

**SAFER INTERNET
FOR CHILDREN
QUALITATIVE STUDY
IN 29 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
NATIONAL ANALYSIS : MALTA**

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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OPTEM
74, chemin de la FerMe des Bois
78950 Gambais – France
Tel : +33 (0) 134 871 823 – Fax : +33 (0) 134 871 783
E mail : optem@optem.fr

MISCO INTERNATIONAL
Regency House, Floor 3
Republic Street
VALLETTA VLT 04
MALTA

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INTRODUCTION

❖ The European Commission – Directorate-General Information Society and Media - has commissioned OPTEM and its European partners to carry out a qualitative study on the subject “Safer Internet for Children”⁽¹⁾.

❖ **This study covers 29 countries** (the 27 Member States, as well as Iceland and Norway) and **it involves children :**

- Boys aged 9 to 10 years
- Girls aged 9 to 10 years
- Boys aged 12 to 14 years
- Girls aged 12 to 14 years

all of whom have the possibility to access the Internet (although not necessarily at their home place) and use it at least once per month.

❖ **It aims at improving knowledge about :**

- **Internet usage by children, as well as mobile phone usage** (by those who own a mobile phone)
- **Their on-line behaviour**
- **Their perceptions of risk and safety related questions**

The results of the study are to be used to contribute to designing the Safer Internet Programme, and to increase the impact of awareness building actions.

❖ The **methodology used is that of group discussions** – with, in each country, four groups of children (one in each of the above categories).

❖ **This report constitutes the national analysis of results of the section of the study conducted in Malta by MISCO International, the permanent member of the above-mentioned network of partners.**

❖ It includes, in the Annexes

- The composition of the groups
- The discussion guide used by the moderators

(1) Study conducted under the aegis of the Framework Contract Eurobarometer “Qualitative Studies”, set up and managed by Directorate-General Communication A/4.

CHAPTER I

THE INTERNET AND INTERNET APPLICATIONS

I.1 LEARNING TO USE THE INTERNET

- ❖ Respondents were asked to point out how they had learnt to use the internet. Across all groups the majority pointed out that there was an element of induction from parents or older relatives. After some time the respondents claimed to have been left to learn how to use the internet on their own. However there were certain respondents who pointed out that they learnt how to use the internet mostly on their own steam.

“I learnt how to use the internet on my own. My parents didn’t really know how to use it so I’d teach them a few things myself.” (Boys group,12 to 14)

- ❖ It is worth noting that the respondents in the older age groups (both boys and girls) there were a few respondents who mentioned that they learnt how to use the internet by watching friends use the internet. This point was not raised by either one of the younger groups.

- ❖ Very few respondents mentioned that they had learnt how to use the internet from school. This source however in most cases would be paired either with experimentation or further instruction from third parties

“I had learnt from the people around me (e.g. parents and friends) and also from school”
(Girls group,12 to 14)

“I had first experimented on the computer at school and then we got internet at home and I continued to learn alone.” (Boys group,12 to 14)

I.2 INTENSITY OF USAGE

- ❖ The respondents were asked how often they used the internet. The usage seemed to be somewhat more intense amongst the older groups both in the case of boys and girls. The majority of respondents in fact claimed to use the internet daily mostly for between 1 and 2 hours a day. However, there were a couple of respondents who mentioned spending anything between 2 and 3 hours of internet use everyday.
- ❖ On the other hand, in the younger groups none of the boys aged 9 to 10 stated that they used the internet everyday. The maximum frequency of use mentioned by this group was up to three times a week for not longer than an hour. Other respondents in this group mentioned logging on to the internet once a week or so. One of the respondents mentioned using the internet on occasions where research for school projects is necessary.
- ❖ A number of respondents in the 9 to 10 years group mentioned that they had a tendency to use the internet more during weekends and holidays. As was the case for the 9 to 10 year old males the majority of respondents claimed that they did not exceed using the internet for more than an hour.

I.3 DEGREE OF FREEDOM IN USING THE INTERNET

- ❖ In all the groups, except for the Girls aged 12 to 14 years, the respondents mentioned that one of the restrictions imposed by parents was to use the internet after the homework and study work for the day have been finished.
- ❖ Excessive use of the internet or excessive downloads was also a restriction which was imposed by parents.
- ❖ One boy and one girl (aged 12 to 14 years) stated that the access to internet was limited to after a certain time of day.
- ❖ One of the 9 to 10 year old boys pointed out that other family members would need to use the internet and for this reason the use of internet is somewhat limited. Also mentioned by the 9 to 10 year old boys was the fact that they had to request permission to actually turn the computer on.
- ❖ In the girls group, 9 to 10 and the boys group, 12 to 14 it was mentioned that access to inappropriate sites was explicitly forbidden. In fact, one of the male respondents mentioned that the internet at home was filtered.
- ❖ For the girls group, 9 to 10 years two of the respondents mentioned using the internet in the presence of an older sibling *“because there are things which I do not know how to use”* (Girls group, 9 to 10). This method was also mentioned to be a means to avoid downloading harmful viruses.
- ❖ The Girls aged 12 to 14 years mentioned that there were no explicit rules in relation to internet usage. However it was pointed out that excessive usage was not tolerated. The respondents felt that there was no need to impose any regulations for the use of internet and in case they did they would be quite disappointed.
- ❖ One of the respondents in particular pointed out that the use of internet was prohibited as a means of punishment. However the respondent admitted to finding means to still gain access *“When my mother would be resting I would turn the computer on and use it anyways”*. (Girls group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ In the younger discussion groups, respondents seemed to agree that the restrictions imposed by their parents although unpleasant were to an extent necessary *“At that point in time you don’t really agree with them but then you know that they are telling you things which are for your own good”*. (Boys group, 9 to 10).
- ❖ The girls aged 12 to 14 felt that there was no need to impose any regulations for the use of internet and in case they did they would be quite disappointed. The 12 to 14 year old boys expressed a lack of agreement with the rules implemented by the parents
“They have an old mentality” (Boys group, 12 to 14)
“I don’t see anything wrong with logging on for an hour before starting homework and another 2 hours after homework...Of course I think it’s important to do your homework as well” (Boys group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ One of the respondents pointed out that he agreed with his parents’ concern to avoid certain inappropriate sites. It was also thought to be beneficial to avoid spending too much time at the computer to avoid eye strain.

