One in three internet users globally is a child: What do we know about them?
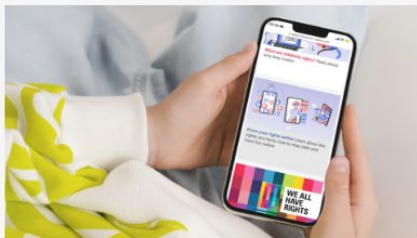
Sonia Livingstone

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Digital Futures for Children   About us   Our work   Your rights online   Events   Contact us

Digital Futures for Children centre (DFC)

Digital Futures for Children centre (DFC)
As a joint LSE and 5Rights centre, we support an evidence base for advocacy, facilitate multidisciplinary dialogues and amplify children's voices.

Our work Access all our publications and learn about our ongoing research projects

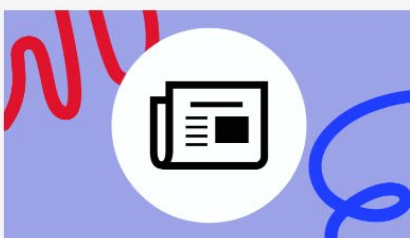**Your rights online** Learn about your rights with our resource for children and young people

Global research database access robust research about children and the digital environment from around the world

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Digital Futures For Children

Convention on the Rights of the Child

What are human rights? ▼ | Topics ▼ | Countries ▼ | Instruments & mechanisms ▼ | Latest ▼

1 DEFINITION OF A CHILD
2 NO DISCRIMINATION
3 BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD
4 MAKING RIGHTS REAL
5 FAMILY GUIDANCE AS CHILDREN DEVELOP
6 LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

11 PROTECTION FROM KIDNAPPING
12 RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS
13 SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY
14 FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION
15 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS
16 PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

21 CHILDREN WHO ARE ADOPTED
22 REFUGEE CHILDREN
23 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES
24 HEALTH, WATER, FOOD, ENVIRONMENT
25 REVIEW OF A CHILD'S PLACEMENT
26 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HELP

31 REST, PLAY, CULTURE, ARTS
32 PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL WORK
33 PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL DRUGS
34 PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL ABUSE
35 PREVENTION OF SALE AND TRAFFICKING
36 PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION

United Nations

CRC/C/GC/25

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
2 March 2021

Original: English

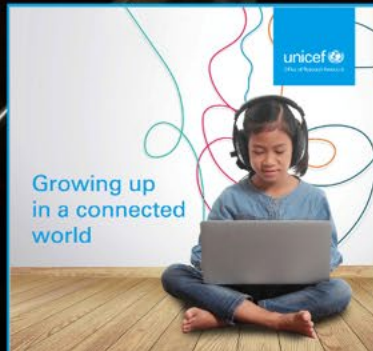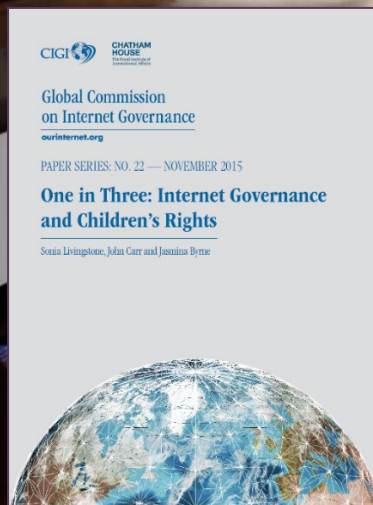**Committee on the Rights of the Child**

General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment

E. Data collection and research

30. Regularly updated data and research are crucial to understanding the implications of the digital environment for children's lives, evaluating its impact on their rights and assessing the effectiveness of State interventions. States parties should ensure the collection of robust, comprehensive data that is adequately resourced and that data are disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographical location, ethnic and national origin and socioeconomic background. Such data and research, including research conducted with and by children, should inform legislation, policy and practice and should be available in the public domain. Data collection and research relating to children's digital lives must respect their privacy and meet the highest ethical standards.

