

Technical report – The Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 7, January 2025)

Preface

Wave 7 of the Online Experiences Tracker (2025) was undertaken by YouGov on behalf of Ofcom.

The objectives of this quantitative tracking study, as with previous waves of the research, were to gain a deeper understanding of internet users' attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potential harms online, and to monitor these over time.

The insights collected from this tracking data over time have served to shape Ofcom's preparations for their duties under The Online Safety Act 2023. The data from the tracker continues to inform policymakers and other users of these statistics about items covered by the Act.

This report refers to the seventh wave completed in January 2025. Further information about the study is summarised in the sections below. More information on the previous wave's approach and methodology is available [here](#).

Summary of Approach

- The **Online Experiences Tracker (Wave 7)** survey was conducted amongst a nationally representative sample of UK internet users aged 13-84 and addresses their attitudes towards and use of the internet, and their experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online.
- The **Online Experiences Tracker** is a multi-wave study with research taking place in November 2021, May 2022, July 2023, January 2024, May/June 2024 and most recently January 2025. It builds on previous work of similar focus ('Pilot Online Harms Survey') which was commissioned by Ofcom in 2020 to explore internet usage and behaviours, attitudes towards online safety regulation, and experiences of potential online harms. The pilot study informed preparations for the Online Safety regime.
- Respondents were recruited to be nationally representative of the UK internet user population, with quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region. Boosts were applied to low incidence groups such as younger respondents, those living in specific UK nations, those belonging to specific religions and minority ethnic groups to allow for base sizes robust enough for analysis.
- A total of 7,966 interviews (including boosts) were conducted for Wave 7, with the sample reflecting similar sizes to Waves 1, 2, 5 & 6. All fieldwork was conducted between 3rd - 22nd January 2025.
- The average length of the interviews in Wave 7 was 17 minutes and 2 seconds and in Wave 6 it was 16 minutes, 21 seconds

Significance Testing

Significance testing is applied at the **95%** confidence level for comparisons within Wave 7. In Wave 7 tables, significance testing is carried out between subgroups, while each subgroup is additionally tested against the total.

For comparisons between Wave 7 and other Waves we carry out significance testing at the **99%** confidence level due to the larger sample size.

Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This definition was provided by Ofcom and is based on household income and household composition (i.e., size of household and number of children) and can only be run on data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions. The definition of each group has been remained in line with Wave 2 specifications.

The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group:

MOST financially vulnerable	POTENTIALLY financially vulnerable	LEAST financially vulnerable
Household income under £10,399	Earning between £10,400 - £25,999	Earning between £26,600 - £36,399
All respondents	1-2 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
	3 adults, no children	
Earning between £10,400 - £25,999	Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	Earning between £36,400 - £51,999
1-2 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	1 adult, 0-1 child
3+ adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	2 adults, 0 children
4+ adults	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
	4 adults, no children	
Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	Earning between £36,400 - £51,999	Household income £52,000+
1 adult, 4+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	All households
2 adults, 4+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
3 adults, 2+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	4 adults, 0-1 child	
5+ adults	5 adults, 0 children	
Earning between £36,400 - £51,999		
1 adults, >3 children		
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		
5 adults, 1+ children		
6+ adults		

Sample and Fieldwork Design

All respondents who took part in the research were drawn solely from the YouGov panel of over 3.3m people who live in the UK. The approach taken was to survey a nationally representative sample of UK internet users. The YouGov panel is large enough to enable the selection of nationally representative

samples that reflect the actual breakdown of the population across the key demographics of age, gender, region and social grade.

Children between 13-17 were recruited through their parents or guardians. The survey was passed to the children after obtaining parents' or guardians' consent. Children then gave their own consent and had the opportunity to decline to participate in the research if they wanted. If there was more than one child in the household aged 13-17 years, the parent or guardian was asked to select one child to take part in this survey.

During this recruitment parents are asked to give consent as to whether they were happy for their children to take part in question C1, of which 465 parents said 'No' to their children taking part in the survey. Subsequently, at question C7, the children of parents who responded positively were requested to provide their own consent to participate in the survey. Of these children, 10 did not provide consent and hence didn't take part in the survey.

Boost

After the main fieldwork was completed, sample boosts were applied to achieve a minimum of n=100 interviews among all ethnic minority groups, low incidence religious minority groups (Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism), and each single year of age between 13 and 17 years old. Regarding the UK nations, an additional boost was applied to attain n=350 in Wales and n=350 in Northern Ireland.