I.4 SPECIFIC INTERNET APPLICATIONS

	Girls 9-10	Boys 9-10	Girls 12-14	Boys 12-14	Total
Searching for information as a part of my school work	4/4	3/4	4/4	7/1	18/13
Searching for information on subjects which interest me/surfing for fun	6/2	3/5	6/1	4/4	19/12
Sending and receiving emails	3/2	3/1	4/3	6/2	16/8
Using instant messaging (MSN)/chatting with friends	1/5	1/2	0/5	1/6	3/18
Engage in open chatrooms	1/2	1/0	3/0	4/0	9/2
Creating my own blog/homepage and posting my own texts, photos, music on the Internet	1/1	1/1	2/1	2/1	6/4
Reading and responding to friends'blogs/homepages	4/1	0/0	1/2	5/0	10/0
Reading and responding to blogs/homepages of someone I have never met	0/1	0/0	2/0	2/0	4/1
Playing on-line games	3/4	0/7	3/3	4/4	10/18
Downloading music, films, videos, games or other files	4/3	2/1	5/3	5/3	16/10
Sharing files (music, films, videos, games or others)	3/2	1/0	4/0	4/2	12/4
Sharing photos	4/2	2/0	2/1	4/1	12/4
Downloading ring tones/images for my mobile phone	0/0	2/0	1/0	5/0	8/0
Taking part in competitions	1/0	2/0	0/0	0/0	3/0
Making phone calls through the Internet	2/0	0/0	0/0	0/1	0/1
Total	37/29	21/21	37/23	53/25	148/98

❖ As indicated in the list above the applications which are mostly used by respondents are the following:

- Searching for information as a part of school work.

In the Boys group 9 to 10, respondents mentioned that the use of internet for schoolwork purposes was easy and fast to find the necessary information. Moreover the internet was considered to be useful to find pictures for school projects.

A substantial number of respondents in the Girls 12 to 14 group, claimed to use the internet in order to find information for school projects. When the respondents were asked why they resorted to this method, the respondents claimed that “*It avoided going through the books*” (Girls group, 12 to 14) and “*There’s a lot of websites one can choose from*” (Girls group, 12 to 14)

- Searching for information on subjects which are considered to be interesting/surfing for fun

For the same reasons as the previous point mentioned.

- Sending and receiving emails

It is worth noting that this application was more popular amongst the 12 to 14 year olds. However, it was not rated as one of the applications that were **very** frequently used.

- Using instant messaging (MSN)/chatting with friends

MSN was one of the favourite internet programmes amongst respondents across all groups. This method of communication was preferred a lot more than engaging in open chat rooms “*Because you give your email address only to your friends*” (Girls group, 12 to 14). Moreover, respondents felt that MSN was very useful during the holidays to keep in touch with friends.

The Girls in the 9 to 10 group had different reasons for their preference to MSN. One of the girls mentioned that she liked to use MSN because she enjoyed typing. Another respondent’s reason attributed to the use of this programme was because she enjoyed talking to other people. It is worth noting that one of the respondents mentioned that she preferred chatting online with her friends because “*We feel more comfortable sharing our experiences on MSN rather than face-to-face*” (Girls group, 9 to 10)

- Playing on-line games

One of the 9 to 10 year old girls mentioned that she enjoyed playing online because she could play against children from foreign countries. The 9 to 10 year old boys expressed that they greatly enjoyed playing online games. In fact this can be seen very clearly in the count presented in the previous table.

- Downloading music, films, videos, games or other files

The use of these applications was more predominant amongst the older respondents. However there were a number of girls aged 9 to 10 who claimed that they used the internet for this purpose.

CHAPTER II
MOBILE PHONE AND MOBILE PHONE USAGE

II.1 MOBILE PHONE USAGE

- ❖ All of the respondents in the 12 to 14 year old groups owned a mobile.
- ❖ In the 9 to 10 years boys group, 4 out of 8 respondents owned a mobile phone. The respondents who owned a mobile in the 9 to 10 boys group claimed that they used their mobiles mostly to call their parents when necessary *“I call my mother after music lessons so that she can come for me”* (Boys group, 9 to 10)
- ❖ In the 9 to 10 years girls group on the other hand, there was only one respondent who owned a mobile. This respondent claimed to use her mobile to *“Call my mother in case something crops up”* (Girls group, 9 to 10) and sometimes messaging friends about homework. However the respondent stated that she sometimes leaves her mobile at home and doesn’t carry it around with her all the time.
- ❖ The respondents who did not own a mobile in the 9 to 10 age group stated that their parents believed that they were still too young to own a mobile. In certain cases the parents promised a mobile to the children as a reward for achieving commendable results at school. The reasons which were provided by the girls and boys in this age group were exactly the same.
- ❖ A point which was common for the boys aged 9 to 10 and those aged 12 to 14 was that the use of SMS seemed to be more for communication with friends rather than with parents. *“I usually message my friends and call my mother...I message my friends because if I had to call all the time I would be broke...and I call my mother because she doesn’t understand the shortcuts which I use when I write a message”* (Boys group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ It is worth noting that there was a mention by one of the 12 to 14 year old girls to use the mobile to occasionally take photos and videos and sending and receiving them. This point was not spontaneously brought up in any of the other groups.

	Girls 9-10	Boys 9-10	Girls 12-14	Boys 12-14	Total
Making and receiving phone calls	N/A	3/1	4/4	1/6	8/11
Sending/receiving SMSs	N/A	1/2	0/8	0/7	1/17
Taking photos/images	N/A	3/1	1/4	3/1	7/6
Sending/receiving/sharing images	N/A	2/1	4/0	4/2	10/3
Connecting to the Internet through my mobile phone	N/A	1/0	1/0	3/2	5/2
Total	N/A	10/5	10/16	11/18	31/39

- ❖ The 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned that they didn’t usually use the MMS function on their mobile phones. One respondent in particular stated that he was more likely to receive photos rather than to send them. Some of the respondents stated that they took photos using their parents’ mobiles but they did not send them to anyone as their parents prohibited them to do so. The respondents also mentioned that they did not have the facility to log on to the internet from their mobiles.

- ❖ Very few 12 to 14 year old boys claimed that they used the MMS and Internet service to send pictures to their friends. One of the respondents however claimed to share pictures by using the mobile's Bluetooth because it is free. Some of the respondents who use neither of these services claimed it was because they did not have the facility to do so on their mobiles.

- ❖ The girls aged 12 to 14 claimed that they do not usually log on to the internet or use the chatting functions on their mobiles particularly due to the fact that these services are considered to be expensive

II.2. DEGREE OF FREEDOM IN USING MOBILE PHONES

- ❖ The girl in the 9 to 10 year old group who owned a mobile mentioned that the mobile was meant to be used only when absolutely necessary.
- ❖ The boys in the 9 to 10 group who owned a mobile phone claimed that their restrictions with regard to mobile phone use were mostly related to the volume of usage “*My mother tells me that she will not top up my credit before a particular date*” (Boys group, 9 to 10). Moreover it was also mentioned that the mobile phone was meant to be turned off during study time.
- ❖ The majority of the respondents agreed that the restrictions that were imposed upon them were reasonable. One of the respondents did not agree with the regulations due to a desire to use the mobile phone at leisure.
- ❖ None of the 12 to 14 year old girls or boys mentioned any restrictions related to mobile phone use.

