relation to the interactions with other people/content compared to last year

Potential online harm experienced



Younger people, those spending more time online (weekday time spent online), those with children and ABC1 are most likely to have experienced potential online harms:

	16 – 34	35 – 54	55+
ANY	69%	67%	51%

	2 hours of less	5 hours of less	10 hours of less
ANY	53%	68%	75%

	Children in HH	No children in HH
ANY	70%	58%

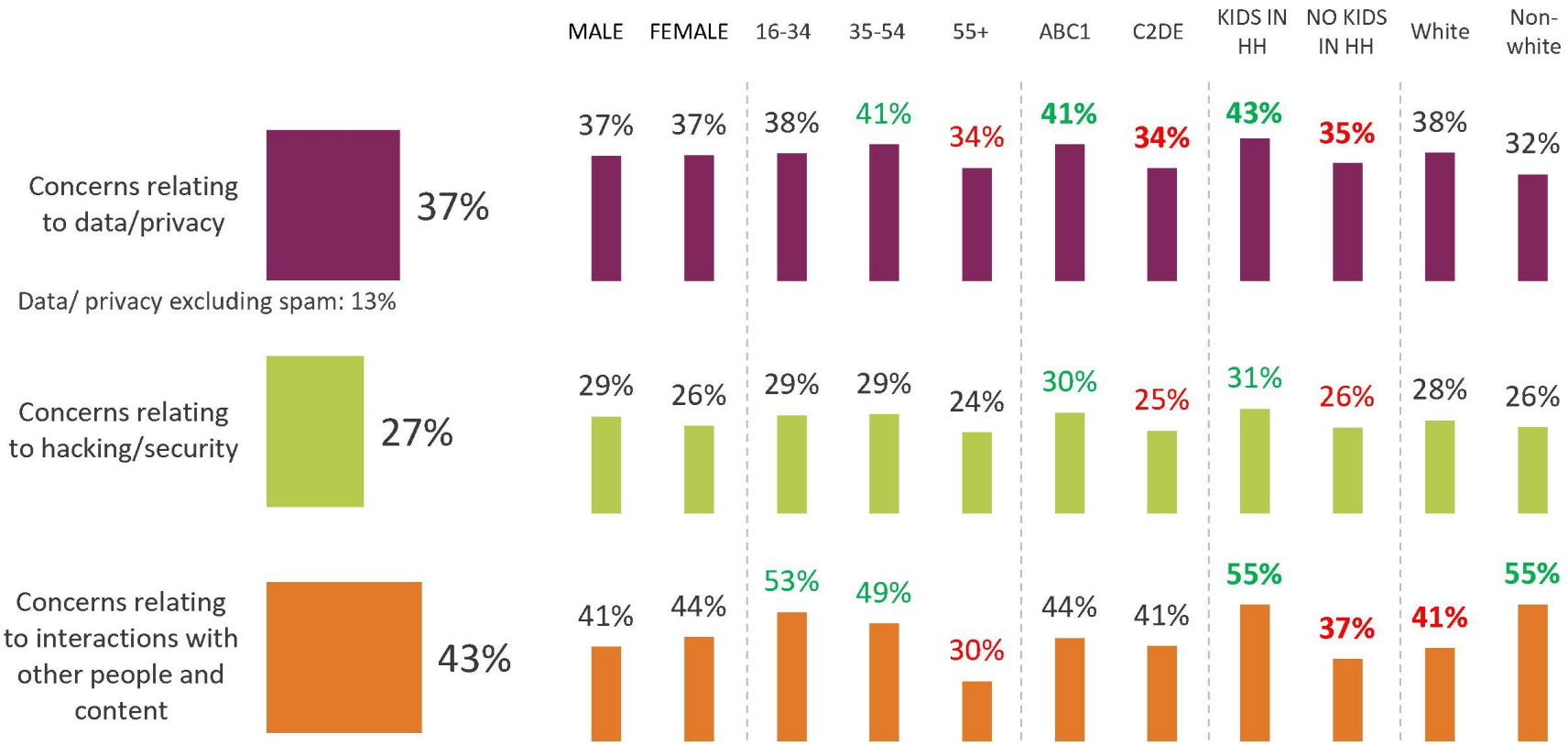
	ABC1	C2DE
ANY	65%	58%

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057).
*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

16-54s, ABC1's and those with children in their household are more likely to have experienced potential harms

Potential online harm experienced



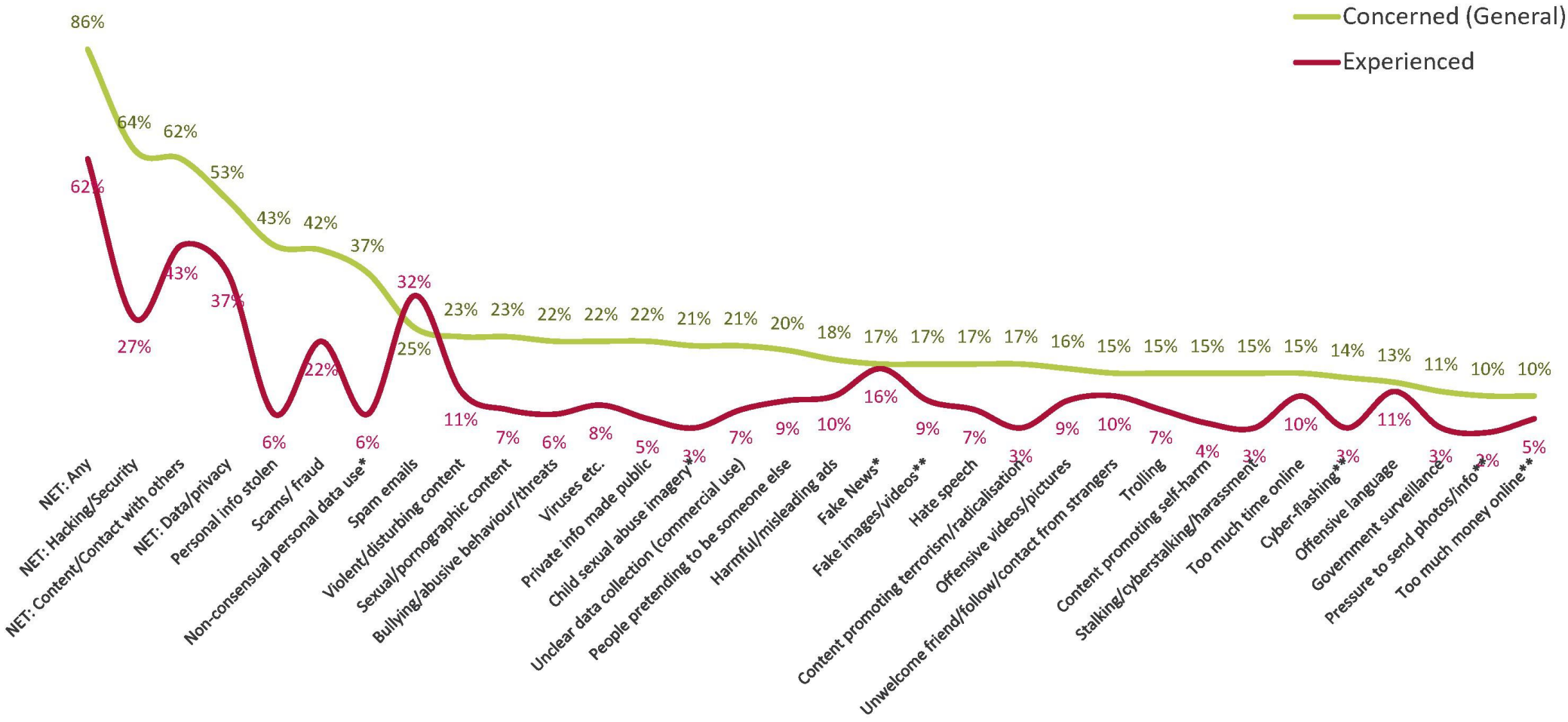
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

INQ000615301_0170

As in 2019, spam emails are the only potential harm where respondents have experienced them more than they are concerned about them

Experience vs. general concern (prompted)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

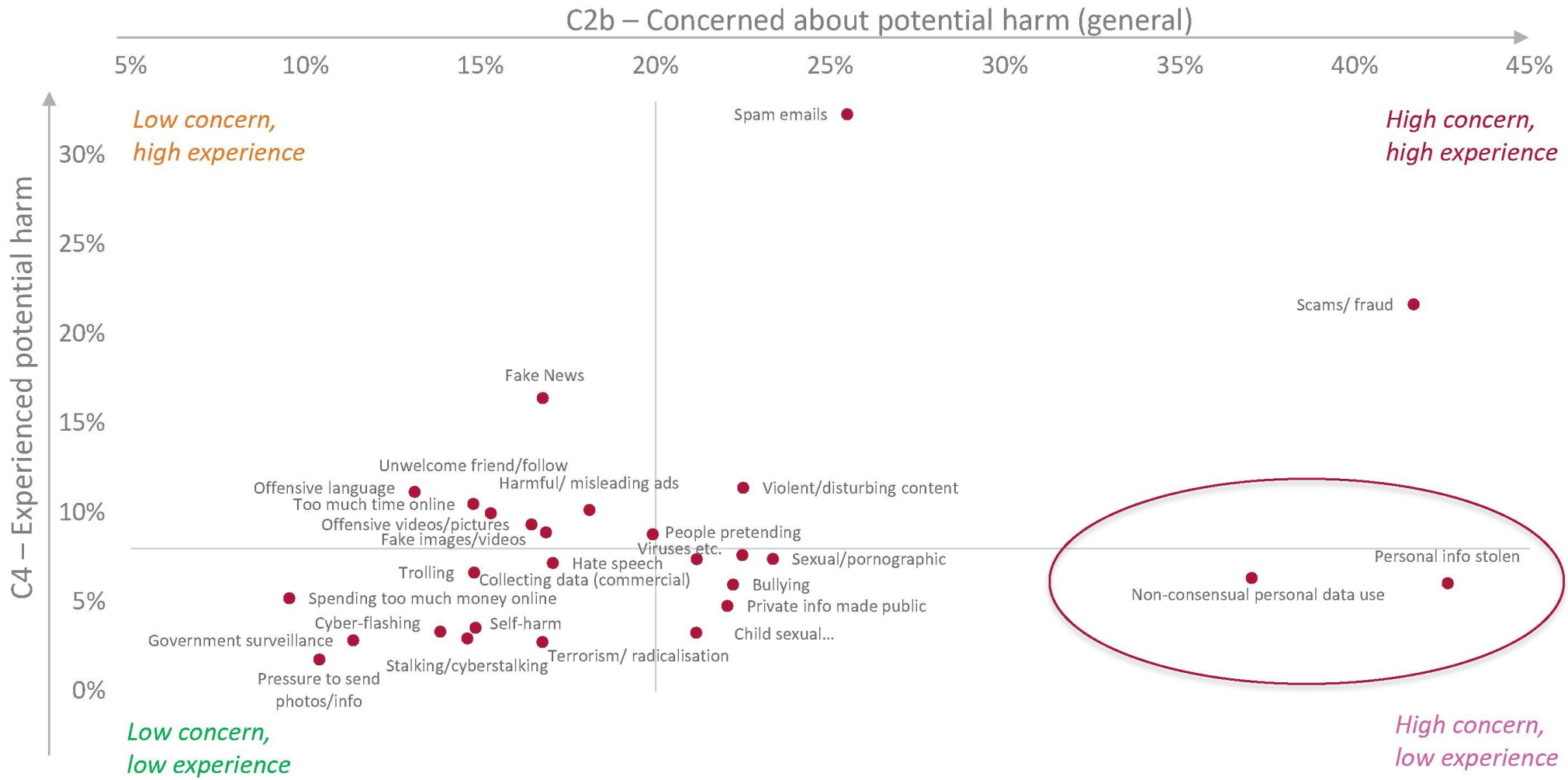
Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally? C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080), 2019 (2057)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Relatively few adults have experienced the key concerns of personal information being stolen and non-consensual data use

Relationship between concern (general) and actual experience of potential harm



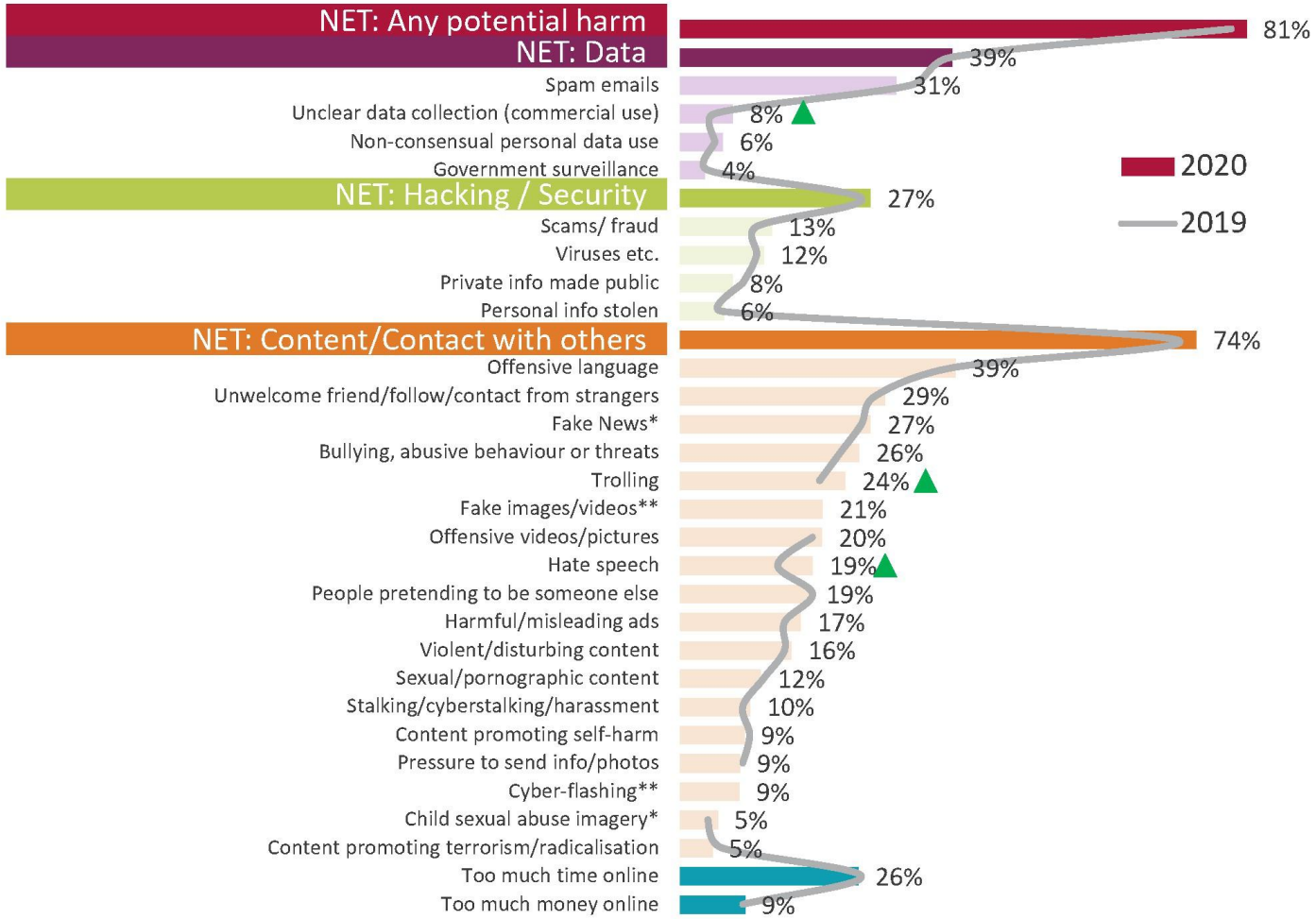
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each PROMPTED C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All adult internet users (2080)

Offensive language remains the most common potential harm experienced by 12-15 year olds, followed by spam emails, unwelcome friend requests and fake news. Just over a quarter have come across bullying

Potential online harm experienced



17% answered "none of these". 2% answered 'don't know'.

There is generally a correlation between being more confident internet users, visiting more different sites and the likelihood to have experienced a potential harm

Boys experienced more than girls:
- *Offensive language – 42% vs. 37%*
- *Spend too much money online – 12% vs. 7%*

Girls experienced more than boys:
- *Unwelcome friend/follow –34% vs. 25%*
- *Bullying – 28% vs. 23%*

ABC1s experienced more than C2DEs
- *NET data/privacy – 43% vs. 34%*
- *Spam emails – 34% vs. 28%*

C2DEs experienced more than ABC1s
- *Hate speech – 22% vs. 17%*

DEs experienced more than average
- *Bullying – 30% vs. 26%*

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you experienced or seen on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED
Base: All children 12-15 (2001).
*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Although girls tend to be more concerned than boys about potential online harms, there is less of a gap around (most) experiences. Notable exceptions include *follow requests from strangers* and *bullying*, which are more likely to be experienced by girls and *offensive language* which is more likely to be experienced by boys

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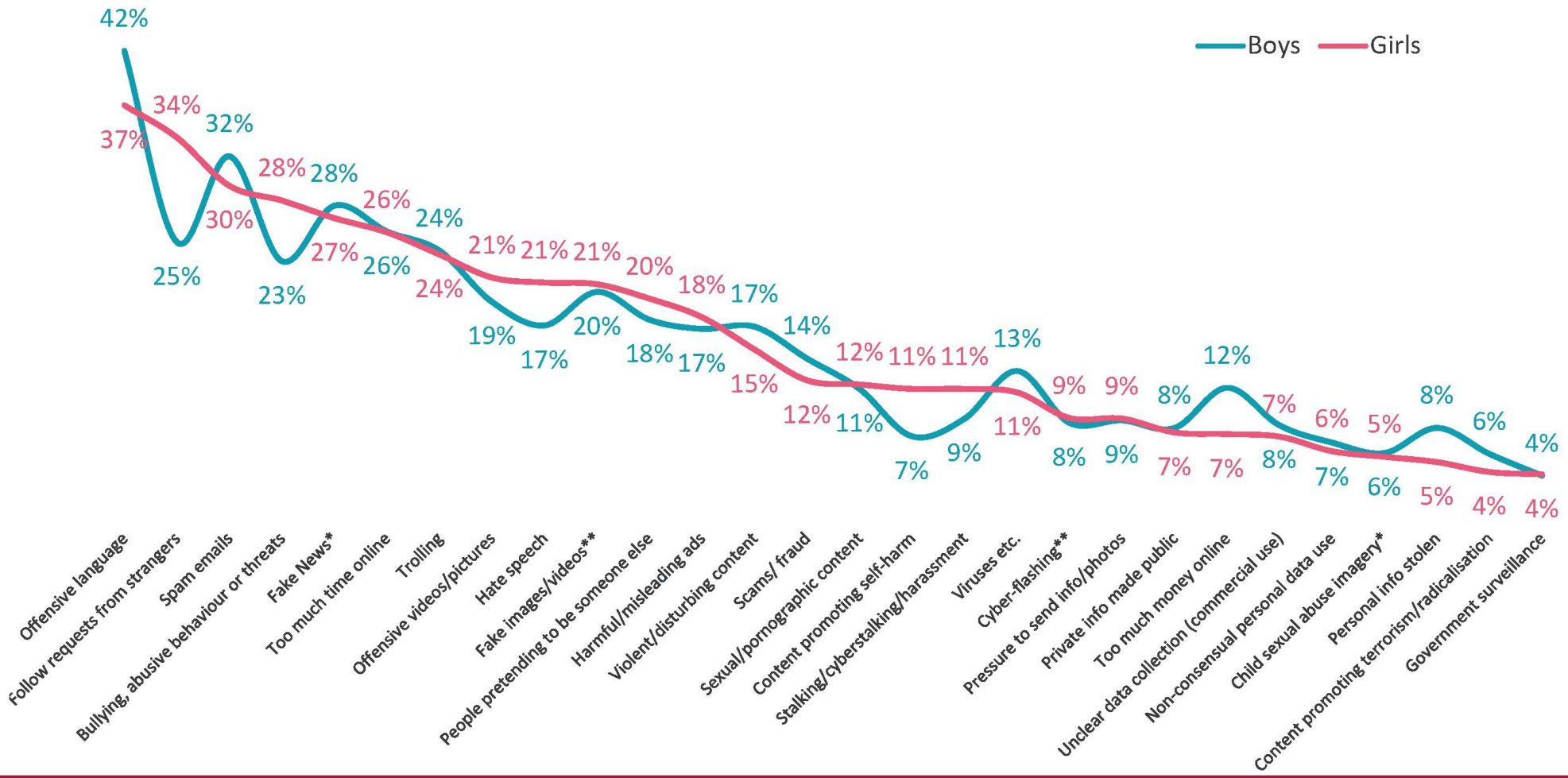
Potential online harm experienced



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you experienced or seen on the internet in the last year? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

As in 2019, 4 in 10 children have experienced offensive language online in the last 12 months, significantly more than the proportion that are concerned about it

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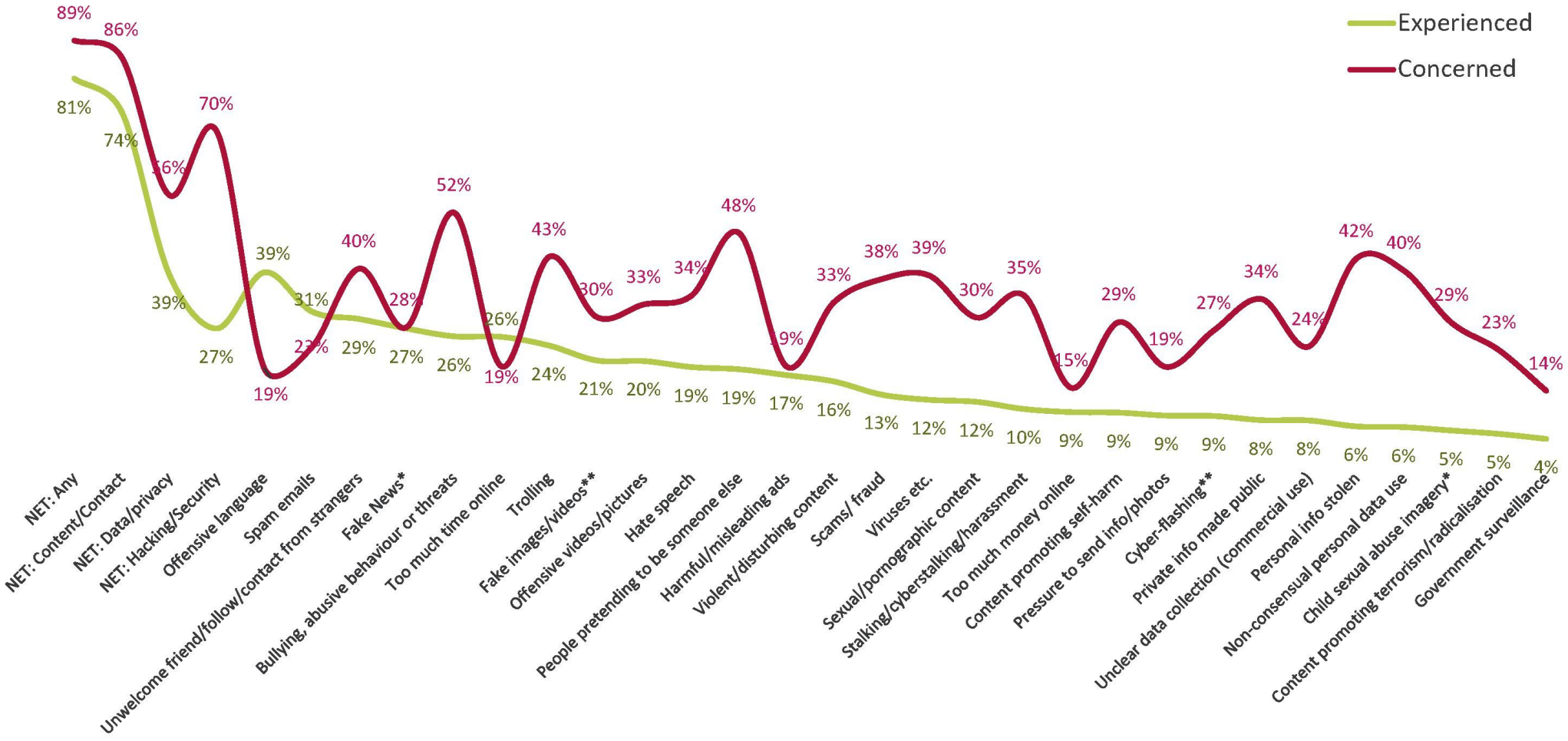
Experience vs. concern (prompted)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

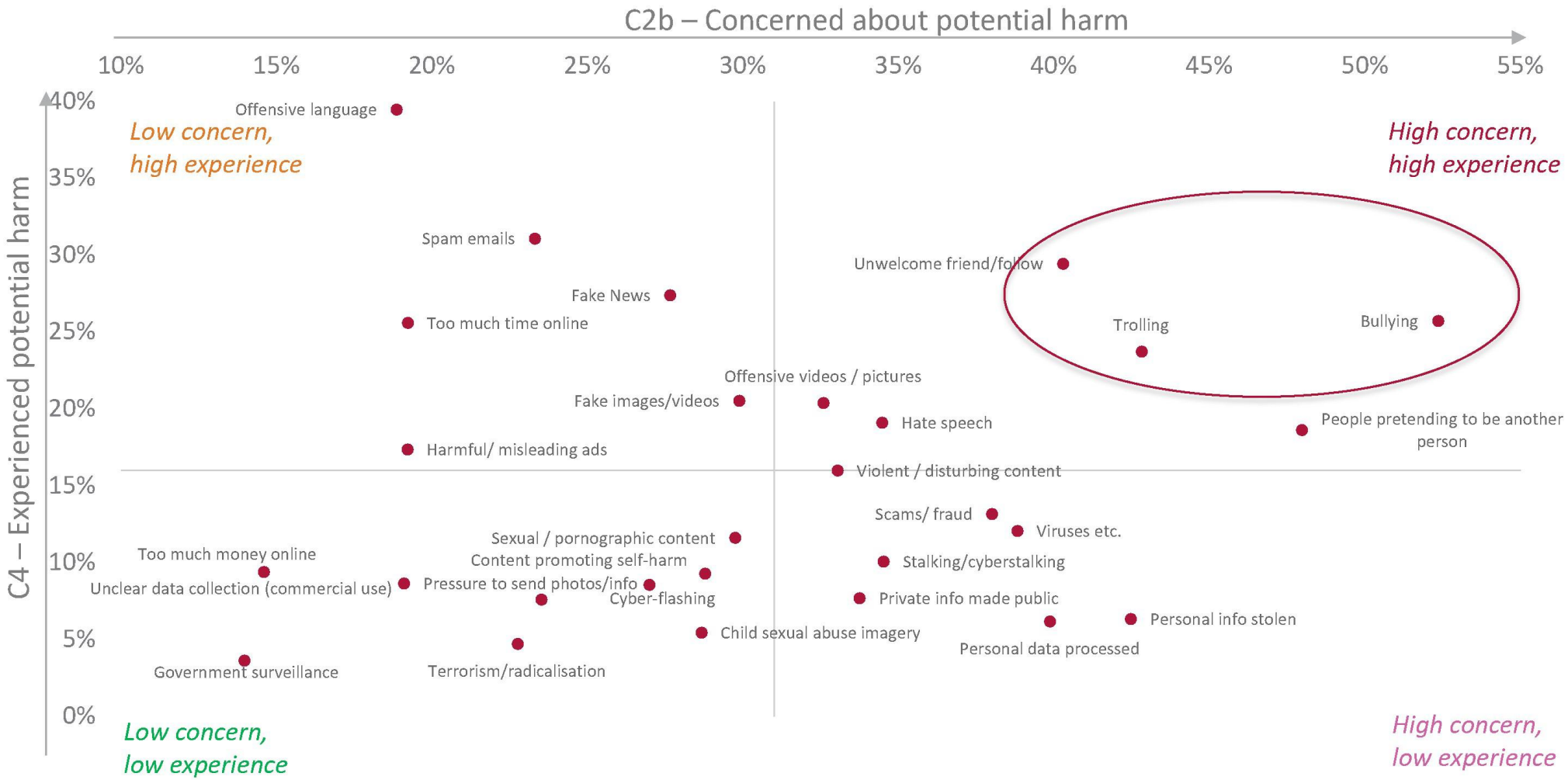
Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Unwelcome friend requests, bullying and trolling are all relatively frequently experienced and are of high concern amongst 12-15 year olds

Relationship between concern and actual experience of potential harm



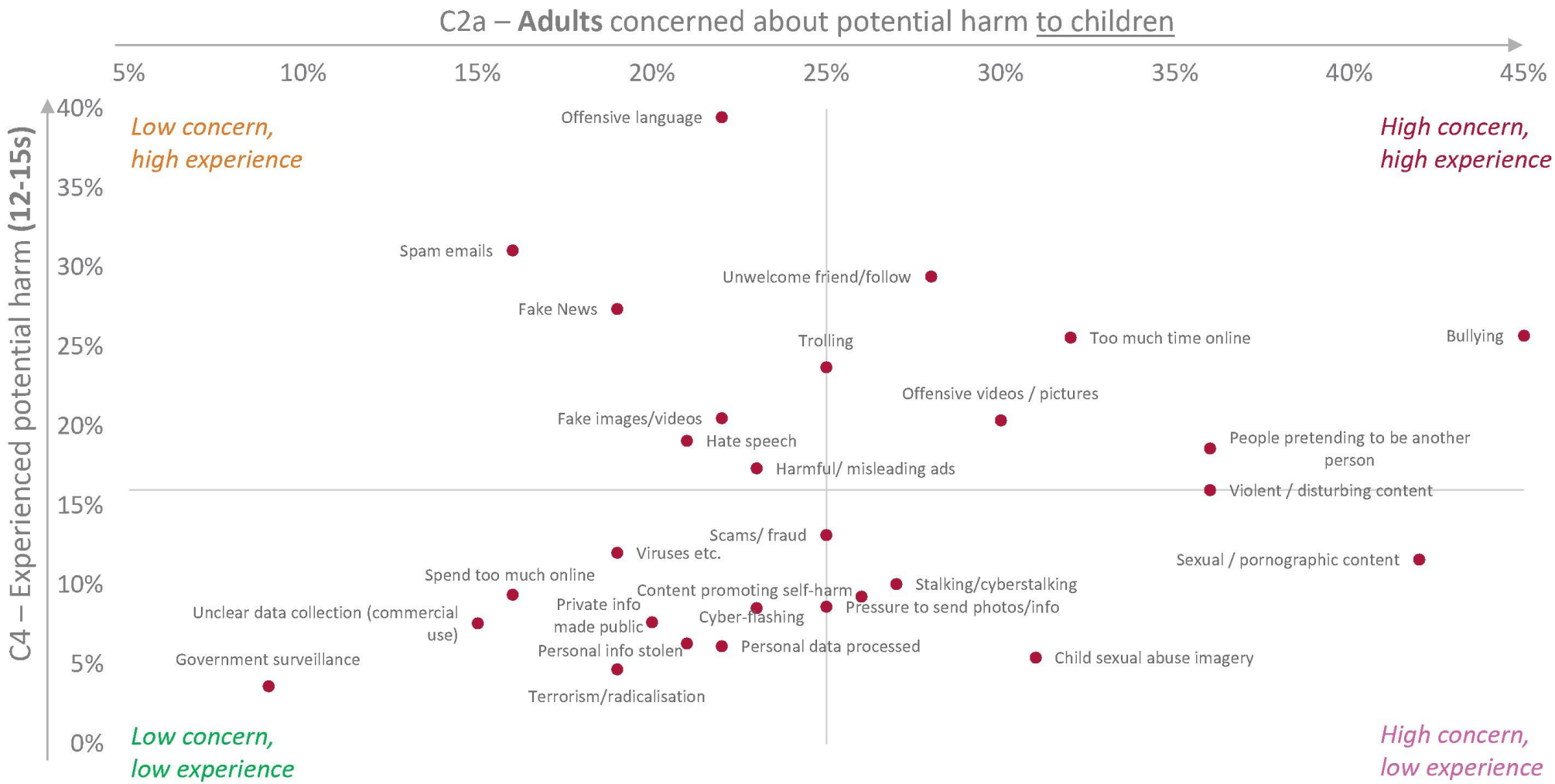
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

Bullying and spending too much time online are relatively frequently experienced by children and are of high concern amongst adults

Relationship between concern (adults) and actual experience of potential harm by children



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

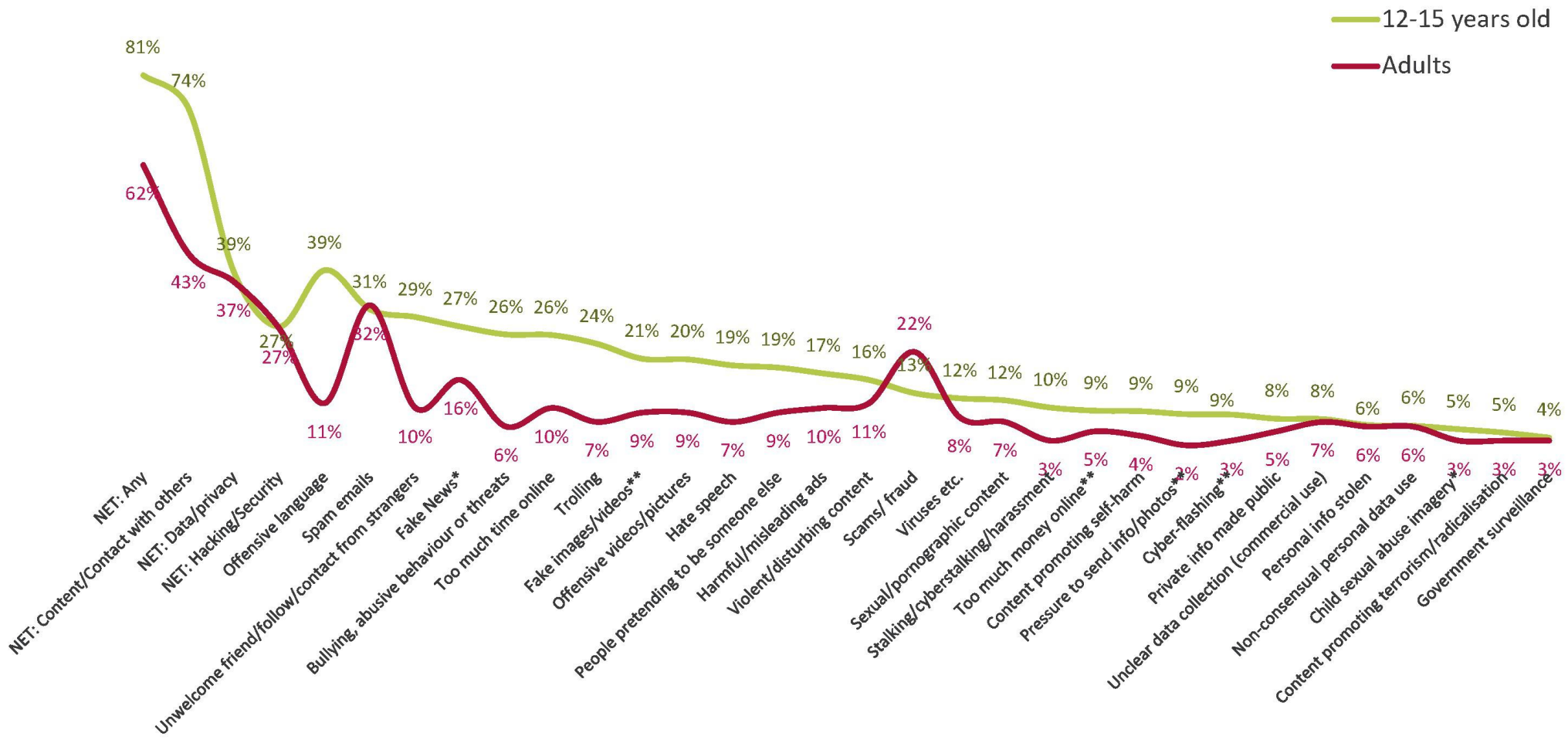
Question: ADULTS: C2a) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED

CHILDREN: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

Base: All children 12-15 (2001) All adults (2080)

12-15 year olds are significantly more likely to have experienced a potential harm than adults, especially in relation to offensive language. Adults are more likely to have experienced scams

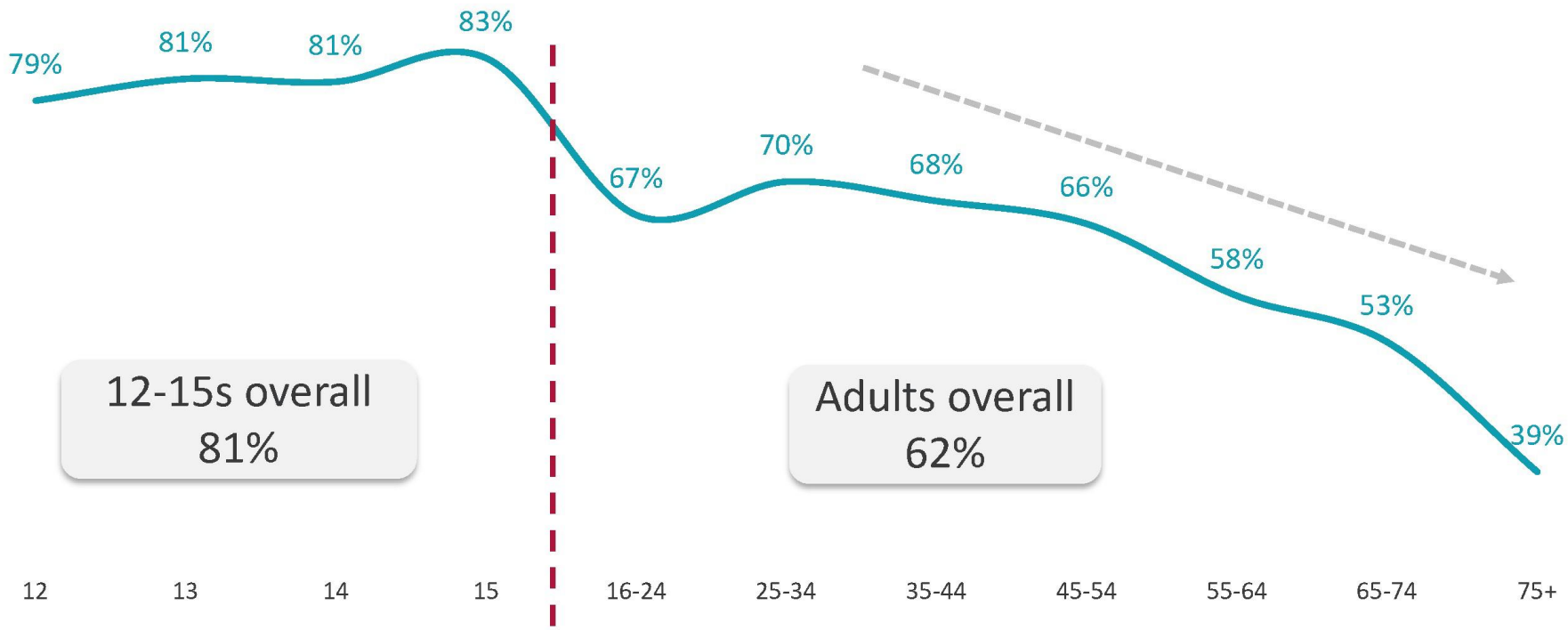
Potential harms Experienced – Adults vs children



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.
Base: All adult internet users (2080) All children 12-15 (2001)
*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

12-15 year olds are significantly more likely to have experienced a potential harm than adults. The incidence of experiencing potential harm quickly drops after the age of 54 (as the audience becomes less confident online)

Experienced **any potential harm** in the last year



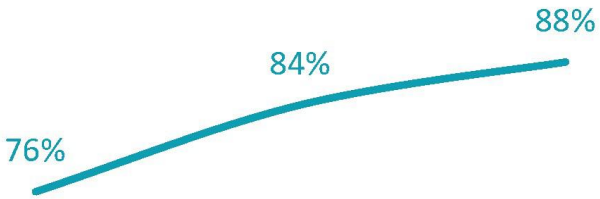
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.

Base: All adult internet users (2080) All children 12-15 (2001)

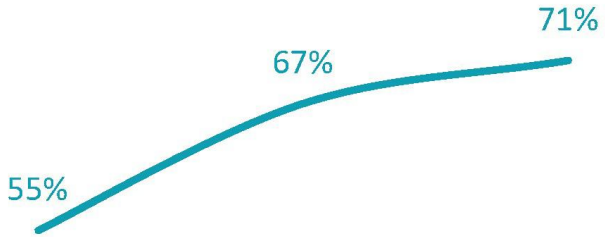
Those using new sites/apps are significantly more likely to have experienced a potential harm – across both 12-15 year olds and adults

Experienced **any potential harm** in the last year



12-15s overall
81%

Sites/apps used before | 1-2 new sites/apps | Lots new sites/apps



Adults overall
62%

Sites/apps used before | 1-2 new sites/apps | Lots new sites/apps

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.

Base: All adult internet users (2080) All children 12-15 (2001)

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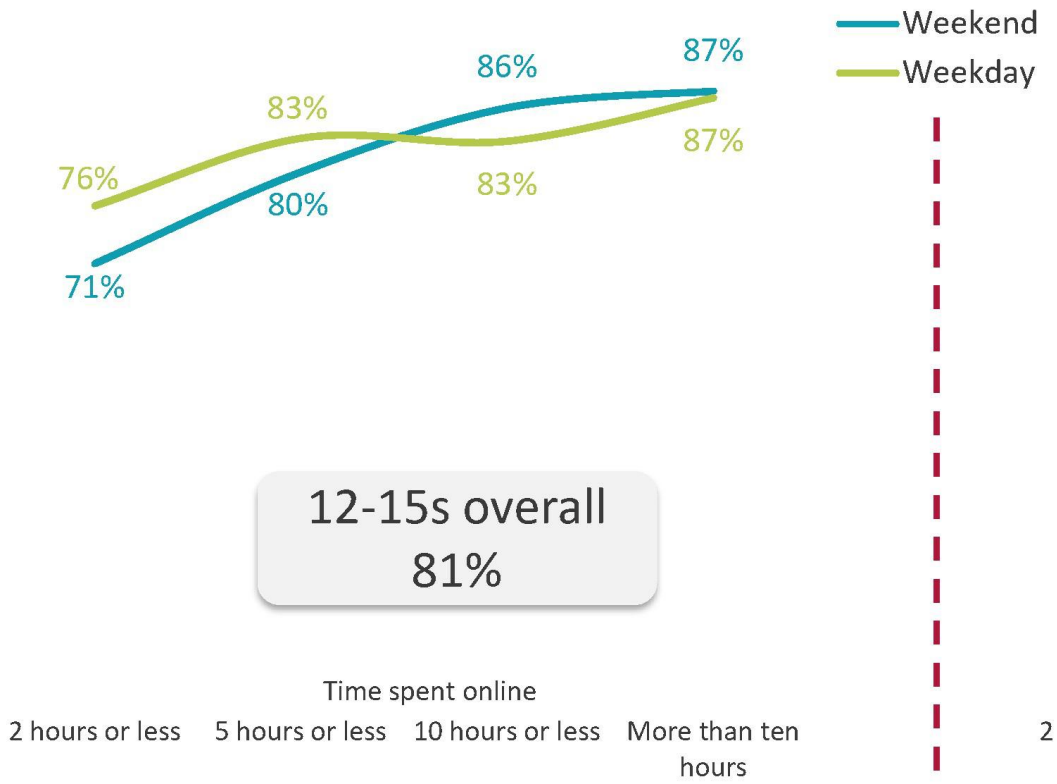
Increased time online increases the exposure to potential harm, notably for children

Experienced **any potential harm** in the last year



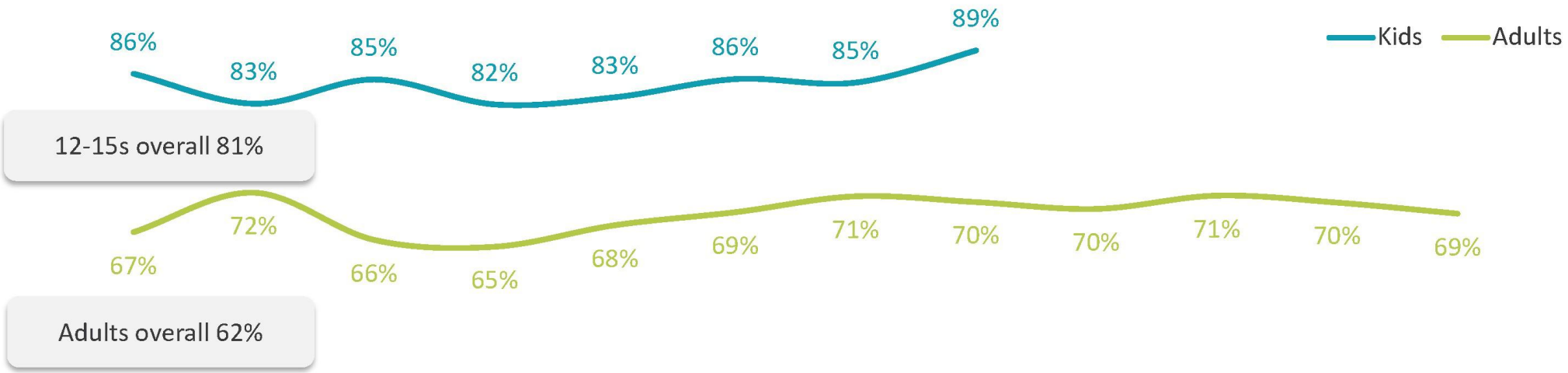
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.

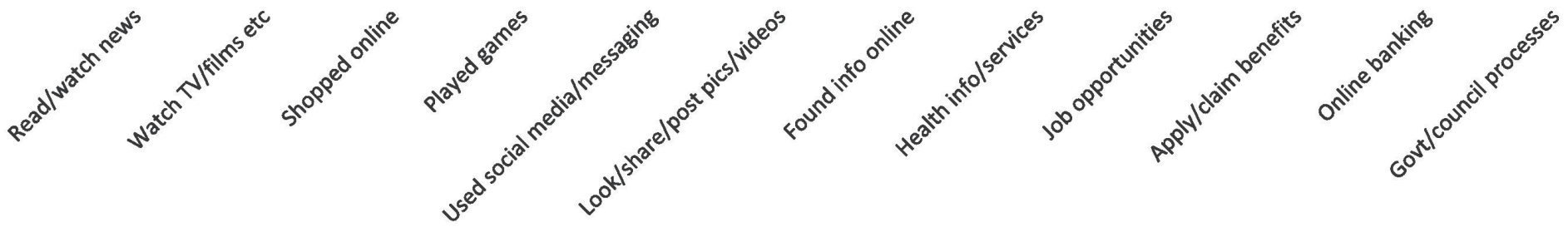
Base: All adult internet users (2080) All children 12-15 (2001)

As would be expected, undertaking activities online increases exposure to potential harm

Experienced **any potential harm** in the last year



Things done online in the last week



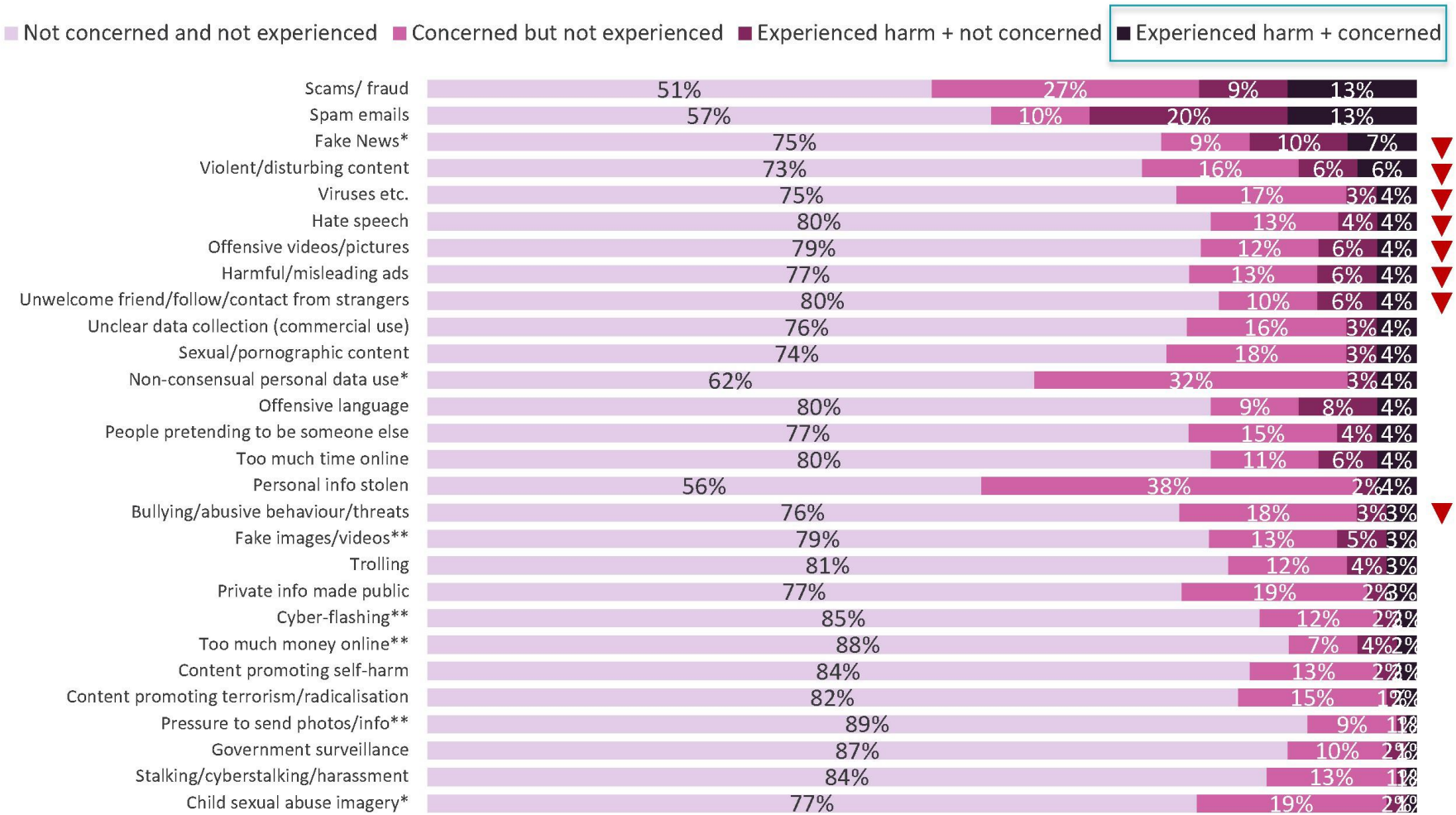
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED.
B5d) Which of these things have you done online in the last week?
Base: All adult internet users (2080) All children 12-15 (2001)

Section 2
Reported experience of potential harms
B) Frequency and impact of experiences

Scams and spam are the most likely to have been experienced and for adults to be concerned about

Incidence of experiencing/being concerned about potential online harms



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C2b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each. C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Going online too much is the most frequently reported type of potential harm followed by spam. Theft of personal information is, for example, experienced relatively infrequently

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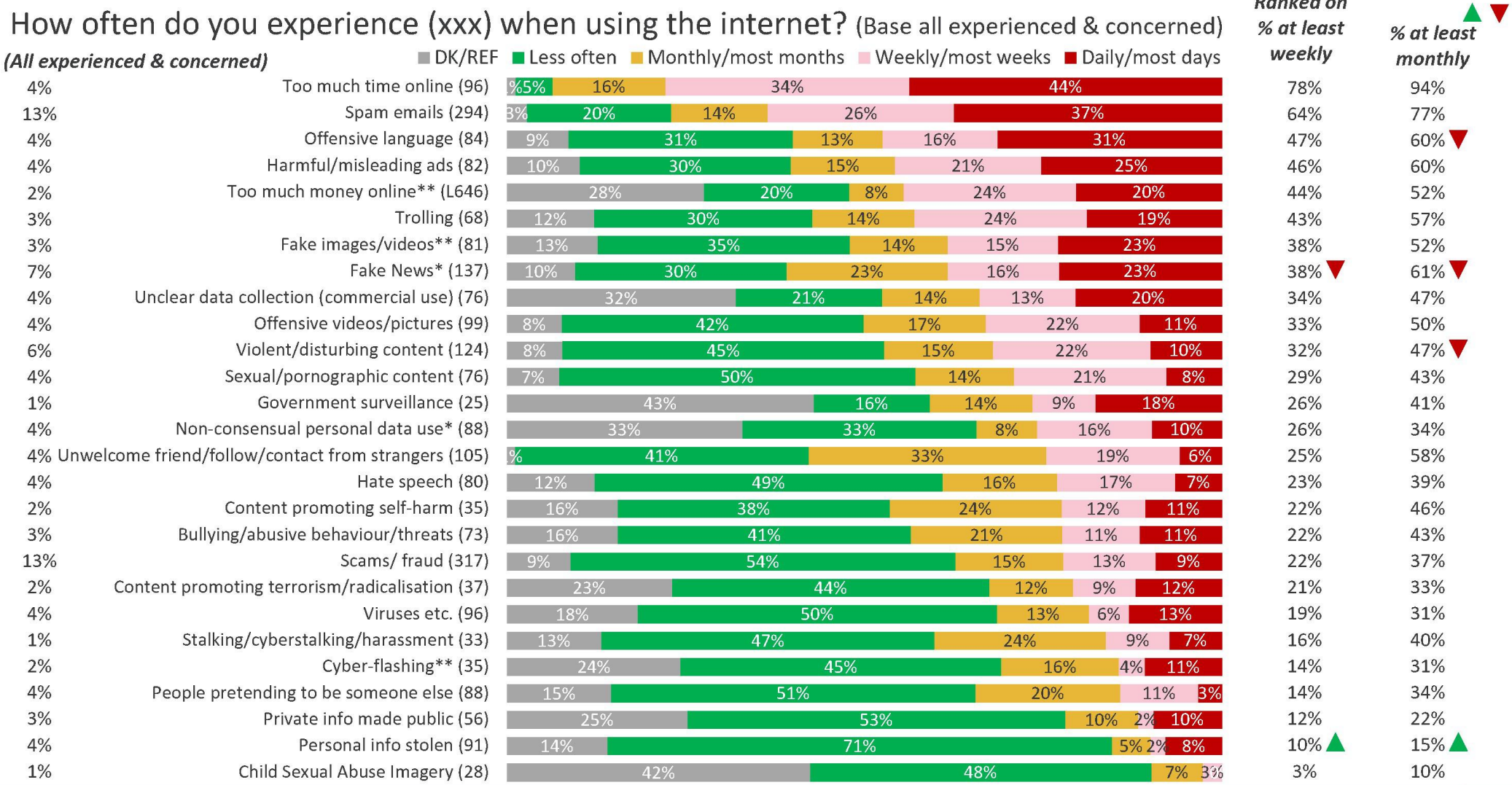
How often do you experience (xxx) when using the internet? (Base all experienced & concerned)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases on in brackets above). Warning – low base sizes (see individual bases).

"Pressure to send photos info" statement not shown as base too low. *Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020.

However, theft of personal information has the most severe impact when experienced, along with non-consensual use of personal data and then bullying

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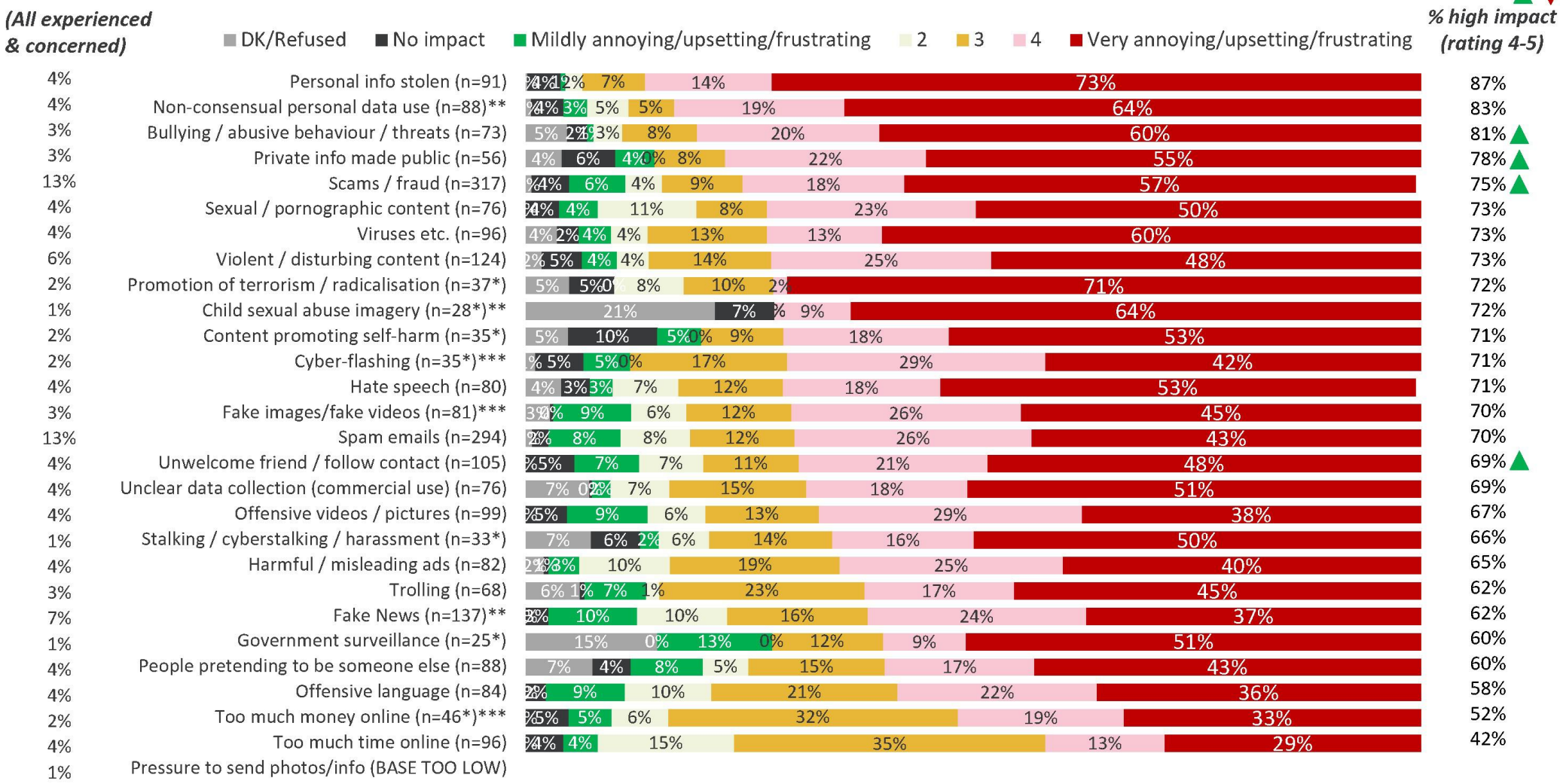
Level of impact experiences have had (amongst all experienced and concerned)

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases on chart) *Warning – low base sizes (see individual bases). "Pressure to send photos info" statement not shown as base too low.

