User Experience of Potential Online Harms within Video Sharing Platforms

Introductory Definitions

Video Sharing Platforms

This report explores a range of websites and apps that people in the UK use to watch and share videos online. Although we refer to the services broadly under the term 'video sharing platforms' (VSPs) and other related terms, this report does not seek to identify which services will fall into Ofcom's regulatory remit, nor to pre-determine whether any particular service we refer to would be classed as a VSP under the regulatory definition.

It should be noted that the platforms we discuss in this report operate at different scales. This is a characteristic of the current online landscape and means that each of the VSPs discussed in this report have a different number of users. This reality should be taken into consideration when comparing results from users of smaller VSPs against those from users of larger platforms. In some cases, quantitative analysis for smaller VSPs has been limited by the low sample sizes of users for specific platforms. This has been specified within the footnotes of the report.

Site and App Content

We researched a range of sites and apps which have video sharing functionalities (such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitch, and Instagram). Many of these platforms also contain a mix of video and other types of content and allow users to view and participate in a range of ways, of which video sharing is one element.

Active and Passive Users

This report refers to active and passive users. Passive users are defined in the research as those who exclusively engage with the sites and apps studied in the following four ways:

- Browsing and scrolling through content
- Searching for specific videos or content
- Liking or upvoting content
- Giving thumbs down or downvoting content

Active users may engage with the platforms in the four ways listed above, but they will also interact with the site or app in at least one of the following ways:

- Sharing content with friends, family, or on other platforms
- Writing comments
- Posting or uploading content
- Talking to or chatting to other users
- Buying physical goods via links on the platform
- Buying virtual goods on the platform.

Potential Online Harms

A range of potential online harms on websites and apps were explored in this research. The harms are referred to as 'potential online harm(s)' because the research measured the types of content and behaviour that users could be exposed to online, but did not seek to assess what, if any, harm arose from this exposure.

This research considered a broad range of online content or experiences that VSP users could be exposed to when using these sites. This includes potential content harms that fall within the scope of the VSP regulation, as well as others that are not covered by regulation. This approach was taken to build a holistic understanding of VSP users' experiences on these sites. Further details are available in the 'Experience of Potential Online Harm' section.

These potential online harms are categorised into 'Content' harms and 'Contact' harms. Content harms refer to potential online harm that arises from posts, pictures, videos, or other content posted by users or advertisers on VSPs. Contact harms are potential online harms that originate from the behaviour of other users. 26 potential online harms were explored in the quantitative research.

Safety Measures

There are rules, policies, tools and technical systems that websites and apps have in place to protect users. These may include terms and conditions when signing up, rules which appear when uploading a piece of content, parental control settings, or a 'report' button.

The research explored user awareness and engagement with the following safety measures in detail, as outlined below. These safety measures, taken from the VSP regulations, are:

- Clear terms and conditions in relation to the three categories of harm;
- Advertising Rules including a functionality for users to declare advertising in content they upload;
- Transparent, user-friendly flagging and reporting mechanisms, with feedback loops to explain what effect has been given to flagged or reported content;
- Age verification (and assurance) systems to protect minors;
- Parental control systems under the control of end-users for protecting minors;
- Easy-to-use systems for users to rate content in relation to the three categories of harm;
- Transparent, easy-to-use, and effective procedures for the handling and resolution of users' complaints;
- Promotion and availability of media literacy measures and tools.

This research also looked more broadly at safety measures around advertising, including general engagement with advertising rules.

Sources of Evidence in this Report

The results presented within this report convey the findings of primary research projects conducted with users of VSPs. Evidence is self-reported by respondents who have shared their experiences, recollections and feelings about VSP usage, potential online harm experienced on VSPs, safety measures they encounter, and creating content. All respondents participated voluntarily and were free to withdraw their participation at any point during the research process.

As such, the evidence is limited by respondents' freedom to decide whether to participate, their ability to recall events, accuracy of that recall and which experiences they chose to disclose.

This report does not seek to replicate prevalence metrics of potential online harms and reporting of those harms that may be collected by alternative means.

1. Executive Summary

Video Sharing Platforms are used widely

Video sharing platforms (VSPs) are widely used by the online population of the UK. Nearly everyone who accesses the internet has used a website or app which has video sharing capabilities in the last 12 months (97%, Fig 1). Only a minority (3%) of those who go online have not engaged with a video sharing service in the last 12 months.

Fig 1:

Almost everyone who accesses the internet has used Video Sharing Platforms in the last 12 months
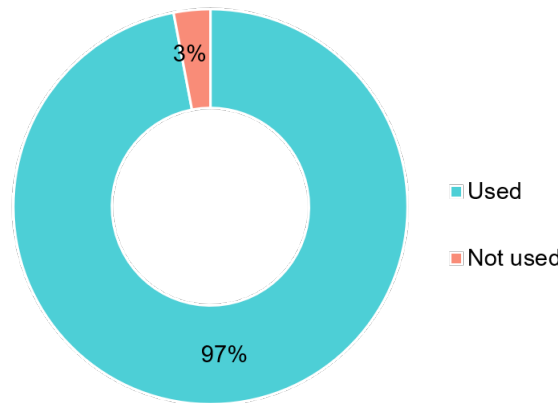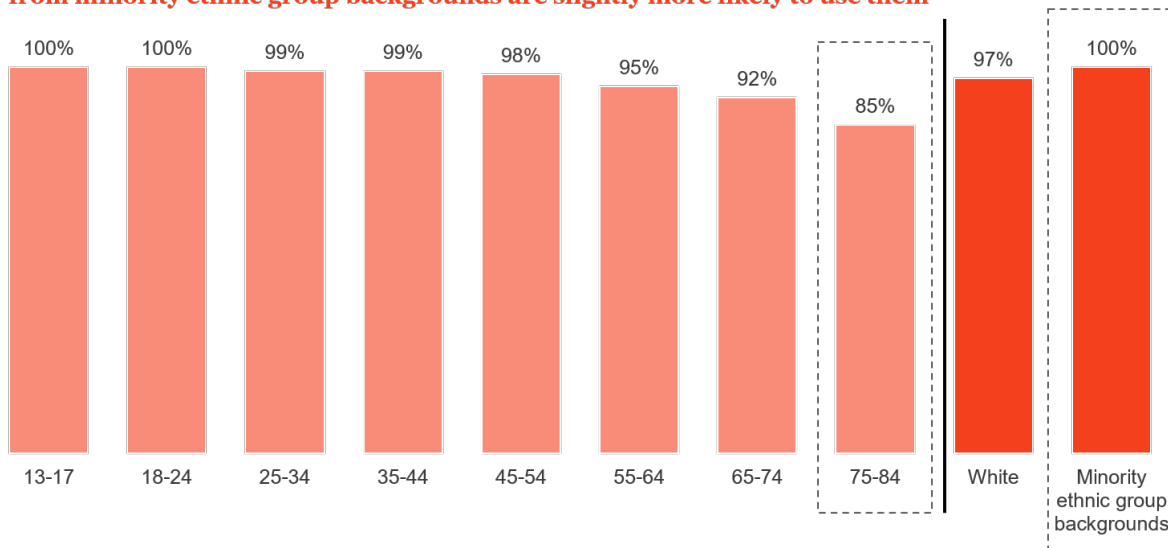

[1]*Fig 2:*

Older age groups are less likely to use platforms with video sharing functionalities whilst people from minority ethnic group backgrounds are slightly more likely to use them

This prevalence of usage is true regardless of most demographic differences. No significant differences are seen between males and females, socio-economic groups, or disability status. There is a trend for a higher prevalence of VSP usage amongst younger age groups, compared

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[1] **Fig 2:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q1. How frequently do you use or visit any of the following sites or apps that host user-generated videos (i.e. people sharing videos online)? This includes watching videos, uploading videos, commenting on videos, or sending private messages on these sites or apps using any device. Figures for use of any VSP in the last 12 months shown. Base: all, UK internet users, 13-17, n=214; 18-24, n=213; 25-34, n=314; 35-44, n=300; 45-54, n=343; 55-64, n=277; 65-74, n=235; 75-84, n=143; White, n=1,811; Minority ethnic group, n=204.

to older age groups (Fig 2). However, this is by no means confined to teenagers and young adults, with the most significant drop off in usage seen in the 75-84-year-old age group. Even so, the majority of older age groups who go online do access platforms with video sharing functionalities[2].

There is also evidence that people from minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to use VSPs than people of white ethnicity (Fig 2). VSPs are very widely used, 97% overall, and amongst certain groups it hits 100% (13-17, 18-24, minority ethnic backgrounds).

On average, people are using between 5 and 6[3] different platforms with video sharing capabilities each year. The most used platforms are **YouTube** (93% of people who go online have used it within the last year) and **Facebook** (82% of people who go online have used it within the last year). The majority (81%) use at least one VSP on a daily basis. 43% use YouTube on a daily basis. However, the frequency of usage for Facebook is even higher, with 62% using it at least daily. It should be noted that Facebook contains a mix of content, not just video content. Please see 'Site and App Content' definition on page 1.

The majority (63%) of VSP users engage actively with the platform(s), primarily through behaviours such as sharing content with friends and family, or on other platforms, writing comments, posting content, and engaging with other platform users. 34% only engage passively with the services, through activities such as browsing and scrolling, searching for content, and liking or giving thumbs down reactions to content. 13-17 year-olds are more likely to be active users of VSPs, compared to older age groups. For a full definition of Active and Passive behaviours please see 'Active and Passive Users' definition on page 1.

Seventy percent claim to have been exposed to a potential online harm on video sharing platforms

Of those that use VSPs, the majority (70%) encountered exposure to at least one potentially harmful online experience[4] on the platform(s) within the last three months (Fig 3). Twitter is the platform with the highest number of claimed exposures to potential online harm within this period, with an average of 2.84 among Twitter users.

26 potential online harms were tested within the research[5]. The potential online harms tested included a broad spectrum of behaviours and content that users may find potentially harmful or offensive, ranging from offensive language to illegal activity. This includes potential content harms that fall within the scope of the VSP regulation, as well as others that are not covered by regulation. See Fig 4 for further details of the potential online harms tested. Of these, the most prevalent online experiences that could potentially be considered harmful for VSP users in the last three months are misinformation (49%) and offensive language (45%, Fig 4).

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[2] **Fig 1:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q1. How frequently do you use or visit any of the following sites or apps that host user-generated videos (i.e. people sharing videos online)? This includes watching videos, uploading videos, commenting on videos, or sending private messages on these sites or apps using any device. Figures for use of any VSP in the last 12 months shown. Base: all We would now like you to imagine you are the boss of a video sharing site or app. Most of your users love the videos available on the service. However, there are also some concerns about offensive and inappropriate videos on the service. To protect your users from this harmful content, you need to put tools or measures in place to keep users safe. This might include changes to the service or asking a regulator to help. What tools or measures would you choose and why? Base: all, UK internet users, n=2,039
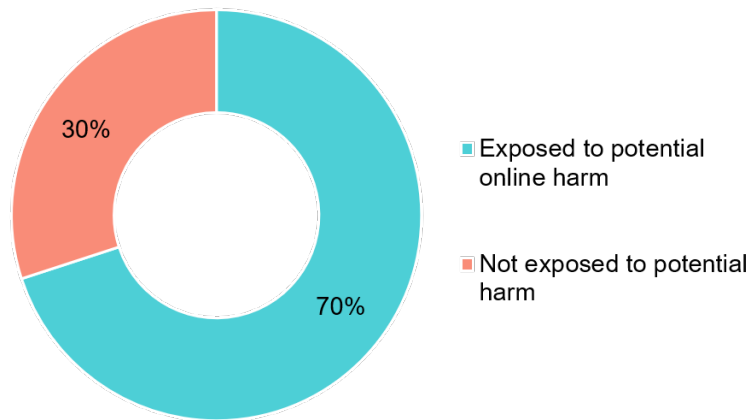
[3] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[4] Note: this includes all potential online harms, some of which are beyond the scope of VSP regulation.

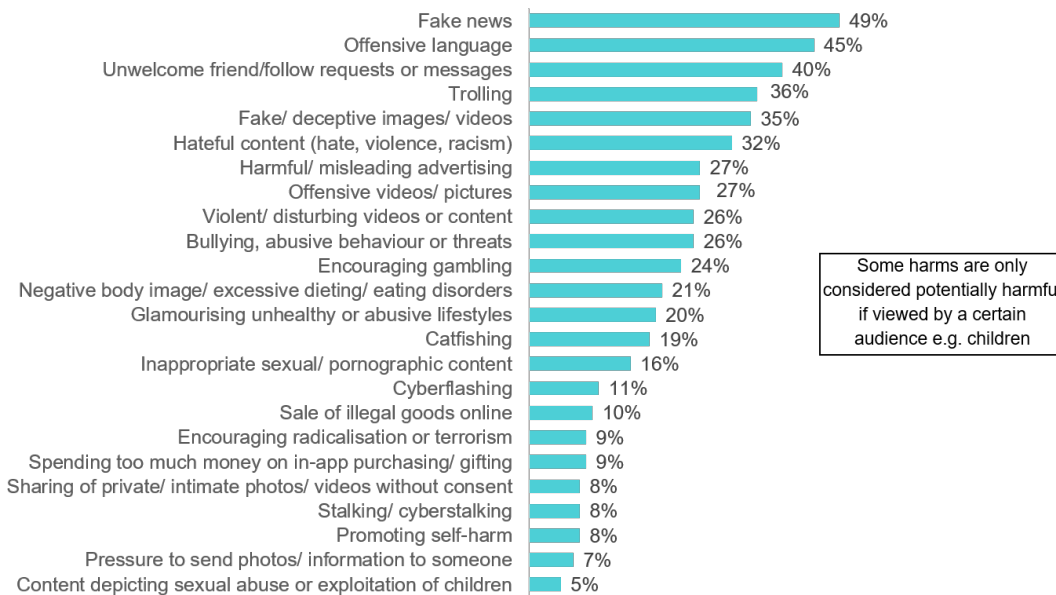[5] Harms selected were based on previous Ofcom research in this field

[6]*Fig. 3:*

The majority of Video Sharing Platform users report exposure to potential online harm on the service(s) in the last three months

- 30% Not exposed to potential harm
- 70% Exposed to potential online harm

[7]*Fig 4:*

Exposure to potential online harms whilst using Video Sharing Platforms

Harm	%
Fake news	49%
Offensive language	45%
Unwelcome friend/follow requests or messages	40%
Trolling	36%
Fake/ deceptive images/ videos	35%
Hateful content (hate, violence, racism)	32%
Harmful/ misleading advertising	27%
Offensive videos/ pictures	27%
Violent/ disturbing videos or content	26%
Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	26%
Encouraging gambling	24%
Negative body image/ excessive dieting/ eating disorders	21%
Glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles	20%
Catfishing	19%
Inappropriate sexual/ pornographic content	16%
Cyberflashing	11%
Sale of illegal goods online	10%
Encouraging radicalisation or terrorism	9%
Spending too much money on in-app purchasing/ gifting	9%
Sharing of private/ intimate photos/ videos without consent	8%
Stalking/ cyberstalking	8%
Promoting self-harm	8%
Pressure to send photos/ information to someone	7%
Content depicting sexual abuse or exploitation of children	5%

Some harms are only considered potentially harmful if viewed by a certain audience e.g. children

Qualitative research highlights that users of video sharing platforms can be exposed to a higher number of potential online harms depending on their network for each service. For example, Twitter tends to include a larger network of people that users might not deem as 'friends' or 'family'. Particularly as Twitter is perceived as a platform where 'retweeting' content is prevalent, thus increasing the risk of exposure to potentially harmful online content[8]. It should

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[6] **Fig 3:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: Those who have used at least one listed VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958

[7] **Fig 4:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: Those who have used at least one listed VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958

[8] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

be noted that Twitter is a mixed content platform and therefore these findings may represent viewpoints relating to non-video content.

Out of the 26 potential online harms identified, six were explored in further detail: hateful content (which included the categories of hate, violence, and racism); harmful or misleading advertising; violent or disturbing videos and content; encouragement of radicalisation or terrorism; bullying, abusive behaviour, or threats; and content constituting sexual abuse or exploitation of children. Of these potential online harms, the research identified the most prevalent to be hateful content (32%). Racial groups are primarily the target of this hateful content (59% of those who said they had been exposed to hateful content incidents), followed by religious groups (28%) and transgender people (25%).

Users claim to have encountered potentially harmful online experiences on all of the VSPs studied. Facebook has the highest prevalence of potentially harmful online experiences for each of the six harms covered in detail in this report. However, this is partly a function of the wide usage of Facebook within the video sharing platform landscape, rather than these harms being particularly commonplace on Facebook.

Across all the potential online harms, users say they tend to discover potentially harmful online experiences themselves, when browsing or scrolling through content on a platform with video sharing capabilities. This appears as the primary source compared to those who came across a harm by being sent it by another user or contact [9].

Users were asked to recall how they felt after their most recent exposure to a potential online harm. Their reaction was captured within the research using non-verbal emotional icons:

[10]**Fig 5:**

The leading reaction selected across all potentially harmful online experiences on VSPs was one depicting anger[11]. Our qualitative research shows that some users have altered their behaviour on video sharing platforms due to exposure to potentially harmful online experiences via browsing or scrolling. For example, a substantial number of users within the qualitative research tended to check comments or like/dislike ratios before viewing video content to assess reactions to the content and understand whether it might be harmful.

> [12] *"I will go out of my way to pause a video really quickly before I watch it...this way I can scan the top comments to see if the video is inappropriate or not…I trust the community's judgement."*
> Female, 32, Light User

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[9] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of [HARM] on [VSP], how did you come across it? Base: Those who experienced any harm on at least one of the following VSPs in the last 3 months: Facebook, n=532; Twitter, n=322; YouTube, n=318; Instagram, n=206; TikTok, n=123.

[10] **Fig 5:** Non-verbal images used within Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021.
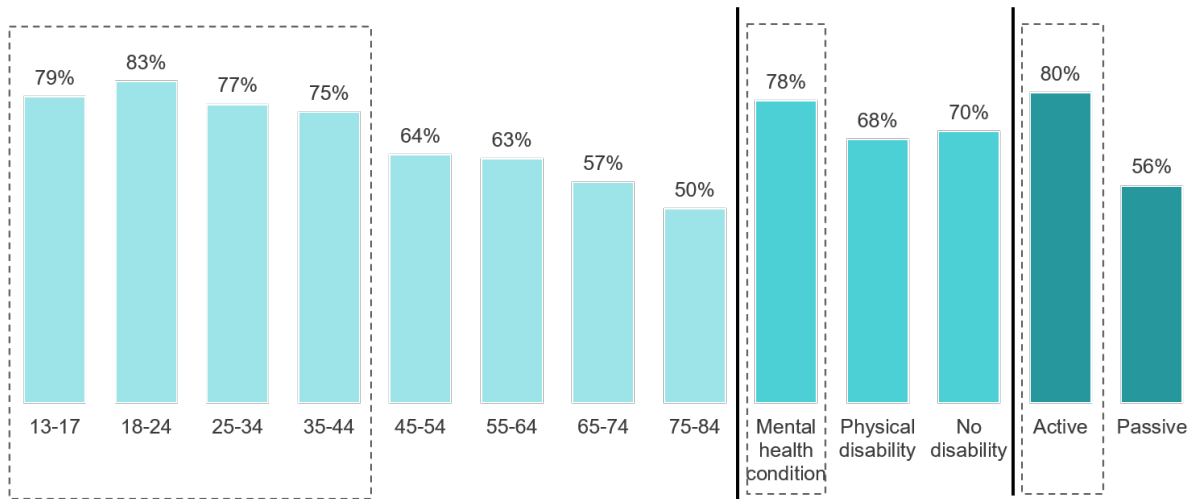
[11] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of [HARM] on [VSP], which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base: Those who experienced any harm on at least one of the following VSPs in the last 3 months: Facebook, n=532; Twitter, n=322; YouTube, n=318; Instagram, n=206; TikTok, n=123.