CHAPTER III
PERCEPTIONS OF INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE
RELATED PROBLEMS AND RISKS

III.1. SPONTANEOUS MENTIONS OF PROBLEMS AND RISKS

- ❖ Many of the respondents mentioned that a possible risk related to internet use is logging into chat rooms *“You can log into a chat room and the person you meet there starts to ask you for certain information...like for example at what time does your mother go out to work? At what time does she come back?...When we won’t be at home? When we’re going abroad? If you give them the information they can break into your house”* (Boys group, 9 to 10)
- ❖ In all of the groups the respondents mentioned that there was the risk related to receiving harmful viruses. The respondents also mentioned pop ups, hacking and spy ware as major risks when using the internet
- ❖ One of the boys in the 9 to 10 year old group also mentioned that there was the risk related to playing games which request credit card details.
- ❖ One of the girls in the 9 to 10 year old group stated sometimes receiving emails which are frightening.
- ❖ In the 9 to 10 years girls group a couple of respondents mentioned the possibility of going into inappropriate sites *“Sometimes I’m afraid that I will type the name of a website wrongly and I’d end up in a site which is not good for me...in fact if I am given a paper (with the address on it) I check it and re-check it to make sure that I typed it in well.”* (Girls group, 9 to 10). The 9 to 10 year old girls mentioned that when given a website address they double check with the person who gave the address that the site is genuinely good.
- ❖ A couple of respondents mentioned that they had learnt about these problems or risks from school (one of the 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned a talk which was once organised by the school). Another 9 to 10 year old boy mentioned that he had heard something about the problems related to the credit card details from the radio.
- ❖ A couple of respondents mentioned having got to know about certain problems by word of mouth from friends or family.
- ❖ With reference to possible problems related to mobile phone use one of the 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned that *“Maybe someone will get your number and call you with an anonymous number and he can threaten to kill you for example”* (Boys group, 9 to 10). Another respondent mentioned that there was the possibility of a misunderstanding when sending a message which could lead to a fight with someone.
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old girls mentioned the possibility of a virus being sent to one’s mobile. Anonymous phone calls were also mentioned. One of the respondents also mentioned that one had to be careful who they gave their number to as it could be given out carelessly. The 12 to 14 year old boys on the other hand did not think that there were any problems or risks related to using this service.
- ❖ As a means of precaution the 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned paying extra attention to the sites that are used. Moreover the respondents claimed that they resorted to asking someone older in case of difficulty *“I usually tell my mother or my father in which sites I am planning to go into, many times they remain beside me while I’m using the interne...if I’m alone and I see something strange I call my father to come and help me”* (Boys group, 9 to 10).

- ❖ The girls aged 12 to 14, although aware of the possible risks and problems associated with using internet and mobiles did not give enough weight to such problems to change the way they use either one of these services.
- ❖ The boys aged 12 to 14 were not too concerned about the risks which they mentioned to be related to internet use. The respondents in this age group thought there was not much they could do to avoid viruses and in case of someone requesting personal information it was thought to be obvious that one would not answer such questions.
- ❖ With reference to the use of mobile phones, one of the 9 to 10 year old boys stated that if an unknown number shows up, the phone is turned off immediately. Another respondent claimed that if a strange number shows up on the mobile phone either one of the parents is informed.

III.2 PROBLEMS AND RISKS RELATED TO SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS

Internet Applications

	Girls 9-10	Boys 9-10	Girls 12-14	Boys 12-14	Total
Searching for information as a part of my school work	2/2	2/1	1/0	7/0	12/3
Searching for information on subjects which interest me/surfing for fun	1/3	2/0	3/0	4/1	10/4
Sending and receiving emails	3/5	3/5	4/3	5/3	15/16
Using instant messaging (MSN)/chatting with friends	1/3	2/5	6/1	1/1	10/10
Engage in open chatrooms	2/6	2/6	2/6	2/4	8/22
Creating my own blog/homepage and posting my own texts, photos, music on the Internet	2/2	3/4	2/2	3/0	10/8
Reading and responding to friends' blogs/homepages	2/3	7/1	2/1	3/0	14/5
Reading and responding to blogs/homepages of someone I have never met	0/7	2/5	1/5	2/3	5/20
Playing on-line games	3/0	6/0	5/0	4/1	18/1
Downloading music, films, videos, games or other files	3/2	5/2	5/2	3/5	16/11
Sharing files (music, films, videos, games or others)	2/2	3/4	4/0	4/2	13/8
Sharing photos	4/2	3/3	4/2	4/1	15/8
Downloading ring tones/images for my mobile phone	3/1	3/2	3/0	4/0	13/3
Taking part in competitions	2/1	3/5	1/0	2/2	8/8
Making phone calls through the Internet	2/3	3/4	2/0	1/0	8/7
Total	32/42	49/47	45/22	49/23	175/134

Mobile phone applications

	Girls 9-10	Boys 9-10	Girls 12-14	Boys 12-14	Total
Making and receiving phone calls	1/2	7/1	6/0	3/0	17/3
Sending/receiving SMSs	1/2	4/4	5/0	3/0	13/6
Taking photos/images	3/1	4/0	0/0	2/0	9/1
Sending/receiving/sharing images	3/3	1/7	2/3	3/0	9/13
Connecting to the Internet through my mobile phone	2/3	8/0	1/2	4/0	15/5
Total	10/11	24/12	14/5	15/0	63/28

❖ The following are the comments which the respondents presented as possible problems relating to the use of internet applications featuring in the presented lists.

- Searching for information as a part of my school work

Misspelling a word and going into an inappropriate site or innocently typing the correct word and inappropriate websites come up.

There are many distractions on the internet “*I would be looking for something for a school project I could see another site which makes me curious and I would go into it instead*” (Girls group, 9 to 10)

Coming across irrelevant information “*Sometimes you don’t manage to find the information you are looking for*” (Boys group, 12 to 14)

- Searching for information on subjects which interest me/surfing for fun

The same points as above were raised.

- Sending and receiving emails

The disadvantages of using this application include receiving inappropriate or anonymous emails as well as receiving viruses, spam and chain letters

- Using instant messaging (MSN)/chatting with friends

The 12 to 14 year old girls mentioned that having an image of you available to others could be a possible risk related to the use of MSN. The 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned that one risked receiving viruses through MSN. One of the 9 to 10 year old boys believed that one can cause fights over the internet “*Someone may tell you that someone else called you names*” (Boys group, 9 to 10). Another respondent in this group mentioned that one might have added strangers to MSN and they can see you over the webcam. One of the respondents counter argued that in MSN you only add the people that you want to add and you only turn the camera on when you want to.

