# Online Nation

## 2024 Report

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# Contents

# 1. Introduction

Ofcom's Online Nation report is an annual publication that looks at what people are doing online, how they are served by online content providers and platforms, and their attitudes to and experiences of using the internet. There is an accompanying interactive report with additional data to what is included in this report.

In October 2023 Ofcom became the regulator of online safety in the UK under the Online Safety Act. Regulated services will have to follow various rules, including protecting users from illegal content and activity online, as well as protecting children from harmful content and activity online. The terminology, and the categorisation of the services and potential harms discussed in this report, do not necessarily align with the Online Safety Act definitions and should not be considered a reflection of any policy position that Ofcom may adopt.

A range of Ofcom and third-party sources have been used to provide context and information on the UK's use of online services and people's experiences of being online. Two sources played a major role in the production of this report: Ofcom's Online Experiences Tracker (OET)[1] and Ipsos iris.[2] The Online Experiences Tracker (OET) is Ofcom's biannual quantitative tracking survey that examines people's attitudes to and experiences of using online services. Ipsos iris is the UKOM-endorsed currency for the measurement of online audiences and provides data that is representative of the UK online adult (18+) population, giving a snapshot of both reach and time spent on websites and apps, across smartphones, tablets and computers in May 2024. It compares year-on-year trends since May 2022, and is used to explore monthly trends where notable changes are occurring.

**A note on research methodology and terminology regarding 'potential harms' used in the report**

The OET survey seeks to understand the experiences of encountering potential harms online by UK internet users aged 13 and over. Not all occurrences of potentially harmful content or behaviour online result in actual psychological (or financial) harm, so in this report they are referred to as 'potential harms'.

The data relating to the type and prevalence of potential harm relates to the responses from internet users encountering a 'potential harm' in the four weeks before completing our OET survey; their 'most recent encountered potential harm'. Further OET data relating to the location and impact of, and response to a potential harm, relate to this 'most recent encountered potential harm'. To capture these figures, survey participants in the OET are prompted with a list of potential harms, and their responses are based on their recall and judgement of the content and behaviours which they consider align with those listed in the questionnaire.

The list of potential harms in the OET questionnaire covers content that is harmful to children, falling within the scope of the Online Safety Act, and also extends to other types of potentially harmful content and behaviour, in order to capture a wide range of experiences online.[3]

[1] The Online Experiences Tracker (OET) is created by Ofcom, run by YouGov on its online panel. More information and data from each wave can be found here: Experiences of using online services.
[2] Ipsos iris measures participants' online behaviours and activities on their personal devices. For more information see the Ipsos iris website and the methodology annex below.
[3] A full list of potential harms used to prompt participants can be found in the questionnaire.

# 2. Overview

## Time spent online

**In May 2024, UK adults spent an average of 4 hours 20 minutes a day online, across smartphones, tablets and computers**

Young adults spent the most time online, with 18-24-year-olds spending a daily average of 6 hours 1 minute online, and those aged 65+ spending the least time online (3 hours 10 minutes). Women spent more time online than men across all adult age groups. The daily average for women was 4 hours 36 minutes, 33 minutes more than men (4 hours 3 minutes). The difference was highest among 'Gen Z' women aged 18-24, who spent more than an hour longer online than their male counterparts (6 hours 36 minutes vs 5 hours 28 minutes).

**Almost half (48%) of the time UK adults spend online is on services owned by Alphabet or Meta**

In May 2024, UK adults spent an average of 2 hours 4 minutes a day on services owned by these two organisations. Alphabet remains the highest reaching organisation visited by almost all online adults (99%), with 94% visiting YouTube, spending an average of 47 minutes a day on it. Meta was not far behind as the second highest reaching organisation (96%). In total, 70% (33 million) of UK online adults visited all top three Meta-owned platforms – Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. Although Facebook and Messenger was Meta's highest-reaching service among adults (at 91%), there is a notable difference in the time spent on it by adult age groups. Facebook users aged 18-24 are the least engaged with the service, spending an average of 15 minutes a day on the platform, much lower than the average time spent by adults overall (39mins).

## Online sectors

### Social media

**Reddit was the fastest-growing large social media platform in the UK, reaching more than half of UK online adults by June 2024**

Reddit experienced a 47% year-on-year increase in reach among UK online adults, rising to 22.9 million (48% UK online adults) by May 2024 (May 2023: 15.6m, 33%), overtaking X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn to become the fifth highest-reaching social media service among adults. This increase was predominantly driven by young adults, resulting in Reddit appearing in the top ten online organisations for young online adults for the first time (age 18-24: 71%; age 25-34: 63%). This is a notable increase since May 2023 (18-24%: 58%, 25-34: 49%). Reddit increased its reach further in June 2024, reaching 24.6 million (52%) of UK online adults.

A year after its release, Meta's microblogging service Threads became the 12th highest-reaching social media service, reaching 5.3 million (11%) UK online adults in July 2024. Although X remains the highest-reaching microblogging service, its average monthly adult reach continues to decline: from 27.9 million in 2021 to 26.5 million in 2022 and 23.8 million in 2023. The monthly 2024 average up to August 2024 was 22.2 million, down by a further 1.6 million adult visitors.

**18-24-year-old TikTok and Snapchat visitors spent on average about an hour per day on each service**

About three-quarters (74%, 2.0m) of online 18-24-year-olds visited TikTok in May 2024, spending an average of 64 minutes per day on the service and accounting for 39% of the total time UK adults spent on the service. Women aged 18-24 who visited TikTok spent on average 1 hour 17 minutes on it, while men spent 35 minutes less on average (48 minutes). Snapchat skews even more heavily towards young adults, with users aged 18-24 accounting for 64% of the total time spent by UK adults on Snapchat in May 2024, averaging 55 minutes per day. Two-thirds of the total time spent by UK adults on Snapchat in May 2024 was by women; women aged 18-24-year who visited Snapchat spent over an hour (67 minutes) on average on the service per day, while men spent 42 minutes.

## Messaging and calling

**Forty-three per cent of UK Snapchat messenger users aged 16+ sent a disappearing image or video on the service in July 2024**

An Ofcom survey in July 2024 found that 57% of 16-24-year-olds had sent a disappearing image or video on Snapchat. WhatsApp and Telegram also offer 'view once' or disappearing image/video functionalities, and these had been used by 9% and 12% of UK internet users aged 16+ respectively.

Ipsos iris data showed that WhatsApp continued to be the highest-reaching messaging service, reaching 87% of UK online adults in May 2024. Sixty-four per cent of UK online adults accessed WhatsApp daily, up from 58% in May 2023.

## Generative artificial intelligence

**ChatGPT was the most popular generative AI tool, with 37% of British online 8-15s and 33% of UK internet users aged 16+ saying they had used it in the past year**

An Ofcom survey conducted in June 2024 revealed that over half (54%) of British online 8-15s and 41% of UK online aged 16+ users said they had used a generative AI tool in the past year. UK online males aged 16+ were more likely than females to have used a generative AI tool in the past year (50% vs 33%). Ipsos iris data found that ChatGPT had continued to expand its reach, with 4.2 million (9%) UK online adults visiting it in May 2024, increasing to 4.4 million (9%) by July 2024. ChatGPT adult reach was highest among UK online 18-24-year-olds (27%, 1.4m) in May 2024.

**Although 'finding information or content' is the most popular reason for using a generative AI tool, only a minority believe the information provided is reliable**

The most popular reason for using a generative AI tool in the past year was to find information or content, reported by 48% of internet users aged 16+ and 31% of British online 8-15-year-olds. Despite this, only 18% of those aged 16+ said they thought the information from generative AI was reliable, while a third of 8-15s said they were confident in the information they got from these tools.

## Search engines

**Search engines are still widely used; 90% of UK online adults visited at least one of the top ten highest-reaching search engines in May 2024**

Google Search remained the highest-reaching search engine, with 83% of UK online adults visiting it in May 2024, down from 86% in May 2023. Microsoft's Bing was the next highest-reaching, at 39% in May 2024, down from 46% in May 2023. Both Google and Microsoft have incorporated generative AI into their search sites – Microsoft Copilot and Google Gemini. Fifteen per cent of UK internet users aged 16+ said they had used Copilot, the second-highest-reaching generative AI tool, in the past year, while 10% said they had used Google Gemini, which became the fourth-highest-reaching AI tool only six months after its launch.

## Dating

**One in ten UK online adults visited a dating service in May 2024, in line with May 2023 (11%), although there has been a decline in UK adult use of popular dating services**

Visitors to dating services was highest among 18-24-year-olds (18%) and 25-34-year-olds (17%). Tinder continued to be the highest reaching, at 1.9 million (4%) UK online adults. However, its reach had declined by 600k from 2.5 million visitors (5%) the year before. Hinge, the second-highest-reaching service, reached 1.4 million UK online adults (3%) in May 2024, down 131k from the year before. While men still outnumbered women on online dating services overall, Hinge was more popular among women in May 2024.

## Pornographic content services

**Twenty-nine per cent of UK online adults accessed a pornographic content service in May 2024**

Twenty-nine per cent (13.8m) of UK online adults accessed a pornographic content service in May 2024, in line with the previous two years (May 2023: 29%, May 2022: 31%). For the first half of 2024, the monthly average time spent on pornographic content services by UK adult visitors was 1 hour 33 minutes, an 11% decrease (-11 minutes) compared to the first half of 2023 (monthly average 1 hour 41 minutes). Men remained far more likely to visit a pornographic content service, comprising 72% of the UK adult audience in May 2024, consistent with the previous year (May 2023: 73%). Pornhub continued to be the highest-reaching pornographic content service across nations, genders and age groups, visited by 18% (8.4m) of UK online adults in May 2024.

## Retail

**Amazon remained the UK's leading online retailer visited by 35% UK online adults per day in May 2024**

Eighty-eight per cent (41.5m) of UK online adults visited Amazon in May 2024, consistent with the same period in the previous two years (May 2022: 88%, May 2023: 87%). On average, 16.4 million (35%) UK online adults visited Amazon per day in May 2024. Three quarters of the UK online population aged 16+ said they had used an online marketplace in Q2 2024. Ebay was the top reaching online marketplace (57%) followed by 40% saying they used Facebook Marketplace in Q2 2024.

# The online experience

**Two-thirds (67%) of online adults agree that for them the benefits of being online outweigh the risks, a decrease from June 2023 (71%) and January 2024 (68%)**

Younger adults aged 18-24 (11%) and those in a minority ethnic group (10%) were more likely to agree that the risks outweighed the benefits of being online. Although more users felt that the personal benefits of being online were high (67%), fewer felt that the internet was good for society (40%). Women (34%), white individuals (39%), those in the lower C2DE socio-economic group (36%) and those with a limiting condition (36%) were less likely than average to feel that the internet was good for society.

**Young adults were less likely than older people to think they had a good balance between their online and offline lives, and older children were more concerned than younger ones about the time they spent online**

Ofcom's Media Literacy research found young adults were more likely than older adults to disagree that they had a good balance between their online and offline lives (21% of 18-24-years vs 7% of over-54s). A separate Ofcom survey showed that children's concern about their time spent online increases with age: 35% of 8-9-year-olds, 46% of 10-12-year-olds, and 51% of 13-15-year-olds reported concern about the amount of time they spent on at least one service type. Children were worried about the mental (49%) and physical (46%) health effects of spending too much time online.

**Misinformation remained the most prevalent potential harm, with 39% of users aged 13+ saying they had encountered it in June 2024**

In June 2024, three in ten UK internet users aged 13+ said they had seen something in the past four weeks that had made them feel uncomfortable, upset or negative, an increase since June 2023 (27%). Despite the increase, the proportion of users who had encountered at least one of the harms listed in our OET survey remained the same as in previous years (68%); Younger adults (18-24: 80% vs 65+: 55%) were more likely than average to have come across potential harms online.

Misinformation was the most prevalent potential harm with 39% of internet users aged 13+ saying they had encountered it. The types of misinformation that internet users saw fluctuated according to the topical news and current affairs when the survey was run. Following the announcement of the UK General Election, on 22 May 2024, there was a small but significant increase in June 2024 of internet users aged 13+ saying they had encountered political or electoral misinformation (25%), up from 22% in January 2024. In January 2024, reports of misinformation about conflicts rose significantly (to 21% from 6% in June 2023), probably linked to the war in Gaza which began in October 2023. Although these numbers fell in the June 2024 survey, they are still significantly higher than in June 2023, at 16%.

**More online adults are encountering hateful, offensive or discriminatory content**

UK adult internet users reporting seeing hateful, offensive or discriminatory content has increased over the past year, from 23% in June 2023 to 26% in June 2024. The types of hateful online content reported fluctuates according to the news and current affairs at the time of the survey. In January 2024, reports of content hateful towards people because of their ethnicity or religion rose sharply, to 36% and 33% respectively, up from 25% and 16% in June 2023. In June 2024 these figures remained higher than in the previous year, both for ethnicity (33%) and religion (30%).