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ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/crc

2

2000 100 million online in developing world

2015 2 billion online in developing world

1 in 3 internet users is under 18

A Global Agenda for Children's Rights in the Digital Age

Recommendations for Developing UNICEF's Research Strategy

Professor Sonia Livingstone
Dr. Monica E. Bulger
September 2013

LSE THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

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The Royal Institute of International Affairs

Global Commission on Internet Governance
ourinternet.org

PAPER SERIES: NO. 22 — NOVEMBER 2015

One in Three: Internet Governance and Children's Rights

Sonia Livingstone, John Carr and Jasmina Byrne

GLOBAL KIDS ONLINE

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Growing up in a connected world

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2025, a decade later, we know some more . . .

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NAVIGATING BETWEEN INVISIBLE RISKS AND REAL OPPORTUNITIES: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

GLOBAL KIDS BOLIVIA

Finally, in **Bolivia**, one of the newest countries to join the Global Kids Online network, the study *"Risks and Opportunities of ICT Use"* provides the first nationwide evidence on children's digital lives. Conducted by Save the Children Bolivia, ChildFund Bolivia and the Behavioural Science Research Institute of the Universidad Católica Boliviana "San Pablo," the research shows a similar pattern – greater internet access can create opportunities and reduce digital exclusion, but also increases children's exposure to online risks:

- Most children access the internet mainly via mobile phones, but inequalities of geography, income and gender mean that rural children and girls remain at a disadvantage.

- Children report strong technical and communication skills, but overestimate their abilities overall; gaps remain in information navigation and content creation, highlighting the importance of active mediation and formal education.

- Digital participation offers important educational, civic and emotional benefits, but recreational uses still dominate.

Three new Global Kids Online reports have just been launched by the LATAM network – in Argentina, Brazil, and Bolivia. The findings highlight today's public policy dilemma: the more children gain internet access, the more societies can overcome forms of digital exclusion and inequality, but at the same time, the more children become exposed to online risks of harm.

So, risks to well-being without or with access

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Research at LSE and 5Rights Foundation ■