**Wording changed in 2020. ***New statement added 2020

However, theft of personal information has the most severe impact when experienced, along with non-consensual use of personal data and content promoting terrorism/radicalisation

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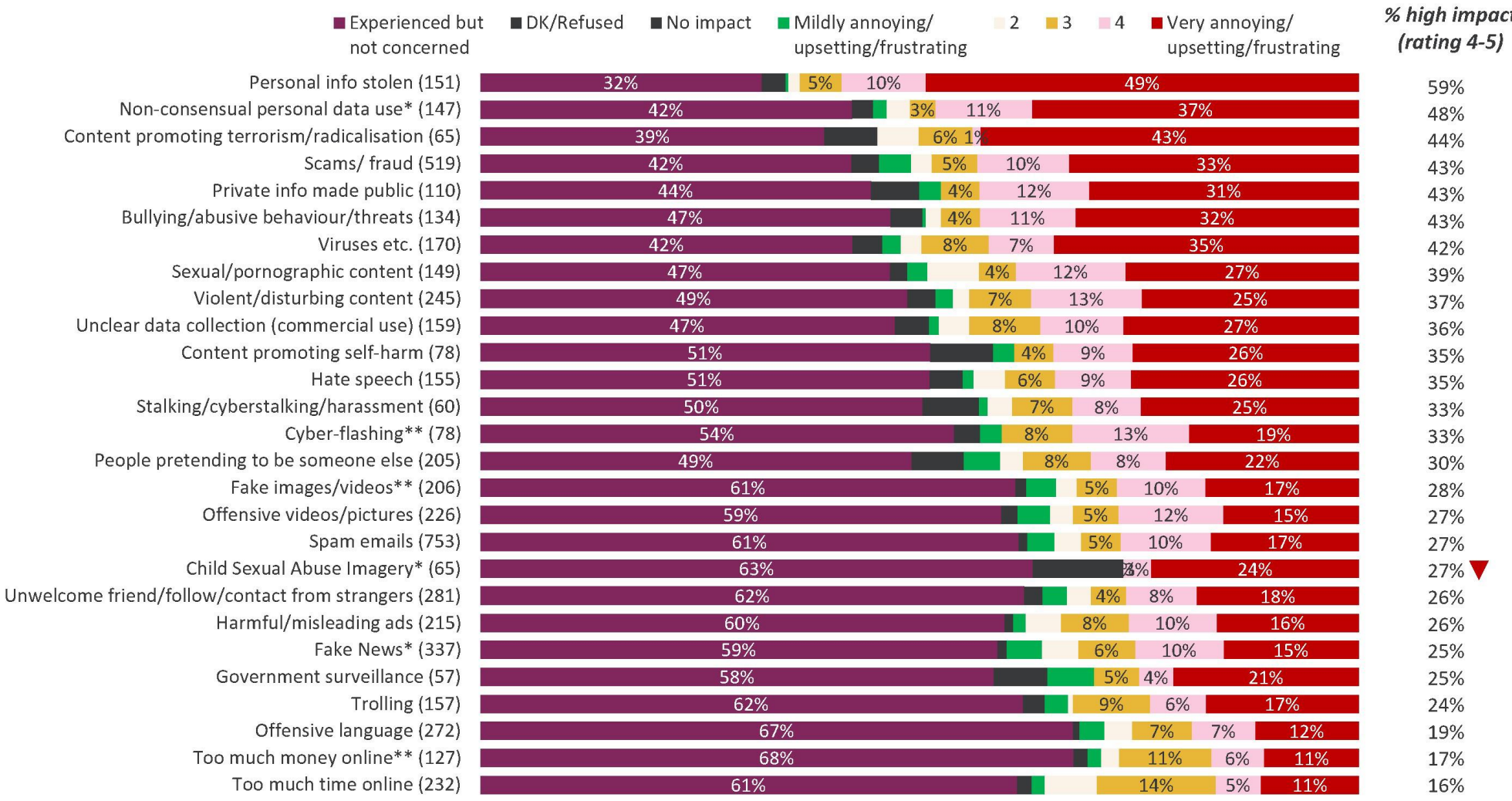
Level of impact experiences have had (amongst those who have experienced)

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲▼



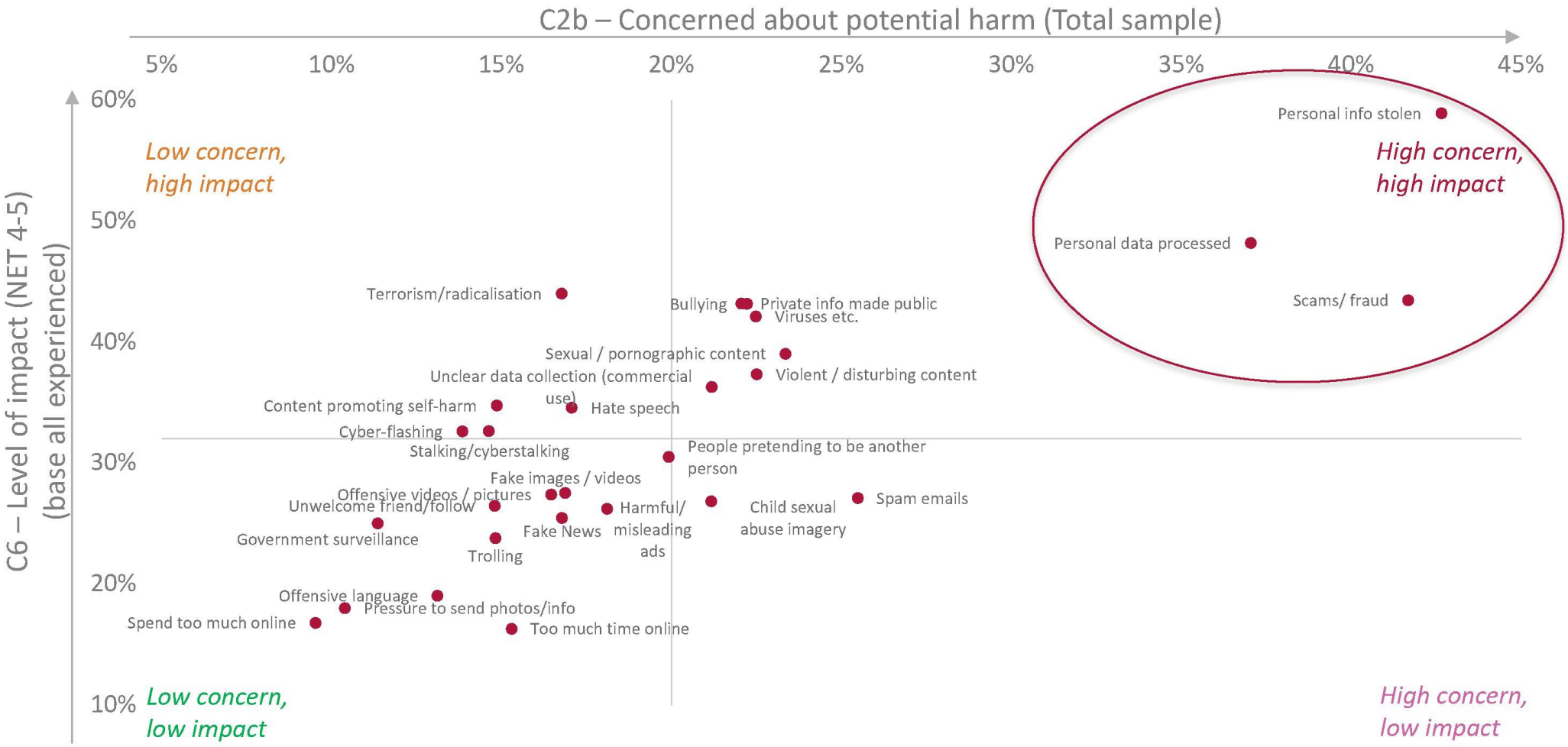
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced X (bases shown in brackets above). *Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Potential harms with the highest levels of concern tend to have the greatest impact upon those who have experienced them

Impact vs. Incidence of concern raised



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2b) Which, if any, of the following aspects of the internet concern you more generally? Base: All adult internet users (2080)

C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating.

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced X (bases vary)

Despite the high frequency of spending too much time online and receiving spam emails, the level of impact is lower than the other potential harms

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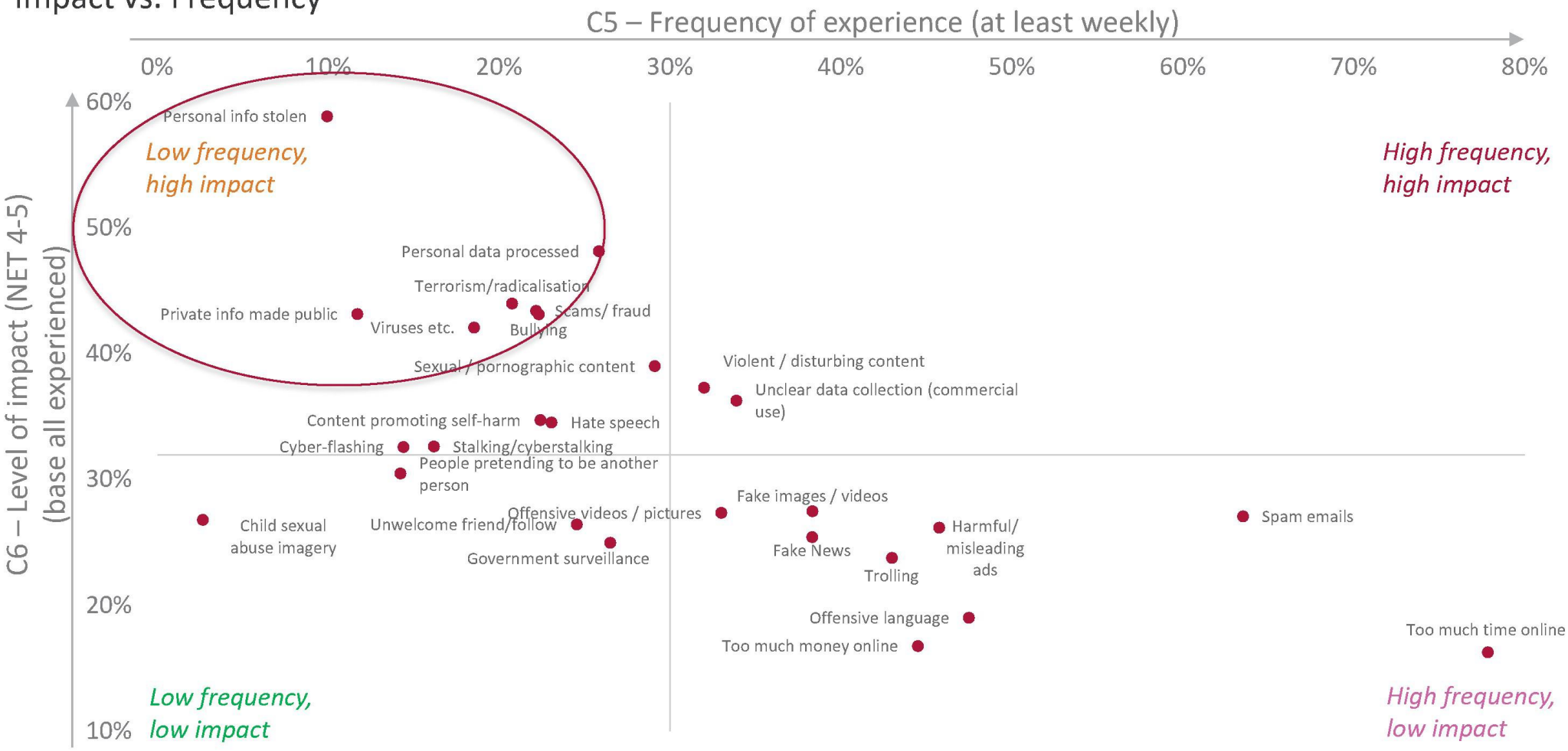
Impact vs. Frequency

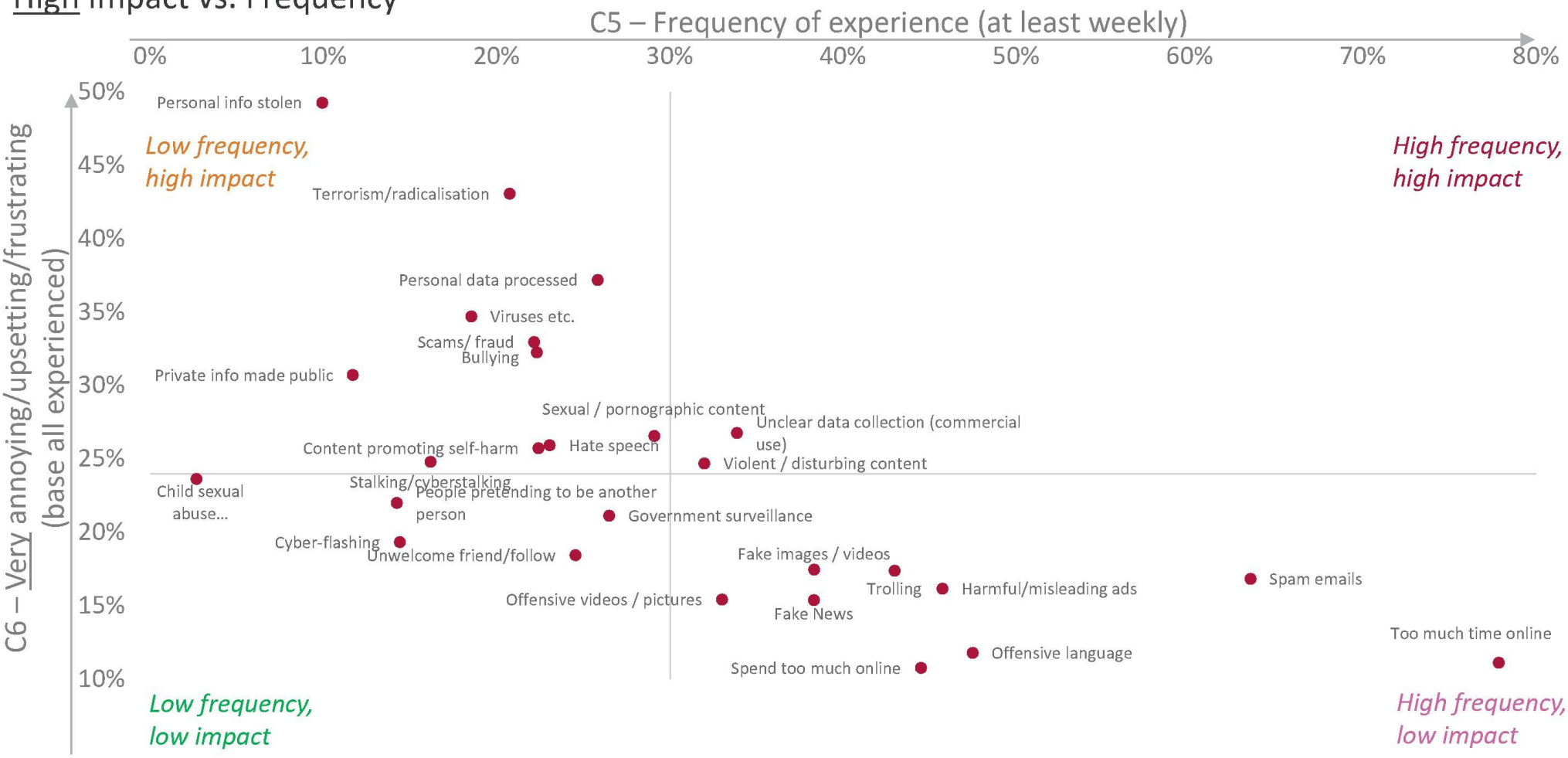


Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet? Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases vary). C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All adult internet users who have experienced X (bases vary)

Despite the low frequency, personal info being stolen and data processing without consent are both be very upsetting. The same is true for promoting terrorism, viruses, scams and bullying

High Impact vs. Frequency

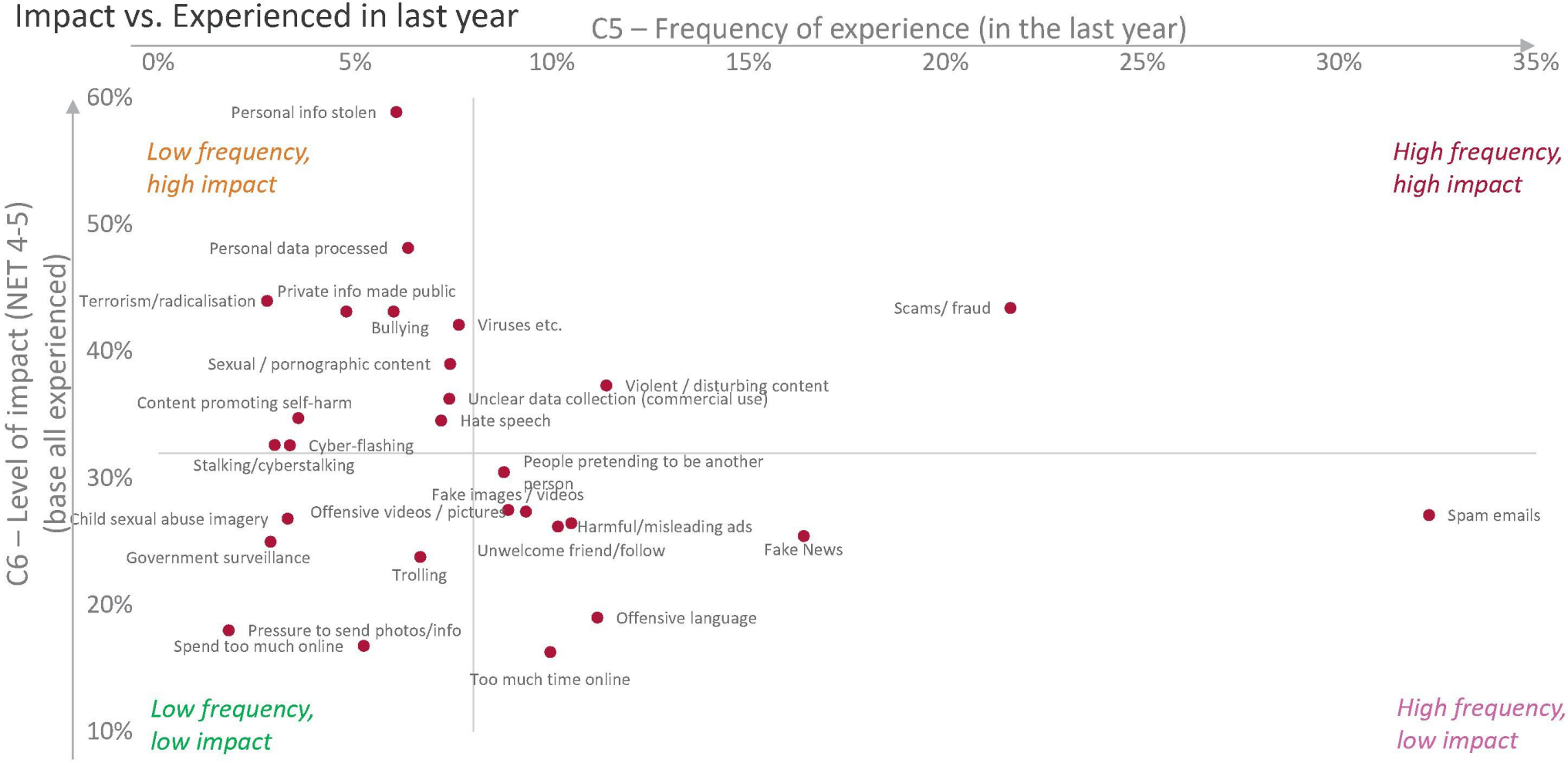


Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet? Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases vary). C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All adult internet users who have experienced X (bases vary)

Despite the low frequency, personal info being stolen and data processing without knowledge both have a high level of impact. The same is true for promoting terrorism, private info being made public and bullying

Impact vs. Experienced in last year



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4. Which of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? Base: All adult internet users (2080)

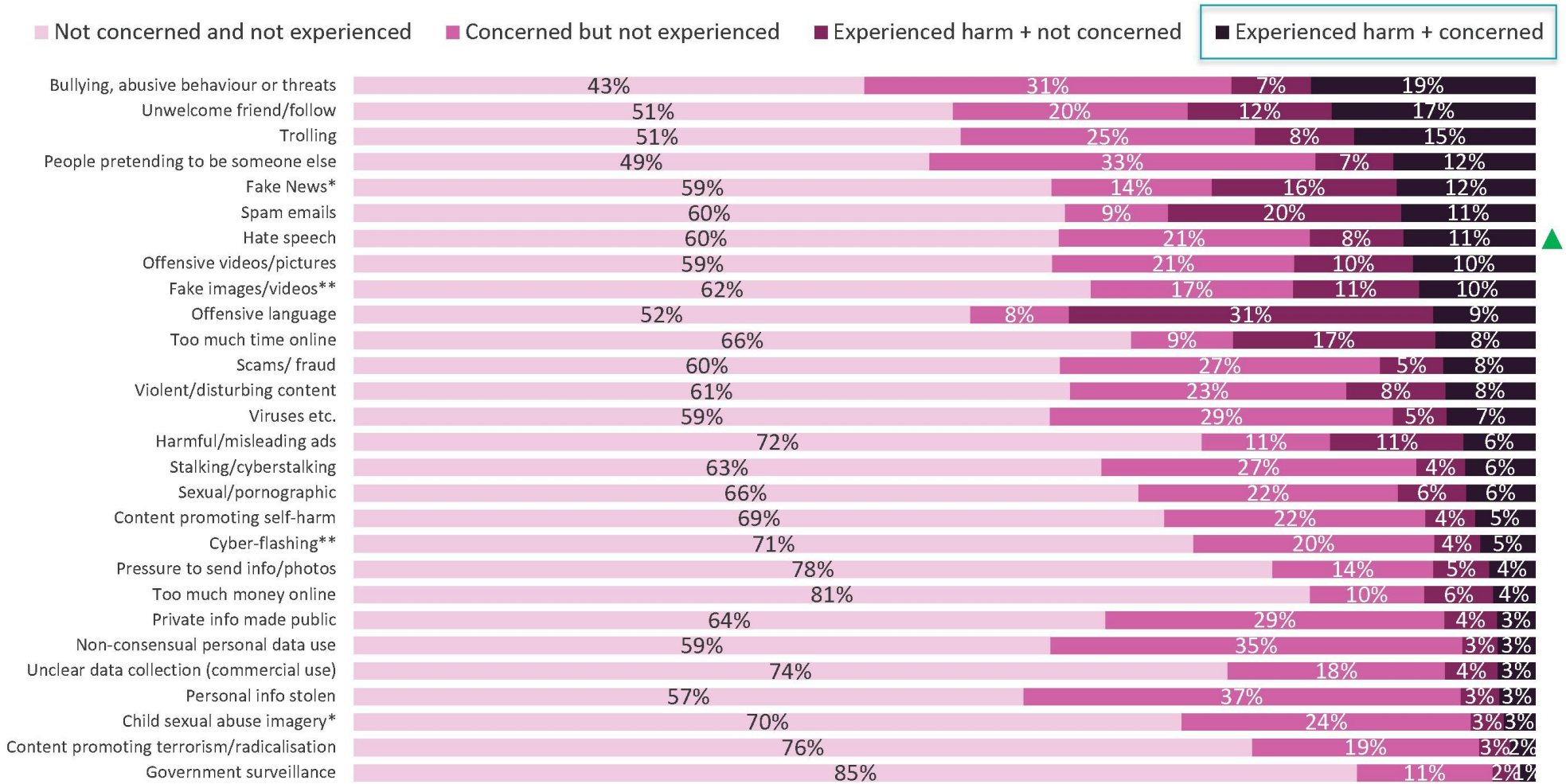
C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating.

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced X (bases vary)

Bullying, unwelcome friend/follow requests and trolling are the most likely to have been experienced by and of concern to 12-15 year olds

Incidence of experiencing/being concerned about potential online harms

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2b) I am now going to read out the areas you are generally concerned about. I would like you to tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly concerned and 5 means Very Concerned, how concerned you are about each. C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months?

Base: All children 12-15 (2001). *Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Frequency of experiencing potential harms is generally lower amongst 12-15 year olds than adults. Too much time online is the most commonly reported issue

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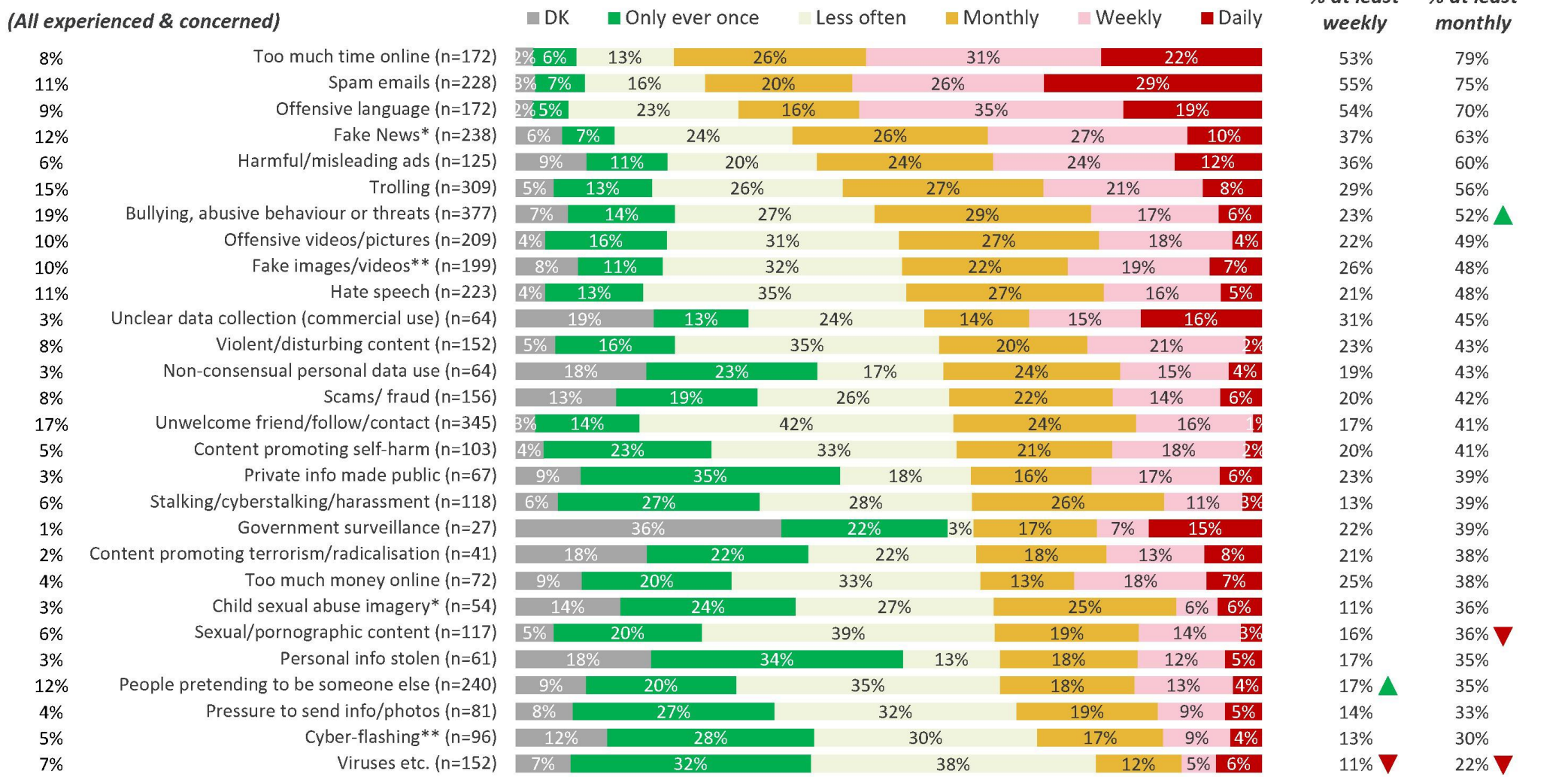
How often do you experience (xxx) when using the internet? (Base all experienced & concerned)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet?

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases on chart)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

However, viruses, hate speech and content promoting self-harm have the most severe impact when experienced, along with the theft of personal info, bullying and cyber flashing

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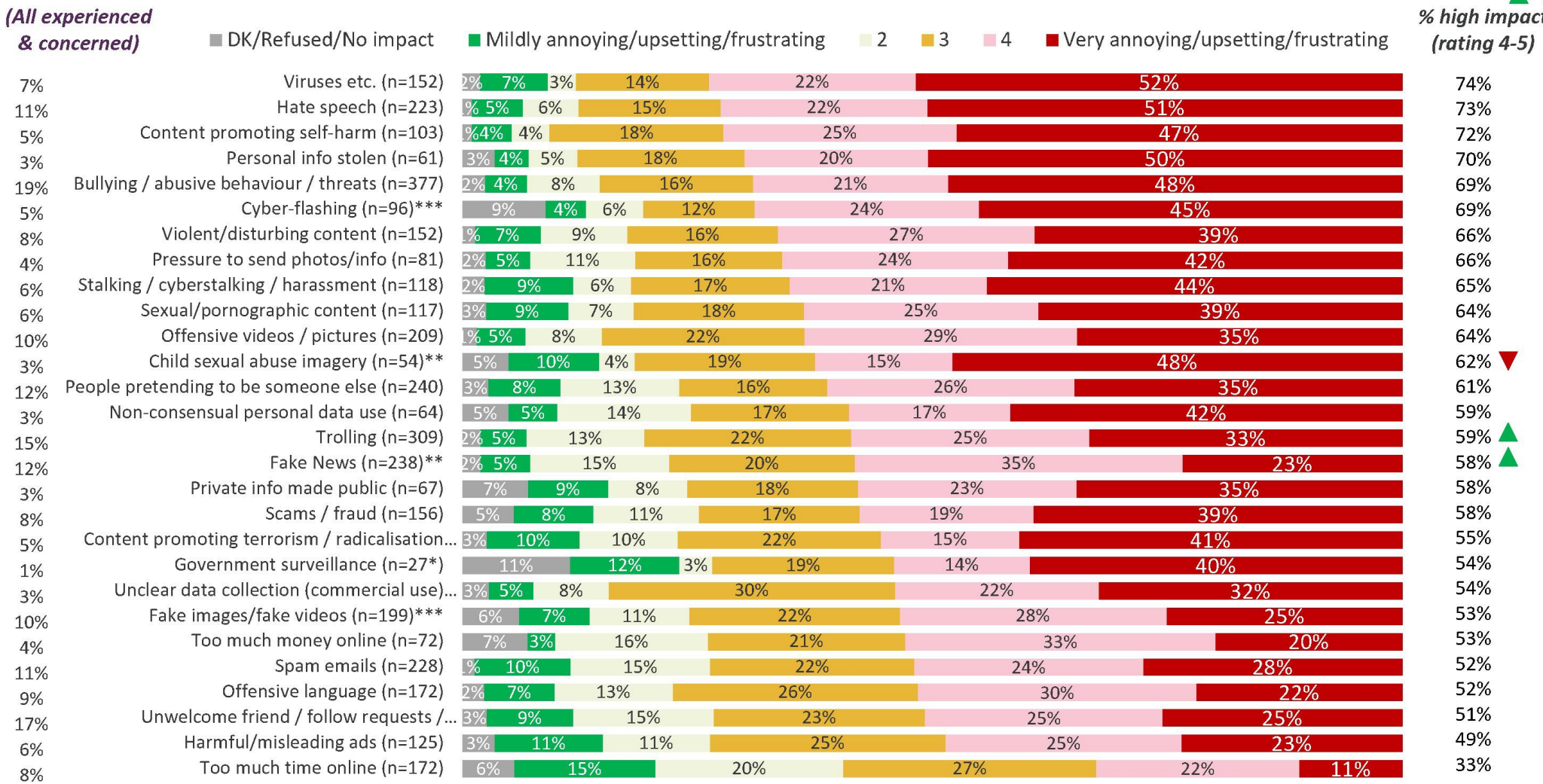
Level of impact experiences have had (Base all experienced and concerned)

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲▼



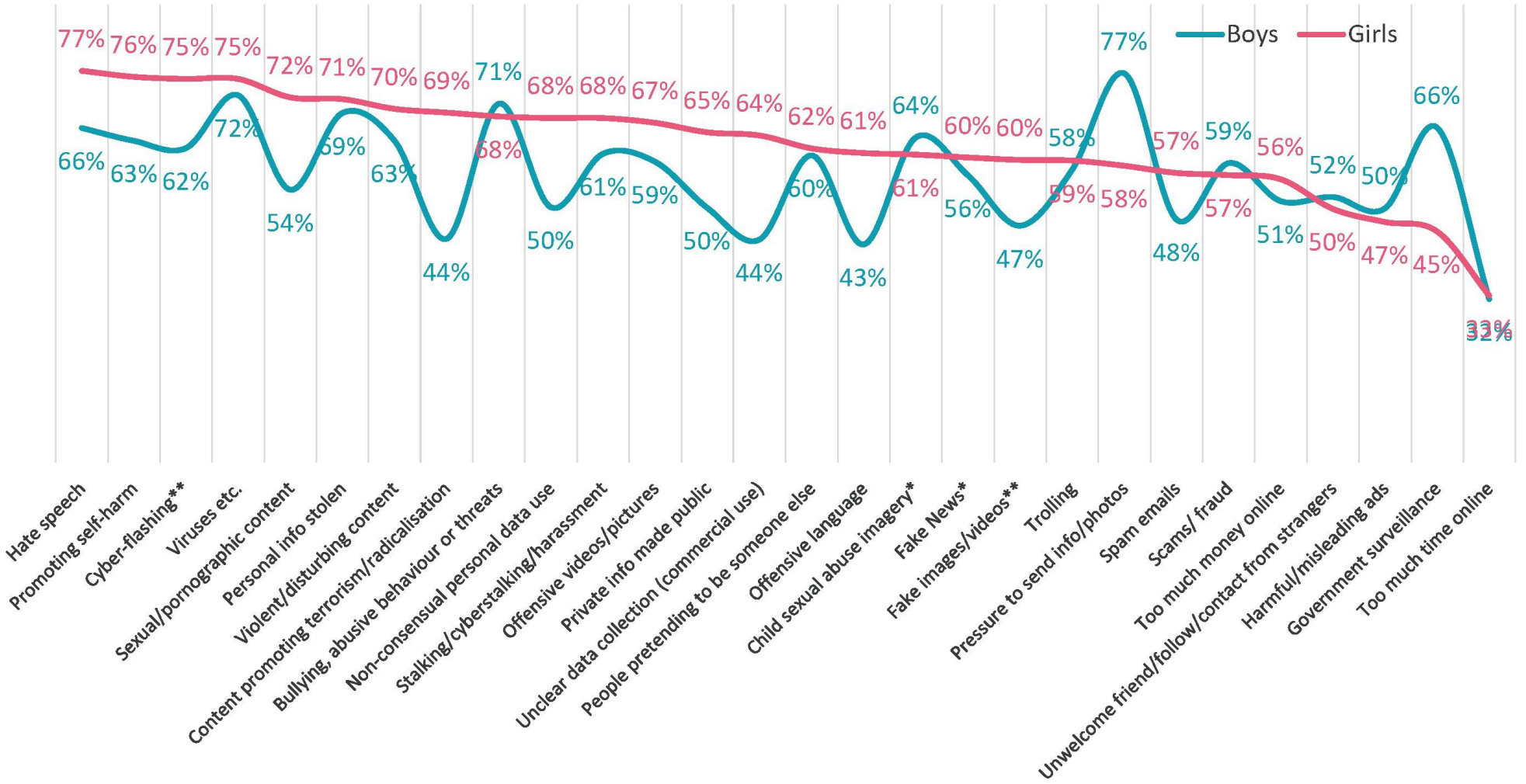
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases on chart) * Warning – low base size. **Wording changed in 2020. ***New statement added 2020

Girls are more likely to find their experiences more upsetting than boys in general. Boys are more likely to find pressure to send info/photos and government surveillance more upsetting

Level of impact experiences have had (4-5) (Base all experienced & concerned)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Bullying is the potential harm that impacts 12-15 year olds the most, along with viruses, hate speech and content promoting self-harm

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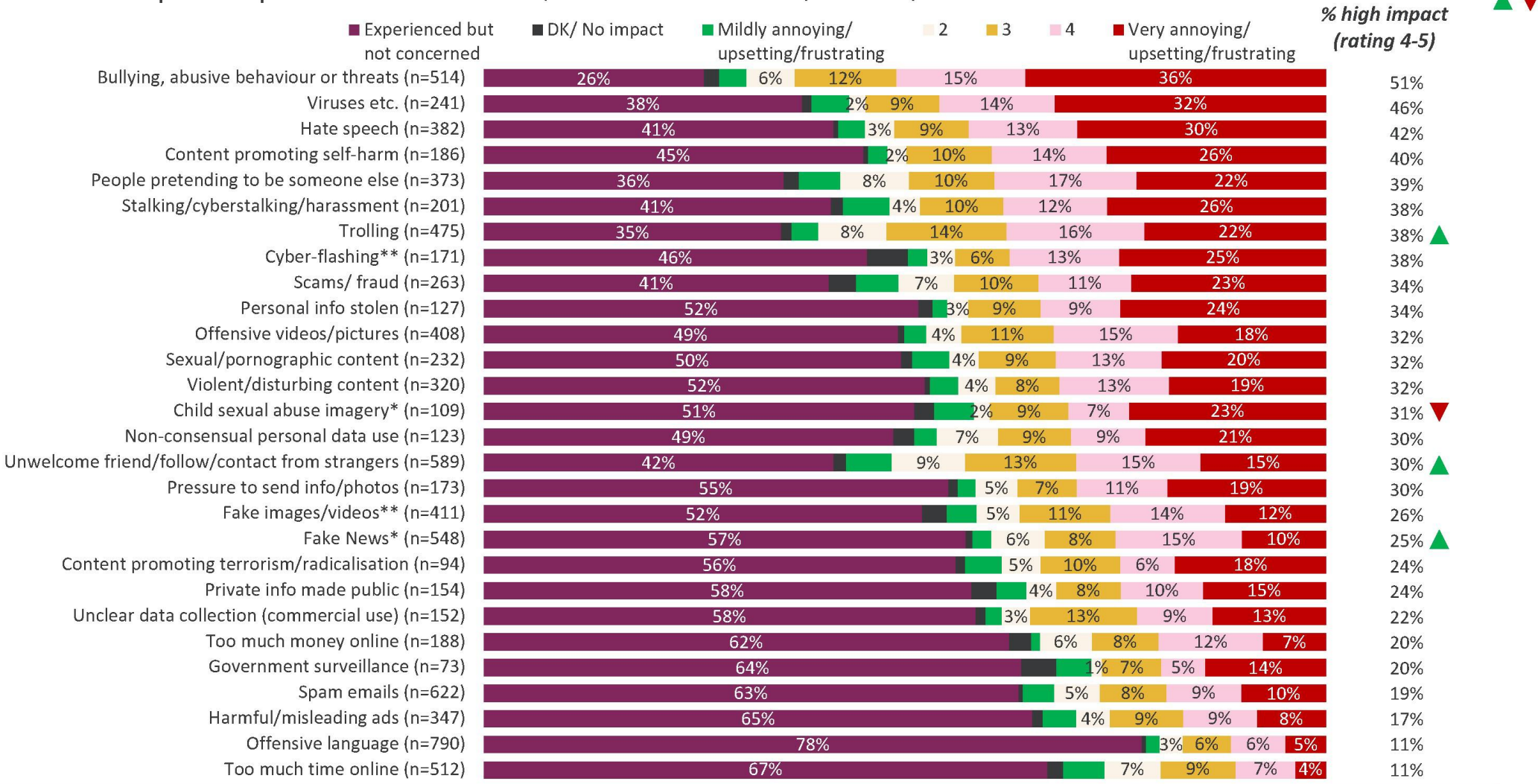
Level of impact experiences have had (Base those who have experienced)



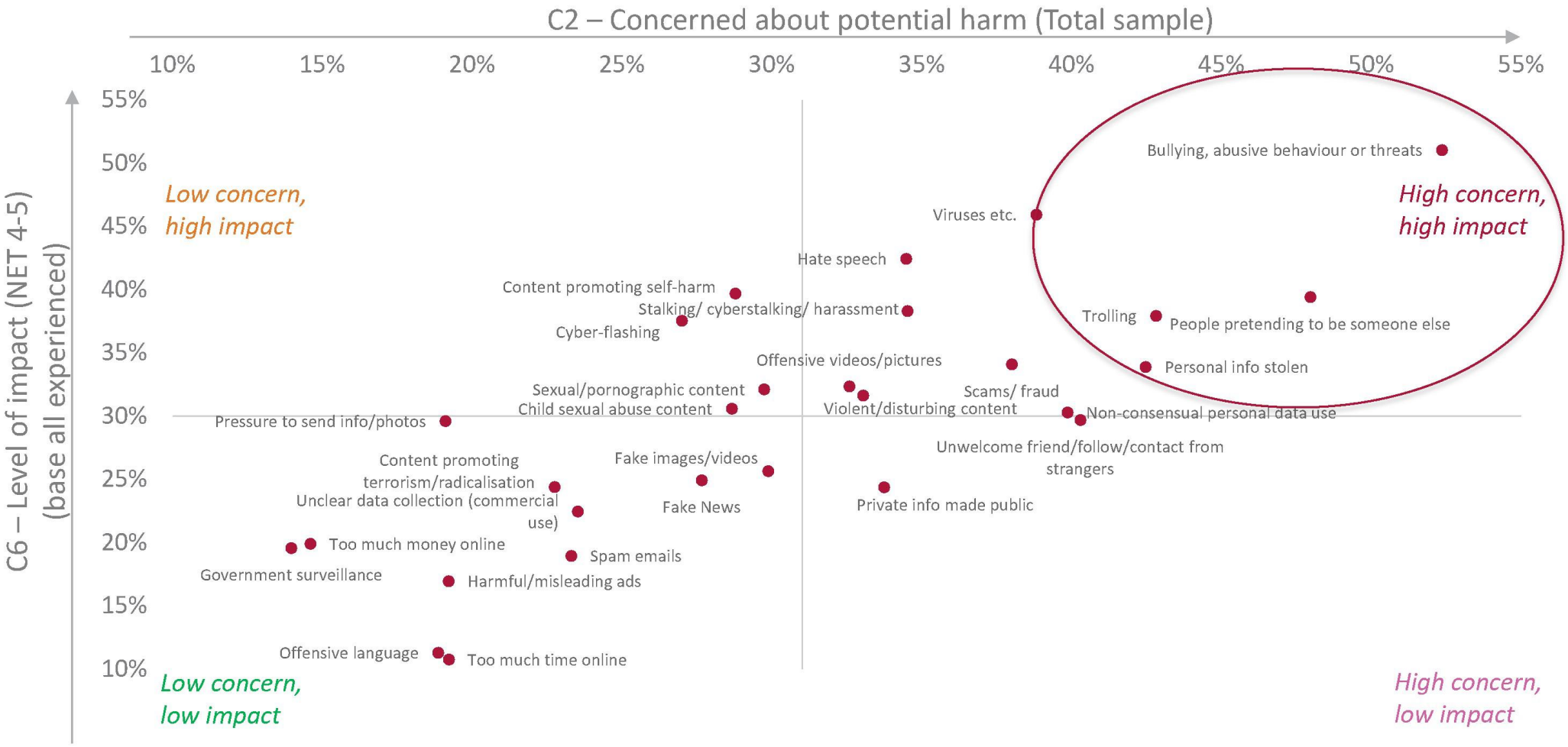
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced X (bases in brackets above). *Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Again, potential harms with the highest levels of concern tend to have the greatest impact on those who have experienced them

Impact vs. Incidence of concern raised



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C2) Which, if any, of the following things concern you about the internet? PROMPTED Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases vary)

Despite the high frequency of spending too much time online, exposure to offensive language and receiving spam emails, the level of impact is lower than the other potential harms

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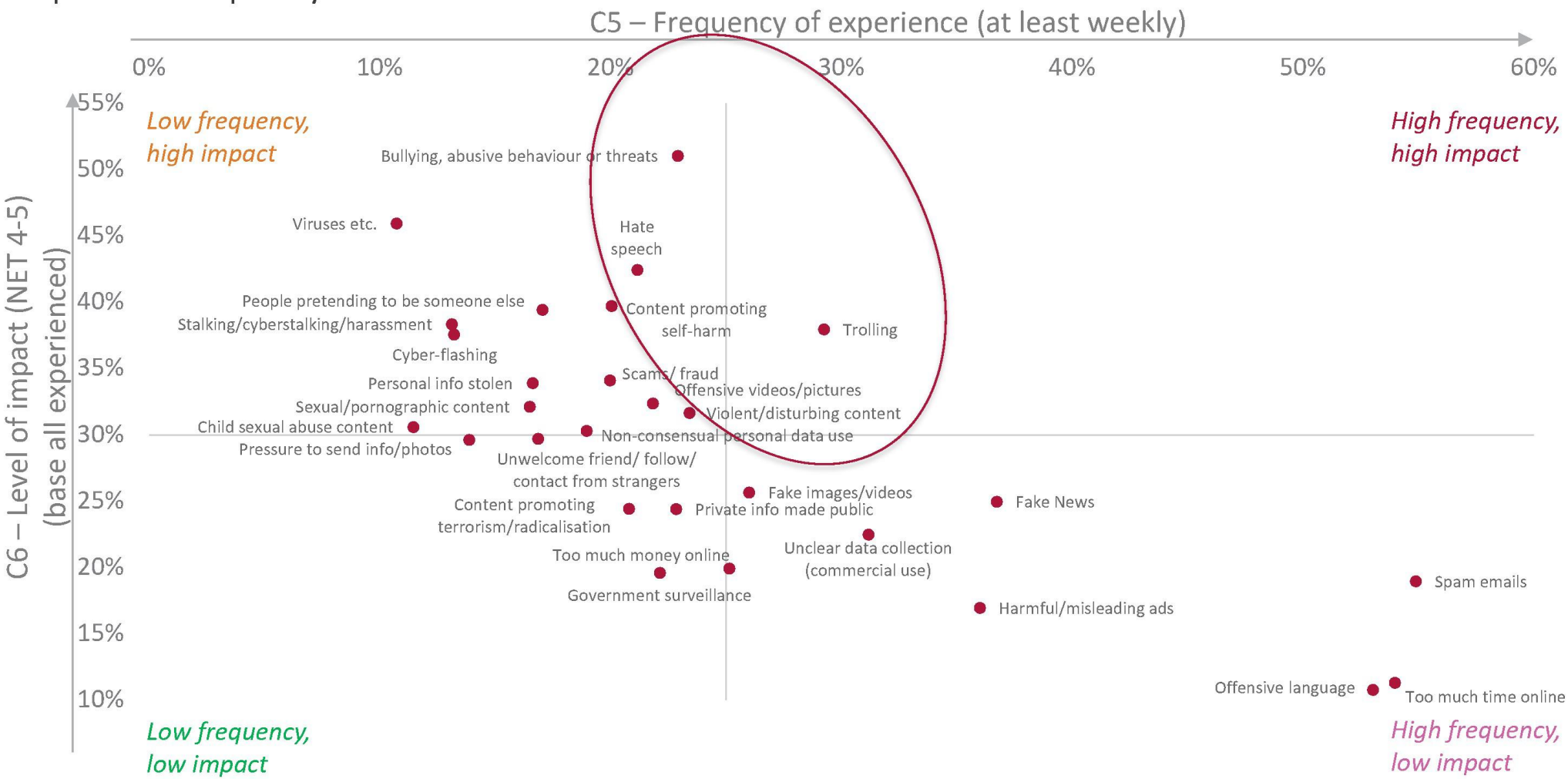
Impact vs. Frequency

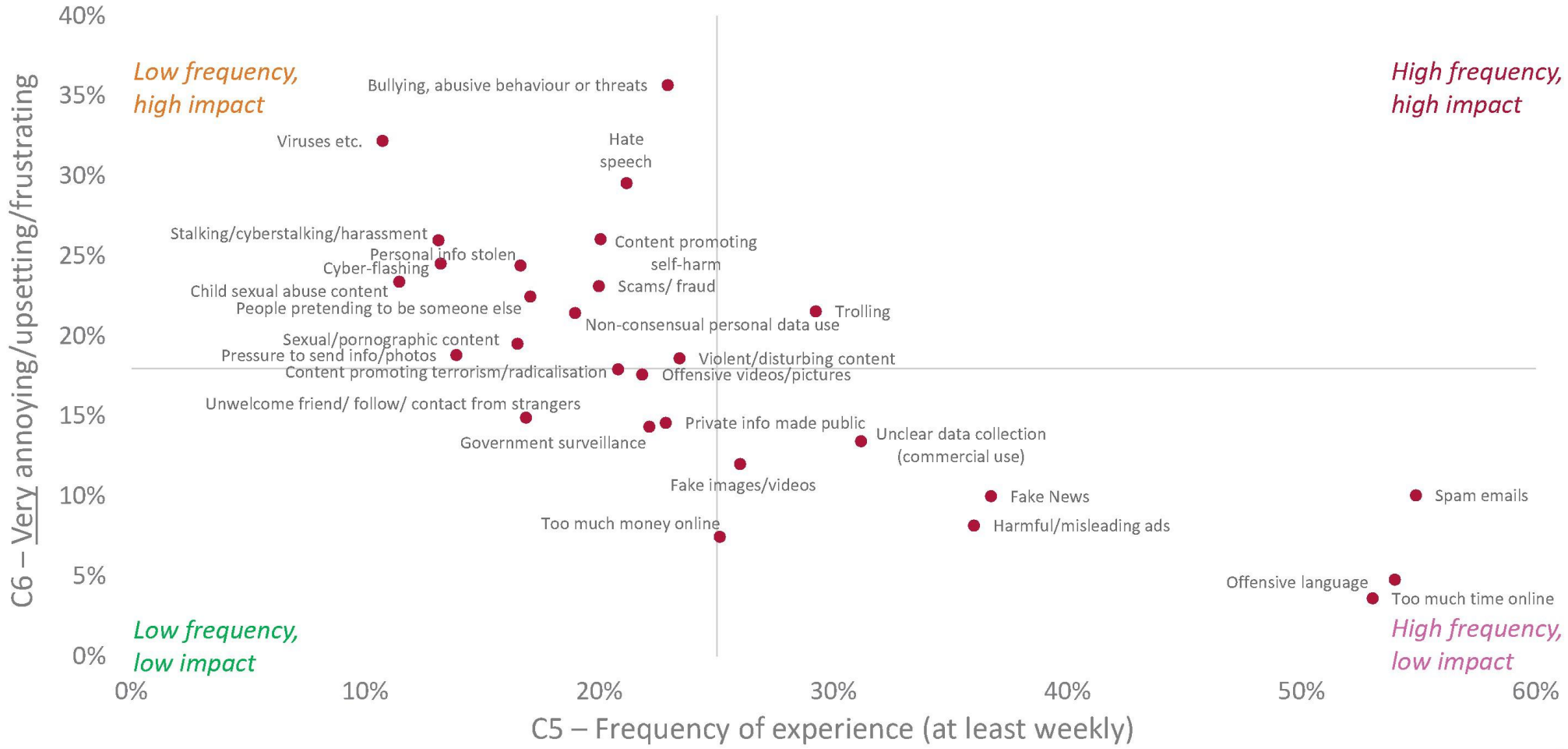


Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet? Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases vary). C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced X (bases vary)

Despite the relatively low frequency, online bullying, viruses and material promoting hate speech are the most annoying/ upsetting potential harms

High Impact vs. Frequency



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C5. How often do you experience [INSERT CODE FROM C4] when using the internet? Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases vary). C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced X (bases vary)

Online bullying has the greatest impact and was also experienced by more than a quarter of 12-15 year olds in the past year

Impact vs. Experienced in last year

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED. Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

C6) Thinking about all of the times that you have experienced [INSERT CODE FROM C4] in the last 12 months, what impact has this had on you? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Mildly annoying or upsetting or frustrating and 5 means Very annoying or upsetting or frustrating. Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced X (bases vary)

Section 3
Sources of potential online harm

Across adults and 12-15 year olds, social media sites are the most commonly cited sources of potential online harm. 12-15 year olds have experienced more harms on social media than last year

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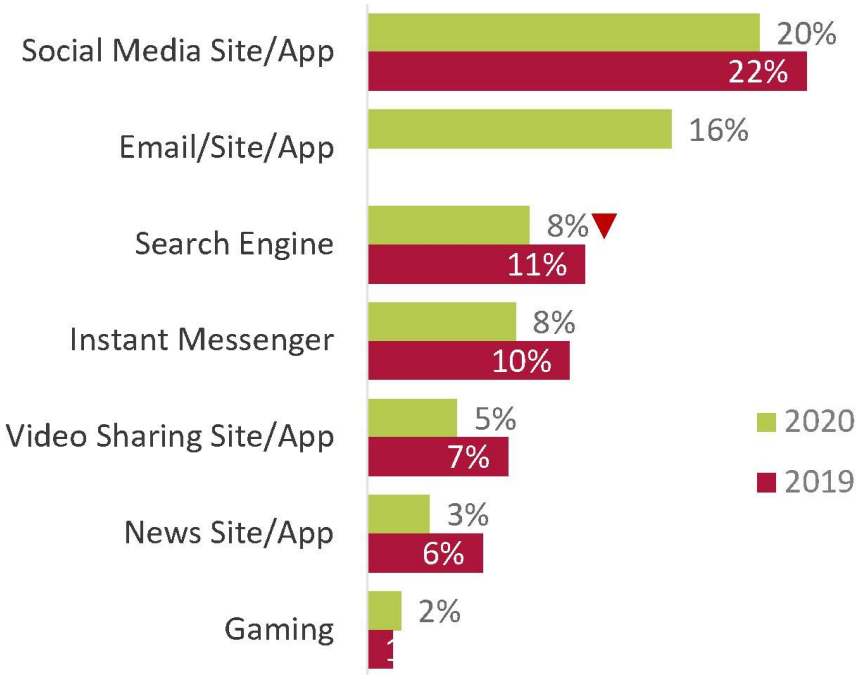
Sources of potential online harm

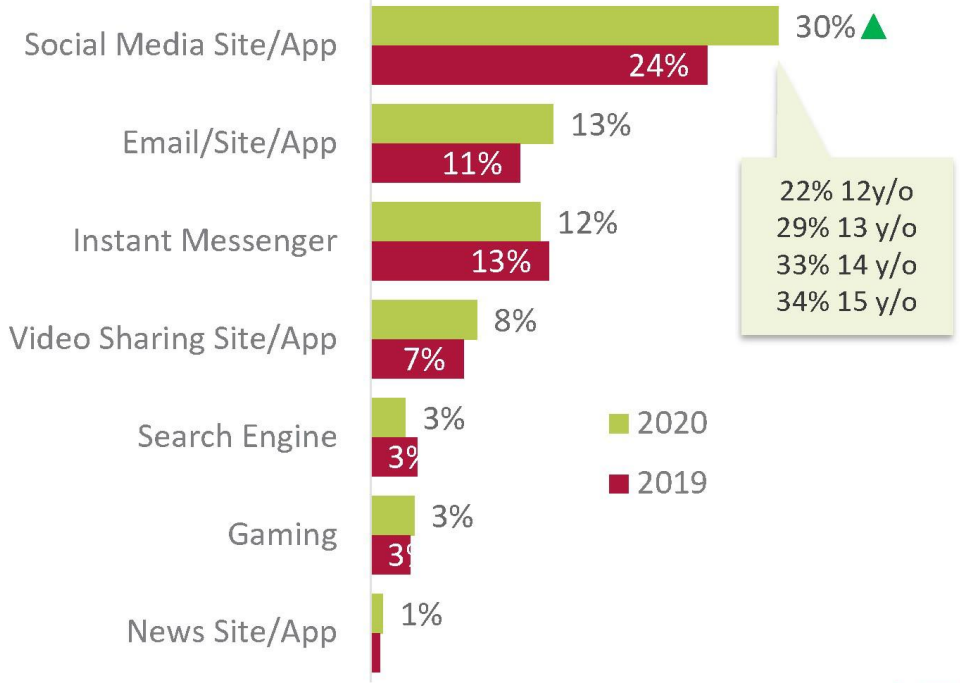
62%

Of adults have **experienced** potential online harms in the last 12 months



81%

Of children (12-15) **experienced** potential online harms in the last 12 months



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" March 2019

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? PROMPTED

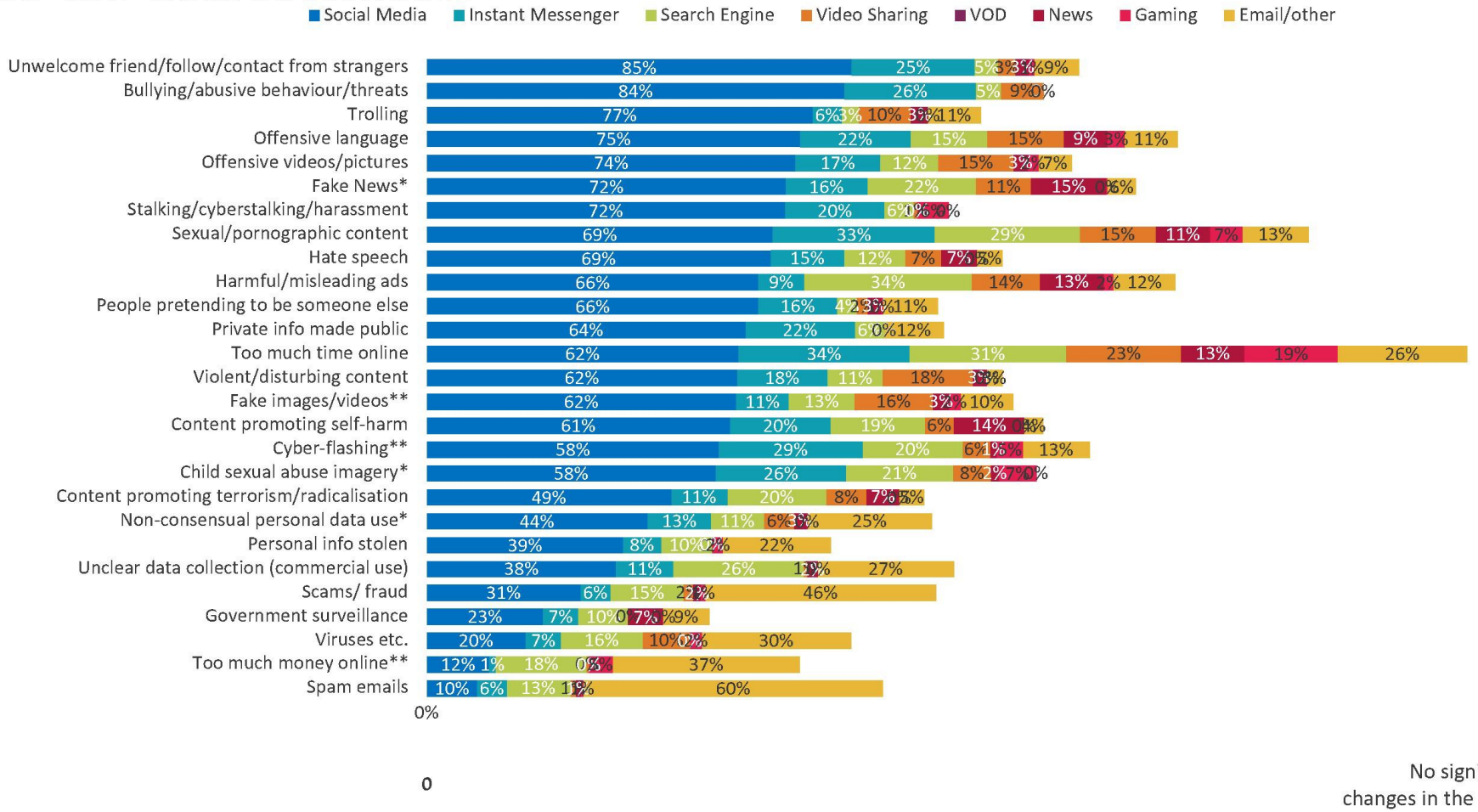
C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All adult internet users (2057) All 12-15s (1001)

Adults experience potential online harms on a range of sites/ apps, but social media is most commonly identified for most types of potential harms. IM comes through strongly as a source for sexual/pornographic content, cyber-flashing and bullying

Places where potential online harm was experienced (types of source*).