Due to the significantly low incidence rate seen among some specific ethnic groups, a boost is implemented to encourage best efforts, however it is not necessary to attain a maximum of 100 completes (e.g. Gypsy or Irish travellers or Arab).

There was an overlap observed among certain groups, such as Irish (ethnicity) and Northern Ireland (UK nation) Hindus (religion), and Indians (ethnicity), which consequently led to certain groups having a higher number of completions compared to others.

The table below shows the unweighted and weighted numbers of completes for each boosted group:

Demographic	Category	Total achieved	Nat rep achieved	Boost achieved	Total achieved	Nat rep achieved	Boost achieved
		Unweighted			Weighted		
Children's age	13	105	67	38	100	62	38
	14	112	83	29	107	78	29
	15	111	83	28	105	77	28
	16	134	122	12	126	114	12
	17	126	106	20	120	100	20
Ethnicity	Irish	306	59	247	303	56	247
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	54	0	54	54	0	54
	White and Black Caribbean	119	40	79	124	45	79
	White and Black African	124	84	40	137	97	40
	White and Asian	144	63	81	147	66	81
	Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background	134	44	90	136	46	90

	Indian	286	75	211	288	77	211
	Pakistani	117	23	94	118	24	94
	Bangladeshi	104	16	88	107	19	88
	Chinese	134	30	104	136	32	104
	Any other Asian background	138	25	113	139	26	113
	African	175	139	36	190	154	36
	Caribbean	106	18	88	106	18	88
	Any other Black / African / Caribbean background	110	14	96	110	14	96
	Arab	73	5	68	74	6	68
	Any other ethnic group	136	14	122	136	14	122
Religion	Judaism	119	39	80	120	40	80
	Hinduism	130	33	97	130	33	97
	Sikhism	110	8	102	111	9	102
	Buddhism	111	18	93	110	17	93
UK nations	Wales	404	311	93	401	308	93
	Northern Ireland	382	138	244	367	123	244

Quotas

Interview quotas were applied so that the final sample was representative of UK internet users by age, gender, region and socio-economic group (SEG).

Targets for quotas were derived from Ofcom. Quotas were set on the following variables:

- Age (13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 64-74, 75-84)
- Gender
- Region
- Socio-economic group (SEG)

The table below details the specific quotas used for this study:

Demographic group	Category	Quota
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	13-17	7%
	18-24	11%
	25-34	17%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	18%
	55-64	14%
	65-74	11%

	75-84	6%
Region	Scotland	8%
	North East	4%
	North West	11%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	8%
	West Midlands	9%
	East Midlands	7%
	Wales	5%
	Eastern	9%
	London	14%
	South East	14%
	South West	9%
	Northern Ireland	3%
Social Grade	AB	27%
	C1	30%
	C2	21%
	DE	22%

YouGov considers a 'complete' response if a respondent has answered all sections of the questionnaire. Those that choose not to answer specific section within the script were removed from the final dataset.

Below is a comparison of the final sample for Wave 5 and Wave 6 against the final data in Wave 7 across key demographics:

Demographic group	Category	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7
Total sample		7,611	7,837	7,966
Gender	Male	48%	47%	48%
	Female	51%	51%	50%
Age	13-17	7%	7%	7%
	18-24	10%	11%	10%
	25-34	18%	19%	18%
	35-44	17%	17%	17%
	45-54	18%	17%	18%
	55-64	14%	13%	14%
	65-74	11%	10%	10%
	75-84	5%	5%	5%
Region	Scotland	7%	7%	7%
	North East	4%	4%	3%
	North West	10%	10%	10%
	Yorkshire & Humberside	7%	7%	7%
	West Midlands	9%	9%	9%
	East Midlands	6%	7%	6%