[12] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

Younger people, active users, and people with a mental health condition[13] are most likely to say they encountered a potential online harm on video sharing platforms (see Fig 6).

[14]*Fig 6:*

Younger people, those with a mental health condition and active users are more likely to report being exposed to potential online harm

79%	83%	77%	75%	64%	63%	57%	50%	78%	68%	70%	80%	56%
13-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	Mental health condition	Physical disability	No disability	Active	Passive

Within the six harms explored in detail in this report, it is young adults (18-34 years-old), active users[15] and those in minority ethnic groups that are consistently most likely to say they were exposed to potential online harms.

Awareness and Experience of Safety Measures

This section focuses on safety measures on video sharing platforms. Safety measures are rules, policies, tools and technical systems put in place by the sites or apps to protect users from potential harmful online material, such as terms and conditions, parental controls, and report buttons. See 'Safety Measures' definition on pages 1-2 for further details.

Safety measures on VSPs are not at the top of users' minds, with only 40% of users claiming awareness of such measures on the video sharing platforms they use (Fig 7). Our research on this topic focused specifically on awareness of safety measures on the following selection of platforms with video-sharing functionality: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitch, Vimeo, and LiveLeak. When asked about recall of measures on these particular sites in the last three months, awareness amongst users of the services was still relatively low, with Facebook users having the highest level of recall (33% of users recalled rules or safety measures, Fig 7).
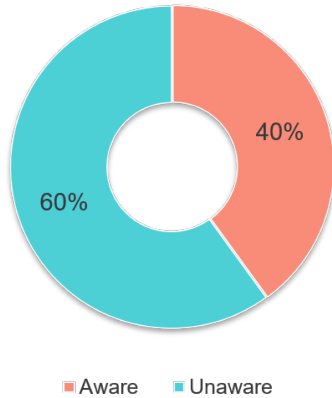
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[13] Respondents were asked to self-declare mental or physical health conditions: Do you have a longstanding physical or mental condition or disability that has lasted or is likely to last 12 months and which has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

[14] **Fig 6:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: Those who have used at least one listed VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958
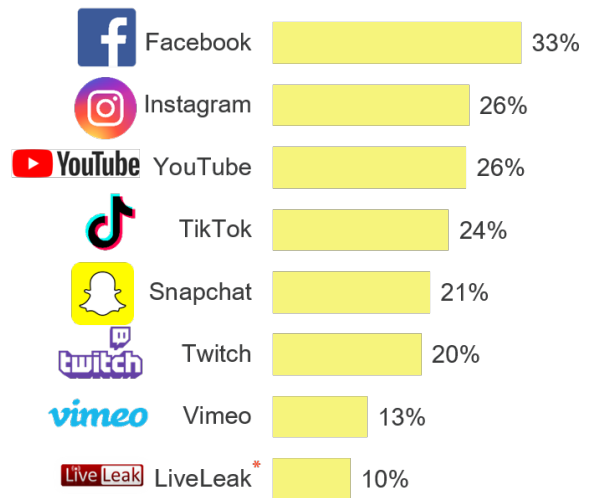
[15] Active users are those who engage actively with the platforms(s), primarily through behaviours such as sharing content with friends and family, or on other platforms, writing comments, posting content, and engaging with other platform users

[16] **Fig 7:**

Awareness of rules or safety measures to protect users from offensive, violent or inappropriate videos or behaviour

Recall of rules or safety measures on specific services in the last 3 months

40%

60%

■ Aware   ■ Unaware

Facebook	33%
Instagram	26%
YouTube	26%
TikTok	24%
Snapchat	21%
Twitch	20%
Vimeo	13%
LiveLeak [*]	10%

When prompted with the specific safety measures[17], the highest level of awareness is present for **flagging and reporting mechanisms and buttons** (60% of users), followed by **parental controls** (54%). Users are least aware of **media literacy** resources (information on staying safe on the site/app, 29%). However, results also suggest there is a level of confusion about the measures available: two dummy measures were tested alongside real safety measures. 36% of users claim they are aware of one of these dummy measures (36% believe that VSPs have a mechanism for reporting content to a regulator or the police) and 19% believe customer service advisers are available to report inappropriate content to by chat or phone. This suggests there is low engagement with safety measures and that claimed awareness of such measures by users could be over-stated.

Our qualitative research highlights the lack of understanding of some of these measures, including flagging and reporting mechanisms, with most users tending to agree that there is a lack of transparency regarding how these measures work and how they are attempting to keep users safe.

> [18] *"I've used the report function a few times across different platforms, but I still don't quite know how they work. Who checks the report? Who gets to decide what is and isn't offensive?"*
> Female, 28, Medium User

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[16] **Fig 7:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q6. How much, if at all, are you aware of rules or safety measures put in place by the sites or apps we've been talking about to protect users from offensive, violent, or inappropriate videos or behaviour? Base: All, UK internet users, n=1,002. Q9. Please think about any rules or safety measures you may have come across when using these sites or apps in the last 3 months. This may include terms and conditions when signing up, rules which appear when uploading a piece of content, parental control settings or a 'report' button. For which of the following sites/apps, if any, can you recall seeing such rules or safety measures? Base: all who have used VSP in the last three months, YouTube: n=911, Instagram: n=559, TikTok: n=244, Facebook: n=852, Snapchat: n=315, Twitch: n=142, LiveLeak: n=50*, Vimeo: n=139. *CAUTION: Low base size.

[17] NB: Advertisement rules and notices were included as part of the safety measures explored

[18] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

Awareness and experience of safety measures on VSPs for content creators

For VSP content creators who monetise their activity, advertising rules are a highly relevant measure[19]. Our research with this audience has found that most are broadly aware and supportive of the general need to declare advertising within content and are also broadly aware and supportive of rules prohibiting advertising for illegal products. However, many lack a clear understanding of the specifics of these rules. In addition, content creators are often unaware of who is responsible for the enforcement of advertising rules, and what the consequences are if these rules are broken.

Improving Safety Measures on Video Sharing Platforms

41% of users feel safety measures need to be consistent across VSPs, and only a minority (15%) feel the current measures are sufficient, indicating clear user support for improving safety measures.

There is a distinct concern for protecting children who are using platforms with video sharing capabilities. Users feel the burden for protecting users on VSPs primarily falls upon the platforms themselves (80%), whilst only a minority also feel the responsibility lies with children who use the site or app (22%). More than 80% feel each of the following types of content need to have rules or measures in place to protect users from them: rules to protect children from seeing sexual content (84%), videos encouraging people to harm themselves (84%), videos promoting violence (83%), rules to protect children from seeing or experiencing inappropriate content (82%), and videos promoting hate towards others (81%). By contrast, the support for safety measures in relation to videos which encourage unhealthy diets or eating disorders (66%) and misleading information, such as fake news or conspiracy theories (66%) in relation to all users is slightly lower – although the majority do still support measures for these types of content.

Specifically, users suggest that age verification systems on VSPs can be improved:

[20] *"I've seen that Amazon's Alexa now has voice authentication...so it can recognise different people within the household to ensure children aren't accessing certain content. I think this would be great for something like YouTube, to ensure those under 18 aren't viewing inappropriate content."*
Male, 61, Light User

The availability of media literacy materials is also an area where users would suggest opportunities for improvement. Our qualitative research reveals that users are aware of other media types (e.g. television) providing third party support in response to specific programming. This can range from information about relevant charities or helplines, through to emergency numbers. This is perceived as a responsible reaction, and something which users want to see reflected within VSPs.

[21] *"I think helpline numbers should be there on the front page of these platforms…your mind and matter is the most important thing."*
Male, 18, Heavy User

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[19] Source: VSP Content Creators and Community Standards qualitative research 2021
[20] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021
[21] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

If a potential online harm is reported by users, awareness of the outcome is not always known by the person who reported it (55% are aware, 40% unaware), suggesting that feedback loops could be improved. Users have high expectations for the speed of resolution when a potential online harm is reported specifically to a video sharing platform, with 68% feeling the VSP should solve issues related to reported offensive, violent, or inappropriate videos immediately. Our qualitative research reflects this finding, with most users tending to agree that harmful content can remain on platforms for over 24 hours after being reported, which is putting other users at risk.

Improving safety measures on VSPs for content creators

For VSP content creators, awareness and engagement with advertising rules can be improved by increasing clarity and understanding around how to declare advertising across the full range of VSP content scenarios[22]. The role of peer-to-peer learning and advice is likely to have an important role to play here, as content creators often gain their understanding of advertising rules via other content creators, rather than via official sources or video sharing platforms.

Conclusions

Overall, the picture is of relatively high levels of engagement with platforms with video sharing functionalities amongst internet users, and most of these users declare they encounter potential online harm on these websites or apps. Exposure to potential online harms is particularly high for younger people, those who are active on VSPs, and people with mental health conditions [23]. Amongst the harms looked at in detail within this report, exposure is highest amongst younger people, active VSP users, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

In addition to this, overall awareness of safety measures to protect users is low, with signs of confusion about which measures are available and the impact of those measures. Users are keen for VSPs to employ effective age verification measures to protect children, improve access to media literacy materials, resolve issues that are flagged to them swiftly, and improve the feedback loop.

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[22] Source: VSP Content Creators and Community Standards qualitative research 2021

[23] Mental health conditions were self-declared by respondents

2. Introduction

Objectives of the Research

The objective of this scheme of research was to add to the evidence base for developing policies to regulate websites and apps that allow the sharing of video content. Specifically, the objectives of this research scheme were:

- To provide evidence to support Ofcom's regulation of video-sharing platforms
- To understand how these websites and apps are used and the extent to which potential online harm is encountered on them, including those relating to:
    - Protection of minors from content which may impair their physical, mental, and moral development;
    - Protections in relation to content containing incitement to violence or hatred;
    - Protections in relation to content, the inclusion of which would be a criminal offence under legislation concerning child sexual abuse and exploitation; encouragement of terrorism; incitement to racism and xenophobia.
- Explore user awareness and experience of safety measures on these websites and apps
- Find how content creators are interacting with the websites and apps, specifically regarding safety measures

These objectives were met through a series of research projects combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. For further information on the research methodologies, please see the section 'Methodology of research projects'.

Regulatory Framework Context

Ofcom is the regulator for the UK's communications services. It regulates the telecoms, broadcasting, video-on-demand, and postal industries, as well as managing civilian use of the radio spectrum. Its remit was expanded in 2020 to cover UK-established VSPs and will be expanded further in the future following the Government's announcement that Ofcom will be appointed as the Online Harms regulator.

The statutory framework for the regulation of VSPs is set out in Part 4B of the Communications Act 2003. Part 4B was introduced under regulations made by the Secretary of State to implement the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive ("AVMSD" or "the Directive") and came into effect on 1 November 2020. This sets out Ofcom's duties to protect users of VSP services from harms that may result from viewing specific categories of material. In particular, to protect under-18s from potentially harmful online content and to protect the general public from incitement to hatred or violence and other specific material the inclusion of which would be a criminal offence. The VSP Framework sets out a list of measures which providers must consider taking, as appropriate, to secure the required protections. This includes certain standards around advertising.

Methodology of Research Projects

The evidence presented in this report is taken from a series of three primary research projects:

Project 1 VSP Usage & Experience of Harms	Project 2 Safety Measures on VSPs	Project 3 VSP Content Creators & Community Standards

Projects 1 and 2 involved the use of a panel created for Ofcom featuring 5,835 UK internet users aged 13-84 years. 5,223 were adults (18-84 years) and 612 were children (13-17 years). The sample was sourced from Yonder Consulting's PopulusLive research panel. The sample for Project 3 was drawn from traditional qualitative recruitment sources. This source was chosen due to the niche nature of the sample, which consisted of those who create and monetise content using websites and apps which allow the sharing of video content.

Project 1 was an online quantitative survey. It explored:

- Usage levels of VSPs, including barriers to usage
- How users interact with VSPs, from frequency of access and length of time spent, through to the types of content viewed
- Potential online harms encountered on VSPs in the last 3 months, the reaction to the potential online harm, what users did afterwards, and the actions (if any) taken by users, VSPs, and other bodies
- Users' ideas on the measures VSPs could introduce to help protect them.

The full list of websites and apps studied in Project 1 is:

- 9GAG
- Admire.Me (shown to respondents aged 18+ only)
- BitChute
- Brand New Tube
- DailyMotion
- DLive
- Dubsmash
- Facebook
- Facebook gaming
- GoBubble
- GROM
- Imgur
- Instagram
- Likee
- LiveLeak/ iLeak
- OnlyFans (shown to respondents aged 18+ only)
- Periscope
- Pinterest
- Popjam
- Reddit
- RevealMe (shown to respondents aged 18+ only)
- Snapchat

- Storyfire
- TikTok
- Triller
- Tumblr
- Twitch
- Twitter
- Ustream
- Vimeo
- YouNow
- YouTube
- YouTube Kids
- Yubo

Users' ideas for how these platforms could better protect them were collected in the form of open ended verbatims, and subsequently analysed using a combination of artificial intelligence (AI) coding and expert human qualitative interpretation.

The survey sample consisted of 2,039 people in the UK aged 13-84. Quotas were set on gender, age, socio-economic group, and region. Of the 2,039 sample, 1,825 were aged 18-84 years and a boost of 214 children aged 13-17 years was applied, with 13-17s weighted back to a representative proportion. Overall, the data was weighted to be online nationally representative of the UK. The data has been tested for statistical significance applied at the 95% confidence level.

Fieldwork took place from 8th – 14th September 2020.

Project 2 was a two-phased programme of qualitative research followed by quantitative research exploring safety measures on video sharing platforms.

Qualitative phase

The objectives of this phase were:

- To understand VSP users' attitudes towards existing safety measures
- How users define appropriate social etiquette on VSPs
- How users felt safety measures on VSPs could be improved

The qualitative phase consisted of a pre-task and one-to-one online interviews followed by online group workshops.

The sample was made up of 24 UK adults aged 18+ years with quotas set on region, gender, usage of VSPs (light, medium, heavy) and working status. A mix of sites and apps were explored: YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, LiveLeak, and Vimeo.

Fieldwork took place from 21st September – 9th October 2020.

Quantitative phase

The objectives of this phase were to understand:

- Attitudes towards VSPs, including the level of personalisation they provide, how protected users feel on them, and how likely users think they are to encounter harmful content
- Awareness of safety measures, overall and by VSP, as well as the reasons why some users are not aware of these measures
- Attitudes towards safety measures, including the perceived need for them in relation to different types of content, and the use of reporting mechanisms
- Attitudes towards the implementation of safety measures and how long a VSP should have to resolve any breaches of its rules

As in the qualitative phase, the research focused specifically on the following platforms with video sharing capabilities: YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook, Twitch, LiveLeak, and Vimeo.

The sample consisted of 1,002 people aged 13-84 years in the UK with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group, and region. All participants used at least one of the following in the last 12 months: YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook, Twitch, LiveLeak, and Vimeo. Data was weighted to be representative of those who go online in the UK. The data has been tested for statistical significance applied at the 95% confidence level.

Fieldwork took place from 26th – 30th October 2020.

Project 3 was a qualitative deep dive on VSP content creators who monetise their account/ content, either though revenue making or gifts, or those who use their channels for brand and personal marketing purposes. It explored:

- Awareness, engagement, and perceptions of VSP safety measures (community standards) including personal interactions with standards, extent to which they are beneficial, reflective, and enforced
- Usage and experiences with safety measures – any breaches of rules, or any rules with particular relevance for content creators
- Monetisation – awareness, engagement, and perceptions of safety measures regarding this
- Social behaviour and etiquette – what is considered acceptable behaviour, and who is responsible for enforcement

The project consisted of online, one-to-one depth interviews lasting 60 minutes per interview.

The sample consisted of 20 content creators who are active on video sharing platforms. They spanned a mix of platforms and content genres. All earn revenue via content shared on VSPs. There were a mix of those who use the services for marketing, sponsorship, and brand advertising, as well as those who earn money directly from viewers - all within the past 12 months. The sample contained a mix of age and demographics and participants were located in Greater London and Greater Manchester.

Fieldwork took place from 21st September – 9th October 2020.

3. Video Sharing Platforms Market and Landscape

Overall Market Landscape

The vast majority of people who go online in the UK are accessing VSPs (97% have used in the last 12 months). This is true regardless of gender, socio-economic group, and disability. There is evidence that older age groups, particularly people aged 75-84 years-old, are less likely to have used a platform with video sharing functionality in the last year (85%), yet the majority of those groups who are online are still engaging with VSPs. There is also evidence that people identifying as minority ethnic backgrounds are significantly more likely to have used a VSP in the last year than those defining as white ethnicity (100% of those from minority ethnic backgrounds vs. 97% of white). However, this speaks more of an exceptionally high engagement amongst people from minority ethnic backgrounds rather than a lack of engagement by those from white ethnicities.

Overall, the most used VSPs are YouTube and Facebook, with the vast majority of those who go online having used YouTube in the last year (93%), and the majority having used Facebook (82% - see Fig 8).

[24]*Fig 8:*

VSPs used in the last 12 months amongst those who go online
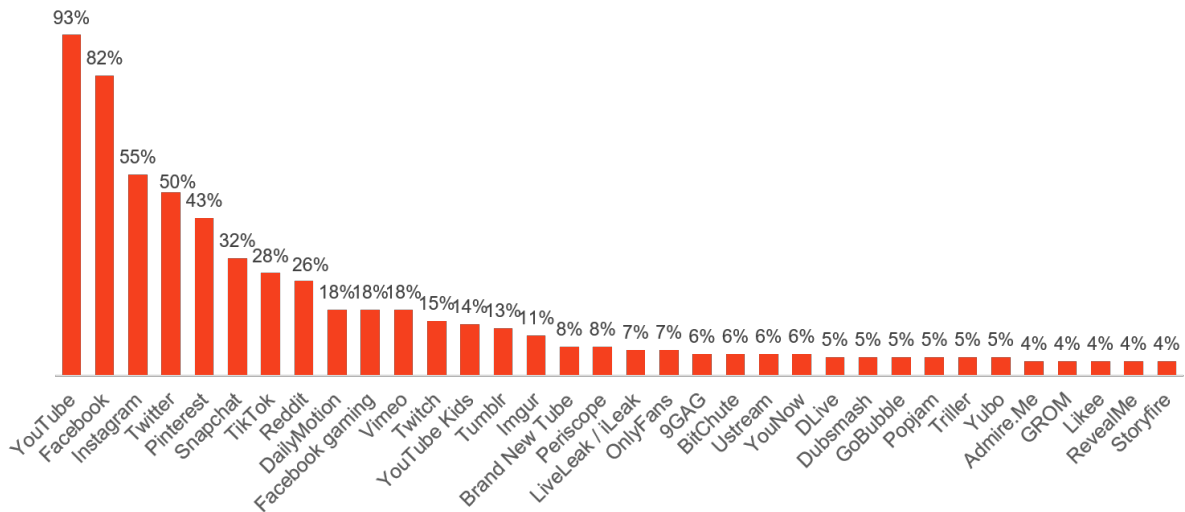
Amongst those who go online, the vast majority are using platforms with video sharing capabilities (97% have used a VSP within the last 12 months) and this is true across gender, socio-economic group, and disability (Fig 2). The majority of all age groups who are online are using VSPs, although in older age groups the number accessing VSPs does decrease slightly (92% of 65–74 year-olds and 85% of 75–84 year-olds, compared to 100% of 13–17 year-olds and 100% of 18–24 year-olds). On average, internet users access 5 to 6 VSPs each year.