*smaller "other" sources and DK not shown



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

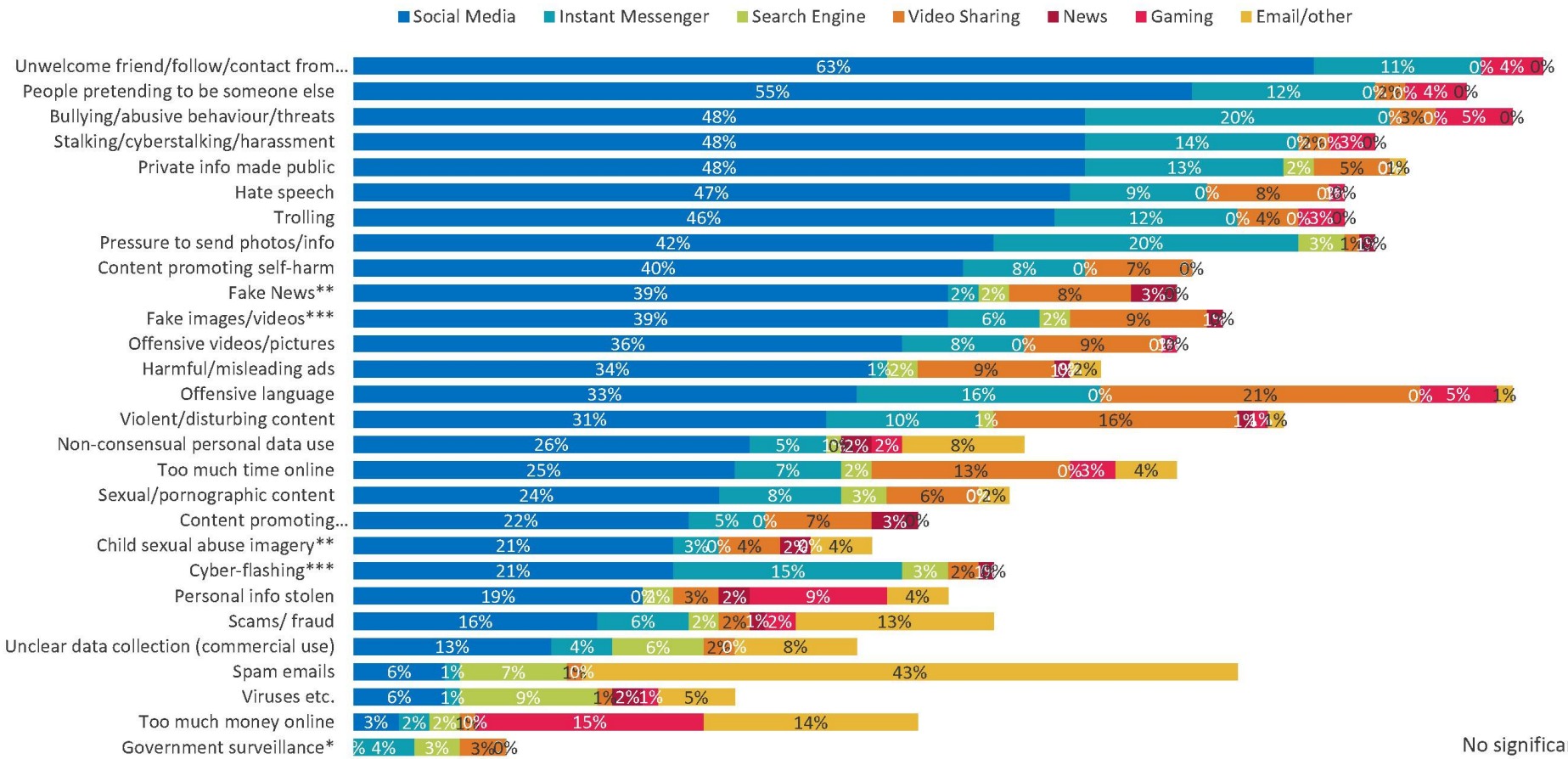
Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases 35-317)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

The same is true for 12-15 year olds, with social media being the most common source for most potential harms. IM comes through strongly for bullying, pressure to send photos and cyber-flashing

Places where potential online harm was experienced (types of source*).

*smaller "other" sources and DK not shown



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

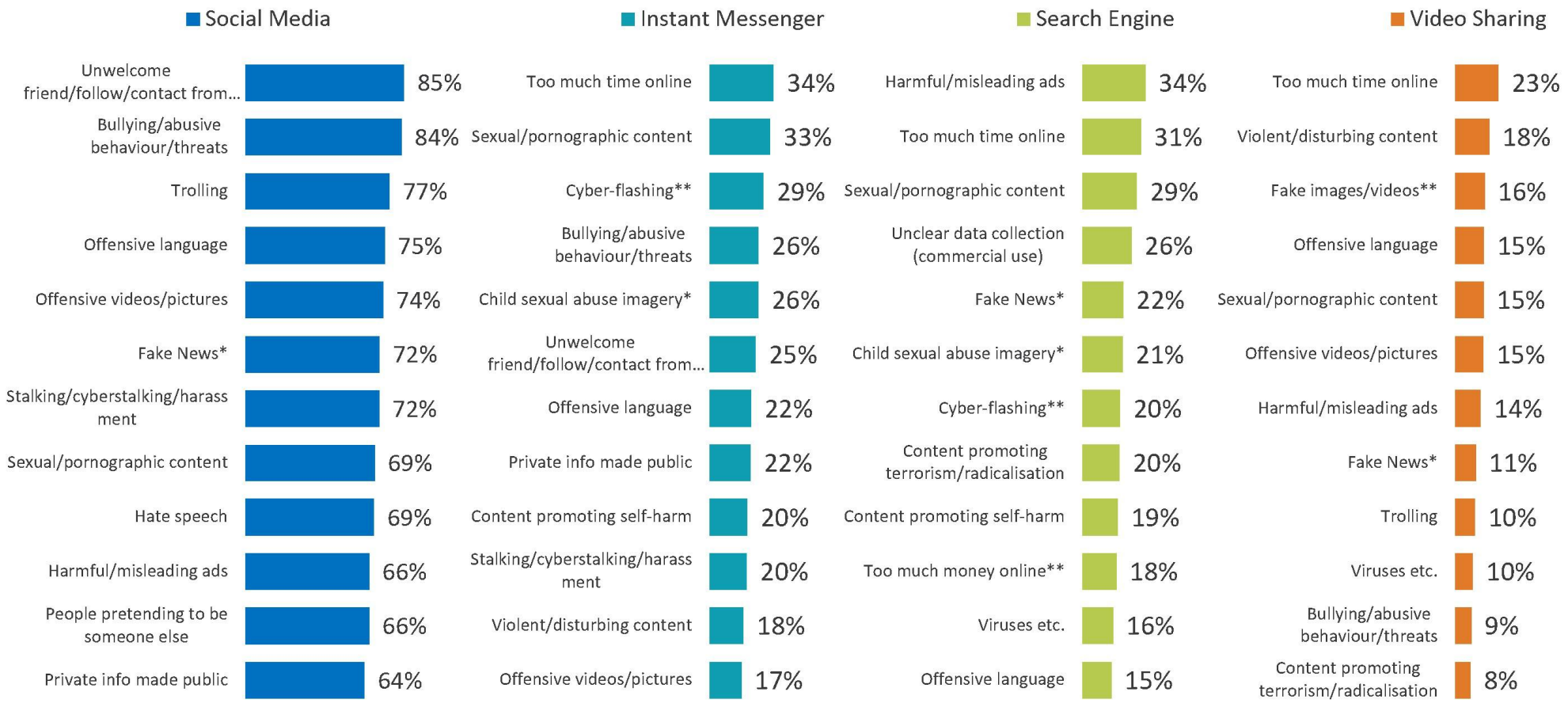
Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases 27*-377)

*CAUTION LOW BASE (<50). **Wording changed in 2020. ***New statement added 2020

Social media is most associated with unwelcome friend/follow requests, bullying and trolling for those who are concerned and experienced. Search is most associated with harmful ads, whilst IM is linked to sexual/pornographic content and cyber-flashing

Leading potential harms associated with source types



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

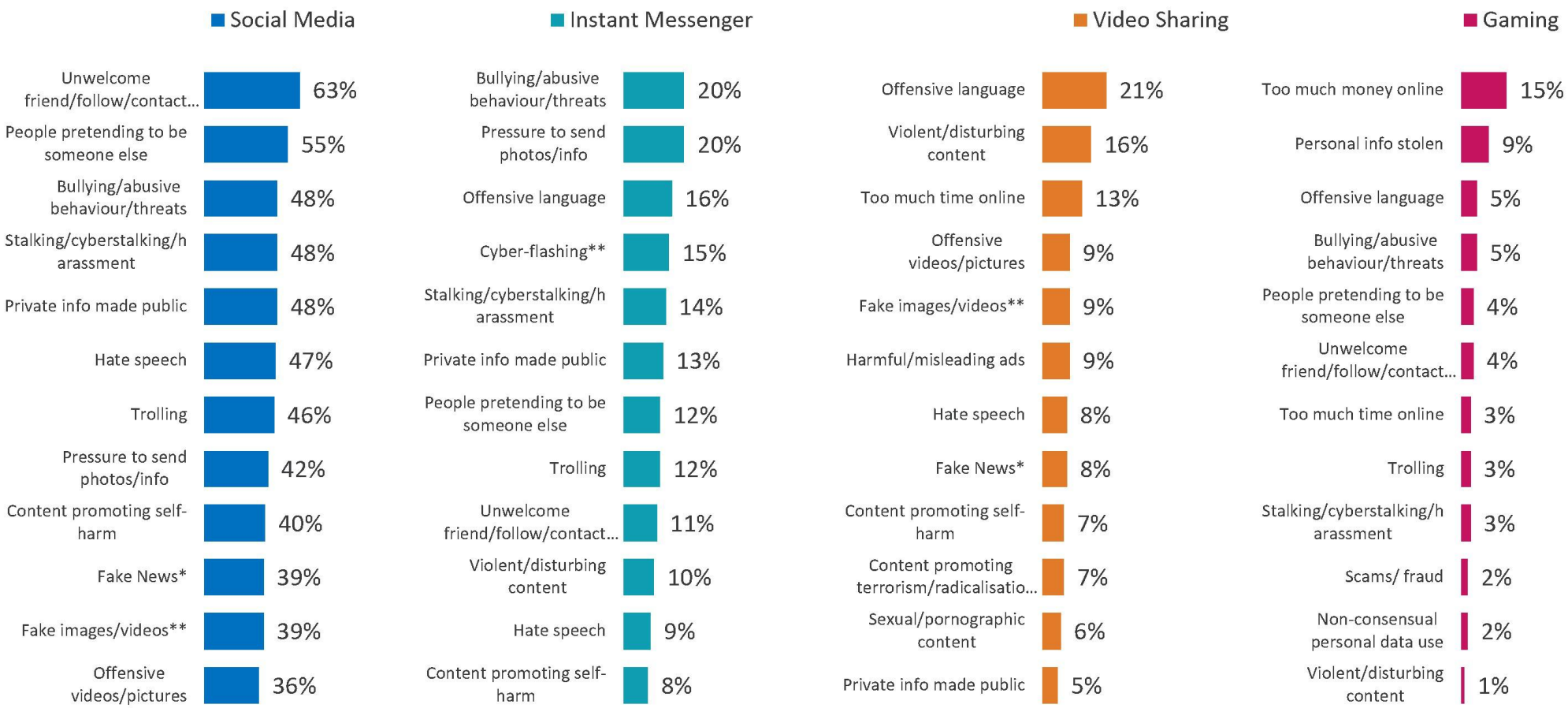
Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases 35-317)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

12-15's are less likely to experience potential harms on social media than adults, but 63% of those who are concerned and experienced unwelcome friend/follow requests cite social media as the source

Leading potential harms associated with source types (Top 12)



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases 27*-377)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

Potentially negative experiences are encountered on a range of sites and platforms, with social media sites being most commonly mentioned

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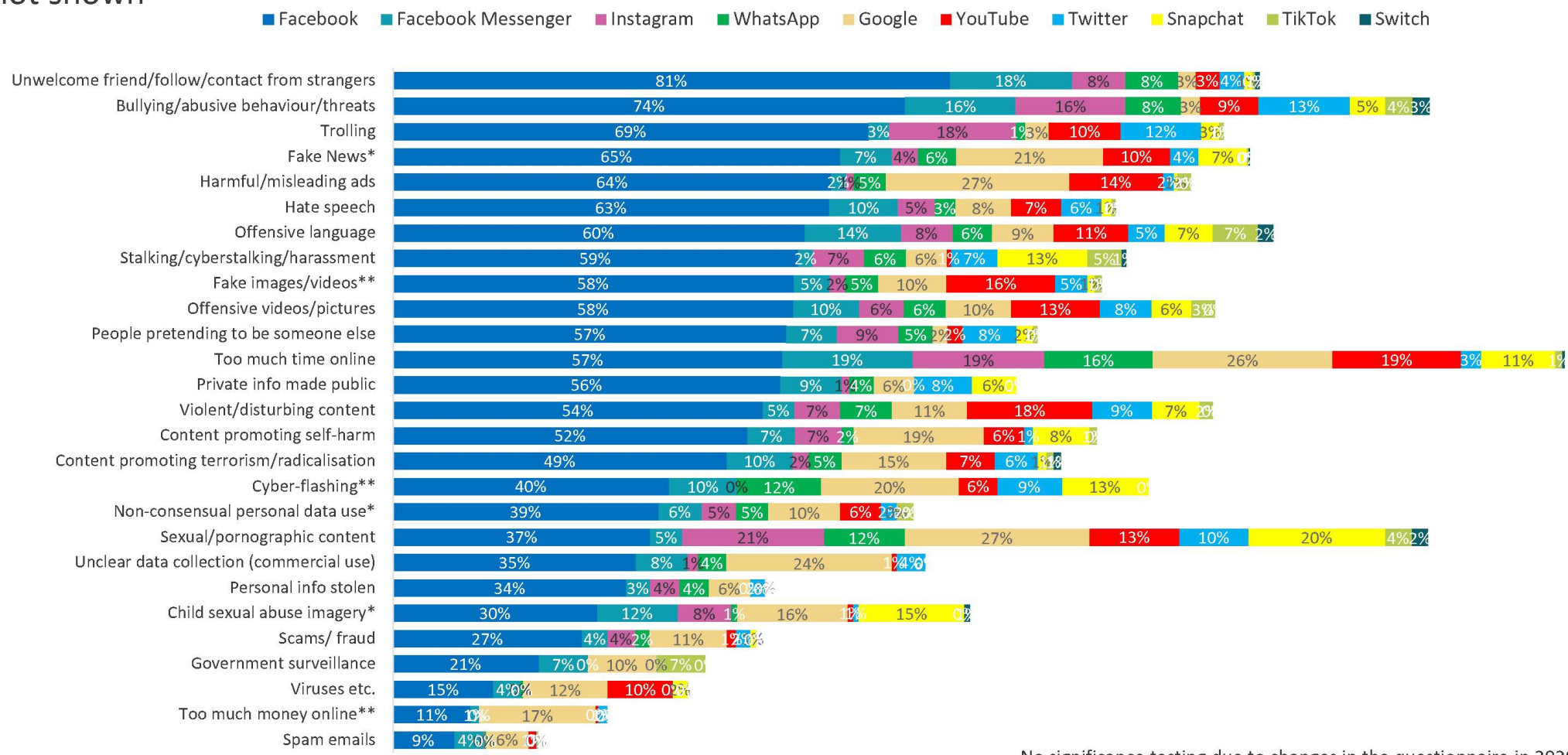
Places where potential online harm was experienced (specific source*). *smaller "other" sources and DK not shown



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

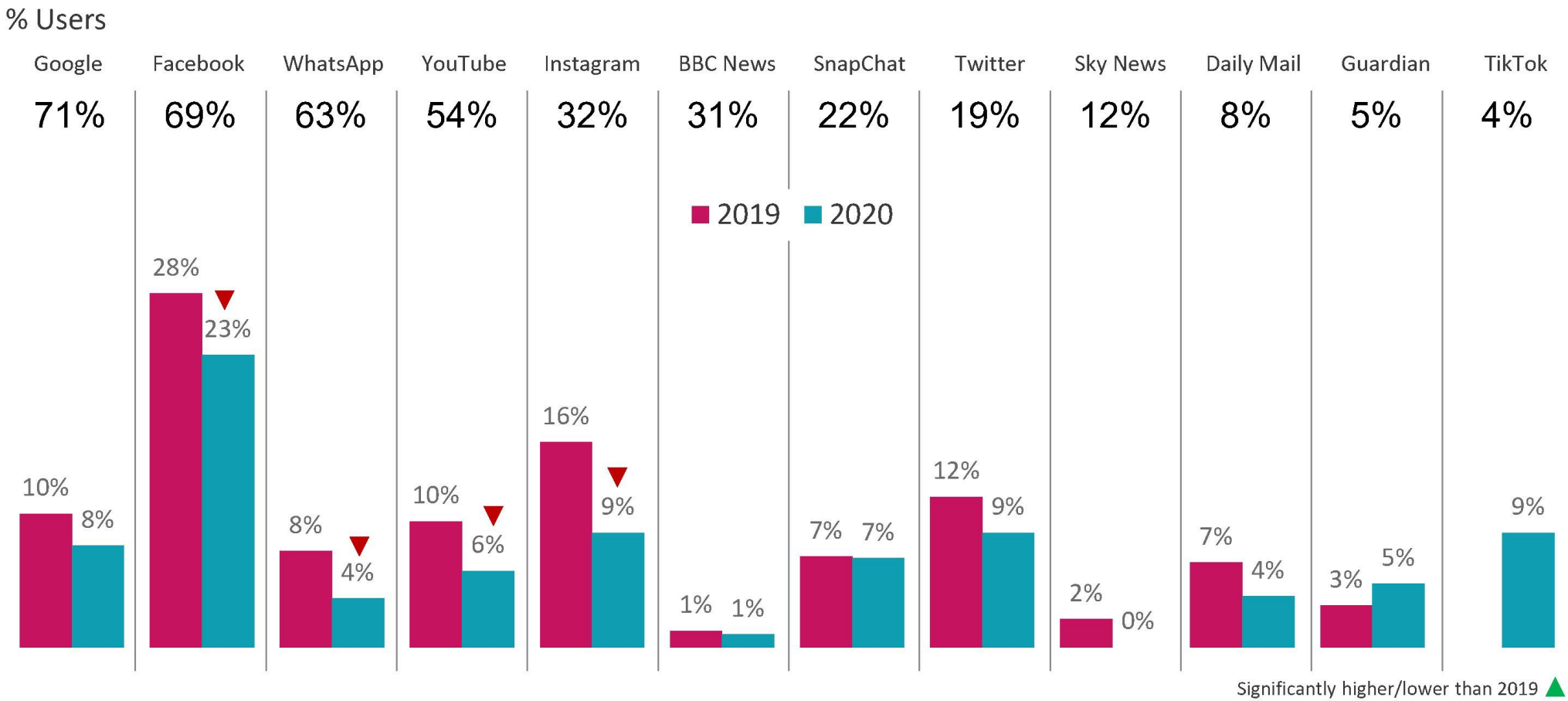
Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases between 25 and 317)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

The proportion of users who come across potentially negative experiences varies by platform

% Experienced potential harm on a platform they use



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" March 2019

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All adult internet users of X (bases 101-1443)

E4. Which, if any, of the following sites or apps do you use nowadays? Base: All adult internet users (2005)

1 in 3 of those that experienced stalking/cyberstalking knew the person harassing them

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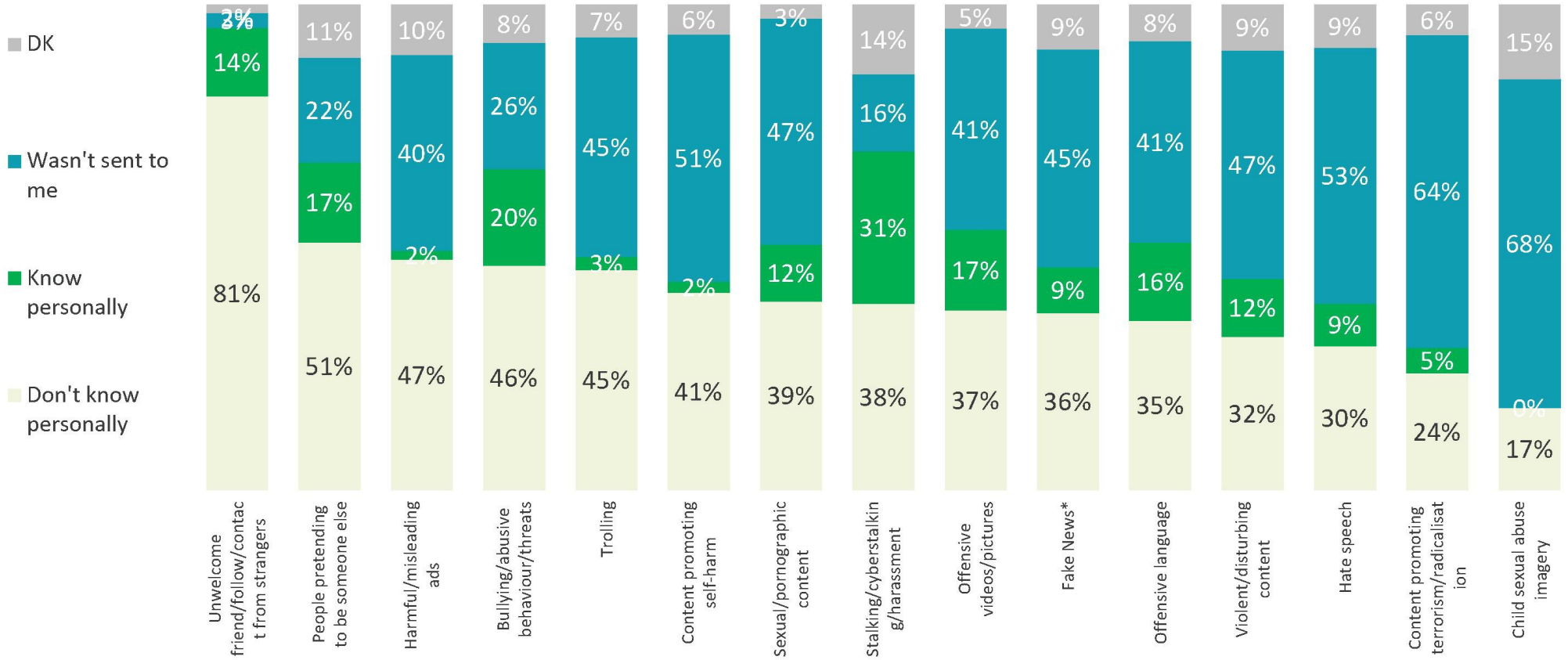
Individual responsible for potential harm experienced



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

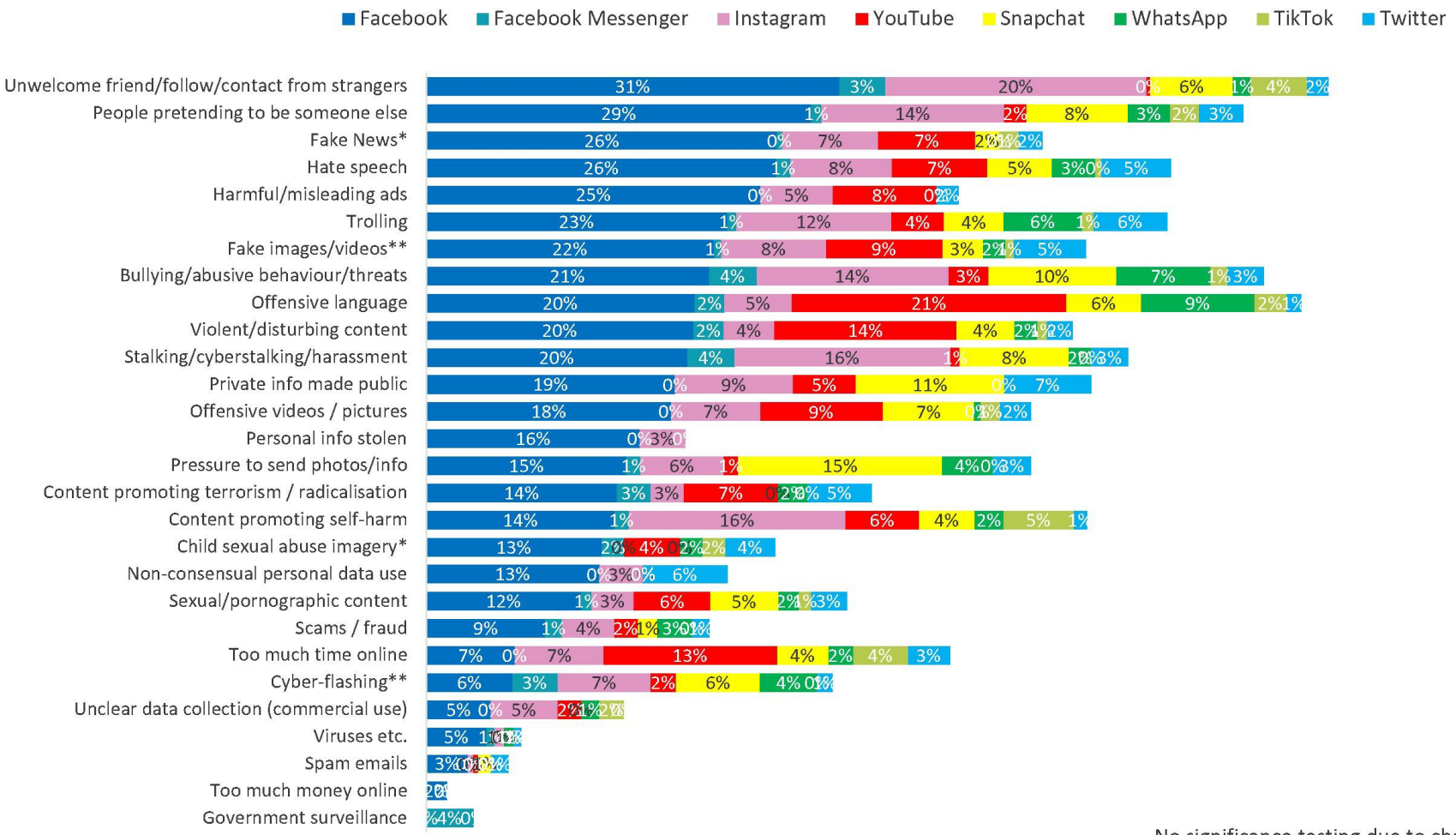
Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? C8) And was your most recent experience of [INSERT CODE FROM C4] sent to you by someone you know personally or someone you don't know personally?

Base: All adult internet users who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases between 28-137)

Potentially negative experiences are commonly encountered on social media sites

Places where potential online harm was experienced (specific source*).

*smaller "other" sources and DK not shown



No significance testing due to changes in the questionnaire in 2020

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases 27*-377)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

The proportion of users who come across potentially negative experiences varies by platform

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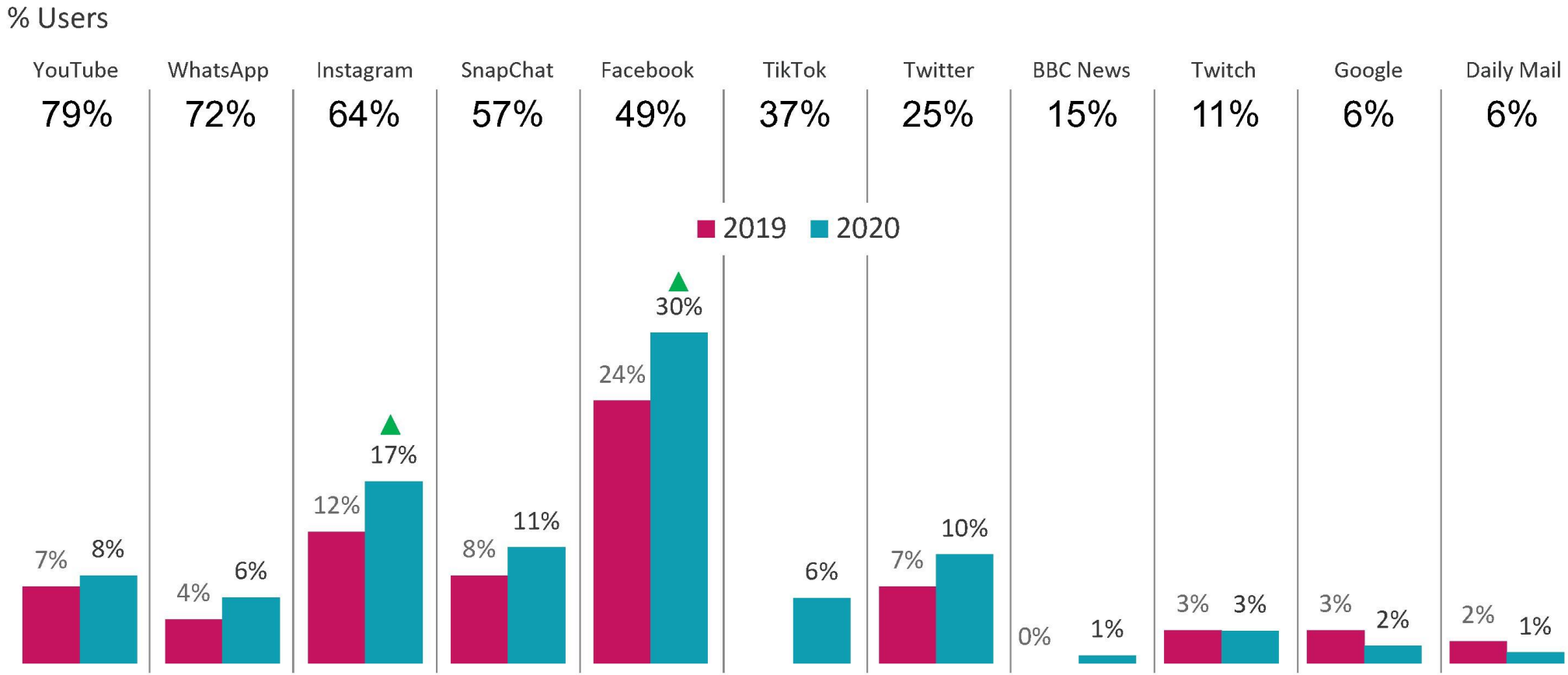
% Experienced potential harm on a platform they use



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" March 2019

Question: C7 Which site or service were you using when you came across your most recent experience of (XXX)?

B6. Which, if any, of the following sites or apps do you use nowadays? Base: All children 12-15 (1001)

2 in 5 of those that experienced stalking/cyberstalking or bullying knew the person that was harassing/bullying them

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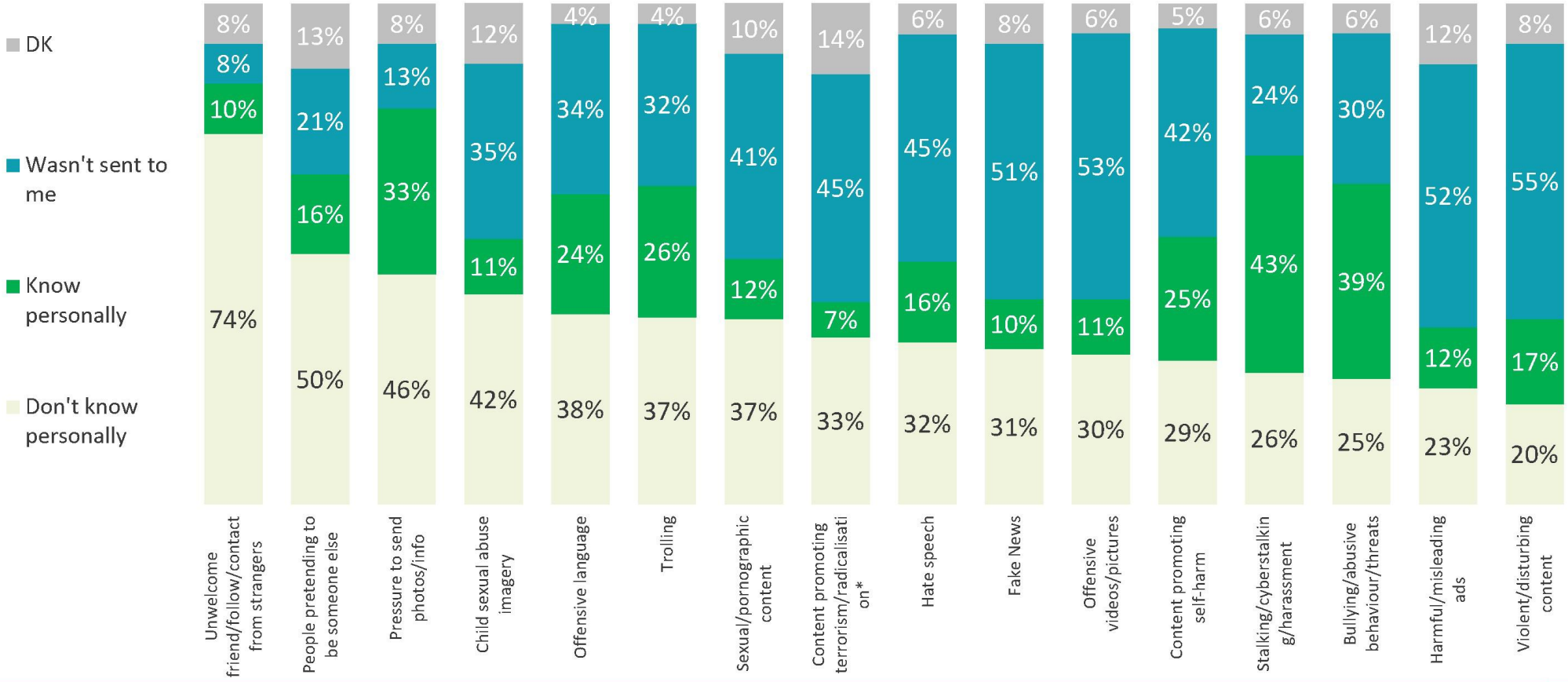
Individual responsible for potential harm experienced



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: C4) Which, if any, of the following things have you come across on the internet in the last 12 months? C8) And was your most recent experience of [INSERT CODE FROM C4] sent to you by someone you know personally or someone you don't know personally?**

Base: All children 12-15 who have experienced and are concerned about X (bases 27*-377)

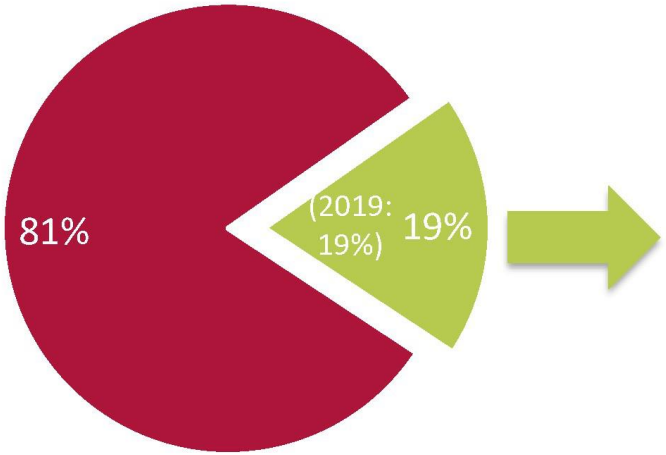
*CAUTION LOW BASE (<50).

Section 4
Reporting potentially harmful online experiences

As in 2019, 1 in 5 (19%) adults have taken action to report potentially harmful content they have seen online. 16-34's, females, those with children in the household, confident and heavy internet users are more likely to take action

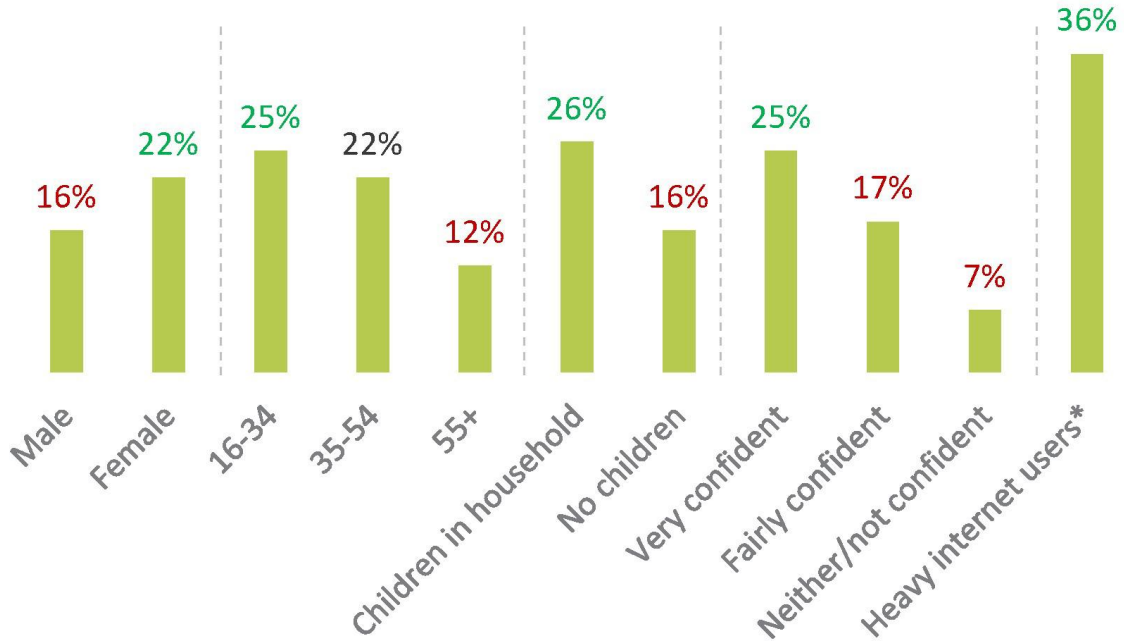
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

% All adults



*Including 3% "Don't know", 1% refused

% by demographics, internet confidence



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

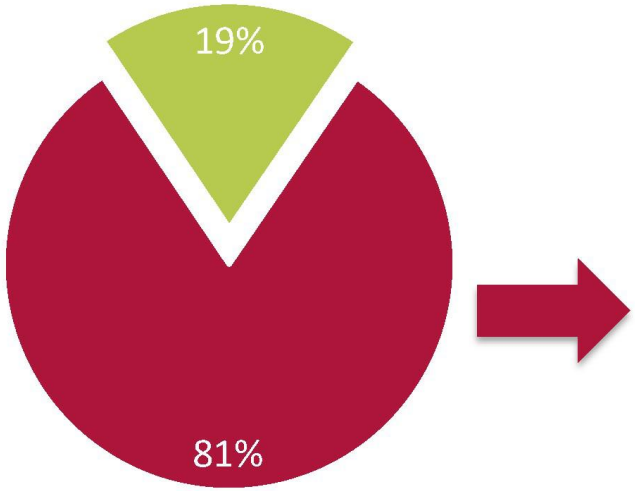
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

*Heavy internet users 5+ hours at weekdays AND 10+ hours at weekends (n=82)

A third (33%) of those who didn't report say they hadn't seen anything to report, while 1 in 7 'couldn't be bothered' and a further 1 in 12 'didn't think it would help'. 1 in 10 who unfollowed/blocked thought they hadn't taken action to protect themselves, when they actually had.

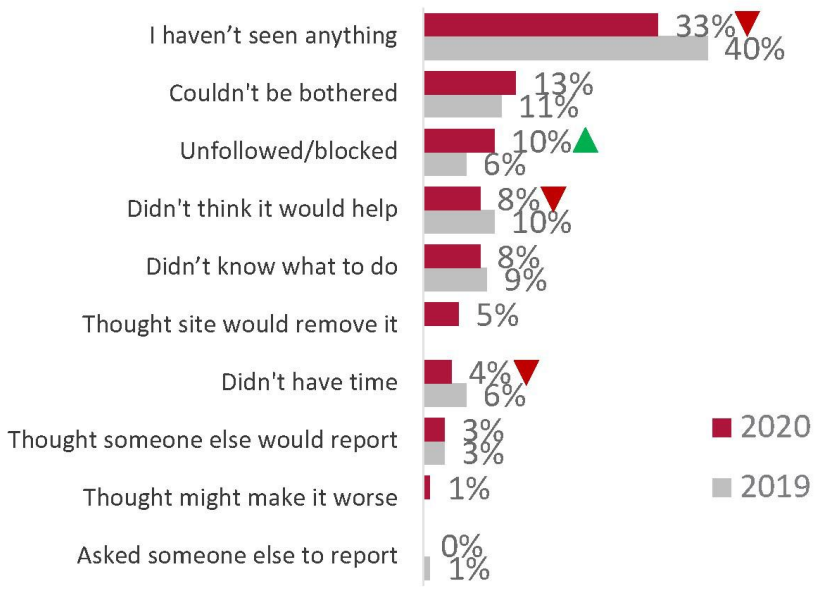
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

% All adults



Including 3% "Don't know", 1% refused

Why not?



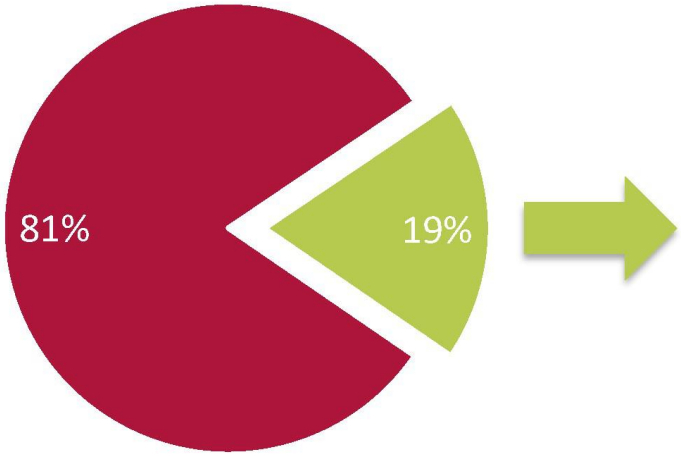
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D3) What were the reasons for not reporting something you've seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057), those who reported 2020 (475) 2019 (376), those who have not reported 2020 (1551) 2019 (1631)

Clicking on the report button has increased and remains the most common action taken (69%), followed by unfollowing/ unfriending/ blocking (22%) and informing the site (15%)

Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

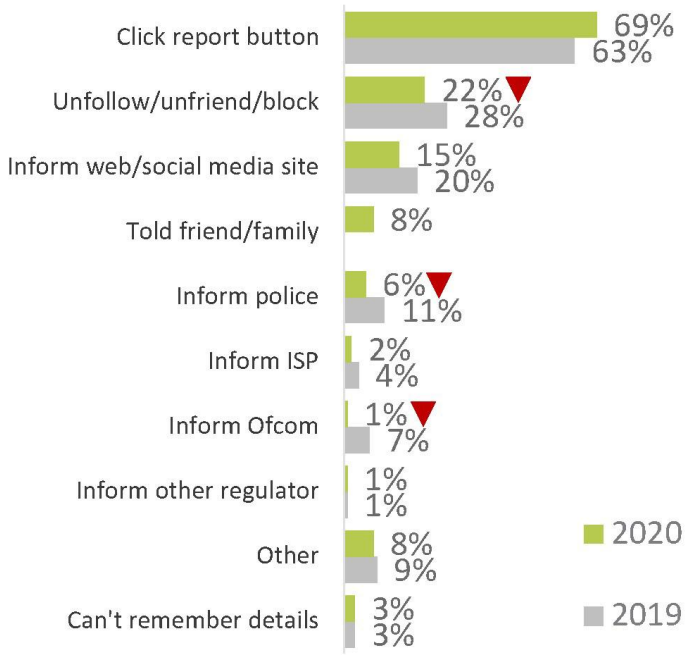
% All adults



- Yes, reported online harm
- No, didn't report online harm*

**Including 3% "Don't know", 1% refused*

Actions taken



Higher amongst 16-34s (82%), and those with children (82%)

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019

Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D2) What did you do?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057), those who reported 2020 (475) 2019 (376), those who have not reported 2020 (1551) 2019 (1631)

Nearly 7 in 10 of the people who reported an online harm experienced it on social media. Almost half thought the content was removed but significant proportions remain unaware of what happened as a result of their reporting

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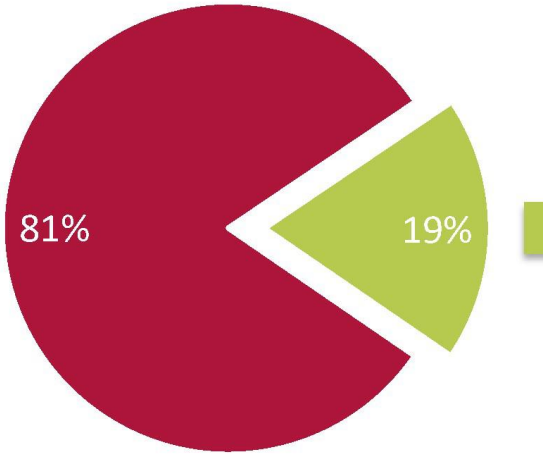
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

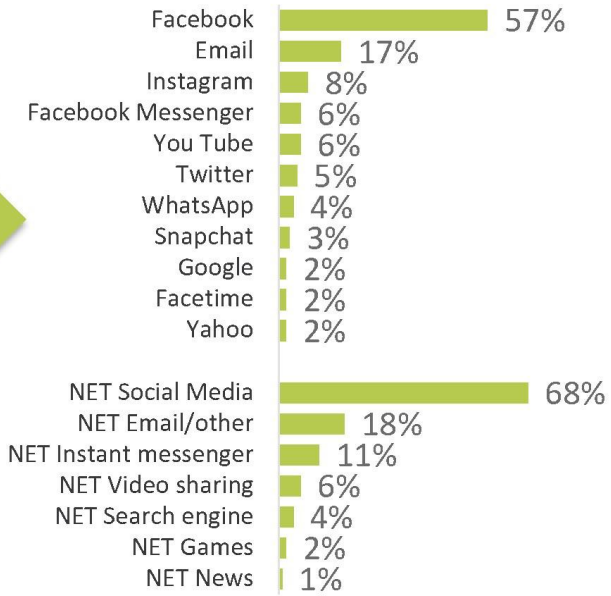
% All adults



*Including 3% "Don't know", 1% refused

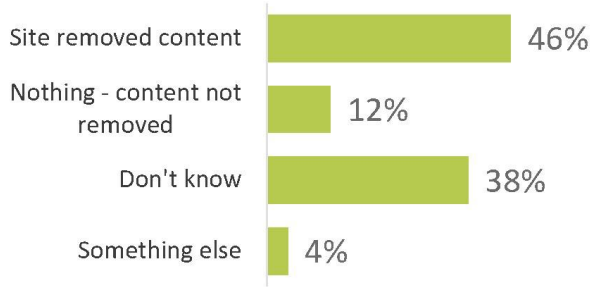
**NEW questions

Site/App seen on

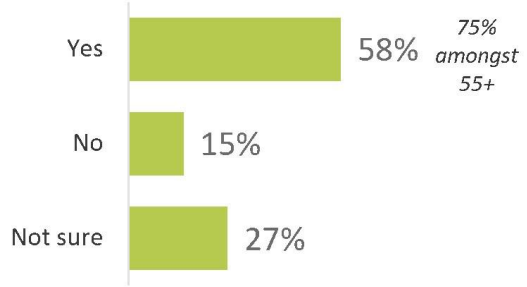


Social media and instant messaging significantly higher amongst 16-34s

*Perception of what happened next?***



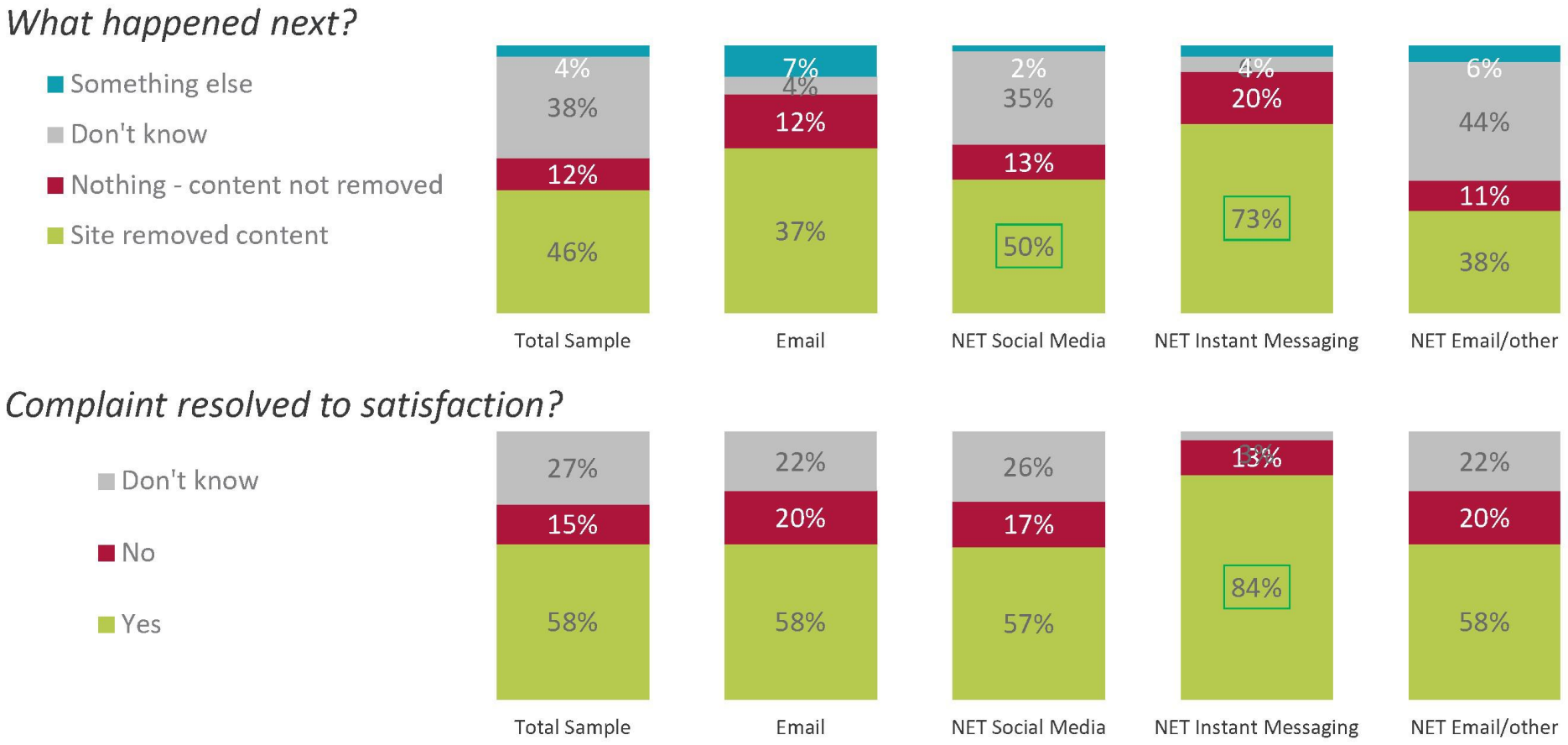
*Complaint resolved to satisfaction?***



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057).
D1b) On which site(s) or app(s) did you see the offensive, disturbing or harmful content that you reported? D2b. What happened when you reported? D2c. Was your complaint resolved to your satisfaction? Base: those who reported 2020 (475)

Instant messaging websites/apps were most likely to have removed content and these were the types of websites/apps with the highest levels of complaint resolution

Complaint resolution by website/app or type of website/app



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019

D1b) On which site(s) or app(s) did you see the offensive, disturbing or harmful content that you reported? D2b. What happened when you reported? D2c. Was your complaint resolved to your satisfaction? Base: those who reported 2020 (475) content seen on

Almost 1 in 3 12-15's have now taken action to report potentially harmful online content. C2DE's and those who have visited lots of new sites in the past month are more likely to take action

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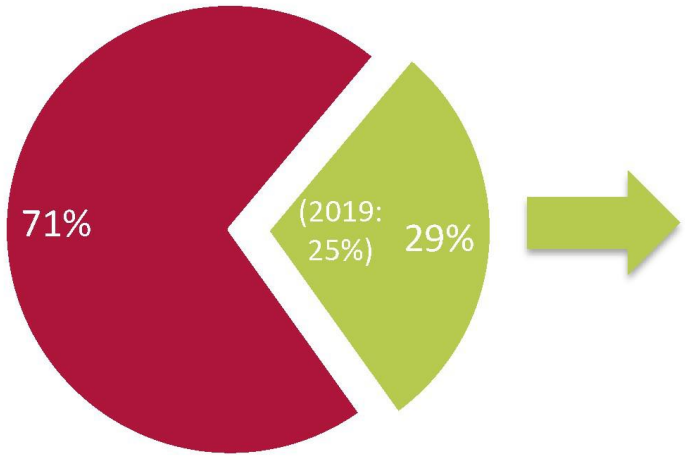
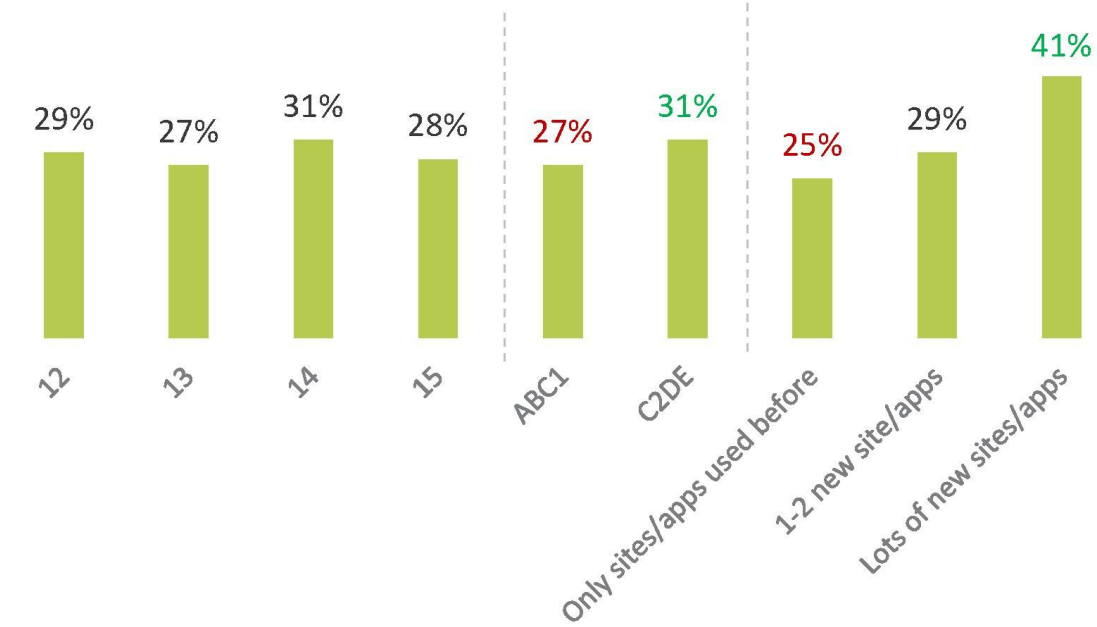
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

% All children



% by age group, SEG and sites visited in past month



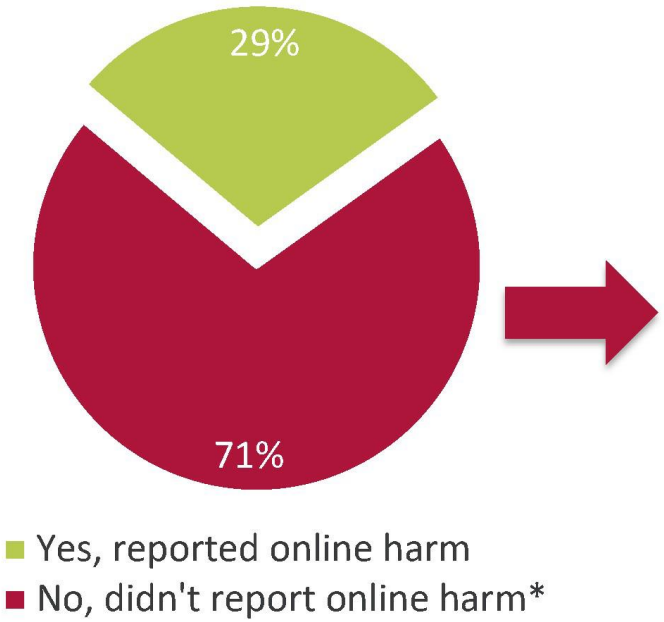
*Including 4% "Don't know"

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D2) What did you do? D3) Why haven't you reported anything that you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001)

A quarter of those who didn't report harm say they hadn't seen anything to report, while 1 in 7 'didn't think it would help' and 1 in 8 didn't know what to do. 1 in 7 who unfollowed/blocked thought they hadn't taken action to protect themselves, when they actually had

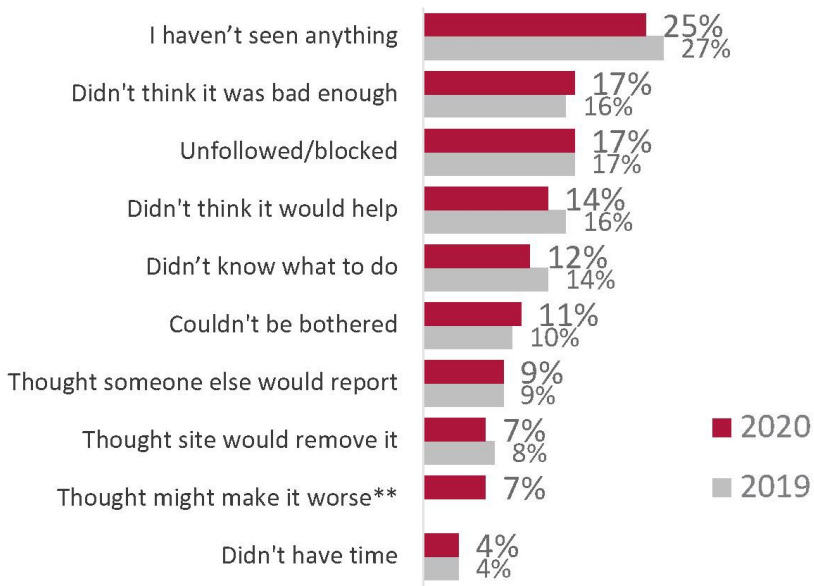
Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

% All children



*Including 4% "Don't know"

Why not?