	Wales	5%	5%	5%
	East of England	9%	9%	8%
	London	17%	17%	17%
	South East	13%	13%	13%
	South West	8%	8%	8%
	Northern Ireland	4%	4%	5%
Social Grade	ABC1	59%	60%	60%
	C2DE	41%	40%	40%
Ethnicity	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	67%	64%	64%
	Irish	3%	4%	4%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1%	1%	1%
	Any other White background	3%	3%	3%
	White and Black Caribbean	1%	1%	2%
	White and Black African	1%	2%	2%
	White and Asian	1%	1%	2%
	Indian	4%	3%	4%
	Pakistani	1%	1%	1%
	Bangladeshi	1%	1%	1%
	Chinese	1%	2%	2%
	Caribbean	1%	1%	1%
	African	2%	2%	2%
	Arab	1%	1%	1%
Religion	No religion	50%	50%	49%
	Catholic	9%	11%	11%
	Church of England/Scotland/Ireland	18%	17%	17%
	Muslim	4%	4%	4%
	Hindu	2%	2%	2%
	Jewish	1%	1%	2%
	Sikh	2%	1%	1%
	Buddhist	2%	1%	1%
	Other religion	2%	2%	2%
	Prefer not to say	4%	5%	4%

Weighting

The data (excluding boosts) has been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall, to regional and SEG profiles. The boosts' samples are not weighted.

Fieldwork

All interviews were conducted over a 19-day period between 3rd - 22nd January 2025. Nat rep fieldwork was conducted between 3rd January and 9th January 2025, with boosts conducted over 9th January and 22nd January 2025.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of some of the research topics (e.g. experiences of potentially harmful behaviour or content online), respondents were given the option to end the survey at three points. They were also forewarned of the sensitive nature of the research topic and asked to give their consent to participate, in line with MRS guidelines.

Participants who opted out (and also those who completed the survey) were provided with a list of resources if further support was needed.

The questionnaire also included questions designed to obtain consent to be contacted for participation in further qualitative research into online habits, attitudes and behaviours, as well as experience of potential online harms. This data is managed and stored in line with GDPR commitments.

YouGov carried out the following standard checks during and post-fieldwork:

- Manual checks post-fieldwork to remove anyone who responded in unreasonable ways.
- Manual 'flatlining' checks post-fieldwork to check grid questions and ensure respondents did not answer the same codes across an unreasonable range of grid / scale questions.
- Open-end checks to ensure respondents answered thoughtfully and were not 'spamming' answers.
- The participants removed from the survey through the QA checks were excluded from final demographic quotas as well as from the dataset.

Sample Representativeness

The following table shows both the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profiles:

Demographic group	Unweighted counts	Unweighted %	Weighted counts	Weighted %
Male 13-17	309	3.9	298	3.7
Male 18-34	960	12.1	1065	13.4
Male 35-54	1379	17.3	1351	17
Male 55+	1132	14.2	1115	14
Female 13-17	270	3.4	252	3.2
Female 18-34	1078	13.5	1139	14.3
Female 35-54	1467	18.4	1402	17.6
Female 55+	1231	15.5	1209	15.2
Scotland	579	7.3	574	7.2
North East	274	3.4	278	3.5
North West	832	10.4	817	10.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	600	7.5	579	7.3
West Midlands	721	9.1	714	9
East Midlands	520	6.5	513	6.4
Wales	404	5.1	401	5
East of England	674	8.5	673	8.4
London	1334	16.7	1370	17.2
South East	995	12.5	1032	13
South West	651	8.2	647	8.1
Northern Ireland	382	4.8	367	4.6
AB	2417	30.3	2312	29

C1	2206	27.7	2159	27.1
C2	1248	15.7	1382	17.3
DE	1507	18.9	1555	19.5

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the “true” values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 99% level: that is, the chances are 99 in 100 that the “true” values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results. The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main groups within the sample.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS	ACTUAL BASE	ESS
TOTAL	7966	7819
GENDER: Male	3780	3708
GENDER: Female	4046	3976
AGE: 13-17	588	585
AGE: 18-24	601	586
AGE: 25-34	1512	1505
AGE: 35-44	1400	1394
AGE: 45-54	1489	1481
AGE: 55-64	1049	1044
AGE: 65-74	885	880
AGE: 75+	442	440
SEG: AB	2417	2392
SEG: C1	2206	2164
SEG: C2	1248	1222
SEG: DE	1507	1481

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the “99% confidence interval”:

Variables	Actual Sample	Effective Sample	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Total	7966	7819	0.87	1.17	1.34	1.43	1.46
Female	4046	3976	1.23	1.63	1.87	2.00	2.04
Male	3780	3708	1.27	1.69	1.94	2.07	2.12
13-17	588	585	3.21	4.28	4.90	5.24	5.35