Males are slightly more likely to use YouTube than females (95% vs. 91% of females – in the last 12 months) and usage is particularly high amongst younger age groups (99% of 13–17 year-olds, 97% of 18–24 year-olds, 98% of 25–34 year-olds, 97% of 35–44 year-olds).

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[24] **Fig 8:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q1. How frequently do you use or visit any of the following sites or apps that host user-generated videos (i.e. people sharing videos online)? This includes watching videos, uploading videos, commenting on videos, or sending private messages on these sites or apps using any device. Base: all, UK internet users, n=2,039 except for OnlyFans, Admire.Me and RevealMe which were asked to adults (18-84) only, n=1,825

However, the majority of those over the age of 55 years are still using YouTube (85%). Usage of YouTube is particularly high in wealthier socio-economic groups, compared to those who are less wealthy (95% of ABC1s vs. 90% of C2DEs) and those from minority ethnic backgrounds (98% vs. 92% of white respondents). Urban dwellers are significantly more likely to use YouTube than those in rural locations (93% vs. 89%). Notably, passive VSP users are just as likely to use YouTube (97%) as active users (96%).

For Facebook, females are more likely to have used the platform than males (84% in the last year, vs. 79%) and children are significantly less likely to engage with Facebook than adults (69% of 13–17 year-olds vs. 83% of 18–84 year-olds). Facebook use is most prevalent amongst young adults (92% of 18–24 year-olds, 89% of 25–34 year-olds and 88% of 35–44 year-olds). Active VSP users are significantly more likely to use Facebook than passive users (92% vs. 72%).

Whilst YouTube is the most prevalent VSP, it is Facebook that has the highest frequency of usage. 43% of VSP users use YouTube on a daily basis (Fig 9) compared to 62% who use Facebook each day.

[25]**Fig 9:**

Use of top 5 most prevalent VSPs by frequency:
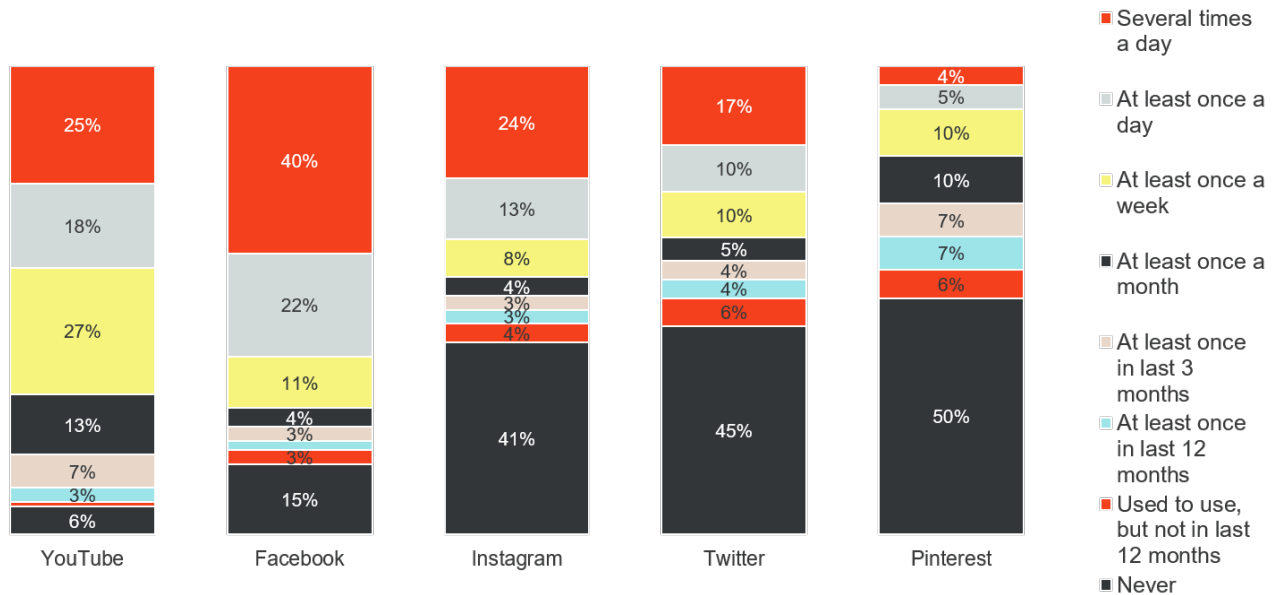
Activities and Time Spent on Video Sharing Platforms

Passive activities are common when using video sharing platforms, with the majority having browsed or scrolled content in the last 12 months (74%) or searched for specific videos or content (53% - see Fig 10).

63% of users undertake active engagements on VSPs. The most common active engagements include sharing content with others (45%), writing comments (36%) and posting/ uploading content (32%). Only 34% are fully passive – not undertaking any active engagements while using VSPs.

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[25] **Fig 9:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q1. How frequently do you use or visit any of the following sites or apps that host user-generated videos (i.e. people sharing videos online)? This includes watching videos, uploading videos, commenting on videos, or sending private messages on these sites or apps using any device. Base: all, UK internet users, n=2,039. NOTE: data labels 3% or more shown.
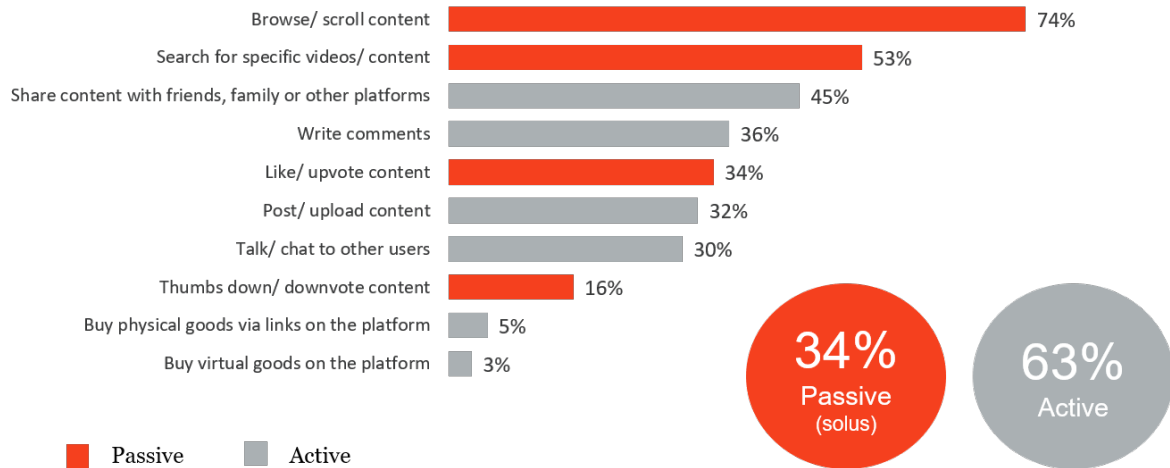
Younger people are more likely to be active on VSPs than older people. 70% of those aged between 13 and 44 have undertaken active engagements, compared to 55% of those aged 45 and over. In particular, active engagement is highest among 13-17 year-olds (78%).
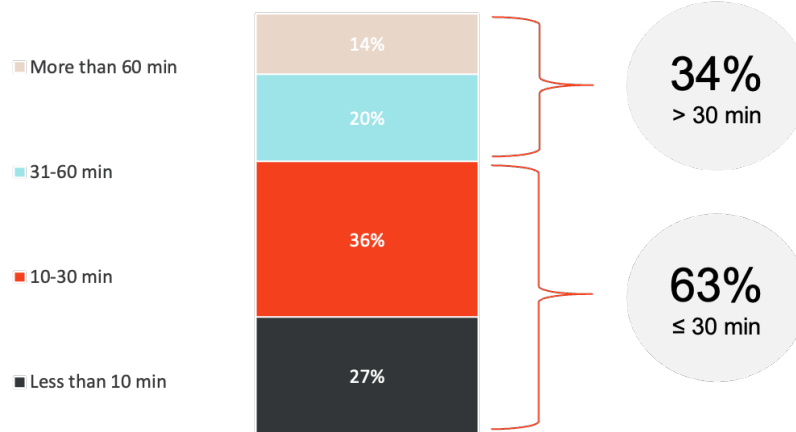
[26]*Fig 10:*

Activities on VSPs
In the last 12 months amongst those who go online

Activity	%
Browse/ scroll content	74%
Search for specific videos/ content	53%
Share content with friends, family or other platforms	45%
Write comments	36%
Like/ upvote content	34%
Post/ upload content	32%
Talk/ chat to other users	30%
Thumbs down/ downvote content	16%
Buy physical goods via links on the platform	5%
Buy virtual goods on the platform	3%

34% Passive (solus)

63% Active

■ Passive   ■ Active

[27]*Fig 11:*

Average time spent watching videos per day (claimed)

■ More than 60 min — 14%
■ 31-60 min — 20%
■ 10-30 min — 36%
■ Less than 10 min — 27%

34% > 30 min

63% ≤ 30 min

34% of VSP users watch videos on these platforms for more than 30 minutes a day (Fig 11). Videos are typically discovered by users themselves (77%), most often by using search tools within the service (58%) or on pages and channels that users subscribe to (38%). 54% of users find their video content via others – either through being sent videos by friends/ family

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(45%) or through receiving push notifications about suggested videos from platforms with video sharing functionalities (22%).

The most popular type of video content is music videos, watched by 47%. Pranks and challenges (43%), comedy videos (39%), TV programme and film clips (33%) and news and current affairs videos (33%) are also popular.

Social Behaviours and Video Sharing Platforms

Qualitative research[28] highlights that some users are making subconscious actions when browsing VSPs. Some users state that if they are not confident in the content of an upcoming video, they tend to pause at the beginning and quickly assess the like/dislike ratios or comments attached. This is a way for them to determine whether the content is appropriate, as they tend to believe that they can 'trust' the majority of the community and their judgment of what is and what is not appropriate.

Furthermore, some users have changed their privacy and content settings within VSPs as a way to ensure only users they know can interact with them, reducing the chances of being exposed to potential online harms. However, most users tend to agree that they have been led to believe that VSPs could 'learn' about each individual user, and as a result, would expose them to content they were interested in (through certain algorithms). While users do not believe that these algorithms would stop harmful content appearing on their feeds completely, it is something that they hope will improve over time.

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[28] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

4. Experience of Potential Online Harm

Video-sharing platform regulation requires that services take measures to protect their users from the following categories of harm[29]:

- Protection of minors from content which may impair their physical, mental, and moral development
- Protections in relation to content containing incitement to violence or hatred
- Protections in relation to content, the inclusion of which would be a criminal offence under legislation concerning child sexual abuse and exploitation; encouragement of terrorism; incitement to racism and xenophobia.

This research considered a broader range of potentially harmful online content or experiences that VSP users could be exposed to when using these sites than the specified categories of harmful material in the VSP legislation. This approach was taken to build a holistic understanding of VSP users' experiences on these sites. Our quantitative research explored video sharing platform users' exposure to 26 potential online harms (Fig 12). These harms are categorised into 'Content' harms and 'Contact' harms. Content harms refer to potential online harm that arises from posts, pictures, videos, or other content posted by users or advertisers on VSPs. Contact harms are potential online harms that originate from the behaviour of other users.

This report will focus on the detailed results from six potentially harmful content or behaviours:

1. Violent/ disturbing videos or content
2. Harmful or misleading advertising
3. Bullying, abusive behaviour, or threats
4. Hateful content (the combined results for: Videos or content encouraging hate towards others; Videos or content encouraging violence towards others; Videos or content encouraging racism)
5. Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children
6. Content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism

These harms have been reported in alignment with the three categories of harm Ofcom has regulation over (Fig 13).

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[29] Note: This report does not seek to identify which services will fall into Ofcom's regulatory remit

[30] *Fig 12:*

Content Harms

- Videos or content relating to negative body image/ excessive dieting/eating disorders
- Videos or content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
- Sharing of private/ intimate photos/videos without consent
- Sexual/ pornographic content inappropriate for the site/app
- Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children (18+ only)
- Offensive language
- Offensive videos/pictures
- Violent/ disturbing videos or content
- Fake news i.e. false or misleading stories
- Content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism
- Videos or content promoting self-harm e.g. suicide
- Harmful or misleading advertising
- Fake or deceptive images/ videos
- Videos or content encouraging hate towards others
- Videos or content encouraging violence towards others
- Videos or content encouraging racism

Contact & Other Harms

- Unwelcome friend/ follow requests or messages
- Stalking/ cyberstalking
- People pretending to be another person e.g. catfishing
- Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
- Trolling (a person who says something to cause upset)
- Pressure to send photos/ personal information to someone
- Cyber-flashing, i.e. unwanted sexual or nude images or videos
- Sale of illegal goods online
- Content encouraging gambling
- Spending too much money on in-app purchasing/ gifting

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[30] **Fig 12:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021.

3 Categories of harm	Focus harms included		
Protection of minors from content which may impair their physical, mental and moral development	Violent/ disturbing videos or content	Harmful or misleading advertising	Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats
Protections in relation to content containing incitement to violence or hatred	Hateful content (Videos or content encouraging hate towards others; Videos or content encouraging violence towards others; Videos or content encouraging racism)		
Protections in relation to content which is a criminal offence	Videos or content encouraging racism*	Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children	Content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism

*Covered in full within the 'Hateful Content' harm

Summary of Content Harms

Content harms refer to potential online harm that arises from posts, pictures, videos, or other content posted by users or advertisers on VSPs.

Overall, 63% of users have been exposed to potential content harms on VSPs in the last 3 months (Fig 14). Fake news and offensive language are the most common potentially harmful content experiences, with 49% and 45% of VSP users having been exposed to one of these in this time frame respectively. The potential content harms that this report focuses on in detail have been experienced by a significant minority – including hateful content (32%), harmful/ misleading advertising (27%) and violent/ disturbing videos or content (26%). Only 9% have been exposed to content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism and 5% to content depicting sexual abuse or exploitation of children.

Younger VSP users (13–34 year-olds) are most vulnerable to content harms – with the vast majority of 13-17s (73%, Fig 15), 18-24s (80%) and 25-34s (73%) being exposed to at least one of these in the last 3 months. Minority ethnic background users are significantly more likely to have experienced content harms than white users (70% vs. 63%), while active users are more vulnerable than passive (73% vs. 49%).

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[31] **Fig 13:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021.

[32]**Fig 14:**

Potential content harms experienced in the last 3 months

Content harm	%
Fake news	49%
Offensive language	45%
Fake/ deceptive images/ videos	35%
Hateful content (hate, violence, racism)	32%
Harmful/ misleading advertising	27%
Offensive videos/ pictures	27%
Violent/ disturbing videos or content	26%
Negative body image/ excessive dieting/ eating disorders	21%
Glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles	20%
Inappropriate sexual/ pornographic content	16%
Encouraging radicalisation or terrorism	9%
Sharing of private/ intimate photos/ videos without consent	8%
Promoting self-harm	8%
Content depicting sexual abuse or exploitation of children	5%

63% Exposed to potential content harm

[33]**Fig 15:**

Who is exposed to content harms?

Age		Ethnicity		SEG		Activity	
13-17	73%	White	63%	AB	66%	Active	73%
18-24	80%			C1	60%		
25-34	73%			C2	66%		
35-44	66%	Minority Ethnic groups	70%	DE	62%	Passive	49%
45-54	56%						
55+	51%						

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[32] **Fig 14:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: Those who have used at least one listed VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958

[33] **Fig 15:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used VSP in the last 3 months: 13-17 (n=214), 18-24 (n=213), 25-34 (n=312), 35-44 (298), 45-54 (n=334), 55+ (n=587), White (n=1730), BAME (n=204), Active (n=1268), Passive (n=641), AB (n=554), C1 (n=557), C2 (n=386), DE (n=461)
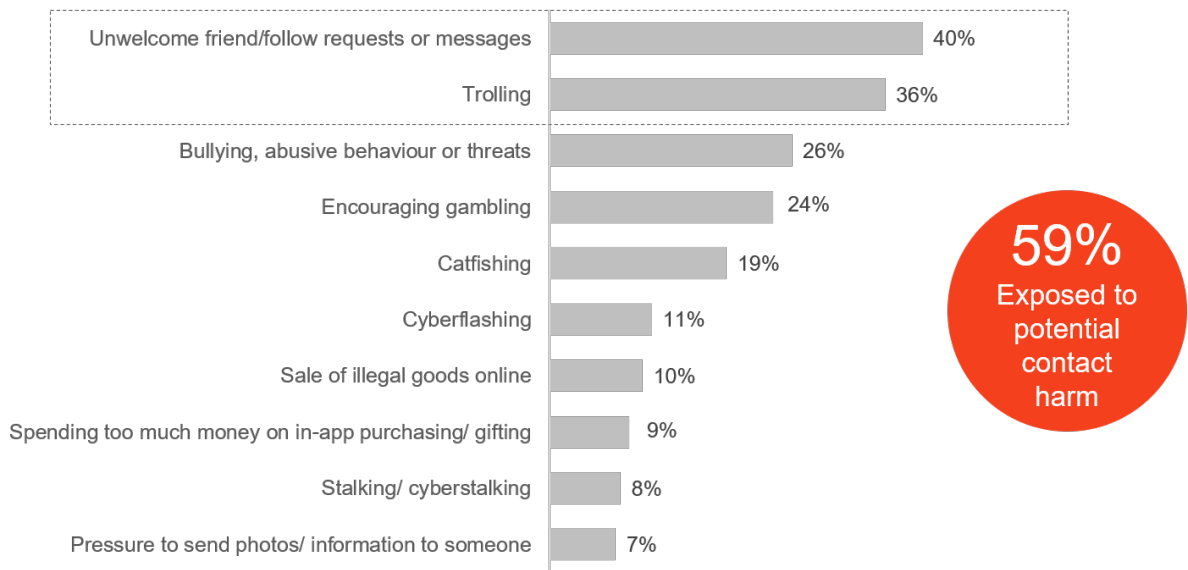
Summary of Contact Harms

Contact harms are potential online harms that originate from the behaviour of other users. **59% claim to have been exposed to contact harms in the last 3 months** (Fig 16), with unwelcome friend requests or messages and trolling being the most commonly experienced (40% and 36% respectively).

26% have been exposed to bullying, abusive behaviour, or threats – one of the potential online harms explored in more detail within this report.