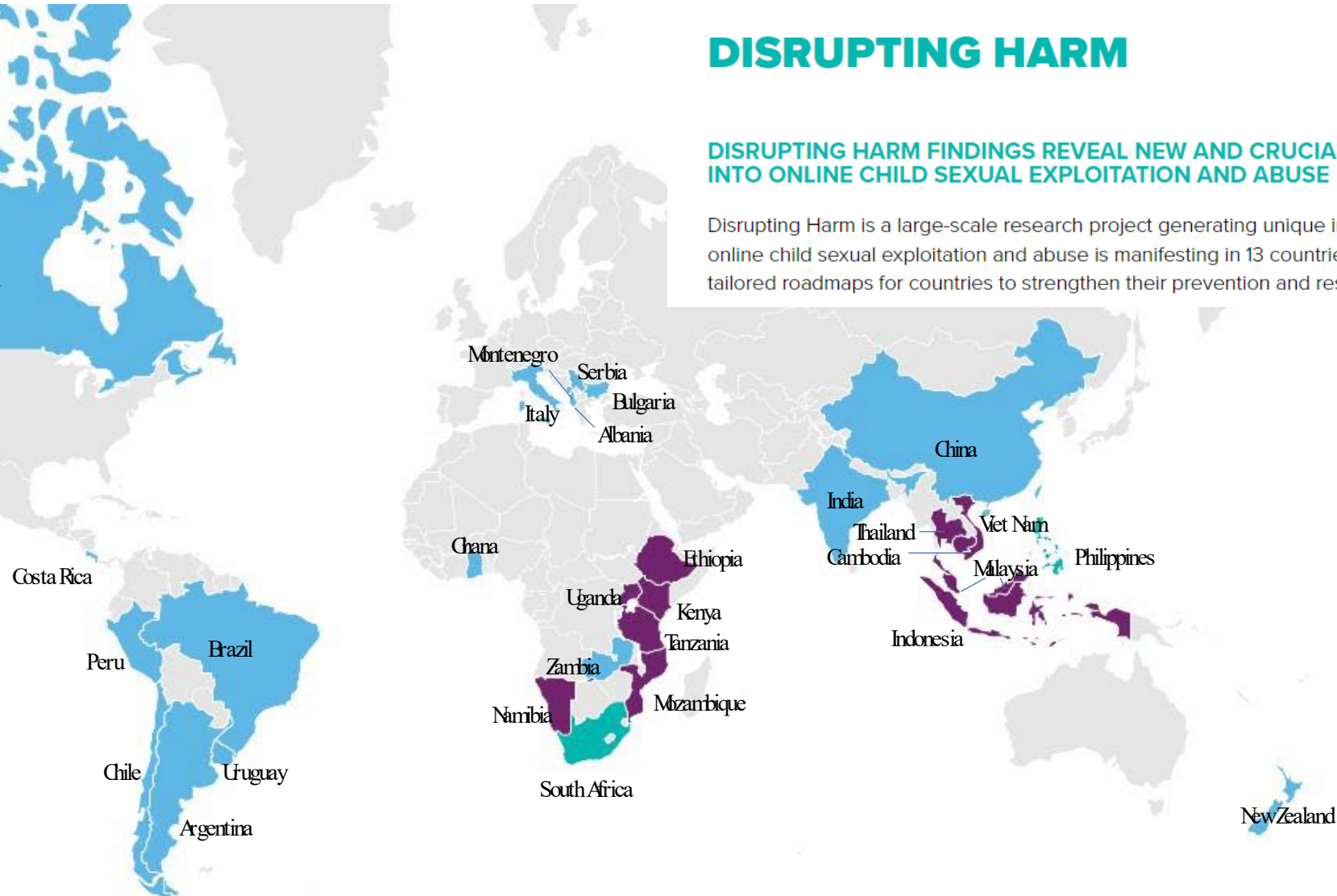# Comparative research is scarce

End Violence Against Children

Home / Disrupting Harm

DISRUPTING HARM

DISRUPTING HARM FINDINGS REVEAL NEW AND CRUCIAL INSIGHTS INTO ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE
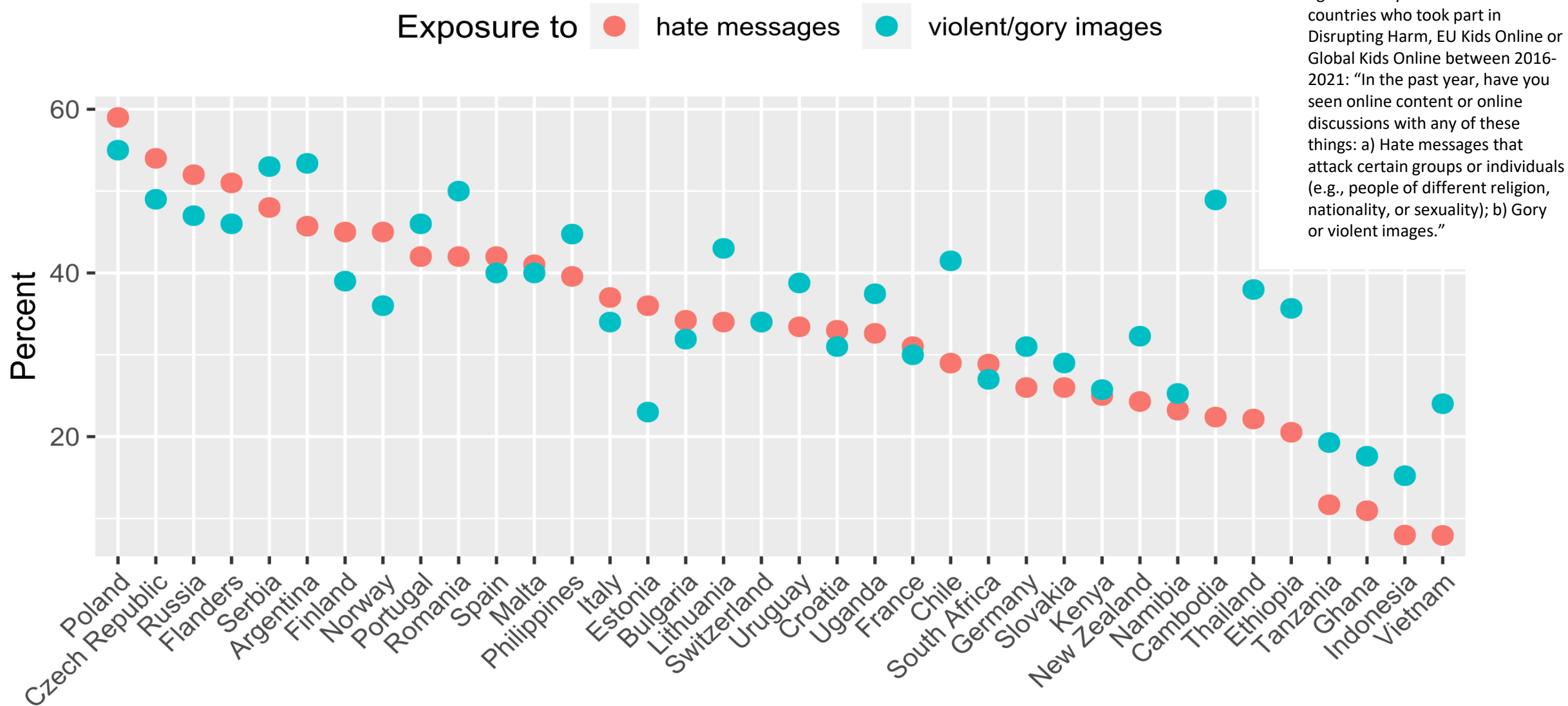
Disrupting Harm is a large-scale research project generating unique insights on how online child sexual exploitation and abuse is manifesting in 13 countries and providing