18-24	601	586	3.20	4.27	4.90	5.23	5.34
25-34	1512	1505	1.99	2.66	3.05	3.26	3.32
35-44	1400	1394	2.07	2.76	3.17	3.39	3.46
45-54	1489	1481	2.01	2.68	3.07	3.28	3.35
55-64	1049	1044	2.40	3.20	3.66	3.92	4.00
65-74	885	880	2.61	3.48	3.99	4.26	4.35
75+	442	440	3.71	4.94	5.66	6.05	6.18
AB	2417	2392	1.58	2.11	2.42	2.58	2.64
C1	2206	2164	1.66	2.22	2.54	2.72	2.77
C2	1248	1222	2.21	2.95	3.38	3.62	3.69
DE	1507	1481	2.01	2.68	3.07	3.28	3.35
Ethnic Minorities	1900	1868	1.79	2.39	2.73	2.92	2.98
White	5776	5672	1.03	1.37	1.57	1.68	1.71

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 7,837 gives a particular answer, the chances are 99 in 100 that the “true” value will fall within the range of +/- 1.34 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be “real”, or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is “statistically significant” – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume “99% confidence interval”, the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant.

Differences required for significance at or near these percentages.

Variable		Actual Sample	Effective Sample	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Gender	Female	4046	3976	1.76	2.35	2.70	2.88	2.94
	Male	3780	3708					
Age	13-17	588	585	4.89	6.52	7.46	7.98	8.14
	75+	442	440					
Social Grade	ABC1	4623	4556	1.88	2.50	2.87	3.07	3.13
	C2DE	2755	2703					

Ethnicity	Minorities	1900	1868	2.06	2.75	3.15	3.37	3.44
	White	5776	5672					

Prioritisation of codes for summary tables:

Regarding the Q7_any named harm summary tables, where respondents' concern levels were asked for listed potential harms, codes are prioritised in the following order: Code 5 (Very concerned_>4>3>2> 1(Mildly Concerned). If a respondent answered code 6 (Not concerned at all) or code 7 (Don't know), then code 6 was kept.

Prioritisation was also applied to Q46 combined summary tables, where respondents were asked confidence in the Online Safety Bill in keeping adults and children safe, codes are prioritised in the following order: (Very Confident 1>2>3>4>5 Not at all confident).

Changes to the questionnaire between waves

Multiple additions and amendments were made to the questionnaire as either improvements or revisions, in line with the shifting policy focus. A summary of changes has been included below ¹.

Category	Question/Net	Wave	Definition
Wellbeing			
New questions added	WB1	Wave 7	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
	WB2		Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
	WB3		On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?
	WB4		Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
Attitudes			
Question removed	Q2	Wave 7	None
Q2. Please think about how much of your personal time you spend online across a typical week. This includes time using social media and messaging, watching films, TV programmes and videos online, playing games online, on video calls, searching for information online and doing homework. Please do not include any time you spend online for work or at your			Less than 6 hours
			6 to 11 hours
			11 to 22 hours

¹ For reference, copies of questionnaires have been published alongside this report: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/online-research/internet-users-experience-of-harm-online>

school, college or university. This could be using a mobile phone, laptop, tablet (like an iPad), computer, games console or Smart TV. Please think about weekdays and weekends, either at home or anywhere else. How many hours in a typical week would you say you spend online?			22 to 30 hours
			Over 30 hours
			Don't know/unsure
Question removed: Q5. In the last month, when you have gone online, have you....	Q5	Wave 7	Only used websites or apps that you have used before
			Used maybe one or two websites or apps that you have not used before
			Used lots of websites or apps that you have not used before
			Have not gone online in the last month
Experience of Harms			
New codes added to Q7/Q8/Q9	Q7/Q8/Q9	Wave 5	Content that shames or stigmatizes certain body types e.g. body size, shape or features
			Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
	Q8/9 - Any Named Harm		Q8/Q9 any named harm codes 1-47
Text change	Q7/Q8/Q9	Wave 7	Content encouraging or assisting serious self-harm
			Content encouraging or assisting suicide
Q21			

Text change	Q21	Wave 4	Gaming website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online
		Wave 5	Gaming platform website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online, Roblox
New code added to Q21		Wave 5	File sharing service e.g. Google Drive, Apple iCloud
Text change		Wave 6	Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram
			Online gaming website or app, but not including in-game chat e.g. Fortnite, EA Sports FC 24, Roblox
			A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora
			Video on demand website or app e.g. Netflix, Now
			Generative AI e.g. ChatGPT, Snapchat MyAI
			File sharing service e.g. Apple AirDrop, Google Drive, Apple iCloud
Codes removed		Wave 6	Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop
New codes added	Wave 6	User to user marketplaces e.g. Facebook Marketplace, eBay, Vinted	
		Retail shopping e.g. Amazon, Tesco, Temu	
Q21a			
New code added to Q21a	Q21a	Wave 5	In an advertisement
Q22			
New codes added to Q22	Q22	Wave 7	Trovo
			Kawi
Q23			
New codes added to Q23	Q23	Wave 5	Google Bard
			Bing AI