[34]*Fig 16:*

Potential contact harms experienced in the last 3 months

Unwelcome friend/follow requests or messages	40%
Trolling	36%
Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	26%
Encouraging gambling	24%
Catfishing	19%
Cyberflashing	11%
Sale of illegal goods online	10%
Spending too much money on in-app purchasing/ gifting	9%
Stalking/ cyberstalking	8%
Pressure to send photos/ information to someone	7%

59% Exposed to potential contact harm

Fig 17:

Who is exposed to contact harms?

Harms Relating to The Protection of Children

Exposure to Potential Online Harms amongst 13–17 year-olds

Overall, the majority (79%, Fig 6) of 13–17 year-olds who use platforms with video sharing functionalities say they experienced a potential online harm on the platforms within the last three months.
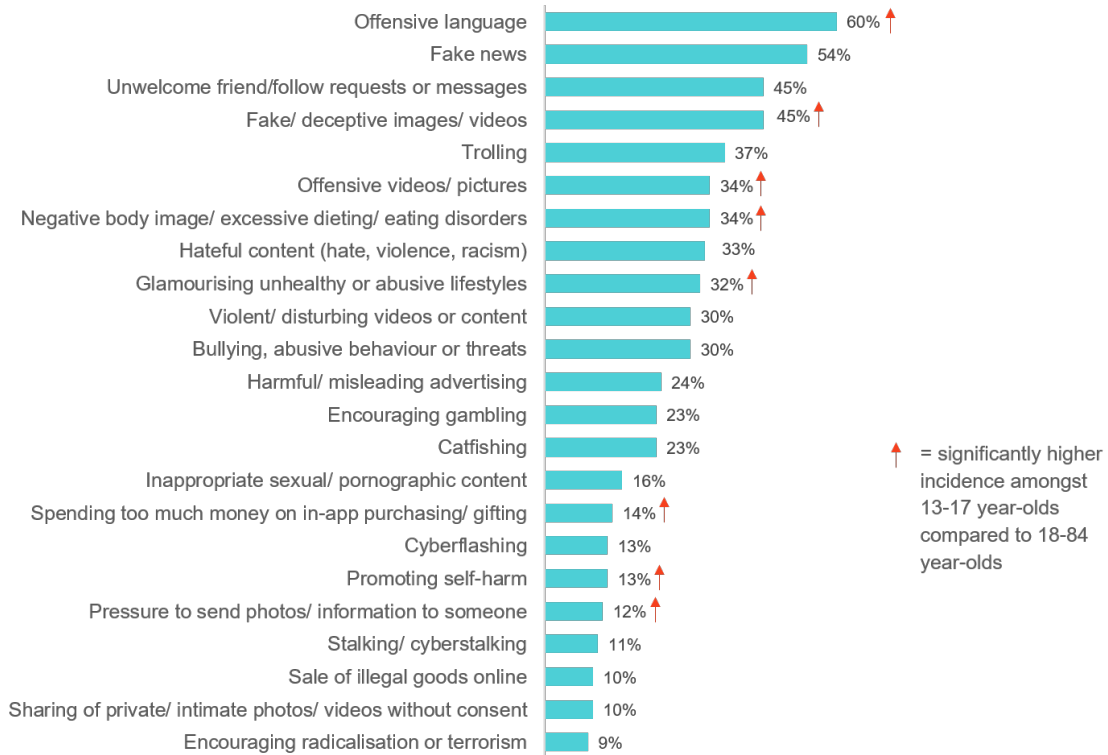
The most prevalent content or behaviour that could be considered harmful experienced amongst this age group of VSP users is offensive language (60% of 13-17 year-old VSP users, Fig 18), followed by misinformation ('fake news', 54%). This is a similar pattern to that seen in adult VSP users (18-84 years), where misinformation is the most prevalent potentially harmful online experience (49%) followed by offensive language (44%). 16% of 13 -17 year-olds using VSPs have declared exposure to inappropriate sexual or pornographic content – the same as the proportion of adult VSP users (16%) who say they have been exposed to this potential online harm.

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[35] **Fig 17:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used VSP in the last 3 months: 13-17 (n=214), 18-24 (n=213), 25-34 (n=312), 35-44 (298), 45-54 (n=334), 55+ (n=587), White (n=1730), BAME (n=204), Active (n=1268), Passive (n=641), AB (n=554), C1 (n=557), C2 (n=386), DE (n=461)

[36]*Fig 18:*

Offensive language and misinformation ('fake news') were the most commonly experienced potentially harmful online experiences for 13-17 year-olds

Experience	%
Offensive language	60% ↑
Fake news	54%
Unwelcome friend/follow requests or messages	45%
Fake/ deceptive images/ videos	45% ↑
Trolling	37%
Offensive videos/ pictures	34% ↑
Negative body image/ excessive dieting/ eating disorders	34% ↑
Hateful content (hate, violence, racism)	33%
Glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles	32% ↑
Violent/ disturbing videos or content	30%
Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats	30%
Harmful/ misleading advertising	24%
Encouraging gambling	23%
Catfishing	23%
Inappropriate sexual/ pornographic content	16%
Spending too much money on in-app purchasing/ gifting	14% ↑
Cyberflashing	13%
Promoting self-harm	13% ↑
Pressure to send photos/ information to someone	12% ↑
Stalking/ cyberstalking	11%
Sale of illegal goods online	10%
Sharing of private/ intimate photos/ videos without consent	10%
Encouraging radicalisation or terrorism	9%

↑ = significantly higher incidence amongst 13-17 year-olds compared to 18-84 year-olds

However, there are also some clear differences between the exposure to potential online harms in children who use VSPs compared to adult VSP users, with signs that children are more vulnerable to specific potential online harms on VSPs. Although offensive language is a leading potentially harmful online experience in both groups, it is significantly more likely to be experienced by 13–17 year-olds than 18–84 year-olds. Compared to adult VSP users, 13-17 year-old VSP users are also significantly more likely to claim exposure to the following eight potential online harms: fake/deceptive images and videos (45% of 13-17 year-old VSP users vs. 35% of 18-84 year-olds), offensive videos/ pictures (34% vs. 26%), negative body image/ excessive dieting/ eating disorders (34% vs. 20%), content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles (32% vs. 19%), spending too much money on in-app purchasing/gifting (14% vs. 9%), promotion of self-harm (13% vs. 7%) and pressure to send photos or information to someone (12% vs. 7%).
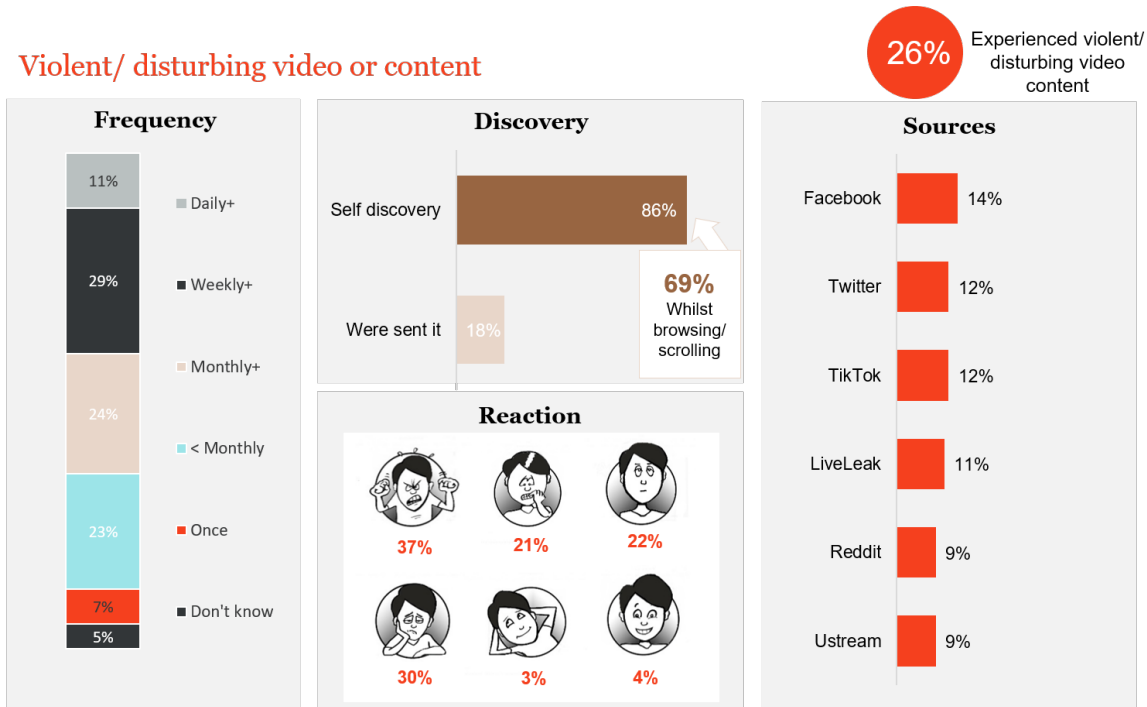
Violent/ Disturbing Videos or Content

26% of VSP users declare exposure to violent/ disturbing videos or content. Nearly half of these say Facebook is the source of their exposure (45%), which means approximately 14% of Facebook users were exposed to this harm (see Fig 19).

Across VSPs, frequency of exposure tends to fall on a weekly to monthly basis with 29% experiencing it weekly. Only a minority say they are exposed on a daily basis (11%).

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[36] **Fig 18:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [any VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: 13-17 years-old, n=214. Note: the option 'Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children' is not displayed as this answer option was not shown to 13-17 year-olds.

Violent/ disturbing video or content

26% Experienced violent/ disturbing video content

Frequency
- Daily+ 11%
- Weekly+ 29%
- Monthly+ 24%
- < Monthly 23%
- Once 7%
- Don't know 5%

Discovery
- Self discovery 86%
- Were sent it 18%

69% Whilst browsing/ scrolling

Reaction
- 37%
- 21%
- 22%
- 30%
- 3%
- 4%

Sources
- Facebook 14%
- Twitter 12%
- TikTok 12%
- LiveLeak 11%
- Reddit 9%
- Ustream 9%

The vast majority discover the harm themselves (86% of those who had experienced this potential online harm, Fig 19), with browsing and scrolling as the dominant mechanism (69%). The primary reaction is anger (37%) followed by boredom (30%). A very small minority have a positive reaction, but it should be noted that the exact interpretation of the answer code by respondents is unknown, as is the exact context in which the content was viewed. Qualitative research[38] has uncovered specific occasions where exposure to potentially harmful online content is interpreted positively because it is in the context of campaigning against a harm. For example, an image of animal abuse that respondents found shocking, but the intention of the content was to raise awareness of animal abuse and support animal protection.

This potential online harm is most prevalent amongst young adults (39% 18-24 year-old users have been exposed and 25-34 years, 35%, Fig 20), people belonging to minority ethnic backgrounds (40%) and active VSP users (32%), who are significantly more likely to claim exposure.

Of those who say they have been exposed to violent and disturbing content, just over half (51%) have taken some form of action as a result. The main route of action is to click the report button within the platform (28%). 45% did not take an action with the key barrier being a perception that taking action would not make a difference. Females are significantly more likely to take action than males (59% vs. 45% of males) as are those with children under the age of 18 (59% vs. 46% without children) and active VSP users (54%, vs. 41% of passive).
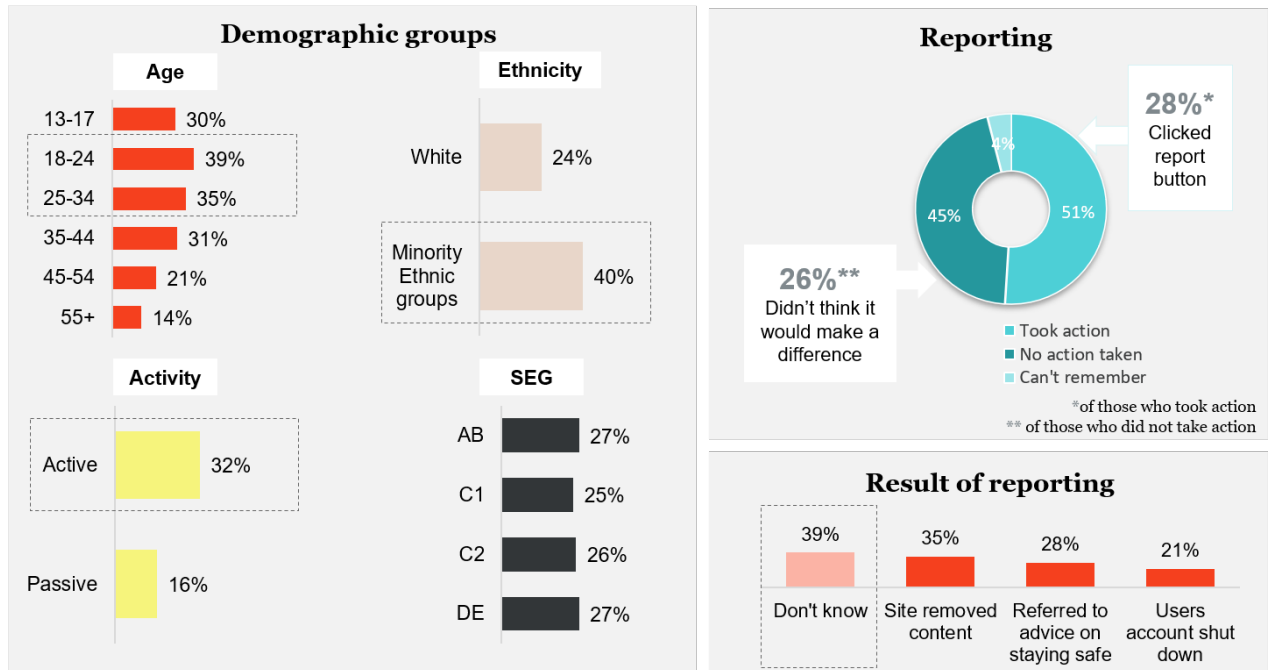
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[37] **Fig 19:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q5. How often do you experience violent or disturbing videos or content when using [VSP]? Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent or disturbing videos or content, how did you come across it? Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent or disturbing videos or content, which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base for Q5-Q7: experienced violent or disturbing videos or content in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=509. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base for Q4: Used VSP in the last 3 months, Facebook, n=1,617, Twitter, n=968, TikTok, n=556, LiveLeak n=111, Reddit, n=465, Ustream, n=109. NOTE: Sources analysis shows the percentage of users for each VSP that remembered seeing or experiencing violent or disturbing videos or content on that VSP in the last 3 months. VSPs with a base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis.

[38] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[39] **Fig 20:**

Violent/ disturbing video or content

26% Experienced violent/ disturbing video content

Demographic groups

Age
- 13-17: 30%
- 18-24: 39%
- 25-34: 35%
- 35-44: 31%
- 45-54: 21%
- 55+: 14%

Ethnicity
- White: 24%
- Minority Ethnic groups: 40%

Activity
- Active: 32%
- Passive: 16%

SEG
- AB: 27%
- C1: 25%
- C2: 26%
- DE: 27%

Reporting

28%* Clicked report button

26%** Didn't think it would make a difference

- 51% Took action
- 45% No action taken
- 4% Can't remember

Took action
No action taken
Can't remember

*of those who took action
** of those who did not take action

Result of reporting
- Don't know: 39%
- Site removed content: 35%
- Referred to advice on staying safe: 28%
- Users account shut down: 21%

Case study: TikTok

Qualitative research[40] has revealed that the suicide that was live-streamed on TikTok in 2020 (after first appearing on other platforms) was a well-known event and caused concern for many users, both for their own safety and others (source: BBC News). The biggest concern was the length of time in which the video (and subsequent copies of the video) remained on the platform. Some users tend to believe that cases such as this highlight VSPs' apparent reliance on communities to identify violent and disturbing content. For some, this exposes the issue that users (including children) will have viewed it, potentially causing long-term negative effects on mental and physical health. The other concern is that once one platform removes this violent and disturbing content, it can be uploaded to other platforms, increasing exposure.

Harmful or Misleading Advertising

27% of video sharing platform users say they were exposed to potentially harmful or misleading advertising (Fig 21). Of these users, just over half have been exposed to this on Facebook (55%). This means that 18% of Facebook users overall experienced this potential online harm.

[41]*Fig 21:*

Harmful or misleading advertising

27% Experienced harmful or misleading advertising
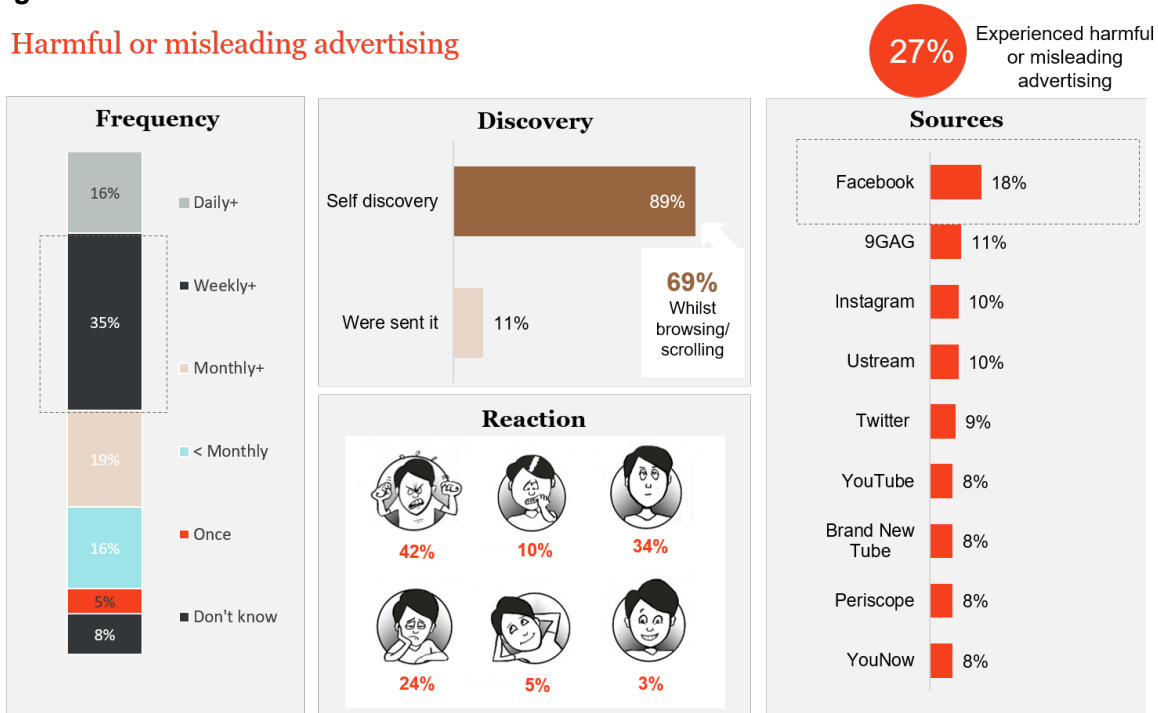
Users are typically exposed to this potential online harm at least weekly or more frequently (52% of those who have been exposed to this potential harm), with 16% claiming to experience this daily. The overwhelming majority discover the harm themselves (89%), predominantly while browsing or scrolling (69%). Reactions to this type of potential online harm are most likely to be those of anger (42%), indifference (34%) and boredom (24%). Few have positive reactions towards the potential online harm.
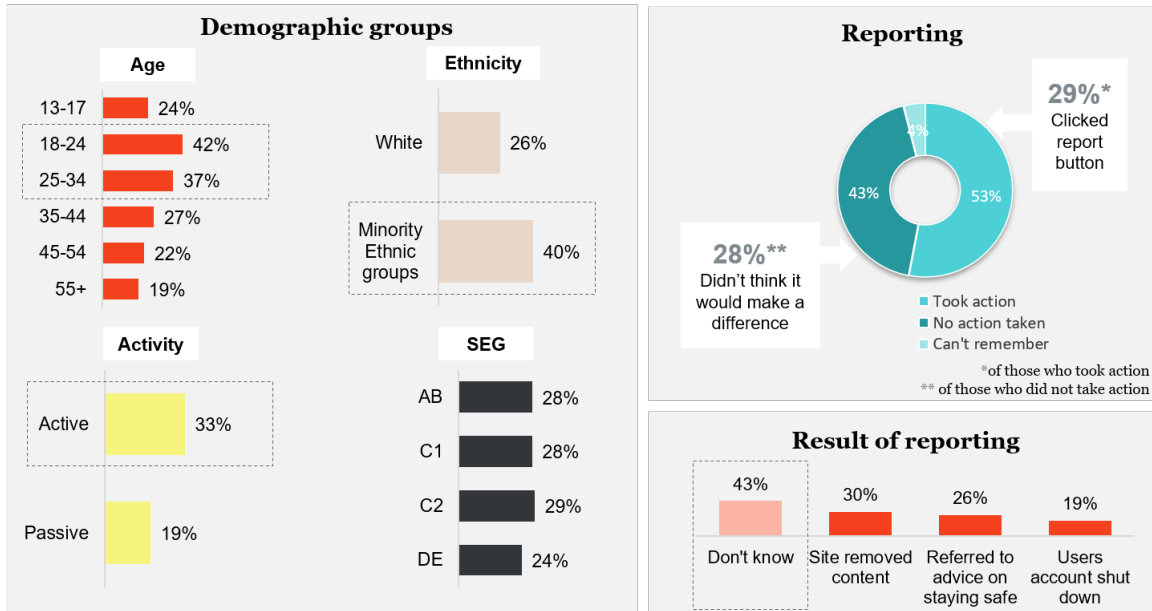
Those aged 18-34 are most likely to have been exposed to harmful or misleading advertising, with 42% of those aged 18-24 and 37% of those aged 25-34 experiencing this potential online harm in the last year (Fig 22). Minority ethnic background users (40%) and active users (33%) are also significantly more likely to have experienced harmful or misleading advertising, while there is little difference in exposure by a user's socio-economic background.