- Engage in open chatrooms

The respondents mentioned that it was risky to talk to strangers because one was vulnerable to being deceived “*You don’t know the people you are chatting with, so they may be good and honest people but they may be people who pretend to be my age but in reality are older and in their minds they have bad intentions that may be harmful to me.*” (Girls group, 9 to 10)

The 12 to 14 year old boys also mentioned that sometimes there is bullying as well.

- Creating my own blog/homepage and posting my own texts, photos, music on the Internet

The respondents in all groups mentioned that their concern for the use of such an application would be to having photos being available to people you do not know for them to do whatever they want with them.

- Reading and responding to friends’ blogs/homepages

The 12 to 14 year old girls did not really perceive too many problems involved with this application. Their male counterparts mentioned that there was the possibility of retrieving viruses.

- Reading and responding to blogs/homepages of someone I have never met

The respondents believed that interacting with strangers may lead to getting into trouble. The respondents mentioned the possibility of being manipulated by the people speaking to you “*You would think that they are your friends when in reality they wouldn’t be your friends at all*” (Boys group, 12 to 14)

❖ For the rest of the items on the list presented the respondents mentioned that the applications in question were a possible channel for viruses, pop ups and hacking. Additionally in the case of competitions the 12 to 14 year old boys mentioned that they could be an excuse to obtain personal information.

❖ The following are the comments which the respondents presented as possible problems relating to the use of mobile applications featuring in the presented lists.

- Making and receiving phone calls.

The problem that was associated with this application was that of receiving anonymous calls. “*If someone calls you with a private number you would have to turn off the mobile because of that person, because the person can call you asking to meet them*” (Girls group, 9 to 10)

- Sending/receiving SMSs

The older girls mentioned that one could receive viruses. The 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned that people can send rude words via SMS. Another problem which was brought up by the male respondents in both groups was that SMSs could lead to misunderstandings between people.

- Taking photos/images

The respondents did not perceive that this could cause any problems

- Sending/receiving/sharing images

The respondents mentioned that the risk of using such an application could be having an image of you available to others. *“Sometimes even if you share things with people you know, they can make fun of you”* (Boys group 9 to 10). Moreover there was the possibility of receiving inappropriate pictures.

- Connecting to the Internet through my mobile phone

The respondents associated this application with it being a money wasting activity which could lead to getting a virus.

CHAPTER IV
REACTIONS TO THE PRESENTATION OF SIX
CATEGORIES OF PROBLEMS AND RISKS

IV.1. TRUTHFULNESS OF INFORMATION FOUND ON THE INTERNET

- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old boys did not recall being in a situation whereby the information which was provided from the internet was untrue. “*A possible problem is that the information is outdated*” (Boys group 12 to 14) However, one of the respondents pointed out that particularly when carrying out some research for a school project more than one site is resorted to, in order to compare the content. The internet was considered to be a useful means of getting information because of the visuals that it offered. Although the respondents in this group did not seem to believe that the internet could provide inaccurate information they stated that having incorrect information could have a negative impact particularly with regard to school project work.
- ❖ The boys and girls aged 9 to 10 believed that there was the possibility of finding incorrect information on the internet. This was thought to have repercussions particularly “*For an adult who would have been looking for something for a long time and once that information is found it would be incorrect which might have serious repercussions...at school you’d be asked to simply do a correction*” (Boys group 9 to 10) or perhaps *for someone who is looking for information for a project which leads to ‘O’ Levels*” (Girls group 9 to 10)
- ❖ A number of both boys and girls aged 9 to 10 went on to say that they would rather look for information from the internet not because they thought it was more or less credible than other source of information but because it was a faster and more pleasant way to look up information “*When you’re looking for information from the internet it would be almost like you’re playing, books can be boring.*” (Boys group 9 to 10). One of the respondents believed that a lot of what was written in books would have been found off the internet anyways and was perceived to contain a larger volume of information than books. Two respondents in the Girls group 9 to 10, mentioned that the information gathered would be both from books as well as from the internet.
- ❖ The internet was also considered to be more accessible than books “*What do you do if you don’t have the book you need...you cannot say that you don’t have the book and you’d have to go to a library to find the information you need*” (Boys group 9 to 10).
- ❖ Neither the girls aged 12 to 14 have been in a situation whereby the information that was collected from the internet was incorrect. However, the respondents perceived that one should not believe entirely all the information that is found on the internet and that one needed to use the tool wisely. One of the respondents mentioned that one should be able to tell whether the information that was found is correct or not “*For example I have a school project about air...we have already done a couple of lessons on the subject so I should be able to tell if the information that I found from the internet is not good*” (Girls group 12 to 14)
- ❖ In this respect, the girls aged 12 to 14 unlike their male counterparts stated they felt more comfortable looking up information in books rather than from the internet when working on a project. The consequence of this problem was considered to be getting a bad grade on the project in question.

IV.2. POTENTIALLY SHOCKING CONTENTS

- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old boys mentioned that sometimes “*you could be downloading some music and at the same time these pop ups could come up with indecent pictures.*” (Boys group, 12 to 14). One of the respondents mentioned that some search engines provide a short description of the content. However, sometimes the description provided does not give an indication of inappropriate material thus leading to entering into indecent sites.
- ❖ It is worth noting that a few 12 to 14 year old boys knew that by deleting the history of the sites which they would have gone into there would have been no evidence of entering inappropriate sites. However having said this the respondents claimed that if they happened to be in such a situation they would either block the site or take note of it so as to never go into it again.
- ❖ Boys aged 9 to 10 seemed to be quite familiar with this problem. A couple of respondents mentioned that they knew people who had gotten into trouble because they had accessed inappropriate sites. The respondents mentioned that going into such sites could lead to unpleasant consequences. The respondents stated that if they encountered one of these sites they would immediately close the window without giving second thoughts and their advice to their friends would be to do the same.
- ❖ The girls aged 9 to 10 also seemed familiar with this problem. One of the respondents mentioned that being exposed to such sites could have a negative influence on people as they would seek things that are wrong as they grow up.
- ❖ A number of 9 to 10 year old girls mentioned that they had encountered certain sites with inappropriate content. The respondents stated that as a consequence they simply abandoned the site. One of the respondents mentioned that she had informed her mother about this experience. Another girl mentioned that she only went into sites which were recommended by family members and for this reason never encountered such problems.
- ❖ The girls aged 12 to 14 believed that the existence of inappropriate sites could have harmful effects. One of the respondents mentioned that these effects are obvious “*Especially for children who are younger than us, such things may influence them badly*” (Girls group, 12 to 14). One of the respondents went on to say that such harmful effects are not limited to younger children “*It depends on how mature you are. If I go into a site like the ones you mentioned I’d know that it would be wrong*” (Girls group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ The girls in the 12 to 14 discussion group mentioned situations whereby they or their younger siblings were exposed to inappropriate sites. In such cases the respondents claimed that they would close or block the site in question. Only one of the respondents stated that when exposed to such a situation she had told her mother about it. The rest of the respondents mentioned that they would deal with the situation themselves.