tailored roadmaps for countries to strengthen their prevention and response systems.
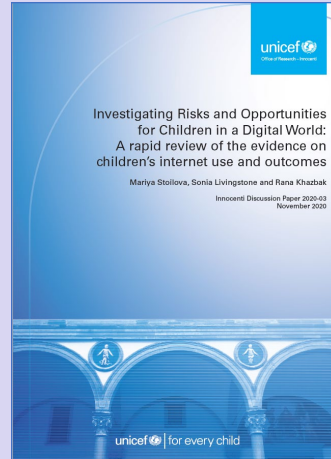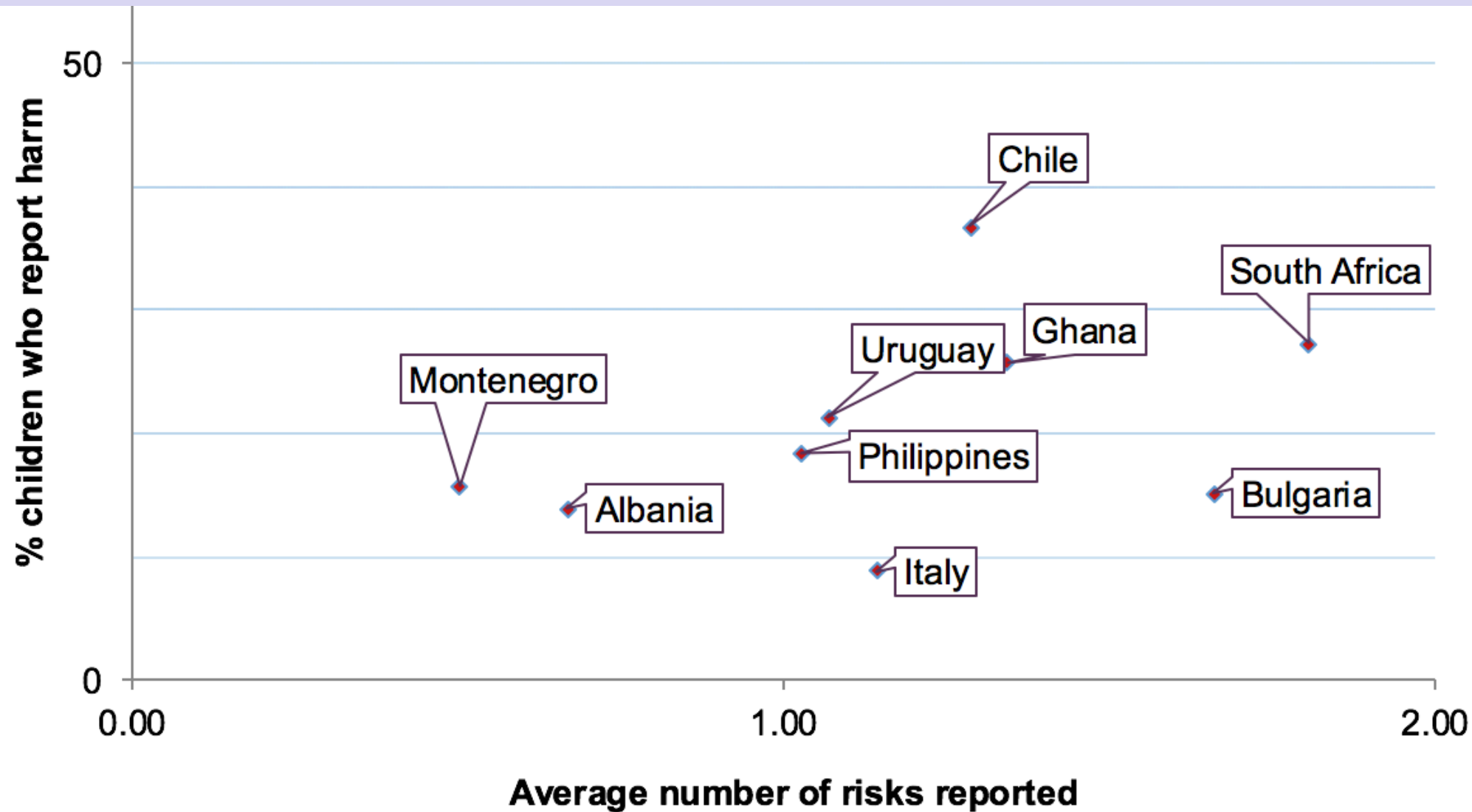
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Comparative report