			Ekoru
			Ocean Hero
			Search HQ
		Wave 6	Tineye
			Baidu
Code wording updated		Wave 6	Google Gemini
Q24			
Code wording updated	Q24	Wave 4	Twitter
		Wave 5	Twitter/X
		Wave 6	X (formerly Twitter)
Wave 5		DeviantArt	
		Threads	
New codes added to Q24		Wave 6	Mastodon
			XPro (formerly Tweetdeck)
			Bluesky
			Tusky
			Twidere

			Fedilab
			Tooot
			Toot!
Q25			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Twitter
		Wave 5	Twitter/X
		Wave 6	X (formerly Twitter)
Wave 5		Clapper	
New codes added to Q25		Wave 7	Trovo
Q26			
Code removed		Wave 5	Threads
			Omegle
New code added to Q26		Wave 5	Clapper
Q27			
Code wording updated		Wave 4	Xbox Live
		Wave 5	Xbox Network (formerly Xbox LIVE)
Code removed		Wave 5	Fruitlab
			Metaverse

	Wave 6	Nintendo Online
		PlayStation Network
		Steam
		Xbox Network (formerly Xbox LIVE)
		Apple Arcade
		VR Chat
		Rec room
		Horizon World
		Metaverse
New codes added	Wave 6	Fortnite
		EA Sports FC 24
		Call of Duty HQ (Modern Warfare III, Modern Warfare II, Warzone)
		Grant Theft Auto V/Online
		Rocket League
		Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege
		F1

			FIFA
			The Legend of Zelda
			Super Mario (Wonder, Mario Kart)
			Candy Crush Saga
			Royal Match
			Pokémon GO
			Among Us
Q28			
Code removed		Wave 6	Yahoo Answers
Q29			
New question added Q29. Which file sharing service were you using when you experienced [insert harm selected at Q9]?		Wave 5	DropBox
			Google Drive
			One Drive
			WeTransfer
			Box
			Apple AirDrop
			Apple iCloud

			Other
			Can't remember
			Prefer not to say
New codes added		Wave 7	Mega
			Amazon Photos
Q30			
New question added: Q30. Which generative AI tool were you using when you experienced [insert harm selected at Q9]?		Wave 7	ChatGPT
			ChatGPT plugin e.g. on Expedia, Kayak
			Snapchat My AI
			Google Gemini (formerly Bard)
			Microsoft CoPilot (formerly Bing Chat)
			DALL-E
			Midjourney
			Character.AI
			Scribe
			AlphaCode
			Quillbot
			Synthesia
			Claude from Anthropic
			Perplexity
			Stability AI's tools
			Grok on X (formerly Twitter)
			Other
			Can't remember
			Prefer not to say
Q32a			
New code added		Wave 6	Someone I don't know online e.g. a stranger on social media
Q32c			
Question wording/routing change		Waves 5, 6 & 7	You mentioned that you received an unwanted sexual message. Thinking about the most recent experience you had, can you please tell us who this message was from? Please remember that you do not have to answer this question. [Routed from Q8]

		Wave 6	You mentioned that you received an <i>[insert contact harm from Q9]</i> Thinking about the most recent experience you had, can you please tell us who this content/message was from? Please remember that you do not have to answer this question. Contact harms routed from this question: ○ Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or message ○ Stalking, cyberstalking or harassing behaviour ○ People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing' ○ Persistent bullying online ○ Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction ○ Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos ○ People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing' ○ Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing' ○ Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn' ○ Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing' ○ Private conversations shared without consent ○ Unwanted sexual messages ○ One-off abusive behaviour or threats ○ Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
Q34			
Code changes		Wave 4	Yes – but I don't understand why it was taken down (removed) and don't think it breached the service's policies
		Wave 5	Yes – but I don't understand why it was taken down (removed)
			Yes – but I don't think it breached the service's policies