IV.3. POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS CONTACTS

- ❖ The girls aged 9 to 10 seemed to be well aware of the possibility of such risks of the internet. In fact one of the respondents mentioned that she had heard of a girl who had gone through a similar experience as the one described. The respondent mentioned that this girl had met up a person who she had made friends with in a chat room. The respondent mentioned that the person she was chatting with was taking drugs and ended up giving the drugs to the formerly mentioned girl.
- ❖ One of the 9 to 10 year old girls mentioned that one could avoid getting into such situations because for example one must agree to add someone to their MSN friend's list. Chat rooms were perceived to be a means that could lead to certain problems and are altogether avoided.
- ❖ In the Girls group (9 to 10 years), the respondents believed that in the eventuality of such a situation they would recommend to speak to an adult (primarily parents) who could help them get out of a situation. One of the respondents also mentioned that one can also resort to the police.
- ❖ The boys aged 9 to 10 also pointed out that they would not be likely to add someone they did not know to their MSN. The respondents mentioned that they would not send out information or pictures of themselves to strangers. The respondents stated that if one of their friends got into such a situation they would advise them not to meet the person and to inform their parents about the incident immediately.
- ❖ One of the boys aged 9 to 10 mentioned that there was the option of agreeing to the meeting and call the police to inform them about the situation. Another two respondents mentioned that if someone asked them to meet somewhere, they would ask their parents to go with them to meet the person. One of the respondents pointed out that in such cases *"If one pays attention to the information that he is giving you, you will notice that it doesn't make sense."* (Boys group, 9 to 10). This respondent believed that certain questions could be asked in order to find out about the true identity of the person.
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old boys also stated that they had never been in such a situation since the majority of them claimed that they did not usually sign into chat rooms. One of the respondents mentioned an episode where a prank had been played on a friend of his *"I had a friend who thought he was speaking to a girl. In reality the person he was speaking to was another friend of mine...he told the first guy to meet him in Valletta and he went, but obviously there was nobody there to meet him."* (Boys group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old boys stated that if they had to be in such a situation they would block the person they would be speaking to on MSN if they sensed something that was not quite right. Another option mentioned was to add the person concerned onto MSN so as to have a video call to make sure about the identity of the person.
- ❖ In the 12 to 14 year old groups there were respondents mentioned that they would meet the person who asked for a meeting only if it was someone who they knew in person, or if their friends knew the person concerned. Otherwise none of the respondents seemed to be inclined to meet a stranger.
- ❖ One of the 12 to 14 year old girls stated that she would not be likely under any circumstance to meet with a stranger.

- ❖ None of the male 12 to 14 year old respondents would have resorted to an adult's counsel in such a situation. Whereas only two of their female counterparts claimed that they would inform their parents about meeting someone who was met over the internet. The other respondents claimed that they would inform their friends but not their parents.
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old girls did not exclude the possibility that someone met in a chat room could have bad intentions. However, one of the respondents pointed out that one is usually able to tell from the conversations that take place and the questions that are asked on the internet what the person's intentions are. If the intentions are perceived to be bad the respondents claimed that they would terminate all communication with the person concerned. Some of the respondents stated that they would be likely to inform their mother about the situation.

IV.4. BULLYING

- ❖ One of the 12 to 14 year old boys mentioned a situation whereby something was stolen from one of his friends. The respondent claimed that he and his friends knew who the culprit was and made plans on MSN to confront the person concerned. The confrontation did in fact occur and in doing so the person had returned that which had been stolen. Another respondent mentioned that he knew of people who had discussed on MSN how they were going to go about getting rid of a group member. The respondents admitted that sometimes they planned pranks via MSN. The respondents acknowledged that such behaviour could lead to someone getting offended “*If the prank is taken seriously*” (Boys group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old boys mentioned that even if they would be the victim they would not resort to help from an adult “*If I was being talked against, I would talk against the person myself*” (Boys group, 12 to 14). Another reaction mentioned was taking matters into ones own hands “*I would confront the person on MSN myself*” (Boys group, 12 to 14) or “*I would block that person if he’s on my friends list*” (Boys group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ Two of the 12 to 14 year old girls mentioned that they witnessed a fight between two girls which was taking place on MSN. These respondents stated that they simply did not take sides with anyone of them and let them sort the situation out between themselves. Another respondent stated that if she was caught up in a fight over the internet she would encourage face-to-face communication rather than a conversation on MSN. The respondents stated that if they would get caught in such a situation they would simply ignore what was happening.
- ❖ Another respondent in the Girls 12 to 14 year old group mentioned at a later stage during the discussion that she had been in a situation where she had fought with a friend who as a means of revenge gave out her personal email address to older cousins who would annoy her on MSN. In order to rectify the situation the respondent mentioned that she changed her MSN address.
- ❖ Even the 9 to 10 year old girls believed that this was an existing problem related to the use of MSN. One of the respondents mentioned that she had been in a situation where there was a boy in her class who had her MSN address who would say nasty things about a friend of hers in an MSN conversation. The respondent claimed to have confronted the boy herself. The respondents claimed that their means to rectify such a situation would be by blocking the contact of the person who was causing harm.
- ❖ The 9 to 10 year old boys claimed that they had never experienced online bullying but they were convinced that this situation was very real. Some of the respondents mentioned that if they knew someone who was in such a situation they would advise them to inform their parents. Other respondents said that they would support their friends in any way they could.

IV.5 DECEPTION ON FREE OF CHARGE CHARACTER

- ❖ One of the 12 to 14 year old boys mentioned that he had logged on to an online shopping site since he wanted to buy a mobile. The respondent said that the mobile had been paid for and the sale was apparently a scam. *“I couldn’t be refunded and they couldn’t find the person responsible”* (Boys group, 12 to 14)
- ❖ One of the 12 to 14 year old girls mentioned coming across a competition whereby *“you would first have to fill in your details in a form and once you arrive to the bottom of the form you find out that you have to pay”* (Girls group, 12 to 14). Another couple of respondents mentioned that sometimes when downloading a file like a game or music files you find out that you would have to pay for them. The respondents mentioned that if they encountered such a situation they would simply close the application immediately.
- ❖ One of the 9 to 10 year old girls mentioned that such a situation had happened to her brother who had to pay for a product which was advertised as free. The respondent claimed that her brother had told her first and then she encouraged him to inform their parents about the matter. The rest of the respondents had not encountered such problems when surfing the internet. If encountering such a case the respondents mentioned that they would inform their parents about the matter immediately. One of the respondents mentioned contacting the people concerned and informing them that she does not want whatever they were selling.
- ❖ The 9 to 10 year old girls believed that such a situation was quite serious, however they did not believe that it was as serious as talking to strangers in chat rooms *“A bad experience from a chat room is for life but money comes and goes”* (Girls group, 9 to 10)
- ❖ Quite a number of 9 to 10 year old boys mentioned that they had encountered certain pop-ups telling them that they had won a sum of money or that they need to click on the advert to claim their prize. The respondents claimed that they did not believe these adverts and immediately closed them when they came across them. *“How can it be that you won a competition if you never took part in one?”* (Boys group, 9 to 10) When they were asked whether they believed that this problem was serious one of the respondents mentioned that it could be serious for those people who believe the advert and click on it.