November 2019

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LSE Media and Communications

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Kenya
Tanzania
Zambia
Mozambique
Namibia
South Africa

China
India
Thailand
Viet Nam
Cambodia
Malaysia
Philippines
Indonesia
New Zealand

GKO   Disrupting Harm   Both

Disclaimer: This map is stylized and not to scale. The information shown on this map does not imply official recognition or endorsement of and physical, political boundaries or feature names…

Comparative data are informative

Exposure to ● hate messages ● violent/gory images

Data from 42,362 internet users aged 12-16 years from 36 countries who took part in Disrupting Harm, EU Kids Online or Global Kids Online between 2016-2021: "In the past year, have you seen online content or online discussions with any of these things: a) Hate messages that attack certain groups or individuals (e.g., people of different religion, nationality, or sexuality); b) Gory or violent images."

Pathways from risk to harm – or wellbeing

Measurement challenges – and resources

GLOBAL KIDS ONLINE

Tools for researchers

Research results

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Q1 Access: Are you able to access the internet when you want to or need to? Frequency scale.

Q2 Barriers: How often do you experience these things? Frequency of 11 possible barriers to internet access.

Q3: Frequency: How often do you go online or use the internet at the following places? School, home, somewhere else.

Q4 Devices: How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? Mobile phone, computer, tablet, console or TV.

Q5 Activities: How often have you done these things online or on a phone in the past MONTH? 15 activities (learning, civic, creative, social, etc)

Q6 Skills: How true are these things for you? Self-rating for 10 operational, informational, social, creative and mobile digital skills.

Q7 Harm: In the PAST YEAR, how often, if ever, has anything happened online or on a phone that bothered or upset you in some way?
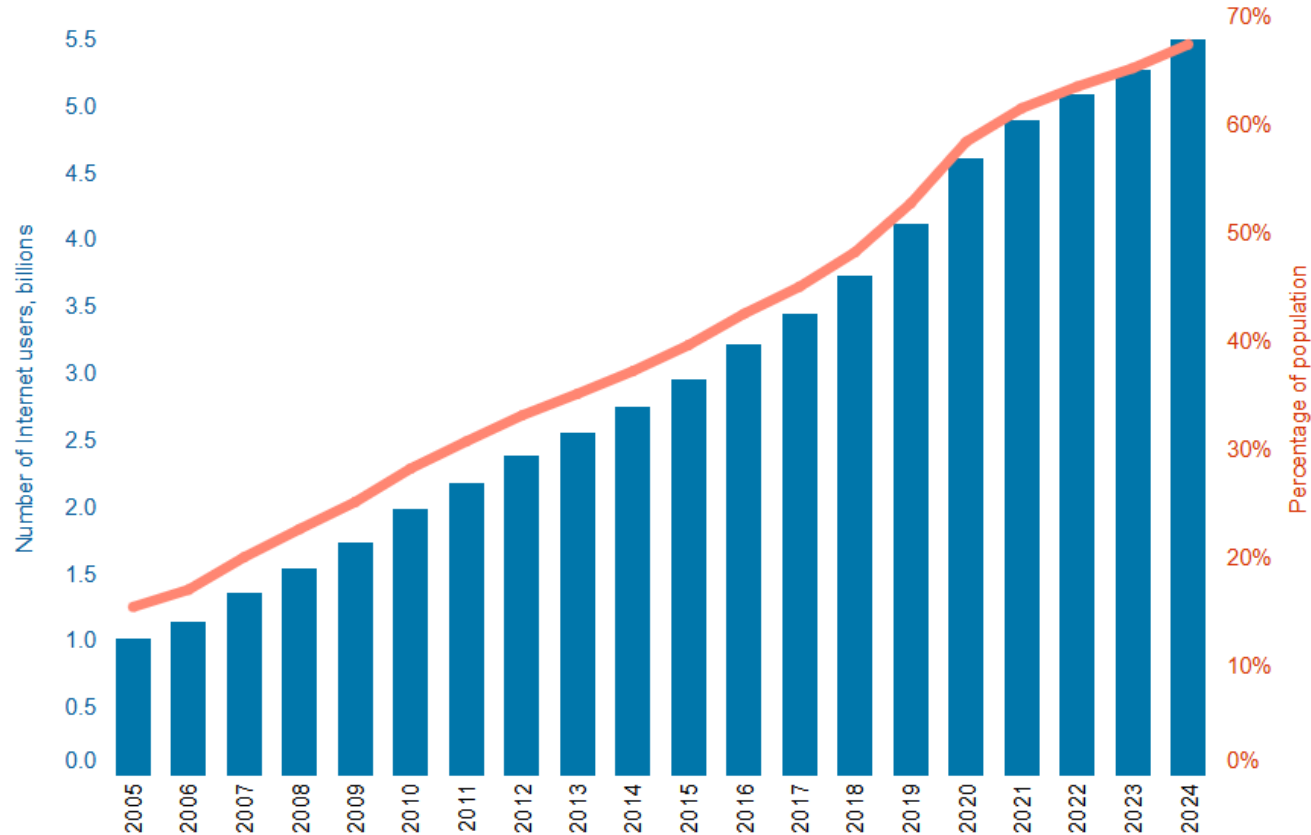
Q8: Risks: In the PAST YEAR, has any of the following happened to you on the internet or on a phone? List of 7 risks. **Q9 Risk frequency**