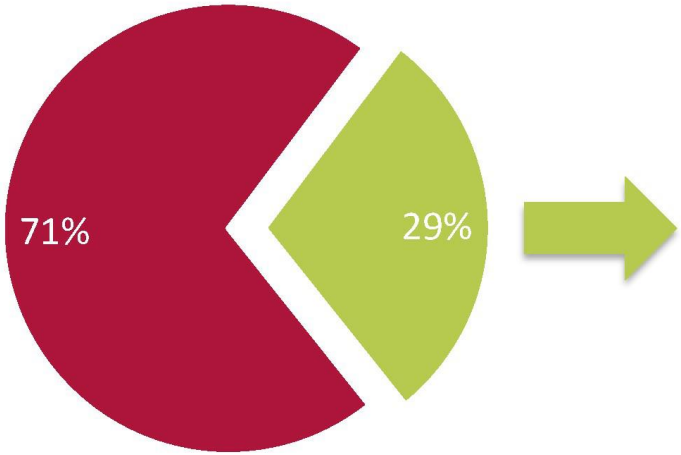
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D3) What were the reasons for not reporting something you've seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001), those who have not reported 2020 (1340) 2019 (728)
**NEW STATEMENT ADDED 2020

Telling a parent (50%), then clicking on the report button (39%) are the most common actions taken, followed by unfollowing/blocking (25%)

Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

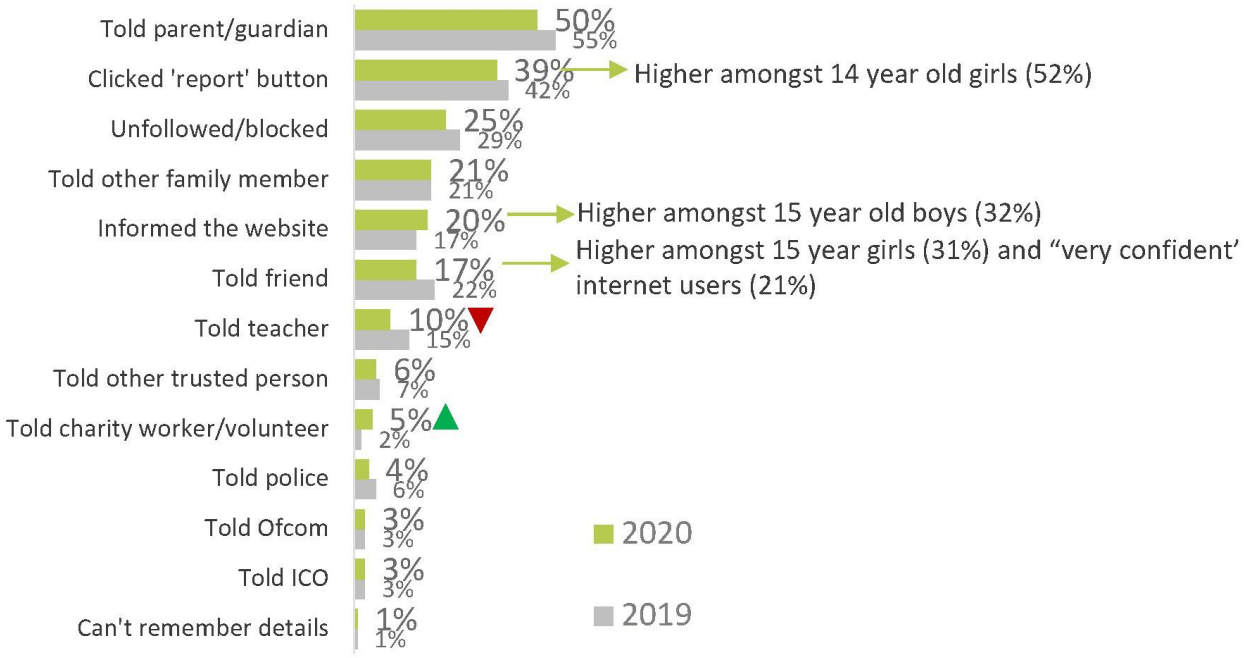
% All children



- Yes, reported online harm
- No, didn't report online harm*

**Including 4% "Don't know"*

Actions taken



Higher amongst 14 year old girls (52%)

Higher amongst 15 year old boys (32%)

Higher amongst 15 year girls (31%) and "very confident' internet users (21%)

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019

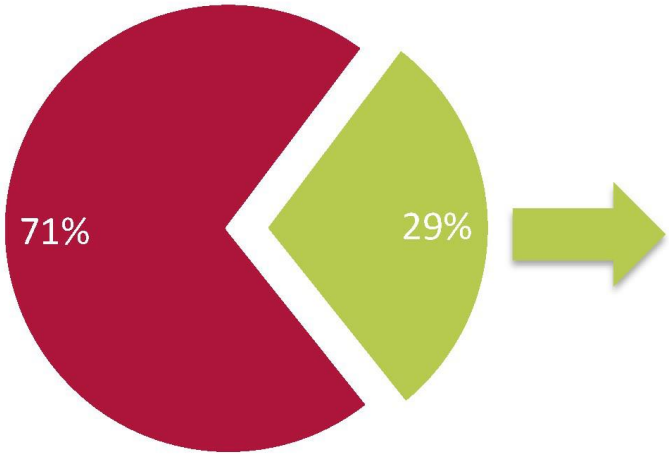
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? D2) What did you do?

Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001), those who have reported 2020 (578) 2019 (247)

Almost 2 in 3 12-15s who reported online harm said the incident happened on social media. Content was removed in almost half of cases but significant proportions remain unaware of what happened as a result of their reporting

Ever reported anything seen online you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful

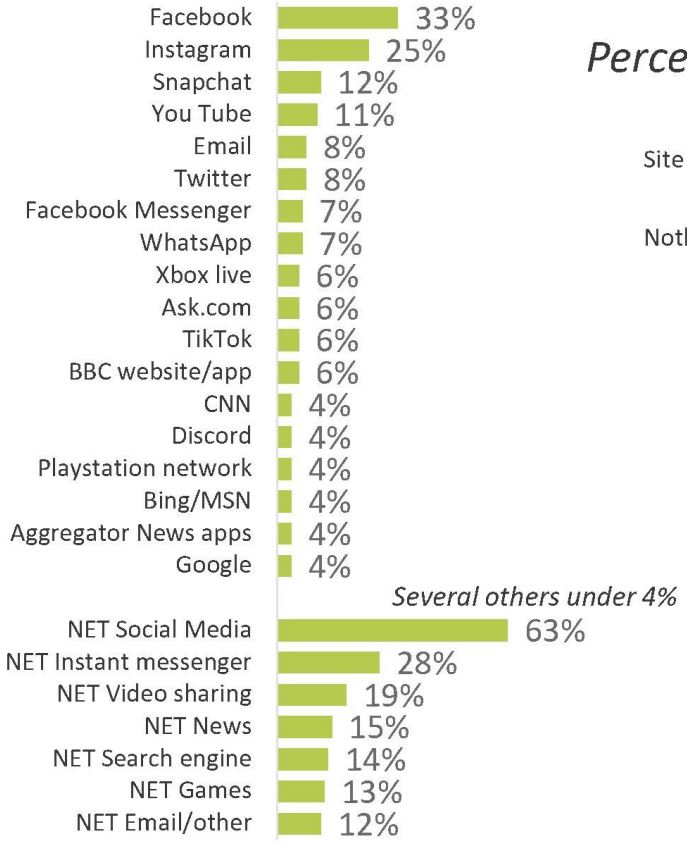
% All children



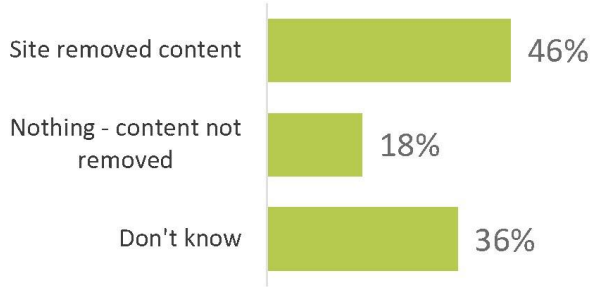
- Yes, reported online harm
- No, didn't report online harm*

*Including 4% "Don't know"
**NEW question

Site/App seen on



*Perception of what happened next?***



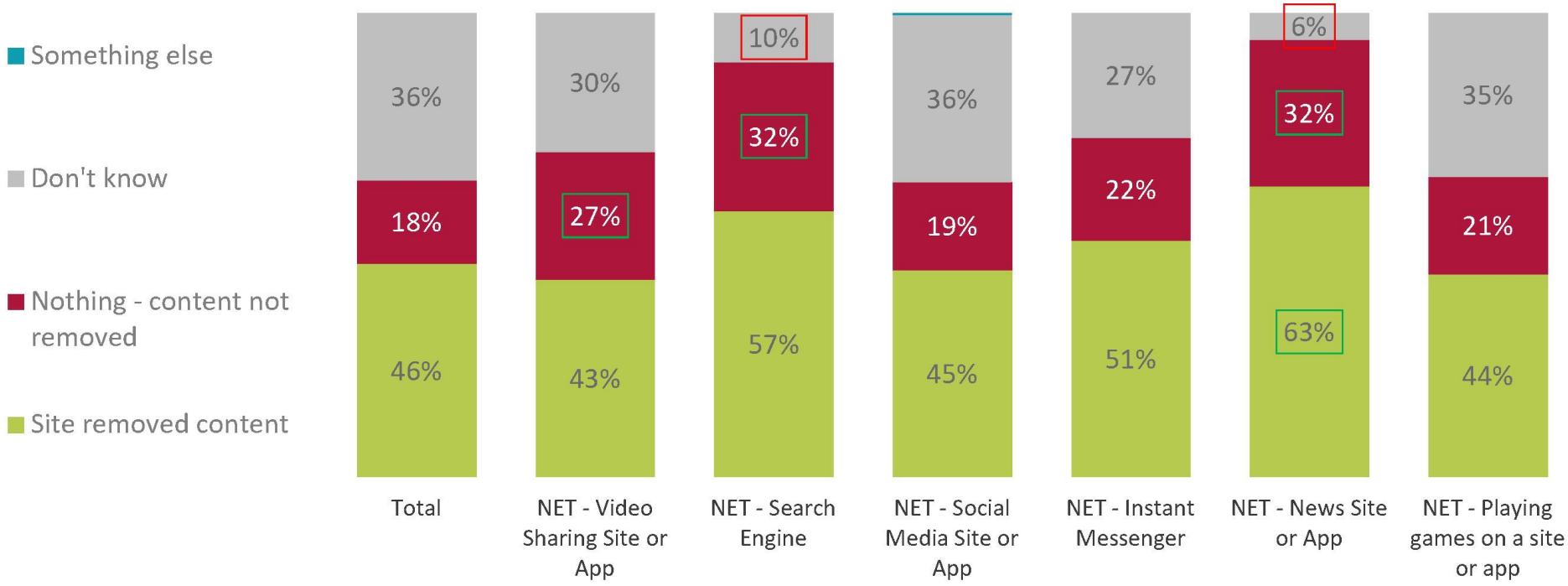
Significantly higher/lower ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019
Question: D1) Have you ever taken action to report anything you have seen on the internet that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?
Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001).
D1b) On which site(s) or app(s) did you see the offensive, disturbing or harmful content that you reported? Base: those who reported 2020 (578). D2b. What happened when you reported? D2c. Base: those who reported via report button/informing website/police/Ofcom/ICO or charity worker 2020 (337).

News sites/apps and search engines most likely to either remove or not remove the content (fewer children did not know what happened in these situations)

Complaint resolution by website/app or type of website/app

What happened next?



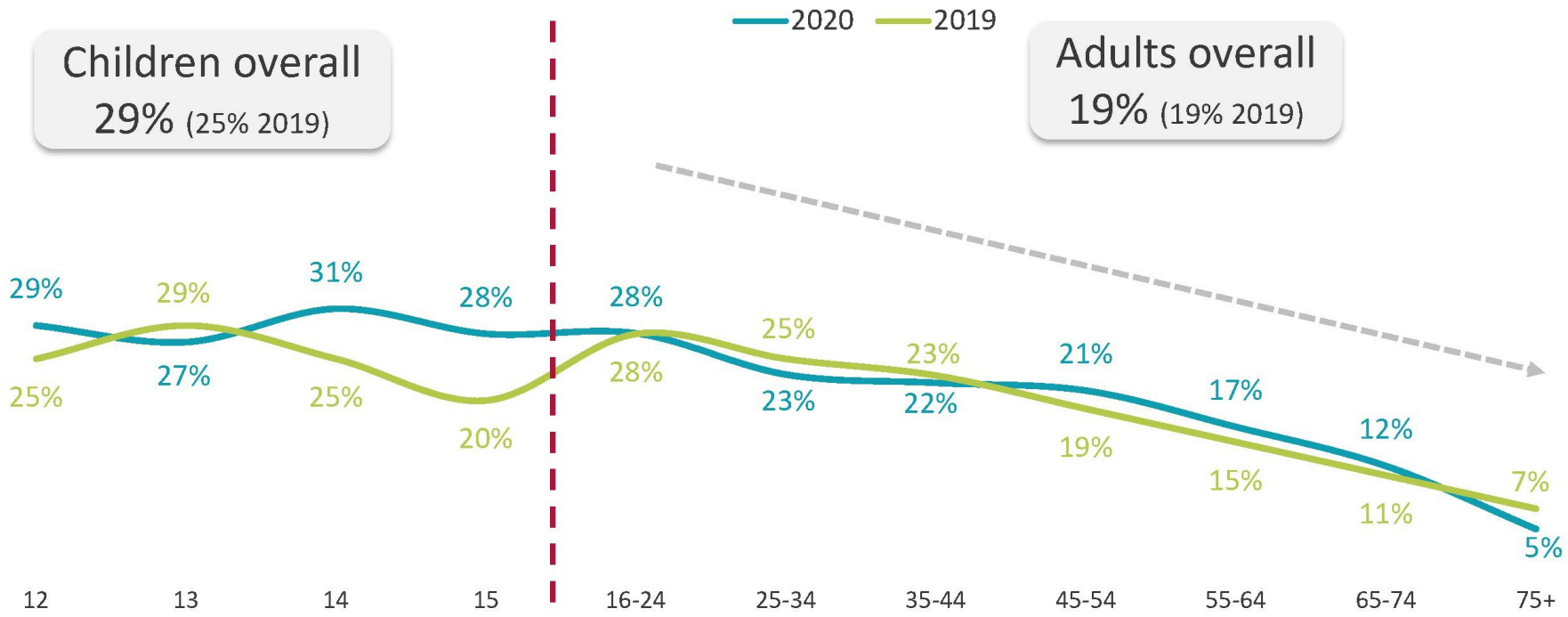
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019

D1b) On which site(s) or app(s) did you see the offensive, disturbing or harmful content that you reported? D2b. What happened when you reported?

Base: All children 12-15 2020 who have reported something that they saw on NET Video (62), NET Search Engine (58), NET Social Media (221), NET Instant Messaging (91), NET News (54), NET Playing Games (60)

The proportions reporting potential harms is largely consistent across 12-15 year olds. The incidence of adults reporting reduces significantly with age

Ever reported something seen online that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful?



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

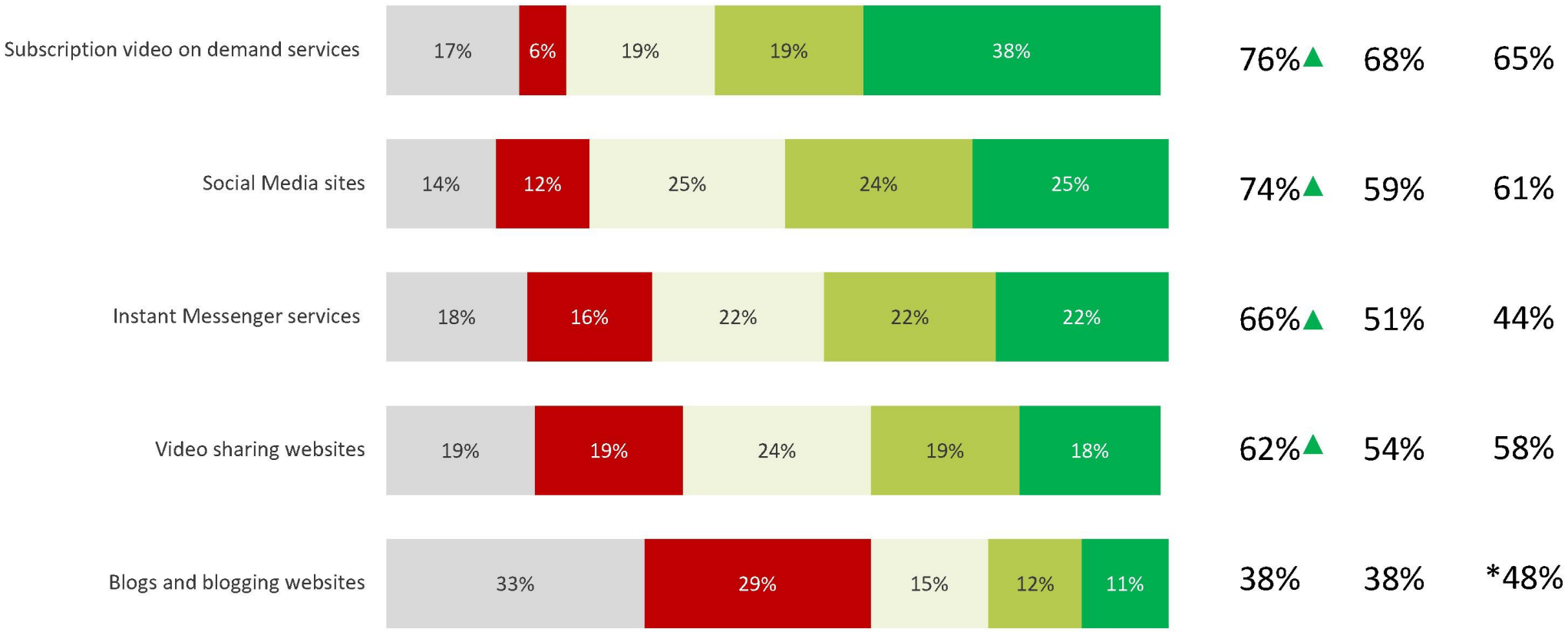
Question: D1 Have you ever reported something you have seen online that you thought was offensive, disturbing or harmful? This could include telling a person, using a 'report' button or emailing/messaging a website or social media site. Base: All adult internet users (2080), All children 12-15 (2001)

Section 5
Attitudes towards regulation and internet brands

INQ000615301_0225

More adults think there are regulations for SVOD, social media, IM and video sharing sites than in 2019. This is possibly due to media coverage about something *needing* to be done and people now thinking something *is* being done

Perceived regulation of different types of media



	% Some form of rules/regs		
	2020	*2019*	*2018*
Subscription video on demand services	76%▲	68%	65%
Social Media sites	74%▲	59%	61%
Instant Messenger services	66%▲	51%	44%
Video sharing websites	62%▲	54%	58%
Blogs and blogging websites	38%	38%	*48%

Don't know ■ There are no restrictions ■ Each company sets own rules (T&Cs) ■ Companies worked together set up industry body ■ Watchdog or regulator with legal powers

Significantly higher/lower ▲ ▼

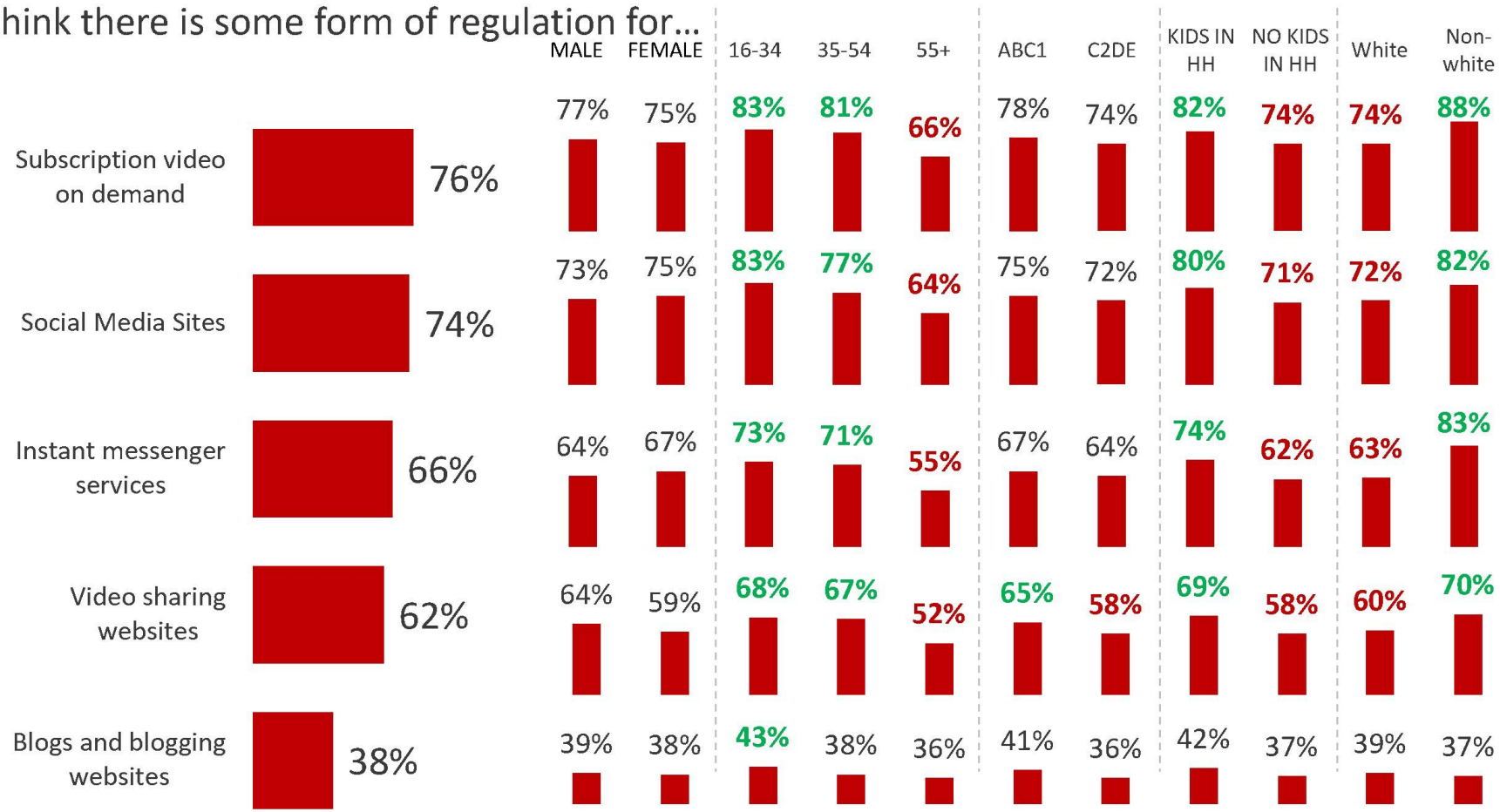
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E2) I'm now going to read out different types of media and for each please tell me which one statement best describes your understanding of the level of regulation in the UK?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

*2018 wording for "Blog and blogging websites" was "Independently owned websites and blogs"

16-54s, with children in household and non-white respondents are more likely to feel there is some form of regulation in place



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E2) I'm now going to read out different types of media (for example TV, internet sites, newspapers etc.) and for each please tell me which one statement best describes your understanding of the level of regulation in the UK?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

There is a high level of support for increased regulation across social media, video sharing and IM – although the level of support is lower than that observed at the start of 2019 *(NB: more people now think there is already regulation in this space)*

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Desired regulation of different types of media

	Should be more 2020	*Should be more 2019*	*Should be more 2018*
Social Media sites	66% ▼	70%	52%
Video sharing websites	57% ▼	64%	46%
Instant Messenger services	56% ▼	61%	40%
Blogs and blogging websites	55%	57%	*44%
Subscription video on demand services	39% ▲	34%	26%

Significantly higher/lower ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E3) And for each type of media, do you think that there should be more, less or about the same amount of regulation as there is today?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

*2018 wording for "Blog and blogging websites" was "Independently owned websites and blogs"

Females and those with children in household are generally more likely to want more regulation. Younger age groups are generally less likely to want more regulation.

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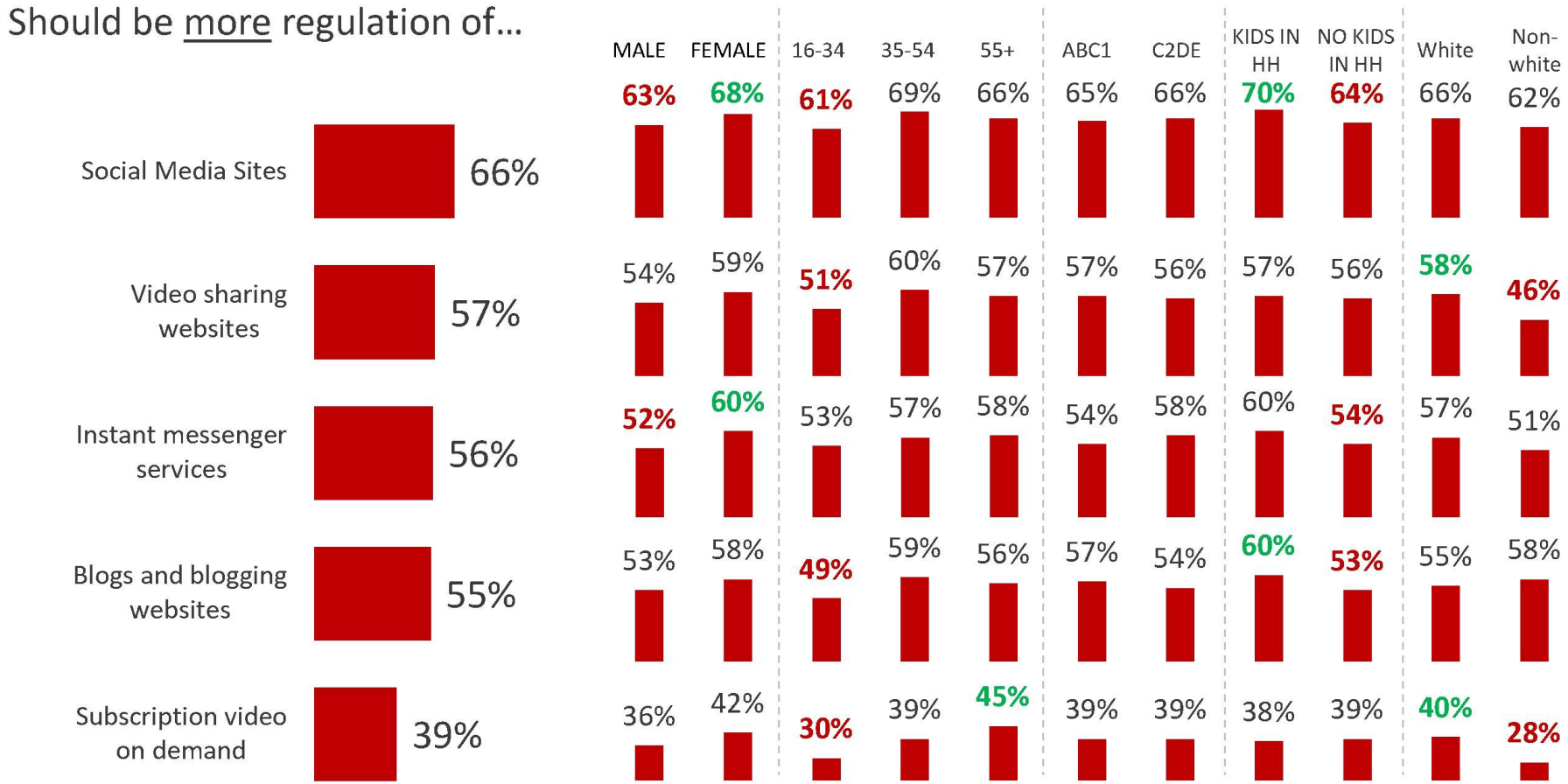

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E3) And for each type of media, do you think that there should be more, less or about the same amount of regulation as there is today?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

News sites tend to be most trusted, whereas Social media and video sharing sites are least trusted

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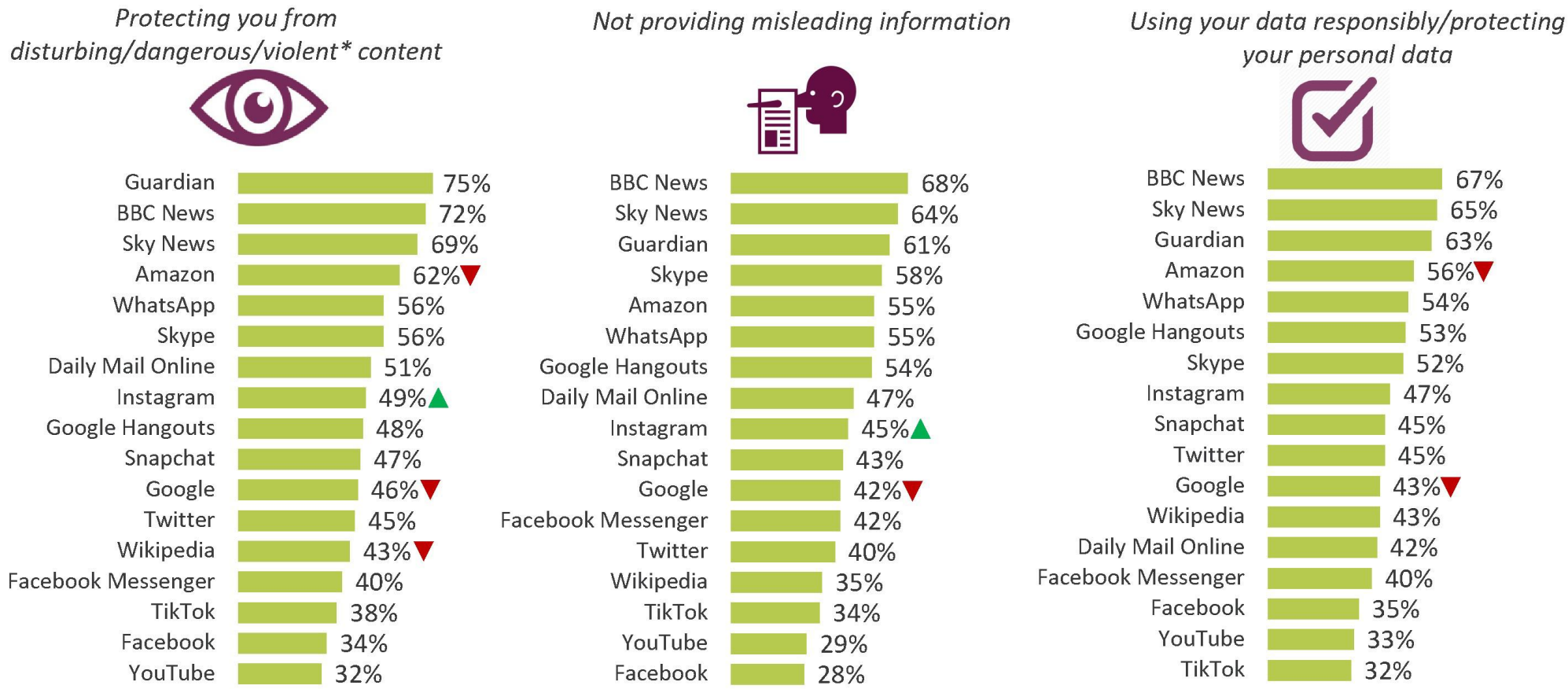
% agreeing they trust (Top 2 box) brand for…
For **all users answering** about each brand



Trust is lowest amongst Light internet users (2 hours or less online, weekday or weekend), Low confidence online, 55+ years old, C2DE

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020. Question: E5) Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you "do not trust it at all" and 5 means you "trust it a great deal", please tell me how much you trust (brand) when it comes to…Base: all adults randomly selected to answer about brand and using that brand: Facebook (1192), Instagram (490), Wikipedia (272), Snapchat (312), Google (1131), BBC News (475), Amazon (788), Sky News (138), Twitter (257), Mail Online (167), Guardian (73), YouTube (817), WhatsApp (1032), TikTok (59), Skype (174), Google Hangouts (44*), Facebook Messenger (762).
*Statement wording changed in 2020. Question asked differently in 2020 (random allocation of users. 2019 was asked regardless of usage)

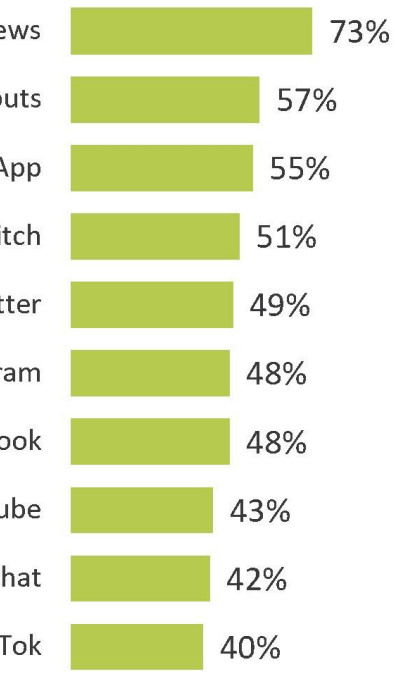
Social media and video sharing sites are also least trusted among 12-15s

Ofcom making communications work for everyone

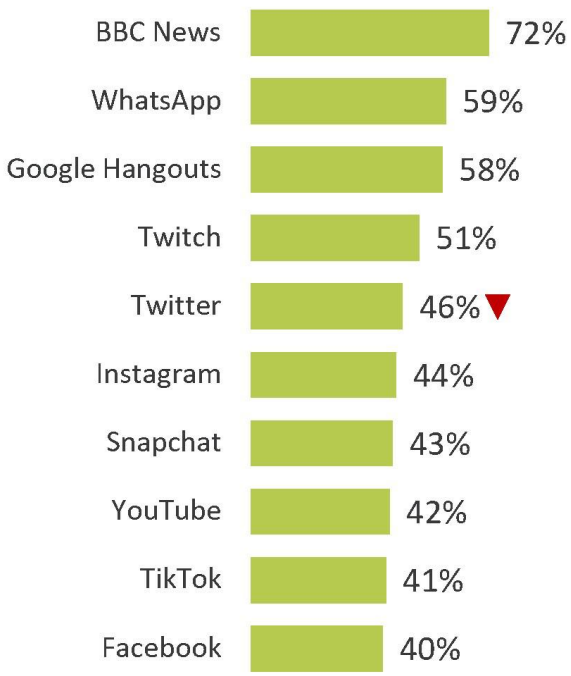
ico. Information Commissioner's Office

% agreeing they trust (Top 2 box) brand for…
For **all users answering** about each brand

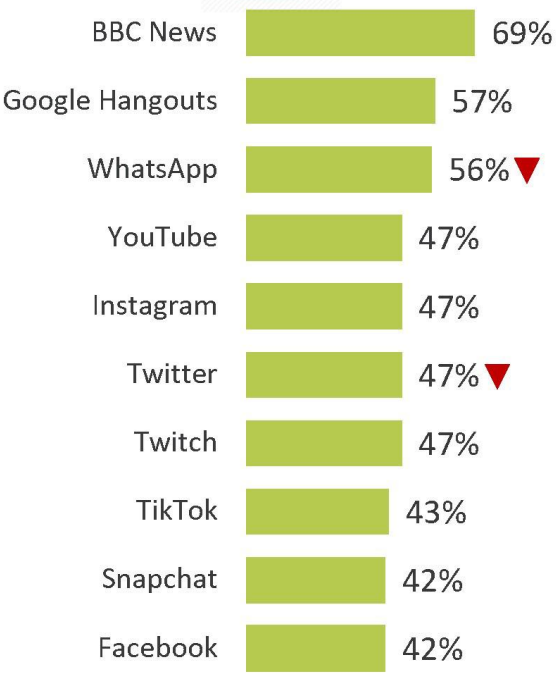
Protecting you from disturbing/dangerous/violent content*



Not providing misleading information



Using your data responsibly/protecting your personal data



"Google" changed to "Google Hangouts" in 2020

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

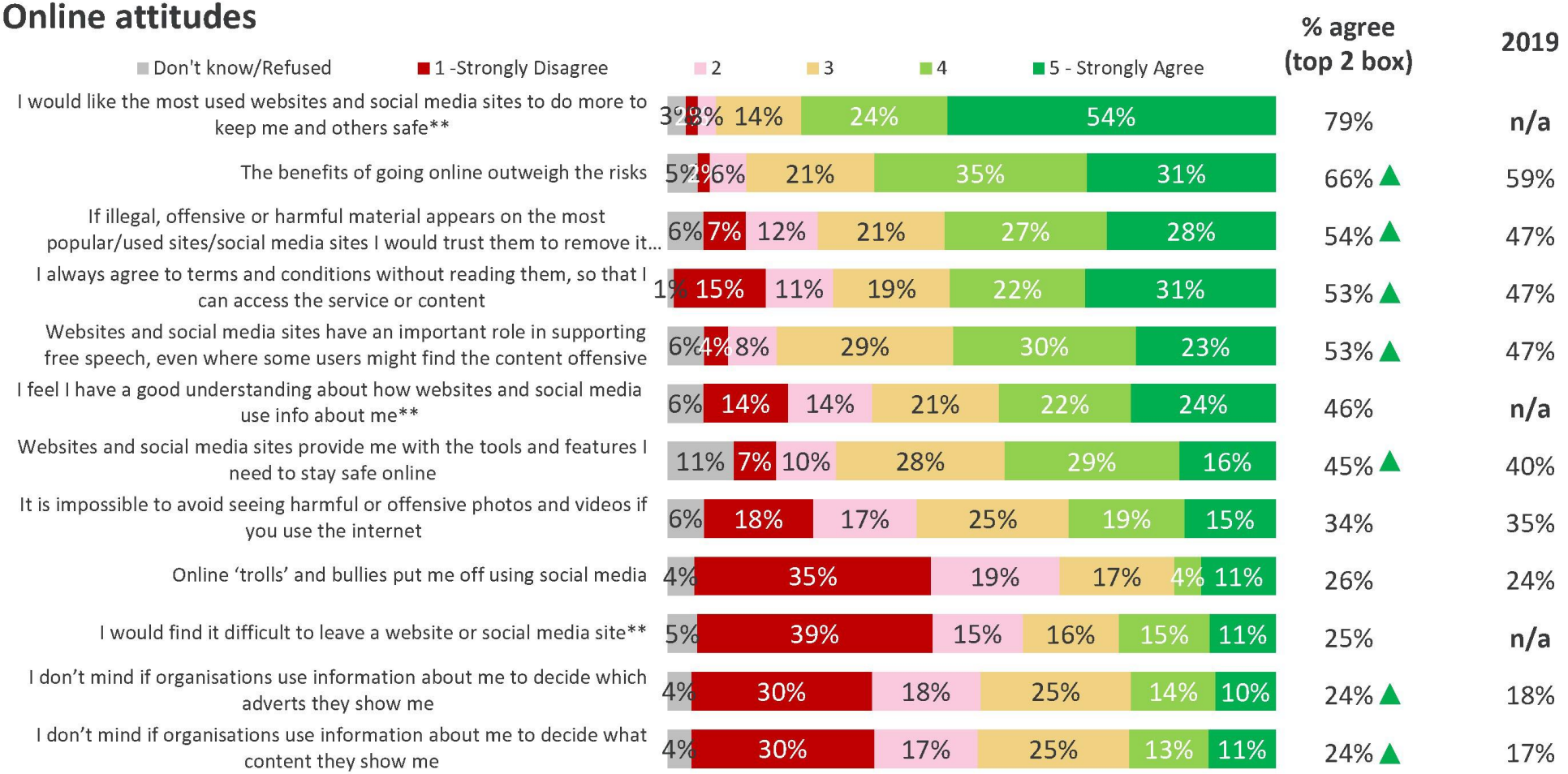
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E5) Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you "do not trust it at all" and 5 means you "trust it a great deal", please tell me how much you trust (brand) when it comes to…Base: all children randomly selected to answer about brand and using that brand: Facebook (962), Instagram (1148), Twitch (224), Snapchat (1075), Twitter (500), TikTok (746), You Tube (1153), WhatsApp (1151), Google Hangouts (125), BBC News (304).

*Statement wording changed in 2020. Question asked differently in 2020 (random allocation of users. 2019 was asked regardless of usage)

Although two-thirds of adults feel the benefits of going online outweigh the risks, almost 8 in 10 would like websites to do more to keep them and others safe

Online attitudes



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

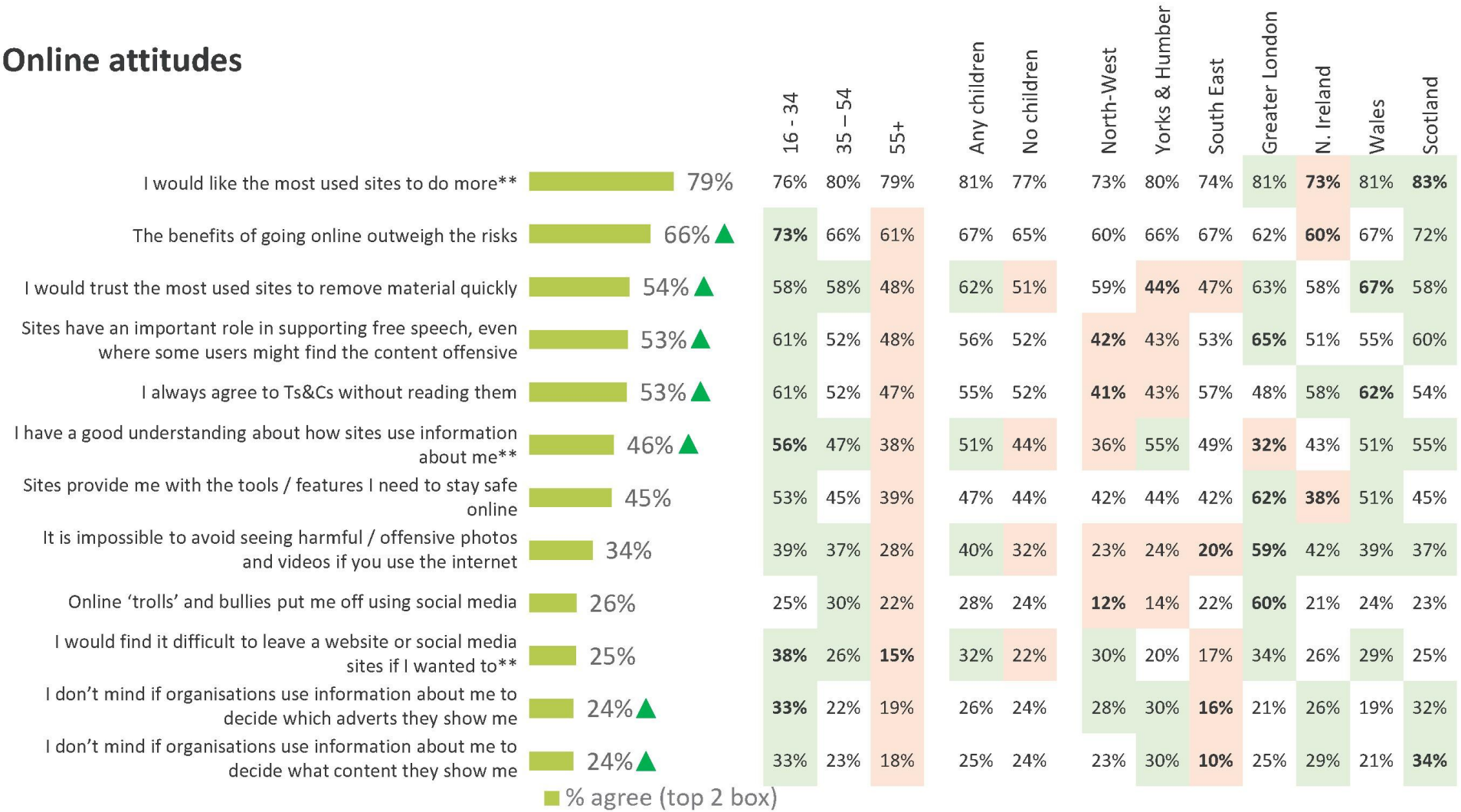
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

**New statement for 2020

Those aged 55+, without children in the household and certain regions are less likely to agree with the statements

Online attitudes



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

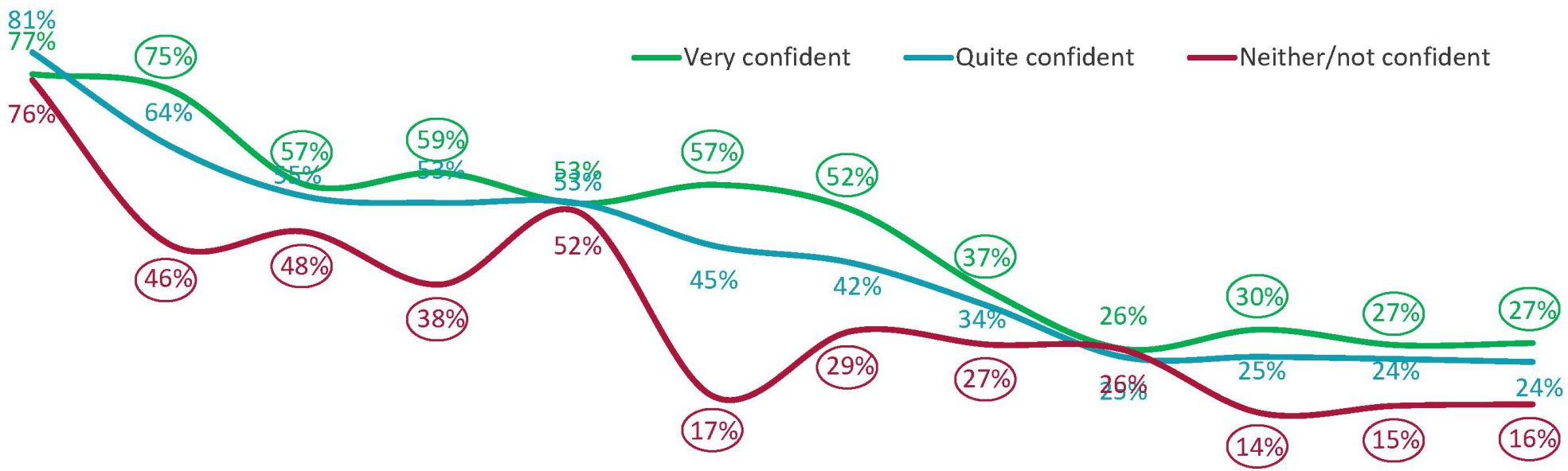
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080) 2019 (2057)

**New statement for 2020

There is a clear link between the perceived level of internet confidence and most attitudes

Online attitudes



I'd like the most used sites to do more to keep me and others safe**

The benefits of going online outweigh the risks

If illegal, offensive or harmful material appears on the most popular / used sites I would trust them to remove it quickly

Sites have an important role in supporting free speech

I always agree to Ts&Cs without reading them

I have a good understanding about how sites use info. about me to decide which adverts / content to show me**

Sites provide me with the tools and features I need to stay safe online

It's impossible to avoid seeing harmful / offensive photos and videos if you use the internet

Online 'trolls' and bullies put me off using social media

I'd find it difficult to leave a site if I wanted to**

I don't mind if orgs. use info. about me to decide what content they show me

I don't mind if orgs. use info. about me to decide which adverts they show me

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

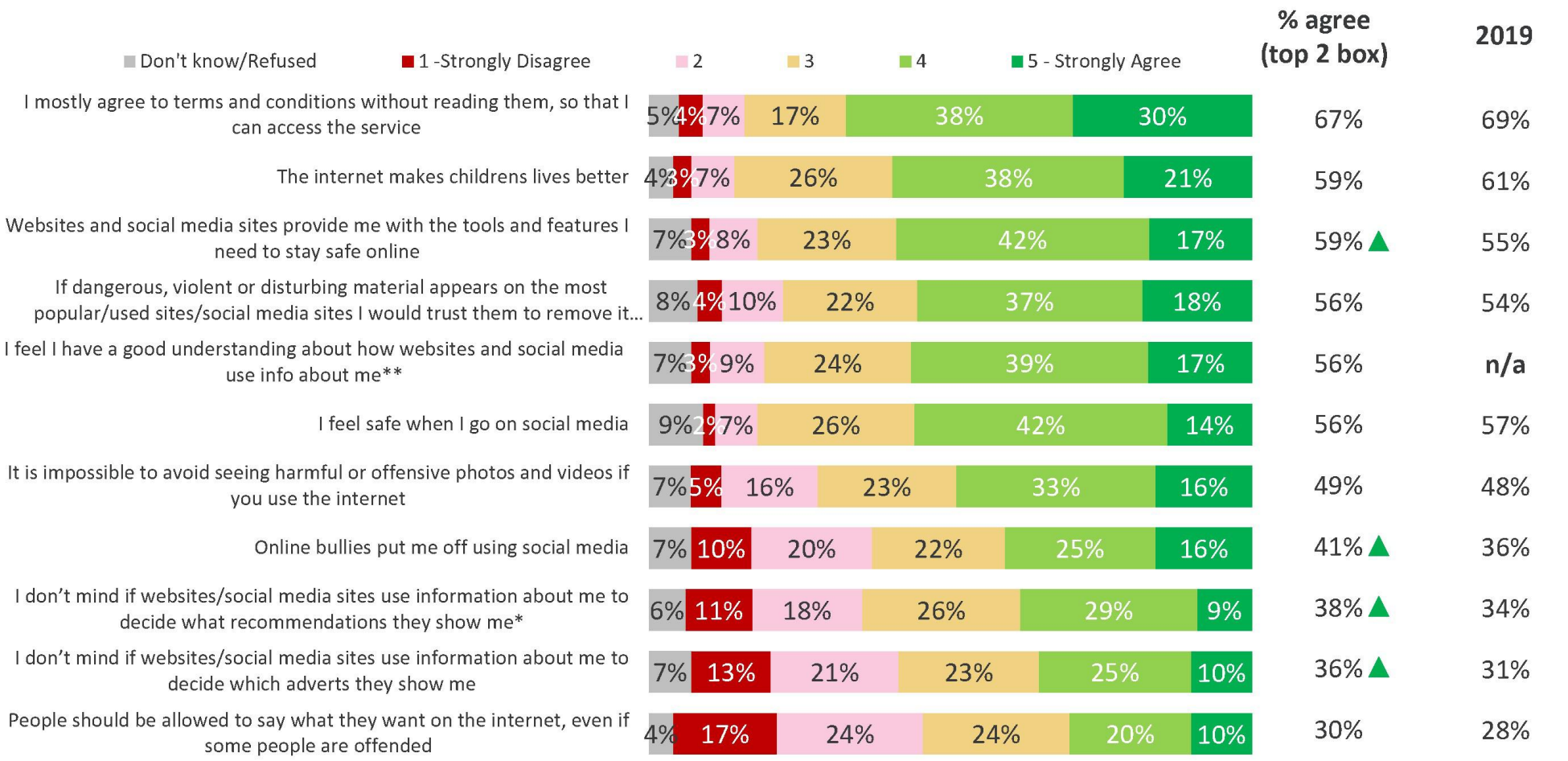
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All adults (2080). Very confident internet users (751), Quite confident (457), Neither/not confident (163)

**New statement for 2020

3 in 5 12-15 year olds believe the internet makes children's lives better – however, only half (56%) feel safe to go on social media and 2 in 5 are put off using social media by online bullies

Online attitudes



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

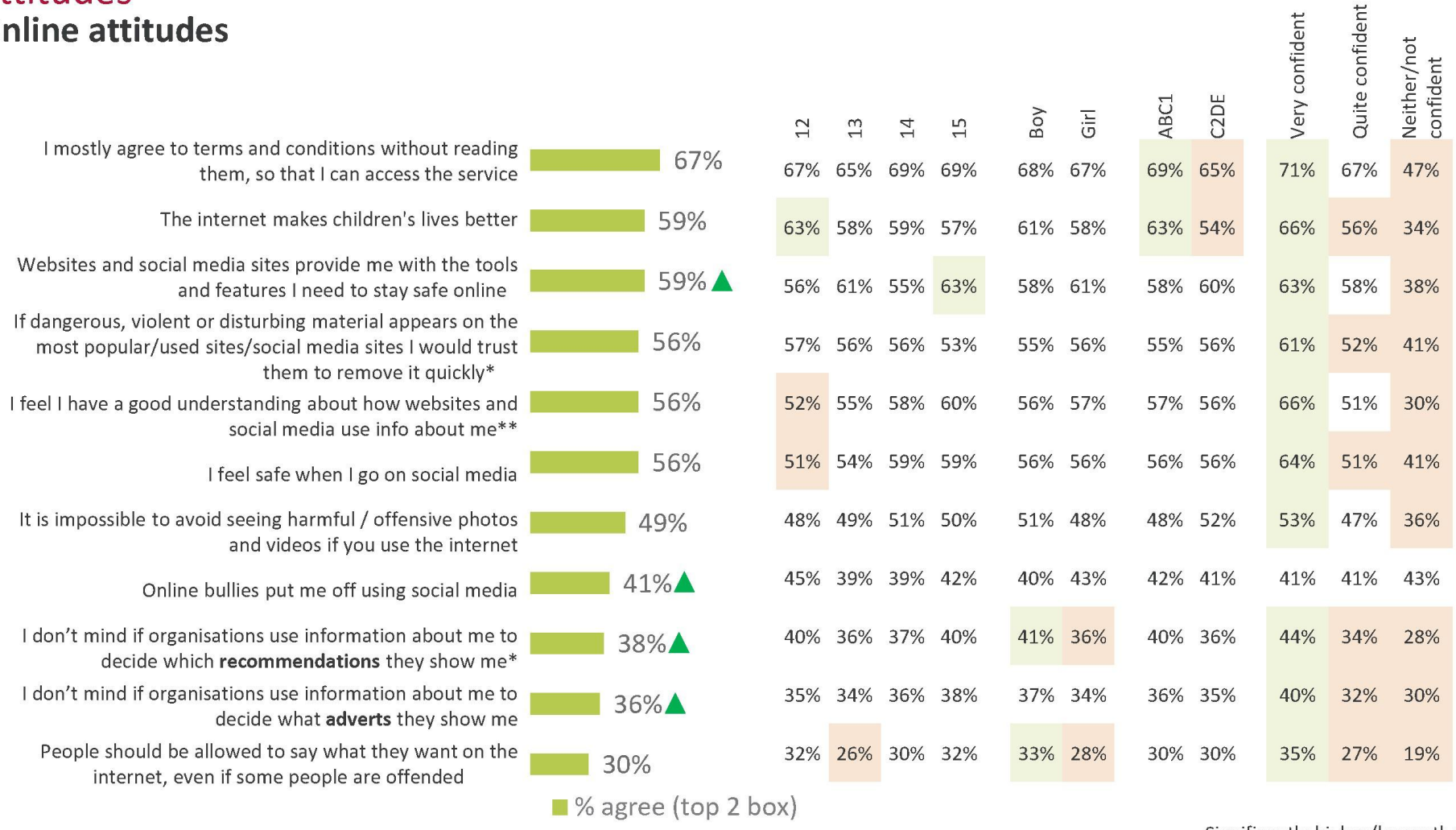
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

12 year olds and ABC1s are more likely to agree that the internet makes children's lives better. There is a clear link between the perceived level of internet confidence and most attitudes

Online attitudes



Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

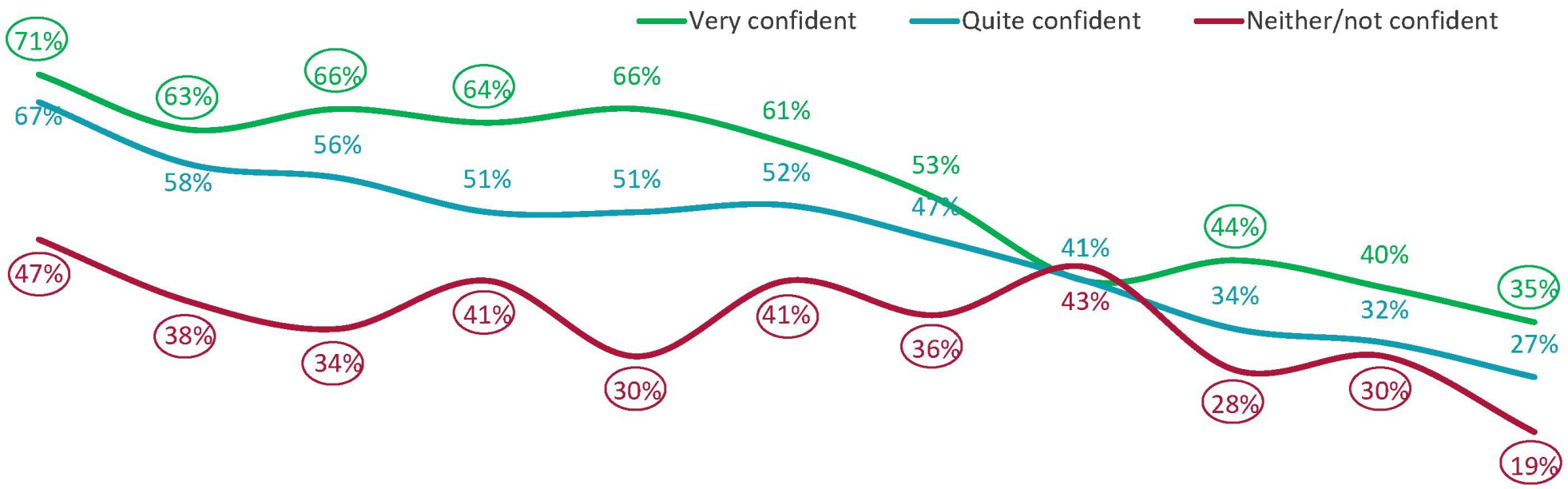
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001)

*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

There is a clear link between the perceived level of internet confidence and most attitudes

Online attitudes



I mostly agree to terms and conditions without reading them, so that I can access the service

Websites and social media sites provide me with the tools and features I need to stay safe online

The internet makes children's lives better

I feel safe when I go on social media

I feel I have a good understanding about how websites and social media use info about me**

If dangerous, violent or disturbing material appears on the most popular/used sites/social media sites I would trust them to remove it quickly*

It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful / offensive photos and videos if you use the internet

Online bullies put me off using social media

I don't mind if organisations use information about me to decide which recommendations they show me*

I don't mind if organisations use information about me to decide what adverts they show me

People should be allowed to say what they want on the internet, even if some people are offended

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

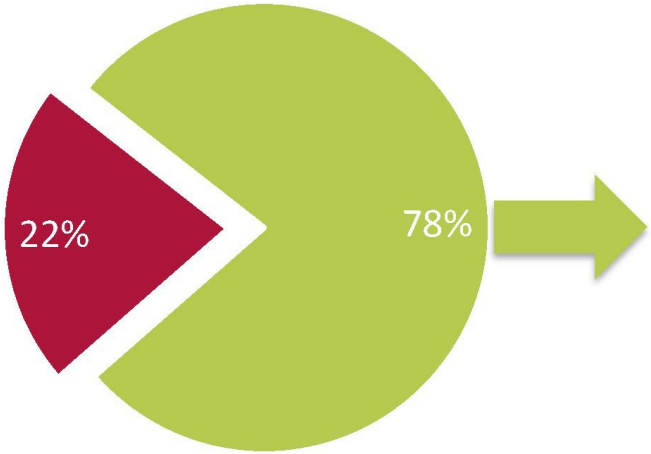
Question: E1) On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly disagree and 5 means Strongly agree, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All children 12-15 (2001). Very confident internet users (907), Fairly confident (982), Neither/not confident (104)
*Wording changed in 2020. **New statement added 2020

More than three quarters of children (78%) know how to change the privacy settings on social media accounts. This is correlated with increasing age and higher levels of internet confidence

Know how to change the privacy settings on social media account?