There were some gender disparities in regard to the types of potential harms that were encountered online. Men were more likely than women to report that they had encountered misinformation (41% vs 37%), scams or fraud (36% vs 31%), hateful content (27% vs 24%), fake or deceptive content (20% vs 16%) and paid for/sponsored content that is not marked as such (19% vs 15%). Women were more likely than men to report encountering unwelcome friend or follow requests (30% vs 26%), misogynistic content (23% vs 19%) and body-image-related content (21% vs 13%).

**One in five 8-15 year-olds have a user age of at least 18 on a social media platform but there are indications that there are more frequent efforts from services to verify their date of birth**

Ofcom's user age research, conducted in August 2024, suggests that 22% of 8-17-year-olds (and 20% of 8-15s) with a social media profile on at least one of the platforms listed in our study, have a user profile age of at least 18, meaning they are at greater risk of seeing adult content. This has remained consistent with data from February 2024 and September 2023 (8-17s: 21% and 22%, 8-15s: 20% for both). Compared to September 2023, children aged 8-17 in August 2024 were more likely to say that they had been asked to verify their date of birth on their profile (Facebook: 25% vs 10%, Instagram: 18% vs 9%, Snapchat: 14% vs 9%, TikTok: 19% vs 13%, X: 20% vs 10% and YouTube: 14% vs 10%).

**Among online teens, generally offensive or 'bad' language[4] was the most prevalent potential harm encountered, although their reported exposure has declined over the past year**

[4] Although generally offensive or bad language' is not separately recognised as a harm in the Online Safety Act 2023, this was included as part of a list of potential harms within our OET survey as we wanted to capture the wider online user experience.

Thirty-five per cent of users aged 13-17 said in June 2024 that they had come across generally offensive or 'bad' language online. The proportion of 13-17s encountering this potential harm has decreased over the past year, with 47% citing this harm in June 2023 and 40% in January 2024.

**Teenage boys were more likely to encounter content showing dangerous stunts, while girls were more likely to encounter potential harms relating to body image**

There were gender differences in the prevalence of potential harms that teen users were exposed to. Teenage boys were more likely than girls to encounter content showing dangerous stunts (29% vs 19%). Encounters with potential online harms relating to body image are more common among girls than boys; this includes content stigmatising certain body types (25% vs 11%), content promoting excessive or unhealthy eating/exercise (19% vs 9%), group shaming (19% vs 10%) and content relating to eating disorders (17% vs 5%). Teen girls were also more likely than boys to say they had encountered unwelcome friend or follow requests (33% vs 21%) and misogynistic content (23% vs 14%).

**Facebook remains the most likely service on which adult users encountered a potential harm (29%) in the past year, while TikTok (22%) and YouTube (13%) are the services where teen users were most likely to encounter a potential harm**

Social media was the type of service on which users aged 13+ most commonly reported encountering their most recent potential harm online (56%). Facebook (29%) was the most likely platform on which adult users encountered potential harms, followed by X (June 2024: 18%, down from 23% in June 2023). Older adults were significantly more likely to have encountered their most recent potential harm on Facebook, (55+: 45% vs. 18-24: 8%). Users aged 18-24 were more likely than older adults to encounter their most recent potential harm on X (23%), Instagram (20%), TikTok (20%), Snapchat (3%) and Tumblr (1%), and less likely on Facebook (8%).

Children aged 13-17 were significantly more likely than adults to have encountered their most recent potential harm on TikTok (22% vs 9%), YouTube (13% vs 4%), Snapchat (7% vs 1%) and WhatsApp (7% vs 2%).

**In June 2024, 35% of adults said they had reported or flagged content in response to encountering a potential harm online in the past four weeks**

Thirty-eight per cent of adults who chose to report or flag the content or activity were aware of the outcome of their report, an increase since the last two waves of the survey (32% in January 2024, 30% in June 2023). Women were more likely to say that they had 'not heard anything yet' in response to their report, compared to men (55% vs 46%). Men were more likely to say they had received a written response (11% vs 7%) and more likely to say the reported content had been removed (25% vs 18%).

Satisfaction following reporting potential harmful content has increased, from 31% in June 2023 to 40% in June 2024. There has also been an increase in awareness of the result of reporting content (e.g. content removal, written response, etc.), from 30% in June 2023 to 38% in June 2024.

**Two-fifths of adult users believe the onus is on the website/app (39%) and on search engines (41%) to keep users safe online**

Women were more likely than average to say the onus is on the website or app that hosts user generated content (40%) and on search engines (45%), while 38% of men said this for both websites and apps that host user generated content and search engines. Twenty per cent of adult users thought the onus was on the individual to ensure that what they posted is appropriate for other users.

More online adults in June 2024 than in June 2023 said it was important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users (26%, compared to 24% in June 2023). However, 38% of online adults agreed that 'the internet has an important role in supporting free speech'. Men were more likely to be advocates of free speech: 47% agreed with this statement, compared with 30% of women.

There was an increase in the proportion of online adults who believed that further safety measures are needed online (44%, compared to 42% in January 2024 and 40% in June 2023). This belief is especially prevalent among women, people aged 55+ and heterosexuals. In contrast, men, younger adults and those identifying as LGB+ are more likely to say that the existing safety measures are sufficient.

# 3. The online landscape

## Introduction

This chapter sets out an overview of what people in the UK do online, exploring adults' use of, and behaviour on, the highest-reaching online services and those where they spend the most time. It is based mainly on data on UK online adults aged 18+ provided by Ipsos iris, the UKOM-accredited online audience measurement currency. We use May 2024 as the core reference month.

### Key metrics

**Figure 1: Average daily time spent online by adults only, by device and age (hours:minutes): May 2024**


*Source: Average daily time spent online by device - Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: custom data supplied by Ipsos. Time spent online includes personal use and in some instances those who also use their device for work. UK home internet access - Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QE1: do you or does anyone in your household have access to the internet at home (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc.), and if so, do you personally use the internet at home? Base: all respondents aged 16+, UK.*

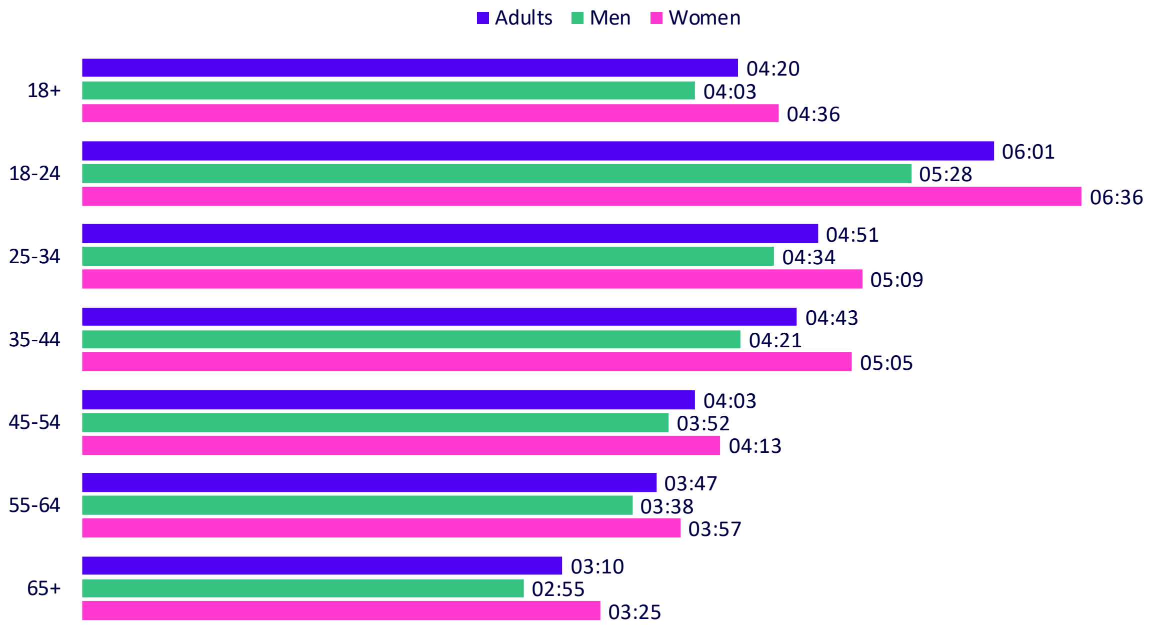
## Take-up and use

### UK adults spent an average of 4 hours 20 minutes a day online in May 2024; women aged 18-24 spent more than an hour longer online than their male counterparts

Data from Ipsos iris[5] shows that 47.4 million UK adults accessed the internet across smartphones, tablets and computers in May 2024 (our sample month), spending an average of 4 hours 20 minutes a day online. Young adults spent the most time online, with 18-24-year-olds spending a daily average of 6 hours 1 minute online, and those aged 65+ spending the least time online (3 hours 10 minutes). Adult internet users in Scotland (4 hours 44 minutes) and Wales (4 hours 43 minutes) spent the most time online daily compared to the other UK nations. England and Northern Ireland both had an average time of 4 hours 16 minutes.[6] [7]

Women spent more time online than men across all adult age groups. The daily average for women was 4 hours 36 minutes, 33 minutes more than men (4 hours 3 minutes). The difference in time spent online was highest among 18-24s, with women of this age spending 21% more time online than their male counterparts.[8]

**Figure 2: Average daily time spent online by UK online adults, by age and gender (hours:minutes): May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.*

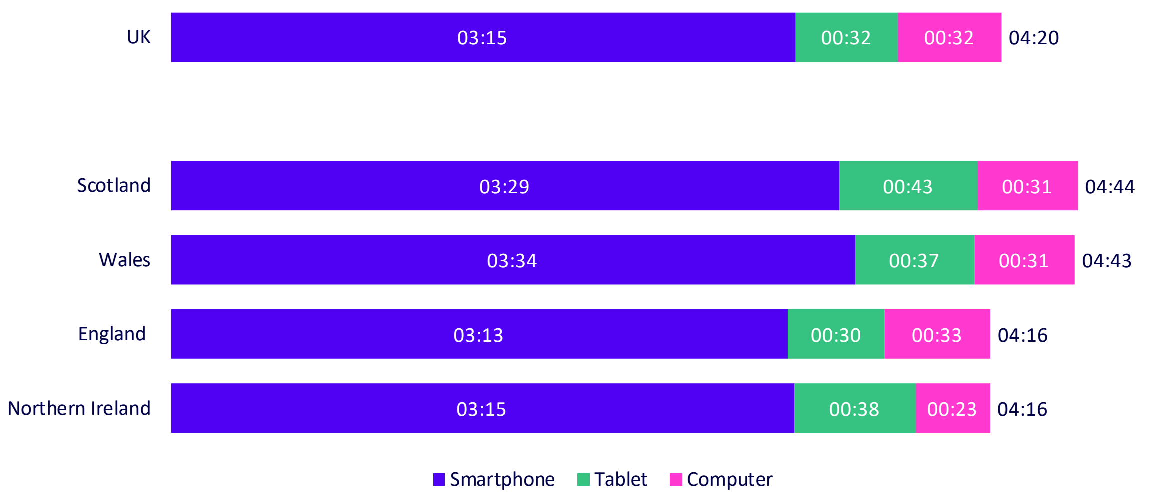
[5] See Methodology for details on Ipsos iris.
[6] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.
[7] Due to a methodology enhancement of the Ipsos iris data set average total time spent data cannot be compared to previous years.
[8] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## Three-quarters of the time spent online per day in May 2024 by UK adults was on smartphones

In May 2024, 75% (3 hours 15 minutes) of the time spent online per day by UK adults, across smartphones, tablets and computers, was on a smartphone. The average time spent online on computers and tablets was identical at 32 minutes daily, with older people (65+) tending to spend more of their time online on tablets, and young people spending relatively more of their time on computers. The 25-34-year-olds spent the greatest proportion of their time online on smartphones, at 83%, while those aged 65+ spent the least time online via a smartphone, at 56%.[9]

Overall, women tended to spend a slightly higher proportion of their time online on smartphones, at 77%, compared to 73% for men. Among 25-34-year-olds, women spent 87% of their time online on smartphones, compared to 79% for men. In the 55-64 and 65+ age groups men and women spent the same proportion (55-64: 70%, 65+: 56%) of their time online on smartphones.[10]

**Figure 3: Daily time spent online by adults, by device and UK nation (hours:minutes): May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.*

## One in 20 people do not have access to the internet at home

Five per cent of UK individuals aged 16+ say they do not have access to the internet at home in 2024,[11] down from 7% in 2022 and 2023. Among 16-54-year-olds it is rare to be without home internet access, ranging between 1-3%, and it is generally the older age groups (55+) that are more