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[41] **Fig 21:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021 Q5. How often do you experience harmful or misleading advertising when using [VSP]? Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of harmful or misleading advertising, how did you come across it? Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of harmful or misleading advertising, which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base: for Q5-Q7, experienced harmful or misleading advertising in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=540. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base for Q4: Used VSP in the last 3 months, Facebook, n=1617, 9GAG, n=101, Instagram, n=1091, Ustream, n=109, Twitter, n=968, YouTube, n=1831, Brand New Tube, n=150, Periscope, n=130, YouNow, n=114. NOTE: Sources analysis shows the percentage of users for each VSP that remembered seeing or experiencing harmful or misleading advertising on that VSP in the last 3 months. VSPs with a base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis.

[42]**Fig 22:**

Harmful or misleading advertising

27% Experienced harmful or misleading advertising

Demographic groups

Age
- 13-17: 24%
- 18-24: 42%
- 25-34: 37%
- 35-44: 27%
- 45-54: 22%
- 55+: 19%

Ethnicity
- White: 26%
- Minority Ethnic groups: 40%

Activity
- Active: 33%
- Passive: 19%

SEG
- AB: 28%
- C1: 28%
- C2: 29%
- DE: 24%

Reporting

- 29%* Clicked report button
- 28%** Didn't think it would make a difference
- 53%
- 43%
- 4%

Took action | No action taken | Can't remember

*of those who took action
** of those who did not take action

Result of reporting
- Don't know: 43%
- Site removed content: 30%
- Referred to advice on staying safe: 26%
- Users account shut down: 19%

Of those exposed to the potential online harm, 53% have taken action due to it, with the most frequent form of action taken being clicking on a report button (29%). The main reason for not reporting harmful or misleading advertising is that users do not feel it will make a difference or be acted on (28% of those who did not take action). Younger users are more likely to have taken action after seeing potentially harmful or misleading advertising (58% of 18–34 year-olds vs 42% of 55+ year-olds), as are those people with children under 18 years (63%, compared to 48% of those without children) and active users (60%, compared to 31% of passive users).

43% of those who reported the content do not know the outcome of reporting this type of potential online harm. The outcome for 30% was the content being removed from the site, while slightly fewer were referred to advice on staying safe (26%).

Bullying, Abusive Behaviour or Threats

26% of users have declared that they have been exposed to bullying, abusive behaviour or threats while using VSPs in the last year (Fig 23). Of those VSP users who have experienced this potential online harm, they predominantly experienced it on either Facebook (42%) or Twitter (37%). Nonetheless, a minority of Facebook users overall have experienced this (13%), compared to 20% of Twitter users. Thus we see that although those who experienced the potential harm were most likely to have done so on Facebook, that is because

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[42] **Fig 22:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used VSP in the last 3 months: 13-17 (n=214), 18-24 (n=213), 25-34 (n=312), 35-44 (298), 45-54 (n=334), 55+ (n=587), White (n=1730), BAME (n=204), Active (n=1268), Passive (n=641), AB (n=554), C1 (n=557), C2 (n=386), DE (n=461). Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of harmful or misleading advertising, which of the following actions, if any, did you take? Base: experienced harmful or misleading advertising in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=540. Q9. You mentioned that you did not take any action. Why was this? Base: experienced harmful or misleading advertising in the last 3 months on any VSP and took no action, n=293. Q10. What happened when you reported the harmful or misleading advertising? Base: experienced harmful or misleading advertising in the last 3 months on any VSP and took action, n=217.

more people use Facebook than other VSPs, rather than because bullying, abusive behaviour or threats are particularly prevalent on Facebook.
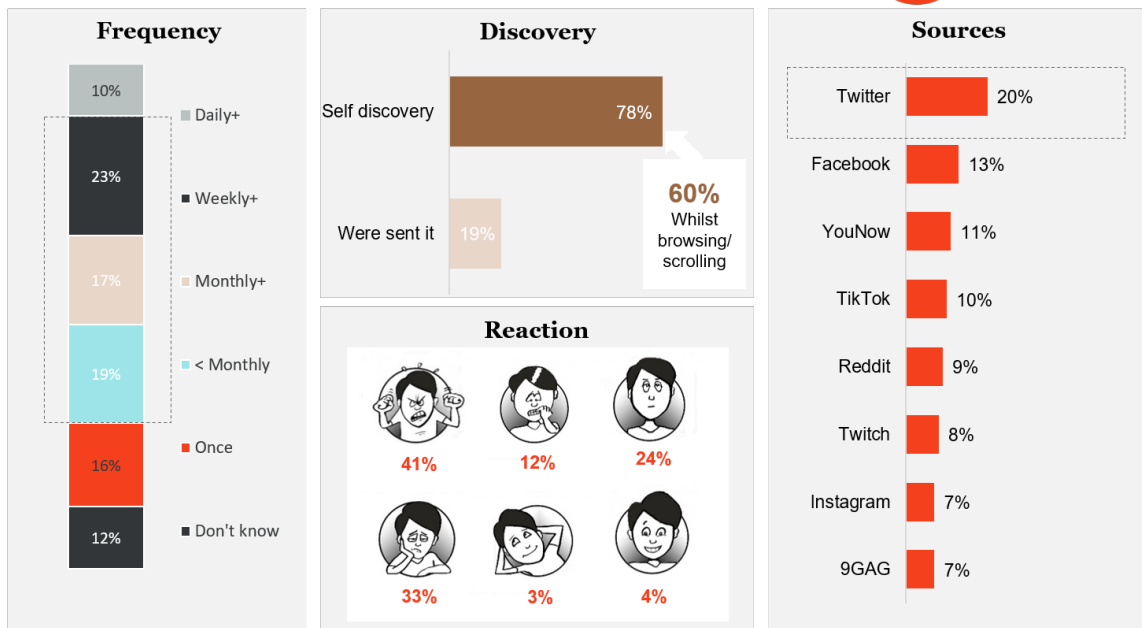
10% of those exposed to bullying, abusive behaviour or threats on a VSP experience this at least daily. A further 23% experience bullying, abusive behaviour or threats at least weekly. Video sharing platform users typically discover this type of harm themselves (78%), most commonly while browsing or scrolling through content (60%). Nonetheless, a sizeable minority are sent it directly (19%).

The most prevalent reactions to this form of potential online harm are anger (41%) or boredom (33%).

[43]*Fig 23:*

Those aged 18-24 and 25-34 are the most vulnerable to exposure to bullying, abusive behaviour or threats (40% and 38% having been exposed to this in the last year respectively, Fig 24). Minority ethnic background users (34%) and active users (31%) are also significantly more likely to experience this type of potential online harm.

55% have taken action when exposed to bullying, abusive behaviour or threats, with 24% of these clicking a button to report the potential online harm. Of those who did not report the harm, a similar proportion feel it would make no difference (24%). Females are more likely to take action than males (61% compared to 50%), as are those with children under the age of 18 years (61% vs 50% without children) and active users (59% vs 42% of passive).
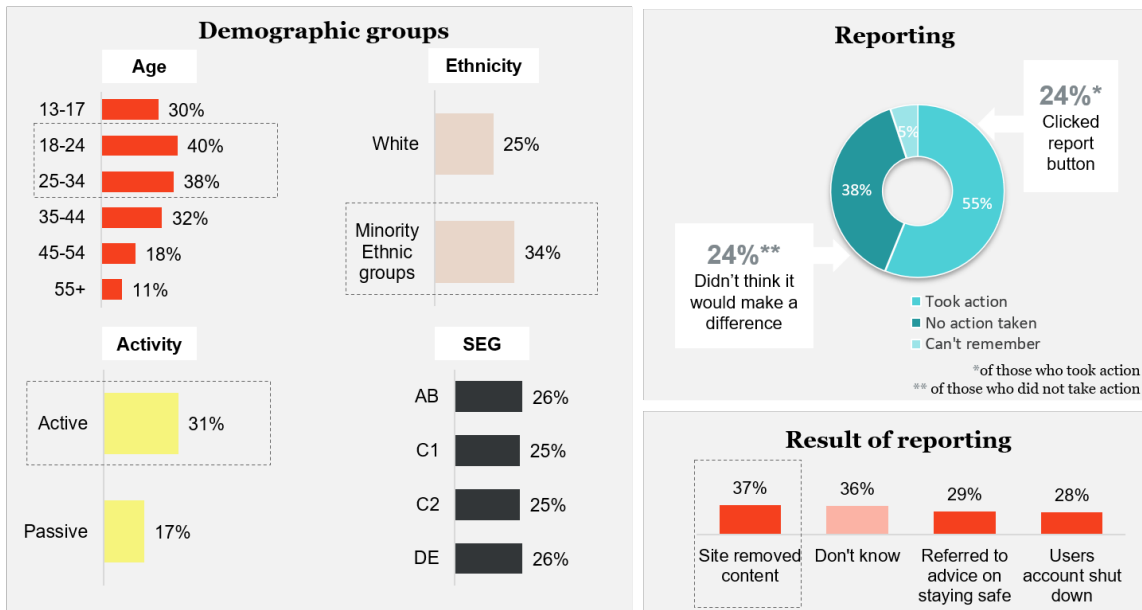
37% claim that the site removed the potentially harmful online content as a result of them reporting it, while a similar proportion are unsure of the outcome (36%).

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[43] **Fig 23:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q5. How often do you experience bullying, abusive behaviour or threats [VSP]? Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of bullying, abusive behavior, or threats, how did you come across it? Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of bullying, abusive behavior, or threats, which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base: for Q5-Q7, experienced bullying, abusive behaviour or threats in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=507. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base for Q4: Used VSP in the last 3 months, Twitter, n=968, Facebook, n=1,617, YouNow, n=114, TikTok, n=556, Reddit, n=465, Twitch, n=278, Instagram, n=1091, 9GAG, n=101. NOTE: Sources analysis shows the percentage of users for each VSP that remembered seeing or experiencing bullying, abusive behaviour or threats on that VSP in the last 3 months. VSPs with a base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis.

Bullying, abusive behaviour or threats

26% Experienced bullying, abusive behaviour or threats

Demographic groups

Age

13-17	30%
18-24	40%
25-34	38%
35-44	32%
45-54	18%
55+	11%

Ethnicity

White	25%
Minority Ethnic groups	34%

Activity

Active	31%
Passive	17%

SEG

AB	26%
C1	25%
C2	25%
DE	26%

Reporting

24%* Clicked report button

24%* Didn't think it would make a difference

38% / 55% / 6%

- Took action
- No action taken
- Can't remember

*of those who took action
** of those who did not take action

Result of reporting

37%	36%	29%	28%
Site removed content	Don't know	Referred to advice on staying safe	Users account shut down

Harms Relating to Content which Encourages Violence or Hatred

Hateful Content

For the purpose of this research, figures on hateful content are based on the combined data for exposure to videos or content encouraging hate towards others, videos or content encouraging violence towards others, and videos or content encouraging racism.

32% of VSP users claim to have been exposed to at least one of these forms of content in the last 3 months (Fig 25). Of these users, 49% of those who experienced it experience it on Facebook, followed by Twitter (32%). Nonetheless, a minority of Facebook and Twitter users overall have experienced this form of potential online harm (19% and 21% respectively).
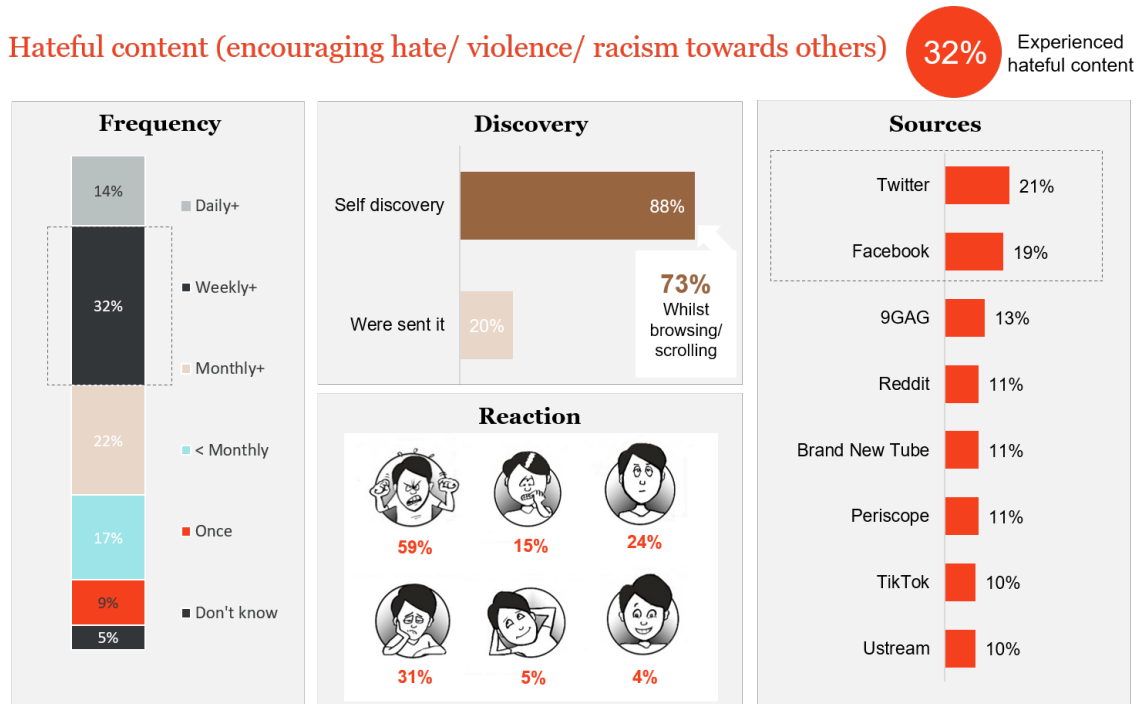
A minority of those exposed to this potential online harm (14%) claim they are exposed to hateful content at least daily, while a further 32% have experienced it at least weekly. This type of content is predominantly discovered while browsing or scrolling (73%), although a fifth are directly sent it by others (20%).

The majority of hateful content experienced online in the last 3 months is directed towards a racial group (59%), while around a quarter of those who said they were exposed to hateful content say it is targeted at religious groups (28%) and transgender individuals (25%).

The dominant reaction to hateful content is that of anger (59%).

[45]*Fig 25:*

Hateful content (encouraging hate/ violence/ racism towards others) — 32% Experienced hateful content

Frequency
- 14% Daily+
- 32% Weekly+
- Monthly+
- 22% < Monthly
- 17% Once
- 9% Don't know
- 5%

Discovery
- Self discovery 88%
- Were sent it 20%
- 73% Whilst browsing/ scrolling

Reaction
- 59% 15% 24%
- 31% 5% 4%

Sources
- Twitter 21%
- Facebook 19%
- 9GAG 13%
- Reddit 11%
- Brand New Tube 11%
- Periscope 11%
- TikTok 10%
- Ustream 10%

47% of those aged 18-24 and 43% of those aged 25-34 have been exposed to hateful content while using VSPs in the last year (Fig 26). Exposure is more prevalent among minority ethnic background users (49%) than white users (30%) and more common among active (38%) rather than passive VSP users (22%).

Of those exposed to hateful content, the majority have taken some form of action as a result of this (58%), with 33% reporting the content via a report button. Females are significantly more likely to take action than males (67% vs 51%), along with people from minority ethnic backrounds (75% compared to 55% from white ethnicities) and those with children under 16 years of age (65% vs 54% of those without children). Active users are also more likely to take action (61%) than passive users (46%). The most common outcome of reporting hateful content is that the site removed the content (43%). A sizeable minority are unsure of the outcome of their actions (36%).