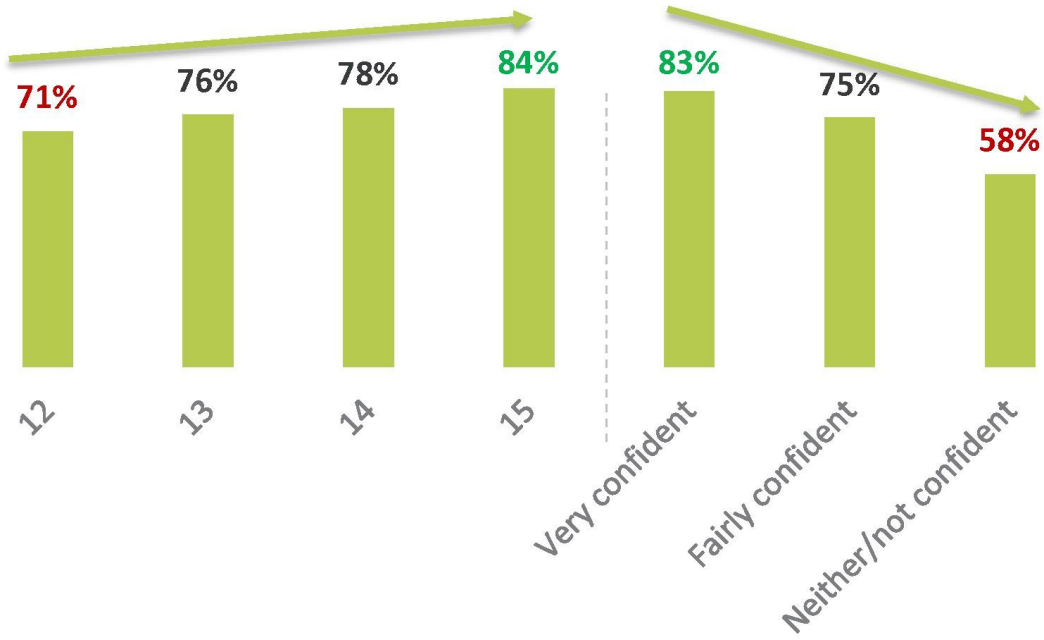
% All children



- Yes, know how to change privacy settings
- No/don't know*

**Including 2% "don't use social media"*

% by age group & internet confidence



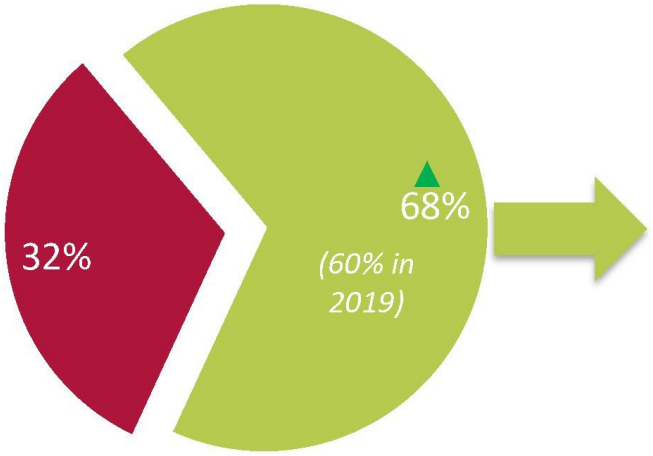
Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020
Question: E2. Do you know how to change the privacy settings on your social media account?
Base: All children 12-15 using social media 2020 (1758)

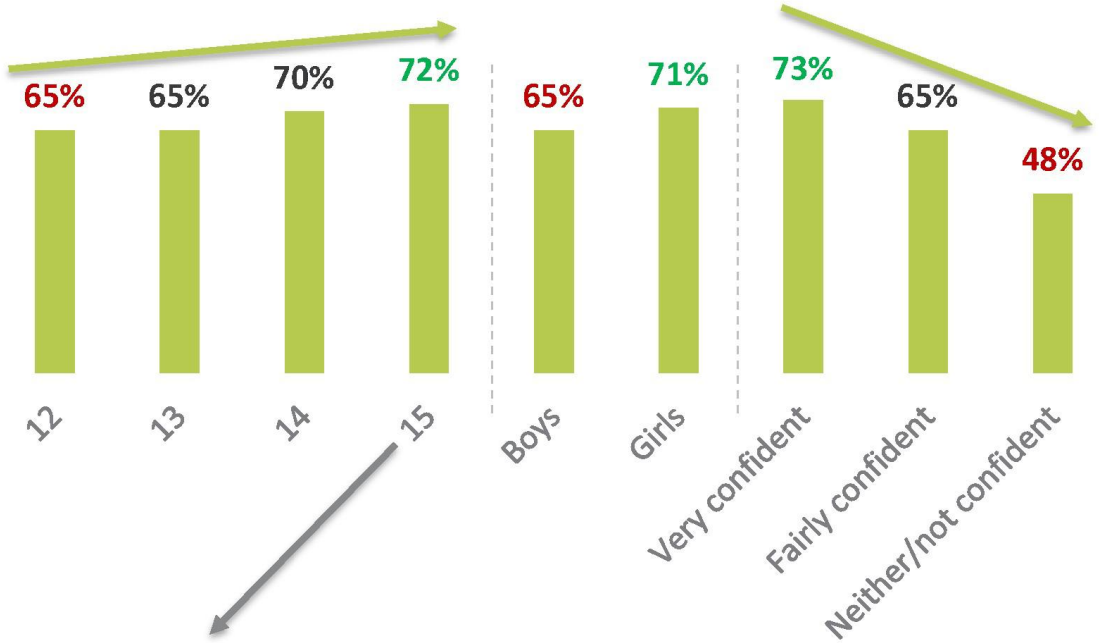
More than two thirds of children (68%) have actually changed the privacy settings on social media accounts. Again, this is correlated with increasing age and higher levels of internet confidence. Girls are more likely than boys to have changed their privacy settings.

Ever changed privacy settings on social media account

% All children



% by age group, gender & internet confidence



Notably 15 year old girls (78%)

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

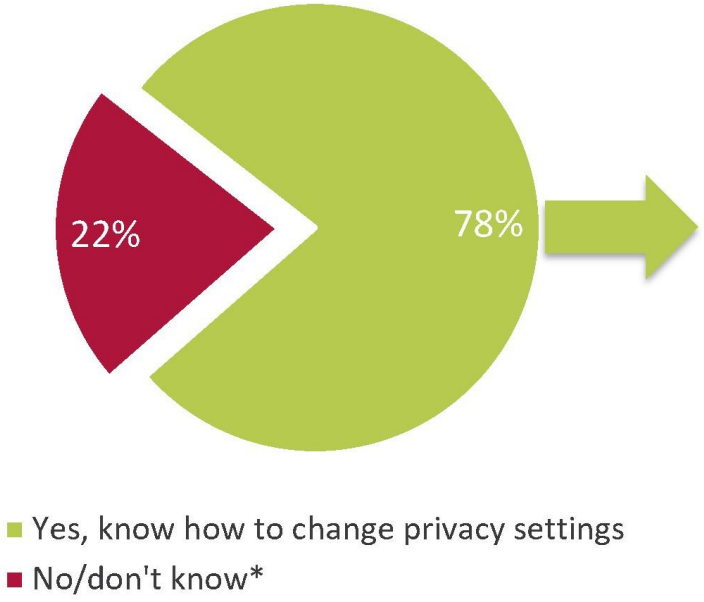
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020
Question: E1b And have you changed the privacy settings on your social media accounts to make them more private?
Base: All children 12-15 using social media 2020 (1758)

INQ000615301_0239

84% of those who know how to change their privacy settings on their social media account have done so

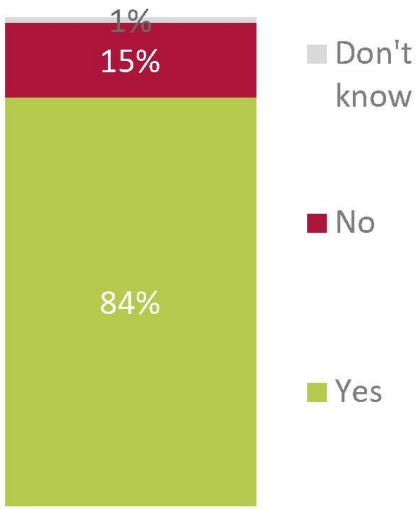
Know how to change the privacy settings on social media account?

% All children



**Including 2% "don't use social media"*

Ever changed privacy settings on social media account



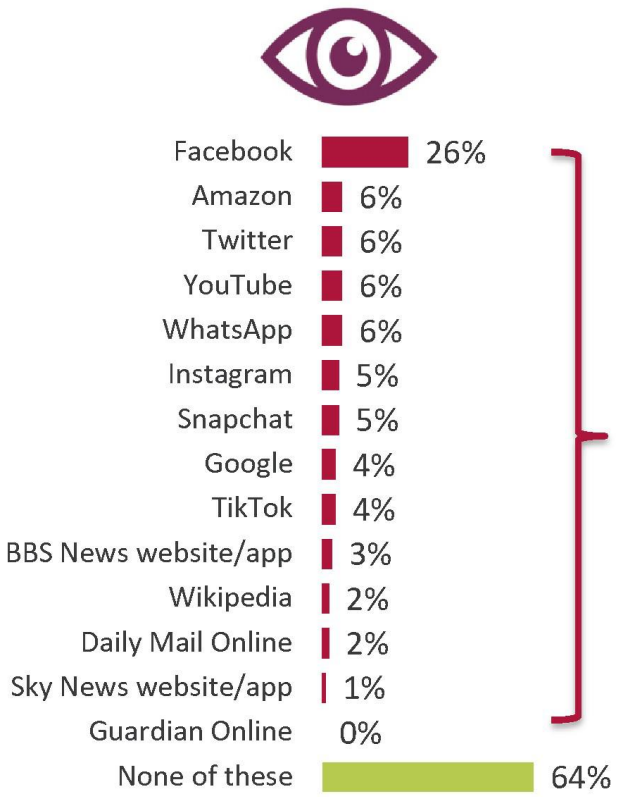
Significantly higher/lower ▲ ▼

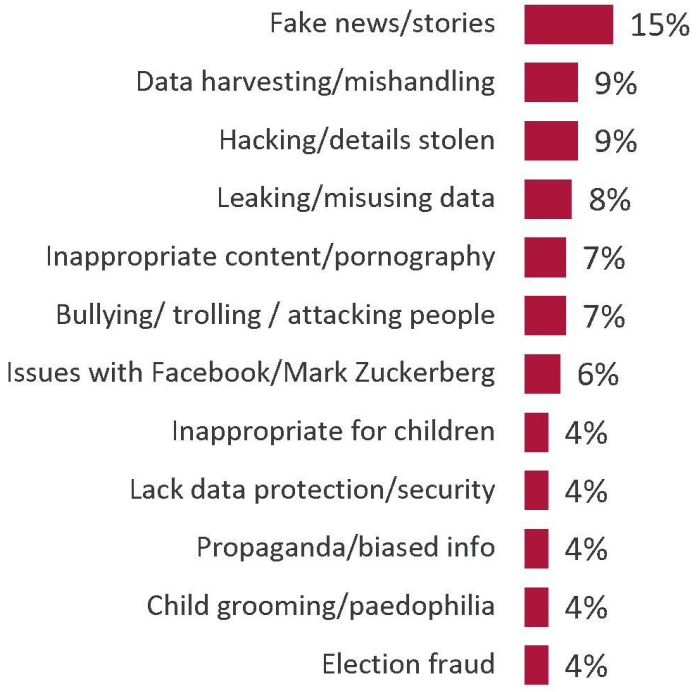
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020
Question: E2. Do you know how to change the privacy settings on your social media account?
Base: All children 12-15 using social media 2020 (1758), Know how to change (1353)

Section 6
Bad news stories about sites/apps

More than a third (36%) of adults have seen at least one bad news stories about any of the listed websites/apps in the past year.

% seen any bad news stories about…





**Several "other" mentions under 4% response not shown here*

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

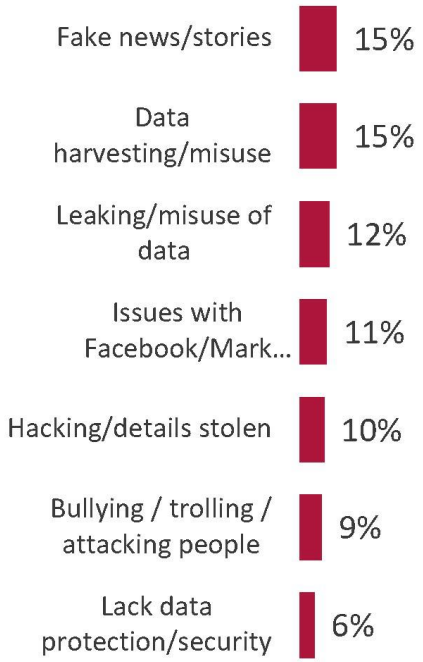
Question: E6a. Have you seen any bad news stories about any of these sites or apps during the past 12 months? Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080)
E6b. What bad news story (or stories) have you seen about (website/app)? Base: All answering, randomly selected from a brand chosen at E6a (open ended n=785 answering).
NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

Most of the sites we asked about were associated with stories related to fake news

Top “bad news” cited for individual websites/apps

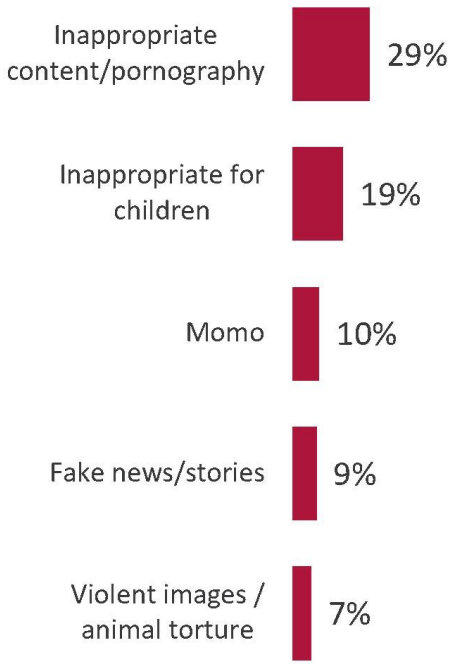
Facebook

“Fake news all of the time it's being reported but especially when the recent election was taking place”



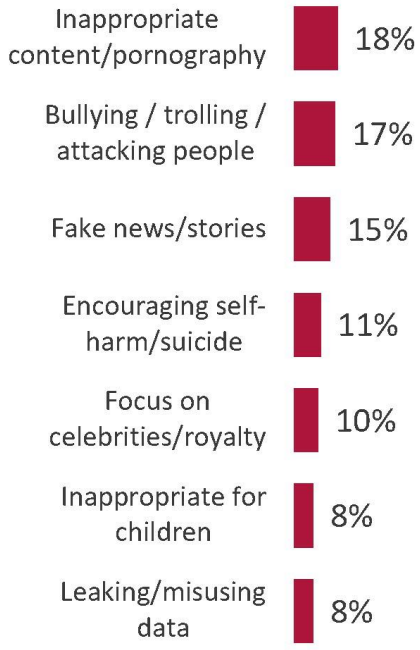
YouTube

“MOMO hacking into system and terrorising children”



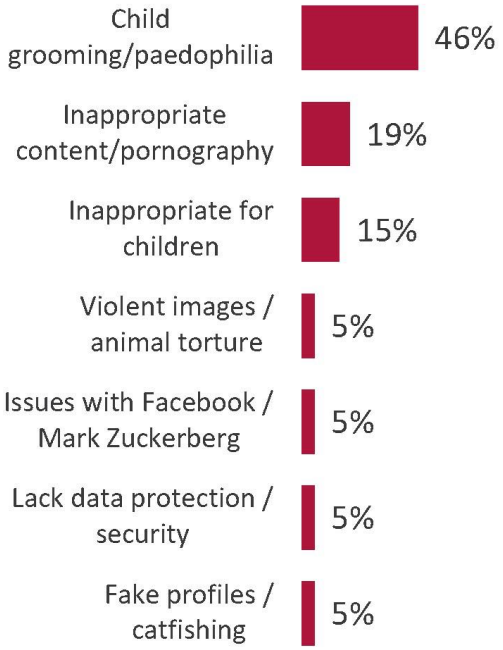
Instagram

“More people saying posts are too sexual and body images”



TikTok

“I read in the paper that paedophiles use it to attract children to use the site by saying they are children but they are adults”



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E6a. Have you seen any bad news stories about any of these sites or apps during the past 12 months? Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080)
E6b. What bad news story (or stories) have you seen about (website/app)? Base: All answering, randomly selected from a brand chosen at E6a (open ended). Facebook (359), YouTube (59), Instagram (34*), TikTok (48). NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020. *CAUTION LOW BASE

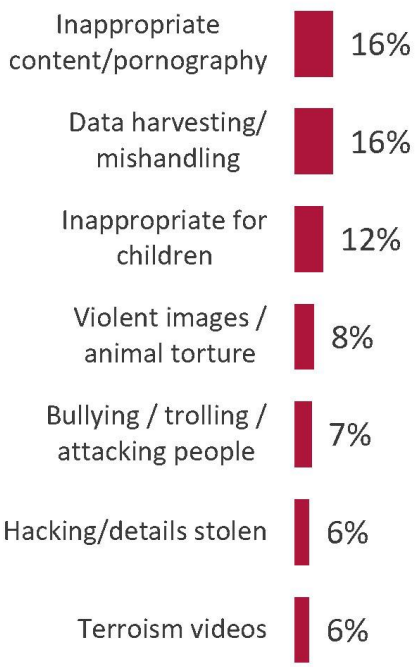
NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

Stories about inappropriate content and the conduct of other users also came out strongly

Top "bad news" cited for individual websites/apps

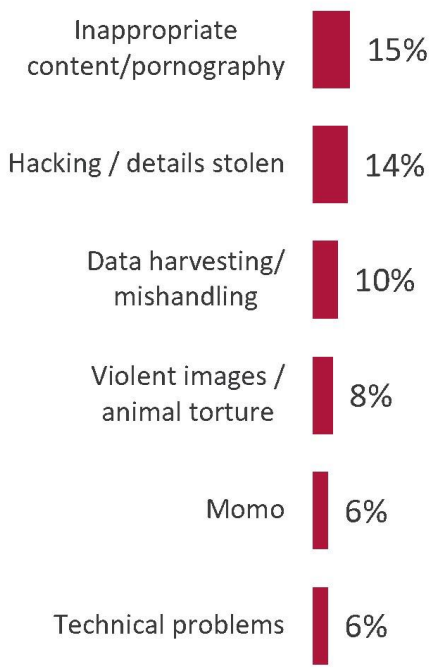
SnapChat

"Young people sending sexual images to each other"



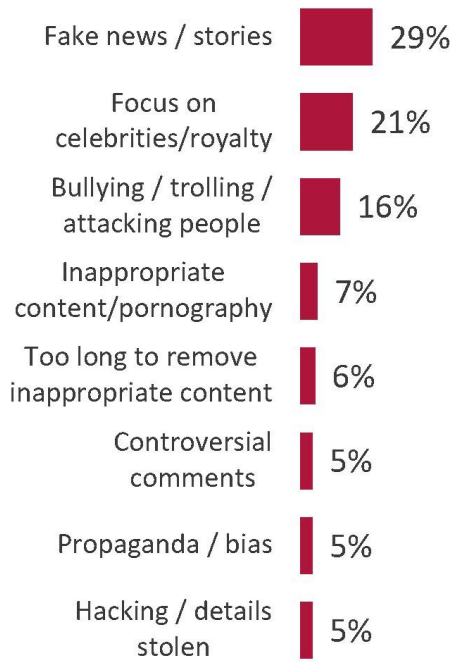
WhatsApp

"Disturbing images being sent from unknown contacts"



Twitter

"It targets celebrities saying abusive things about their looks and their bodies"



Amazon

"Accounts had been hacked allowing items to be bought by someone else, it was on Rip off Britain"

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

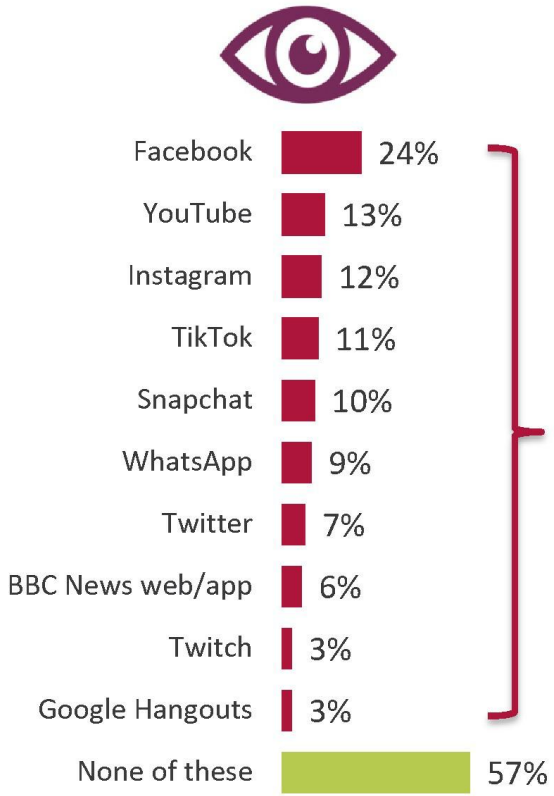
Question: E6a. Have you seen any bad news stories about any of these sites or apps during the past 12 months? Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080)
E6b. What bad news story (or stories) have you seen about (website/app)? Base: All answering, randomly selected from a brand chosen at E6a (open ended).
Snapchat (30*), WhatsApp (63), Twitter (42), Amazon (59), NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020. *CAUTION LOW BASE

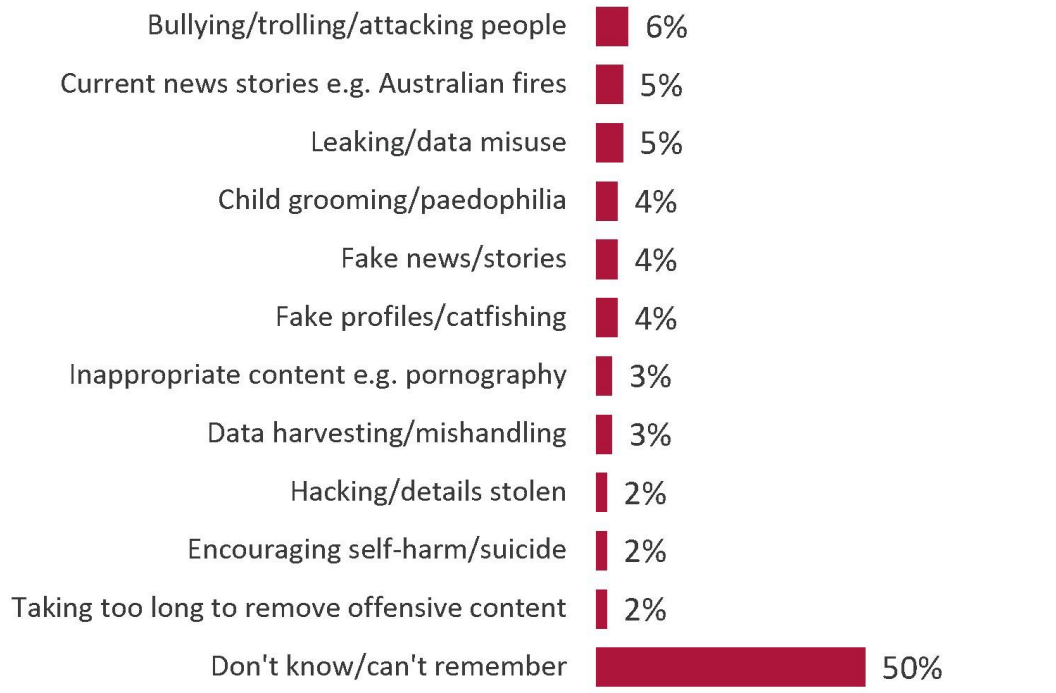
NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

More than two thirds (43%) of children claim to have seen at least one bad news story about the listed sites/apps in the past year.

Note: Some might have misunderstood this question as bad news stories they saw on sites/apps rather than about sites/apps

% seen any bad news stories about…





**Several "other" mentions under 2% response not shown here*

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E6a. Have you seen any bad news stories about any of these sites or apps during the past 12 months? Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

E6b. What bad news story (or stories) have you seen about (website/app)? Base: All answering, randomly selected from a brand chosen at E6a (open ended n=853).

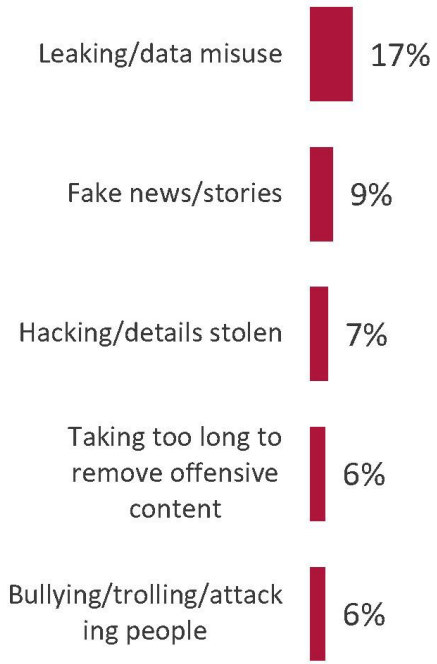
NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

Stories about content/conduct harms come through more strongly among 12-15s than adults, but stories around fake news are less prominent

Top "bad news" cited for individual websites/apps

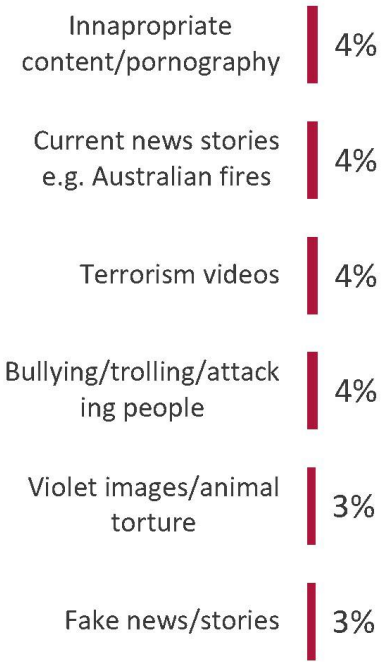
Facebook

"The misuse of people's personal information and the whole Cambridge Analytica scandal"



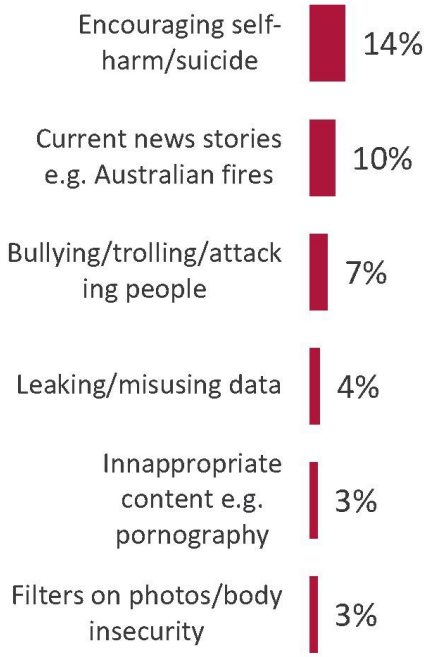
YouTube

"In general you can see a lot of bad things on you tube because people can film things easily"



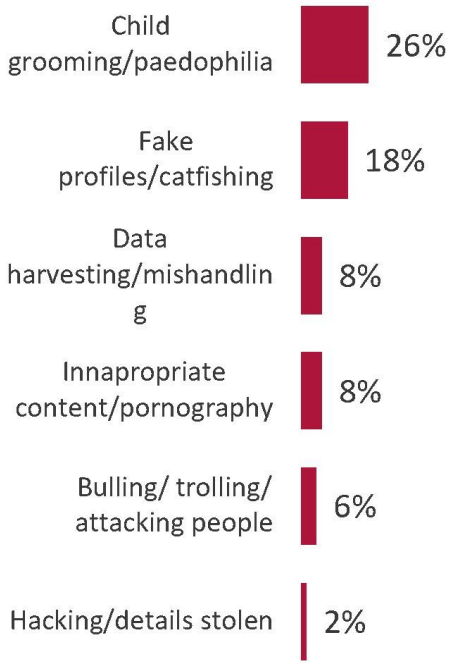
Instagram

"About a young girl who committed suicide after finding an account which helped her"



TikTok

"Weird people using it to lure children"



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E6a. Have you seen any bad news stories about any of these sites or apps during the past 12 months? Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

E6b. What bad news story (or stories) have you seen about (website/app)? Base: All answering, randomly selected from a brand chosen at E6a (open ended). Facebook (170), Instagram (84), YouTube (87), TikTok (93). NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

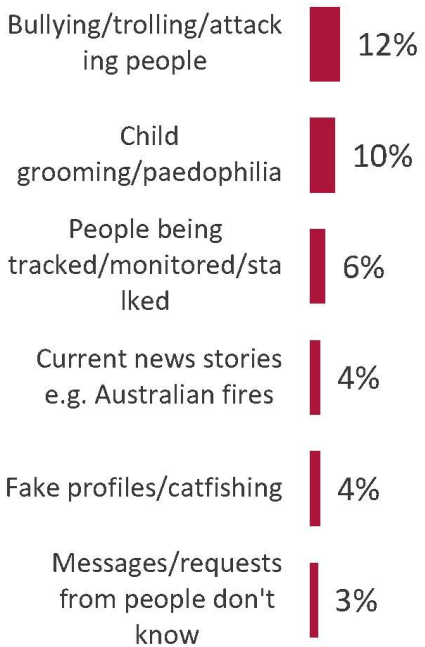
NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

Stories around bullying/trolling/abusive behaviour come through more strongly among 12-15s than adults

Top "bad news" cited for individual websites/apps

SnapChat

"People in general saying they have been hacked, bullied or other things"

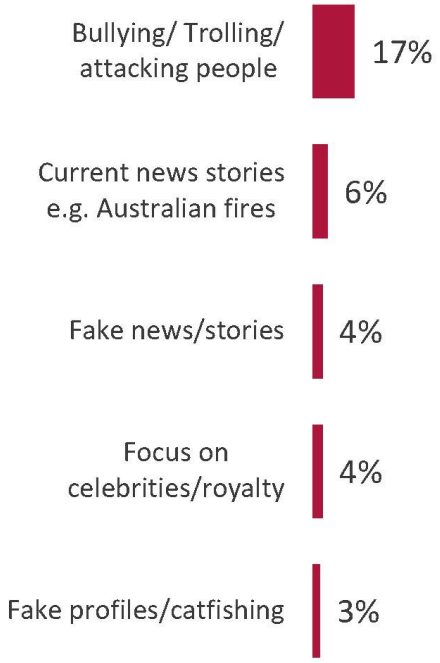


WhatsApp

"People stealing other peoples WhatsApp identities and using it to scam other people"

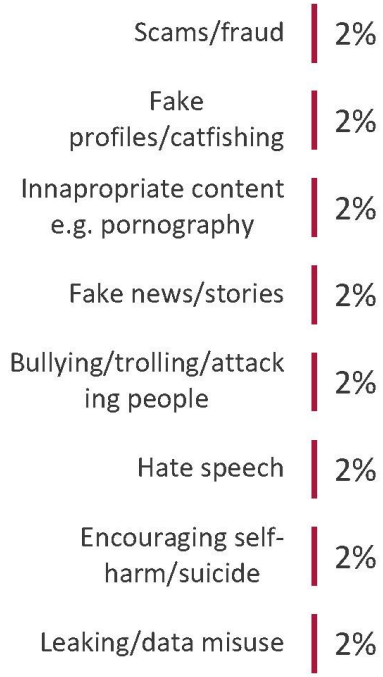
Twitter

"People been nasty about other peoples private lives"



Twitch

"The guy who went on a racist and homophobic rant and got kicked off"



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: E6a. Have you seen any bad news stories about any of these sites or apps during the past 12 months? Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

E6b. What bad news story (or stories) have you seen about (website/app)? Base: All answering, randomly selected from a brand chosen at E6a (open ended). Snapchat (83), WhatsApp (81), Twitter (79), Twitch (53). NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

NEW QUESTIONS FOR 2020

Technical appendix

INQ000615301_0248

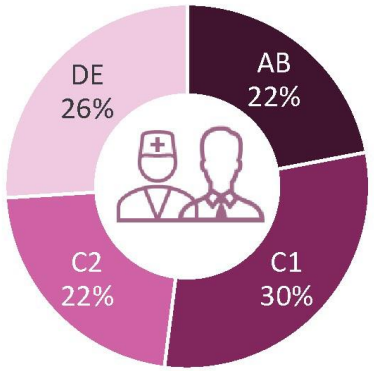
Adult sample profile

Jigsaw employed a random location quota sampling approach, with quotas set to be representative of the UK adult population based on 2018 ONS/NOMIS population estimates and, for SEG, 2011 Census data. All participants were internet users.

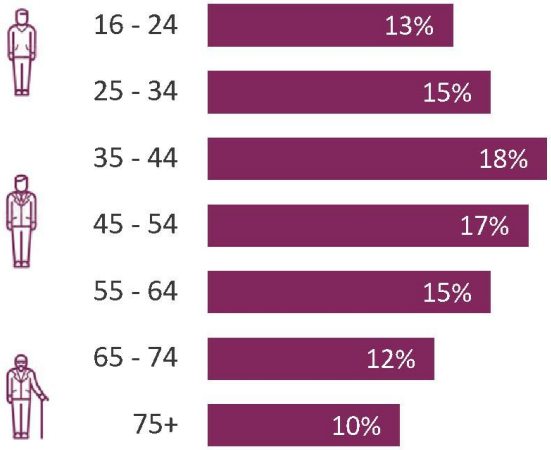
Gender

Household composition

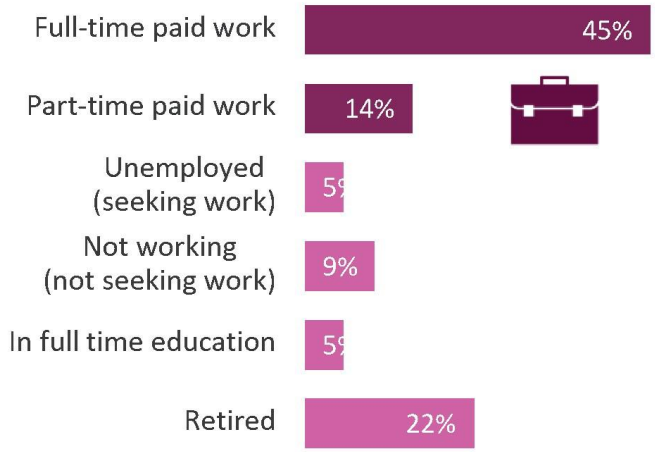
Social grade



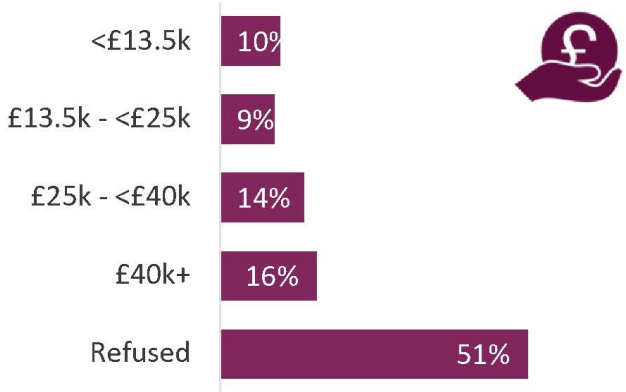
Age



Working status



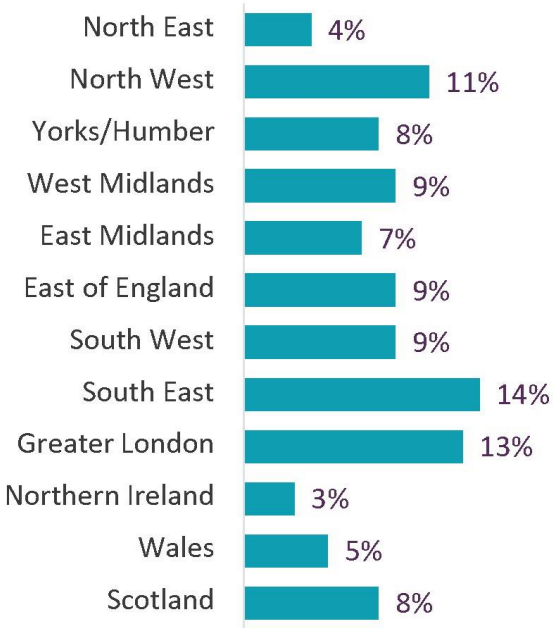
Annual household income



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020
Question: A2, A3, A5, F1, F2, F5, F10
Base: All adult internet users (2080)

Adult sample profile

Region

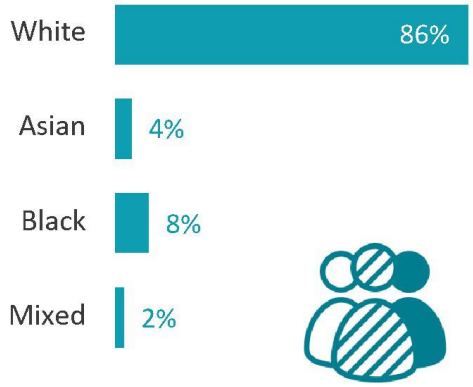


Urban/Rural

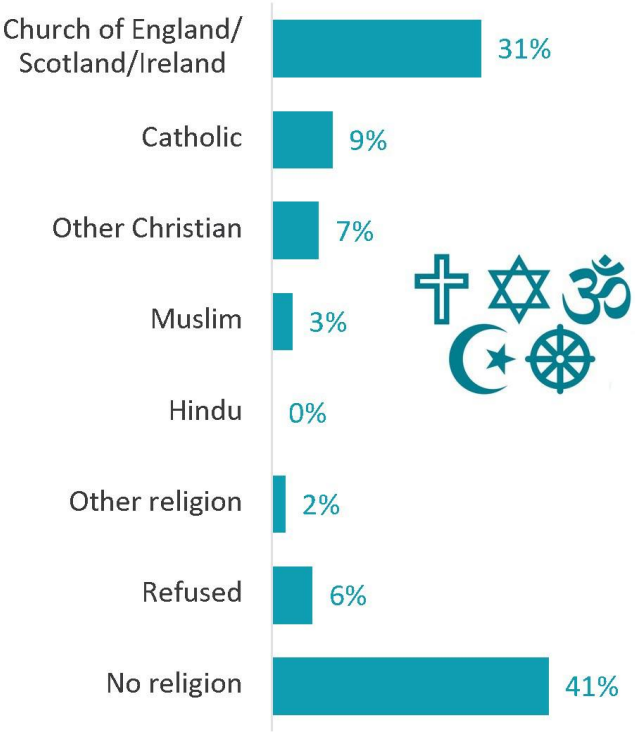
89% urban

11% rural

Ethnic origin



Religion



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020
Question: A7, F6, F7
Base: All adult internet users (2080)

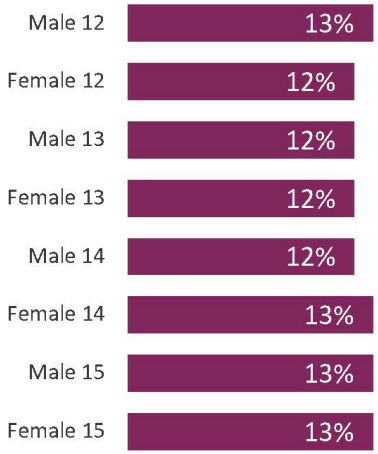
INQ000615301_0250

12-15 year old sample profile

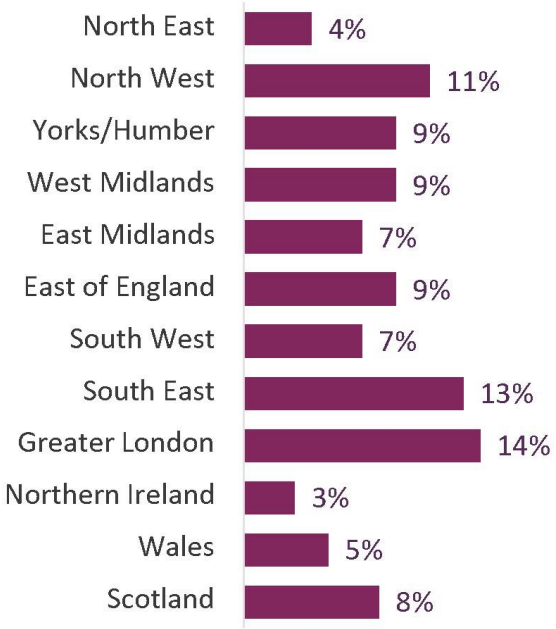
Jigsaw employed a quota sampling approach, with quotas set to be broadly representative of UK 12-15 year olds. All participants were internet users.

Gender

Age

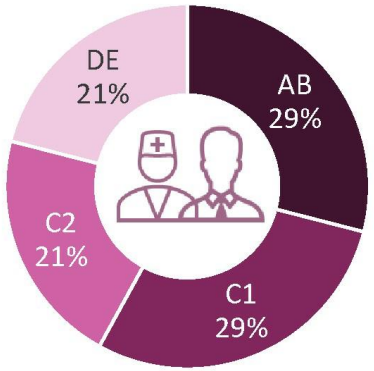


Region

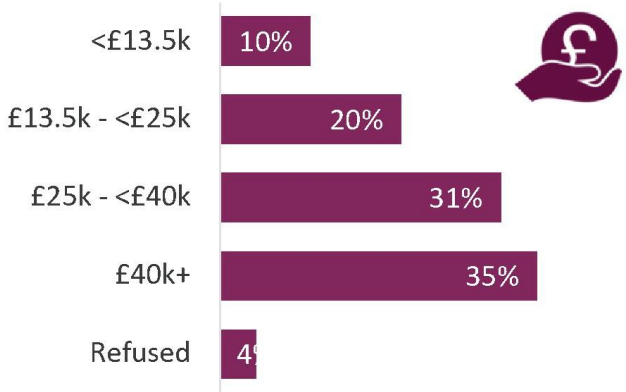


Urban/Rural

Social grade (HH)



Annual household income



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question:

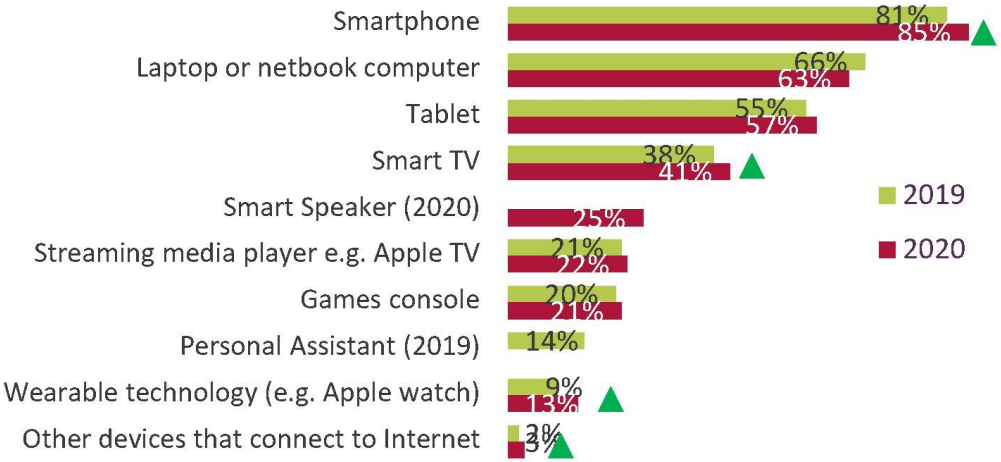
Base: All children 12-15 (2001), region (1905)

Confidence Online

Two fifths of UK adults feel as though they are confident Internet users (same as last year)

All adult internet users

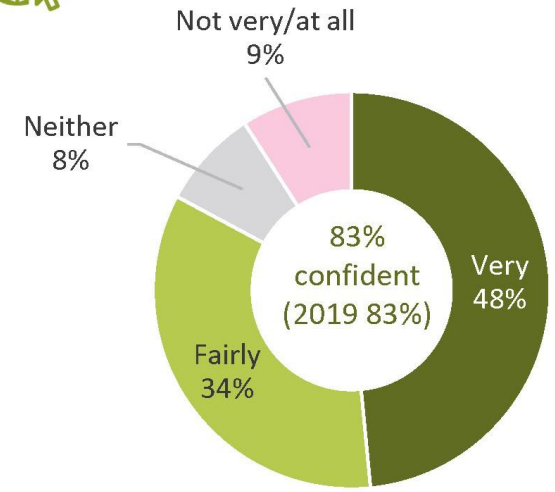
Devices used personally



Males more likely than females to use streaming media player, games console, wearable technology. Females more likely than males to use smartphone, tablet

Most devices associated with younger profiles (<55), higher social grades (ABC1), the presence of children in the HH and being very confident online.

Confidence as Internet user



Very confident internet users are more likely to be male, younger, ABC1, with children in HH and not class themselves as having a disability.

They are more likely to have visited lots of new sites/apps and to have ever reported online harm

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019

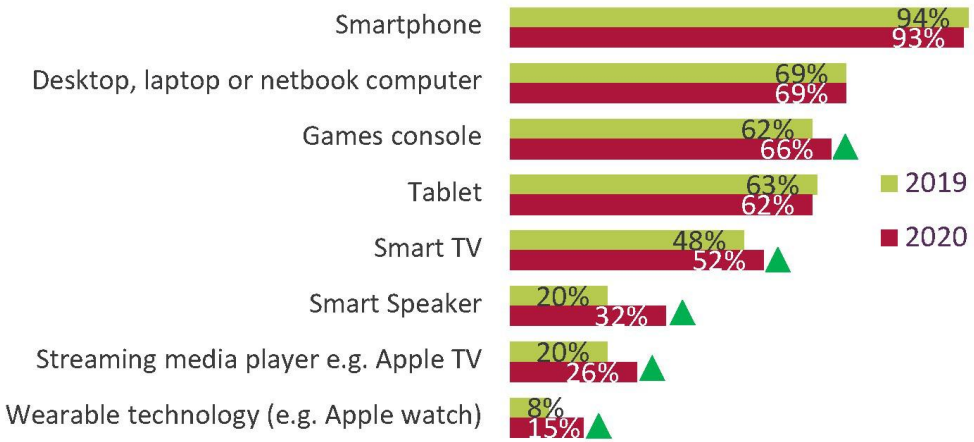
Question: B1) Do you use any of the following devices? B2) Overall, how confident are you as an internet user?

Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080), 2019 (2057)

More than 9 in 10 (94%) of 12-15 year olds feel confident online (no change since 2019)

All children 12-15

Devices used personally



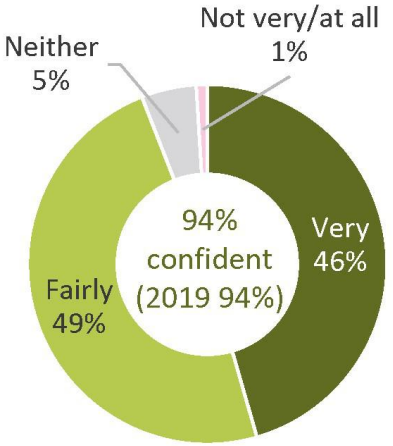
Boys more likely than girls to use game console (80% vs. 52%),

Girls more likely to have smartphone than boys (95% vs. 91%) or tablet (65% vs. 59%)

ABC1 more likely than C2DE to use:

- *Desktop/laptop (74% vs. 62%)*
- *Tablet (65% vs. 57%)*
- *Smart TV (55% vs. 46%)*
- *Smart speakers (35% vs. 28%)*
- *Streaming media player (29% vs. 21%)*
- *Smart watch (19% vs. 11%)*

Confidence as Internet user



Boys more likely to describe themselves as VERY confident than girls (49% vs. 43%)

Confidence increases with age. 39% of 12 year olds VERY confident compared with 45% of 13, 47% of 14 and 51% of 15 year olds

Confidence also correlated with increasing time spent online:

- ***Weekdays** – 36% of those spending 2 hours or less say they are VERY confident, rising to 59% of those spending 10+*
- ***Weekends** - 33% of those spending 2 hours or less say they are VERY confident, rising to 64% of those spending 10+*

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

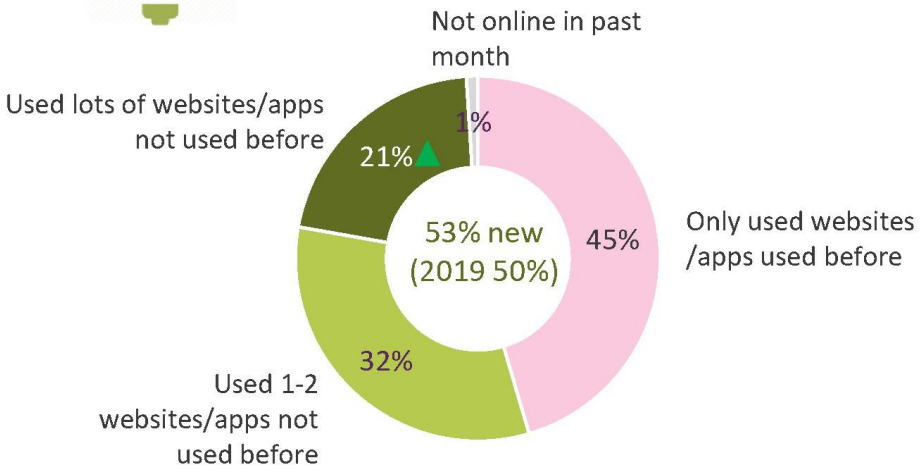
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: B3) Do you use any of the following devices? B4) Overall, how confident are you as an internet user?

Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001), 2019 (1001)

45% of UK adults only used websites they've previously used before in the last month. Two thirds are on Facebook

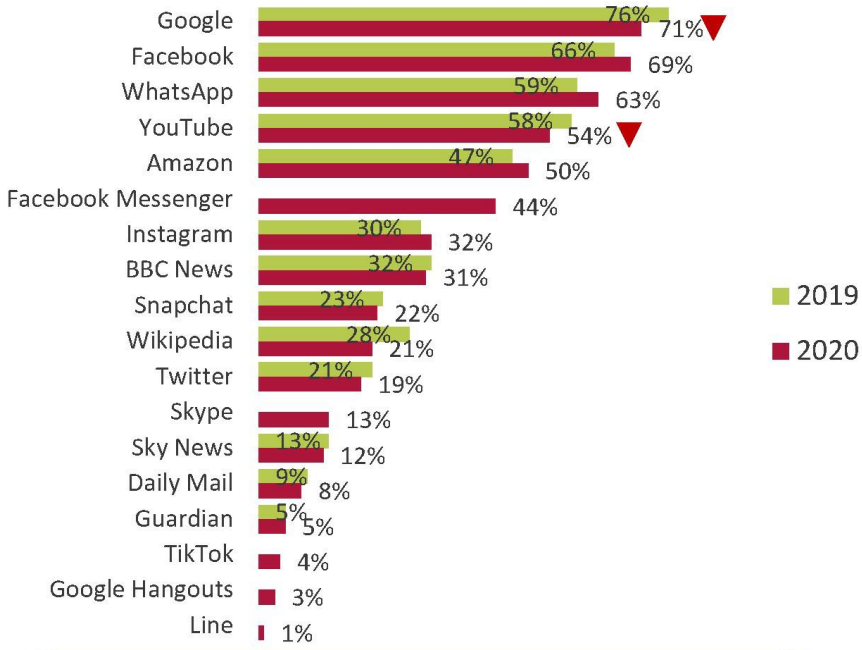
Use of new websites/apps



The 21% (up from 16% in 2019) who have used lots of new websites/apps are more likely than average to:

- *Be aged <35 (40% vs. 28% total)*
- *Say they are VERY confident internet users (72% vs. 48%)*
- *Have come across any "harms" on the internet (71% vs. 62%)*
- *Agree that the "benefits of going online outweigh the risks" (77% vs. 66%)*

Sites/apps used nowadays



- *Females more likely than males to use Facebook/ Messenger, Instagram and Snapchat. Males more likely than females to use Sky News*
- *55+ far less likely to use any social media and more likely to use BBC News. 16-24s are the highest users of social media*
- *ABC1 more likely than C2DE to use Google, WhatsApp, Amazon, Instagram, BBC, Wikipedia, Twitter, Skype and The Guardian*

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

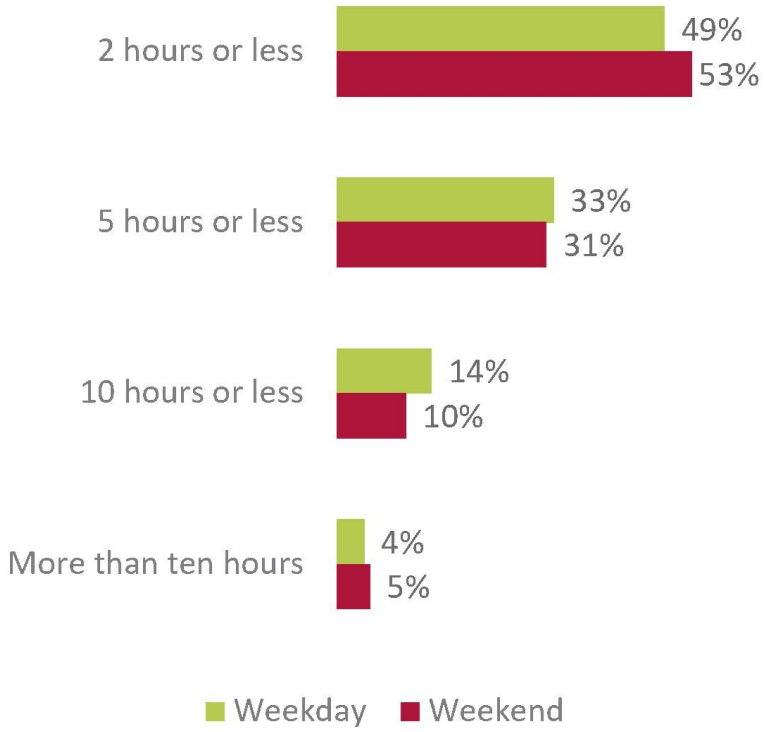
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020 & March 2019

Question: B3) In the last month, when you have gone online, have you…. E4. Which, if any, of the following sites or apps do you use nowadays?