Q10 Excessive use: Frequency of 5 options (missed meals or sleep, family conflict, dropped grades, etc.).
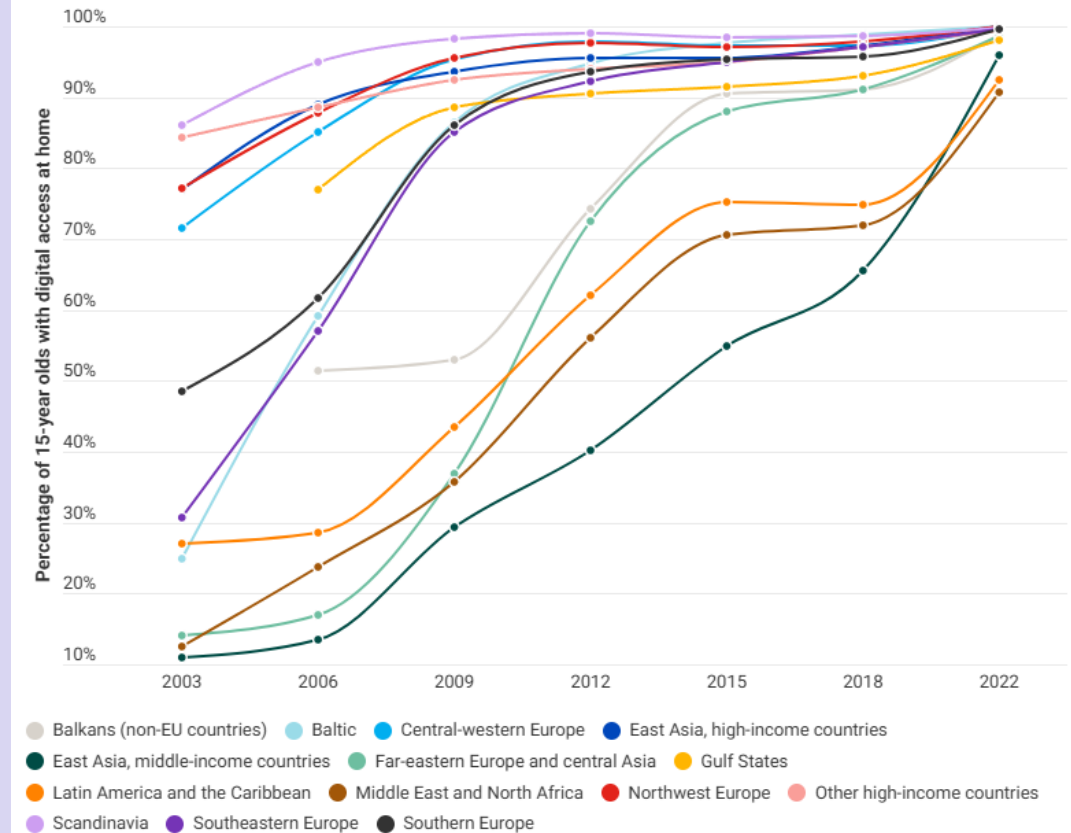
Q11 Social support: Last time something happened online or on a phone that bothered or upset you, did you talk to (11 types of) people?