Q33			
Question wording change		Wave 4	Which of the following, if any, do you believe are currently responsible for overseeing and monitoring online safety?
		Wave 5	As far as you are aware, which of the following body or bodies is the regulator for online safety in the UK?
Q45			
New question added: Which of the following best describes your knowledge of the Online Safety Act?		Wave 5	I have heard of the Online Safety Act and know a lot about
			I have heard of the Online Safety Act and know a fair amount about it
			I have heard of the Online Safety Act but don't know much about it
			I have never heard of the Online Safety Act
			Don't know
Q46			
New question added: The UK Online Safety Act 2023 makes companies that operate a wide range of online services legally responsible for keeping people in the UK, especially children, safe online when			Very confident
			Fairly confident

using services such as social media, chat and instant messaging services, gaming, search services etc. How confident are you, if at all, that the Online Safety Act will keep each of the following safe online? -Children (under 18s) -Adults		Wave 5	Not very confident
			Not at all confident
			Don't know

Where appropriate YouGov used 'PDLs' which are information identifiers assigned to panel members based on their previous responses. PDLs used in Waves 5, 6 & 7:

- Region
- Ethnicity
- Religion

NET definitions featured in the published tables

Certain subgroups within the sample were grouped together to aid analysis and are featured alongside this report in the published data tables. The definitions of these so-called 'NETs' are in the table below.

Changes to some 'NET' definitions were made between the different waves of the research. Wherever present, these have been noted in the 'Wave' column in the table below:

Category	NET	Wave	Definition
Demographics			
Ethnicity	White	Waves 5, 6 & 7	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
			Irish
			Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller
			Any other white background
	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups		White and Black Caribbean
			White and Black African
			White and Asian
			Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
	Asian and British Asian		Indian

			Pakistani	
			Bangladeshi	
			Chinese	
			Any other Asian background	
	Black and black British		Caribbean	
			African	
			Any other black/ African/ Caribbean background	
	Other ethnic group		Arab	
			Any other ethnic background	
Limiting/Impacting Conditions* Adults and Children	Any	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Any reported limiting/impacting condition	
	Mental Health Condition	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Your mental health? Anxiety, depression, or trauma-related conditions, for example	
	No disability	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Nothing – no impairments or conditions impact or limit your daily activities or the work you can do	
Q2: Internet Usage				
Hours online	Low usage	Waves 5 & 6	None	
			Less than 6 hours	
	Medium usage		6 to 11 hours	
			12 to 22 hours	
			23 to 30 hours	
			Over 30 hours	
High usage				
Q3: Attitudes				
Platform vs individual responsibility	It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the	Onus on platform	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6

Search engine vs individual responsibility	individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users	Onus on the individual	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 7-10
	It is the responsibility of the search engine to control what is presented in search results vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure they have the correct settings in place to only be presented with content appropriate for them	Onus on the search engine		If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Onus on the individual		If score 7-10
Confidence in staying safe online	I feel confident in my ability to stay safe online vs. I do not feel confident in my ability to stay safe online	Safety confident	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Not confident		If score 7-10
Benefits vs risks of going online	The benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. The risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Benefits outweigh risks	Waves 5, 6 & 7	
		Neutral		If score 0-3
		Risk outweigh benefits		If score 4-6
Sufficiency of common sense to	Using a bit of common sense when	Common sense is sufficient	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 7-10
				If score 0-3

protect from exposure to potential harms	you're online usually prevents you from seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos vs. It is impossible to avoid seeing harmful or offensive photos and videos if you go online	Neutral		If score 4-6
		Resigned to potential harms		If score 7-10
Free speech vs content monitoring	The Internet has an important role in supporting free speech, even when some users might find the content offensive vs. It is important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users	Free speech advocates	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 0-3
		The neutrals		If score 4-6
		Protection prioritisers		If score 7-10
Support for more online safety measures	There are enough online safety measures in place vs there should be more online safety measures in place	Measures meets needs	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Further measures needed		If score 7-10
Benefits vs risks of going online	For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks vs. For me personally,	Benefits outweigh risks	Wave 5 & 6	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4 to 6