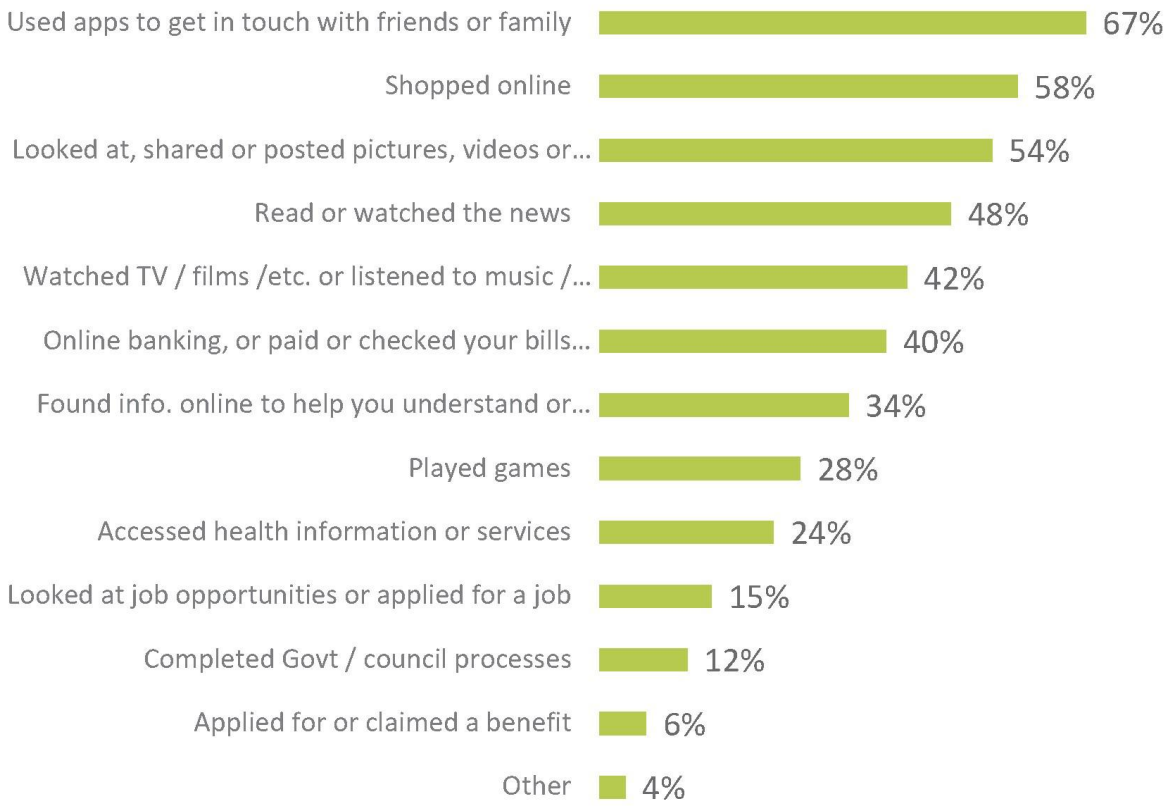
Base: All adult internet users 2020 (2080), 2019 (2057)

Half of adults spend more than two hours a day online on average. The most common activities are getting in touch with friends/family and online shopping

Average daily time spent online



Online activities in the last week



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: B3b. On an average weekday, how long would you say you spend online? B3c. On an average day at the weekend, how long would you say you spend online? B3d. Which of these things have you done online in the last week?

Base: All adults 2020 (2080)

Frequent users tend to be aged 16-54 and ABC1

Who are frequent users?

	Total	M	F	16 - 34	35 - 54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Children in HH	No children in HH	White	Minority	Disability	No Disability	Greater London	Urban	Rural/ Remote
Base	*2080*	*982*	*1098*	*625*	*715*	*740*	*1103*	*977*	*691*	*1379*	*1894*	*179*	*358*	*1118*	*151*	*1775*	*305*
WEEKDAY																	
2 hours or less	49%	47%	52%	28%	41%	72%	42%	57%	40%	54%	53%	27%	61%	47%	24%	48%	57%
5 hours or less	33%	33%	32%	45%	36%	20%	34%	30%	40%	29%	32%	38%	26%	33%	35%	33%	26%
10 hours or less	14%	16%	13%	20%	18%	7%	17%	11%	16%	13%	12%	28%	8%	16%	31%	14%	12%
More than 10 hours	4%	5%	3%	7%	5%	2%	6%	2%	5%	4%	4%	7%	5%	5%	10%	4%	5%
WEEKEND																	
2 hours or less	53%	51%	56%	28%	51%	75%	50%	57%	45%	57%	55%	43%	59%	49%	44%	52%	61%
5 hours or less	31%	34%	29%	42%	36%	19%	33%	29%	36%	30%	31%	32%	28%	33%	27%	32%	25%
10 hours or less	10%	11%	10%	21%	9%	4%	11%	10%	13%	9%	9%	16%	9%	11%	15%	10%	10%
More than 10 hours	5%	5%	5%	10%	4%	2%	6%	4%	6%	5%	4%	9%	5%	6%	14%	5%	4%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: B3b. On an average weekday, how long would you say you spend online? B3c. On an average day at the weekend, how long would you say you spend online? Base: All adults 2020 (2080)

16-54s, ABC1 and with kids in HH tend to be more active online

Who does what online?

	Total	M	F	16 - 34	35 - 54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Children in HH	No children in HH	White	Minority	Disability	No Disability	Greater London	Urban	Rural/ Remote
Base	*2080*	*982*	*1098*	*625*	*715*	*740*	*1103*	*977*	*691*	*1379*	*1894*	*179*	*358*	*1118*	*151*	*1775*	*305*
Read/watch news	48%	52%	45%	43%	49%	52%	56%	41%	47%	49%	49%	48%	44%	51%	52%	48%	51%
TV/films/videos/ music	42%	47%	38%	64%	42%	27%	47%	38%	50%	39%	43%	39%	41%	46%	32%	42%	47%
Shopped online	58%	53%	62%	64%	62%	49%	63%	52%	66%	54%	58%	54%	51%	59%	51%	56%	69%
Played games	28%	31%	24%	48%	24%	15%	25%	31%	30%	27%	29%	20%	26%	28%	21%	28%	27%
Social media/messaging keep in touch	67%	64%	70%	82%	77%	46%	71%	63%	82%	60%	66%	74%	57%	73%	73%	68%	63%
Look/share/post	54%	51%	58%	70%	61%	37%	56%	53%	68%	48%	53%	63%	50%	59%	67%	55%	46%
Found info online	34%	35%	34%	41%	34%	30%	42%	26%	36%	34%	35%	28%	36%	39%	27%	34%	37%
Health info online	24%	21%	27%	18%	27%	25%	27%	20%	27%	23%	24%	24%	30%	25%	26%	23%	30%
Jobs online	15%	15%	16%	25%	18%	6%	16%	15%	17%	15%	15%	18%	13%	14%	17%	16%	15%
Benefits online	6%	6%	7%	10%	8%	2%	5%	8%	11%	4%	6%	10%	9%	5%	10%	7%	2%
Online banking	40%	38%	41%	41%	44%	35%	47%	31%	45%	37%	42%	26%	39%	47%	29%	38%	51%
Government processes	12%	15%	9%	11%	13%	12%	15%	9%	14%	11%	12%	14%	12%	13%	21%	12%	14%

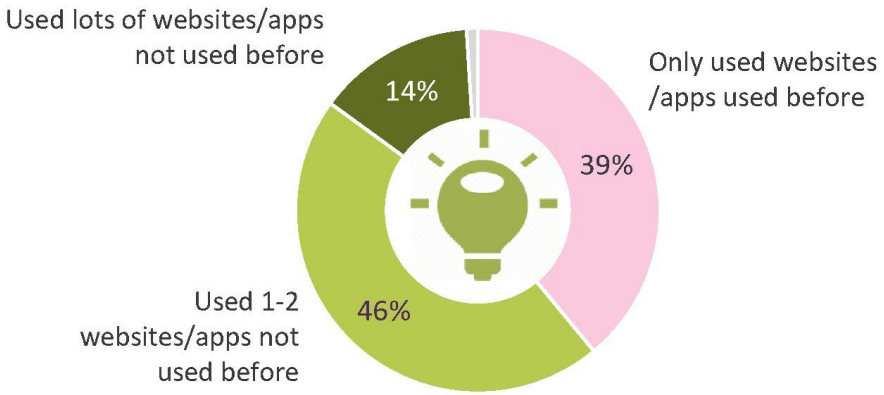
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: B3d. Which of these things have you done online in the last week?

Base: All adults 2020 (2080)

City-dwelling AB children are more likely to have used websites/apps they've not used before.

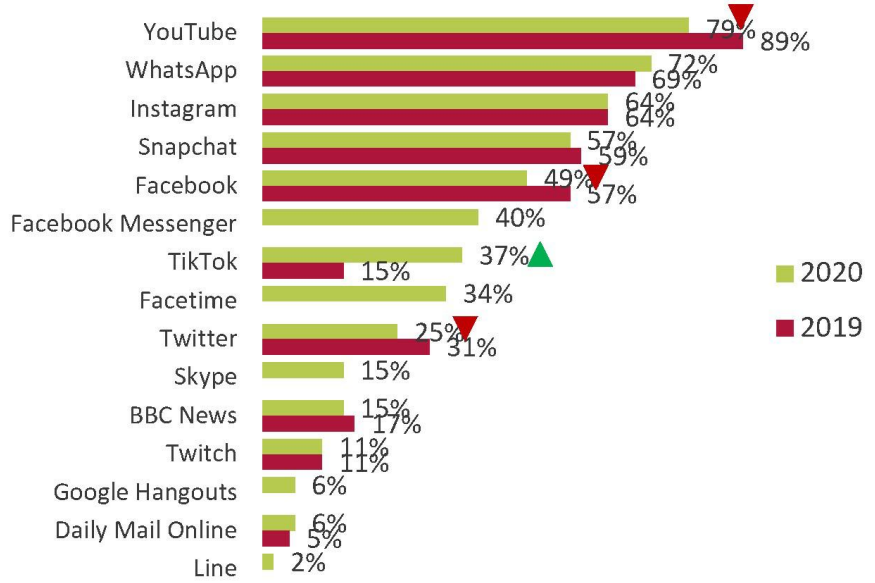
Use of new websites/apps



The 14% who have used lots of new websites/apps are more likely than average to:

- *Be AB social grade (38% vs. 29% overall)*
- *Be in Greater London (21% vs. 14% overall) or other large cities (24% vs. 17% overall)*
- *Use lots of different devices (notably more likely than average to use games console, tablet, smart TV, smart speakers, streaming media player, smart watch)*
- *Be VERY confident internet users (67% vs. 46% overall)*
- *Spend 5+ hours on weekdays (29% vs. 19% overall) or weekends (54% vs. 41% overall)*

Sites/apps used nowadays



- *ABC1 more likely than C2DE to use WhatsApp, Skype, BBC*
- *C2DE more likely than ABC1 to use Snapchat, Facebook, Facebook Messenger, TikTok*
- *Scotland more likely to use Snapchat, Facebook, Facebook Messenger and Twitter*
- *London more likely to use Twitter, Skype, WhatsApp, BBC, Twitch, Google Hangouts, Daily Mail*
- *Girls more likely than boys to use WhatApp, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Facetime*
- *Generally an age correlation – greater usage of sites as get older*

Significantly higher/lower than 2019 ▲ ▼

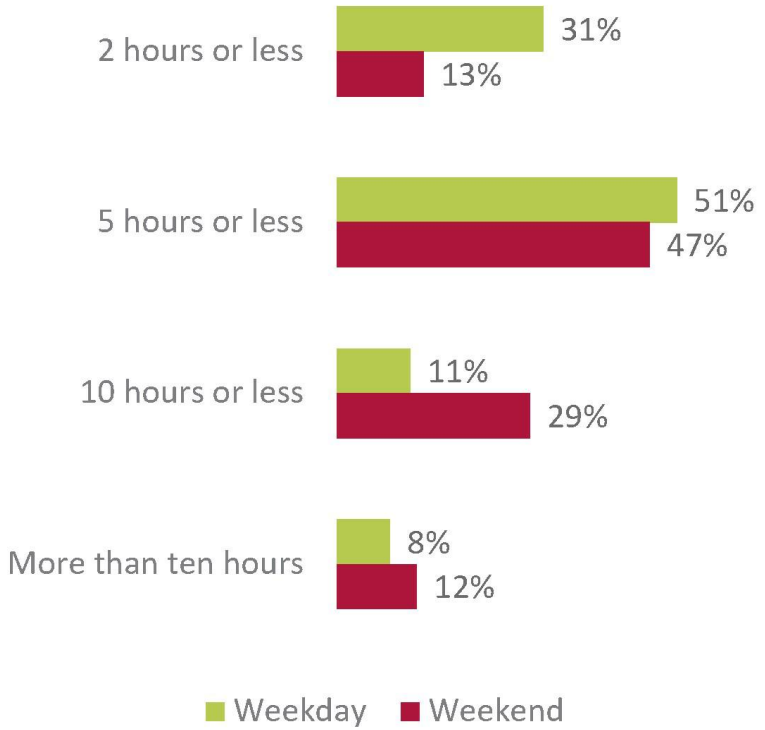
Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: B5) In the last month, when you have gone online, have you….B6. Which, if any, of the following sites or apps do you use nowadays?

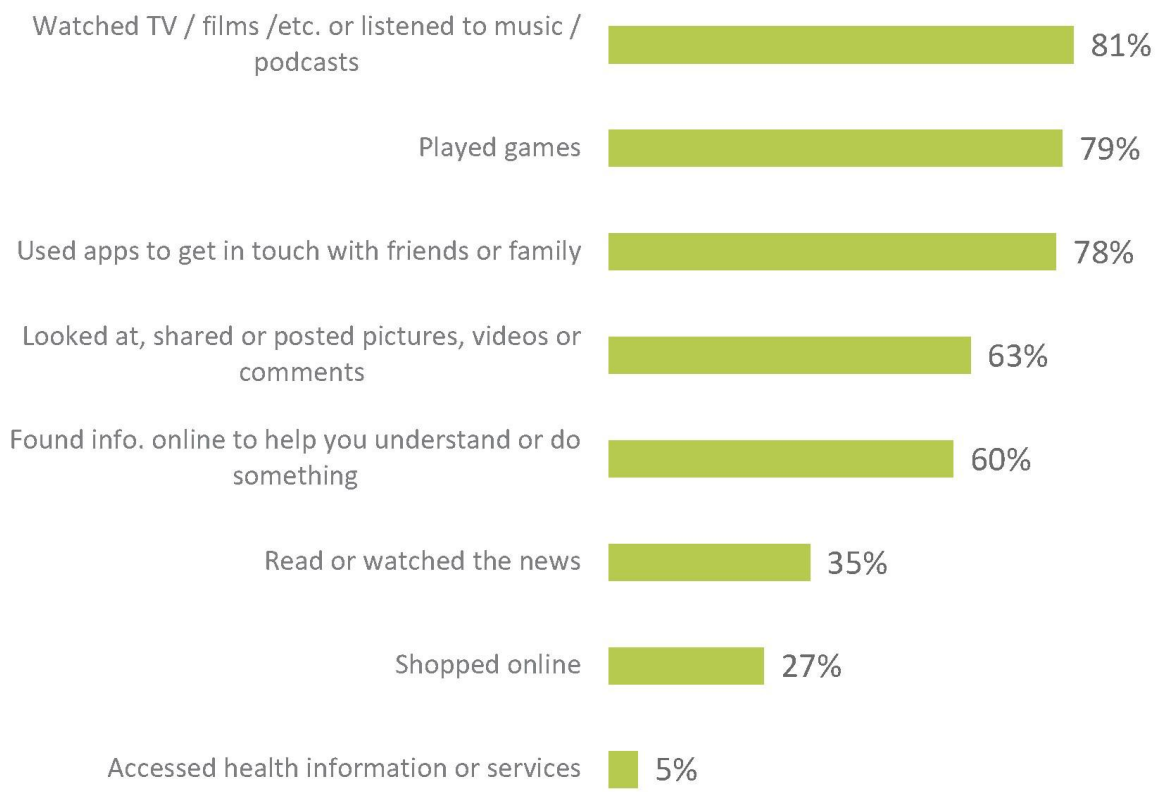
Base: All children 12-15 (2001), all children who have visited lots of different websites

4 in 5 children (82%) spend five hours or less per weekday online. Their most common activities are watching video/ listening to music online, playing games online and using apps to get in touch with friends and family

Average daily time spent online



Online activities in the last week



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020

Question: B3b. On an average weekday, how long would you say you spend online? B3c. On an average day at the weekend, how long would you say you spend online? B3d. Which of these things have you done online in the last week?

Base: All children 12-15 2020 (2001)

Frequent users tend to be aged 14 and 15 years of age

Who are frequent users?

	Total	ABC1	C2DE	12 years	13 years	14 years	15 years	Boys	Girls	Only used sites/apps used before	Visited 1-2 new sites/ apps	Visited lots of new sites/ apps	Taken action to report	Never taken action to report
Base	*2001*	*1198*	*794*	*500*	*500*	*500*	*501*	*998*	*999*	*773*	*931*	*274*	*578*	*1340*
WEEKDAY														
2 hours or less	31%	34%	27%	36%	32%	28%	27%	29%	32%	38%	28%	18%	23%	34%
5 hours or less	51%	50%	52%	50%	51%	52%	50%	51%	50%	47%	54%	53%	56%	49%
10 hours or less	11%	10%	12%	8%	11%	11%	14%	12%	10%	9%	10%	18%	14%	9%
More than 10 hours	8%	6%	9%	6%	7%	8%	9%	8%	7%	6%	7%	11%	7%	8%
WEEKEND														
2 hours or less	13%	14%	12%	16%	11%	12%	12%	12%	14%	18%	11%	4%	10%	15%
5 hours or less	47%	49%	43%	49%	49%	46%	42%	48%	46%	48%	47%	43%	44%	47%
10 hours or less	29%	28%	30%	27%	28%	27%	33%	30%	28%	26%	30%	34%	34%	27%
More than 10 hours	12%	10%	14%	8%	11%	15%	13%	10%	13%	8%	12%	20%	12%	11%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: B3b. On an average weekday, how long would you say you spend online? B3c. On an average day at the weekend, how long would you say you spend online? Base: All children 2020 (2001)

INQ000615301_0261

14 and 15 year olds tend to be more active online. Girls tend to be more likely to use social media and shop online, whereas boys are more likely to game

Who does what online?

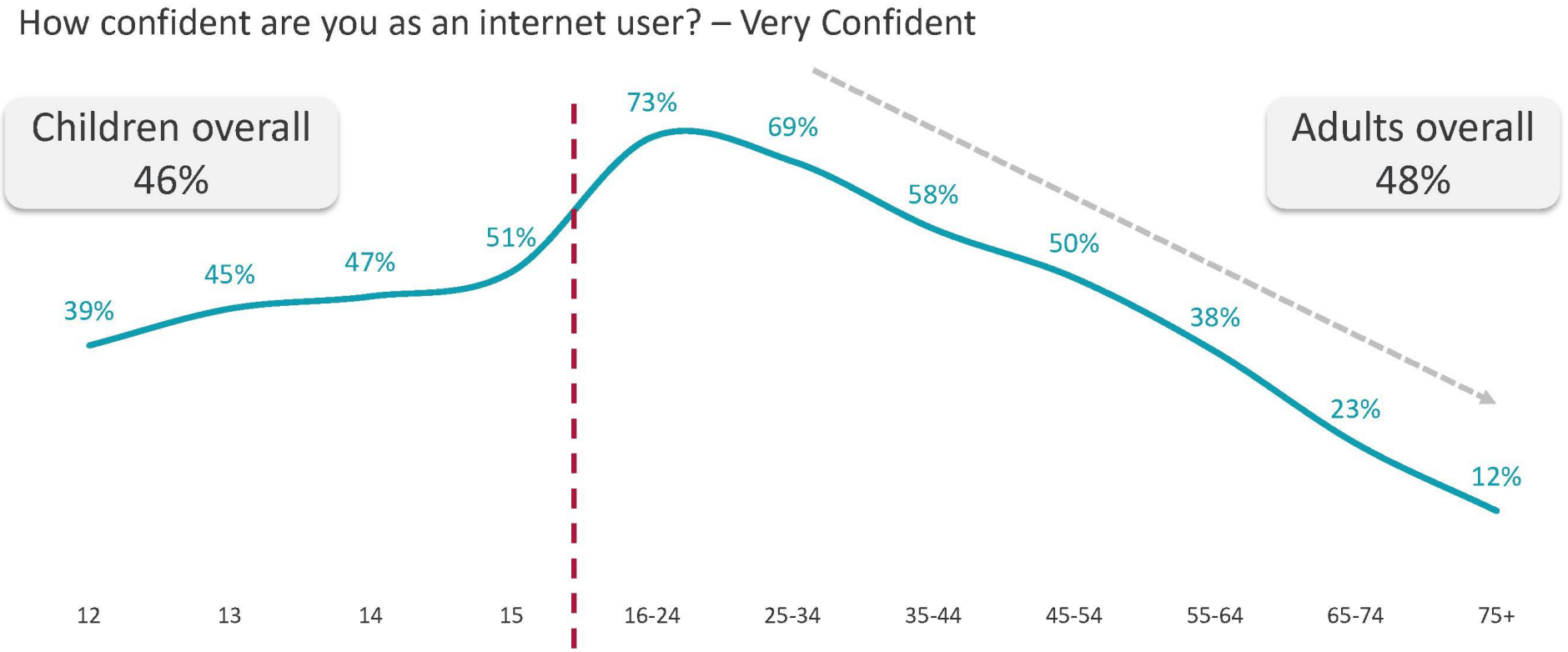
	Total	ABC1	C2DE	12 years	13 years	14 years	15 years	Boys	Girls	Only used sites/apps used before	Visited 1-2 new sites/ apps	Visited lots of new sites/ apps	Taken action to report	Never taken action to report
Base	*2001*	*1198*	*794*	*500*	*500*	*500*	*501*	*998*	*999*	*773*	*931*	*274*	*578*	*1340*
TV/films/videos/ music	81%	82%	81%	83%	81%	84%	78%	80%	83%	77%	84%	86%	83%	81%
Played games	79%	79%	80%	83%	80%	78%	76%	85%	73%	72%	83%	88%	80%	79%
Social media/messaging keep in touch	78%	79%	78%	67%	82%	81%	83%	75%	82%	71%	83%	88%	79%	79%
Look/share/post	63%	64%	62%	52%	63%	69%	67%	58%	68%	51%	69%	77%	65%	63%
Found info online	60%	64%	55%	55%	57%	66%	61%	59%	61%	50%	64%	72%	65%	59%
Read/watch news	35%	37%	32%	29%	32%	42%	37%	35%	36%	31%	34%	52%	43%	32%
Shopped online	27%	28%	26%	18%	21%	33%	35%	22%	32%	20%	28%	47%	32%	25%
Health info online	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	7%	6%	5%	5%	3%	4%	17%	8%	4%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Question: B3d. Which of these things have you done online in the last week?

Base: All children 2020 (2001)

The most confident internet users tend to be aged between 16-34 (those likely to have been the first to grow up with the internet in home)



Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020

Base: All adult internet users (2080) Question: B2) Overall, how confident are you as an internet user?

Base: All children 12-15 (2001) Question: B4) Overall, how confident are you as an internet user?

INQ000615301_0263

Very confident internet users are more likely 16-34's, ABC1s and those with children in their household. They are more likely to have visited lots of new sites/apps and to have reported more potential harms

Who is a confident user?

	Total	M	F	16 - 34	35 - 54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	childr en in HH	No childr en in HH	Disability	No disability	Have not gone online	Only used sites/apps used before	Visited 1-2 new sites/ apps	Visited lots of new sites/ apps	Taken action to report	Never taken action to report
Very confident	48%	52%	45%	71%	54%	26%	57%	39%	63%	42%	28%	54%	5%	38%	49%	72%	64%	45%
Fairly confident	34%	33%	36%	27%	33%	41%	34%	35%	29%	37%	38%	35%	3%	35%	41%	23%	30%	35%
Neither	8%	7%	9%	1%	7%	14%	5%	11%	4%	10%	13%	4%	10%	13%	5%	2%	3%	9%
Not confident	9%	8%	10%	2%	5%	19%	4%	15%	4%	12%	20%	6%	83%	14%	4%	2%	2%	11%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" Feb 2020
Question: B2) Overall, how confident are you as an internet user?
Base: All adult internet users (2080)

INQ000615301_0264

12-15 year olds who class themselves as 'very confident' are more likely to be older, boys, and those that have visited lots of new sites/apps in the last month

Who is a confident user?

	Total	ABC1	C2DE	12 years	13 years	14 years	15 years	Boys	Girls	Only used sites/apps used before	Visited 1-2 new sites/ apps	Visited lots of new sites/ apps	Taken action to report	Never taken action to report
Very confident	46%	46%	46%	39%	45%	47%	51%	49%	43%	40%	44%	67%	47%	46%
Fairly confident	49%	50%	47%	53%	50%	48%	44%	44%	53%	52%	51%	31%	47%	50%
Neither	5%	4%	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%	6%	3%	6%	4%	2%	5%	4%
Not confident	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%

Source: Jigsaw Research "Potential online harms" February 2020
Question: B4) Overall, how confident are you as an internet user?
Base: All children 12-15 (2001)

INQ000615301_0265

Technical report – The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 1) (2021)

Preface

Wave 1 of the Online Experiences Tracker (2021/22) was undertaken by Yonder Consulting on behalf of Ofcom. The objectives of the study were to gain a deeper understanding of internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms online.

The insights drawn from this data have informed Ofcom's preparations for The Online Safety Bill, which was introduced to Parliament earlier this year, granting Ofcom new responsibilities in helping to protect internet users online. The study has also informed the continuing implementation of Ofcom's video-sharing platform (VSP) regulation, by monitoring harms on regulated VSPs.

The tracker runs twice annually (in November and May), and this report refers to the first wave completed in November 2021.

The study provides data on a nationally representative sample of UK internet users, with boosts applied to younger respondents, specific UK nations, and certain minority ethnic groups to allow for robust analysis of demographic subgroups.

Further information about the study is summarised in the sections below.

Summary of Approach

- The **Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 1)** survey was conducted with a nationally representative sample of UK internet users and addresses internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms.
- All research was carried out online, with respondents recruited from Yonder's proprietary online panel 'YonderLive', containing around 150,000 panellists from all over the UK. Respondents were recruited to be nationally representative of the UK internet user population, with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region. Boosts were applied to low incidence groups such as younger respondents, those living in specific UK nations, and minority ethnic groups to allow for bases sizes robust enough for analysis.
- The **Online Experiences Tracker** is a multi-wave study that runs twice annually in November and May. It builds on previous work of similar focus ('Pilot Online Harms Survey'[1]) which was commissioned by Ofcom in 2020 to explore internet usage and behaviours, attitudes towards online safety regulation, and experiences of potential online harms. The pilot study informed preparations for the Online Safety regime.
- The study also contained a qualitative cognitive test element which tested respondents' understanding and experience of the questionnaire. The results of this study informed the final questionnaire structure, format and content.
- A total of 6,619 interviews were conducted for Wave 1. All fieldwork was conducted between 22nd October and 12th November 2021.

[1] https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/220622/online-harms-survey-waves-1-4-2021.pdf

Significance Testing

Significance testing for the **Online Experiences Tracker** has consistently been applied at 95%.

Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This definition is based on household income and household composition (i.e. size and number of children) and can only be run on data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions.

The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group.

Most financially vulnerable	Potentially financially vulnerable	Least financially vulnerable
Household income under £14,000	**Earning between £14,001 - £28,000**	**Earning between £28,001 - £41,000**
All respondents	1-2 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
	3 adults, no children	
Earning between £14,001 - £28,000	**Earning between £28,001 - £41,000**	**Earning between £41,001 - £55,000**
1-2 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	1 adult, 0-1 child
3+ adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	2 adults, 0 children
4+ adults	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
	4 adults, no children	
Earning between £28,001 - £41,000	**Earning between £41,001 - £55,000**	**Household income £55,001+**
1 adult, 4+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	All households
2 adults,4+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
3 adults, 2+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	4 adults, 0-1 child	
5+ adults	5 adults, 0 children	
Earning between £41,001 - £55,000		
1 adults, >3 children		
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		

The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 1), November 2021

Introduction

Yonder Consulting interviewed a sample of 6,619 UK internet users aged 13 to 84 years old in order to explore their internet usage, behaviours and attitudes, and experiences of real or potential online harms. Interviews were carried out online between 22nd October and 12th November 2021.

Details of the sample design, research methodology, and weighting procedures for this study are outlined in the following pages. A note on statistical reliability is also included.

Sample Design

A representative sample of UK internet users aged 13-84 was provided by Yonder's proprietary online panel, YonderLive. Boosts were also applied to UK nations (Wales, Northern Ireland), minority ethnic groups (Black, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese respondents) and religions (Hindu, Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist respondents) to ensure that achieved base sizes for these low-incidence demographic subgroups were large enough to allow for detailed and statistically robust analysis.

Duplication checks took place to ensure that respondents could not complete the survey more than once. As well as duplication checks, Yonder carried out the following checks during and post fieldwork as standard:

- IP geo-locator checks to ensure the respondents are all based in the UK.
- Front and back end quality control questions within the survey to ensure respondents are answering logically and consistently.
- 'Trap' questions within the survey to ensure respondents are paying attention and reading each code i.e. at a random question we would ask them to select a certain code, those who do not select this we will remove from the data.
- Manual speeder check post-fieldwork to remove anyone deemed to have proceeded through the questionnaire at an unreasonable pace.
- Manual flatlining checks post-fieldwork to check grid questions and ensure respondents aren't answering the same codes across an unreasonable range of grid / scale questions.
- Open end checks to ensure respondents are answering thoughtfully and not spamming answers.

Quotas

Interview quotas were applied so that the final sample was representative of UK internet users by age, gender, region and socio-economic group (SEG).

Targets for quotas were derived from Yonder's bi-weekly online omnibus, and moderated by data obtained from the Ofcom Online Research Panel recruitment and the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Quotas were set on the following variables:

- Age (13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 64-74, 75-84)
- Gender
- Region
- Socio-economic group (SEG)

The table below details the specific quotas that were used for this study:

Demographic group	Category	Quota
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	13-17	7%
	18-24	11%
	25-34	17%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	18%
	55-64	14%
	65-74	11%
	75-84	6%
Region	Scotland	8%
	North East	4%
	North West	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%
	West Midlands	9%
	East Midlands	7%
	Wales	5%
	Eastern	9%
	London	14%
	South East	14%
	South West	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%
Social Grade	AB	27%
	C1	30%
	C2	21%
	DE	22%

Cognitive Testing

The study was informed by qualitative cognitive testing. The aims of the cognitive test element were to understand how people perceived the structure, key questions and language of the questionnaire, how clear and sensitive these elements were and whether they were sufficiently streamlined and fit for purpose. The qualitative cognitive testing provided insight on how to improve the questionnaire (e.g. how best to ask about harms experienced and the impact of these experiences on the individual).

Twenty 45-minute qualitative interviews were carrired out online between 14th and 27th September 2021. Participants were recruited to represent a mix of the UK population in terms of gender, urban, suburban and rural locations[2], SEG, lifestage, ethnicity, internet and device usage, and a number did not speak English as their first language. The findings were used to infom questionnaire development.

Fieldwork

An online survey was conducted using Yonder's online panel (YonderLive) to reach adults aged 13-84. YonderLive is made up of 150,000 internet users across the UK. For the 'main sample', online interviews with interlocking quotas were set to be broadly representative of UK internet users based on age, gender, region and SEG. For the 'boost' interviews, minimum quotas were set on specific UK nations, ethnicities and religions. The criteria for inclusion for these 'boost' interviews was being a member of one of the subgroups of interest where fewer than 100 interviews had been conducted in the 'main sample' surveys. Boost interviews were conducted to ensure at least 100 interviews among all subgroups of interest.

All interviews were conducted over a three week period between 22nd October – 12th November 2021.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of some of the research topics (e.g. experences of potential online harms), respondents were given the option to end the survey at two points. They were also forewarned of the sensitive nature of the research topic and asked to give their consent to participate, in line with MRS guidelines. A total of 228 respondents opted to end the survey due to the sensitivity of the content.

The questionnaire also included questions designed to obtain consent to be contacted for participation in further qualtitative research into online habits, attitudes and behaviours, as well as experience of potential online harms. This data is managed and stored in line with GDPR commitments.

Weighting

The data have been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall to the region and SEG profiles. This approach counteracted any effect that boost oversampling would have had on the final data.

Weighting profiles were created using a combination of Yonder online omnibus data and CATI omnibus data[3] to produce the most accurate profile of UK internet users.

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[2] Locations were selected in and around London and Manchester, and were chosen to be a mix of urban, suburban and rural.

[3] Certain biases may exist on online panels given the nature of the methodology (e.g. panelists may be higher internet users). In order to mitigate any bias, Yonder conducted an offline CATI calibration exercise to obtain the most up-to-date and accurate data for time spent online per day, device usage, and VSP usage. Weighting profiles were then moderated using a combination of this offline exercise and data on the known proportion of each age group that use the internet, taken from the ONS.

Sample Representativeness

The following table shows both the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profiles:

Demographic group	Unweighted counts	Unweighted %	Weighted counts	Weighted %
Male 13-17	267	4%	236	4%
Male 18-34	800	12%	943	14%
Male 35-54	1121	17%	1108	17%
Male 55+	1056	16%	959	14%
Female 13-17	238	4%	224	3%
Female 18-34	1007	15%	935	14%
Female 35-54	1104	17%	1129	17%
Female 55+	1012	15%	1071	16%
Scotland	537	8%	550	8%
North East	257	4%	272	4%
North West	689	10%	722	11%
Yorkshire and the Humber	506	8%	537	8%
West Midlands	553	8%	563	9%
East Midlands	442	7%	477	7%
Wales	369	6%	318	5%
East of England	550	8%	590	9%
London	931	14%	901	14%
South East	881	13%	928	14%
South West	539	8%	570	9%
Northern Ireland	365	6%	192	3%
AB	1918	29%	1807	27%
C1	1928	29%	1959	30%
C2	1294	20%	1377	21%
DE	1479	22%	1476	22%

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the "true" values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 95% that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results.

The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main groups within the main sample.

	ACTUAL	ESS
TOTAL	6,619	6,396
GENDER: Male	3,246	3,110
GENDER: Female	3,359	3,273
AGE: 13-17	508	456
AGE: 18-24	703	663
AGE: 25-34	1,110	1,092
AGE: 35-44	1,077	1,056
AGE: 45-54	1,153	1,133
AGE: 55-64	941	914
AGE: 65-74	734	717
AGE: 75+	393	373
SEG: AB	1,918	1,835
SEG: C1	1,928	1,868
SEG: C2	1,294	1,265
SEG: DE	1,479	1,437

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval".

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels

Effective sample size		10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
		±	±	±	±	±
TOTAL	6,396	0.7%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%
GENDER: Male	3,110	1.1%	1.4%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
GENDER: Female	3,273	1.0%	1.4%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%
AGE: 13-17	456	2.8%	3.7%	4.2%	4.5%	4.6%
AGE: 18-24	663	2.3%	3.0%	3.5%	3.7%	3.8%
AGE: 25-34	1,092	1.8%	2.4%	2.7%	2.9%	3.0%
AGE: 35-44	1,056	1.8%	2.4%	2.8%	3.0%	3.0%
AGE: 45-54	1,133	1.7%	2.3%	2.7%	2.9%	2.9%
AGE: 55-64	914	1.9%	2.6%	3.0%	3.2%	3.2%
AGE: 65-74	717	2.2%	2.9%	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%
AGE: 75+	373	3.0%	4.1%	4.7%	5.0%	5.1%
SEG: AB	1,835	1.4%	1.8%	2.1%	2.2%	2.3%
SEG: C1	1,868	1.4%	1.8%	2.1%	2.2%	2.3%
SEG: C2	1,265	1.7%	2.2%	2.5%	2.7%	2.8%
SEG: DE	1,437	1.6%	2.1%	2.4%	2.5%	2.6%

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 6,396 gives a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 1.1 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant.[4]

Differences required for significant at or near these percentages

Sample sizes being compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
GENDER: Male v Female (3,110 v 3,361)	1.50%	1.90%	2.20%	2.40%	2.50%
AGE: Young (13-17) v Old (75+) (456 v 373)	4.30%	5.60%	6.40%	6.80%	6.80%
SEG: ABC1 v C2DE (3,699 v 2,699)	1.50%	2.00%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%
ETHNICITY: Black v White (5,462 v 213)	4.50%	5.70%	6.50%	6.80%	6.80%

[4] It is important to note that these numbers are estimates. Further testing should be carried out on individual examples to understand whether differences are significant.

NET definitions featured in the published tables

Certain subgroups within the sample were grouped together to aid analysis, and are featured alongside this report in the published data tables. The definitions of these so-called NETs are as follows:

Category	NET	Definition
Break Group 1: Demographics		
Ethnicity	White	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
		Irish
		Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
		Any other white background
	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups	White and Black Caribbean
		White and Black African
		White and Asian
		Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
	Asian and British Asian	Indian
		Pakistani
		Bangladeshi
		Chinese
		Any other Asian background
	Black and black British	Caribbean
		African
		Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background
	Other ethnic group	Arab
		Any other ethnic background
Religion	Christian	Catholic
		Church of England / Scotland / Ireland
		Other Christian
	Other religions	Muslim
		Hindu
		Jewish
		Sikh
		Buddhist
		Other religion
	None	No religion
Disability	Any	Any reported disability
	Mental condition	Mental abilities? Such as learning, understanding, concentration, memory, communicating, cognitive loss or deterioration

Category		NET	Definition
			Social/ behavioural? Conditions associated with this such as autism, attention deficit disorder, Asperger's, etc.
			Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
		Physical condition	Hearing? Poor hearing, partial hearing, or are deaf
			Eyesight? Poor vision, colour blindness, partial sight, or are blind
			Mobility? Cannot walk at all/ use a wheelchair or mobility scooter etc., or cannot walk very far or manage stairs or can only do so with difficulty
			Dexterity? Limited ability to reach/ difficulty opening things with your hands/ difficulty using a telephone handset/ television remote control/ computer keyboard etc.
			Breathing? Breathlessness or chest pains
Break Group 2: Internet Usage			
Internet usage	High / Medium / Low	Low usage	None
			Less than 5 hours
		Medium usage	6 to 11 hours
			12 to 22 hours
		High usage	23 to 30 hours
			Over 30 hours
Break Group 3: Attitudes			
Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	Platform dependents	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral	If score -1 to 1
		Self-regulators	If score 2 to 5
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to stay safe online	Safety assured	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals	If score -1 to 1
		Safety self-doubters	If score 2 to 5

Category		NET	Definition
Parent vs platform responsibility	Websites and apps have a particular responsibility to protect children vs. It is the responsibility of parents/ carers to monitor what their children do online	Platform dependents	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals	If score -1 to 1
		Parental controllers	If score 2 to 5
Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Online optimists	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals	If score -1 to 1
		Online pessimists	If score 2 to 5
Sufficiency of common sense to protect from exposure to potential harms	Using a bit of common sense when you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos if you go online	Common sense supporters	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals	If score -1 to 1
		Disempowered defeatists	If score 2 to 5
Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals	If score -1 to 1
		Cautious protectors	If score 2 to 5
Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety	Status quo supporters	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals	If score -1 to 1
		Safety measure advocates	If score 2 to 5

Category		NET	Definition
	measures in place		
BREAK 4 - Experience of Harms			
Type of potential harm experienced		Contact harm	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
			Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
			People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
			Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			Pressure to send photos or personal information to someone
			People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
			Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
			Sharing of intimate images without consent
			Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
			Private conversations shared without consent
			Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'
			Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness
			Unwanted sexual messages
		Content harm	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children
			Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
			Content depicting violence
			Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games

Category	NET	Definition
		Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions
		Content relating to self-harm or suicide
		Content relating to negative body image, excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise and/or eating disorders
		Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM)
		Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
		Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
		Content which impacted negatively on my self-esteem
		Content depicting animal cruelty
	Commercial harm	Codes 7, 21, 22, 28 and 30 @ Q8
		Sale or advertisement of illegal goods
		Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
		Scams, fraud, or phishing
		Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
		Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'

Technical report – The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 2, May 2022)

Preface

Wave 2 of the Online Experiences Tracker (2021/22) was undertaken by Yonder Consulting on behalf of Ofcom. The objectives of the study were to gain a deeper understanding of internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms online.

The insights drawn from this data have informed Ofcom's preparations for The Online Safety Bill, which was introduced to Parliament earlier this year, granting Ofcom new responsibilities in helping to protect internet users online. The study has also informed the continuing implementation of Ofcom's video-sharing platform (VSP) regulation, by monitoring harms on regulated VSPs.

The tracker runs twice annually (in November and May), and this report refers to the second wave completed in May 2022[1].

The study provides data on a nationally representative sample of UK internet users, with boosts applied to younger respondents, specific UK nations, and certain minority ethnic groups to allow for robust analysis of demographic subgroups.

Further information about the study is summarised in the sections below.

Summary of approach

- The **Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 2)** survey was conducted with a nationally representative sample of UK internet users and addresses attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online.
- All research was carried out online, with respondents recruited from Yonder's proprietary online panel 'YonderLive', containing around 150,000 panellists from all over the UK. Respondents were recruited to be nationally representative of the UK internet user population, with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region. Boosts were applied to low incidence groups such as younger respondents, those living in specific UK nations, and minority ethnic groups to allow for bases sizes robust enough for analysis.
- The **Online Experiences Tracker** is a multi-wave study that runs twice annually in November and May. It builds on previous work of similar focus ('Pilot Online Harms Survey'[2]) which was commissioned by Ofcom in 2020 to explore internet usage and behaviours, attitudes towards online safety regulation, and experiences of potential online harms. The pilot study informed preparations for the Online Safety regime.
- A total of 6,666 interviews were conducted for Wave 2. All fieldwork was conducted between 29th April and 20th May 2022.

[1] A separate report, covering the first wave completed in November 2021, is available here: Online Experiences Tracker (wave 1) – technical report (ofcom.org.uk)
[2] https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/220622/online-harms-survey-waves-1-4-2021.pdf

Significance testing

Significance testing for the **Online Experiences Tracker** has been applied at 99% during analysis of the Wave 2 data only, and of the combined Wave 1 and 2 data. This represents a change from Wave 1, for which significance testing was applied at the 95% confidence interval during analysis. The change to a higher confidence level reflects the significantly larger sample size.

Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This definition was provided by Ofcom, and is based on household income and household composition (i.e. size and number of children) and can only be run on data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions.

The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group[3]:

Most financially vulnerable	Potentially financially vulnerable	Least financially vulnerable
Household income under £10,399	**Earning between £10,400 - £25,599**	**Earning between £26,600 - £36,399**
All respondents	1-2 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
	3 adults, no children	
Earning between £10,400 - £25,599	**Earning between £26,000 - £36,399**	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**
1-2 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	1 adult, 0-1 child
3+ adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	2 adults, 0 children
4+ adults	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
	4 adults, no children	
Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**	**Household income £52,000+**
1 adult, 4+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	All households
2 adults,4+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
3 adults, 2+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	4 adults, 0-1 child	
5+ adults	5 adults, 0 children	
Earning between £36,400 - £51,999		
1 adults, >3 children		
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		
5 adults, 1+ children		
6+ adults		

[3] The definition was updated for Wave 2, with an adjustment to the income bands that determine financial vulnerability. The definition used for wave 1 can be found in the wave 1 technical report: Online Experiences Tracker (wave 1) – technical report (ofcom.org.uk)

The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 2, May 2022)

Introduction

Yonder Consulting interviewed a sample of 6,666 UK internet users aged 13 to 84 years old in order to explore their internet usage, behaviours and attitudes, and experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online. Interviews were carried out online between 29th April and 20th May 2022.

Details of the sample design, research methodology, and weighting procedures for this study are outlined in the following pages. A note on statistical reliability is also included.

Sample design

A representative sample of UK internet users aged 13-84 was provided by Yonder's proprietary online panel, YonderLive. Boosts were also applied to UK nations (Wales, Northern Ireland), minority ethnic groups (Black, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese respondents) and religions (Hindu, Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist respondents) to ensure that achieved base sizes for these low-incidence demographic subgroups were large enough to allow for detailed and statistically robust analysis.

Sample exclusions were put in place in Wave 2 to prevent respondents who had taken part in Wave 1 from filling the nationally representative quotas that were part of the sample design. This was to minimise answering bias as a result of respondents having prior knowledge of the survey and its contents. In order to ensure successful and timely completion of quotas, no restrictions were placed on respondents who filled the boost quotas for UK nations, minority ethnic groups and religions[4].

Duplication checks took place to ensure that respondents could not complete the survey more than once. As well as duplication checks, Yonder carried out the following standard checks during and post-fieldwork:

- IP geo-locator checks to ensure the respondents were all based in the UK.
- Front- and back-end quality control questions within the survey to ensure respondents were answering logically and consistently.
- 'Trap' questions within the survey to ensure respondents were paying attention and reading each code i.e. at a random question we would ask them to select a certain code, those who did not select this were removed from the data.
- A manual speeder check post-fieldwork to remove anyone deemed to have proceeded through the questionnaire at an unreasonable pace.
- Manual flatlining checks post-fieldwork to check grid questions and ensure respondents did not answer the same codes across an unreasonable range of grid / scale questions.
- Open end checks to ensure respondents answered thoughtfully and not spamming answers.

Quotas

Interview quotas were applied so that the final sample was representative of UK internet users by age, gender, region and socio-economic group (SEG).

Targets for quotas were derived from Yonder's bi-weekly online omnibus, and moderated by data obtained from the Ofcom Online Research Panel recruitment and the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Quotas were set on the following variables:

[4] Yonder operates a standard exclusion period of three months for research among consumer audiences. Given the extended period between waves (six months) there is a high level of confidence that answering bias has been minimised.

- Age (13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 64-74, 75-84)
- Gender
- Region
- Socio-economic group (SEG)

The table below details the specific quotas that were used for this study:

Demographic group	Category	Quota
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	13-17	7%
	18-24	11%
	25-34	17%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	18%
	55-64	14%
	65-74	11%
	75-84	6%
Region	Scotland	8%
	North East	4%
	North West	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%
	West Midlands	9%
	East Midlands	7%
	Wales	5%
	Eastern	9%
	London	14%
	South East	14%
	South West	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%
Social Grade	AB	27%
	C1	30%
	C2	21%
	DE	22%

Fieldwork

An online survey was conducted using Yonder's online panel (YonderLive) to reach adults aged 13-84. YonderLive is made up of 150,000 internet users across the UK. For the main sample online interviews with interlocking quotas were set to be broadly representative of UK internet users based on age, gender, region and SEG. For the 'boost' interviews, minimum quotas were set on specific UK nations, ethnicities and religions. The criteria for inclusion for these 'boost' interviews was being a member of one of the

subgroups of interest where fewer than 100 interviews had been conducted in the 'main sample' surveys. Boost interviews were conducted to ensure at least 100 interviews among all subgroups of interest.

All interviews were conducted over a three week period between 29th April and 20th May 2022.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of some of the research topics (e.g. experences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online), respondents were given the option to end the survey at two points. They were also forewarned of the sensitive nature of the research topic and asked to give their consent to participate, in line with MRS guidelines. A total of 157 respondents opted to end the survey due to the sensitivity of the content.

The questionnaire also included questions designed to obtain consent to be contacted for participation in further qualtitative research into online habits, attitudes and behaviours, as well as experience of potential online harms. This data is managed and stored in line with GDPR commitments.

Weighting

The data has been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall to the region and SEG profiles. This approach counteracted any effect that boost oversampling would have had on the final data.

Weighting profiles were created using a combination of Yonder online omnibus data and CATI omnibus data[5] to produce the most accurate profile of UK internet users.

Sample representativeness

The following table shows both the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profiles:

Demographic group	Unweighted counts	Unweighted %	Weighted counts	Weighted %
Male 13-17	221	3%	239	4%
Male 18-34	634	10%	938	14%
Male 35-54	1,104	17%	1,114	17%
Male 55+	1,325	20%	964	14%
Female 13-17	218	3%	225	3%
Female 18-34	1,101	17%	934	14%
Female 35-54	1,233	18%	1,139	17%
Female 55+	796	12%	1,074	16%

[5] Certain biases may exist on online panels given the nature of the methodology (e.g. panelists may be higher internet users). In order to mitigate any bias, Yonder conducted an offline CATI calibration exercise to obtain the most up-to-date and accurate data for time spent online per day, device usage, and VSP usage. Weighting profiles were then moderated using a combination of this offline exercise and data on the known proportion of each age group that use the internet, taken from the ONS.

Scotland	534	8%	554	8%
North East	260	4%	274	4%
North West	703	11%	727	11%
Yorkshire and the Humber	520	8%	540	8%
West Midlands	560	8%	567	9%
East Midlands	464	7%	480	7%
Wales	375	6%	320	5%
East of England	575	9%	594	9%
London	893	13%	907	14%
South East	895	13%	934	14%
South West	536	8%	574	9%
Northern Ireland	351	5%	194	3%
AB	2,025	30%	1,820	27%
C1	1,919	29%	1,973	30%
C2	1,237	19%	1,387	21%
DE	1,485	22%	1,487	22%

Guide to statistical reliability

The variation between the sample results and the "true" values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 99% that is, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results.

The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main groups within the main sample.

TOTAL	ACTUAL	ESS
	6,666	6,075
GENDER: Male	3,284	2,949
GENDER: Female	3,348	3,096
AGE: 13-17	442	411
AGE: 18-24	588	532
AGE: 25-34	1,168	1,064
AGE: 35-44	1,147	1,118
AGE: 45-54	1,195	1,171
AGE: 55-64	977	873

TOTAL	ACTUAL	ESS
	6,666	6,075
AGE: 65-74	777	725
AGE: 75+	372	278
SEG: AB	2,025	1,833
SEG: C1	1,919	1,760
SEG: C2	1,237	1,146
SEG: DE	1,485	1,366
ETHNICITY: White	5,714	5,203
ETHNICITY: Black	223	206

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "99% confidence interval".

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels

Effective sample size		10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
		±	±	±	±	±
TOTAL	6,075	1.0%	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%
GENDER: Male	2,949	1.4%	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%	2.4%
GENDER: Female	3,096	1.4%	1.9%	2.1%	2.3%	2.3%
AGE: 13-17	411	3.8%	5.1%	5.8%	6.2%	6.4%
AGE: 18-24	532	3.4%	4.5%	5.1%	5.5%	5.6%
AGE: 25-34	1,064	2.4%	3.2%	3.6%	3.9%	3.9%
AGE: 35-44	1,118	2.3%	3.1%	3.5%	3.8%	3.9%
AGE: 45-54	1,171	2.3%	3.0%	3.4%	3.7%	3.8%
AGE: 55-64	873	2.6%	3.5%	4.0%	4.3%	4.4%
AGE: 65-74	725	2.9%	3.8%	4.4%	4.7%	4.8%
AGE: 75+	278	4.6%	6.2%	7.1%	7.6%	7.7%
SEG: AB	1,833	1.8%	2.4%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%
SEG: C1	1,760	1.8%	2.5%	2.8%	3.0%	3.1%
SEG: C2	1,146	2.3%	3.0%	3.5%	3.7%	3.8%
SEG: DE	1,366	2.1%	2.8%	3.2%	3.4%	3.5%
ETHNICITY: White	5,203	1.1%	1.4%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
ETHNICITY: Black	206	5.4%	7.2%	8.2%	8.8%	9.0%

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 6,075 gives a particular answer, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 1.5 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "99% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant.[6]

Differences required for significant at or near these percentages

Sample sizes being compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
GENDER: Male v Female (2.949 v 3,096)	2.10%	2.70%	3.00%	3.30%	3.30%
AGE: Young (13-17) v Old (75+) (411 v 278)	7.00%	8.70%	9.60%	10.00%	10.00%
SEG: ABC1 v C2DE (3,579 v 2,505)	2.10%	2.70%	3.10%	3.30%	3.40%
ETHNICITY: Black v White (5,203 v 206)	6.80%	8.20%	8.90%	9.10%	9.20%

[6] It is important to note that these numbers are estimates. Further testing should be carried out on individual examples to understand whether differences are significant.

Changes to the questionnaire between waves

Multiple additions and amendments were made to the questionnaire for wave 2 as improvements or revisions in line with shifting policy focus. A summary of changes has been included below[7].

Section Label	Section Number	Question number	Changes made
Profiling and screening	1	D1	Changes to question wording and gender labels
		D7	Inclusion of new limiting/impacting condition: 'Difficulty with speech? e.g. due to stroke, stutter or stammer'
		D11	Removal of old household income question
		D11b	New household income question with updated brackets
		D13	New highest educational or professional qualification question
		C2	Changes to question wording and gender labels (for under 18s)
		C4	Inclusion of new limiting/impacting condition: 'Difficulty with speech? e.g. due to stroke, stutter or stammer' (for under 18s)
Attitudes	3	Q1	Inclusion of new sub-question on societal impact of the internet. Removal of sub-question relating to websites/apps have responsibility to protect children versus it is the responsibility of parents/carers Removal of sub-question of general benefits vs risks of going online
Online behaviour	4	Q2	Changes to minimum hours spent online
		Q3	Removal of two statements: being online gives space to pursue hobbies/interests and accessing goods/services is convenient for me
		Q4a.	New follow up question on website/app used most

[7] For reference, copies of both wave 1 and 2 questionnaires have been published alongside this report [PLACEHOLDER

		Q4b.	New follow up question on activities taken on site/app used most
		Q4c.	New question on individual content being reported and/or taken down
Experience of potential harms	5	Q6	Removal of open question on experiences of potential harms in last four weeks
		Q6a.	New closed question capturing experiences of potential harms in last four weeks
		Q7	Removal of question measuring levels of concern across all potential harms
		Q8	Additional and removal of various harms from multicode list and change on filtering for code relating to promotion of gambling
		Q10	Removal of question, if harm happened to you personally or somebody else
		Q11	Removal of question, if content was shared/sent directly with you or came across it yourself
		Q14b	Removal of old question capturing level of offense/bother after experiencing harm
		Q14b	New question capturing level of offense/bother after experiencing harm, with amended scale
		Q15	Additional actions after experiencing potential included in multicode list
		Q19	Removal of question, the relationship to person who posted/shared content
		Q20	Removal of question, device first used when experienced harm
		Q21a	Additional question capturing functions on site/service when experienced harm
		Q29	Removal of question, follow up if experienced stalking/cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
		Q30	Removal of question, follow up if experienced stalking/cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
		Q31	Removal of question, follow up if seen stalking/cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour

		Q32a.	New question, follow up if received an unwanted sexual message
		Q32b.	New question, follow up if seen or experienced misinformation
		Q32c.	New question, follow up seen or experienced self-harm/suicide or negative body image

NET definitions featured in the published tables

Certain subgroups within the sample were grouped together to aid analysis and are featured alongside this report in the published data tables. The definitions of these so-called NETs are in the table below.

Changes to some NET definitions were made between waves. Wherever present these have been noted in the 'Wave' column in the table below.

Category	NET	Wave	Definition
Break Group 1: Demographics			
Ethnicity	White	Waves 1 & 2	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
			Irish
			Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
			Any other white background
	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups		White and Black Caribbean
			White and Black African
			White and Asian
			Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
	Asian and British Asian		Indian
			Pakistani
			Bangladeshi
			Chinese
			Any other Asian background
	Black and black British		Caribbean
			African
			Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background
	Other ethnic group		Arab
			Any other ethnic background
Religion	Christian	Waves 1 & 2	Catholic
			Church of England / Scotland / Ireland
			Other Christian
	Other religions		Muslim
			Hindu
			Jewish

			Sikh
			Buddhist
			Other religion
	None		No religion
Limiting/Impacting Conditions* *NET name change in Wave 2	Any	Waves 1 & 2	Any reported limiting/impacting condition
	Mental condition	Wave 1 only	Mental abilities? Such as learning, understanding, concentration, memory, communicating, cognitive loss or deterioration
			Social/ behavioural? Conditions associated with this such as autism, attention deficit disorder, Asperger's, etc.
			Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
	Physical condition	Wave 1 only	Hearing? Poor hearing, partial hearing, or are deaf
			Eyesight? Poor vision, colour blindness, partial sight, or are blind
			Mobility? Cannot walk at all/ use a wheelchair or mobility scooter etc., or cannot walk very far or manage stairs or can only do so with difficulty
			Dexterity? Limited ability to reach/ difficulty opening things with your hands/ difficulty using a telephone handset/ television remote control/ computer keyboard etc.
			Breathing? Breathlessness or chest pains
	Mental Health Condition	From wave 2	Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
	None	Waves 1 & 2	Nothing – no impairments or conditions impact or limit your daily activities or the work you can do
Break Group 2: Internet Usage			
Internet usage		Low usage	Wave 1 only	None
				Less than 5 hours

	High / Medium / Low	Low usage	From wave 2	None
				Less than 6 hours
		Medium usage	Waves 1 & 2	6 to 11 hours
				12 to 22 hours
		High usage	Waves 1 & 2	23 to 30 hours
				Over 30 hours
Break Group 3: Attitudes				
Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	Platform dependents	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Self-regulators		If score 2 to 5
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to stay safe online	Safety assured	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Safety self-doubters		If score 2 to 5
Parent vs platform responsibility	Websites and apps have a particular responsibility to protect children vs. It is the responsibility of parents/ carers to monitor what their children do online	Platform dependents	Wave 1 only	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Parental controllers		If score 2 to 5

Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Online optimists	Wave 1 only	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Online pessimists		If score 2 to 5
Sufficiency of common sense to protect from exposure to potential harms	Using a bit of common sense when you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos if you go online	Common sense supporters	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Disempowered defeatists		If score 2 to 5
Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Cautious protectors		If score 2 to 5

Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety measures in place	Status quo supporters	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Safety measure advocates		If score 2 to 5
Benefits vs risks of going online	For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. For me personally, the risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Benefits outweigh risks	From wave 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Risks outweigh benefits		If score 2 to 5
Societal impact	The internet is good for society vs. the internet is damaging to society	Internet is good for society	From wave 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Internet is damaging to society		If score 2 to 5
BREAK 4 - Experience of Harms				
Type of potential harm experienced		Any Harm (wave 1 definition)	Waves 1 & 2	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Waves 1 & 2	Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app
			Waves 1 & 2	Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women

		Waves 1 & 2	Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1 & 2	Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
		Waves 1 & 2	Content depicting violence
		Waves 1 & 2	Sale or advertisement of illegal goods
		Wave 1 only	Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1 & 2	Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions
		Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to self-harm or suicide
		Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to negative body image, excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise and/or eating disorders
		Waves 1 & 2	Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1 & 2	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
		Waves 1 & 2	Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
		Waves 1 & 2	People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
		Waves 1 & 2	Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
		Waves 1 & 2	Pressure to send photos or personal information to someone
		Waves 1 & 2	People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
		Waves 1 & 2	Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
		Waves 1 & 2	Scams, fraud, or phishing
		Waves 1 & 2	Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Sharing of intimate images without consent
		Waves 1 & 2	ntentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Private conversations shared without consent

		Waves 1 & 2	Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
		Waves 1 & 2	Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
		Waves 1 & 2	Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'
		Waves 1 & 2	Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Content which impacted negatively on my self-esteem
		Waves 1 & 2	Content depicting animal cruelty
		Waves 1 & 2	Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness
		Waves 1 & 2	Unwanted sexual messages
		From wave 2	Content depicting dangerous stunts [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		From wave 2	Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
	Contact harm	Waves 1 & 2	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
		Waves 1 & 2	Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
		Waves 1 & 2	People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
		Waves 1 & 2	Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
		Waves 1 & 2	Pressure to send photos or personal information to someone
		Waves 1 & 2	People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Sharing of intimate images without consent
		Waves 1 & 2	Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
		Waves 1 & 2	Private conversations shared without consent

		Waves 1 & 2	Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'
		Waves 1 & 2	Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness
		Waves 1 & 2	Unwanted sexual messages
	Content harm	Waves 1 & 2	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
		Waves 1 & 2	Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app
		Waves 1 & 2	Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
		Waves 1 & 2	Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1 & 2	Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
		Waves 1 & 2	Content depicting violence
		Wave 1 only	Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [SHOW TO OVER 18 IN WAVE 1 / SHOW TO UNDER 18 IN WAVE 2]
		Waves 1 & 2	Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions
		Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to self-harm or suicide
		Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to negative body image, excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise and/or eating disorders
		Waves 1 & 2	Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1 & 2	Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
		Waves 1 & 2	Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
		Waves 1 & 2	Content which impacted negatively on my self-esteem
		Waves 1 & 2	Content depicting animal cruelty
		From wave 2	Content depicting dangerous stunts [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		From wave 2	Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]

	Commercial harm	Waves 1 & 2	Sale or advertisement of illegal goods
		Waves 1 & 2	Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
		Waves 1 & 2	Scams, fraud, or phishing
		Waves 1 & 2	Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
		Waves 1 & 2	Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'
Q15 - Action taken			
Action taken after experiencing potential harm	Any Action	Waves 1 & 2	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
		Waves 1 & 2	Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
		Waves 1 & 2	Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
		Waves 1 & 2	Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
		Waves 1 & 2	Informed the police
		Waves 1 & 2	Informed Ofcom
		Waves 1 & 2	Informed a support service
		Waves 1 & 2	Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		Waves 1 & 2	Closed my account/left the service
		Waves 1 & 2	Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email
		Waves 1 & 2	Told a friend or family member
		Waves 1 & 2	I use the platform less
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped using the platform
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
		Waves 1 & 2	I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
		From wave 2	Changed my settings to change the type of content I see
		From wave 2	Changed my settings to change who can see my profile
		From wave 2	I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing

		Waves 1 & 2	Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
	Reported or flagged content	Waves 1 & 2	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
		Wave 1 only	Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
		Waves 1 & 2	Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
		Waves 1 & 2	Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
		Waves 1 & 2	Informed the police
		Waves 1 & 2	Informed Ofcom
		Waves 1 & 2	Informed a support service
		Waves 1 & 2	Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		From wave 2	I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
		Waves 1 & 2	Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
	Disengaged or changed engagement behaviour	Waves 1 & 2	I use the platform less
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped using the platform
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
		Waves 1 & 2	I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
		From wave 2	Closed my account/left the service

21ST SEPTEMBER 2022

The Online Experiences Tracker (2021/22): Summary Report

PREPARED FOR: OFCOM

PREPARED BY: YONDER CONSULTING

INQ000615301_0300

Ofcom Foreword

Ofcom has a statutory duty to promote and research media literacy. A key way we seek to fulfil this duty is through our *Making Sense of Media* programme, which aims to help improve the online skills, knowledge and understanding of children and adults in the UK. Ofcom was also given powers in autumn 2020 to regulate UK-established video-sharing platforms (VSPs). And in December 2020, the Government confirmed its intention to nominate Ofcom as the regulator for online safety in the UK, under the Online Safety Bill, which is currently in Parliament.

