

8 February 2011: Safer Internet Day

## **Nearly one third of internet users in the EU27 caught a computer virus**

### **84% of internet users use IT security software for protection**

In connection with the **Safer Internet Day**<sup>1</sup> on 8 February 2011, **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, presents a selection of statistics concerning internet security. The Safer Internet Day is part of a global drive to promote a safer Internet for all users, in particular children and young people, and is organised by INSAFE, a European internet safety network co-funded by the European Commission.

The data presented in this News Release have been collected from the survey on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) usage in households and by individuals<sup>2</sup> in the **EU27**, mainly carried out in the second quarter of 2010. More data on internet security and related topics can be found in the dedicated section on Information Society on the Eurostat website<sup>3</sup>.

#### **3% of internet users suffered financial loss**

In the **EU27** in 2010, almost one third of individuals (31%) who used the internet in the 12 months prior to the survey reported that they caught a virus or other computer infection<sup>4</sup> resulting in loss of information or time during this period. The highest shares of internet users who caught a virus or other computer infection were found in **Bulgaria** (58%), **Malta** (50%), **Slovakia** (47%), **Hungary** (46%) and **Italy** (45%), and the lowest in **Austria** (14%), **Ireland** (15%), **Finland** (20%) and **Germany** (22%).

Among the individuals in the **EU27** who used the internet in the last 12 months, 4% reported that they suffered from an abuse of personal information sent on the internet and/or other privacy violations<sup>4</sup> in this period, with the highest shares in **Bulgaria** and **Spain** (both 7%), **Italy** and the **Netherlands** (both 6%). In the same period, 3% of internet users in the **EU27** suffered financial loss due to phishing or pharming attacks or fraudulent payment card use<sup>4</sup>, with the highest shares recorded in **Latvia** (8%), the **United Kingdom** (7%), **Malta** and **Austria** (both 5%).

In 2010 in the **EU27**, a large majority of individuals (84%) who used the internet in the last 12 months stated that they used an IT security software or tool<sup>4</sup> to protect their private computer and data. Among the Member States, more than 90% of internet users in the **Netherlands** (96%), **Luxembourg**, **Malta** and **Finland** (all 91%) used IT security software, while it was less than two-thirds in **Latvia** (62%), **Romania** (64%) and **Estonia** (65%).

#### **Use of parental control software remains limited**

In 2010, 14% of individuals in the **EU27** who used the internet in the last 12 months and live in a household with children had a parental control or web filtering software<sup>4</sup> installed. This share was highest in **Luxembourg** and **Slovenia** (both 25%), followed by **France** (24%), **Denmark**, **Austria**, the **United Kingdom** (all 21%) and **Finland** (20%).

Of the individuals in the **EU27** who used the internet in the last 12 months and live in a household with children, 5% reported that they experienced children accessing inappropriate websites or connecting with potentially dangerous persons<sup>4</sup> while using a computer within the household. The highest shares were recorded in **Italy** (11%) and **Latvia** (9%). It should be noted that this indicator only represents the share of individuals who became aware of this problem and thus it may underestimate the real figure.

## Internet security problems and use of IT security software

(% of individuals who used the internet in the last 12 months)

	Caught a virus or other computer infection (worm, Trojan horse, etc.)	Abuse of personal information sent on the internet and/or other privacy violations	Financial loss due to 'phishing', 'pharming' or payment card misuse	Use any kind of IT security software or tool (anti-virus, anti-spam, firewall, etc.)
<b>EU27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>84</b>
Belgium	32	3	3	89
Bulgaria	58	7	1	73
Czech Rep.	26	1	1	68
Denmark	29	4	3	89
Germany	22	2	3	88
Estonia	42	4	2	65
Ireland	15	2	4	80
Greece	34	3	2	83
Spain	33	7	4	84
France	34	5	2	89
Italy	45	6	4	67
Cyprus	34	1	2	79
Latvia	41	5	8	62
Lithuania	34	2	1	79
Luxembourg	28	5	3	91
Hungary	46	4	2	84
Malta	50	4	5	91
Netherlands	23	6	3	96
Austria	14	3	5	87
Poland	30	3	1	79
Portugal	37	4	2	86
Romania	*	5	2	64
Slovenia	37	1	1	88
Slovakia	47	3	1	86
Finland	20	1	2	91
Sweden	31	1	2	89
United Kingdom	31	4	7	88
Norway	28	3	3	91
Croatia	33	2	2	78
Turkey	36	4	3	58