38% did not take any action when exposed to the potential online harm, with inaction driven by users thinking it would not make a difference (34% of those who did not take action).
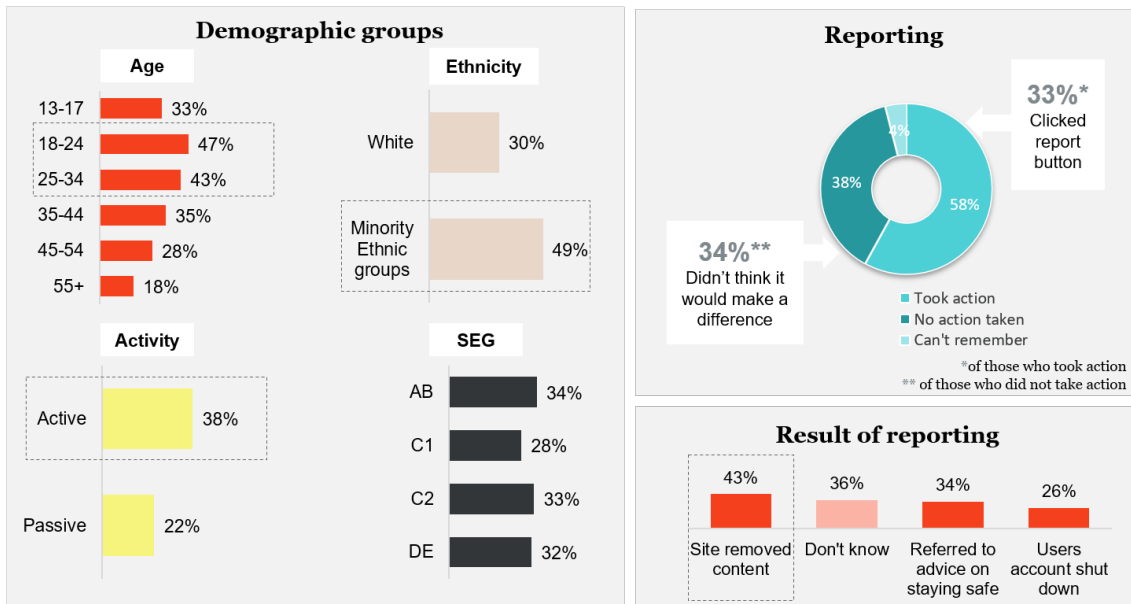
[46]*Fig 26:*

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[45] **Fig 25:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q5. How often do you experience videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism towards others [VSP]? Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism towards others, how did you come across it? Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism towards others, which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base: for Q5-Q7, experienced videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism towards others in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=625. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base for Q4: Used VSP in the last 3 months, Twitter, n=968, Facebook, n=1617, 9GAG, n=101, Reddit, n=465, Brand New Tube, n=150, Periscope, n=130, TikTok, n=556, Ustream, n=109. NOTE: Sources analysis shows the percentage of users for each VSP that remembered seeing or experiencing hateful content on that VSP in the last 3 months. VSPs with a base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis.

[46] **Fig 26:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used VSP in the last 3 months: 13-17 (n=214),

Hateful content (encouraging hate/ violence/ racism towards others) 32% Experienced hateful content

Demographic groups

Age

13-17	33%
18-24	47%
25-34	43%
35-44	35%
45-54	28%
55+	18%

Ethnicity

White	30%
Minority Ethnic groups	49%

Activity

Active	38%
Passive	22%

SEG

AB	34%
C1	28%
C2	33%
DE	32%

Reporting

33%* Clicked report button

34%** Didn't think it would make a difference

38% | 58% | 4%

- Took action
- No action taken
- Can't remember

*of those who took action
** of those who did not take action

Result of reporting

43%	36%	34%	26%
Site removed content	Don't know	Referred to advice on staying safe	Users account shut down

Content which is a Criminal Offence

Videos or Content Encouraging Racism

Full results of exposure to videos or content encouraging racism are discussed in full, along with the results of videos or content encouraging hate towards others, and videos or content encouraging violence towards others, in the 'Hateful Content' section of this report.

In brief, 21% say they have been exposed to videos or content encouraging racism on a platform with video sharing capabilities within the last three months[47]. Of those exposed to this content, 47% have seen it on Facebook and 31% on Twitter[48]. This equates to 13% of Twitter users and 12% of Facebook users overall.

Males are significantly more likely to say they were exposed to racist content than females (25% of males compared to 17% of females[49]) and exposure is highest in the 18–24 year (29%) and 25–34 year (27%) age brackets – significantly higher than the levels of exposure in middle aged and older age groups (45 years+). Those from minority ethnic backgrounds are more than twice as likely to have come across racist content (40%) than those who are white

18-24 (n=213), 25-34 (n=312), 35-44 (298), 45-54 (n=334), 55+ (n=587), White (n=1730), BAME (n=204), Active (n=1268), Passive (n=641), AB (n=554), C1 (n=557), C2 (n=386), DE (n=461). Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism, which of the following actions, if any, did you take? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=625. Q9. You mentioned that you did not take any action. Why was this? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism in the last 3 months on any VSP and took no action, n=233. Q10. What happened when you reported the videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging hate/ violence/ racism in the last 3 months on any VSP and took action, n=285.

[47] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958.

[48] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months, n=423.

[49] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used any VSP in the last 3 months and: male, n=981; female, n=977; 18-24 years, n=213; 25-34 years, n=312; Minority ethnic groups, n=204; White, n=1,730; Active, n=1,268; Passive, n=641.

(19%). Active users are also much more likely to have seen this content (26% compared to 12% of passive).

A minority (14%) are exposed to racist content at least daily and 26% at least once a week[50]. The majority come across the content themselves (83%) whilst browsing and scrolling (67%[51]). The primary reaction is one of anger (55%[52]).

56% of those exposed to this content have taken action after being exposed to it, with clicking the report or flag button being the dominant mechanism (32%[53]). Females are significantly more likely to take action than males (64% vs 50%), as are people with children under the age of 18 years (65% vs 52% of those without children). 38% of those exposed to this potential online harm did not take action, with the primary barrier being a perception that taking action would not help matters (29% of those who did not take action)[54]. Of those who reported the content, the majority (61%) are aware of what happened as a result, with 33% noting the content was removed and the same proportion being directed to advice (33%)[55].

Videos or Content Depicting the Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children

Users aged 18+ years were asked if they recalled exposure to videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children on VSPs that they had used in the last three months. Respondents aged 13-17 years were not asked if they had been exposed to this content in order to avoid causing distress via the research process.

It should be noted that respondents saw the answer option with the wording 'Videos or Content Depicting the Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children' with no additional definitions or examples. Therefore, selection of this harm was based on the respondent's own interpretation of the answer code.

5% of VSP users have declared exposure to this potential online harm within the last three months. **Due to the low incidence of exposure, the results for this harm are based on a small sample (93 respondents) and therefore should be treated as an indicative trend only.**

Respondents are most likely to declare Facebook as the source of their exposure to content relating to child sexual abuse or exploitation (33%, see Fig 27). However, it should be noted that this is partly a function of high usage of Facebook compared to other VSPs; 2% of Facebook users claim exposure to this type of content in the last three months. Of the apps

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[50] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q5. How often do you experience videos or content encouraging racism when using [VSP]? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months, n=423.

[51] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content encouraging racism on [VSP], how did you come across it? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months, n=423.

[52] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content encouraging racism on [VSP], how did you come across it? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months, n=423.

[53] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content encouraging racism on [VSP], which of the following actions, if any, did you take? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months, n=423.

[54] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q9. You mentioned that you did not take any action. Why was this? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months and did not take any action, n=186.

[55] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q10. What happened when you reported videos or content encouraging racism? Base: experienced videos or content encouraging racism on any VSP in the last 3 months and did take any action, n=189.

and websites tested, the one with the highest proportion of users declaring exposure to this potential online harm was 9GAG (5% of users[56]).

[57]*Fig 27:*

Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children *CAUTION: Low base size*
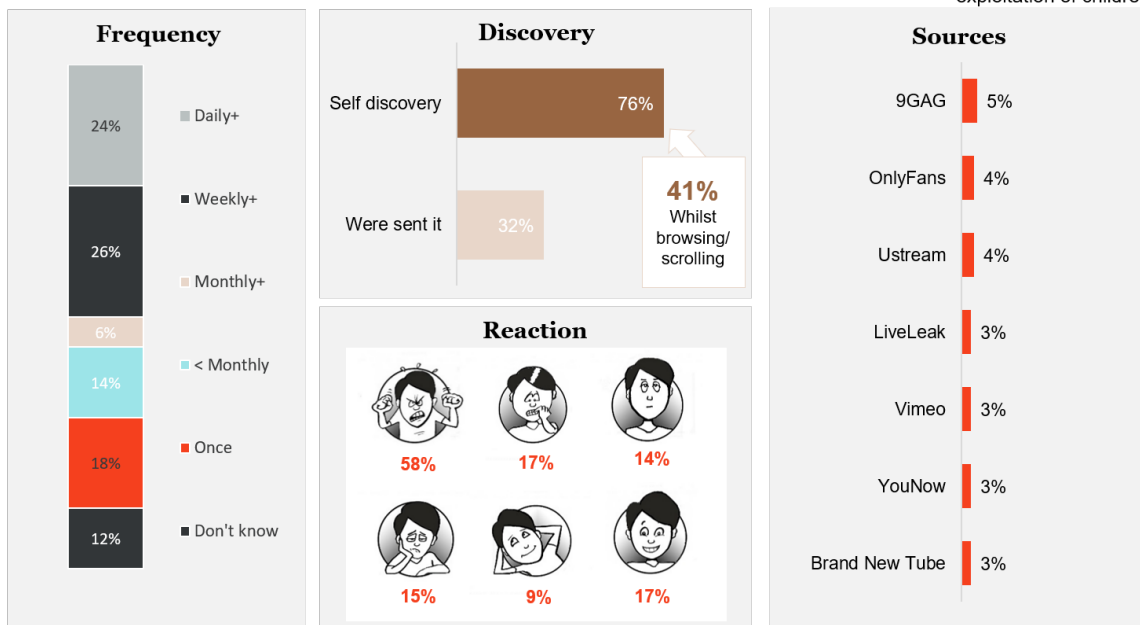
Amongst the small group exposed to this harm, nearly a quarter (24%, Fig 27) claimed daily exposure and another quarter (26%) declared weekly exposure. This information is only indicative due to the small sample size.

The majority discover the harm themselves (76%, Fig 27), primarily through browsing and scrolling (41%). The primary reaction to the content is one depicting anger (58%).[58]

Of the minority that say they were exposed to this type of content, young adults (18-24 years, 10% and 25-34 years, 11%, Fig 28), people belonging to minority ethnic backgrounds (21%) and active video sharing platform users (6%) are significantly more likely to declare exposure.

If exposed to the online harm, the majority (76%) have taken some form of action as a result, with clicking the report button on the VSP being the primary method (28%). 49% have been referred to advice on staying safe online and 35% note that the user they had reported has

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[56] Source: P1 VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used 9GAG within in the last 3 months, n=101. Note: VSPs with a user base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis. **Reader's guidance:** results for 9GAG are based on a sample size of n=101. Whilst this is a robust number for analysis the 9GAG sample size is notably smaller than other VSPs featured in this report. Therefore 9GAG results represent the experience of a smaller number of users.

[57] **Fig 27:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q5. How often do you experience videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children when using [VSP]? Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children, how did you come across it? Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children, which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base for Q5-Q7: experienced videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=93 – CAUTION: Low base size. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base for Q4: Used VSP in the last 3 months, 9GAG, n=101, OnlyFans, n=107, Ustream, n=109, LiveLeak, n=111, Vimeo, n=303, YouNow, n=114, Brand New Tube, n=150. NOTE: Sources analysis shows the percentage of users for each VSP that remembered seeing or experiencing videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children on that VSP in the last 3 months. VSPs with a base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis.
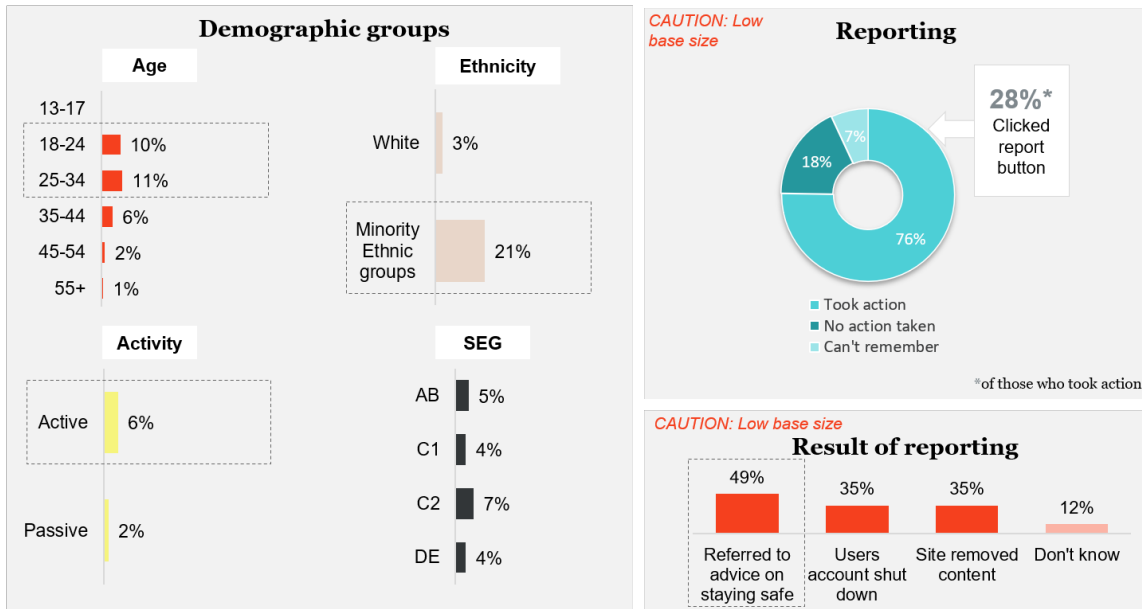
[58] A minority claimed to have a positive reaction, but it should be noted that in addition to open interpretation of the answer code and exact context of the content being unknown, the small base size of respondents also means this result is indicative only.

had their account shut down and/ or the content removed from the site (35%). Only a small minority (12%) do not know what happened as a result of reporting.

[59]**Fig 28:**

Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children

5% Encountered videos or content depicting the sexual abuse of exploitation of children

Demographic groups

Age
- 13-17
- 18-24: 10%
- 25-34: 11%
- 35-44: 6%
- 45-54: 2%
- 55+: 1%

Ethnicity
- White: 3%
- Minority Ethnic groups: 21%

Activity
- Active: 6%
- Passive: 2%

SEG
- AB: 5%
- C1: 4%
- C2: 7%
- DE: 4%

CAUTION: Low base size

Reporting

28%* Clicked report button

- 76%
- 18%
- 7%

■ Took action
■ No action taken
■ Can't remember

*of those who took action

CAUTION: Low base size

Result of reporting
- Referred to advice on staying safe: 49%
- Users account shut down: 35%
- Site removed content: 35%
- Don't know: 12%

Content Encouraging Radicalisation or Terrorism

Overall, 9% of VSP users declared they have been exposed to content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism in the last three months (Fig 29). Although 35% of incidences were on Facebook, only 4% of Facebook users were exposed to this type of content. The VSP with the highest proportion of users declaring they experienced this online harm is 9GAG (7%[60]).

Of those exposed to content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism, 46% have experienced this at least weekly, with 16% experiencing it daily. The majority find the content themselves (83%), predominantly while browsing or scrolling a site (57%). Nonetheless, a sizeable minority are sent the content by others (16%).

57% reacted angrily to the content, with feelings of boredom also relatively common (28%).
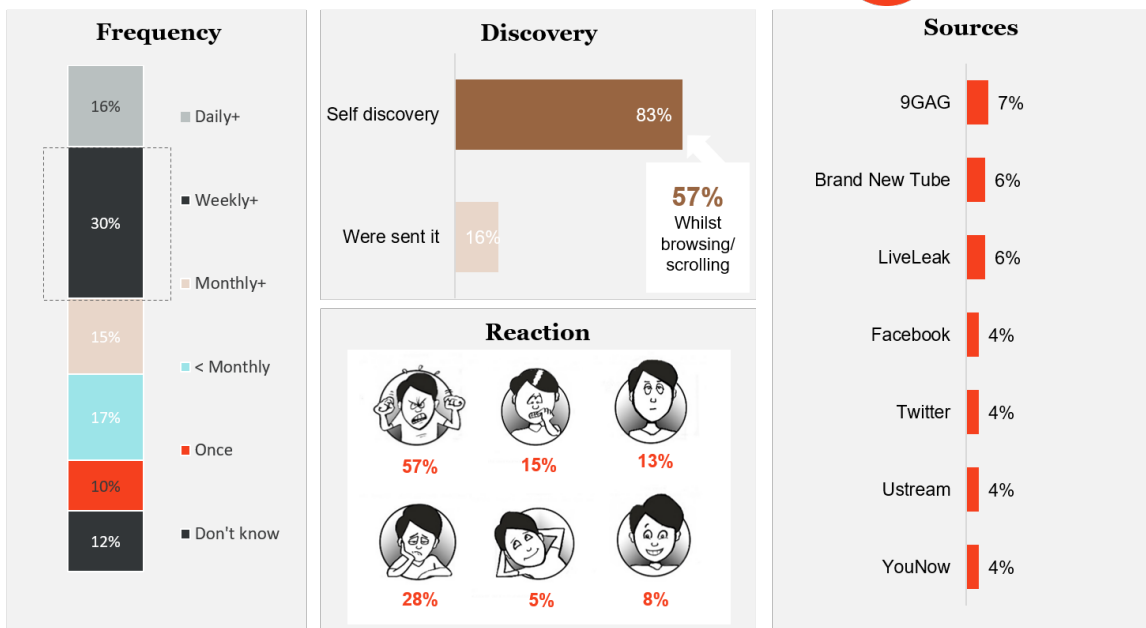
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[59] **Fig 28:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used VSP in the last 3 months: 13-17 (n=214), 18-24 (n=213), 25-34 (n=312), 35-44 (298), 45-54 (n=334), 55+ (n=587), White (n=1730), BAME (n=204), Active (n=1268), Passive (n=641), AB (n=554), C1 (n=557), C2 (n=386), DE (n=461) Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children, which of the following actions, if any, did you take? Base: experienced videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=93. Q10. What happened when you reported the videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children? Base: experienced videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children in the last 3 months on any VSP and took action, n=63 – CAUTION: Low base size.

[60] Source: P1 VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: used 9GAG within in the last 3 months, n=101. Note: VSPs with a user base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis. **Reader's guidance:** results for 9GAG are based on a sample size of n=101. Whilst this is a robust number for analysis the 9GAG sample size is notably smaller than other VSPs featured in this report. Therefore 9GAG results represent the experience of a smaller number of users.