As referenced in our Roadmap to Online Safety Regulation, this summary report is one in a series of research studies into online safety that will inform our preparations for implementing the new online safety laws. As part of these preparations, we are building a robust evidence base, bringing together internal and external data, collected using different methods, from a variety of different sources.

In this context, this programme of research further develops our understanding of online harms and how we can help to promote a safer user experience. The findings should not be considered a reflection of any policy position that Ofcom may adopt when we take up our role as the online safety regulator.

The Online Experiences Tracker was commissioned to enable Ofcom to extend and enrich its understanding of UK users' attitudes towards and experiences of using online services, positive and negative, including their experience of encountering potential online harms. This report summarises findings from Waves 1 and 2, comprising the first full year of the tracker (2021-2).

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Introduction: methodology

The Online Experiences Tracker is a quantitative tracking study comprising of two waves annually. Fieldwork for Wave 1 was conducted in October-November 2021 with a nationally representative sample of 6,619 UK internet users aged 13+. Fieldwork for the Wave 2 was conducted in April-May 2022 with a sample of 6,666 UK internet users aged 13+.

Research was carried out online, with respondents recruited from Yonder's proprietary online panel 'YonderLive', containing around 150,000 panellists from across the UK. Respondents were recruited to ensure a sample that was nationally representative of the UK internet user population, with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region. Boosts were applied to low incidence groups to allow for bases sizes robust enough for analysis. Boosts were applied for younger respondents, respondents living in Wales, Scotland and Norhern Ireland, and respondents from minority ethnic backgrounds.

This report analyses data for both waves at a combined level[1], with a focus on observed differences among key demographic subgroups. Where appropriate, statistically significant changes in reported experience, opinions, attitude, or behaviours between the two waves are mentioned. All data is analysed at the 99% confidence level.

For a detailed breakdown of the sample design, weighting, net definitions and overall methodology please refer to the accompanying technical report.[2]

Summary of key findings

Time spent online and use of website and apps

It's important to understand the amount of time people spend online, both in order to be able to understand the differences in consumption between types of user, and also to see whether time spent online has any correlations with the types of negative experiences that people encounter. We focus here on 'free time' which we define as time spent using social media and messaging, watching films, TV programmes and videos online, playing games online, on video calls, searching for information online and doing, but excluding any time spent online for work or at school, college or university.

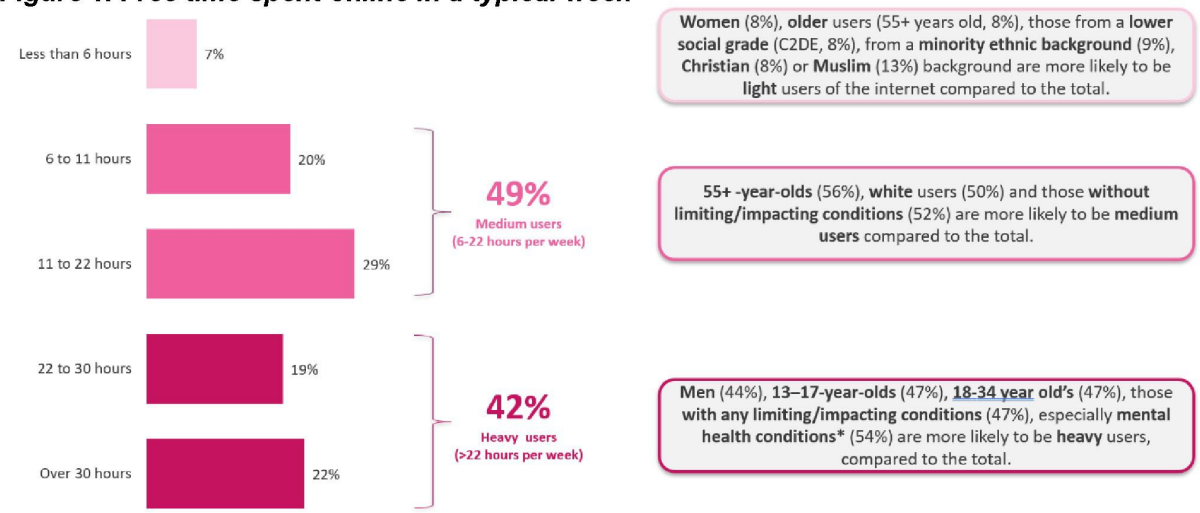
- **Just under half of UK internet users (49%) are classed as *medium* volume users of the internet, spending 6-22 hours of their free time online a week.[3]**
    - A further 42% are classed as *heavy* volume users of the internet, spending more than 22 hours online, while fewer than one in ten (7%) UK internet users are *light* volume users, spending less than 6 hours online in a typical week.

[1] While analysis focuses on the data at a combined level, some questions were only asked in one wave or the other. In these cases analysis is limited to the wave in which the question appears, and a note to acknowledge that fact has been included in the footnotes.
[2] The accompanying technical report is available on the Ofcom website.
[3] By 'free time' spent online we mean time spent using social media and messaging, watching films, TV programmes and videos online, playing games online, on video calls, searching for information online and doing, but excluding any time you spend online for work or at your school, college or university.

INQ000615301_0303

- **Volume of internet use varies by demographic group. Men (44%), 13-17 year olds (47%) and those with limiting or impacting conditions[4] (47% overall, but rising to 54% of those with mental health conditions) tend to be *heavy* volume users of the internet.**
    - Users aged over 55, (56%), white users (50%) and those who do not have a limiting or impacting condition (52%) are more likely to be *medium* users compared to the average (49%).
    - Women (8%), users aged over 55 (8%), those from a lower social grade (C2DE, 8%), from a minority ethnic background (9%), Christian (8%) or Muslim (13%) users are more likely to be *light* volume users of the internet compared to the average for all users (7%).

Figure 1. Free time spent online in a typical week



- **In the last month, just under half of internet users said they have used only websites or apps they have used before (46%). A similar proportion used one or two websites which were new to them (44%).**
    - Fewer than one in ten internet users (9%) used 'lots of websites or apps they have not used before in the last month'.

Attitudes towards the internet and being online

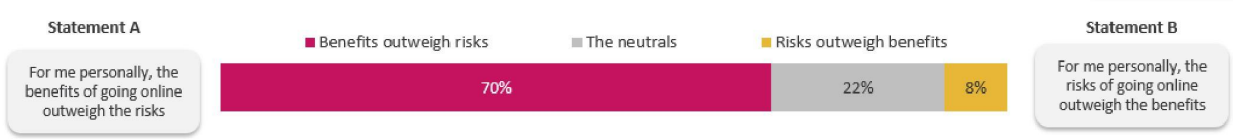
Internet users were asked a range of questions about their overall attitudes to being online. We found that the majority think that the benefits of being online outweigh the risks, and just under half agreed that they can share their opinions and have a voice. Women, particularly, were less likely to feel they can share their opinions and were less likely to feel free to be themselves online.

- **Seven in ten internet users feel that, for them personally, the benefits of being online outweigh the risks. A lower proportion, 51%, feel the internet is good for society.**

[4] A definition of the net 'Any limiting or impacting condition' is available in the accompanying technical report.

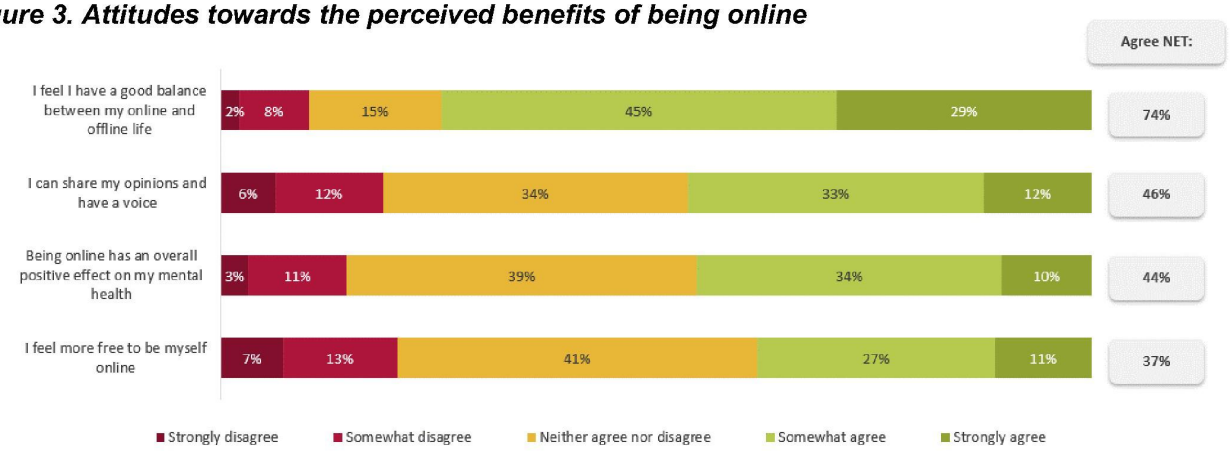
- Fewer than one in ten (8%) believe the risks outweigh the benefits, and 12% believe the internet is damaging for society.
- Women (68%) and users from minority ethnic backgrounds (61%) are less likely to believe the benefits of going online outweigh the risks compared to the average (70%).

Figure 2. Benefits v. risks of being online



- **A clear majority of internet users agree that they have a good balance between their online and offline life (74%), compared to one in ten (10%) who disagree.**
  - 55+ year olds (83%), individuals without any limiting or impacting conditions (78%) and white users (75%) are more likely to agree compared to the average (74%).
  - Those with mental health conditions (62%), 18-34 year olds (65%), and users from minority ethnic backgrounds (69%) are less likely to agree than the average.

Figure 3. Attitudes towards the perceived benefits of being online



- **Just under half (46%) of internet users agree that they can share their opinions and have a voice online, and under two-fifths (37%) feel more free to be themselves online.**
  - Younger users are more likely to feel they can share their opinions and have a voice (13-17, 62% and 18-34, 53%) and are more free to be themselves online (13-17, 61% and 18-34, 50%) compared to the average.
  - Users from minority ethnic backgrounds (56%)[5], and those with limiting or impacting conditions (50% overall, rising to 54% of those with mental health conditions), are more

[5] Users from Minority Ethnic Groups are defined as: mixed/multiple ethnic groups, Asian and British Asian, Black and Black British and other any other ethnic background. For a full definition please see the accompanying technical report.

likely to say they can share their opinions and have a voice more easily online than the average user (46%).
    - Gay or lesbian (50%), bisexual users (53%), those with limiting or impacting conditions (39% overall, rising to 45% of those with a mental health condition), and those from minority ethnic backgrounds (55%) are more likely to say they feel more free to be themselves online than the average user (37%).

- **Just over four in ten (44%) agree that being online has an overall positive effect on their mental health, compared to a smaller proportion (15%) who disagree.**
    - 13-17 year olds (58%) are more likely to agree that being online has an overall positive effect on their mental health compared to all other ages (18-34, 43%; 35-54, 43% and 55+, 42%).

- **Women, however, are less likely to feel they can share their opinions and have a voice more easily (42%), less likely to feel free to be themselves online (34%) less likely to agree that being online has a positive effect on their mental health (41%); compared to men,** as shown in Table 1 below.

- **There is a high proportion of 'neutral' or 'undecided' responses – neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statements provided – regarding attitudes to being online.**
    - Around four in ten neither agree nor disagree that they feel more free to be themselves online than offline (41%) and that being online has a positive effect on their mental health (39%).
    - While 37% neither agree nor disagree when deciding if the internet is good or damaging for society. And a further 34% neither agree nor disagree that they can share their opinions and have a voice online more easily or effectively than they can offline.

Table 1. Demographic differences regarding attitudes online

	I can share my opinions and have a voice	I feel more free to be myself online	Being online has an overall positive effect on my mental health
Total % Agree	46%	37%	44%

Men	50%↑	40%↑	46%↑
Women	42%↓	34%↓	41%↓
White	44%↓	34%↓	43%↓
Minority Ethnic Groups	56% ↑	55% ↑	51% ↑
Heterosexual	44%↓	34%↓	43%↓
Gay/Lesbian	53%↑	50%↑	47%
Bisexual	59% ↑	53% ↑	43%
Any limiting/impacting conditions	50% ↑	39% ↑	43%
Mental Health conditions	54%↑	45%↑	41%
No conditions	44%↓	36%↓	44%

Green and red arrows indicate significantly higher/lower differences to the total average

Attitudes towards online safety

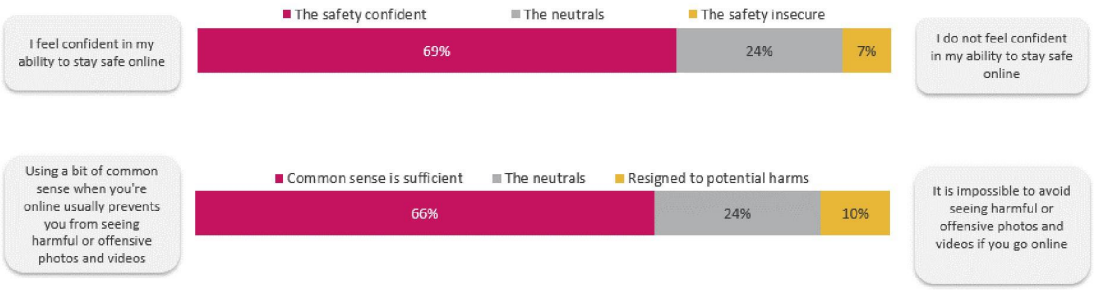
Internet users were also asked a range of questions to gauge attitudes to their own online safety. We found that the majority felt confident in their ability to stay safe online, although a quarter were neutral or undecided.

- **A majority of users (69%) are confident about their ability to stay safe online, compared to a much smaller proportion (7%) who do not feel confident.**
  - Women (65%) and users aged over 55 (67%) are less confident in their ability to stay safe online than average (69%).

- **Two thirds of users believe that using a bit of common sense when online usually prevents people from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos, compared to one in ten (10%) who believe it is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos online.**
  - Women (64%), users aged under 34 (13–17 year olds (58%) and 18-34 year olds, (54%)), and parents (59%) are less likely to agree using common sense online usually prevents individuals from seeing harmful content than average (66%).

- **There is a high proportion of 'neutral' or 'undecided' responses – those neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statements provided regarding attitudes towards online safety.**
  - 24% neither agree nor disagree that they feel confident in their ability to stay safe online.
  - 24% neither agree nor disagree that using a bit of common sense when online usually prevents people from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos.

Figure 4. Attitudes towards online safety



Experiences of potentially harmful online content and behaviour[6]

Internet users were asked if they had experienced any potential harm in the last four weeks. They were asked about their experience from a list of 34 specific potential online harms. We found that six in ten said they had experienced a potential online harm in the last four weeks, with scams, fraud and phishing the most commonly experienced potential harm.

- **Over six in ten (62%) UK internet users have experienced at least one instance of potentially harmful behaviour or content online in the last four weeks.**[7]
  - Men (65%), users from higher social grades (ABC1, 65%), 18–34-year-olds (70%), users from minority ethnic backgrounds (70%) and those with any limiting or impacting conditions (70%) are more likely to have experienced at least once potential harm in the last four weeks.

- **Experience of at least one potential harm has increased from 61% (November 2021) to 64% (May 2022).**[8]
  - This increase is driven by men (W1 63% to W2 67%), 18–34-year-olds (W1 64% to 75%), users from minority ethnic backgrounds (W1 66% vs 73%) and those with mental health conditions (W1 71% vs W2 77%).

[6] This section of the questionnaire included a sensitivity screener which alerted respondents to the sensitive nature of the topics under discussion and provided them with an option to conclude the survey before any questions of a sensitive nature were asked. Respondents were asked about their experience of a list of 34 specific potential harms. A full breakdown of the incidence of each potential harm is shown below in Table 2.
[7] When respondents were prompted with a list of 34 types of potentially harmful content and behaviour and asked whether they had encountered any of them in the last four weeks. Respondents were able to make multiple selections as appropriate to their experience. In creating the net proportion of those encountering at least one potential harm, codes relating to content depicting dangerous stunts and content advertising alcohol or cigarettes, were excluded as they were only added in wave 2. The definition also excludes content encouraging gambling, which was shown to over 18's in wave 1, and only U18s in wave 2. The last two waves have been iterative improvements ahead of the permanent contract / the data becoming an official stat, hence why there have been changes to definitions between the waves (though not to the raw data itself). A full definition of the nets used to groups harms is available in the accompanying technical report.
[8] In comparing data wave on wave, codes relating to content depicting dangerous stunts and content advertising alcohol or cigarettes, which were added in wave 2, were excluded from the net definition (experience of at least one potential harm) as they were only shown to U18s. The definition also excludes content encouraging gambling, which was shown to over 18s in wave 1, and only U18s in wave 2.

- **Scams, fraud and phishing is the most commonly experienced potential harm (encountered by 28% in the last four weeks),** followed by: misinformation (23%), generally offensive or 'bad' language (22%), unwelcome friend or follow requests or messages (20%), trolling (16%), hateful, offensive or discriminatory content (11%) and content depicting violence (10%).

- **There is evidence of a strong correlation between volume of internet use and experience of potential harms online: with heavier users (69%) more likely to experience at least one potential harm in the last four weeks compared to the light (44%) and medium (60%) users.[9]**

Table 2. Incidence of potential harms; wave-on-wave comparison

	W1 and W2 combined	Wave 1	Wave 2
Scams, fraud, or phishing	28%	27%	30%↑
Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions	23%	22%	23%

[9] Heavy volume users are defined as spending more than 22 hours a week online, medium volume users between 6 and 22 hours, and light volume users less than 6 hours. Men (44%), 13-17 year olds (47%) and those with any limiting or impacting conditions (47% overall, but rising to 54% of those with mental health conditions) tend to be *heavy* volume users of the internet.

Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness	22%	21%	22%
Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages	20%	20%	19%
Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction	16%	15%	18% ↑
Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity e.g. hate speech	11%	11%	12%
Content depicting violence	10%	9%	11% ↑
Content which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women i.e misogynistic content	9%	8%	10% ↑
Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	9%	8%	9%
Content encouraging gambling e.g. sports betting, or casino style games	9%	16%	1%[10]
Content relating to negative body image, excessive dieting and/ or eating disorders	8%	8%	9%
Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'	8%	7%	9% ↑
Animal cruelty	7%	7%	7%
Received an unwanted sexual message	7%	8%	7%
Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking	7%	7%	7%
Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'	7%	7%	6% ↓

[10] Content encouraging gambling e.g. sports betting, or casino style games was shown to over 18s in wave 1, and under 18s in wave 2, accounting for the steep decline in experience. A wave-on-wave comparison is not possible due to this amendment, and this code has been excluded from any net definition referring to experience of at least one potential harm in the last four weeks.

Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app	7%	7%	7%
People pretending to be another person, e.g. catfishing	6%	6%	7% ↑
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'	6%	6%	6%
Content which impacted negatively on my self-esteem	5%	5%	5%
Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission	4%	4%	4% ↓
Sale or advertisement of illegal goods	4%	4%	4%
Content relating to self-harm or suicide	4%	3%	4%
People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'	3%	3%	3%
Private conversations shared without consent	3%	3%	3%
Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism	3%	2%	3%
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'	2%	3%	2%
Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts	2%	3%	2% ↓
Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour	2%	2%	2%
Pressure to send photos or personal information to someone	2%	2%	1% ↓
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'	2%	2%	2%
Sharing of intimate images without consent	2%	1%	2%
Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children	1%	1%	1%

Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM)	1%	1%	1%
NET: Any harm[11]	62%	61%	64% ↑

Green and red arrows indicate significantly higher/lower differences than Wave 1.

Concerns towards potential harms online[12]

Although people say they are concerned about some potential online harms, the harms which most internet users are concerned about tend to be those with the lowest incidence.

- **Regarding levels of concern about potential harms existing online, users who express a concern are most concerned about content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children (86%) and content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism (79%).**
    - Users who express a concern are less concerned about generally offensive or 'bad' language (41%) and unwelcome friend/follow requests or messages (42%).

- **Generally, the harms eliciting the highest concern are encountered online at a relatively low incidence; the exceptions being scams, fraud or phishing, and misinformation, which stand out as harms for which both concern and experience are relatively high.**

Where and how potential harms are being experienced

Half of internet users say that they experienced a potential harm on a social media site. Facebook is the most likely site or app for users to have encountered their most recent harm. Potential online harms were most likely to be encountered while scrolling or on the 'For You' page.

- **Half of those who experienced a potential harm encountered their most recent instance on a social media site or app,** as shown in figure 4 below**.**

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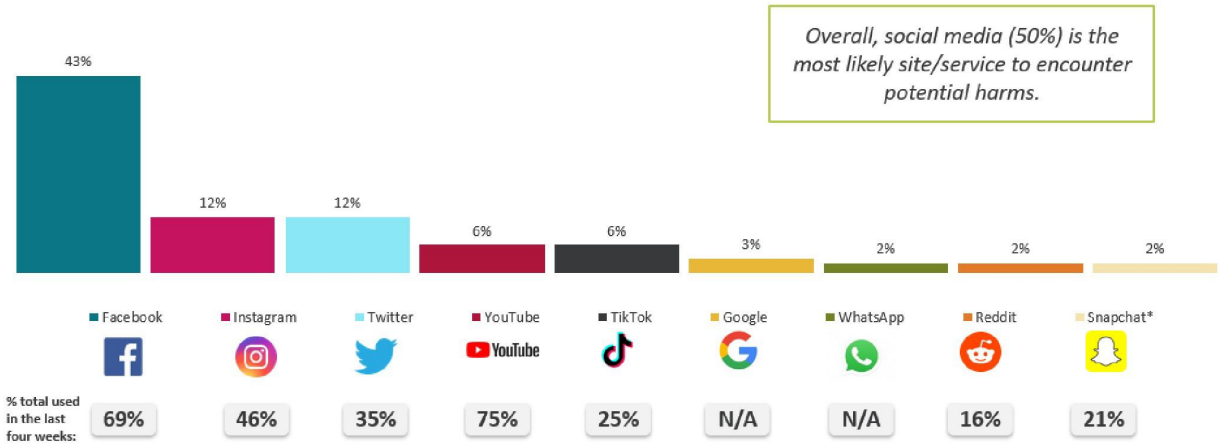
[11] In creating the net proportion of those encountering at least one potential harm, codes relating to content depicting dangerous stunts and content advertising alcohol or cigarettes, which were added in wave 2, were excluded as they were only shown to U18s. The definition also excludes content encouraging gambling, which was shown to all respondents in wave 1, and only U18s in wave 2. A full definition of the nets used to groups harms is available in the accompanying technical report.

[12]Respondents were prompted with a list of 34 types of potentially harmful content and behaviour that someone may come across on the internet and asked how concerned they were about each. In terms of questionnaire flow, respondents were asked about concerns over potential harms before they were asked about actual experience. This question was only asked in Wave 1 and so excludes codes covering content depicting dangerous stunts and content advertising alcohol or cigarettes, which were added in Wave 2. Data from wave 1 was tested at the 95% confidence interval.

- Facebook (43%) is the most likely social media site or app for users to have encountered their most recent potential harm on, followed by Instagram (12%) and Twitter (12%).[13]
  Conversely, only 6% of users encounter their most recent potential harm on YouTube, despite the fact that it is the most used app.

Figure 5. Platforms on which most recently-experience harm was encountered



- **Potential harms are most likely to be encountered while scrolling through a user's feed or 'For You' Page. Around a third (34%) of those who have experienced at least one potential harm have encountered their most recently experienced potential harm this way.**
  - Among the top five most frequently encountered harms: misinformation and scams, fraud and phishing are most likely to be encountered through a user's feed / For You Page (50% & 18% respectively).
  - While trolling and generally offensive or 'bad' language are most commonly encountered in the comments or replies to a post, article or video (52% and 43% respectively); unwelcome friend or follow requests are most commonly encountered while using the private or direct message function to communicate with one other user (24%).

Impact of potential harms online

As well as measuring internet users' experience of encountering potential online harms, we also ask about the impact of these potential harms. We found that a fifth said they were *really* bothered or offended by it. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with any limiting or impacting conditions were also more likely to say that they were *really* bothered or offended by their most recent experience of a potential harm.

[13] Data here combined platform mentions across multiple questions (QQ22-28) to give an aggregate score by platform.

- **A fifth of users say their most recent experience of potential harm *really* bothered or offended them[14].**
    - Around half (49%) say it *slightly* bothered or offended them and just over three in ten (31%) say it did not bother or offend them *at all.*
    - Users are most likely to be really bothered or offended by animal cruelty (71%), hateful, offensive or discriminatory content e.g. hate speech (53%) and content which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women (46%).

- **As well as being more likely to experience potential online harms, users from minority ethnic backgrounds (27%) and those with any limiting or impacting conditions (22%) are more likely to report being *really* bothered or offended by their most recent experience of a potential harm, compared to the average (20%).**
    - Black users (38%) are more likely to report being *really* bothered after experiencing a potential harm compared to white users (18%).

- **While women are less likely to experience potential online harms, they are more likely to say their experience *really* bothered or offended them (22%) compared to men (17%).**

Table 3. Impact of most recently experienced harm, at an overall level and by demographic subgroup

	It didn't bother me at all/It didn't offend me at all	It slightly bothered me/It slightly offended me	It really bothered me/I found it extremely offensive
Total %	31%	49%	20%
Men	37%↑	46%↓	17%↓
Women	25%↓	53%↑	22%↑
White	33%↑	49%	18%↓
Minority Ethnic Groups	21%↓	52%	27%↑

[14] The scale for this question was amended from a 5-point scale to a 3-point scale for Wave 2. Data has been aggregated here for the purposes of analysis and refers only to respondents' *most recently* experienced potential harm in Wave 2. For a description of the change please refer to the associated technical report.

Any limiting or impacting conditions	27%↓	51%	22%↑
No limiting or impacting conditions	35%↑	48%	18%↓

Green and red arrows indicate significantly higher/lower differences to the total average

Reporting potential harms online[15]

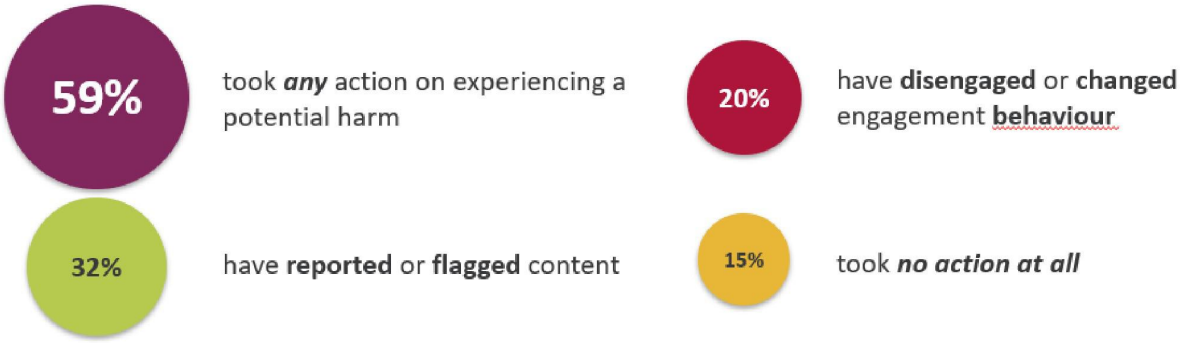
We also ask questions to understand if internet users are using reporting functions online. We found that six in ten did take some action but 15% did not take any action at all. They either did not think it was serious enough to report or felt that it would not make a difference. One in ten of these users did not know what to do or who to inform.

- **Just under six in ten (59%) of those who had encountered a potential harm took any form of action[16].**
  - A third of users claim to have reported or flagged content (32%) and a further fifth (20%) disengaged from the site/app or changed their engagement behaviour.
  - A quarter of users (26%) experiencing potential harms simply scrolled past the content.
  - Women (62%) are more likely to have taken *any* action compared to men (57%).

- **15% who those who encountered a potential harm took no action at all.**
  Half of those who took no action at all (51%) felt that the behaviour or content was not serious enough to report.
  - A further fifth (19%) of those who took no action felt it would not make a difference or be acted on, and one in ten (10%) because they did not know what to do, or who to inform.

Figure 6. Action taken on experiencing a potential harm[17][18]

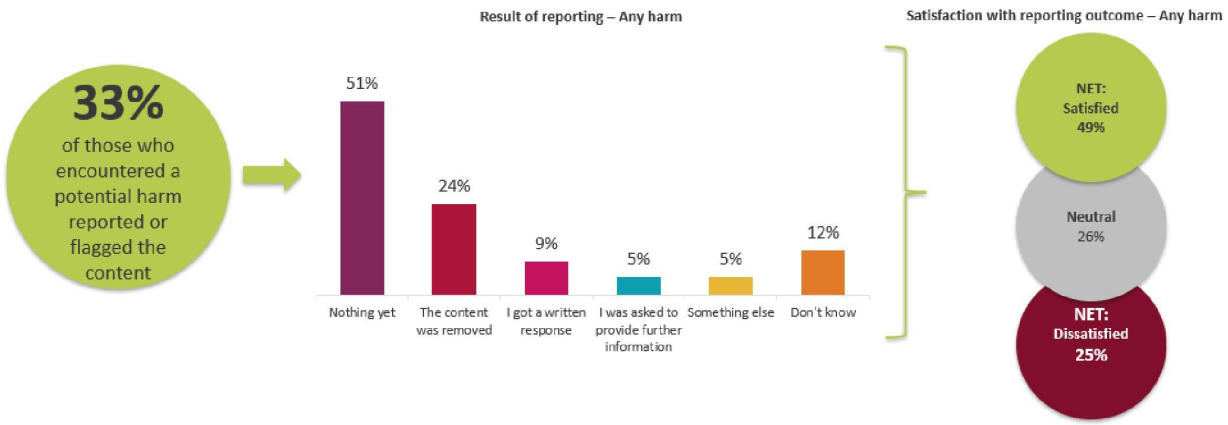
[15] Data in this section relates to a respondents' *most recently* experienced potential harm.
[16] All nets created for analysis ('Any action', 'Reporting or flagging action', 'Disengagement or change of behaviour action') were based on the definitions that remained consistent between waves 1 and 2, despite changes to the action code lists between waves. Those actions that were new for wave 2 were not included in the net definitions. Full definitions are available in the accompanying technical report.
[17] Base: all those experiencing at least one potential harm in the last four weeks, with action taken referring to their most recently experienced harm.
[18] The following codes are included in the 'Any action' NET but not in the others: 'Closed my account/left the service', 'Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email, 'Told a friend or family member'. Given this is a multicode question responses (including NETs) will not necessarily sum to 100%.



- **Of those who reported or flagged the potentially harmful behaviour or content, half (51%) reported that nothing had yet happened as a result.**
  - Meanwhile around a quarter (24%) said the content had been removed, and just under one in ten (9%) had received a written response.

- **Around half (49%) of users are satisfied with the reporting or flagging process, regardless of the outcome.**
  - Users with any limiting or impacting conditions (29%) are more likely to be dissatisfied with the reporting process than the average (25%) and those with no limiting or impacting conditions (21%).

Figure 7. Outcome of reporting or flagging potential harm and satisfaction with reporting process



- **Just over one in ten users of social media platforms (12%) have had their own content reported and / or taken down. However, only half of these (6%) understand why.**
    - Users from minority ethnic groups (21%), aged 18-34 (18%), with any limiting or impacting conditions (16%), and men (15%) are all more likely than average (12%) to say that they have had content reported and / or taken down.

Awareness of and attitudes towards of regulation

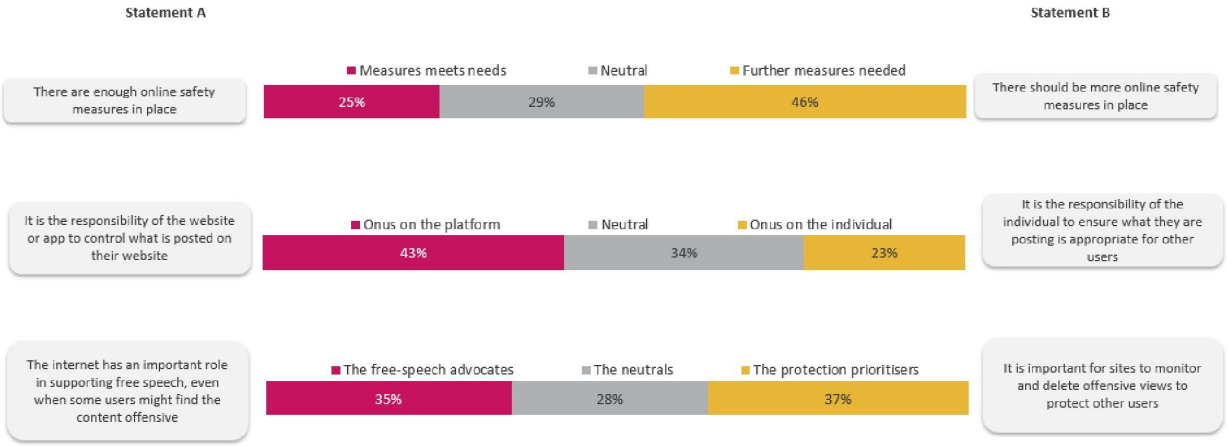
We wanted to assess awareness and perceptions of regulation of the internet and found that while internet users felt that broadly there should be more online safety measures in place, there was no clear consensus as to whether free speech or user protection should be prioritised online.

- **Just under half (46%) of internet users feel there should be more online safety measures in place, compared to a quarter who believe current measures are sufficient (25%).**
    - Women (53%), 55+ year olds (53%) and those with any limiting or impacting conditions (50%) are more likely to believe further measures are needed compared to the average (46%).
    - While 13-17 year olds (31%), men (30%) and those without any limiting or impacting conditions (26%) are more likely to believe current measures are sufficient compared to the average (25%).
    - There has been a decline in the proportion of users who believe that more online safety features are needed, decreasing from 50% (November 2021) to 43% (May 2022).

- **Internet users are more likely to believe that responsibility for what is posted on a site or app lies with the platform itself (43%), rather than the individual posting the content (23%).**
    - Men (24%) are more likely to believe that the responsibility lies with the individual compared to women (21%).

- **There is no clear consensus as to whether free speech or user protection should be prioritised online. Just under two-fifths of users agree the internet has an important role in supporting free speech even if it might offend others (35%), while a similar proportion also feel it is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect others (37%).**
    - Women (42%) and users with limiting or impacting conditions (39%) are more likely than average (37%) to believe that it is important for websites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users.

Figure 8. Attitudes towards online regulation and safety



- **There is a high proportion of 'neutral' or 'undecided' responses – those neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statements provided regarding attitudes towards online regulation and safety. This may reflect that users are conflicted about key questions related to online safety, or feel unable or unwilling to give a fixed opinion.**
    - 29% neither agree nor disagree that current online safety measures are enough.
    - 34% neither agree nor disagree that it is the responsibility of the website / app or the individual to ensure what is posted is appropriate.
    - 28% neither agree nor disagree that protecting free speech is important even if it may offend others.

- **Around a third (33%) think that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Ofcom (32%) are currently responsible for overseeing and monitoring online safety. Just under two-fifths (37%) do not know who is responsible.**
    - Users who are not parents are more likely to believe the ISP (35%) and Ofcom (34%) are responsible for overseeing and monitoring online safety compared to parents (ISP, 31% and Ofcom 28%)
    - Those that feel further online safety measures are needed are more likely to feel the ISP (37%) and Ofcom (35%) are responsible compared to the those who feel current online safety measures meets their needs (ISP, 31% and Ofcom, 30%).

Technical report – The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 4, July 2023)

Preface

Wave 4 of the Online Experiences Tracker (2023) was undertaken by YouGov on behalf of Ofcom.

The objectives of this quantitative tracking study, as with previous waves of the research, were to gain a deeper understanding of internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms online, and to monitor these over time.

The insights drawn from this data continues to inform Ofcom's preparations for The Online Safety Bill, which was introduced to Parliament earlier this year, eventually granting Ofcom new responsibilities in helping to protect internet users online.

This report refers to the fourth wave completed in July 2023. Further information about the study is summarised in the sections below.

Summary of Approach

- The **Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 4)** survey was conducted amongst a nationally representative sample of UK internet users aged 13-84, and addresses their attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online.
- The **Online Experiences Tracker** is a multi-wave study with research taking place in November 2021, May 2022 and most recently July 2023. It builds on previous work of similar focus ('Pilot Online Harms Survey'[1]) which was commissioned by Ofcom in 2020 to explore internet usage and behaviours, attitudes towards online safety regulation, and experiences of potential online harms. The pilot study informed preparations for the Online Safety regime.
- Data from the third wave (Wave 3) was removed after further quality assurance found errors in the questionnaire design. These errors affected our measures of encountering harmful content.
- As a result of the removal of Wave 3, a total of 14,181 interviews were conducted for Wave 4 to produce a more robust data set, which also helped to achieve a large enough sample size for low-incidence groups such as younger respondents and those living in specific UK nations (Wales & Northern Ireland). Hence, unlike the previous waves, these groups did not need any additional 'boost' and so no 'boosts' were applied in Wave 4.

Significance Testing

Significance testing for the **Online Experiences Tracker** has been applied at a 99% confidence interval during the analysis of Wave 4 data. Due to a significantly larger sample size than Wave 2, the wider 99% confidence interval was selected instead of 95% as it is more likely to contain the true population value than the narrower 95% confidence interval. Significance testing has been applied between subgroups, while each subgroup has also been tested against the total.

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Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This definition was provided by Ofcom and is based on household income and household composition (i.e., size of household and number of children) and can only be run on data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions. The definition of each group has been remained in line with Wave 2 specifications.

The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group:

MOST financially vulnerable	POTENTIALLY financially vulnerable	LEAST financially vulnerable
Household income under £10,399	**Earning between £10,400 - £25,999**	**Earning between £26,600 - £36,399**
All respondents	1-2 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
	3 adults, no children	
Earning between £10,400 - £25,999	**Earning between £26,000 - £36,399**	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**
1-2 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	1 adult, 0-1 child
3+ adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	2 adults, 0 children
4+ adults	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
	4 adults, no children	
Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**	**Household income £52,000+**
1 adult, 4+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	All households
2 adults,4+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
3 adults, 2+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	4 adults, 0-1 child	
5+ adults	5 adults, 0 children	
Earning between £36,400 - £51,999		
1 adults, >3 children		
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		
5 adults, 1+ children		
6+ adults		

Sample and Fieldwork Design

All respondents who took part in the research were drawn solely from the YouGov panel of over 2.7m people who live in the UK. The approach taken was to survey a nationally representative sample of UK internet users. The YouGov panel is large enough to enable the selection of nationally representative samples that reflect the actual breakdown of the population across the key demographics of age, gender, region and social grade.

Children between 13-17 were recruited through their parents or guardians. The survey was passed to the children after obtaining parents' or guardians' consent. Children then gave their own consent and

had the opportunity to decline to participate in the research if they wanted. If there was more than one child in the household aged 13-17 years, the parent or guardian was asked to select one child to take part in this survey.

Quotas

Interview quotas were applied so that the final sample was representative of UK internet users by age, gender, region and socio-economic group (SEG).

Targets for quotas were derived from Ofcom. There were no "boosts" applied to the sample in Wave 4.

Quotas were set on the following variables:

- Age (13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 64-74, 75-84)
- Gender
- Region
- Socio-economic group (SEG)

The table below details the specific quotas used for this study:

Demographic group	Category	Quota
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	13-17	7%
	18-24	11%
	25-34	17%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	18%
	55-64	14%
	65-74	11%
	75-84	6%
Region	Scotland	8%
	North East	4%
	North West	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%
	West Midlands	9%
	East Midlands	7%
	Wales	5%
	Eastern	9%
	London	14%
	South East	14%
	South West	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%
Social Grade	AB	27%

	C1	30%
	C2	21%
	DE	22%

YouGov considers a 'complete' response if a respondent has answered all sections of the questionnaire. Those that choose not to answer specific section within the script were removed from the final dataset. This is different to the approach taken in Wave 1 and Wave 2 where those respondents were included in the final data set.

Below is a comparison of the final sample for Wave 4 against the final data in Wave 2 across key demographics. There is slight difference in the Social Grade composition, driven by C2DE. We do not expect this to impact the results in any meaningful way, i.e. it will not result in significant differences in results driven by this respondent group.

Demographic group	Category	Wave 2	Wave 4
Total sample		6,666	14,181
Gender	Male	49%	48%
	Female	51%	51%
Age	13-17	7%	7%
	18-24	11%	10%
	25-34	17%	17%
	35-44	16%	16%
	45-54	18%	19%
	55-64	14%	14%
	65-74	11%	11%
	75-84	6%	6%
Region	Scotland	8%	9%
	North East	4%	4%
	North West	11%	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%	8%
	West Midlands	9%	9%
	East Midlands	7%	8%
	Wales	5%	5%
	Eastern	9%	9%
	London	14%	11%
	South East	14%	14%
	South West	9%	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%	3%
Social Grade	ABC1	57%	57%
	C2DE	43%	36%
Ethnicity	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	80%	84%
	Irish	1%	1%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%	0%

	Any other White background	4%	4%
	White and Black Caribbean	1%	0%
	White and Black African	1%	0%
	White and Asian	1%	1%
	Indian	2%	1%
	Pakistani	2%	1%
	Bangladeshi	1%	0%
	Chinese	1%	1%
	Caribbean	1%	0%
	African	2%	1%
	Arab	0%	0%
Religion	No religion	49%	59%
	Catholic	10%	8%
	Church of England/Scotland/Ireland	22%	20%
	Muslim	4%	5%
	Hindu	1%	2%
	Jewish	1%	1%
	Sikh	1%	1%
	Buddhist	1%	0%
	Other religion	1%	1%
	Prefer not to say	2%	2%

Weighting

The data has been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall, to regional and SEG profiles. There were no "boosts" applied to the sample in Wave 4.

Fieldwork

All interviews were conducted over a 10-day period between 7th and 17th July 2023. Due to the highly sensitive nature of some of the research topics (e.g. experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online), respondents were given the option to end the survey at three points. They were also forewarned of the sensitive nature of the research topic and asked to give their consent to participate, in line with MRS guidelines.

Participants who opted out (and also those who completed the survey) were provided with a list of resources if further support was needed.

The questionnaire also included questions designed to obtain consent to be contacted for participation in further qualtitative research into online habits, attitudes and behaviours, as well as experience of potential online harms. This data is managed and stored in line with GDPR commitments.

YouGov carried out the following standard checks during and post-fieldwork:

- Manual checks post-fieldwork to remove anyone who responded in unreasonable ways.

- Manual 'flatlining' checks post-fieldwork to check grid questions and ensure respondents did not answer the same codes across an unreasonable range of grid / scale questions.
- Open-end checks to ensure respondents answered thoughtfully and were not 'spamming' answers.
- The participants removed from the survey through the QA checks were excluded from final demographic quotas as well as from the dataset.

Sample Representativeness

The following table shows both the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profiles:

Demographic group	Unweighted counts	Unweighted %	Weighted counts	Weighted %
Male 13-17	498	7%	509	7%
Male 18-34	1,751	26%	1,872	27%
Male 35-54	2,406	36%	2,361	35%
Male 55+	2,115	31%	2,091	31%
Female 13-17	458	6%	465	7%
Female 18-34	1,935	27%	1,961	28%
Female 35-54	2,496	35%	2,396	34%
Female 55+	2,288	32%	2,290	32%
Scotland	1,207	9%	1,134	8%
North East	594	4%	567	4%
North West	1,588	11%	1,560	11%
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,181	8%	1,134	8%
West Midlands	1,244	9%	1,276	9%
East Midlands	1,064	8%	993	7%
Wales	719	5%	709	5%
East of England	1,329	9%	1,276	9%
London	1,616	11%	1,985	14%
South East	1,957	14%	1,985	14%
South West	1,304	9%	1,276	9%
Northern Ireland	378	3%	284	2%
AB	3,864	29%	3,320	25%
C1	4,247	32%	4,079	31%
C2	2,301	17%	2,805	21%
DE	2,793	21%	2,985	23%

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the "true" values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 99% level: that is, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true"

values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results. The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main groups within the sample.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS	ACTUAL	ESS
TOTAL	14,181	13,776
GENDER: Male	6,770	6,572
GENDER: Female	7,177	6,979
AGE: 13-17	976	948
AGE: 18-24	1,384	1,342
AGE: 25-34	2,432	2,370
AGE: 35-44	2,312	2,252
AGE: 45-54	2,658	2,595
AGE: 55-64	1,957	1,905
AGE: 65-74	1,617	1,575
AGE: 75+	845	824
SEG: AB	3,864	3,812
SEG: C1	4,247	4,188
SEG: C2	2,301	2,272
SEG: DE	2,793	2,757

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "99% confidence interval".

Effective sample size		10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
		±	±	±	±	±
TOTAL	13,776	0.65	0.87	0.99	1.06	1.08
GENDER: Male	6,572	0.94	1.25	1.43	1.53	1.56
GENDER: Female	6,979	0.92	1.22	1.4	1.5	1.53
AGE: 13-17	948	2.46	3.28	3.76	4.01	4.1
AGE: 18-24	1,342	1.96	2.61	2.99	3.2	3.27
AGE: 25-34	2,370	1.58	2.1	2.41	2.57	2.63
AGE: 35-44	2,252	1.62	2.17	2.48	2.65	2.71
AGE: 45-54	2,595	1.53	2.04	2.34	2.5	2.55
AGE: 55-64	1,905	1.74	2.32	2.65	2.84	2.89
AGE: 65-74	1,575	1.96	2.61	2.99	3.2	3.27
AGE: 75+	824	2.66	3.54	4.06	4.34	4.43
SEG: AB	3,812	1.34	1.79	2.05	2.19	2.24
SEG: C1	4,188	1.21	1.61	1.85	1.98	2.02
SEG: C2	2,272	1.46	1.95	2.23	2.38	2.43
SEG: DE	2,757	1.42	1.89	2.16	2.31	2.36

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 14,181 gives a particular answer, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 0.99 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "99% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant.

Prioritisation of codes for overall concern levels

Regarding the Q7_any named harm summary tables, where respondents' concern levels were asked for listed potential harms, codes are prioritised in the following order: Code 5 (Very concerned_ >4>3>2> 1(Mildly Concerned). If a respondent answered code 6 (Not concerned at all) or code 7 (Don't know), then code 6 was kept.

Differences required for significance at or near these percentages

Sample sizes being compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
GENDER: Male vs. Female	1.31%	1.75%	2.00%	2.14%	2.18%
AGE: Younger (13-17) vs. Older (75+)	3.61%	4.82%	5.52%	5.90%	6.02%
SEG (social grade): ABC1 vs. C2DE	1.36%	1.81%	2.07%	2.21%	2.26%

Changes to the questionnaire between waves

Multiple additions and amendments were made to the questionnaire for Wave 4 as either improvements or revisions, in line with the shifting policy focus. A summary of changes has been included below [2].

Category	NET	Wave	Definition
Break Group 1: Demographics			
Ethnicity	White	Waves 1, 2 & 4	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
			Irish

[2] For reference, copies of both wave 1 and 2 questionnaires have been published alongside this report: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/online-research/internet-users-experience-of-harm-online

			Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
			Any other white background
	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups		White and Black Caribbean
			White and Black African
			White and Asian
			Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
	Asian and British Asian		Indian
			Pakistani
			Bangladeshi
			Chinese
			Any other Asian background
	Black and black British		Caribbean
			African
			Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background
	Other ethnic group		Arab
			Any other ethnic background
Limiting/Impacting Conditions* *NET name change in Wave 2	Any	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Any reported limiting/impacting condition
	Mental condition	Wave 1 only	Mental abilities? Such as learning, understanding, concentration, memory, communicating, cognitive loss or deterioration
			Social/ behavioural? Conditions associated with this such as autism, attention deficit disorder, Asperger's, etc.
			Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example

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Wave 4 separate break for Adults and Children	Physical condition	Wave 1 only	Hearing? Poor hearing, partial hearing, or are deaf
			Eyesight? Poor vision, colour blindness, partial sight, or are blind
			Mobility? Cannot walk at all/ use a wheelchair or mobility scooter etc., or cannot walk very far or manage stairs or can only do so with difficulty
			Dexterity? Limited ability to reach/ difficulty opening things with your hands/ difficulty using a telephone handset/ television remote control/ computer keyboard etc.
			Breathing? Breathlessness or chest pains
	Mental Health Condition	From Wave 2 & 4	Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
	None	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Nothing – no impairments or conditions impact or limit your daily activities or the work you can do
Break Group 2: Internet Usage			
Internet usage	High / Medium / Low	Low usage	Wave 1 only	None
				Less than 5 hours
		Low usage	From Wave 2 & 4	None
				Less than 6 hours
		Medium usage	Waves 1, 2 & 4	6 to 11 hours
				12 to 22 hours
		High usage	Waves 1, 2 & 4	23 to 30 hours
				Over 30 hours
Break Group 3: Attitudes			

Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	Platform dependents	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Self-regulators		If score 2 to 5
		Platform dependents	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Self-regulators		If score 7-10
Search engine vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the search engine to control what is presented in search results vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure they have the correct settings in place to only be presented with content appropriate for them	Search engine dependents	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Self-regulators		If score 7-10
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to	Safety assured	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1

	stay safe online	Safety self-doubters		If score 2 to 5
		Safety confident	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Not confident		If score 7-10
Parent vs platform responsibility	Websites and apps have a particular responsibility to protect children vs. It is the responsibility of parents/ carers to monitor what their children do online	Platform dependents	Wave 1 only	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Parental controllers		If score 2 to 5
Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Online optimists	Wave 1 only	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Online pessimists		If score 2 to 5
		Benefits outweigh risks	Wave 4 only	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Risk outweigh benefits		If score 7-10
Sufficiency of common sense to protect from exposure to potential harms	Using a bit of common sense when you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos if you go online	Common sense supporters	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Disempowered defeatists		If score 2 to 5
		Common sense is sufficient	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Resigned to potential harms		If score 7-10

Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Cautious protectors		If score 2 to 5
		Free speech advocates	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Protection prioritisers		If score 7-10
Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety measures in place	Status quo supporters	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Safety measure advocates		If score 2 to 5
		Measures meets needs	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Further measures needed		If score 7-10
Benefits vs risks of going online	For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. For me personally, the risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Benefits outweigh risks	From Wave 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Risks outweigh benefits		If score 2 to 5
Societal impact	The internet is good for society vs.	Internet is good for society	From Wave 2	If score -5 to -2

	the internet is damaging to society	Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Internet is damaging to society		If score 2 to 5
		Internet is good for society	Wave 4 only	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Internet is damaging society		If score 7-10
BREAK 4 - Experience of Harms				
		Any Named Harm	Wave 1 & 2	Q8 any named harm
		Any Named Harm	Wave 4	Q8 any named harm codes 1-45
		Contact harm	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
			Waves 1, 2 & 4	Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
			Waves 1, 2 & 4	People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
			Waves 1, 2	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
			Wave 4	Persistent bullying online
			Waves 1, 2 & 4	Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction

		Waves 1, 2	Pressure to send photos or personal information to someone
		Wave 4	Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
		Waves 1, 2	Sharing of intimate images without consent
		Wave 4	Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Private conversations shared without consent
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness

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		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unwanted sexual messages
		Wave 4	One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Content harm	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content depicting violence or injury
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [SHOWN TO 18 IN WAVE 1 / SHOWN TO UNDER 18 IN WAVE 2 AND WAVE 3]
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions

Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to self-harm or suicide
Wave 4	Content promoting self-harm
Wave 4	Content promoting suicide
Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to negative body image, excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise and/or eating disorders
Wave 4	Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
Wave 4	Content relating to eating disorders
Waves 1, 2 & 4	Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
Waves 1, 2 & 4	Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
Waves 1, 2	Content which impacted negatively on my self-esteem

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content depicting animal cruelty
		From Wave 2	Content depicting dangerous stunts [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		From Wave 4	Content depicting dangerous stunts and online challenges [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		From Wave 2 & 4	Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		From Wave 4	Content facilitating human trafficking (including sexual and labour exploitation, or recruitment for county lines activity) and illegal immigration
		From Wave 4	Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
	Commercial harm	Waves 1 & 2	Sale or advertisement of illegal goods
		Wave 4	Sale or advertisement of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances e.g. 'magic mushrooms'
		Wave 4	Sale or advertisement of weapons
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission

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		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Scams, fraud, or phishing
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'
		Wave 4	Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc. in exchange for sex [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
Q15 - Action taken			
Action taken after experiencing potential harm	Any Action	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed the police
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed Ofcom

	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed a support service
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Closed my account/left the service
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Told a friend or family member
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I use the platform less
	Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped using the platform
	Wave 4	I have stopped using the platform altogether
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website

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		From wave 2 & 4	Changed my settings to change the type of content I see
		From wave 2 & 4	Changed my settings to change who can see my profile
		From wave 2 & 4	I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
	Reported or flagged content	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
		Wave 1 only	Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed the police
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed Ofcom

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed a support service
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		From wave 2 & 4	I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
	Disengaged or changed engagement behaviour	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I use the platform less
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped using the platform
		Wave 4	I have stopped using the platform altogether
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
		From wave 2 & 4	Closed my account/left the service
Q16 - Didn't think it was that serious			

Why no action	Didn't think it was that serious	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I didn't consider it to be offensive, disturbing or harmful
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I didn't like it, but I didn't consider it bad enough to do something about
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I didn't see the need to do anything
Q17- Awareness of result of reporting			
Results of reporting	Awareness of result of reporting	Waves 1, 2 & 4	The content was removed
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I got a written response
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I was asked to provide further information
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Something else
Q21- Non-email			
Site/service when experience harm	Non-Email	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok
		Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
		Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live	Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live
		A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo	A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo
		Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp	Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp
		News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online	News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online

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		Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online	Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online
		A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers	A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers
		Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'	Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'
		Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop	Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop
		Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble	Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble
		Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV	Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV
		'Adult' site containing sexual content	'Adult' site containing sexual content

Where appropriate YouGov used 'PDLs' which are information identifiers assigned to panel members based on their previous responses. PDLs used in Wave 4:

- Region
- Ethnicity
- Religion

NET definitions featured in the published tables

Certain subgroups within the sample were grouped together to aid analysis and are featured alongside this report in the published data tables. The definitions of these so-called 'NETs' are in the table below.

Changes to some 'NET' definitions were made between the different waves of the research. Wherever present, these have been noted in the 'Wave' column in the table below.