\* = data not fully comparable

## Children and internet security

(% of individuals who live in a household with dependant children and used the internet in the last 12 months)

	Reported incidence of children accessing inappropriate web-sites or connecting with potentially dangerous persons <sup>5</sup>	Use a parental control or a web filtering software
<b>EU27</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	7	11
<b>Bulgaria</b>	8	2
<b>Czech Rep.</b>	1	5
<b>Denmark</b>	6	21
<b>Germany</b>	4	12
<b>Estonia</b>	6	12
<b>Ireland</b>	u	10
<b>Greece</b>	3	8
<b>Spain</b>	3	13
<b>France</b>	4	24
<b>Italy</b>	11	4
<b>Cyprus</b>	1	9
<b>Latvia</b>	9	4
<b>Lithuania</b>	2	15
<b>Luxembourg</b>	6	25
<b>Hungary</b>	6	13
<b>Malta</b>	2	9
<b>Netherlands</b>	5	18
<b>Austria</b>	3	21
<b>Poland</b>	3	5
<b>Portugal</b>	4	8
<b>Romania</b>	4	3
<b>Slovenia</b>	7	25
<b>Slovakia</b>	6	3
<b>Finland</b>	5	20
<b>Sweden</b>	6	15
<b>United Kingdom</b>	4	21
<b>Norway</b>	9	21

u = unreliable data

1. European Commission Safer Internet Programme: [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/sip/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm)  
Insafe: <http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/index.htm>.
2. The survey covers individuals aged 16-74. The survey period was mainly the second quarter of 2010. Internet usage refers to those who reported using the internet during the 12 months prior to the survey. The security problems which these individuals experienced also relate to the 12 months prior to the survey. The indicators which refer to individuals living in a household with dependant children have been calculated especially for the purpose of this news release and are not available in the database. Dependant child is a child less than 16 years.
3. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ict>

4. **Catching a virus or other computer infection** (e.g. worm or Trojan horse): Computer systems could be infected with viruses, worms or Trojan horses which could damage personal computers and files, result in loss of time or money or other personal damage. A Trojan or Trojan horse is a non-self-replicating malware facilitating unauthorised access to the user's computer. Another example for computer infection is spyware which has installed itself on the computer to monitor and report on the respondent's computer activity.

**Abuse of personal information sent on the Internet and/or other privacy violations** (e.g. abuse of pictures, videos, personal data uploaded on community websites): Personal information sent on the internet are usually the name, address, and/or e-mail details. Other privacy violations could be private pictures or videos uploaded over the internet and misused by third persons, or misuse of any personal details uploaded to community websites, i.e. sites used for social or professional networking.

**Financial loss** can be a result of receiving fraudulent messages ('phishing'), getting redirected to fake websites asking for personal information ('pharming') or can be due to fraudulent payment (credit or debit) card use.

**Use of an IT security software or tool to protect their private computer and data** refers to the use of e.g. a firewall, anti-virus and anti-spam. The aim is to combat a wide range of threats, including worms, phishing attacks, Trojan horses and other malware. Anti-virus software scans files for infection using a dictionary and identifies suspicious behaviour from any installed computer program.

**A parental control or a web filtering software** is software designed for controlling what content is permitted and for restricting material delivered over the internet. Parents may use this software to limit what sites children may view from computers at home.

**Children accessing inappropriate websites or connecting with potentially dangerous persons** refers to the use of the computer within the household. Mobile computers (laptop, handheld) are included but not phones.

5. Incidents reported by internet users aged 16-74 who live in a household with children less than 16 years.

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