[61]*Fig 29:*

Content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism

9% Encountered content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism

Frequency

16%	Daily+
30%	Weekly+
	Monthly+
15%	
17%	< Monthly
10%	Once
12%	Don't know

Discovery

Self discovery — 83%

Were sent it — 16%

57% Whilst browsing/ scrolling

Reaction

57%   15%   13%

28%   5%   8%

Sources

9GAG	7%
Brand New Tube	6%
LiveLeak	6%
Facebook	4%
Twitter	4%
Ustream	4%
YouNow	4%

Exposure to content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism is significantly more common among minority ethnic background users (24%), those aged 25-34 (16%) and active VSP users (13%, Fig 30). Of those exposed to it, close to three in five have reported the content to the platform (57%). 37% did not take any action, with thinking it would not make a difference being the most prevalent reason (23%).
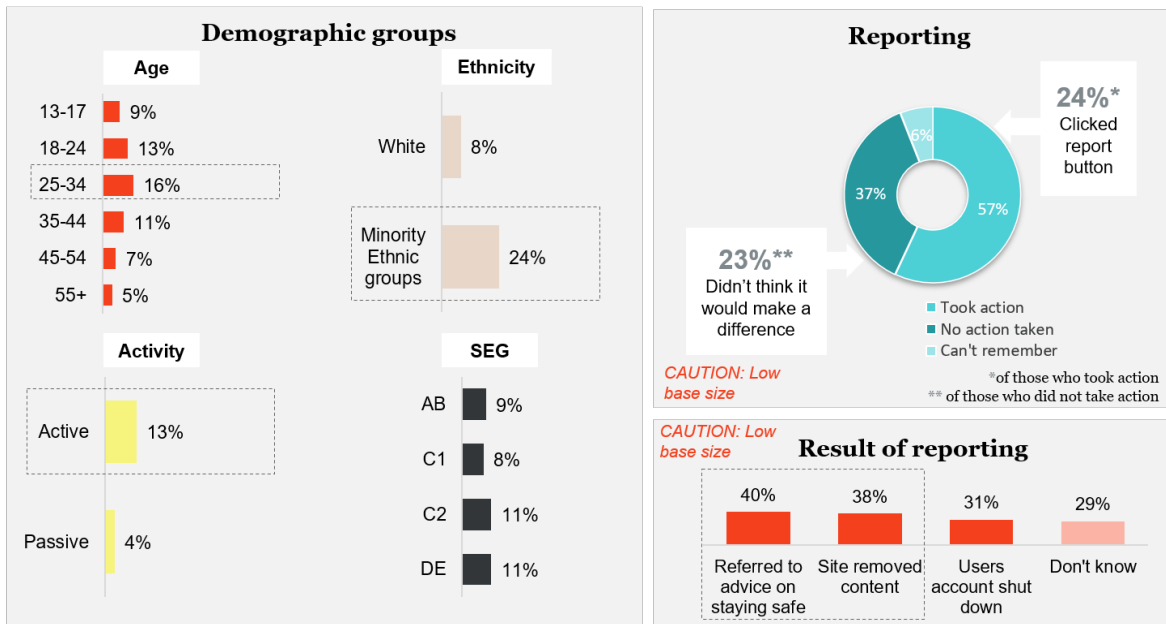
The majority who report this potential online harm are aware of the outcome. 40% have been referred to advice on staying safe and a similar proportion claim that the site removed the potentially harmful online content (38%). 31% report that the video sharing platform shut down the offending user account. However, low levels of exposure to this type of content mean that only a small number (85 respondents) reported the harm and were able to share what they perceived to be the outcome. Therefore, the results for awareness of outcome and what those outcomes were are only indicative trends.

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[61] **Fig 29:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q5. How often do you experience content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism when using [VSP]? Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism, how did you come across it? Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism, which of the following best describes how this made you feel? Base: for Q5-Q7, experienced content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism in the last 3 months on any VSP, n=190. Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base for Q4: Used VSP in the last 3 months, 9GAG, n=101, Brand New Tube, n=150, LiveLeak, n=111, Facebook, n=1,617, Twitter, n=968, Ustream, n=109, YouNow, n=114. NOTE: Sources analysis shows the percentage of users for each VSP that remembered seeing or experiencing content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism on that VSP in the last 3 months. VSPs with a base size of less than n=100 were excluded from this analysis.

Content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism

9% Encountered content encouraging radicalisation or terrorism

Demographic groups

Age

13-17	9%
18-24	13%
25-34	16%
35-44	11%
45-54	7%
55+	5%

Ethnicity

White	8%
Minority Ethnic groups	24%

Activity

Active	13%
Passive	4%

SEG

AB	9%
C1	8%
C2	11%
DE	11%

Reporting

24%* Clicked report button

23%** Didn't think it would make a difference

6%
37%
57%

■ Took action
■ No action taken
■ Can't remember

CAUTION: Low base size

*of those who took action
** of those who did not take action

Result of reporting

CAUTION: Low base size

40%	38%	31%	29%
Referred to advice on staying safe	Site removed content	Users account shut down	Don't know

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7. Safety Measures
Overall Awareness and Engagement with Safety Measures

Quantitative research highlights that video sharing platform users are **more likely to be unaware (60%) of safety measures** to protect them from offensive, violent, or inappropriate videos or behaviour versus aware (40%, Fig 7).

Awareness remains relatively consistent when prompted with whether users have seen specific rules or safety measures in the last 3 months, including terms and conditions when signing up, rules which appear when uploading a piece of content, parental control settings or a 'report' button. Respondents were asked for awareness of these measures on the VSPs they have used in the last three months, specifically on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitch, Vimeo and LiveLeak (as appropriate to respondent). 42% of VSP users recall seeing any of these types of safety measures on the VSPs that they have used in the last three months. This recall is highest for Facebook (33%), followed by Instagram (26%), YouTube (26%) and TikTok (24%, Fig 7).

Our qualitative research[63] shows that despite awareness of some safety measures, it is a lack of understanding of these measures that frustrates users most. This is particularly concerning for lighter users, who struggle to articulate how some of these measures work. As a result, they feel less likely to use the measures, as there is a perception that there is a lack of transparency regarding how they are attempting to keep users safe.

When attitudes towards safety measures were explored, opinions were generally split (Fig 31). 41% feel that rules and regulations should be consistent across sites or apps, with this option significantly more favoured than having regulations tailored to each VSP (29%). Users are also slightly more likely to want protective measures to be pre-determined by the site or app (36%), rather than selecting these themselves (31%). 37% agree that stricter rules and regulations are needed on VSPs, in contrast to just 15% who feel that existing rules and regulations are sufficient. Thus, there is a picture of users leaning towards a preference for unified, stricter rules between VSPs, but this does not necessarily represent a majority.

Our qualitative research[64] also highlights the desire for VSPs to work together in order to provide consistency of rules and regulations across platforms. This was identified due to a perception that harmful content can appear on other platforms before it can be removed, potentially exposing it to more users. Users tend to perceive this to mean that there is a lack of dialogue and co-operation between the various platforms.
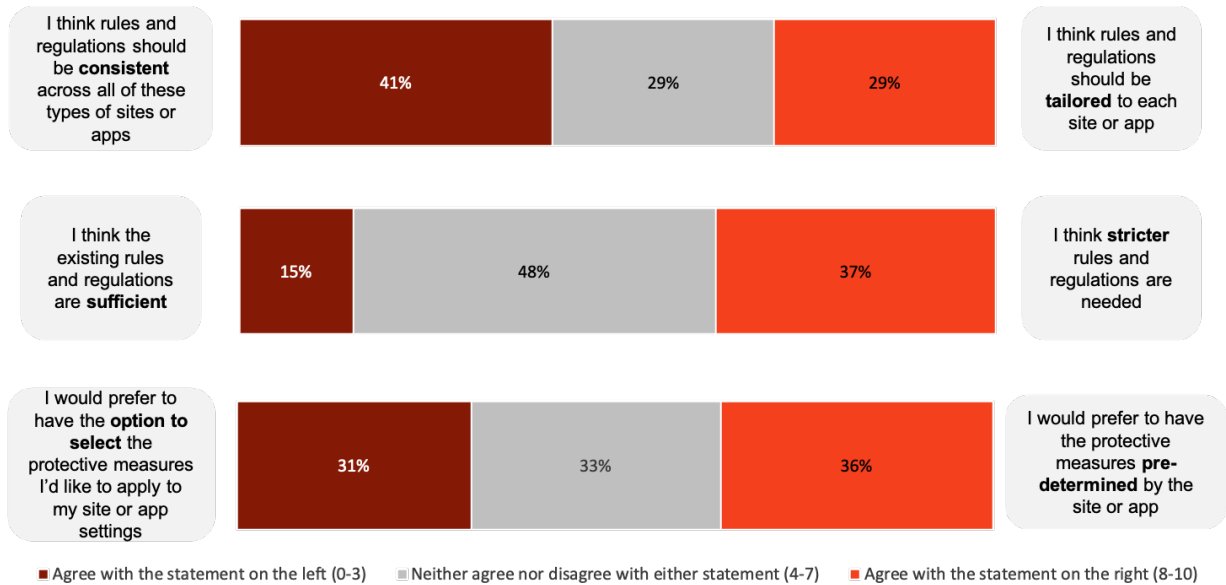
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[63] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021
[64] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[65]*Fig 31:*

Views on safety measures

	Agree with the statement on the left (0-3)	Neither agree nor disagree with either statement (4-7)	Agree with the statement on the right (8-10)	
I think rules and regulations should be **consistent** across all of these types of sites or apps	41%	29%	29%	I think rules and regulations should be **tailored** to each site or app
I think the existing rules and regulations are **sufficient**	15%	48%	37%	I think **stricter** rules and regulations are needed
I would prefer to have the **option to select** the protective measures I'd like to apply to my site or app settings	31%	33%	36%	I would prefer to have the protective measures **pre-determined** by the site or app

- Agree with the statement on the left (0-3)
- Neither agree nor disagree with either statement (4-7)
- Agree with the statement on the right (8-10)

The research explored user awareness and engagement with safety measures in detail, as outlined below:

- Clear terms and conditions in relation to the three categories of harm
- Advertising rules and declaring advertising in content
- Transparent, user-friendly flagging and reporting mechanisms, with feedback loops to explain what effect has been given to flagged or reported content
- Age verification (assurance) systems to protect minors
- Parental control systems under the control of end-users for protecting minors
- Easy-to-use systems for users to rate content in relation to the three categories of harm
- Transparent, easy-to-use, and effective procedures for the handling and resolution of users' complaints
- Promotion and availability of media literacy measures and tools

These safety measures have the aim of reducing exposure to harm through the following three categories:

- Protection of minors from content which may impair their physical, mental, and moral development
- Protections in relation to content containing incitement to violence or hatred
- Protections in relation to content, the inclusion of which would be a criminal offence under legislation concerning child sexual abuse and exploitation; encouragement of terrorism; incitement to racism and xenophobia.

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[65] **Fig 31:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q12/Q14. On a scale of 0-10, please indicate where your own view lies when it comes to rules or safety measures on these sites or apps. 0 means complete agreement with the statement on the left, 10 means complete agreement with the statement on the right, and 5 means you don't agree with either of the statements. Base: all UK internet users, n=1,002

Safety Measure: Clear Terms and Conditions

Quantitative research has found that 47%[66] of VSPs users feel the video sharing platforms they use have clear terms and conditions, suggesting a low level of awareness and engagement with platform terms and conditions.

Respondents were questioned on why they were not at all or not very aware of the general rules and safety measures in place on the VSPs[67] they use, and the leading reason is a perceived lack of need to access them (56%). Only a minority feel the key barrier is that the rules are too long to bother reading (14%) or too complicated to understand (11%). However, in the context of less than half being aware of clear terms and conditions and over half feeling they do not need to access the rules, it may be that these barriers are low due to low engagement rather than because VSP terms and conditions are clear and concise.

Our qualitative research[68] highlights that some users struggle to recall specific terms and conditions outside of certain etiquette (e.g., being respectful of other users), and tend to believe their only exposure to a platform's guidelines and policies is at the initial sign-up process. As a result, some users tend to believe that platforms should provide mandatory reminders of its terms and conditions and available measures to help encourage better behaviour and appropriate content.

Safety Measure: Advertising Rules and Declaring Advertising in Content

Quantitative findings[69] highlight that only a minority feel that the video sharing platforms they use have **clear labelling of what is advertising (39%)** and a similar proportion feel that they have **clear rules for users on how to post advertising content (39%).** YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook are the most highly regarded VSPs for clear labelling and clear posting rules. More than a quarter feel that these sites have clear posting rules (29%, 24% and 26% respectively), or clear labelling (28%, 27% and 25% respectively).

Overall, more than a quarter of users say they have seen harmful or misleading advertising on platforms with video sharing functionalities in the last 3 months (27%) and 10% have seen the sale of illegal goods[70].

VSP content creators – current awareness and experiences[71]

For VSP content creators who monetise their activity, advertising rules are a highly relevant safety measure. Qualitative research with this audience has found that most are broadly aware of the need to declare advertising if they have received a payment in some form from the brand in question, and/ or if the brand has had an element of influence with the content (i.e., has told creator what to say/ how to promote the brand/ product). However, many content creators lack a clear understanding of the specifics of these rules, and how they should be applied in practice. Key areas of confusion are as follows:

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[66] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

[67] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q8. You said you are not very or not at all aware of rules or safety measures put in place by the sites or apps we've been talking about. Why do you think that is? Base: not at all/ not very aware of rules or safety measures on VSPs, n=596

[68] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[69] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

[70] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Survey Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months? Base: Those who have used at least one listed VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958

[71] Source: VSP Content Creators and Community Standards qualitative research 2021

- If the brand being advertised has no/ very little control over content (e.g. gifted products)
- The range of permissible declarations within VSP content (for example, specific phrasing/language used, plus at what point within the content does the declaration need to come)
- If the advertising is only a small fraction of the overall content
- If rules differ across countries (for example, do UK content creators need to adhere to the same rules as their US peers)

The research found that most VSP content creators learn about advertising rules from their peers. This is mostly via observation – viewing what other creators are doing, and then modelling personal behaviour accordingly. If content creators are choosing to proactively seek out information on this subject, they typically gravitate towards supportive content that has been produced by their peers, for example 'how-to' guides or advice forums. Most have not read any 'official' guidance on advertising declaration, for example literature produced by CAP or the ASA or by VSP platforms. The reason for this is that most feel that they would not even 'know where to look' for this type of information – there is very mixed awareness around who is responsible for the enforcement of the rules. As a result, there is also low awareness of what the consequences are if the advertising rules are broken. This has important implications – for some, low awareness of the consequences can serve as a disincentive to declare.

VSP content creators have good awareness of rules around what brands and products can be advertised – the vast majority understand that they cannot promote illegal products, or products that are deemed inappropriate or harmful. However, it was noted that a minority of content creators appear to push the rules here, via 'ethical grey areas'. A key example was the promotion of questionable health products such as diet pills. This practice is not received well by the majority of other content creators.

Indeed, the research has found that most content creators want to act in good faith in relation to the rules. They are mostly very supportive of the underlying need for advertising rules, as they provide a fair and level playing field for content creators to work within, and also enable clarity and transparency for their viewers and followers. Content creators are typically very focused on developing and maintaining an authentic 'personal brand' that resonates with their fans, and often care about the wellbeing of their fanbase; and so for the most part most want to portray themselves as acting with integrity and authenticity.
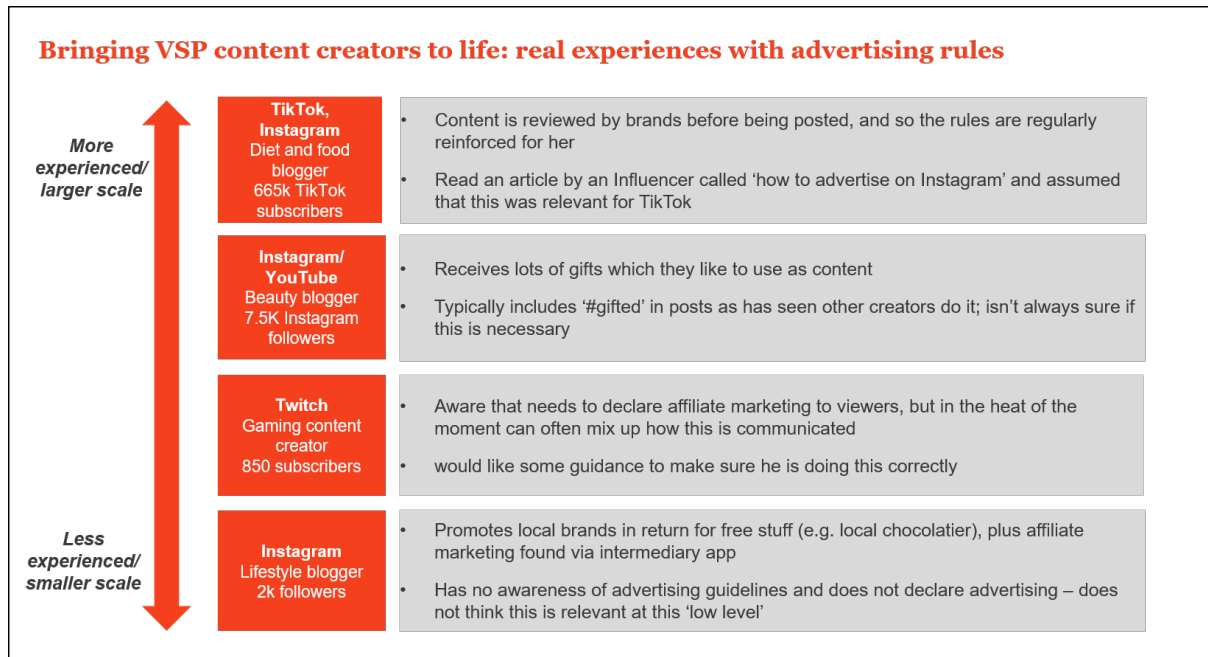
Based on the evidence collected, Yonder consider the following implications for driving engagement and best practice with advertising rules amongst VSP content creators;

Core implications:

- **Harness the influence of peers -** advice and guidance from other creators will have cut through
- **Increase clarity around key specifics of advertising rules** - exactly how to declare across different scenarios
  -

Additional factors that will drive best practice:

- **Increase awareness of consequences of rule breaking** - threat of demonetisation (loss of revenue) the most motivating consequence
- **Greater clarity / stricter controls around 'ethical grey areas'** - for example, health products – diet pills, 'ab stimulators'
- **Animated tutorials have good potential to engage -** concise, visually impactful, fits with content of VSP platforms

Bringing VSP content creators to life: real experiences with advertising rules

More experienced/ larger scale	**TikTok, Instagram** Diet and food blogger 665k TikTok subscribers	• Content is reviewed by brands before being posted, and so the rules are regularly reinforced for her • Read an article by an Influencer called 'how to advertise on Instagram' and assumed that this was relevant for TikTok
	Instagram/ YouTube Beauty blogger 7.5K Instagram followers	• Receives lots of gifts which they like to use as content • Typically includes '#gifted' in posts as has seen other creators do it; isn't always sure if this is necessary
	Twitch Gaming content creator 850 subscribers	• Aware that needs to declare affiliate marketing to viewers, but in the heat of the moment can often mix up how this is communicated • would like some guidance to make sure he is doing this correctly
Less experienced/ smaller scale	**Instagram** Lifestyle blogger 2k followers	• Promotes local brands in return for free stuff (e.g. local chocolatier), plus affiliate marketing found via intermediary app • Has no awareness of advertising guidelines and does not declare advertising – does not think this is relevant at this 'low level'

Safety Measure: Flagging and Reporting Mechanisms

60% of users are aware that the VSPs they use have flagging and reporting buttons (Fig 32). Of those aware of these buttons, 42% have used them to report inappropriate content and the vast majority of reporters feel that these buttons are easy to find (74%).

[72]***Fig 32:***

Transparent, user-friendly flagging and reporting mechanisms, with feedback loops to explain what effect has been given to flagged or reported content
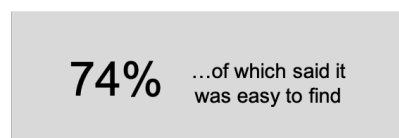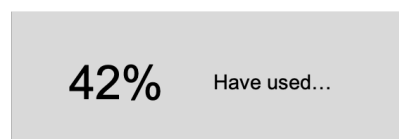
Awareness

60%

Think at least one of the VSPs they use have **flagging and reporting mechanisms/ buttons**

Experience of using flag/ report buttons & mechanisms

Among those who are aware

42% Have used…

74% …of which said it was easy to find

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[72] **Fig 32:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002. Q11. You mentioned that you are aware some sites and apps have buttons or reporting mechanisms that allow users to flag or report content that is concerning to them. Have you ever used these buttons and/or mechanisms to flag content? Base: aware some VSPs have reporting mechanisms, n=609

Of those who reported a harm, 55% are aware of the outcome of this. 40% claim that the site removed the content as a result, while 29% were referred to advice on staying safe online. A quarter report that the offending user had their account shut down or cancelled (24%).