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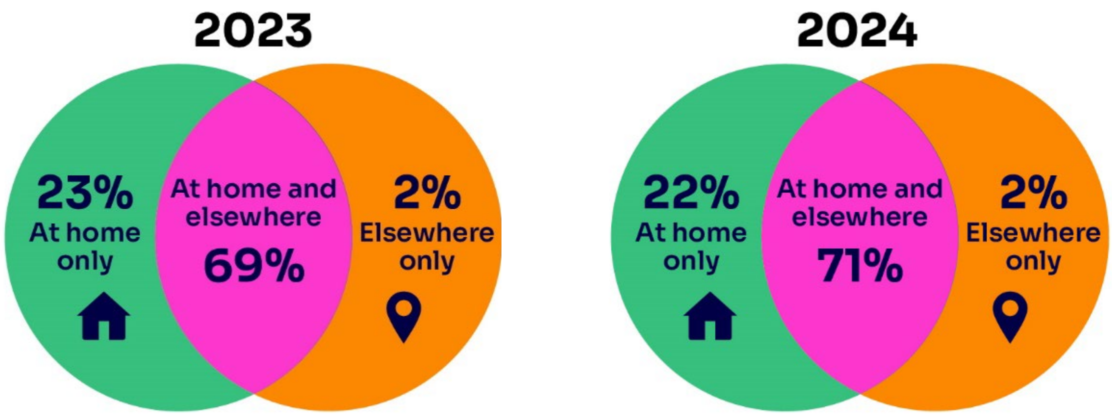
[9] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[10] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[11] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QE1. Do you or does anyone in your household have access to the internet at home (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc), and if so, do you personally use the internet at home? Note: 1% of individuals cited 'don't know' as to whether they had internet access at home.

likely to be without. [12] Thirteen per cent of those aged 65+ do not have home internet access, down from 18% in 2023,[13] while a further 2% have access to the internet at home but do not use it.[14]

Younger age groups with home internet access are more varied with their means of internet connection, 8% of 16-24-year-olds access the internet at home only via their mobile phone connection, twice the overall average, and 86% via fixed broadband. In comparison, 93% of those who have internet access at home receive their internet via fixed broadband, and 4% of online households have access to the internet at home only via their mobile network.[15]

**Figure 4: UK individuals aged 16+, location of internet use**




*Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker 2023 & 2024. QE1. Do you or does anyone in your household have access to the internet at home (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc), and if so, do you personally use the internet at home? QE4: Do you ever access the internet outside your home in and of the following locations. Base: all respondents aged 16+.*

**Figure 5: Percentage of UK individuals aged 16+ with access to the internet at home, by year: 2022-2024**

| Year | Have access to the internet at home | Have access and use at home | Have access but do not use at home |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024** | 94% | 93% | 1% |
| **2023** | 92% | 90% | 2% |
| **2022** | 93% | 92% | 1% |

*Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker 2022, 2023 & 2024. QE1: do you or does anyone in your household have access to the internet at home (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc), and if so, do you personally use the*

[12] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2022 and Ofcom Technology Tracker 2023. QE1. Do you or does anyone in your household have access to the internet at home (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc), and if so, do you personally use the internet at home?
[13] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2023. QE1. Do you or does anyone in your household have access to the internet at home (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc), and if so, do you personally use the internet at home? Base: all respondents aged 16+.
[14] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024 QE16. Which of these are reasons why you are unlikely to get internet access at home in the next 12 months? Base: Where unlikely to get internet in next 12 months.
[15] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QE7. Which of these methods does your household use to connect to the internet at home? Base: Where have internet at home.

*internet at home? Base: all respondents aged 16+. Note: 1% of individuals said they 'don't know' as to whether they had internet access at home.*

## Affordability was given as a reason by more than a quarter of those who do not have internet access at home

Most (82%) of those without internet access at home were unlikely or certain not to get access at home in the next 12 months; 10% said they were likely and a further 8% responded that they did not know. Of those aged 65+ without internet access at home, 95% stated they were unlikely to get it in the next 12 months, with a large proportion (80%) saying this was due to a lack of interest or need, while 19% say that someone else can go online for them if necessary, and 16% state that internet use is too complicated.[16]

In 2024, more than a quarter (27%) of those aged 16+ without home internet access said they were unlikely to get it in the next 12 months due to reasons relating to cost (2023: 26%), with 22% mentioning costs specifically relating to broadband (2023: 23%). Reasons unrelated to cost include 'someone else can go on the internet for me if necessary' (17%) and 'using the internet is too complicated' (13%). Four per cent of men and 6% of women said they did not have access to home internet. Women without internet access at home were more likely than men to have said that internet use was too complicated (19%) as a reason why they were unlikely to get it.[17]

Ofcom estimates that in October 2024 about 1.9 million (+/- 500,000) UK households with fixed broadband found it difficult to afford their fixed broadband service, and 1.6 million (+/- 400,000) UK households with a mobile phone had difficulty affording their mobile phone service. This has decreased compared to figures from October 2023 (2.4 million (+/- 500,000) and 2.4 million (+/- 500,000) respectively).[18]

**Figure 6: Reasons related to cost for not getting internet access at home in the next 12 months**

| Reason | Age | | | Working status | Socio-economic group |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 16+ | 16-64 | 65+ | Not working | DE |
| **Any reason related to cost** | 27% | 51% | 15% | 25% | 28% |
| **Broadband set-up costs** | 18% | 38% | 8% | 17% | 22% |
| **Monthly cost of fixed broadband** | 11% | 20% | 7% | 9% | 14% |
| **Cost of laptop/desktop or tablet** | 6% | 7% | 5% | 6% | 6% |
| **Cost of mobile phone** | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| **Monthly cost of mobile phone service** | 3% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 3% |

*Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024 QE16. Which of these are reasons why you are unlikely to get internet access at home in the next 12 months? Base: Where unlikely to get internet in next 12 months. Other socio-economic groups and smaller range age groups cannot be displayed due to low base size.*

[16] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024 QE16. Which of these are reasons why you are unlikely to get internet access at home in the next 12 months? Base: Where unlikely to get internet in next 12 months.
[17] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024 QE16. Which of these are reasons why you are unlikely to get internet access at home in the next 12 months? Base: Where unlikely to get internet in next 12 months.
[18] Ofcom Affordability Tracker 2024

# Use of internet services – top online companies

## Alphabet- and Meta-owned sites and apps remained the most-visited in the UK

In keeping with previous years, Alphabet, which owns Google and YouTube, remained the organisation[19] whose sites and apps are most visited by UK adults, reaching almost all UK online adults (99%) in May 2024, maintaining the levels seen in 2023 (99%). Meta, the owner of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, followed close behind, with its sites and apps visited by 96% of UK online adults (May 2023: 97%). The sites and apps of Amazon, Microsoft and BBC were the third, fourth and fifth most visited, visited by 90%, 87% and 83% of UK online adults respectively. The top five most-visited organisations were the same for all UK nations (see Figure 7 below).[20]

The BBC was the highest-ranking UK-based organisation, reaching 83% of UK online adults. The BBC was also the fifth most-visited organisation in England (83%), Scotland (83%), Wales (82%) and Northern Ireland (86%) in May 2024. The BBC reach was highest among UK online 55-64s (87%) with its lowest adult audience reach among 25-34s (76%).[21]

Coinciding with the announcement of a general election on 22 May,[22]and in conjunction with the record-breaking rainfall between the 21st and 23rd of that month,[23] adult visitors to UK Government sites (which include the Met Office) increased from an average of 59% in the preceding 12 months[24] to 62% in May 2024. Although UK Government sites relate primarily to central government sites and services, and exclude the sites of the devolved governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, this group of sites also appears in the top ten for all UK nations except Scotland.[25] Ofcom's Technology Tracker found that 67% of UK internet users aged 16+ went online to find information or to apply for benefits/ tax credits/ other government or charitable support. Seventy-eight per cent said they used local council/ Government sites.[26]

## Reddit appeared in the top ten organisations for young adults for the first time

Reddit appeared in the top ten for young adults (18-24: 71%, 25-34: 63%) but not for those aged 35+; its younger adult audience has increased significantly since May 2023 (18-24: 58%, 25-34: 49%). In May 2023, X (formerly Twitter) was 18-24-year-olds' tenth-most-visited organisation, reaching 61% of the audience. In May 2024 it had dropped to 12th place, with a reach of 56%.[27] For further information see Online Sectors - Social Media.

[19] 'Organisations' are the parent companies of the groups of websites and apps; for instance, Alphabet organisations include Google Search, Gmail and YouTube; Meta includes Facebook and Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp.
[20] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[21] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[22] BBC, Rishi Sunak announces UK General Election for Thursday 4 July, 22 May 2024.
[23] Met Office, May 2024 Monthly Weather Report.
[24] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 – April 2024 average, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[25] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[26] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QE9.4. Finding information or applying for benefits/ tax credits/ other government or charitable support. QE9.16. Using local council/ Government sites, (e.g. to contact, to find information, to complete processes such as passport applications). Base: Those aged 16+ who use internet at home or elsewhere.
[27] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+ UK internet users.

Bytedance, the owner of TikTok, was the highest-reaching organisation for 18-34-year-olds which did not appear in the overall top ten (UK online adult reach: 51%, ranked 16th), reaching 75% of 18-24-year-olds (ranked 6th) and 64% of 25-34-year-olds (ranked 8th). This was an increase from 72% and 57% in May 2023 for 18-24-year-olds and 25-34-year-olds respectively. The 18-24s were also the only age group to include Spotify[28] (69%) and Snap (69%) in their top ten, while being the only age group not to include the news publisher Reach (ranked 13th, 55%).[29]

The composition of the top six most-visited organisations were the same for men and women. Also included in the top ten for both men and women were eBay (men: 63%, ranked 8th, women: 64%, ranked 9th) and UK Government (men 62%, ranked 9th; women: 63%, ranked 10th). However, there were two exclusives in the top ten for each gender. Among men, Sky, which includes Sky News, Sky Sports, Sky Go and Now TV sites and apps, was the seventh-most-visited organisation (67%) and News UK, which includes sites and apps such as The Sun, The Times and Sunday Times, and talkSPORT, was tenth (60%). Among women, the online payment service PayPal was the seventh most-visited (67%), and Apple, which includes apps covering a broad range of sectors and functions such as news, weather, music, podcasts, streaming and smart home controls, was the eighth-most-visited organisation (65%).[30]

[28] Spotify use across smartphone, tablet and computer only.
[29] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+ UK internet users.
[30] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+ UK internet users.

**Figure 7: Top ten organisations visited by UK online adults on smartphones, tablets or computers, by nation: May 2024**

| | UK | | England | | Scotland | | Wales | | Northern Ireland | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Organisation | Reach | Organisation | Reach | Organisation | Reach | Organisation | Reach | Organisation | Reach |
| 1 | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 100% |
| 2 | Meta | 96% | Meta | 96% | Meta | 97% | Meta | 99% | Meta | 99% |
| 3 | Amazon Inc | 90% | Amazon Inc | 90% | Amazon Inc | 90% | Amazon Inc | 92% | Amazon Inc | 94% |
| 4 | Microsoft Corporation | 87% | Microsoft Corporation | 87% | Microsoft Corporation | 86% | Microsoft Corporation | 87% | Microsoft Corporation | 89% |
| 5 | BBC Corporation | 83% | BBC Corporation | 83% | BBC Corporation | 83% | BBC Corporation | 82% | BBC Corporation | 86% |
| 6 | Reach Plc | 71% | Reach Plc | 71% | Reach Plc | 70% | Reach Plc | 81% | Reach Plc | 78% |
| 7 | eBay Inc | 64% | eBay Inc | 64% | Apple Inc | 63% | UK Government | 67% | UK Government | 68% |
| 8 | Apple Inc | 63% | Apple Inc | 64% | News UK sites | 61% | eBay Inc | 66% | eBay Inc | 65% |
| 9 | UK Government | 62% | UK Government | 63% | eBay Inc | 61% | Sky | 64% | News UK sites | 64% |
| 10 | PayPal Inc | 61% | PayPal Inc | 62% | PayPal Inc | 61% | News UK sites | 63% | Mail Metro Media | 64% |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, Ranking report, age: 18+ internet users, UK, England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.*
*Note: Each organisation has been assigned a colour. 'UK Government' sites do not include those of the devolved governments.*

**Figure 8: Top ten organisations visited by UK online individuals on smartphones, tablets or computers, by age group: May 2024**

| | 18-24 | | 25-34 | | 35-44 | | 45-54 | | 55-64 | | 65+ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Rank** | **Organisation** | **Reach** | **Organisation** | **Reach** | **Organisation** | **Reach** | **Organisation** | **Reach** | **Organisation** | **Reach** | **Organisation** | **Reach** |
| **1** | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% | Alphabet | 99% |
| **2** | Meta | 95% | Meta | 95% | Meta | 96% | Meta | 97% | Meta | 97% | Meta | 96% |
| **3** | Microsoft Corporation | 92% | Amazon Inc | 90% | Amazon Inc | 91% | Amazon Inc | 92% | Amazon Inc | 91% | Amazon Inc | 89% |
| **4** | Amazon Inc | 87% | Microsoft Corporation | 89% | Microsoft Corporation | 88% | Microsoft Corporation | 87% | BBC Corporation | 87% | BBC Corporation | 86% |
| **5** | BBC Corporation | 80% | BBC Corporation | 76% | BBC Corporation | 82% | BBC Corporation | 85% | Microsoft Corporation | 86% | Microsoft Corporation | 80% |
| **6** | Bytedance Inc | 75% | UK Government | 68% | Reach Plc | 73% | Reach Plc | 76% | Reach Plc | 77% | Reach Plc | 75% |
| **7** | Reddit Inc | 71% | Reach Plc | 67% | eBay Inc | 67% | eBay Inc | 71% | eBay Inc | 68% | Mail Metro Media | 63% |
| **8** | Spotify Music | 69% | Bytedance Inc | 64% | UK Government | 66% | PayPal Inc | 68% | News UK Sites | 66% | News UK Sites | 61% |
| **9** | Snap Inc | 69% | Apple Inc | 64% | PayPal Inc | 65% | Sky | 67% | Mail Metro Media | 66% | NHS Sites | 60% |
| **10** | Apple Inc | 69% | Reddit Inc | 63% | Apple Inc | 65% | Mail Metro Media | 66% | UK Government | 64% | eBay Inc | 60% |