Category	NET	Wave	Definition
Break Group 1: Demographics			
Ethnicity	White	Waves 1, 2 & 4	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British

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			Irish
			Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
			Any other white background
	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups		White and Black Caribbean
			White and Black African
			White and Asian
			Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
	Asian and British Asian		Indian
			Pakistani
			Bangladeshi
			Chinese
			Any other Asian background
	Black and black British		Caribbean
			African
			Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background
	Other ethnic group		Arab
			Any other ethnic background
Limiting/Impacting Conditions* *NET name change in Wave 2	Any	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Any reported limiting/impacting condition
	Mental condition	Wave 1 only	Mental abilities? Such as learning, understanding, concentration, memory, communicating, cognitive loss or deterioration
			Social/ behavioural? Conditions associated with this such as autism, attention deficit disorder, Asperger's, etc.
			Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example

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Wave 4 separate break for Adults and Children	Physical condition	Wave 1 only	Hearing? Poor hearing, partial hearing, or are deaf
			Eyesight? Poor vision, colour blindness, partial sight, or are blind
			Mobility? Cannot walk at all/ use a wheelchair or mobility scooter etc., or cannot walk very far or manage stairs or can only do so with difficulty
			Dexterity? Limited ability to reach/ difficulty opening things with your hands/ difficulty using a telephone handset/ television remote control/ computer keyboard etc.
			Breathing? Breathlessness or chest pains
	Mental Health Condition	From Wave 2 & 4	Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
	None	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Nothing – no impairments or conditions impact or limit your daily activities or the work you can do
Break Group 2: Internet Usage			
Internet usage	High / Medium / Low	Low usage	Wave 1 only	None
				Less than 5 hours
		Low usage	From Wave 2 & 4	None
				Less than 6 hours
		Medium usage	Waves 1, 2 & 4	6 to 11 hours
				12 to 22 hours
		High usage	Waves 1, 2 & 4	23 to 30 hours
				Over 30 hours
Break Group 3: Attitudes			

Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	Platform dependents	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Self-regulators		If score 2 to 5
		Platform dependents	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Self-regulators		If score 7-10
Search engine vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the search engine to control what is presented in search results vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure they have the correct settings in place to only be presented with content appropriate for them	Search engine dependents		If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Self-regulators		If score 7-10
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to	Safety assured	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1

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	stay safe online			
		Safety self-doubters		If score 2 to 5
		Safety confident	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Not confident		If score 7-10
Parent vs platform responsibility	Websites and apps have a particular responsibility to protect children vs. It is the responsibility of parents/ carers to monitor what their children do online	Platform dependents	Wave 1 only	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Parental controllers		If score 2 to 5
Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Online optimists	Wave 1 only	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Online pessimists		If score 2 to 5
		Benefits outweigh risks	Wave 4 only	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Risk outweigh benefits		If score 7-10
Sufficiency of common sense to protect from exposure to potential harms	Using a bit of common sense when you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and	Common sense supporters	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Disempowered defeatists		If score 2 to 5
		Common sense is sufficient	Wave 4	If score 0-3

	videos if you go online			
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Resigned to potential harms		If score 7-10
Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Cautious protectors		If score 2 to 5
Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety measures in place	Free speech advocates	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Protection prioritisers		If score 7-10
		Status quo supporters	Waves 1 & 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutrals		If score -1 to 1
		Safety measure advocates		If score 2 to 5
		Measures meets needs	Wave 4	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Further measures needed		If score 7-10
Benefits vs risks of going online	For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. For me personally, the risks of going online	Benefits outweigh risks	From Wave 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1

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	outweigh the benefits	Risks outweigh benefits		If score 2 to 5
Societal impact	The internet is good for society vs. the internet is damaging to society	Internet is good for society	From Wave 2	If score -5 to -2
		Neutral		If score -1 to 1
		Internet is damaging to society		If score 2 to 5
		Internet is good for society	Wave 4 only	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Internet is damaging society		If score 7-10
BREAK 4 - Experience of Harms				
		Any Named Harm	Wave 1 & 2	Q8 any named harm
		Any Named Harm	Wave 4	Q8 any named harm codes 1-45
		Contact harm	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
			Waves 1, 2 & 4	Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
			Waves 1, 2 & 4	People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
			Waves 1, 2	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
			Wave 4	Persistent bullying online

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
		Waves 1, 2	Pressure to send photos or personal information to someone
		Wave 4	Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
		Waves 1, 2	Sharing of intimate images without consent
		Wave 4	Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Private conversations shared without consent
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unwanted sexual messages
		Wave 4	One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Content harm	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content depicting violence or injury
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [SHOWN TO 18 IN WAVE 1 / SHOWN TO UNDER 18 IN WAVE 2 AND WAVE 3]

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions
		Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to self-harm or suicide
		Wave 4	Content promoting self-harm
		Wave 4	Content promoting suicide
		Waves 1 & 2	Content relating to negative body image, excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise and/or eating disorders
		Wave 4	Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
		Wave 4	Content relating to eating disorders
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking

		Waves 1, 2	Content which impacted negatively on my self-esteem
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Content depicting animal cruelty
		From Wave 2	Content depicting dangerous stunts [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		From Wave 4	Content depicting dangerous stunts and online challenges [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		From Wave 2 & 4	Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		From Wave 4	Content facilitating human trafficking (including sexual and labour exploitation, or recruitment for county lines activity) and illegal immigration
		From Wave 4	Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
	Commercial harm	Waves 1 & 2	Sale or advertisement of illegal goods
		Wave 4	Sale or advertisement of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances e.g. 'magic mushrooms'
		Wave 4	Sale or advertisement of weapons

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Scams, fraud, or phishing
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'
		Wave 4	Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
	Primary Priority Content (PPC)	Wave 4	Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders

	Priority Content (PC)	Wave 4	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
			Persistent bullying online
			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
			Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
			Private conversations shared without consent
			Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
			Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'

			Content depicting animal cruelty
			Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
			Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes
			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
			One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Primary Priority Content /Priority Content (PPC & PC)	Wave 4	Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders

Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
Persistent bullying online
Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
Private conversations shared without consent
Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'

			Content depicting animal cruelty
			Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
			Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes
			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
			One off abusive behaviour or threats
Q15 - Action taken			
Action taken after experiencing potential harm	Any Action	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed the police

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed Ofcom
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed a support service
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Closed my account/left the service
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Told a friend or family member
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I use the platform less
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped using the platform
		Wave 4	I have stopped using the platform altogether
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I have stopped commenting, liking or posting

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
		From wave 2 & 4	Changed my settings to change the type of content I see
		From wave 2 & 4	Changed my settings to change who can see my profile
		From wave 2 & 4	I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
	Reported or flagged content	Waves 1, 2 & 4	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
		Wave 1 only	Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed the police

		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed Ofcom
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Informed a support service
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		From wave 2 & 4	I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
	Disengaged or changed engagement behaviour	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I use the platform less
		Waves 1 & 2	I have stopped using the platform
		Wave 4	I have stopped using the platform altogether
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website

		From wave 2 & 4	Closed my account/left the service
Q16 - Didn't think it was that serious			
Why no action	Didn't think it was that serious	Waves 1, 2 & 4	I didn't consider it to be offensive, disturbing or harmful
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I didn't like it, but I didn't consider it bad enough to do something about
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I didn't see the need to do anything
Q17- Awareness of result of reporting			
Results of reporting	Awareness of result of reporting	Waves 1, 2 & 4	The content was removed
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I got a written response
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	I was asked to provide further information
		Waves 1, 2 & 4	Something else
Q21- Non-email			
Site/service when experience harm	Non-Email	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok
		Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
		Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live	Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live
		A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo	A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo

		Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp	Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp
		News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online	News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online
		Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online	Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online
		A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers	A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers
		Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'	Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'
		Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop	Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop
		Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble	Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble
		Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV	Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV
		'Adult' site containing sexual content	'Adult' site containing sexual content

Technical report – The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 5, January 2024)

Preface

Wave 5 of the Online Experiences Tracker (2024) was undertaken by YouGov on behalf of Ofcom.

The objectives of this quantitative tracking study, as with previous waves of the research, were to gain a deeper understanding of internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms online, and to monitor these over time.

The insights collected from this tracking data over time have served to shape Ofcom's preparations for The Online Safety Act . The data from the tracker continues to inform policymakers about items covered by the Act.

This report refers to the fifth wave completed in January 2024. Further information about the study is summarised in the sections below. More information onthe previous wave's approach and methodology is available here.

Summary of Approach

- The **Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 5)** survey was conducted amongst a nationally representative sample of UK internet users aged 13-84 and addresses their attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online.
- The **Online Experiences Tracker** is a multi-wave study with research taking place in November 2021, May 2022, July 2023 and most recently January 2024. It builds on previous work of similar focus ('Pilot Online Harms Survey') which was commissioned by Ofcom in 2020 to explore internet usage and behaviours, attitudes towards online safety regulation, and experiences of potential online harms. The pilot study informed preparations for the Online Safety regime.
- Respondents were recruited to be nationally representative of the UK internet user population, with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region. Boosts were applied to low incidence groups such as younger respondents, those living in specific UK nations, those belonging to specific religions and minority ethnic groups to allow for base sizes robust enough for analysis.
- A total of 14,181 interviews were conducted for Wave 4 to produce a highly robust data set, which also helped to achieve a large enough sample size for low-incidence groups such as younger respondents and those living in specific UK nations (Wales & Northern Ireland). Hence, unlike the previous waves, these groups did not need any additional 'boost' and so no 'boosts' were applied in Wave 4.
- A total of 7,611 interviews (including boosts) were conducted for Wave 5, with the sample returning to a similar size to Waves 1 & 2. All fieldwork was conducted between 3rd and 22nd January 2024
- The average length of the interviews in Wave 4 was 15 minutes, 26 seconds, and in Wave 5, it was 16 minutes, 7 seconds.

Significance Testing

Significance testing is applied at the **95%** confidence level for comparisons within Wave 5. In Wave 5 tables, significance testing is carried out between subgroups, while each subgroup is additionally tested against the total.

Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This definition was provided by Ofcom and is based on household income and household composition (i.e., size of household and number of children) and can only be run on data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions. The definition of each group has been remained in line with Wave 2 specifications.

The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group:

MOST financially vulnerable	POTENTIALLY financially vulnerable	LEAST financially vulnerable
Household income under £10,399	**Earning between £10,400 - £25,999**	**Earning between £26,600 - £36,399**
All respondents	1-2 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
	3 adults, no children	
Earning between £10,400 - £25,999	**Earning between £26,000 - £36,399**	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**
1-2 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	1 adult, 0-1 child
3+ adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	2 adults, 0 children
4+ adults	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
	4 adults, no children	
Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**	**Household income £52,000+**
1 adult, 4+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	All households
2 adults,4+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
3 adults, 2+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	4 adults, 0-1 child	
5+ adults	5 adults, 0 children	
Earning between £36,400 - £51,999		
1 adults, >3 children		
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		
5 adults, 1+ children		
6+ adults		

Sample and Fieldwork Design

All respondents who took part in the research were drawn solely from the YouGov panel of over 3.3m people who live in the UK. The approach taken was to survey a nationally representative sample of UK internet users. The YouGov panel is large enough to enable the selection of nationally representative samples that reflect the actual breakdown of the population across the key demographics of age, gender, region and social grade.

Children between 13-17 were recruited through their parents or guardians. The survey was passed to the children after obtaining parents' or guardians' consent. Children then gave their own consent and had the opportunity to decline to participate in the research if they wanted. If there was more than one child in the household aged 13-17 years, the parent or guardian was asked to select one child to take part in this survey.

During this recruitment parents are asked to give consent as to whether they were happy for their children to take part in question C1, of which 532 parents said 'No' to their children taking part in the survey. Subsequently, at question C7, the children of parents who responded positively were requested to provide their own consent to participate in the survey. Of these children, 13 did not provide consent and hence didn't take part in the survey.

Boost

After the main fieldwork was completed, sample boosts were applied to achieve a minimum of n=100 interviews among all ethnic minority groups, low incidence religious minority groups (Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism), and each age group between 13 and 17 years old. Regarding the UK nations, an additional boost was applied to attain n=350 in Wales and n=350 in Northern Ireland.

Due to the significantly low incidence rate seen among some specific ethnic groups, a boost is implemented to encourage best efforts, however not necessary to attain a maximum of 100 completes (e.g. Gypsy or Irish travellers, Arab etc.).

There was an overlap observed among certain groups, such as Irish (ethnicity) and Northern Ireland (UK nation) Hindus (religion), and Indians (ethnicity), which consequently led to certain groups having a higher number of completions compared to others.

The table below shows the unweighted and weighted numbers of completes for each boosted group:

Demographic	Category	Total achieved	Nat rep achieved	Boost achieved	Total achieved	Nat rep achieved	Boost achieved
		Unweighted			Weighted		
Children's age	13	110	93	17	107	90	17
	14	111	104	7	106	99	7
	15	111	95	16	108	92	16
	16	104	75	29	101	72	29
	17	107	78	29	107	78	29
Ethnicity	Irish	264	67	197	258	61	197
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	43	5	38	43	5	38
	White and Black Caribbean	111	27	84	112	28	84
	White and Black African	109	62	47	112	65	47
	White and Asian	109	52	57	109	52	57

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	Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background	109	52	57	109	52	57
	Indian	284	78	206	285	79	206
	Pakistani	111	48	63	113	50	63
	Bangladeshi	106	30	76	108	32	76
	Chinese	112	45	67	112	45	67
	Any other Asian background	112	42	70	113	43	70
	African	112	89	23	118	96	23
	Caribbean	110	20	90	110	20	90
	Any other Black / African / Caribbean background	90	18	72	91	20	72
	Arab	59	11	48	59	11	48
	Any other ethnic group	110	22	88	111	23	88
Religion	Judaism	100	47	53	100	47	53
	Hinduism	147	42	105	146	41	105
	Sikhism	127	19	108	127	19	108
	Buddhism	120	24	96	121	25	96
UK nations	Wales	357	311	46	355	309	46
	Northern Ireland	352	157	195	319	124	195

Please note that the sum of children is 529, yet in the tables the weighted results show 531. This is due to rounding.

Quotas

Interview quotas were applied so that the final sample was representative of UK internet users by age, gender, region and socio-economic group (SEG).

Targets for quotas were derived from Ofcom. Quotas were set on the following variables:

- Age (13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 64-74, 75-84)
- Gender
- Region
- Socio-economic group (SEG)

The table below details the specific quotas used for this study:

Demographic group	Category	Quota
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	13-17	7%
	18-24	11%
	25-34	17%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	18%

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	55-64	14%
	65-74	11%
	75-84	6%
Region	Scotland	8%
	North East	4%
	North West	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%
	West Midlands	9%
	East Midlands	7%
	Wales	5%
	Eastern	9%
	London	14%
	South East	14%
	South West	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%
Social Grade	AB	27%
	C1	30%
	C2	21%
	DE	22%

YouGov considers a 'complete' response if a respondent has answered all sections of the questionnaire. Those that choose not to answer specific section within the script were removed from the final dataset.

Below is a comparison of the final sample for Wave 4 against the final data in Wave 5 across key demographics:

Demographic group	Category	Waves 4	Wave 5
Total sample		14,181	7,611
Gender	Male	48%	48%
	Female	51%	51%
Age	13-17	7%	7%
	18-24	10%	10%
	25-34	17%	18%
	35-44	16%	17%
	45-54	19%	18%
	55-64	14%	14%
	65-74	11%	11%
	75-84	6%	5%
Region	Scotland	9%	7%
	North East	4%	4%
	North West	11%	10%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%	7%

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	West Midlands	9%	9%
	East Midlands	8%	6%
	Wales	5%	5%
	Eastern	9%	9%
	London	11%	17%
	South East	14%	13%
	South West	9%	8%
	Northern Ireland	3%	4%
Social Grade	ABC1	57%	59%
	C2DE	36%	41%
Ethnicity	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	84%	67%
	Irish	1%	3%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%	1%
	Any other White background	4%	3%
	White and Black Caribbean	0%	1%
	White and Black African	0%	1%
	White and Asian	1%	1%
	Indian	1%	4%
	Pakistani	1%	1%
	Bangladeshi	0%	1%
	Chinese	1%	1%
	Caribbean	0%	1%
	African	1%	2%
	Arab	0%	1%
Religion	No religion	59%	50%
	Catholic	8%	9%
	Church of England/Scotland/Ireland	20%	18%
	Muslim	5%	4%
	Hindu	2%	2%
	Jewish	1%	1%
	Sikh	1%	2%
	Buddhist	0%	2%
	Other religion	1%	2%
	Prefer not to say	2%	4%

Weighting

The data (excluding boosts) has been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall, to regional and SEG profiles. The boosts' samples are not weighted.

Fieldwork

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All interviews were conducted over a 19-day period between 3rd and 22nd January 2024. Nat rep fieldwork was conducted between 3rd January and 9th January 2024, with boosts conducted over 9th January and 22nd January 2024.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of some of the research topics (e.g. experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online), respondents were given the option to end the survey at three points. They were also forewarned of the sensitive nature of the research topic and asked to give their consent to participate, in line with MRS guidelines.

Participants who opted out (and also those who completed the survey) were provided with a list of resources if further support was needed.

The questionnaire also included questions designed to obtain consent to be contacted for participation in further qualtitative research into online habits, attitudes and behaviours, as well as experience of potential online harms. This data is managed and stored in line with GDPR commitments.

YouGov carried out the following standard checks during and post-fieldwork:

- Manual checks post-fieldwork to remove anyone who responded in unreasonable ways.
- Manual 'flatlining' checks post-fieldwork to check grid questions and ensure respondents did not answer the same codes across an unreasonable range of grid / scale questions.
- Open-end checks to ensure respondents answered thoughtfully and were not 'spamming' answers.
- The participants removed from the survey through the QA checks were excluded from final demographic quotas as well as from the dataset.

Sample Representativeness

The following table shows both the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profiles:

Demographic group	Unweighted counts	Unweighted %	Weighted counts	Weighted %
Male 13-17	263	4%	261	3%
Male 18-34	910	12%	953	13%
Male 35-54	1266	17%	1285	17%
Male 55+	1115	15%	1119	15%
Female 13-17	270	4%	261	3%
Female 18-34	1135	15%	1125	15%
Female 35-54	1360	18%	1337	18%
Female 55+	1158	15%	1144	15%
Scotland	560	7%	555	7%
North East	277	4%	272	4%
North West	792	10%	791	10%
Yorkshire and the Humber	567	7%	561	7%
West Midlands	712	9%	695	9%
East Midlands	509	7%	493	7%
Wales	357	5%	355	5%
East of England	669	9%	655	9%
London	1238	16%	1282	17%

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South East	948	13%	1005	13%
South West	630	8%	628	8%
Northern Ireland	352	5%	319	4%
AB	2291	32%	2121	30%
C1	2099	30%	2088	30%
C2	1191	17%	1354	19%
DE	1487	21%	1518	21%

Please note the sum of C2DE here is 2872 but, in the tables, weighted result sums up to 2971. This is due to rounding.

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the "true" values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 99% level: that is, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results. The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main groups within the sample.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS	ACTUAL BASE	ESS
TOTAL	7,611	7,532
GENDER: Male	3,554	3,517
GENDER: Female	3,923	3,885
AGE: 13-17	543	537
AGE: 18-24	722	714
AGE: 25-34	1,392	1,381
AGE: 35-44	1,319	1,309
AGE: 45-54	1,348	1,336
AGE: 55-64	1,068	1,059
AGE: 65-74	844	836
AGE: 75+	375	371
SEG: AB	2291	2,277
SEG: C1	2099	2,091
SEG: C2	1191	1,183
SEG: DE	1487	1,480

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "99% confidence interval":

Variables	Actual Sample	Effective Sample	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Total	7,611	7,532	0.89	1.19	1.36	1.45	1.48

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Female	3,923	3,885	1.24	1.65	1.90	2.03	2.07
Male	3,554	3,517	1.30	1.74	1.99	2.13	2.17
13-17	543	537	3.35	4.47	5.12	5.47	5.58
18-24	722	714	2.90	3.87	4.43	4.74	4.84
25-34	1,392	1,381	2.08	2.78	3.18	3.40	3.47
35-44	1,319	1,309	2.14	2.85	3.27	3.49	3.57
45-54	1,348	1,336	2.12	2.82	3.23	3.46	3.53
55-64	1,068	1,059	2.38	3.17	3.64	3.89	3.97
65-74	844	836	2.68	3.57	4.09	4.38	4.47
75+	375	371	4.04	5.38	6.17	6.59	6.73
AB	2,291	2,277	1.62	2.16	2.48	2.65	2.70
C1	2,099	2,091	1.69	2.26	2.58	2.76	2.82
C2	1,191	1,183	2.25	3.00	3.44	3.68	3.75
DE	1,487	1,480	2.01	2.68	3.07	3.29	3.35
Ethnic Minorities	1,644	1,635	1.91	2.55	2.92	3.13	3.19
White	5,662	5,597	1.03	1.38	1.58	1.69	1.72

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 7,611 gives a particular answer, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 1.36 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "99% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant.

Differences required for significance at or near these percentages.

Variable		Actual Sample	Effective Sample	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Gender	Female	3,923	3,885	1.80	2.40	2.75	2.94	3.00
	Male	3,554	3,517					

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Age	13-17	543	537	5.23	6.97	7.98	8.53	8.71
	75+	375	371					
Social Grade	ABC1	4,390	4,363	1.90	2.54	2.91	3.11	3.17
	C2DE	2,678	2,655					
Ethnicity	Minorities	1,644	1,635	2.17	2.90	3.32	3.55	3.62
	White	5,662	5,597					

Prioritisation of codes for summary tables:

Regarding the Q7_any named harm summary tables, where respondents' concern levels were asked for listed potential harms, codes are prioritised in the following order: Code 5 (Very concerned_ >4>3>2> 1(Mildly Concerned). If a respondent answered code 6 (Not concerned at all) or code 7 (Don't know), then code 6 was kept.

Prioritisation was also applied to Q46 combined summary tables, where respondents were asked confidence in the Online Safety Bill in keeping adults and children safe, codes are prioritised in the following order: (Very Confident 1>2>3>4>5 Not at all confident).

Changes to the questionnaire between waves

Multiple additions and amendments were made to the questionnaire for Wave 5 as either improvements or revisions, in line with the shifting policy focus. A summary of changes has been included below [1].

Category	Question/Net	Wave	Definition
Break 1 - Experience of Harms			
New codes added to Q8/Q9	Q8/Q9	Wave 5	Content that shames or stigmatizes certain body types e.g. body size, shape or features
			Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
	Q8/9 - Any Named Harm		Q8/Q9 any named harm codes 1-47
Q21			
Text change	Q21	Wave 4	Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online
		Wave 5	Gaming platform website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online, Roblox

[1] For reference, copies of questionnaires have been published alongside this report: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/online-research/internet-users-experience-of-harm-online

New code added to Q21		Wave 5	File sharing service e.g. Google Drive, Apple iCloud
Q21a			
New code added to Q21a	Q21a	Wave 5	In an advertisement
Q23			
New codes added to Q23		Wave 5	Google Bard
			Bing AI
			Ekoru
			Ocean Hero
Q24			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Twitter
		Wave 5	Twitter/X
New codes added to Q24		Wave 5	DeviantArt
			Threads
Q25			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Twitter
		Wave 5	Twitter/X
New codes added to Q25		Wave 5	Clapper
Q26			
Code removed		Wave 5	Threads

			Omegle
New code added to Q26		Wave 5	Clapper
Q27			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Xbox Live
		Wave 5	Xbox Network (formerly Xbox LIVE)
Code removed		Wave 5	Fruitlab
			Metaverse
Q29			
New question added Q29. Which file sharing service were you using when you experienced [insert harm selected at Q9]?		Wave 5	DropBox
			Google Drive
			One Drive
			WeTransfer
			Box
			Apple AirDrop
			Apple iCloud
			Other
			Can't remember

			Prefer not to say
Q34			
Code changes		Wave 4	Yes – but I don't understand why it was taken down (removed) and don't think it breached the service's policies
		Wave 5	Yes – but I don't understand why it was taken down (removed)
			Yes – but I don't think it breached the service's policies
Q33			
Question wording change		Wave 4	Which of the following, if any, do you believe are currently responsible for overseeing and monitoring online safety?
		Wave 5	As far as you are aware, which of the following body or bodies is the regulator for online safety in the UK?
Q45			
New question added: Which of the following best describes your knowledge of the Online Safety Act?		Wave 5	I have heard of the Online Safety Act and know a lot about
			I have heard of the Online Safety Act and know a fair amount about it
			I have heard of the Online Safety Act but don't know much about it
			I have never heard of the Online Safety Act
			Don't know

Q46			
New question added: The UK Online Safety Act 2023 makes companies that operate a wide range of online services legally responsible for keeping people in the UK, especially children, safe online when using services such as social media, chat and instant messaging services, gaming, search services etc. How confident are you, if at all, that the Online Safety Act will keep each of the following safe online? -Children (under 18s) -Adults		Wave 5	Very confident Fairly confident Not very confident Not at all confident Don't know

Where appropriate YouGov used 'PDLs' which are information identifiers assigned to panel members based on their previous responses. PDLs used in Waves 4 & 5:

- Region
- Ethnicity
- Religion

NET definitions featured in the published tables

Certain subgroups within the sample were grouped together to aid analysis and are featured alongside this report in the published data tables. The definitions of these so-called 'NETs' are in the table below.

Changes to some 'NET' definitions were made between the different waves of the research. Wherever present, these have been noted in the 'Wave' column in the table below:

Category	NET	Wave	Definition
Demographics			
Ethnicity	White	Waves 4 & 5	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
			Irish
			Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
			Any other white background

	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups		White and Black Caribbean
			White and Black African
			White and Asian
			Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
	Asian and British Asian		Indian
			Pakistani
			Bangladeshi
			Chinese
			Any other Asian background
	Black and black British		Caribbean
			African
			Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background
	Other ethnic group		Arab
			Any other ethnic background
Limiting/Impacting Conditions* Adults and Children	Any	Waves 4 & 5	Any reported limiting/impacting condition
	Mental Health Condition	Wave 4 & 5	Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
	No disability	Waves 4 & 5	Nothing – no impairments or conditions impact or limit your daily activities or the work you can do
Q2: Internet Usage			
	Low usage	Wave 4 &5	None
			Less than 6 hours
	Medium usage		6 to 11 hours
			12 to 22 hours
	High usage		23 to 30 hours
			Over 30 hours
Q3: Attitudes			

Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	Onus on platform	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Onus on the individual		If score 7-10
Search engine vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the search engine to control what is presented in search results vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure they have the correct settings in place to only be presented with content appropriate for them	Onus on the search engine	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Onus on the individual		If score 7-10
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to stay safe online	Safety confident	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Not confident		If score 7-10
			Waves 4 & 5	

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Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Benefits outweigh risks		If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Risk outweigh benefits		If score 7-10
Sufficiency of common sense to protect from exposure to potential harms	Using a bit of common sense when you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos if you go online	Common sense is sufficient	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Resigned to potential harms		If score 7-10
Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Protection prioritisers		If score 7-10
Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety measures in place	Measures meets needs	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6

		Further measures needed		If score 7-10
Benefits vs risks of going online	For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. For me personally, the risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Benefits outweigh risks	Wave 4 &5	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4 to 6
		Risks outweigh benefits		If score 7-10
Societal impact	The internet is good for society vs. the internet is damaging to society	Internet is good for society	Waves 4 & 5	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Internet is damaging society		If score 7-10
Q7 - Online harms concern				
Concern of potential harm		Net Low concern/Not concerned at all	Waves 4 & 5	1 - Mildly concerned or 2 or 6 - Not concerned at all
		Net: Low concern		1 - Mildly concerned or 2
		Net: High concern		4 or 5 - Very concerned
Q8/Q9 - Experience of Harms				
Experience of potential harm		Any Named Harm	Waves 4 & 5	Q8 any named harm codes 1-47
		Contact/Conduct harm	Waves 4 & 5	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages

Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
People pretending to be another person, e.g. ‘catfishing’
Persistent bullying online
Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos
People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. ‘cyber flashing’
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. ‘doxxing’
Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. ’revenge porn’
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. ‘griefing’
Private conversations shared without consent

			Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'
			Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness
			Unwanted sexual messages
			One off abusive behaviour or threats
		Wave 5	Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
	Content harm	Waves 4 & 5	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting the sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism

			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
			Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
			Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions e.g. ‘fake news’
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders
			Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. ‘deep fakes’
			Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking

			Content depicting animal cruelty
			Content depicting dangerous stunts or online challenges [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Content facilitating human trafficking (including sexual and labour exploitation, or recruitment for county lines activity) and illegal immigration
			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
	Commercial harm	Waves 4 & 5	Sale or advertisement of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances e.g. 'magic mushrooms'
			Sale or advertisement of weapons
			Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
			Scams, fraud, or phishing
			Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts

			Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'
			Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
	Primary Priority Content (PPC)	Wave 4 & 5	Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders
	Priority Content (PC)	Wave 4 & 5	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury

Persistent bullying online
Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. ‘doxxing’
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. ‘griefing’
Private conversations shared without consent
Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online ‘pile-ons’
Content depicting animal cruelty
Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes

			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
			One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Primary Priority Content /Priority Content (PPC & PC)	Wave 4 & 5	Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders
			Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury

Persistent bullying online
Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. ‘doxxing’
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. ‘griefing’
Private conversations shared without consent
Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online ‘pile-ons’
Content depicting animal cruelty
Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes

			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
			One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Violence Against Women and Girls	Wave 5	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
			Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
			Stalking, cyberstalking or harassing behaviour
			People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
			Persistent bullying online
			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction

			Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos
			People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
			Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
			Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
			Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
			Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn'
			Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
			Private conversations shared without consent
			Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
			Unwanted sexual messages

			Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
			One-off abusive behaviour or threats
			Content that shames or stigmatizes certain body types e.g. body size, shape or features
Q12- Exposure to potential harms in the last 4 weeks			
Frequency of exposure to potential harms	Net: All experience	Waves 4 & 5	Once
			2-3 times
			4-5 times
			6-10 times
			More than 10 times
Q13 - Group or characteristic potential harms were directed at			
Online harms directed at	Net: Any	Waves 4 & 5	A specific age group
			Disabled people (physical or mental)
			Trans people
			Pregnant people/ those on maternity leave
			People of a particular marital status (e.g. married, single, civil partnership)
			Ethnicity
			A religious group
			Sexual orientation
			Another group (please specify)
			Men and boys

			Women and girls
			Non-binary people
			Asylum seekers
			A political group
			Gypsy or Irish Travellers
			Nationality
			Regionality
Q15 - Action taken			
Action taken after experiencing potential harm	Any Action	Waves 4 & 5	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
			Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
			Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
			Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
			Informed the police
			Informed Ofcom

		Informed a support service
		Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		Closed my account/left the service
		Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email
		Told a friend or family member
		I use the platform less
		I have stopped using the platform altogether
		I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
		I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
		Changed my settings to change the type of content I see

			Changed my settings to change who can see my profile
			I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
			Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
	Reported or flagged content	Waves 4 & 5	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
			Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
			Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
			Informed the police
			Informed Ofcom
			Informed a support service
			Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue

			I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
			Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
	Disengaged or changed engagement behaviour	Wave 4 & 5	Closed my account/left the service
			I use the platform less
			I have stopped using the platform altogether
			I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
			I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
Q16 - Didn't think it was that serious			
Why no action	Didn't think it was that serious	Waves 4 & 5	I didn't consider it to be offensive, disturbing or harmful
			I didn't like it, but I didn't consider it bad enough to do something about
			I didn't see the need to do anything
Q17- Awareness of result of reporting			
Results of reporting	Awareness of result of reporting	Waves 4 & 5	The content was removed
			I got a written response

			I was asked to provide further information
			Something else
Q21- Non-email			
Site/service when experience harm	Non-Email	Wave 4 & 5	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok
			Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
			Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live
			A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo
			Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp
			News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online
			Gaming platform website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online, Roblox
			A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers
			Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'
			Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop
			Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble
			Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV
			An in-game chat / chat room

			'Adult' site containing sexual content
			Generative AI e.g. ChatGPT
		Wave 5	File sharing service e.g Google Drive, Apple iCloud
Q46- Confidence in the Online Safety Act			
Confidence in the Online Safety Act keeping Children/Adults safe	Confident	Wave 5	Very confident
			Fairly confident
	Unconfident	Wave 5	Not very confident
			Not at all confident

Technical report – Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 6, May-June 2024)

Preface

Wave 6 of the Online Experiences Tracker (2024) was undertaken by YouGov on behalf of Ofcom.

The objectives of this quantitative tracking study, as with previous waves of the research, were to gain a deeper understanding of internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms online, and to monitor these over time.

The insights collected from this tracking data over time have served to shape Ofcom's preparations for their duties under The Online Safety Act 2023. The data from the tracker continues to inform policymakers about items covered by the Act.

This report refers to the sixth wave completed in May-June 2024. Further information about the study is summarised in the sections below. More information on the previous wave's approach and methodology is available here.

Summary of Approach

- The **Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 6)** survey was conducted amongst a nationally representative sample of UK internet users aged 13-84 and addresses their attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online.
- The **Online Experiences Tracker** is a multi-wave study with research taking place in November 2021, May 2022, July 2023, January 2024 and most recently May/June 2024. It builds on previous work of similar focus ('Pilot Online Harms Survey') which was commissioned by Ofcom in 2020 to explore internet usage and behaviours, attitudes towards online safety regulation, and experiences of potential online harms. The pilot study informed preparations for the Online Safety regime.
- Respondents were recruited to be nationally representative of the UK internet user population, with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region. Boosts were applied to low incidence groups such as younger respondents, those living in specific UK nations, those belonging to specific religions and minority ethnic groups to allow for base sizes robust enough for analysis.
- A total of 7,837 interviews (including boosts) were conducted for Wave 6, with the sample reflecting similar sizes to Waves 1, 2, & 5. All fieldwork was conducted between 23rd May and 8th June 2024
- The average length of the interviews in Wave 5 was 16 minutes, 7 seconds, and in Wave 6 it was 16 minutes, 21 seconds.

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Significance Testing

Significance testing is applied at the **95%** confidence level for comparisons within Wave 6. In Wave 6 tables, significance testing is carried out between subgroups, while each subgroup is additionally tested against the total.

For comparisons between Wave 6 and other Waves we carry out significance testing at the **99%** confidence level due to the larger sample size.

Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This definition was provided by Ofcom and is based on household income and household composition (i.e., size of household and number of children) and can only be run on data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions. The definition of each group has been remained in line with Wave 2 specifications.

The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group:

MOST financially vulnerable	POTENTIALLY financially vulnerable	LEAST financially vulnerable
Household income under £10,399	**Earning between £10,400 - £25,999**	**Earning between £26,600 - £36,399**
All respondents	1-2 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
	3 adults, no children	
Earning between £10,400 - £25,999	**Earning between £26,000 - £36,399**	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**
1-2 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	1 adult, 0-1 child
3+ adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	2 adults, 0 children
4+ adults	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
	4 adults, no children	
Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	**Earning between £36,400 - £51,999**	**Household income £52,000+**
1 adult, 4+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	All households
2 adults,4+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
3 adults, 2+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	4 adults, 0-1 child	
5+ adults	5 adults, 0 children	
Earning between £36,400 - £51,999		
1 adults, >3 children		
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		
5 adults, 1+ children		
6+ adults		

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Sample and Fieldwork Design

All respondents who took part in the research were drawn solely from the YouGov panel of over 3.3m people who live in the UK. The approach taken was to survey a nationally representative sample of UK internet users. The YouGov panel is large enough to enable the selection of nationally representative samples that reflect the actual breakdown of the population across the key demographics of age, gender, region and social grade.

Children between 13-17 were recruited through their parents or guardians. The survey was passed to the children after obtaining parents' or guardians' consent. Children then gave their own consent and had the opportunity to decline to participate in the research if they wanted. If there was more than one child in the household aged 13-17 years, the parent or guardian was asked to select one child to take part in this survey.

During this recruitment parents are asked to give consent as to whether they were happy for their children to take part in question C1, of which 436 parents, which equals 37% of invited parents, said 'No' to their children taking part in the survey. Subsequently, at question C7, the children of parents who responded positively were requested to provide their own consent to participate in the survey. Of these children, 4 did not provide consent and hence didn't take part in the survey.

Boost

After the main fieldwork was completed, sample boosts were applied to achieve a minimum of n=100 interviews among all ethnic minority groups, low incidence religious minority groups (Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism), and each age group between 13 and 17 years old. Regarding the UK nations, an additional boost was applied to attain n=350 in Wales and n=350 in Northern Ireland.

Due to the significantly low incidence rate seen among some specific ethnic groups, a boost is implemented to encourage best efforts, however it is not necessary to attain a maximum of 100 completes (e.g. Gypsy or Irish travellers or Arab).

There was an overlap observed among certain groups, such as Irish (ethnicity) and Northern Ireland (UK nation) Hindus (religion), and Indians (ethnicity), which consequently led to certain groups having a higher number of completions compared to others.

The table below shows the unweighted and weighted numbers of completes for each boosted group:

Demographic	Category	Total achieved	Nat rep achieved	Boost achieved	Total achieved	Nat rep achieved	Boost achieved
		Unweighted			Weighted		
Children's age	13	111	89	22	110	89	22
	14	111	111	0	110	110	0
	15	116	101	15	113	98	15
	16	108	75	33	106	73	33
	17	111	65	46	110	64	46
Ethnicity	Irish	284	65	219	276	57	219
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	63	3	60	63	3	60
	White and Black Caribbean	115	67	48	117	69	48

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	White and Black African	116	96	20	120	100	20
	White and Asian	113	54	59	112	53	59
	Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background	137	44	93	136	44	93
	Indian	268	74	194	268	74	194
	Pakistani	102	35	67	102	35	67
	Bangladeshi	102	14	88	102	14	88
	Chinese	139	29	110	139	29	110
	Any other Asian background	125	34	91	126	35	91
	African	163	130	33	166	133	33
	Caribbean	103	16	87	104	17	87
	Any other Black / African / Caribbean background	104	15	89	104	15	89
	Arab	89	11	78	89	11	78
	Any other ethnic group	146	26	120	146	26	120
Religion	Judaism	112	24	88	112	25	88
	Hinduism	125	30	95	125	30	95
	Sikhism	105	11	94	105	11	94
	Buddhism	106	22	84	106	22	84
UK nations	Wales	399	311	88	398	310	88
	Northern Ireland	365	178	187	311	124	187

Quotas

Interview quotas were applied so that the final sample was representative of UK internet users by age, gender, region and socio-economic group (SEG).

Targets for quotas were derived from Ofcom. Quotas were set on the following variables:

- Age (13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 64-74, 75-84)
- Gender
- Region
- Socio-economic group (SEG)

The table below details the specific quotas used for this study:

Demographic group	Category	Quota
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	13-17	7%
	18-24	11%

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	25-34	17%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	18%
	55-64	14%
	65-74	11%
	75-84	6%
Region	Scotland	8%
	North East	4%
	North West	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%
	West Midlands	9%
	East Midlands	7%
	Wales	5%
	Eastern	9%
	London	14%
	South East	14%
	South West	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%
Social Grade	AB	27%
	C1	30%
	C2	21%
	DE	22%

YouGov considers a 'complete' response if a respondent has answered all sections of the questionnaire. Those that choose not to answer specific section within the script were removed from the final dataset.

Below is a comparison of the final sample for Wave 5 against the final data in Wave 6 across key demographics:

Demographic group	Category	Wave 5	Wave 6
Total sample		7,611	7,837
Gender	Male	48%	47%
	Female	51%	51%
Age	13-17	7%	7%
	18-24	10%	11%
	25-34	18%	19%
	35-44	17%	17%
	45-54	18%	17%
	55-64	14%	13%
	65-74	11%	10%
	75-84	5%	5%
Region	Scotland	7%	7%

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	North East	4%	4%
	North West	10%	10%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	7%	7%
	West Midlands	9%	9%
	East Midlands	6%	7%
	Wales	5%	5%
	East of England	9%	9%
	London	17%	17%
	South East	13%	13%
	South West	8%	8%
	Northern Ireland	4%	4%
Social Grade	ABC1	59%	60%
	C2DE	41%	40%
Ethnicity	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	67%	64%
	Irish	3%	4%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1%	1%
	Any other White background	3%	3%
	White and Black Caribbean	1%	1%
	White and Black African	1%	2%
	White and Asian	1%	1%
	Indian	4%	3%
	Pakistani	1%	1%
	Bangladeshi	1%	1%
	Chinese	1%	2%
	Caribbean	1%	1%
	African	2%	2%
	Arab	1%	1%
Religion	No religion	50%	50%
	Catholic	9%	11%
	Church of England/Scotland/Ireland	18%	17%
	Muslim	4%	4%
	Hindu	2%	2%
	Jewish	1%	1%
	Sikh	2%	1%
	Buddhist	2%	1%
	Other religion	2%	2%
	Prefer not to say	4%	5%

Weighting

The data (excluding boosts) has been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall, to regional and SEG profiles. The boosts' samples are not weighted.

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Fieldwork

All interviews were conducted over a 16-day period between 23rd May - 8th June 2024. Nat rep fieldwork was conducted between 23rd May and 28th May 2024, with boosts conducted over 29th May and 8th June 2024.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of some of the research topics (e.g. experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online), respondents were given the option to end the survey at three points. They were also forewarned of the sensitive nature of the research topic and asked to give their consent to participate, in line with MRS guidelines.

Participants who opted out (and also those who completed the survey) were provided with a list of resources if further support was needed.

The questionnaire also included questions designed to obtain consent to be contacted for participation in further qualtitative research into online habits, attitudes and behaviours, as well as experience of potential online harms. This data is managed and stored in line with GDPR commitments.

YouGov carried out the following standard checks during and post-fieldwork:

- Manual checks post-fieldwork to remove anyone who responded in unreasonable ways.
- Manual 'flatlining' checks post-fieldwork to check grid questions and ensure respondents did not answer the same codes across an unreasonable range of grid / scale questions.
- Open-end checks to ensure respondents answered thoughtfully and were not 'spamming' answers.
- The participants removed from the survey through the QA checks were excluded from final demographic quotas as well as from the dataset.

Sample Representativeness

The following table shows both the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profiles:

Demographic group	Unweighted counts	Unweighted %	Weighted counts	Weighted %
Male 13-17	290	4	285	4
Male 18-34	1084	14	1085	14
Male 35-54	1312	17	1293	17
Male 55+	1046	13	1055	14
Female 13-17	261	3	258	3
Female 18-34	1168	15	1160	15
Female 35-54	1381	18	1364	17
Female 55+	1168	15	1195	15
Scotland	581	7	569	7
North East	287	4	277	4
North West	823	11	807	10
Yorkshire and the Humber	568	7	568	7
West Midlands	718	9	702	9

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East Midlands	521	7	510	7
Wales	399	5	398	5
East of England	688	9	682	9
London	1313	17	1349	17
South East	960	12	1033	13
South West	614	8	631	8
Northern Ireland	365	5	311	4
AB	2321	32	2222	31
C1	2129	29	2128	29
C2	1288	18	1389	19
DE	1542	21	1548	21

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the "true" values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 99% level: that is, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results. The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main groups within the sample.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS	ACTUAL BASE	ESS
TOTAL	7,837	7,788
GENDER: Male	3,732	3,710
GENDER: Female	3,978	3,953
AGE: 13-17	557	554
AGE: 18-24	837	832
AGE: 25-34	1,490	1,481
AGE: 35-44	1,357	1,349
AGE: 45-54	1,370	1,361
AGE: 55-64	1,023	1,017
AGE: 65-74	794	790
AGE: 75+	409	407
SEG: AB	2,321	2,311
SEG: C1	2,129	2,120
SEG: C2	1,288	1,281
SEG: DE	1,542	1,534

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "99% confidence interval":

Variables	Actual Sample	Effective Sample	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%

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Total	7,837	7,788	0.88	1.17	1.34	1.43	1.46
Female	3,978	3,953	1.23	1.64	1.88	2.01	2.05
Male	3,732	3,710	1.27	1.69	1.94	2.07	2.12
13-17	557	554	3.30	4.40	5.04	5.39	5.50
18-24	837	832	2.69	3.58	4.10	4.39	4.48
25-34	1,490	1,481	2.01	2.68	3.07	3.28	3.35
35-44	1,357	1,349	2.11	2.81	3.22	3.44	3.51
45-54	1,370	1,361	2.10	2.80	3.21	3.43	3.50
55-64	1,023	1,017	2.43	3.24	3.71	3.97	4.05
65-74	794	790	2.76	3.68	4.21	4.50	4.60
75+	409	407	3.85	5.14	5.89	6.29	6.42
AB	2,321	2,311	1.61	2.15	2.46	2.63	2.68
C1	2,129	2,120	1.68	2.24	2.57	2.74	2.80
C2	1,288	1,281	2.16	2.88	3.30	3.53	3.61
DE	1,542	1,534	1.98	2.63	3.02	3.23	3.29
Ethnic Minorities	1,822	1,818	1.81	2.42	2.77	2.96	3.02
White	5,591	5,549	1.04	1.38	1.59	1.69	1.73

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 7,837 gives a particular answer, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 1.34 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "99% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant.

Differences required for significance at or near these percentages.

Variable	Actual Sample	Effective Sample	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%

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Gender	Female	3,978	3,953	1.77	2.36	2.70	2.89	2.94
	Male	3,732	3,710					
Age	13-17	557	554	5.06	6.74	7.72	8.26	8.43
	75+	409	407					
Social Grade	ABC1	4,450	4,431	1.86	2.49	2.85	3.04	3.11
	C2DE	2,830	2,815					
Ethnicity	Minorities	1,822	1,818	2.09	2.79	3.19	3.41	3.48
	White	5,591	5,549					

Prioritisation of codes for summary tables:

Regarding the Q7_any named harm summary tables, where respondents' concern levels were asked for listed potential harms, codes are prioritised in the following order: Code 5 (Very concerned_ >4>3>2> 1(Mildly Concerned). If a respondent answered code 6 (Not concerned at all) or code 7 (Don't know), then code 6 was kept.

Prioritisation was also applied to Q46 combined summary tables, where respondents were asked confidence in the Online Safety Bill in keeping adults and children safe, codes are prioritised in the following order: (Very Confident 1>2>3>4>5 Not at all confident).

Changes to the questionnaire between waves

Multiple additions and amendments were made to the questionnaire for Wave 6 as either improvements or revisions, in line with the shifting policy focus. A summary of changes has been included below [1].

Category	Question/Net	Wave	Definition
Break 1 - Experience of Harms			
New codes added to Q8/Q9	Q8/Q9	Wave 5	Content that shames or stigmatizes certain body types e.g. body size, shape or features
			Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
	Q8/9 - Any Named Harm		Q8/Q9 any named harm codes 1-47
Q21			
Text change	Q21	Wave 4	Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online

[1] For reference, copies of questionnaires have been published alongside this report: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/online-research/internet-users-experience-of-harm-online

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		Wave 5	Gaming platform website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online, Roblox
New code added to Q21		Wave 5	File sharing service e.g. Google Drive, Apple iCloud
Text change		Wave 6	Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram
			Online gaming website or app, but not including in-game chat e.g. Fortnite, EA Sports FC 24, Roblox
			A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora
			Video on demand website or app e.g. Netflix, Now
			Generative AI e.g. ChatGPT, Snapchat MyAI
			File sharing service e.g. Apple AirDrop, Google Drive, Apple iCloud
Codes removed		Wave 6	Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop
New codes added		Wave 6	User to user marketplaces e.g. Facebook Marketplace, eBay, Vinted
			Retail shopping e.g. Amazon, Tesco, Temu
Q21a			
New code added to Q21a	Q21a	Wave 5	In an advertisement
Q23			
New codes added to Q23	Q23	Wave 5	Google Bard
			Bing AI
			Ekoru
			Ocean Hero

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		Wave 6	Search HQ
			Tineye
			Baidu
Code wording updated		Wave 6	Google Gemini
Q24			
Code wording updated	Q24	Wave 4	Twitter
		Wave 5	Twitter/X
		Wave 6	X (formerly Twitter)
New codes added to Q24		Wave 5	DeviantArt
			Threads
		Wave 6	Mastodon
			XPro (formerly Tweetdeck)
			Bluesky
			Tusky
			Twidere
			Fedilab
			Tooot

			Toot!
Q25			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Twitter
		Wave 5	Twitter/X
		Wave 6	X (formerly Twitter)
New codes added to Q25		Wave 5	Clapper
Q26			
Code removed		Wave 5	Threads
			Omegle
New code added to Q26		Wave 5	Clapper
Q27			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Xbox Live
		Wave 5	Xbox Network (formerly Xbox LIVE)
Code removed		Wave 5	Fruitlab
			Metaverse
		Wave 6	Nintendo Online
			PlayStation Network
			Steam

			Xbox Network (formerly Xbox LIVE)
			Apple Arcade
			VR Chat
			Rec room
			Horizon World
			Metaverse
New codes added		Wave 6	Fortnite
			EA Sports FC 24
			Call of Duty HQ (Modern Warfare III, Modern Warfare II, Warzone)
			Grant Theft Auto V/Online
			Rocket League
			Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege
			F1
			FIFA
			The Legend of Zelda
			Super Mario (Wonder, Mario Kart)

			Candy Crush Saga
			Royal Match
			Pokémon GO
			Among Us
Q28			
Code removed		Wave 6	Yahoo Answers
Q29			
New question added Q29. Which file sharing service were you using when you experienced [insert harm selected at Q9]?		Wave 5	DropBox
			Google Drive
			One Drive
			WeTransfer
			Box
			Apple AirDrop
			Apple iCloud
			Other
			Can't remember
			Prefer not to say
Q32a			

New code added		Wave 6	Someone I don't know online e.g. a stranger on social media
Q32c			
Question wording/routing change		Waves 5 & 6	You mentioned that you received an unwanted sexual message. Thinking about the most recent experience you had, can you please tell us who this message was from? Please remember that you do not have to answer this question. ***[Routed from Q8]***
		Wave 6	You mentioned that you received an ***[insert contact harm from Q9]*** Thinking about the most recent experience you had, can you please tell us who this content/message was from? Please remember that you do not have to answer this question. **Contact harms routed from this question:** ○ Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or message ○ Stalking, cyberstalking or harassing behaviour ○ People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing' ○ Persistent bullying online ○ Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction ○ Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos ○ People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing' ○ Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing' ○ Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn' ○ Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing' ○ Private conversations shared without consent ○ Unwanted sexual messages ○ One-off abusive behaviour or threats ○ Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
Q34			

Code changes		Wave 4	Yes – but I don't understand why it was taken down (removed) and don't think it breached the service's policies
		Wave 5	Yes – but I don't understand why it was taken down (removed)
			Yes – but I don't think it breached the service's policies
Q33			
Question wording change		Wave 4	Which of the following, if any, do you believe are currently responsible for overseeing and monitoring online safety?
		Wave 5	As far as you are aware, which of the following body or bodies is the regulator for online safety in the UK?
Q45			
New question added: Which of the following best describes your knowledge of the Online Safety Act?		Wave 5	I have heard of the Online Safety Act and know a lot about
			I have heard of the Online Safety Act and know a fair amount about it
			I have heard of the Online Safety Act but don't know much about it
			I have never heard of the Online Safety Act
			Don't know
Q46			

New question added: The UK Online Safety Act 2023 makes companies that operate a wide range of online services legally responsible for keeping people in the UK, especially children, safe online when using services such as social media, chat and instant messaging services, gaming, search services etc. How confident are you, if at all, that the Online Safety Act will keep each of the following safe online? -Children (under 18s) -Adults		Wave 5	Very confident Fairly confident Not very confident Not at all confident Don't know

Where appropriate YouGov used 'PDLs' which are information identifiers assigned to panel members based on their previous responses. PDLs used in Waves 5 & 6:

- Region
- Ethnicity
- Religion

NET definitions featured in the published tables

Certain subgroups within the sample were grouped together to aid analysis and are featured alongside this report in the published data tables. The definitions of these so-called 'NETs' are in the table below.

Changes to some 'NET' definitions were made between the different waves of the research. Wherever present, these have been noted in the 'Wave' column in the table below:

Category	NET	Wave	Definition
Demographics			
Ethnicity	White	Waves 5 & 6	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
			Irish
			Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
			Any other white background
	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups		White and Black Caribbean

				White and Black African
				White and Asian
				Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
		Asian and British Asian		Indian
				Pakistani
				Bangladeshi
				Chinese
				Any other Asian background
		Black and black British		Caribbean
				African
				Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background
		Other ethnic group		Arab
				Any other ethnic background
Limiting/Impacting Conditions* Adults and Children		Any	Waves 5 & 6	Any reported limiting/impacting condition
		Mental Health Condition	Waves 5 & 6	Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example
		No disability	Waves 5 & 6	Nothing – no impairments or conditions impact or limit your daily activities or the work you can do
Q2: Internet Usage				
		Low usage	Waves 5 & 6	None
				Less than 6 hours
		Medium usage		6 to 11 hours
				12 to 22 hours
		High usage		23 to 30 hours
				Over 30 hours
Q3: Attitudes				
Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to	Onus on platform	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3

	control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Onus on the individual		If score 7-10
Search engine vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the search engine to control what is presented in search results vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure they have the correct settings in place to only be presented with content appropriate for them	Onus on the search engine	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Onus on the individual		If score 7-10
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to stay safe online	Safety confident	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Not confident		If score 7-10
Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online	Benefits outweigh risks	Waves 5 & 6	
				If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Risk outweigh benefits		If score 7-10

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	outweigh the benefits			
Sufficiency of common sense to protect from exposure to potential harms	Using a bit of common sense when you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos if you go online	Common sense is sufficient	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Resigned to potential harms		If score 7-10
Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Protection prioritisers		If score 7-10
Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety measures in place	Measures meets needs	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Further measures needed		If score 7-10

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Benefits vs risks of going online	For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. For me personally, the risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Benefits outweigh risks	Wave 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4 to 6
		Risks outweigh benefits		If score 7-10
Societal impact	The internet is good for society vs. the internet is damaging to society	Internet is good for society	Waves 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Internet is damaging society		If score 7-10
Q7 - Online harms concern				
Concern of potential harm		Net Low concern/Not concerned at all	Waves 5 & 6	1 - Mildly concerned or 2 or 6 - Not concerned at all
		Net: Low concern		1 - Mildly concerned or 2
		Net: High concern		4 or 5 - Very concerned
Q8/Q9 - Experience of Harms				
Experience of potential harm		Any Named Harm	Waves 5 & 6	Q8 any named harm codes 1-47
		Contact/Conduct harm	Waves 5 & 6	Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
				Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour

People pretending to be another person, e.g. ‘catfishing’
Persistent bullying online
Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos
People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. ‘cyber flashing’
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. ‘doxxing’
Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. ’revenge porn’
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. ‘griefing’
Private conversations shared without consent
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online ‘pile-ons’

			Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness
			Unwanted sexual messages
			One off abusive behaviour or threats
		Waves 5 & 6	Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
	Content harm	Waves 5 & 6	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting the sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury

			Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
			Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions e.g. 'fake news'
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders
			Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
			Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
			Content depicting animal cruelty

			Content depicting dangerous stunts or online challenges [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
			Content facilitating human trafficking (including sexual and labour exploitation, or recruitment for county lines activity) and illegal immigration
			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
	Commercial harm	Waves 5 & 6	Sale or advertisement of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances e.g. 'magic mushrooms'
			Sale or advertisement of weapons
			Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
			Scams, fraud, or phishing
			Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
			Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'

			Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
	Primary Priority Content (PPC)	Waves 5 & 6	Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders
	Priority Content (PC)	Waves 5 & 6	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
			Persistent bullying online

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			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
			Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
			Private conversations shared without consent
			Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
			Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
			Content depicting animal cruelty
			Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
			Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes
			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent

			One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Primary Priority Content /Priority Content (PPC & PC)	Waves 5 & 6	Sexual/ pornographic content
			Content promoting self-harm
			Content promoting suicide
			Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
			Content relating to eating disorders
			Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
			Persistent bullying online

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			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
			Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
			Private conversations shared without consent
			Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
			Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
			Content depicting animal cruelty
			Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
			Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes
			Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent

			One off abusive behaviour or threats
	Violence Against Women and Girls	Waves 5 & 6	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
			Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
			Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
			Stalking, cyberstalking or harassing behaviour
			People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
			Persistent bullying online
			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos

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People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn'
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
Private conversations shared without consent
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
Unwanted sexual messages
Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]

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			One-off abusive behaviour or threats
			Content that shames or stigmatizes certain body types e.g. body size, shape or features
	Net: Abusive/Bullying/Threats /Hate Speech	Wave 6	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Persistent bullying online
			Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			One-off abusive behaviour or threats
Q12- Exposure to potential harms in the last 4 weeks			
Frequency of exposure to potential harms	Net: All experience	Waves 5 & 6	Once
			2-3 times
			4-5 times
			6-10 times
			More than 10 times
Q13 - Group or characteristic potential harms were directed at			
Online harms directed at	Net: Any	Waves 5 & 6	A specific age group
			Disabled people (physical or mental)
			Trans people

			Pregnant people/ those on maternity leave
			People of a particular marital status (e.g. married, single, civil partnership)
			Ethnicity
			A religious group
			Sexual orientation
			Another group (please specify)
			Men and boys
			Women and girls
			Non-binary people
			Asylum seekers
			A political group
			Gypsy or Irish Travellers
			Nationality
			Regionality
Q15 - Action taken			
Action taken after experiencing potential harm	Any Action	Waves 5 & 6	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
			Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
			Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue

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			Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
			Informed the police
			Informed Ofcom
			Informed a support service
			Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
			Closed my account/left the service
			Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email
			Told a friend or family member
			I use the platform less
			I have stopped using the platform altogether

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			I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
			I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
			Changed my settings to change the type of content I see
			Changed my settings to change who can see my profile
			I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
			Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
	Reported or flagged content	Waves 5 & 6	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
			Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
			Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
			Informed the police

			Informed Ofcom
			Informed a support service
			Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
			I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
			Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
	Disengaged or changed engagement behaviour	Waves 5 & 6	Closed my account/left the service
			I use the platform less
			I have stopped using the platform altogether
			I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
			I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
Q16 - Didn't think it was that serious			

Why no action	Didn't think it was that serious	Waves 5 & 6	I didn't consider it to be offensive, disturbing or harmful
			I didn't like it, but I didn't consider it bad enough to do something about
			I didn't see the need to do anything
Q17. Awareness of result of reporting			
Results of reporting	Awareness of result of reporting	Waves 5 & 6	The content was removed
			I got a written response
			I was asked to provide further information
			Something else
Q21. Non-email			
Site/service when experience harm	Non-Email	Waves 5 & 6	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok
			Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
			Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live
			A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo
			Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp
			News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online
			Gaming platform website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online, Roblox

			A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers
			Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'
			Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop
			Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble
			Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV
			An in-game chat / chat room
			'Adult' site containing sexual content
			Generative AI e.g. ChatGPT
		Waves 5 & 6	File sharing service e.g. Google Drive, Apple iCloud
		Wave 6	User to user marketplaces e.g. Facebook Marketplace, eBay, Vinted
			Retail shopping e.g. Amazon, Tesco, Temu
			Online gaming website or app, but not including in-game chat e.g. Fortnite, EA Sports FC 24, Roblox
Q24- Microblogging sites			
Social media website/app used when online harm experienced	Net: Microblogging sites	Wave 6	X (formerly Twitter)
			Mastodon
			XPro (formerly Tweetdeck)
			Bluesky
			Tusky
			Twidere
			Fedilab
			Tooot

			Toot!
Q46- Confidence in the Online Safety Act			
Confidence in the Online Safety Act keeping Children/Adults safe	Confident	Waves 5 & 6	Very confident
			Fairly confident
	Unconfident	Waves 5 & 6	Not very confident
			Not at all confident