The main reasons for not reporting a potential online harm are that users do not think it will make a difference (31%) or feel that they are not directly impacted (30%). 25% claim that they did not know what to do or who to report it to.

Our qualitative research[73] supports the quantitative results above, with users tending to state that a lack of knowledge about how flagging and reporting mechanisms work can mean they do not act when identifying harmful content. This view tends to be driven by a perception that when reporting mechanisms have been used, the specific content can remain on the platform for up to 24 hours before a 'decision' is made about whether to remove it. Consequently, users also 'block' the content (or the content creator) to have it 'removed' from their timeline. However, users acknowledge that this is a very 'personal' outcome – the content disappears for them but remains viewable for everyone else.

Safety Measure: Age verification (and Assurance) Systems

The quantitative survey has revealed that 46% of VSP users are aware that the sites they use have minimum age requirements and checking systems (Fig 33). The majority feel that it is the responsibility of the VSP to protect users from offensive, violent, or inappropriate content (80%). 65% think parents should be responsible for minors' access to VSPs, with only 22% feeling it is the responsibility of the child user to protect themselves.

[74]*Fig 33:*
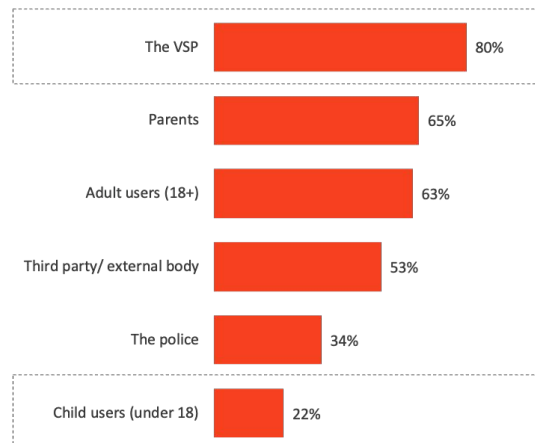
Age verification (assurance) systems to protect minors

Awareness

46%
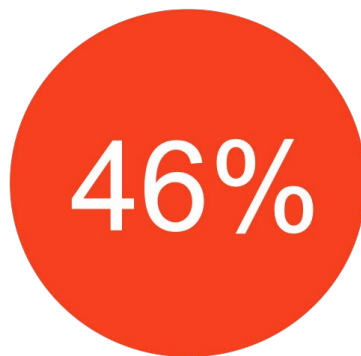
Think at least one of the VSPs they use have **minimum age requirements and checking systems**

Responsibility for protecting users

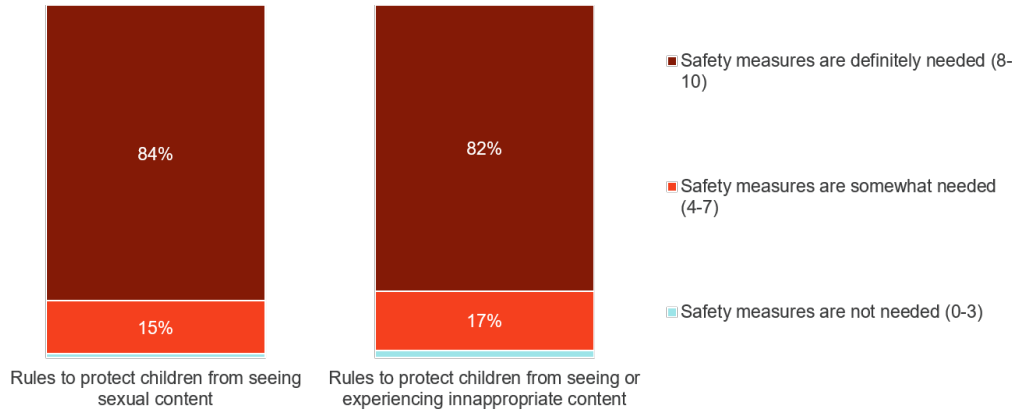Scores of 8-10 shown, on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means no responsibility and 10 means full responsibility

The VSP	80%
Parents	65%
Adult users (18+)	63%
Third party/ external body	53%
The police	34%
Child users (under 18)	22%

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[73] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[74] **Fig 33:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002. Q5. How much responsibility do you feel each of the following should take when it comes to protecting users from offensive, violent, or inappropriate videos or behaviour on the sites and apps we've been thinking about? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

The overwhelming majority of respondents feel that minimum age requirements to protect children from seeing sexual content and rules to protect children from seeing or experiencing inappropriate content are definitely needed (84% and 82% respectively).

[75]*Fig 34:*

Perceived need for child safety measures

84%	82%
15%	17%
Rules to protect children from seeing sexual content	Rules to protect children from seeing or experiencing innappropriate content

Legend:
- Safety measures are definitely needed (8-10)
- Safety measures are somewhat needed (4-7)
- Safety measures are not needed (0-3)

Qualitative research[76] shows that some users do not believe VSPs currently do enough to protect those aged under 18, with many platforms perceived to provide 'easy' methods of 'faking' an age. This is perceived to be a lack of responsibility on the VSPs' part, and currently, the process of entering a birth date is a 'box-ticking' exercise as opposed to showing genuine care for vulnerable audiences. As a result, users tend to believe that platforms should provide greater methods of authentication to ensure that the user is genuinely who they say they are.

The suggestions from participants include identification to be required at sign-up, helping to encourage greater responsibility for personal actions, and voice activation – introduced by parents as an additional parental control (e.g. if a child tries to access their account or harmful content – voice would be required for access).

Safety Measure: Parental Control Systems

54% of those surveyed are aware of parental controls in place on the VSPs that they use. Awareness is similar amongst both those with children under the age of 18 years (52%) and those who do not have children (54%)[77]. Our qualitative research[78] supports the quantitative findings and highlights that some parents are aware of various platforms having some degree of parental controls. However, some parents are concerned about the number of devices their children have access to and whether parental controls are only a short-term measure. Some parents tend to believe that their children will always find 'a way around' the

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[75] **Fig 34:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q13. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 means the sites and apps should have no rules or safety measures in place and 10 means they should definitely have rules and safety measures in place, to what extent do you think there should or should not be rules and safety measures for the following types of content on sites and apps such as ...? Base: all, UK internet users, n=1,002 Labels shown >3%

[76] **Fig 34:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[77] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002; those who have children aged 18 years or less who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=229; those who do not have children aged 18 years or less who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=696.

[78] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

rules, and ultimately view harmful or inappropriate content. There is a tendency amongst some parents to believe that other mediums (e.g., television) embed the parental control measures into the set-up process and are much more secure, making it harder for children to access certain channels or content.

Safety Measure: Systems for Users to Rate Harmful Content

Qualitatively[79], some users tend to believe that VSPs restrict the type of reporting and rating for content, meaning that an accurate classification is difficult to achieve. For example, some users refer to the drop-down menus available on some sites and apps that allow the sharing of video content. The drop-down menus allow users to select why they feel a piece of content may be harmful or offensive. In this situation, some users believe that there are not enough options or that the options available do not match the type of content or complaint. As a result, some users have tended to back out of the reporting process, and only block the content from their timeline. This is as a result of some users feeling that they cannot articulate their point of view in an extensive way.

Users tend to want an option to use their own words via a text box submission, to ensure that the VSP can understand why that user felt the content was inappropriate and should be reported.

Safety Measure: Handling and Resolution of Users' Complaints
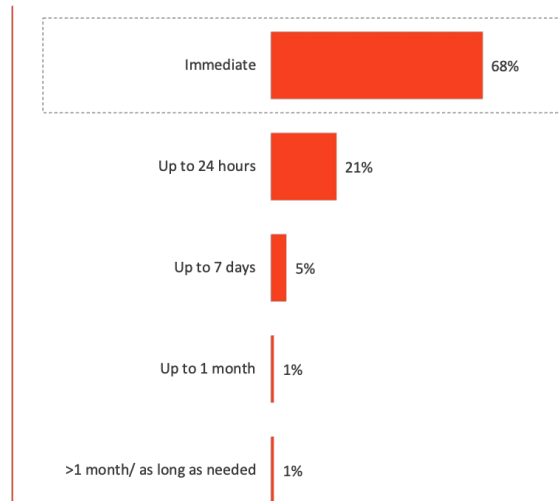
[80]*Fig 35:*

Transparent, easy-to-use and effective procedures for the handling and resolution of users' complaints

Awareness of the measure

Expected timeline for VSP to resolve

41%

Think at least one of the VSPs they use have **procedures for handling user complaints**

Immediate	68%
Up to 24 hours	21%
Up to 7 days	5%
Up to 1 month	1%
>1 month/ as long as needed	1%

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[79] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[80] **Fig 35:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021

Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

Q16. If a site or app finds or is notified of offensive, violent or inappropriate video content that breaks its rules or safety measures, how long do you think the site or app should take to solve the issue? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

41% are aware of VSP procedures for handling user complaints (41%, Fig 35). The majority of users expect a VSP to act on complaints immediately (68%), with a further 21% allowing for a timeframe of up to 24 hours.

Our qualitative research[81] supports the quantitative findings, where users tend to agree that complaints should be handled immediately. However, some users believe finding the appropriate section for user complaints within websites and apps that allow video sharing can be difficult. Users reference other mediums that have more 'central' places to raise concerns over content, such as Ofcom for television and radio. These users tend to believe that this level of authority is not available for VSPs. Consequently, they want to see some type of governing body or regulator that acts as both a catalyst for co-operation, as well as a place for users to voice concerns or complaints about VSPs and content that can appear on these platforms.

Safety Measure: Media Literacy Measures and Tools

29% are aware of video sharing platforms offering information on staying safe on their sites[82], and a similar proportion have been referred to advice on staying safe by a VSP after taking action in regard to a harm, such as after reporting (29%[83]).

Our qualitative research[84] shows that the aftermath of viewing harmful and inappropriate content is a concern for some users. Whether they have either personally been affected, or know someone that has been affected, they feel that there are little to no support avenues provided by platforms, despite being the 'host' of the content itself. Therefore, users tend to want platforms to provide visibility of available help and support. Some believe that this could work on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. when a particular piece of content has been viewed by a significant number of people) whereas others believe that platforms should have a clear area for support on landing pages, so that users, and particularly those that identify as vulnerable, can easily access help and support (e.g., 3rd party support).

Some users point to other entertainment media such as television, where if a piece of content is aired that is particularly sensitive or inappropriate, the channel provides directions of information or support (e.g. websites, helplines) – these users believe the same level of responsibility should be adopted by video sharing platforms.

User Ideas on how to Improve Safety Measures: A Synthesis

Users do have some clear ideas on how they believe sites and apps that allow the sharing of video content could improve their safety measures. From qualitative research[85] it was found that **users want VSPs to engage in better artificial intelligence to ensure that harmful or inappropriate content does not appear on their timelines**. They believe that 'personalisation' of these platforms should not be limited to what content they want to see, but in addition, content they do not want to see. Users also want VSPs to show **greater co-operation when a piece of harmful content is 'circulating' between platforms, to get it removed quickly.**

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[81] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[82] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

[83] Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q10. What happened when you reported [harm]? Base: exposed to a harm and took action, n=467

[84] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

[85] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms qualitative research 2021

Within our survey on VSP usage and experience of harms, survey respondents were asked for their ideas on how VSPs could help protect users in the form of the following open-ended question:
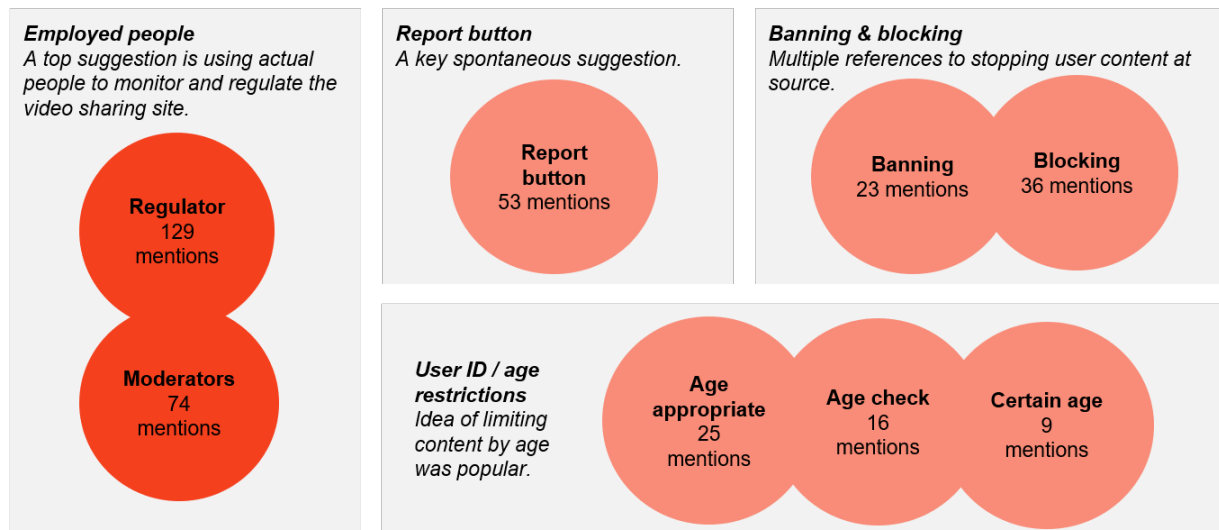
We would now like you to imagine you are the boss of a video sharing site or app. Most of your users love the videos available on the service. However, there are also some concerns about offensive and inappropriate videos on the service.

To protect your users from this harmful content, you need to put tools or measures in place to keep users safe. This might include changes to the service or asking a regulator to help. What tools or measures would you choose and why?[86]

An AI-driven language tool was used to aggregate these into themes. 'Moderators' and 'regulators' received the most mentions across the sample in response to this question (see Fig 36). This suggests users are seeking more active 'human intervention' from VSPs – they expect VSPs to provide a greater degree of moderation and regulation to filter out harmful or inappropriate content.

[87]**Fig 36:**

AI-driven language findings: 'Moderators' and 'Regulators' had most mentions

Employed people
A top suggestion is using actual people to monitor and regulate the video sharing site.

Regulator
129 mentions

Moderators
74 mentions

Report button
A key spontaneous suggestion.

Report button
53 mentions

Banning & blocking
Multiple references to stopping user content at source.

Banning
23 mentions

Blocking
36 mentions

User ID / age restrictions
Idea of limiting content by age was popular.

Age appropriate
25 mentions

Age check
16 mentions

Certain age
9 mentions

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[86] Source: Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q12. We would now like you to imagine you are the boss of a video sharing site or app. Most of your users love the videos available on the service. However, there are also some concerns about offensive and inappropriate videos on the service. To protect your users from this harmful content, you need to put tools or measures in place to keep users safe. This might include changes to the service or asking a regulator to help. What tools or measures would you choose and why? Base: all, UK internet users, n=2,034

[87] **Fig 36:** Source: Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey 2021. Q12. We would now like you to imagine you are the boss of a video sharing site or app. Most of your users love the videos available on the service. However, there are also some concerns about offensive and inappropriate videos on the service. To protect your users from this harmful content, you need to put tools or measures in place to keep users safe. This might include changes to the service or asking a regulator to help. What tools or measures would you choose and why? Base: all, UK internet users n=2,035

[88] *Fig 37:*

Safety measures users perceive to be in place:
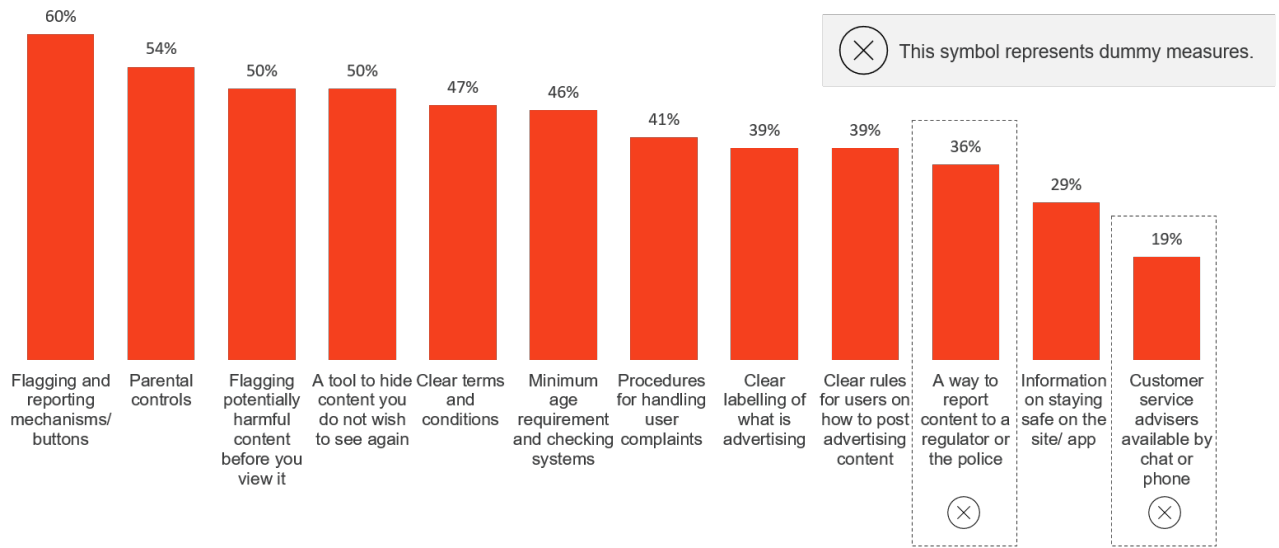
Although there are some clear expectations amongst users, it is imperative to keep in mind that user engagement and awareness of appropriate safety measures is not always accurate or extensive. To understand the depth of user awareness of safety measures, two dummy measures were tested alongside real safety measures[89]. Over a third of users claim they are aware of one of these dummy measures (36% believe that VSPs have a mechanism for reporting content to a regulator or the police, see Fig 37), and 19% feel they have seen the second dummy measure on the VSPs they use (19% believe customer service advisers are available to report inappropriate content to by chat or phone). This supports the notion that there is currently low engagement with safety measures and that the awareness claimed for the real measures that were tested could be subject to over-claim.

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[88] **Fig 37:** Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021 Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the following VSPs in the last three months: Facebook, Instagram, LiveLeak, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitch, Vimeo or YouTube; n=1,002

[89] Source: Safety measures on video-sharing platforms survey 2021. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: all who have used at least one of the listed VSPs in the last three months, n=1,002

Annexes

Research Annexes

Project 1 VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Data Tables

Project 2 Safety Measures on VSPs Data Tables

Project 1 VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Quantitative Report

Project 2 Safety Measures on VSPs Qualitative Report

Project 2 Safety Measures on VSPs Quantitative Report

Project 3 VSP Content Creators & Community Standards Qualitative Report