

260/2016 - 20 December 2016

Internet use by individuals

Almost 8 out of 10 internet users in the EU surfed via a mobile or smart phone in 2016...

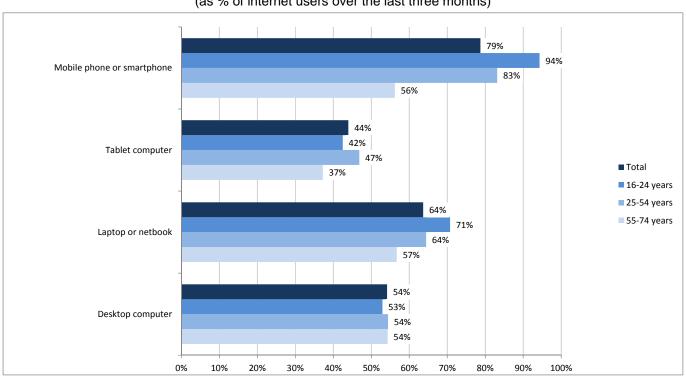
Different patterns across Member States in managing personal information

More than 80% of persons aged 16 to 74 in the **European Union** (EU) used the internet in 2016, in many cases via several different devices. Mobile phones or smart phones were the device most used to surf the internet, by over three-quarters (79%) of internet users. They were followed by laptops or netbooks (64%), desktop computers (54%) and tablet computers (44%).

During the last twelve months, more than 70% of internet users in the **EU** provided some kind of personal information online, many of them undertaking different actions to control access to this personal information on the internet. Almost half of them (46%) refused to allow the use of personal information for advertising and 40% limited access to their profile or content on social networking sites. In addition, 37% of internet users read privacy policy statements before providing personal information and 31% restricted access to their geographical location.

This information, issued **by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, is part of the results of the survey conducted in 2016 on ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) usage in households and by individuals.

Main devices used in the EU to surf the internet, by age groups, 2016 (as % of internet users over the last three months)



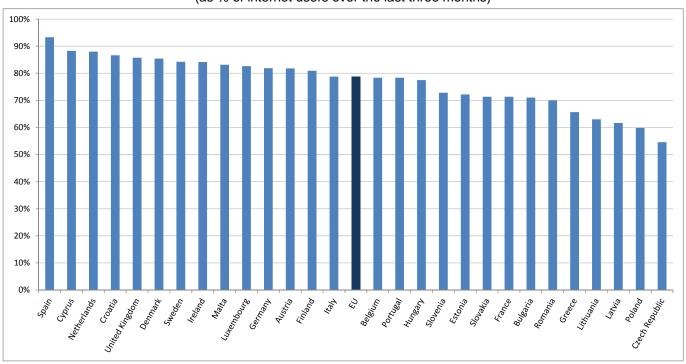
Highest shares of surfers via mobile phone or smartphone in Spain, Cyprus and the Netherlands

Mobile phones or smartphones were the devices the most used in 2016 by internet surfers in every EU Member State, except for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia where it was laptops or netbooks. In 2016, the highest proportion of internet users having accessed the internet via a mobile phone or a smartphone was registered in Spain (93% of those having used the internet over the last three months), ahead of Cyprus and the Netherlands (both 88%), Croatia (87%), the United Kingdom (86%) and Denmark (85%). At the opposite end of the scale, the lowest share was recorded in the Czech Republic (55%), followed by Poland (60%), Latvia (62%), Lithuania (63%) and Greece (66%).

Among Member States, laptops or netbooks were used to surf the internet by at least three-quarters of internet users in the **Netherlands** (80%), **Finland** and **Belgium** (both 78%) and **Denmark** (76%), while desktop computers were used by more than two-thirds of internet users in **Hungary**, **Luxembourg** and **Romania** (all 68%) as well as **Germany** (67%). Finally, tablet computers were used to access the internet by less than half of internet surfers in a vast majority of Member States, with the exceptions of the **Netherlands** (66%), the **United Kingdom** (61%), **Denmark** (56%), **Germany** (55%), **Luxembourg** (53%) and **Finland** (52%).

At **EU** level, young individuals aged 16-24 mostly preferred accessing the internet via a mobile or a smart phone (94%) as well as via a laptop or a netbook (71%), while the use of a tablet computer was most popular among those aged 25-54 (47%).