IV.6. ILLEGAL DOWNLOADING

- ❖ The 9 to 10 year old girls and boys seemed to very faintly understand the point presented that it was wrong to download copied material. The respondents seemed to believe that once the files were accessible as free products they did not have to pay for it. The respondents claimed that they would first ask their parents for permission before they download anything.
- ❖ Some of the respondents in the 9 to 10 year old boys and the 12 to 14 year old boys groups were under the impression that downloading music, games or films for personal use was not illegal but if someone downloaded such files in order to make profit this was considered to be illegal activity.
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old boys and girls did not perceive this activity to be harmful. The respondents mentioned the fact that it was convenient to download music files since buying CDs was expensive and would only be used for a short while before it is put aside. *“I would rather wait for a few minutes and download a CD rather than having to spend Lm5 on a CD...and Lm5 would be for the cheaper CDs”* (Boys group, 12 to 14)

CHAPTER V
RISK RELATED INFORMATION AND REPORTING

V.1 PRECAUTIONS ENVISAGED BY CHILDREN

- ❖ The points below include a list of tips the respondents stated they would give to children who are younger than them when using the internet:
 - To stay away from certain inappropriate sites
 - To be accompanied by an adult
 - To read carefully before clicking any buttons
 - To avoid using it before learning how to use it well
 - To avoid going into chat rooms and speaking to strangers
 - To be aware of the internet's limitations
 - To have a list of appropriate sites in the favourites folder
 - With regards to mobile use: To be careful who to give the mobile number to"

V.2 WAYS OF REPORTING ENVISAGED

- ❖ The boys and girls in the 12 to 14 years age group did not express a propensity to file reports in case of difficulties whilst using the internet. They expressed that they were likely to either deal with the situation themselves or ignore the situation altogether
- ❖ With reference to the 9 to 10 year old respondents (both girls and boys) most of the respondents mentioned that they would resort to the help of family members (parents or older siblings) or people they trust to help them out in case they go through negative experiences. One of the girls in the 9 to 10 group also mentioned that she would consider talking to a school teacher. The respondents did not express particular interest to resort to calling a free-phone number to report problems that were encountered on the internet. The respondents said that they were more likely to speak to their parents first and then possibly inform the specialist organisation about the problem encountered as a means of prevention for other children.

V.3 ATTITUDES TOWARDS INFORMATION ON PROBLEMS AND RISKS

- ❖ The 9 to 10 year olds stated that they preferred if a talk was organised at school in order to be better informed about the risks related to internet. The boys mentioned that their parents were still learning about the usage of internet and it would therefore be more beneficial if someone who knew well the uses of internet guided them. The girls mentioned they were interested to learn more about the dangers related to internet use and how to use the internet in a more safe way.
- ❖ One of the 12 to 14 year old group members expressed the wish to be kept updated as to how one can remain safe whilst using the internet. The rest of the respondents mentioned that they had the necessary information to stay out of trouble. One of the respondents stated that in order to use the internet properly it is entirely up to the individual to avoid getting into bad situations.
- ❖ The 12 to 14 year old girls stated that they preferred if they were informed about the risks related to internet at school by teachers. *“I think that parents may have a tendency to beat around the bush...but I think that it would be better if someone came and carried out some talks”*

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ❖ The intensity of usage of internet was more evident amongst the 12 to 14 year old respondents, both in terms of frequency as well as duration.

- ❖ It can be noted that there are many more restrictions and conditions that are imposed upon the younger children. Whilst the younger children agreed that their parents imposed certain restrictions for their own good this idea was not welcomed by the 12 to 14 year old respondents of both sexes.

- ❖ The use of internet was predominant mostly for research reasons, both on an academic as well as a personal level, playing games online as well as chatting on MSN.

- ❖ The mobile phone for the respondents aged 9 to 10 seemed to serve an emergency function and to keep in contact with parents. On the other hand, the 12 to 14 year olds (both genders) explained that their mobiles were a means of keeping in contact with both parents and friends.

- ❖ The respondents often mentioned that viruses were a problem related to the use of internet. However they did mention both spontaneously as well as when prompted that there were other possible serious problems that could crop up when using internet. The major risks were attributed particularly to signing in to open chat rooms where one would be in a very vulnerable position to possible harassers.

- ❖ The respondents aged 9 to 10 showed more concern in the possibility of being exposed to certain risks and thus exercising behaviours such as double checking before entering a site. On the other hand the respondents aged 12 to 14 did not demonstrate the same attitude and did not therefore change the way they used mobile and internet services.

- ❖ As was shown by the hand counts the respondents pointed out that from the list provided engaging in open chat rooms and reading and responding to blogs/homepages of people they have never met may be some of the more risky applications they could engage in.

- ❖ From the six scenarios that the respondents were presented with, all the problems were given a certain importance in the consequences they would lead except for the illegal downloading aspect. The respondents did not show too much concern in the matter and did not know what the legal implications of exercising such an activity would be.

- ❖ The respondents offered various advice for the sake of correct usage of internet like avoiding contact with strangers and paying special attention to which buttons are pressed when browsing among other things.

- ❖ The younger respondents (both genders) seemed to be more inclined to seek assistance from adults in case problems are encountered whilst on the internet. As opposed to the older respondents who stated they would be inclined to deal with the situation themselves and take matters into their own hands.

- ❖ The younger respondents and the 12 to 14 year old girls seemed to be interested to find out more about how to use the internet in a safer way. However in the boys 12 to 14 year old group the respondents felt that they had all the information that they needed to be safe when using the internet.