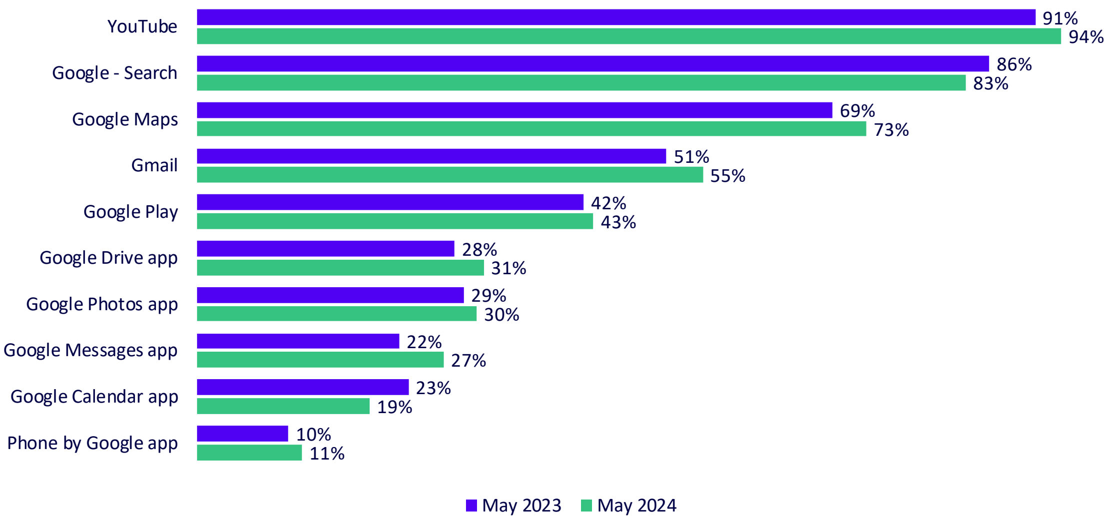
*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Ranking report, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Each organisation has been assigned a colour.*

## YouTube is the highest reaching Alphabet-owned service, with Google Search, Google Maps and Gmail also reaching the majority of UK online adults

YouTube, which encompasses YouTube, YouTube Music, YouTube Kids and YouTube Studio, was the highest reaching (94%, 44.5m) Alphabet-owned service among UK online adults across smartphones, tablet and computers. This is an increase on its 91% reach in May 2023. The youtube.com website remained ahead of the YouTube app, reaching 77% of adults compared to 69%. A YouTube adult visitor spent an average per day of 47 minutes across smartphones, tablets or computers on the service, in- or out-of-home in May 2024. Women are slightly more likely to visit YouTube (women: 95%, men: 93%); however, male visitors spend longer on the site on average per day (men: 54 minutes, women: 40 minutes).[31] While Ipsos iris measures activity on smartphone, tablet and computer, Barb measures YouTube video viewing at home including on the TV set, although only when using the home's WiFi network for viewing on other devices. In May 2024 Barb data showed that more than a third (39%) of in-home YouTube viewing over broadband was on TV sets.[32]

Google Search remained the second-highest-reaching Alphabet service, visited by 83% of UK online adults in May 2024. This was followed by Google Maps, which rose from 69% UK online adult reach in May 2023 to 73% in 2024, primarily via the mobile app, which reached 71% of UK online adults while the website reached 11%. In comparison, Apple Maps, the second-highest-reaching navigation service, was visited by 19% (8.9m) of total UK online adults in May 2024, a decline of 6pp (25%, 12.1m) since May 2023. Gmail was the fourth ranked Alphabet-owned service (55%) and remained the highest-reaching online email service overall, ahead of Microsoft Outlook (50%).[33]

**Figure 9: Top ten, by UK online adult reach, of Alphabet-owned services: May 2023 and May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Alphabet breakdown, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: custom defined list by Ofcom, Google Play services app has not been included as this is a background service and library for use by mobile apps running on the device. Google Search does not include services Maps, Shopping, Play or News.*

[31] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[32] Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network. Does not include time spent when accessed via mobile network internet connection, May 2024, age: 18+, UK.
[33] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users, Microsoft Outlook includes the Outlook app, Outlook Lite app and outlook.live.com website.

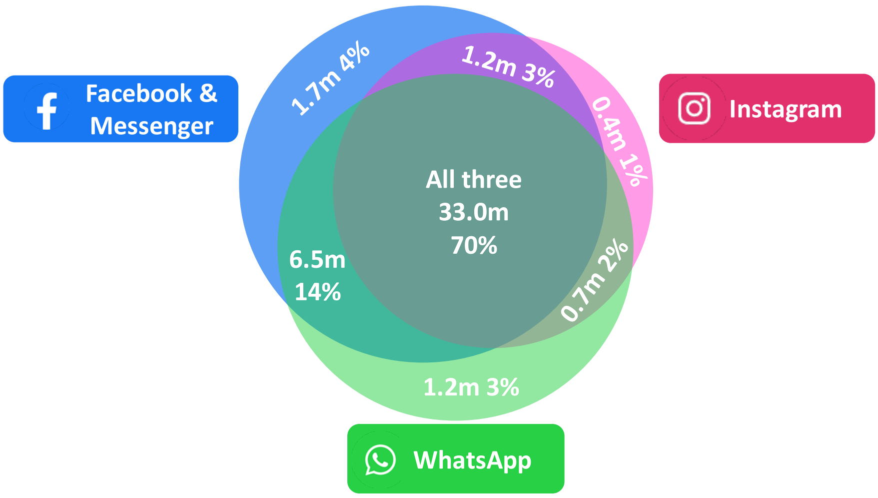
## Seventy per cent of UK online adults visited all top three Meta-owned platforms – Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram

Meta-owned services comprise three main brands: Facebook (inc. Facebook Messenger), WhatsApp and Instagram. At the forefront of Meta's services is Facebook / Messenger, with ninety one percent of UK online adults visiting either of these services in May 2024, consistent with the previous year (May 2023: 92%). WhatsApp was the next most visited, reaching 87% of UK online adults, a slight increase on the previous year (85%). Instagram had the biggest increase in reach, up from 73% in May 2023 to 76% in May 2024. Seventy per cent of UK online adults (33.0m) visited all top three Meta-owned platforms – Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. This was most likely among young adults, with 81% (4.0m) of 18-24-year-olds visiting all three, as did 55% (4.7m) of online adults aged 65+.[34]

In July 2023, Meta launched Threads, a competitor to X, as a sub-brand of Instagram, with users requiring an Instagram account to sign up. In July 2024 Threads reached 11% (4.3m) of UK online adults.[35] Other Meta-owned services include Workplace, which reached 1% of UK online adults in May 2024.[36]

Although Meta services' reach was high to all online users, women (98%) are more likely than men (94%) to be visitors, and women spend on average 45% longer than men on Meta-owned services (women: 1 hour 15 minutes, men: 52 minutes) per day. And 95% of online women visited Facebook / Messenger in May 2024, compared to 87% of men. The biggest gender disparity is seen on Instagram, with 82% of online women visiting in May 2024 (May 2023: 79%) compared to 70% of online men. However, male reach has increased by 4 percentage points since May 2023, the largest increase in reach to either gender for any Meta service (excluding Threads).[37]

**Figure 10: UK online adult reach for top three Meta-owned services: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Audience duplication, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.*

[34] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[35] May 2024 data was reported as only partial iOS data was collected for Threads.
[36] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[37] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## Almost half of the time that UK adults spend online is on sites owned by Alphabet and Meta

Alphabet and Meta remained the two leading organisations in terms of time spent – combined, they accounted for nearly half (48%, 2 hours 4 minutes) of the average time spent online by UK adults in May 2024. The next 25% of daily time spent was accounted for by 17 further organisations; ten of the 25 percentage points went to social media organisations including TikTok-owner Bytedance, Snap and X.[38]

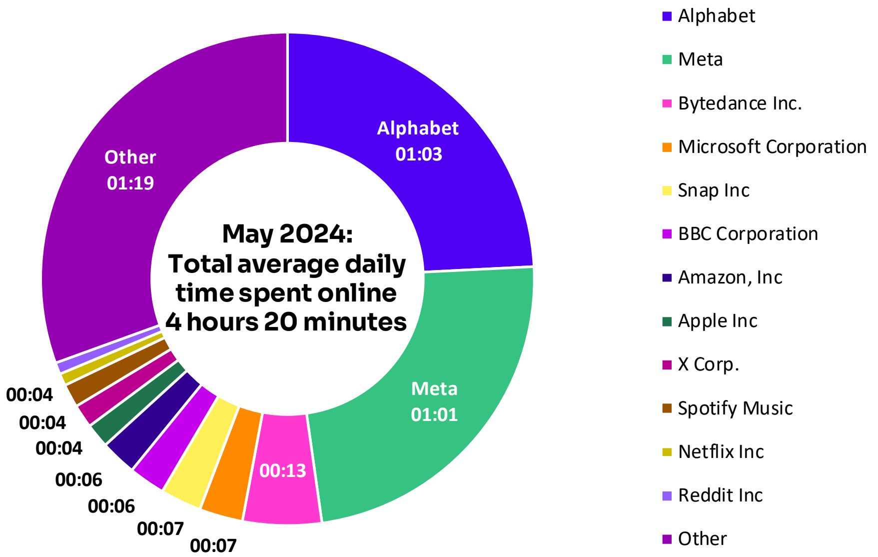
UK online adults spent an average of 1 hour 3 minutes (24.3% of their total online time) with Alphabet-owned sites and apps each day. Meta services were only marginally behind, with adults spending on average 1 hour 1 minute per day (23.6% of total online time) on these services. Of the total average daily minutes (1 hour 3 minutes) spent on Alphabet services on smartphones, tablets and computers, 44 minutes are spent on YouTube sites and apps (note that this excludes time spent watching YouTube on television sets which, according to Barb data, accounts for 38% of in-home viewing over WiFi).[39] Of the time spent on Meta-owned services, 36 minutes are spent on Facebook / Messenger, with 13 minutes spent on both WhatsApp and Instagram. Bytedance is the organisation with the third highest time spent, tracking some way behind, with an average of 13 minutes spent on TikTok per day across all online adults.[40]

When looking at time spent by gender, a contrasting picture emerges. Online men spent an average of 1 hour 9 minutes (28%) on Alphabet-owned services and 49 minutes (20%) on Meta-owned services, while online women reversed this pattern, spending an average of 1 hour 13 minutes (27%) on Meta services and 57 minutes (21%) on Alphabet services. Despite these differences, both men and women spent 48% of their online day on a combination of these services.[41]

More than half the average daily time spent was on a diverse range of smaller services. UK online adults spent on average more than a minute on shopping services Vinted (1 minute 18 seconds), and WhaleCo-owned Temu (1 minute 10 seconds), with women driving these figures (Vinted: 2 minutes 12 seconds, WhaleCo: 1 minute 34 seconds). Providers of gaming services such as Scopely (1 minute 24 seconds), Playrix (1 minute 12 seconds), Activision Blizzard (1 minute 12 seconds) and Roblox (51 seconds) also saw high average time spent per day.[42]

[38] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[39] Barb, as-viewed data captures YouTube video consumption on TV sets and other devices via the home's WiFi network; any viewing outside the home or viewing via mobile networks is not included. Adults 18+, January-June 2024
[40] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[41] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (ORG) Alphabet, (ORG) Meta, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.
[42] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 11: Share of average time spent online per day by UK adult online population, by organisation (hours:minutes): May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, organisations, time on smartphones, tablets and computers only, May 2024, age 18+, UK internet users. Other includes organisations with average time of less than 2 minute. Audio play when Spotify app is closed is not measured, only foreground app use measured.*