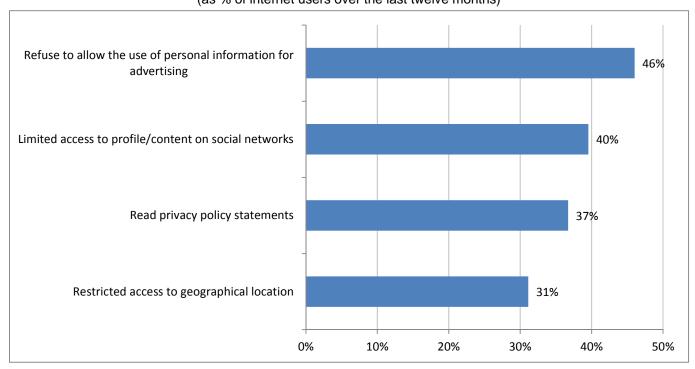
Internet users having accessed the internet via a mobile phone or smartphone in the EU, 2016 (as % of internet users over the last three months)



Disparities in ways used to manage access to online personal information

Disparities between the EU Member States can be observed in the way internet users managed access to their personal information on the internet in 2016. In twelve Member States, refusing to allow the use of personal information for advertising came first, with the highest shares being registered in **Luxembourg** (72% of internet users over the last twelve months) and **Finland** (71%), followed by the **Netherlands** (65%), **Denmark** (60%) and **Estonia** (59%). In nine Member States, access to personal information on the internet was principally managed through reading privacy policies, while this was managed via limiting access to profile or content on social networks in six others. Although restricting access to geographical location was not the most used tool in any Member States, more than half of internet users did so in **Luxembourg** (63%), **Finland** (58%), **Austria** and the **Netherlands** (both 52%).

Main actions undertaken to manage access to personal information on the internet in the EU, 2016 (as % of internet users over the last twelve months)



Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

The data source is the 2016 Community survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals. The survey covered individuals aged 16-74. In most countries it was conducted in the second quarter of 2016. Individuals were asked about frequency of internet use and about activities they had carried out on the internet in the last three or twelve months prior to the survey, at home or at any other location.

Timetable

A news release on the use of internet advertising by enterprises was published on 14 December 2016.

For more information

Eurostat website section on digital economy and society statistics.

Eurostat database on digital economy and society.

Eurostat Statistics Explained articles on internet access and use as well as on e-commerce for households and individuals.

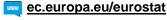
European Commission Digital Single Market strategy.

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Main devices used by individuals to surf the internet, 2016 (as % of internet users over the last three months)

	Desktop computer	Laptop or netbook	Tablet computer	Mobile phone or smartphone
EU	54	64	44	79
Belgium	53	78	49	78
Bulgaria	58	51	19	71
Czech Republic	51	66	19	55
Denmark	40	76	56	85
Germany	67	71	55	82
Estonia	49	73	32	72
Ireland	25	67	37	84
Greece	49	62	31	66
Spain	45	58	42	93
France	60	63	46	71
Croatia	63	66	29	87
Italy	50	31	29	79
Cyprus	29	69	37	88
Latvia	54	59	25	62
Lithuania	42	69	23	63
Luxembourg	68	74	53	83
Hungary	68	64	22	77
Malta	42	69	45	83
Netherlands	64	80	66	88
Austria	56	69	35	82
Poland	49	74	21	60
Portugal	46	73	44	78
Romania	68	37	26	70
Slovenia	57	70	30	73
Slovakia	54	73	36	71
Finland	51	78	52	81
Sweden	43	70	49	84
United Kingdom	45	70	61	86
Norway	33	84	66	89
Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	59	54	17	81
Turkey	:	:	:	:

Respondents could report more than one device.

[:] Data not available

Main actions undertaken to manage access to personal information on the internet, 2016 (as % of internet users over the last twelve months)

	Provided personal information	Read privacy policy statements	Restricted access to geographical location	Limited access to profile/content on social networks	Refused to allow the use of personal information for advertising
EU	71	37	31	40	46
Belgium	71	29	34	49	48
Bulgaria	50	29	10	20	12
Czech Republic	67	45	14	15	25
Denmark	83	44	47	59	60
Germany	80	45	36	41	55
Estonia	77	42	44	49	59
Ireland	76	26	21	32	32
Greece	83	32	18	28	28
Spain	74	36	40	50	52
France	73	22	32	39	50
Croatia	65	50	37	55	50
Italy	52	33	11	22	31
Cyprus	61	22	16	34	26
Latvia	70	49	26	30	31
Lithuania	56	37	22	29	33
Luxembourg	92	43	63	64	72
Hungary	65	57	27	42	48
Malta	70	44	43	56	46
Netherlands	85	41	52	56	65
Austria	80	45	52	53	56
Poland	51	26	15	25	29
Portugal	49	44	48	57	52
Romania	31	24	7	15	15
Slovenia	59	34	24	32	35
Slovakia	74	59	18	29	31
Finland	80	50	58	58	71
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:
United Kingdom	88	43	38	50	54
Norway	87	42	47	60	56
Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	51	33	25	41	37
Turkey	63	32	19	36	29

Respondents could report more than one action.

[:] Data not available