Societal impact	the risks of going online outweigh the benefits	Risks outweigh benefits	If score 7-10	
	The internet is good for society vs. the internet is damaging to society	Internet is good for society	Waves 5, 6 & 7	If score 0-3
		Neutral		If score 4-6
		Internet is damaging society		If score 7-10
Q7 - Online harms concern				
Concern of potential harm		Net Low concern/Not concerned at all	Waves 5, 6 & 7	1 - Mildly concerned or 2 or 6 - Not concerned at all
		Net: Low concern		1 - Mildly concerned or 2
		Net: High concern		4 or 5 - Very concerned
Q8/Q9 - Experience of Harms				
Experience of potential harm		Any Named Harm	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Q8 any named harm codes 1-47
				Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
				Stalking, cyberstalking or intrusive behaviour
		Contact/Conduct harm	Waves 5, 6 & 7	People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
				Persistent bullying online

Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction

Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos

People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'

Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'

Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn'

Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'

Private conversations shared without consent

Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions on actions, including online 'pile-ons'

Generally offensive or 'bad' language, e.g. swearing, rudeness

Unwanted sexual messages

Content harm	Waves 5, 6 & 7	One off abusive behaviour or threats
		Receiving unrequested gifts or in-game gifts from someone you've had brief, or no communication with, online or offline
	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
		Sexual/ pornographic content
		Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
		Content depicting the sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		Content encouraging extremism, radicalisation or terrorism
		Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
		Content encouraging gambling, e.g. sports betting, or casino-style games [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Misinformation i.e. false or misleading stories, claims or assertions e.g. 'fake news'

Content promoting self-harm
Content promoting suicide
Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
Content relating to eating disorders
Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'
Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
Content depicting animal cruelty
Content depicting dangerous stunts or online challenges [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes [ONLY SHOWN TO UNDER 18]

Commercial harm	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Content facilitating human trafficking (including sexual and labour exploitation, or recruitment for county lines activity) and illegal immigration
		Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent [ONLY SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Sale or advertisement of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances e.g. 'magic mushrooms'
		Sale or advertisement of weapons
		Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
		Scams, fraud, or phishing
		Unintentionally spending money on in-app purchases or gifts
		Paid-for or sponsored content which was not clearly marked as such, e.g. 'astroturfing'
		Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [NOT SHOWN TO UNDER 18]
		Sexual/ pornographic content
Primary Priority Content (PPC)	Waves 5, 6 & 7	

		Content promoting self-harm
		Content promoting suicide
		Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
		Content relating to eating disorders
		Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
		Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
Priority Content (PC)	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
		Persistent bullying online
		Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
		Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'

		Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
		Private conversations shared without consent
		Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
		Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
		Content depicting animal cruelty
		Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
		Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes
		Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
		One off abusive behaviour or threats
Primary Priority Content /Priority Content (PPC & PC)	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Sexual/ pornographic content

	Content promoting self-harm
	Content promoting suicide
	Content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise
	Content relating to eating disorders
	Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
	Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
	Content depicting or encouraging violence or injury
	Persistent bullying online
	Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
	Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'

		Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
		Private conversations shared without consent
		Content glamourising unhealthy or abusive lifestyles, e.g. binge drinking, drug taking
		Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
		Content depicting animal cruelty
		Content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges
		Content which advertises alcohol or cigarettes
		Content which promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances e.g. bleach, detergent
		One off abusive behaviour or threats
		Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech

Violence Against Women and Girls (Changed name in W7 to 'Online Gender Based Violence')	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Content or language which objectifies, demeans or otherwise negatively portrays women
		Promotion of female genital mutilation (FGM) [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
		Unwelcome friend or follow requests, or messages
		Stalking, cyberstalking or harassing behaviour
		People pretending to be another person, e.g. 'catfishing'
		Persistent bullying online
		Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
		Pressure to send sexual or nude images or videos
		People sending unwanted/unsolicited sexual or nude images or videos, e.g. 'cyber flashing'
		Fake or deceptive images/videos, e.g. 'deep fakes'

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Collection or use of my data without my knowledge or permission
Private/intimate information made public, e.g. 'doxxing'
Sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images without consent e.g. 'revenge porn'
Intentional harassment during gaming, e.g. 'griefing'
Private conversations shared without consent
Group shaming, boycotting, or excluding someone based on their views, opinions or actions, including online 'pile-ons'
Unwanted sexual messages
Content which advertises prostitution, or offers accommodation etc in exchange for sex [DO NOT SHOW TO UNDER 18]
One-off abusive behaviour or threats
Content that shames or stigmatizes certain body types e.g. body size, shape or features

			Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content that targets a group or person based on specific characteristics like race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity; e.g. hate speech
			Persistent bullying online
	Net: Abusive/Bullying/Threats /Hate Speech	Wave 6	Trolling, i.e. a person who says something to cause intentional upset or provoke a negative reaction
			One-off abusive behaviour or threats
Q12- Exposure to potential harms in the last 4 weeks			
			Once
			2-3 times
	Net: All experience	Waves 5, 6 & 7	4-5 times
			6-10 times
			More than 10 times
Frequency of exposure to potential harms			6-10 times
	Net: More than 6 times	Waves 5, 6 & 7	More than 10 times
			4-5 times
	Net: High frequency	Wave 7	6-10 times
			More than 10 times
Q13 - Group or characteristic potential harms were directed at			
			A specific age group
Online harms directed at	Net: Any	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Disabled people (physical or mental)
			Trans people

Pregnant people/ those on maternity leave
People of a particular marital status (e.g. married, single, civil partnership)
Ethnicity
A religious group
Sexual orientation
Another group (please specify)
Men and boys
Women and girls
Non-binary people
Asylum seekers
A political group
Gypsy or Irish Travellers
Nationality
Regionality

Q15 - Action taken			
Action taken after experiencing potential harm	Any Action	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
			Reposted/forwarded the content to highlight that it was wrong/misleading/harmful
			Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue

Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
Informed the police
Informed Ofcom
Informed a support service
Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
Closed my account/left the service
Unfollowed/unfriended/blocked/muted the person who posted it/ deleted the email
Told a friend or family member
I use the platform less
I have stopped using the platform altogether

Reported or flagged content

Waves 5, 6 & 7

I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website
Changed my settings to change the type of content I see
Changed my settings to change who can see my profile
I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
Clicked the report/flag button, or marked as junk
Contacted others in the community to make them aware of the issue
Complained to the website/app, social media site or email sender
Informed the police

		Informed Ofcom
		Informed a support service
		Contacted the account/user responsible for the issue
		I flagged/reported content I am not interested in seeing
		Something else (informed your internet service provider, informed another regulator, contacted the press, informed the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO))
		Closed my account/left the service
Disengaged or changed engagement behaviour	Waves 5, 6 & 7	I use the platform less
		I have stopped using the platform altogether
		I have stopped commenting, liking or posting
		I stopped what I was doing/closed down the app or website

Q16 - Didn't think it was that serious

			I didn't consider it to be offensive, disturbing or harmful
Why no action	Didn't think it was that serious	Waves 5, 6 & 7	I didn't like it, but I didn't consider it bad enough to do something about
			I didn't see the need to do anything
Q17- Awareness of result of reporting			
Results of reporting	Awareness of result of reporting	Waves 5, 6 & 7	The content was removed
			I got a written response
			I was asked to provide further information
			Something else
Q21- Non-email			
Site/service when experience harm	Non-Email	Waves 5, 6 & 7	A website or app where you view videos posted by other users e.g. YouTube, TikTok
			Social media website or app e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
			Livestreaming website or app – this could be part of a social media website or app e.g. Twitch, Facebook Live
			A search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo
			Instant messenger website or app e.g. Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp
			News website or app e.g. BBC News, The Guardian, Daily Mail Online
			Gaming platform website or app e.g. PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online, Roblox

						A Q&A website or app e.g. Quora, Yahoo! Answers	
						Blog website or app e.g. WordPress, Bloglovin'	
						Shopping website or app e.g. Amazon, eBay, Depop	
						Online dating websites or apps e.g. Tinder, Bumble	
						Video on demand application e.g. Netflix, Now TV	
						An in-game chat / chat room	
						'Adult' site containing sexual content	
						Generative AI e.g. ChatGPT	
						Waves 5, 6 & 7	File sharing service e.g. Google Drive, Apple iCloud
						Wave 6	User to user marketplaces e.g. Facebook Marketplace, eBay, Vinted
							Retail shopping e.g. Amazon, Tesco, Temu
							Online gaming website or app, but not including in-game chat e.g. Fortnite, EA Sports FC 24, Roblox
Q24- Social Media sites/apps							
Social media website/app used when online harm experienced	Net: Microblogging sites	Wave 6				X (formerly Twitter)	
						Mastodon	
						XPro (formerly Tweetdeck)	
						Bluesky	
						Tusky	
						Twidere	
						Fedilab	
						Tooot	

			Toot!
Q46- Confidence in the Online Safety Act			
Confidence in the Online Safety Act keeping Children/Adults safe	Confident	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Very confident
			Fairly confident
	Unconfident	Waves 5, 6 & 7	Not very confident
			Not at all confident