# Use of internet services – top apps

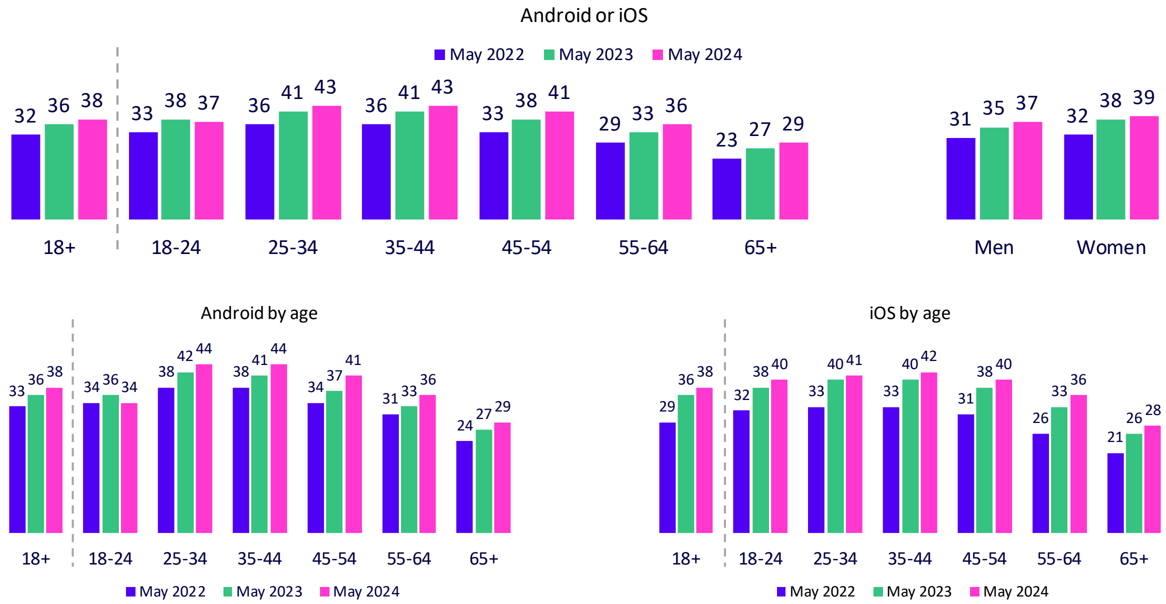
## The average number of smartphone apps visited by those aged 25+ increased in May 2024, while the number for 18-24s fell slightly

UK online adult smartphone users used on average 38 apps on their smartphones in May 2024, up from 36 in May 2023. All adult age groups saw an increase in the average number of apps used on smartphones between May 2023 and May 2024 except 18-24-year-olds, who used one fewer app than the previous year (see Figure 12), and 18-24-year-olds used the fewest apps of any age group except those aged 55+ – perhaps surprisingly, since the 18-24 age group spent the most time using smartphones.[43]

On average, UK online women used two apps more than men (39 vs 37). Adult android smartphone and iPhone users, on average, used the same number of apps (38). However, there was a difference when comparing age groups; 18-24-year-old iPhone users used on average 6 more apps (40) than 18-24s using Android (34). Older adults who used Android used slightly more apps than their iPhone counterparts.[44]

[43] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.
[44] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.

**Figure 12: Average number of apps visited on smartphones by UK internet users, by demographic and operating system: May each year 2022-2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, app, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos..*

## Google Maps joins Meta's WhatsApp and Facebook in the top three highest-reaching smartphone apps among UK adults

Use of WhatsApp app increased to 91% of UK online adult smartphone users in May 2024, up from 89% in May 2023. The Facebook app reached 82%, stable since the same period in 2023 (81%).[45]

Google Maps became the third-highest-reaching smartphone app, visited by 73% of adults, up from 70% the previous year and passing previously third-ranked app Facebook Messenger (now ranked 6th, and reaching 65% of UK adult smartphone users in May 2024, down from 72% in May 2023). Apple Maps was the second-highest-reaching smartphone navigation app (18%, 8.0m). Other navigation apps such as Waze (10%), Citymapper (5%) and What3words (5%) reached 10% or less of UK online smartphone-using adults in May 2024.[46]

TikTok remained in the top ten for 18-34-year-olds, but did not move up from its position as tenth most popular smartphone app, despite its reach increasing from 54% to 60% year on year. Apps such as Gmail (64%; +4pp year on year) and Amazon (62%; +2pp year on year) also increased their reach. Instagram leapfrogged both YouTube (80.6%) and Facebook (81.2%) to become the second-most-visited smartphone app among 18-34-year-olds, with reach up from 78.5% in May 2023 to 81.2% in May 2024.[47]

Although the top ten smartphone apps for men and women shared nine of the same apps, TikTok, which is the 10th highest-ranked app for women (46%), ranked 16th for men (33%) in May 2024.[48]

[45] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (APP) WhatsApp Messenger, (APP) Facebook, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[46] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[47] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[48] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 13: Top ten smartphone apps, UK adult reach, by age and gender: May 2024**

| | Age | | | | | | | | Gender | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 18+ | | 18-34 | | 35-54 | | 55+ | | Men 18+ | | Women 18+ | |
| Rank | App | Online reach (%) | App | Online reach (%) | App | Online reach (%) | App | Online reach (%) | App | Online reach (%) | App | Online reach (%) |
| 1 | WhatsApp | 91% | WhatsApp | 92% | WhatsApp | 90% | WhatsApp | 91% | WhatsApp | 88% | WhatsApp | 94% |
| 2 | Facebook | 82% | Instagram | 81% | Facebook | 85% | Facebook | 80% | Facebook | 77% | Facebook | 88% |
| 3 | Google Maps | 73% | Facebook | 81% | Google Maps | 74% | Google Maps | 70% | Google Maps | 73% | Instagram | 74% |
| 4 | YouTube | 69% | YouTube | 81% | YouTube | 72% | Facebook Messenger | 63% | YouTube | 72% | Google Maps | 73% |
| 5 | Instagram | 68% | Google Maps | 76% | Instagram | 71% | YouTube | 57% | Instagram | 60% | Facebook Messenger | 73% |
| 6 | Facebook Messenger | 65% | Gmail | 64% | Facebook Messenger | 69% | Amazon | 53% | Gmail | 58% | YouTube | 67% |
| 7 | Amazon | 61% | Facebook Messenger | 64% | Amazon | 67% | Instagram | 52% | Amazon | 58% | Amazon | 63% |
| 8 | Gmail | 56% | Spotify | 64% | Gmail | 55% | Gmail | 51% | Facebook Messenger | 57% | Gmail | 54% |
| 9 | Apple Music | 47% | Amazon | 62% | eBay | 51% | Google Play Store | 46% | Google Play Store | 47% | Apple Music | 50% |
| 10 | Spotify | 44% | TikTok | 60% | Apple Music | 48% | Apple Music | 44% | Apple Music | 44% | TikTok | 46% |

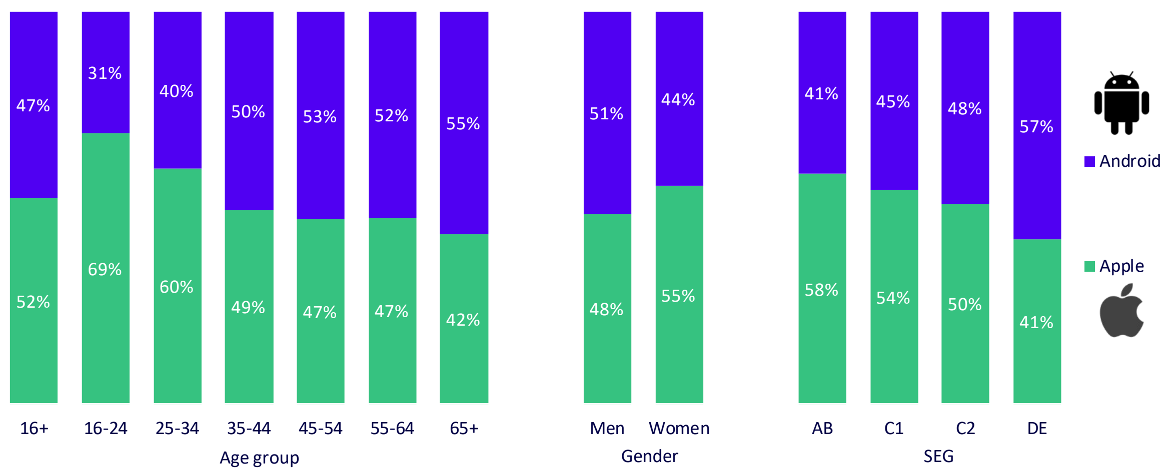
*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, smartphone app, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Each organisation has been assigned a colour.*

## Younger adults and more affluent socio-economic groups are more likely to use Apple smartphones

In 2024, 52% of UK smartphone users aged 16+ said they used an Apple iPhone as their main smartphone while 47% use an Android smartphone, broadly in line with 2023 (Apple: 51%, Android: 46%). Those aged 16-24 remain most likely to use an iPhone (69%) compared to an Android (31%), while those aged 65+ are the least likely to have an iPhone as their main smartphone (42%) and are most likely to have an Android (55%). Apple iPhone ownership skews female, at 55% compared to male (48%), while Android smartphone reverses this (men 51%, women 44%). Smartphone users in England (52%) and Scotland (50%) are more likely to use Apple than Android smartphones (England: 47%, Scotland: 48%), while in Wales (51%) and Northern Ireland (51%), users are more likely to use Android than Apple (Wales: 46%, Northern Ireland: 45%).[49]

There is also a correlation between socio-economic group and smartphone OS ownership, with Apple iPhones more likely to be owned by those in the AB socio-economic group (58%) and less likely by those in the lower socio-economic DE group (41%), the inverse being true for Android phones, with DEs (57%) the more likely and ABs (41%) less likely. This may be because of the higher average price point of Apple phones compared with the broader budget range available for Android handsets. However, it is important to note that older respondents are more likely to fall within the lower socio-economic DE group and that age may therefore also be an influential factor here.[50]

**Figure 14: UK smartphone users aged 16+, share of Apple vs Android operating system: 2024**



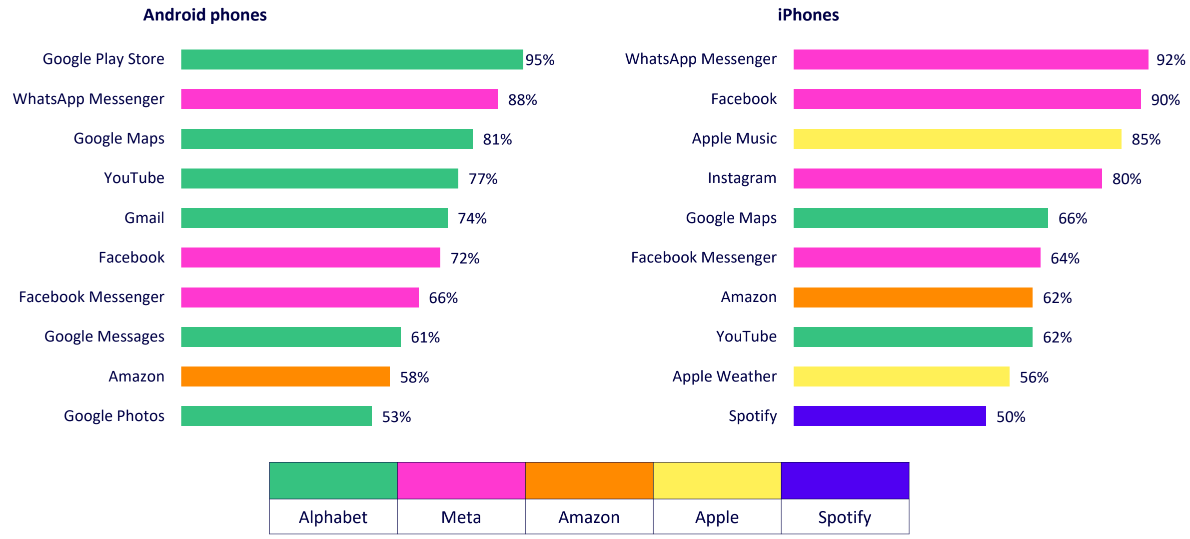

*Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QM9. Thinking of your main mobile phone does it use an Apple or an Android operating system? Base: Where have a smartphone. 'neither' or 'don't know' responses not shown on chart.*

[49] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QM9. Thinking of your main mobile phone, does it use an Apple or an Android operating system? Base: Where have a smartphone. 1% responded 'neither' and 1% 'don't know'.
[50] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QM9. Thinking of your main mobile phone, does it use an Apple or an Android operating system? Responses may not add up to 100% as respondents may have selected 'neither' or 'don't know'.