ANNEX I

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUPS

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUPS

	Boys group 9-10 years	Girls group 9-10 years	Boys group 12-14 years	Girls group 12-14 years
	(Valletta) (9/4/07)	(Valletta) (9/4/07)	(Valletta) (11/4/07)	(Valletta) (11/4/07)
Household social level (Socio-professional category of the head of household)				
Business owners, liberal professions, high-level managers	1	1	1	1
Mid-level managers	1	2	1	2
Office employees (non-managerial)	2	1	2	1
Manual workers	1	3	2	2
Others	3	1	2	2
Places and means of access to the Internet				
Home (broadband))	6	8	8	8
Home (non broadband)				
School	3	5	6	1
Internet cafes	1	0	0	0
Others	1	0	0	0
Personal ownership of computer				
Yes	6	8	8	8
No	2	0	0	0
Ownership of mobile phone				
Yes	4	1	8	8
No	4	7	0	0

ANNEX II
DISCUSSION GUIDE

SAFER INTERNET STUDY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

(29.03.2007)

Introduction

Hello, my name is and I work with, the research agency in charge of the study which brings us here together today.

The subject of the study is how children/youngsters use the Internet and mobile phones.

Have you a clear idea of what we are and what we do?

- Ask the children if they know the terms opinion surveys/polls and what they associate with them
- Explain to them that the purpose is to understand what people do and think – and that they should express themselves quite freely
- Reassure them that whatever they say will be dealt with confidentially – i.e. their words may be taken as examples of children's views, but without ever being associated with their names ; in particular, what a child participant says will not be repeated to his/her parents.

To start with, I will ask each of you to introduce him/herself with a few words : who you are, if you have brothers and sisters, if you have access to the Internet and how – your own computer, your parents' computer, at school, at friends', at an Internet café – and also if you have a mobile phone.

THEME I. THE INTERNET AND INTERNET APPLICATIONS

Let us talk about the Internet.

I.1 Before we start discussing how you use the Internet, I would like to know how you learnt to use it.

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Self learning or learning from others
 - From whom ? Other children (Who? friends, brothers or sisters ?), adults ? (parents, teachers, other adults ?)

I.2 Could you tell me how and how often you use the Internet and how much time, roughly, you spend on it ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Regular or variable Internet usage ? What does it depend on ?
 - To how much time do the children estimate their usage of the Internet (time spent on average, per day or per week)

I.3 Can you use the Internet as you wish and as often as you wish, or do you have any limits, rules or recommendations given by your parents – or anything you think your parents would like you to do or not to do although they may not really have told you.

➤ Spontaneous reactions

➤ Probe :

- If limits/rules/recommendations/implicit rules : what are they ?
- For each of the limits/rules/recommendations/implicit rules : perceived justification and degree of agreement
- If no limits/rules/recommendations/implicit rules : how would they feel if they were given any?
- Which ones would they (or not) accept/agree with ? : perceived justification and degree of agreement

I.4 We have prepared a list with various possible uses of the Internet.
May I ask each of you :

- To put **one green sticker** to each of the applications you use
- To put **a second green sticker** to the applications you use most

➤ Distribute the table.

➤ Let the participants fill it in.

Check that the one sticker/two stickers system has been understood.

Check that each participant has written in his/her first name.

➤ Collect the questionnaires, and quickly identify the most frequent applications.

I.5 I can see that some applications are used more than others.

What are you particularly interested in or do you particularly like in these Internet applications?

➤ Spontaneous reactions

➤ Probe : frequent applications not elicited in spontaneous reactions

CHAPTER II :MOBILE PHONE AND MOBILE PHONE USAGE

II.1 Some of you also have a mobile phone.

For those of you who have one, please tell me how you use it ?

- Ask successively each of the (mobile phone owning) participants

Let each one express him/herself freely. Then probe :

- With whom (friends, parents, in which circumstances ?)
- What is it most often used for (verbal conversations, SMS, other applications)

Others among you do not have a mobile phone. Can you tell me why ?

- Probe for reasons (cost ; parents' wish that their children do not have one ; others)

II.2 Mobile phones can also be used for sending or receiving photographs (MMS), taking part in chats, or connecting to the Internet. Do you also do that ?

- Ask again each (mobile phone owning) participant

- If he/she has already used these functions (which one(s)), what he/she gets out of it or – if not used – why?

II.3 Do you use your mobile phone freely, as you wish and as much as you wish, or do you have any limits, rules or recommendations given by your parents – or anything you think your parents would like you to do or not to do although they may not really have told you.

- Spontaneous reactions

- Probe :

- If limits/rules/recommendations/implicit rules: what are they ?
- For each of the limits/rules/recommendations/implicit rules : perceived justification and degree of agreement
- If no limits/recommendations/implicit rules : how would they feel if they were given any?
- Which ones would they (or not) accept/agree with ? : perceived justification and degree of agreement

II.4 Here is now a short list of mobile phone uses.

In the same way as for Internet uses earlier, could you please :

- Put **one green sticker** to each of the applications you use
- Put a **second green sticker** to the applications you use most

- Distribute the table.

- Let the participants fill it in.

Check that the one sticker/two stickers system has been understood.

Check that each participant has written in his/her first name.

- Collect the questionnaires, and quickly identify the most frequent applications.

THEME III. INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE RELATED PROBLEMS AND RISKS

III.1 Besides it being something useful and pleasant, are there also problems or risks in using the Internet or mobile phones – I mean things that you don't like or find scary ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Types of problems/risks mentioned
 - Problems/risks related to Internet usage/to mobile phone usage
 - How are the children aware of these problems/risks (Personal experience ? Being warned about them ? By whom ? Another child ? Adults – which adults ? An institution/authority ?)
 - How serious do they feel these problems/risks are ?

III.2A Have these problems changed the way you use the Internet ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Limitations in (volume of) usage
 - Precautions taken ; of their own initiative/under the influence of parents

III.2.B Have these problems changed the way you use your mobile phone ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Limitations in (volume of) usage
 - Precautions taken ; of their own initiative/under the influence of parents

III.3 Here is a table with the list of both Internet and mobile phone applications on which you put the green stickers earlier.

Please place **one red sticker** next to the applications which you feel may involve problems of any kind, and **a second red sticker** for those which you regard as most annoying or scary.

- Distribute the table.
- Let the participants fill it in.

Check that the one sticker/two stickers system has been understood.

Check that each participant has written in his/her first name.

- Collect the questionnaires, and quickly identify the applications most selected as involving a risk.

III.4 Let us discuss these problems more in detail, by taking each of those which you have most mentioned.

Why do you think that this application may involve a problem ?

- Take successively each application often mentioned as involving a problem or risk, and elicit the nature and the degree of problem/risk.

THEME IV REACTIONS TO THE PRESENTATION OF SPECIFIED PROBLEMS OR RISKS

I am now going to tell you about certain problems, as they are seen by adults who worry about them – and you will tell me how **you** feel about them.

IV.1 One of the problems may be that the information you find on the Internet is not necessarily true.