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Keeping up with a changing digital landscape
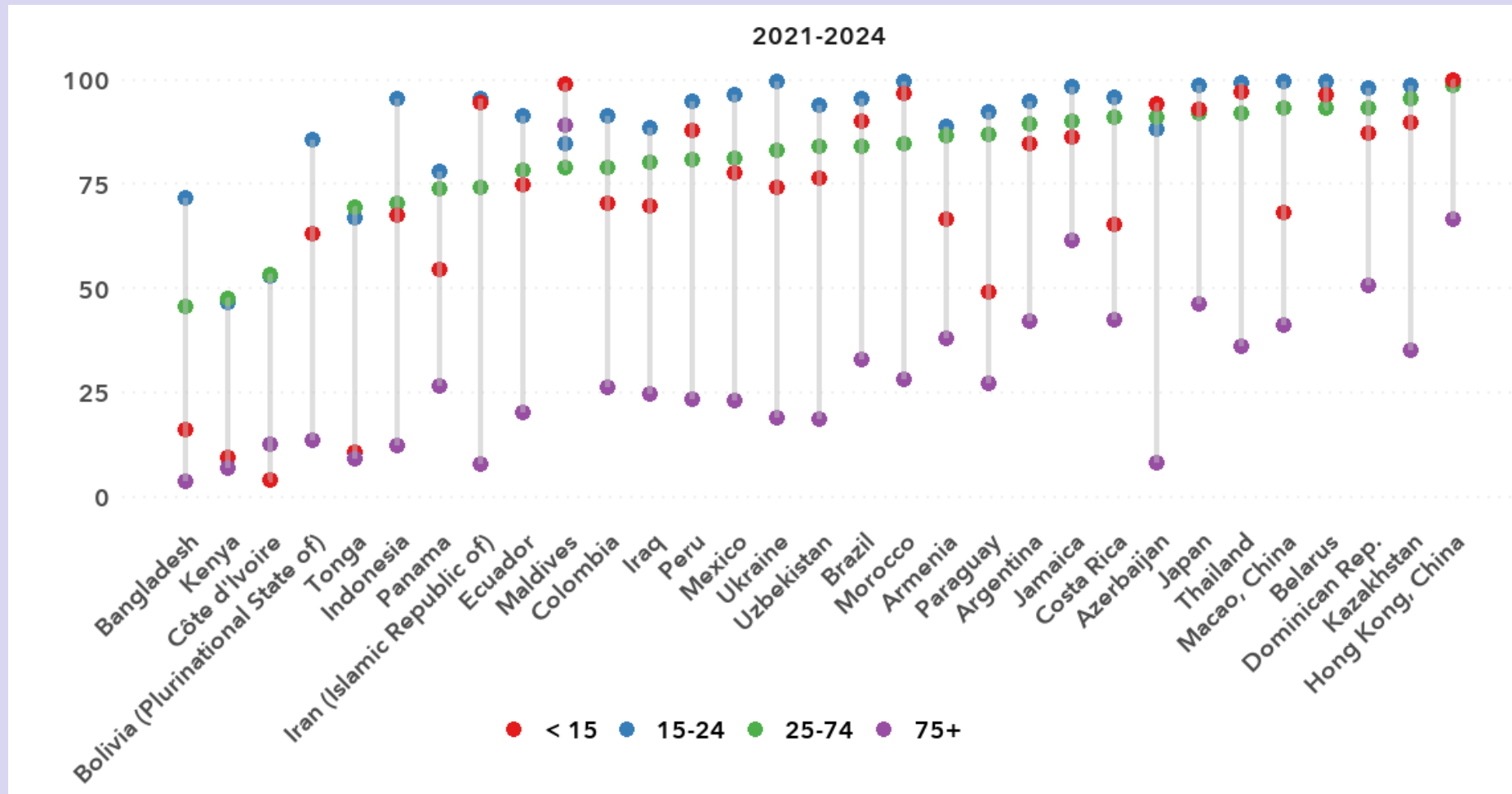

Individuals using the Internet

Regional averages of digital access at home among 15-year-olds

Note: The regions are the authors' based on data trends.
Source: Authors' analysis on data from 78 countries, areas and territories participating in the OECD PISA study.

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Few countries measure children's internet use

Note: Data are from the latest year with data available in the given period. Countries are ordered by Internet use for 25-74-year-olds in 2021-2024. Only countries with data on Internet use for children under 15 (3+, 6+, 10+, 14+) in 2021-2024 are included.

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Conclusions

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