## Alphabet-owned apps account for six of the top ten Android smartphone apps while only two are in the top ten for Apple

Six of the top ten highest-reaching apps used on Android smartphones in May 2024 are owned by Alphabet, the owner of the Android operating system (in line with May 2023). On Apple iPhones two of the top ten are Alphabet-owned: Google Maps at 66% (compared with 81% on Android phones) and YouTube at 62% (compared with 77% on Android phones). Despite being the native app on iPhones, Apple Maps is still some way behind Google Maps on iPhones, used by 33% of iPhone users. Apple Music (85%), the native music app on Apple devices, is used by more iPhone users than Spotify (50%), while music apps in general rank far lower among Android users, with Spotify used by 35% and Apple Music by just 1%. Instagram is used by 80% of iPhone users (ranked 4th) but does not appear in Android users' top ten, reaching 52% and sitting in 12th position.[51]

**Figure 15: Top ten smartphone apps, Android phones vs iPhones, based on reach as a % of the total smartphone app universe: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, app only Android vs iOS, smartphone only, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Apple App Store is not measured by Ipsos iris, Google Play services app has not been included as this is a background service and library for use by mobile apps running on the device.*

[51] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## Four of the top five smartphone apps with the highest daily reach are owned by Meta

Meta smartphone apps comprised four of the five apps with highest daily reach among UK online adults in May 2024 (see Figure 16). The only non-Meta app was Gmail, which was used by an average of 32% of online adults per day in May 2024, compared with 28% in the same period in 2023, moving ahead of Facebook Messenger (May 2023: 39%, May 2024: 31%). While WhatsApp was the smartphone app with the highest daily reach among online 18-24-year-olds (3.1m, 63%), the second-highest-reaching app was Instagram, reaching 60% (3.0 million) followed by Snapchat (2.6m, 53%) in May 2024. The top five smartphone apps were similar among men and women; however, YouTube (men: 32% and ranked 5th, women: 26% and ranked 7th) displaced Facebook Messenger (men: 25% and ranked 7th, women: 36% and ranked 4th) in the ranking of apps visited on an average day.[52]

**Figure 16: UK online adults' top five highest-reaching smartphone apps, based on average daily reach: May 2024**

| Rank | Smartphone app | Parent company | Average daily UK online adult reach | | Daily online adult audience | | Year-on-year difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | May 2023 | May 2024 | May 2023 | May 2024 | |
| 1 | **WhatsApp** | Meta | 61% | 67% | 27.3m | 30.2m | +2.9m |
| 2 | **Facebook** | Meta | 50% | 57% | 22.5m | 25.7m | +3.2m |
| 3 | **Instagram** | Meta | 34% | 40% | 15.4m | 18.1m | +2.8m |
| 4 | **Gmail** | Alphabet | 28% | 32% | 12.6m | 14.4m | +1.9m |
| 5 | **Facebook Messenger** | Meta | 39% | 31% | 17.7m | 13.8m | -3.9m |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, top smartphone apps by average daily reach, May 2023/May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Due to rounding, difference may appear to be 0.1 million off. Green boxes indicate year-on-year increase, red boxes decrease.*

[52] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

# 4. Online sectors

## Introduction

This chapter explores internet users' use of online services in selected sectors: search engines, generative artificial intelligence (AI), social media, messaging and calling, dating, pornographic content services, news, gaming, health and wellbeing, retail and cloud storage services.

### Key metrics

**Figure 17: Top-reaching online services by sector among UK online adults in May each year: 2022-2024**

| | Sector | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Search | Google search **86%** | Google search **86%** | Google search **83%** |
| | Generative AI | **N/A** | * | ChatGPT **9%** |
| | Social media | Facebook / Messenger **94%** | Facebook / Messenger **92%** | YouTube **94%** |
| | Messaging and calling | WhatsApp **84%** | WhatsApp **85%** | WhatsApp **87%** |
| | Dating | Tinder **5%** | Tinder **5%** | Tinder **4%** |
| | Services for pornographic content | PornHub **17%** | PornHub **18%** | PornHub **18%** |
| | News | BBC **75%** | BBC **70%** | BBC **75%** |
| | Health and wellbeing | NHS **60%** | NHS **51%** | NHS **56%** |
| | Games apps | Candy Crush Saga **4%** | Candy Crush Saga **5%** | Candy Crush Saga **5%** |
| | Retail | Amazon **88%** | Amazon **87%** | Amazon **88%** |
| | Cloud storage (age 16+) | * | * | Google Drive (June) **39%** |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: BBC excludes reach via Apple News. Note: *comparable data unavailable. N/A – ChatGPT launched in November 2022 therefore no data for May 2022. / Cloud storage: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 1: Which, if any, of the following statements BEST describes when you last used each of the listed cloud storage services? Those who selected in the past month. Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2100).*

# Search

This section explores search services, specifically general search services – defined as services which aim to index the whole of the open internet. There are two main types of search service:

- General search services, which enable users to search by inputting search queries and returning results. These services rely solely on their own indexing, and work by using automated processes designed to find and organise content (known as crawling and indexing). Algorithms are then used to rank the content based on relevance to the search query and other factors (ranking). 'Downstream' general search services also provide access to content from across the web, but they obtain their search results from general search services.[53]

- Vertical search services, which enable users to search for specific topics, or products or services offered by third-party providers; for example, a search engine that only indexes academic articles from specific websites or databases.

Most search services are free to use. In almost all cases, search services make nearly all their revenue from advertising via paid search, in which advertisers pay for their adverts to feature more prominently in the results of searches that contain relevant keywords or phrases. Typically, this is done through pay-per-click advertising, where advertisers pay when a user clicks one of their ads. The pricing for key search terms is usually determined by their relevance to the searched terms and queries, and an auction among advertisers for the respective keywords. Paid search advertising revenue increased by 12% to £14.7bn in 2023 in the UK, according to IAB UK, and has more than doubled in size in the last five years (2018: £6.8 bn). [54]

## Nine in ten UK online adults visited at least one of the top ten highest-reaching search engines in May 2024

Google[55] remains the highest-reaching search engine, reaching 83% of UK online adults in May 2024, a 3 percentage point (pp) year-on-year decrease (May 2023: 86%). Just under half (49%) of UK online adults visited Google search daily in May 2024. With 39% reach, Bing (owned by Microsoft) was the only other search engine that reached more than 3% of UK online adults. Four search engines had over a million UK adult visitors in May 2024.[56]

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[53] For more information, see Ofcom's illegal harms consultation document: Protecting people from illegal harms online: volume 1.

[54] Figure includes revenue from search engines as well as services that operate a paid search advertising model, for example Amazon and Pinterest. IAB UK, A guide to the State of Search, March 2021.

[55] Does not include Google search services - Maps, Shopping, Play or News.

[56] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 18: UK online adult reach of top ten search engines and average time spent by visitors: May 2024**

| KEY: | | General search service | | Downstream general search service |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| Rank | Search engine | Headquarters | Total adult reach in May 2022 | Total adult reach in May 2023 | Total adult reach in May 2024 | Year-on-year change | Online adult reach in May 2024 | Average time spent in May 2024 per visitor (hours:mins) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Google Search** | US | 41.1m | 41.3m | 39.6m | -1.8m | 83% | 01:29 |
| 2 | **Bing** | US | 13.9m | 21.9m | 18.5m | -3.4m | 39% | 00:38 |
| 3 | **Yahoo!** | US | 1.5m | 1.6m | 1.6m | -24k | 3% | 00:07 |
| 4 | **DuckDuckGo** | US | 1.8m | 1.3m | 1.5m | +202k | 3% | 00:22 |
| 5 | **Yandex** | Russia | 1.3m | 379k | 762k | +383k | 2% | 00:01 |
| 6 | **Ecosia** | Germany | 814k | 724k | 637k | -87k | 1% | 02:42 |
| 7 | **Ask.com** | US | 498k | 574k | 410k | -163k | 1% | 00:07 |
| 8 | **Info.co.uk** | US | 1.9m | 539k | 263k | -275k | 1% | 00:01 |
| 9 | **Tineye** | Canada | 177k | 217k | 195k | -22k | <1% | 00:01 |
| 10 | **Baidu** | China | 175k | 82k | 168k | +87k | <1% | 00:03 |

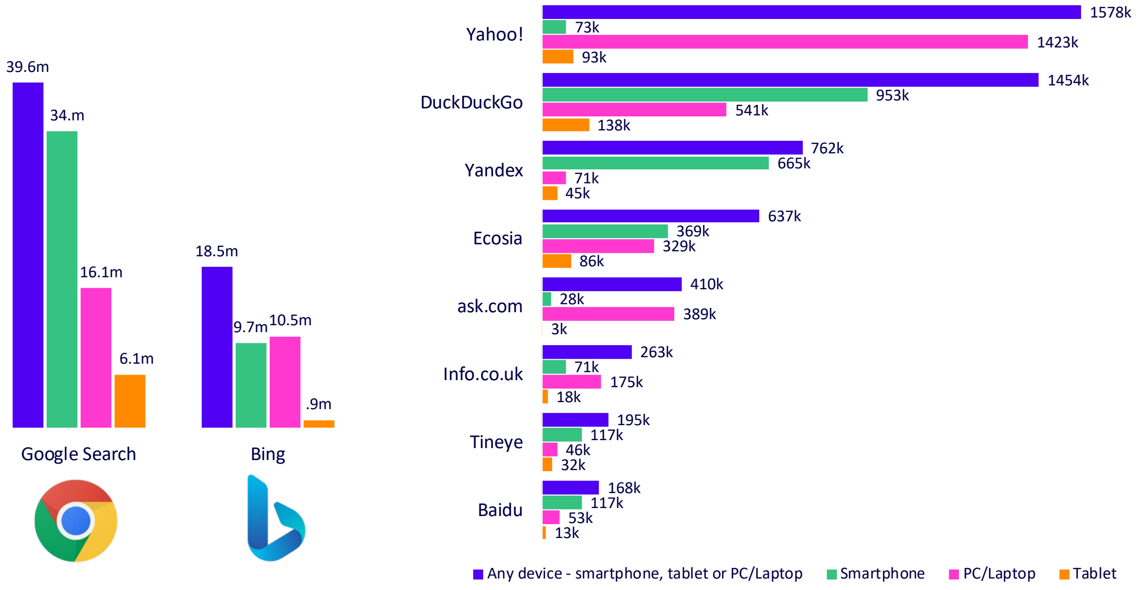
*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Google Search does not include Google search services within Maps, Shopping, Play or News. Custom defined list by Ofcom. Due to the low reach of some of these services they may be more prone to year-on-year fluctuations. Green boxes indicate year-on-year increase, red boxes decrease.*

## Bing, Yahoo, ask.com and info.co.uk have a higher adult audience reach on computers compared to their mobile device audience

Four of the top ten search engines had a higher adult audience reach on computers, compared to their smartphone or tablet audience, in May 2024 (see Figure 19). Over 90% of Yahoo!'s and ask.com's adult audience visited the search engines via a computer, while Bing and Info.co.uk reached 57% and 66% respectively. Google's reach is likely particularly high on smartphones as it is the default search engine on Android devices, and also on Apple devices through the Safari browser. Similarly, Bing's reach is probably relatively high on computers as it is the default search engine for both Microsoft Edge and Internet Explorer browsers.[57]

[57] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 19: UK adult reach of the top ten highest-reaching search engines, by device: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Google Search does not include Google search services - Maps, Shopping, Play or News. Custom defined list by Ofcom.*

## Bing's reach increased when it introduced an AI tool into its service, but has since fallen back

In February 2023, Microsoft launched a version of its Bing search service and Edge web browser powered by OpenAI's GPT-4 technology, called Bing Chat.[58] Following this release, the number of UK online adults visiting Bing.com peaked in April 2023, at 46% (22.2m), a 60% increase on the figure six months earlier (29% UK online adults, 13.9m in October 2022).[59] But because Bing Chat was integrated within Bing's search engine, it is likely that not all users were aware that they were using generative AI. Since April 2023 Bing's adult reach has been slowly declining, stabilising in April 2024, but remains higher than before the introduction of generative AI.[60] In September 2023 Microsoft began rolling out its new AI tool, Copilot, replacing Bing Chat by November 2023.[61] Copilot is available to use as a standalone website and app but is also available within the bing.com site, therefore some visitors to Bing.com may be using Copilot or Bing's search engine (for more on Copilot see Generative AI section). Older UK online adults are more likely than younger adults to visit Bing (UK online 25-34-year-olds: 36% (3.1m) vs over-64s: 43% (3.9m) in May 2024).[62]

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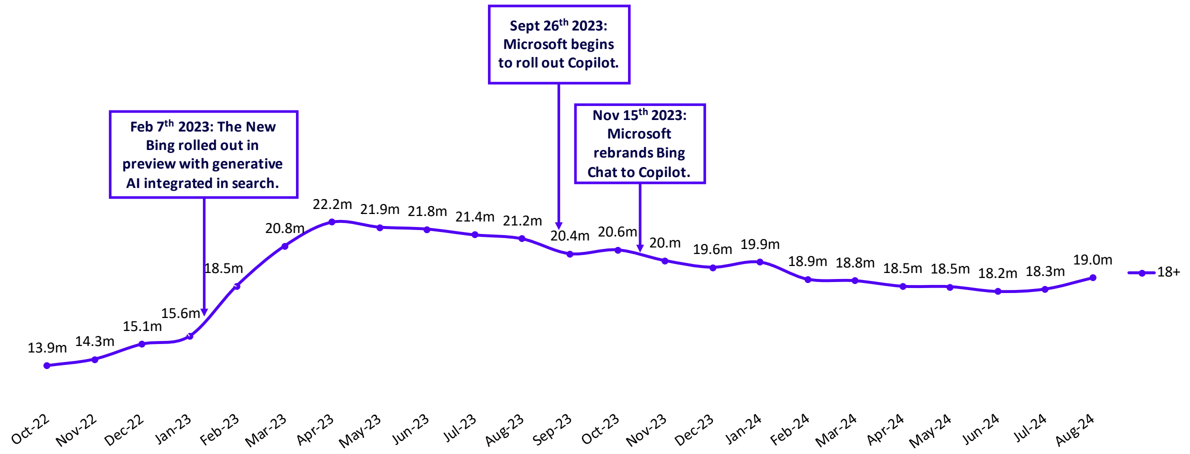
[58] Microsoft, Reinventing search with a new AI-powered Microsoft Bing and Edge, 7 February 2023.
[59] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, October 2022 and April 2023, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[60] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, bing.com, monthly 2022-2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[61] Microsoft, Announcing Microsoft Copilot, your everyday AI companion, 21 September 2023.
[62] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, bing.com, monthly 2022-2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 20: Monthly UK adult reach of Bing.com website: October 2022 – August 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, October 2022 – August 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.*

# Generative artificial intelligence

Generative artificial intelligence (generative AI) broadly refers to algorithms that can create content in response to a prompt. The new content can include text, images, audio, video or code. The content created is based on the content datasets on which the algorithm model was trained.