How do you feel about it ? Generally speaking, do you think we can have trust in what we find on the Internet?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - What is overall the degree of credibility of the Internet ?
 - How does it compare with other sources (parents, teachers, friends, television, books...)
 - Why is the Internet more or less credible ?
 - Examples of inaccurate things seen on the Internet. What was it about ? How did you realize that it was not true ?
 - How serious is this problem/risk felt to be ?

IV.2 Another problem that worries adults is the risk of being sent or coming across images or other contents that can be deeply shocking – than can include scenes of violence, brutal scenes, racism or pornography.

How do you feel about it ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Has it happened to you ? What was it about ?
 - What did you do ? Talk to someone about it ? Who ?
 - What would you do if it happened to you, or what would you advise a friend to do if it happened to him/her ? Talk to someone about it ? Who ? What practical advice would you give ?
 - Moderator : also probe how serious is this problem/risk felt to be.

IV.3 Another risk that worries adults is that children engage in relations with a stranger with whom they have talked online – someone they have never met face to face.

Let us take an example.

X/Y is a child of your age.

He/she likes to play games or post his/her profile on the Internet, and he/she starts talking online with someone to whom he/she gradually gives personal information like his/her MSN address, his/her mobile phone number, his/her name, or where he/she lives, or starts sending pictures of him/her.

He/she thinks this person is a child of his/her age and someone really nice, but it may turn out to be someone quite different, who might encourage him/her to do things he/she should not do, or even an adult with bad intentions.

(Moderator : For boys group, use a typical masculine first name of your country (X) ; for girls groups, use a typical feminine first name (Y)).

How do you feel about it ?

➤ Spontaneous reactions

➤ Probe :

- Has it happened to someone you know ? How, in which situation ?
- Do you think it could happen to you ? How do you communicate and make friends online ?
- (If happened) What did you do ? Talk to someone about it ? Who ?
- What would you do if it happened to you or what would you advise a friend to do if it happened to him/her ?
- Moderator : also probe how serious is this problem/risk felt to be.

IV.4 Another worry that adults have is that some children use online communication to behave badly with another child because they do not like him/her. That can be, for example, by talking about him/her on MSN without including him/her, or sending him/her anonymous nasty messages.

How do you feel about it ?

➤ Spontaneous reactions

➤ Probe :

- Has it happened to you? How, in which situation ? Have you received nasty messages ? Have you maybe sent nasty messages to others yourself ?
- Do you think it could happen to you ?
- (If happened) What did you do ? Talk to someone about it ? Who ?
- What would you do if it happened to you or what would you advise a friend to do if it happened to him/her ?
- Moderator : also probe how serious is this problem/risk felt to be.

IV.5 Another risk that we have heard of is being cheated, for example when downloading a file which seems to be free of charge but has to be paid for, or when taking part in a competition.

How do you feel about it ?

➤ Spontaneous reactions

➤ Probe :

- Has it happened to you ? In which situation ?
- What did you do ? Talk to someone about it ? Who ?
- What would you do if it happened to you or what would you advise a friend to do if it happened to him/her ? Talk someone about it ? Who ?
- Moderator : also probe how serious is this problem/risk felt to be.

IV.6 Another problem may be that many children download music, films, games or other contents without paying.

Perhaps this has happened to you as well : have you downloaded something without paying ?

➤ Record responses, then continue :

In many cases, this content is material which the makers (musicians for example) need to make money from to make a living and therefore should be paid for.

Are you aware of this ? What can be the consequences, do you think ? Do those children know that it is illegal/not allowed ? How do they deal with it ?

➤ Probe :

- Awareness of doing something illegal/awareness of consequences
- What did/would the child participants do in such a situation?
- How serious is this problem felt to be ?

THEME V. RISK RELATED INFORMATION AND REPORTING

V.1 When you think back about it, after our whole discussion, are there any precautions which would now feel would be useful to take in using the Internet and mobile phones – or something you would advise a younger brother or sister to do ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Precautions (and related risks) which the discussion has made the children (more) aware of
 - Propensity to take these precautions in reality

V.2 If you saw or experienced something you find uncomfortable or scary, and you wanted to inform someone about it, what would be the easiest way for you to do it ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Talk to your parents about it
 - Talk to a teacher about it
 - Inform the police
 - Contact a specialist organisation by calling a special free-phone number
 - Contact that organisation by email.
 - Having a report button that automatically informs the relevant authorities just by clicking

V.3 How would you like to learn more about the problems and risks related to Internet and mobile phone usage ?

- Spontaneous reactions
- Probe :
 - Propensity to learn more about problems and risks
 - Nature of information sought
 - From which types of sources/through which channels

END OF DISCUSSION.

DISTRIBUTE AWARENESS MATERIAL FROM THE NATIONAL NODES OR OTHER NGOs.

INTERNET APPLICATIONS USED**First name**

Searching for information as a part of my school work	
Searching for information on subjects which interest me/surfing for fun	
Sending and receiving emails	
Using instant messaging (MSN)/chatting with friends	
Engaging in open chatrooms	
Creating my own blog/homepage and posting my own texts, photos,	
Reading and responding to friends' blogs/homepages	
Reading and responding to blogs/homepages of someone I have never	
Playing on-line games	
Downloading music, films, videos, games or other files	
Sharing files (music, films, videos, games or others)	
Sharing photos	
Downloading ring tones/images for my mobile phone	
Taking part in competitions	
Making phone calls through the Internet	

OPTEM
74, chemin de la FerMe des Bois
78950 Gambais – France
Tel : +33 (0) 134 871 823 – Fax : +33 (0) 134 871 783
E mail : optem@optem.fr

MISCO INTERNATIONAL
Regency House, Floor 3
Republic Street
VALLETTA VLT 04
MALTA

MOBILE PHONE APPLICATIONS USED**First name**

Making and receiving phone calls	
Sending/receiving SMSs	
Taking photos/images	
Sending/receiving/sharing images	
Connecting to the Internet through my mobile phone	

PROBLEMS/RISKS RELATED TO INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE USAGE

INTERNET APPLICATIONS

First name

Searching for information as a part of my school work	
Searching for information on subjects which interest me/surfing for	
Sending and receiving emails	
Using instant messaging (MSN)/chatting with friends	
Engaging in open chatrooms	
Creating my own blog/homepage and posting my own texts, photos,	
Reading and responding to friends' blogs/homepages	
Reading and responding to blogs/homepages of someone I have	
Playing on-line games	
Downloading music, films, videos, games or other files	
Sharing files (music, films, videos, games or others)	
Sharing photos	
Downloading ring tones/images for my mobile phone	
Taking part in competitions	
Making phone calls through the Internet	

MOBILE PHONE APPLICATIONS

Making and receiving phone calls	
Sending/receiving SMSs	
Taking photos/images	
Sending/receiving/sharing images	
Connecting to the Internet through my mobile phone	