The monetisation of generative AI is at an early stage, currently comprising a variety of business models (ad-funded, subscription, payments and licensing) and is likely to remain diverse in the medium term.

Ofcom commissioned a survey to understand UK internet users' use of generative AI. This section draws on research conducted in June 2024 among UK online people aged 16+ and British online children aged 8-15. The survey asked respondents about their use of 16 generative AI tools.[63]

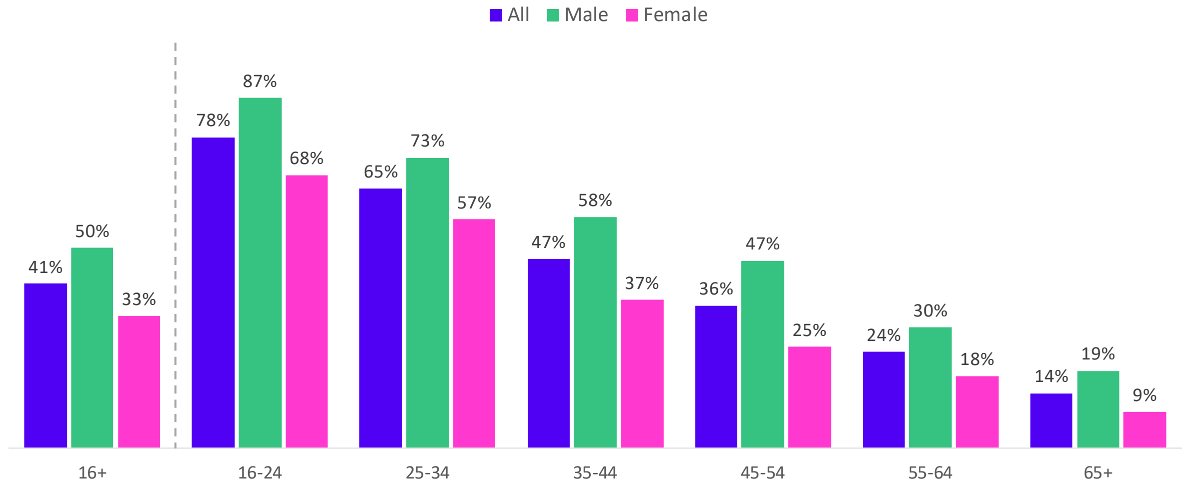
## Half of UK online males aged 16+ have used a generative AI tool in the past year, compared to a third of females

Ofcom research found that 41% of UK internet users aged 16+ said they had used a generative AI tool in the past year, with 18% of those aged 16+ saying they had used a generative AI tool in the past month. Internet users aged 16-24 were the most likely to say they had used a generative AI tool in the past year (78%) compared to all other age groups (see Figure 21). There is a clear difference in gender regarding generative AI use. UK online males aged 16+ were more likely than females to have used a generative AI tool in the past year (50% vs 33%). Males in every age category were more likely to have used a generative AI tool, with the largest difference appearing among 45-54-year-olds (22 percentage points (pp)), closely followed by 35-44s (21pp) and 16-24s (19pp).[64]

[63] Generative AI tools in survey: ChatGPT; ChatGPT Plugin; My AI on Snapchat, Google Gemini, Microsoft CoPilot, DALL-E, Midjourney, Character.AI, Scribe, AlphaCode, Quillbot, Synthesia, Claude from Anthropic, Perplexity, Stability's AI tools and Grok on X.

[64] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.

**Figure 21: UK internet users aged 16+ who have used a generative AI tool in the past year, by age and gender: June 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024. Question 1: When, if ever, did you last use each of the following GenAI tools? Net results Generative AI tools include: ChatGPT; ChatGPT Plugin; My AI on Snapchat, Google Gemini, Microsoft CoPilot, DALL-E, Midjourney, Character.AI, Scribe, AlphaCode, Quillbot, Synthesia, Claude from Anthropic, Perplexity, Stability's AI tools and Grok on X. Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2520).*

## ChatGPT is the most popular generative AI among adults

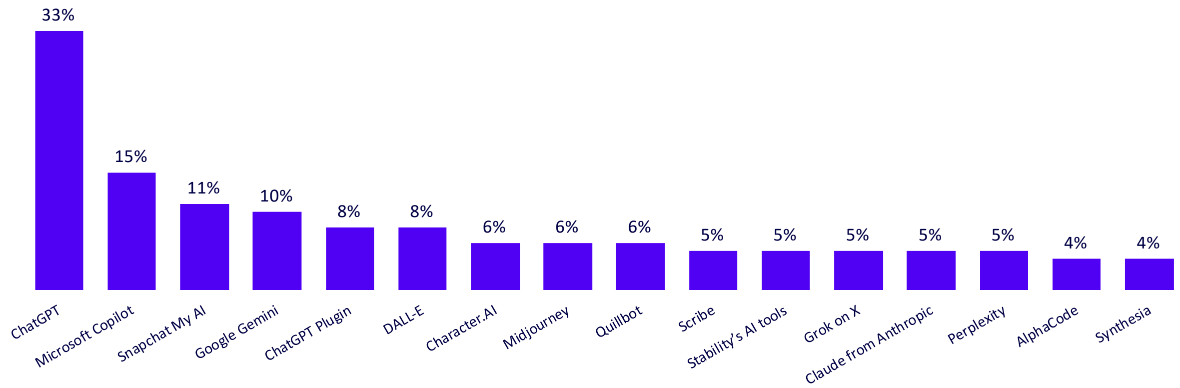
Ofcom's June survey provides a snapshot of people's reported generative AI use. We also looked at Ipsos iris data to track trends in adults' actual use, as collected by passive monitoring of smartphones, tablets and computers used by the Ipsos iris panel.[65] Ofcom's survey found that 33% of UK online aged 16+ said that they had used ChatGPT in the past year, with a long tail of other generative AI tools reaching 15% or less.[66] Ipsos iris data found that 9% (4.2m) UK online adults aged 18+ visited ChatGPT in May 2024,[67] increasing to 11% (5.0m) in August 2024. ChatGPT's adult reach was highest among UK online 18-24-year-olds (27%, 1.4m) in May 2024. However, while reach to those aged 25+ remained relatively stable in the following two months, reach to 18-24-year-olds declined by 16% (-226k) – see Figure 23 below.[68] This may be partly because this time period marked the end of the academic year, with this age group potentially having less need to find information or content relating to their education (see below on activities undertaken on generative AI tools). The notable increase in reach, particularly to 25-34 year olds, in August 2024 compared to previous months, may partially be attributed to the publicity generated by OpenAI's announcement on 25 July of its SearchGPT Prototype – a search designed to combine OpenAI's AI models with information from the web.[69] In terms of gender, 62% (2.6m) of ChatGPT adult visitors in May 2024 were men,

[65] For more on Ipsos iris see Methodology.
[66] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[67] In May 2024 ChatGPT updated its domain name from chatgpt.openai.com to chatgpt.com, therefore unlike preceding months, when iris reported on OpenAI website which included ChatGPT, we can now report on the ChatGPT website and app separately from the OpenAI website (from May 2024).
[68] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, ChatGPT, May 2024, July 2024 and August 2024, age 18+, UK internet users.
[69] OpenAI, SearchGPT prototype, 25 July 2024.

while 38% (1.6m) were women.[70] Microsoft Copilot and Snapchat My AI were the second- and third-highest-reaching generative AI tools.[71]

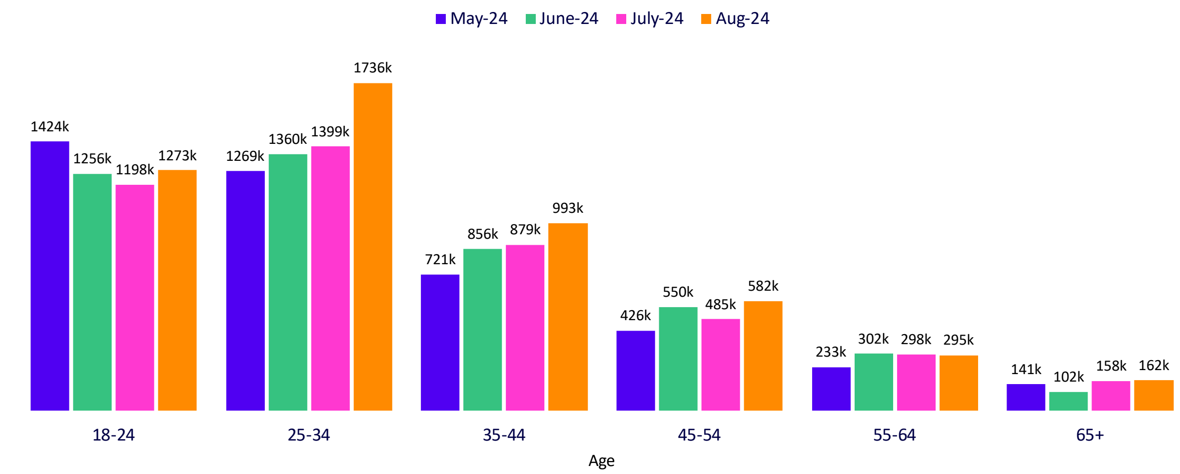
In December 2023, Google launched its new AI assistant, Google Gemini, available for use by internet users with a Google account. By June 2024, Ofcom research found it was the fourth-highest-reaching generative AI among internet users aged 16+ (10%). Ipsos iris found that 548k (1%) UK online adults visited the Google Gemini website in May 2024. However, it should be noted that access to Gemini is also available through the Google app, which offers visitors a toggle option, so the app can be used for Google Search or Google Gemini.[72]

### Figure 22: Reported use of generative AI tool in the past year, UK internet users aged 16+




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024. Question 1: When, if ever, did you last use each of the following GenAI tools? Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2520).*

### Figure 23: Monthly reach of ChatGPT, by age: May - August 2024




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, ChatGPT, May – August 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.*

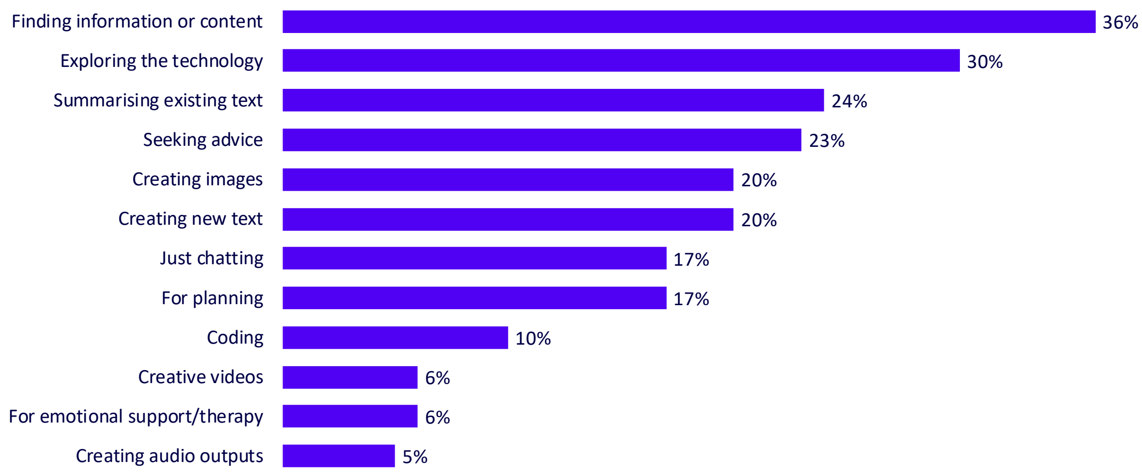
[70] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, ChatGPT, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[71] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[72] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## Although the most popular reason for using a generative AI tool is to find information or content, only a small proportion of users trust it to provide reliable information

Considering all services, almost half of UK internet users aged 16+ said they had used a generative AI tool in the past 12 months 'for fun' (48%), while 43% said they had used one for work and 23% for study. The most popular activity performed using a generative AI tool in the past year among UK internet users aged 16+ was to find information or content; 36% reporting this as a reason. Male internet users aged 16+ were more likely than females in the same age group to use a generative AI tool to find information or content (39% vs 32%), for coding (15% vs 4%), to create images (24% vs 13%) and to explore the technology (36% vs 22%).[73]

Almost one in five (18%) UK generative AI users aged 16+ said they were confident that the information provided by generative AI was reliable, with the majority of users (61%) neutral in their confidence in trusting the information provided.[74] Users aged 16-24 (21%) and 25-34 (23%) were more likely to be confident that the information provided was reliable, compared to older adults aged 45-54 (11%) and 55+ (12%). Male users aged 16-24 were more likely than females in the same age group to say the information was reliable (28% vs 14%).[75]

**Figure 24: Reasons for using a generative AI tool in the past year, UK internet users aged 16+**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024 Question 2: You said you have used a GenAI tool in the past year. Which, if any, of the following are reasons you have used a GenAI tool during this time? (Please select all that apply). Base: UK internet users age: 16+ who have used GenAI in the past 12 months (1010).*

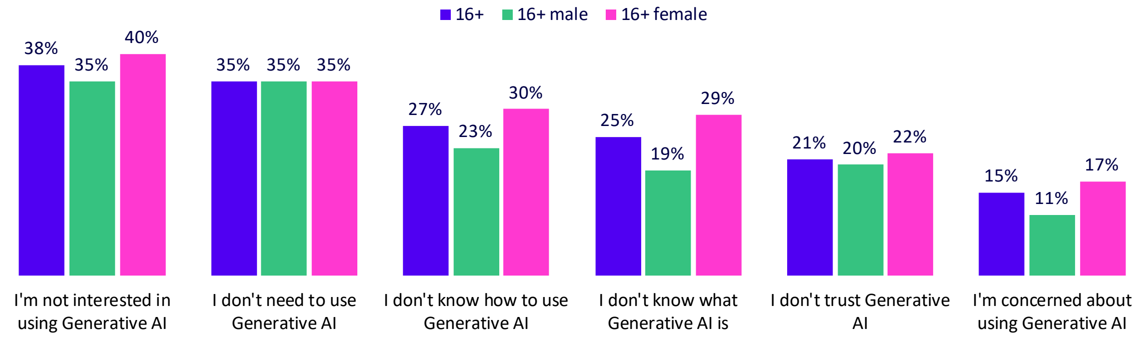
[73] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[74] Reliability of generative AI tools are subjective and some tools may be considered more reliable than others. The answer to this question is based on generative AI perception in general.
[75] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK. Base: those who had used generative AI in the past year.

## Half of UK internet users aged 16+ have not used a generative AI tool[76]

Female internet users are more likely than males to have never used a generative AI tool (57% vs 42%). The most common reasons given for not having used a generative AI tool, by both males and females, was that they were 'not interested in using it' (38%) and/or that they 'did not feel the need to' (35%). There were some differences between genders: thirty per cent of female users said they did not know how to use a generative AI tool, compared to 23% of male users. Seventeen per cent of female users said they had concerns about using generative AI, compared to 11% of males, which suggests that they may be less confident about using generative AI and so choose not to do so. Females were also more likely to say they did not know what generative AI was (29% vs 19%). In particular, older females were more likely than their male counterparts to say they were concerned about generative AI (65+: 17% vs 10%) or did not know about it (35-44: 25% vs 10% and 45-54: 29% vs 15%).[77]

Among internet users aged 16+ there were concerns about the future impact of generative AI on society. Three in five (59%) UK internet users aged 16+ said they were worried; female users were more likely to say this (64%) than males (55%). Forty-six per cent of internet users in Britain aged 8-15 said they were worried about the future impact of generative AI on people.[78]

**Figure 25: Reasons for not using a generative AI tool, by UK non-users of generative AI aged 16+**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024. Question 5: You said you have never previously used a GenAI tool, or are unsure. Which, if any, of the following are reasons why you have never used a GenAI tool? (Please select all that apply.) Base: UK internet users age: 16+ who have not used GenAI or don't know if they have (1432).*

## More than half of online children in Britain aged 8–15 said they had used a generative AI tool in the past year

Fifty-four per cent of online children in Britain aged 8-15 had used a generative AI tool in the past year and 29% of children said they had used one in the past month. Teens aged 13-15 were more likely to have used generative AI in the past year than children aged 8-12 (66% vs 46%). As with users aged 16+, ChatGPT was the most popular generative AI tool among this age group; it had been used by 37% of online 8-15-year-olds in the past year. The reach of all 16 of the generative AI tools we

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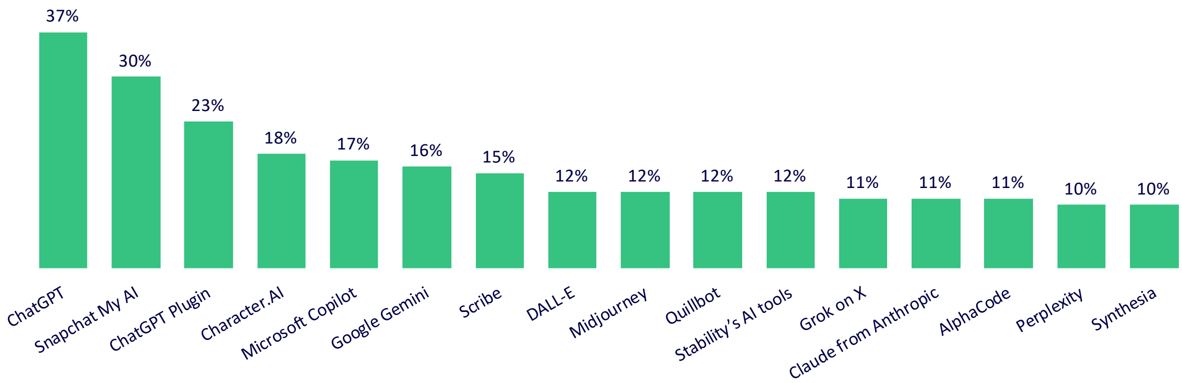
[76] When asked about their use of a range of generative AI tools participants were able to select 'don't know' which is why the percentages for use of generative AI tools may not add to 100%.
[77] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[78] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 16+, UK and age: 8-15, GB.

surveyed was higher to children in Britain than to UK people aged 16+ (see Figure 22 and 26). Like people aged 16+, boys were more likely than girls to have used ChatGPT (42% vs 32%), although the gender gap here is smaller than between adults. Teenagers aged 13-15 were more likely than those aged 8-12 to have used ChatGPT in the past year (46% vs 32%).[79]

Unlike the position among UK internet users aged 16+, Snapchat My AI was the second-highest-reaching generative AI tool among online children in Britain (30%), with its reach not far behind ChatGPT (37). Online teenagers aged 13-15 were more likely than children aged 8-12 to have used Snapchat My AI in the past year (44% vs 21%).[80] Snapchat is already a popular social media platform among children, used by 30% of 8-11 year olds and 59% of 12-15 year olds,[81] so this is likely to have reduced the friction to using the My AI service, as children are already within the Snapchat ecosystem. In the 2023 Online Nation publication we reported that Snapchat My AI was the most widely-used generative AI tool, used by 51% of 7-17-year-olds by June 2023,[82] following its release in April 2023. This suggests that the initial surge of interest in My AI has not been sustained over the past year, leading to a reduced number of child users, although it is still one of the highest-reaching generative AI tools.[83]

**Figure 26: Use of generative AI tools in the past year, by online children aged 8-15 in Britain**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024. Question 1: When did you last use each of the following GenAI tools? Base: GB internet users age: 8-15 (1051).*

## Over half of 8-15-year-olds in Britain who use generative AI said they used it to help with schoolwork

Sixty-three per cent of online children in Britain aged 8-15 said they had used a generative AI tool in the past year 'for fun' and over half (53%) had used AI to help with schoolwork. Older children aged 13-15 were more likely than the 8-12s to have used a generative AI tool to help with schoolwork (59% vs 48%), while children aged 8-12 were more likely than those aged 13-15 to have used it for fun (67% vs 58%). 'Finding information or content' was also a popular use case (31%) among online children in Britain aged 8-15. 'Creating images' was the second most popular activity, with 30% of children citing this, while it was the fifth most popular activity among online users aged 16+. As in the 16+ age group, boys were more likely than girls to have used a generative AI tool in the past year

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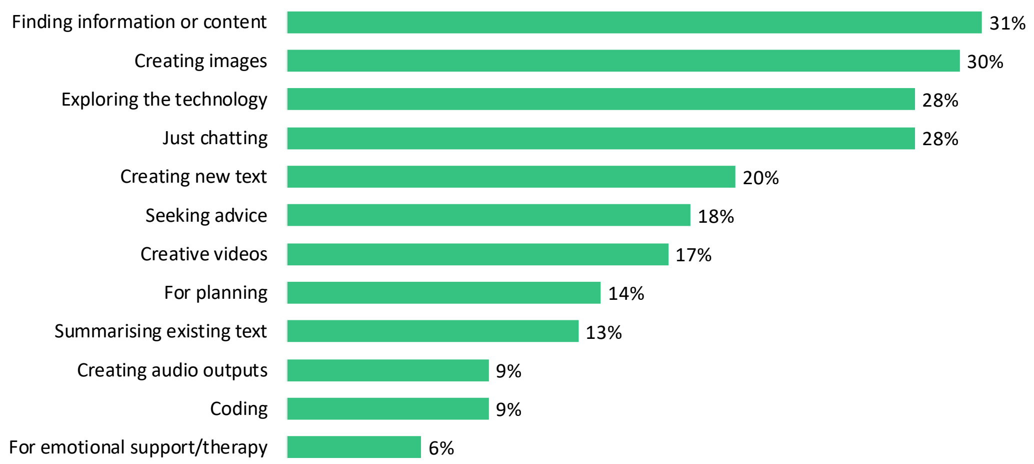
[79] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age 8-15, GB.
[80] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age 8-15, GB.
[81] Ofcom Parents' and Children's Online Behaviours and Attitudes survey, 2023.
[82] CHILDWISE summer omnibus 2023. Services used in the past six months: Fieldwork conducted June-July 2023.
[83] Note: data is from a survey with different questions and age ranges and therefore not directly comparable.

to explore the technology (33% vs 22%) or to create new text/words (for example, writing a poem) (23% vs 16%).[84]

Unlike UK internet users aged 16+, children had higher levels of trust; a third (34%) of generative AI users in Britain aged 8-15 said they trusted the information from these tools to be reliable. Nevertheless, the majority expressed a 'neutral' confidence level (48%). Boys were more likely than girls to say they trusted the information (40% vs 28%), particularly boys aged 8-12 in comparison to girls in the same age group (40% vs 24%).[85]

**Figure 27: Reasons for using a generative AI tool in the past year, internet users in Great Britian aged 8-15: 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024. Question 2: You said you have used a GenAI tool this year. Why did you use the GenAI tool(s)? Base: GB internet users age: 8-15 who have used GenAI in the past 12 months (559).*

## Young children who do not use generative AI are most likely to say they do not know what it is, while teenagers are most likely to say they are not interested

A third (32%) of internet users aged 8-15 said they had not used a generative AI tool. Among those aged 8-15 who had not used a generative AI tool, the younger children (aged 8-12) were less likely to know what generative AI was, compared to children aged 13-15 (29% vs 16%). But the older children (aged 13-15) were more likely than the 8-12s to say that they were not interested in using generative AI (38% vs 12%), that they did not need to use it currently (30% vs 19%), and that they did not trust it (11% vs 4%). Unlike those aged 16+, trust and concerns about generative AI were less of a factor in children's decision not to use generative AI (6% cited 'I don't trust generative AI', 2% were concerned about using it). There were some gender differences: online girls aged 8-15 were less likely to know what generative AI was, compared to boys in the same age group (31% vs 19%). Specifically, girls aged 8-12 were less likely than boys in the same age group to know what generative AI was (38% vs 19%). Interestingly, boys aged 13-15 who did not use generative AI were less interested in using it than girls in the same age group (47% vs 31%).[86]

[84] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age 8-15, GB.
[85] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 8-15, GB. Base: those who had used generative AI in the past year.
[86] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024, age: 8-15, GB.

# Social media

Social media services connect users and enable them to build communities around common interests or connections, allowing them to create and share a wide range of content. Typically, users can find, follow and communicate with each other through direct messaging, posting or sharing content, as well as commenting and reacting to content. Some social media services are also video-sharing services where users can upload and share videos with the public, and some also support livestreaming.

Social media is monetised primarily through advertising, often targeted based on users' online behaviour and demographic information. According to IAB UK in 2023, social display advertising amounted to £7.5bn, over two and a half times more than five years ago, and representing a 16% year-on-year increase following a plateau in 2021-2022. However, as the online advertising market matures, social media companies are diversifying with paid-for revenue streams. Many social media companies have introduced a premium subscription model option offering enhanced services.

## Reddit has become the fastest-growing large social media platform in the UK, reaching over half of UK online adults by June 2024

Launched in 2005, Reddit is a discussion forum on which users can create posts in topic-based communities, known as subreddits, and interact in comment threads. Within the top ten highest-reaching social media services, Reddit had the largest year-on-year increase in adult reach. Forty-eight per cent (22.9m) of UK online adults visited Reddit in May 2024, an increase of 47% (+7.3 million) year on year (May 2023: 33%, 15.6m). This increase moved Reddit up the social media ranking by two positions to become the fifth-highest-reaching social media service, overtaking LinkedIn and X (see Figure 28).[87]

Various factors may have contributed to Reddit's growth in adult audience over the past year. For example, in July 2023, Reddit began charging for its Application Programming Interface (API) access. So developers who had created their own apps, populated with Reddit information using the API, such as subreddit information, posts, comments, and user profiles, could no longer do this for free.[88] This resulted in some of these third-party apps becoming unavailable, potentially forcing their users to switch to the Reddit site in order to continue accessing Reddit.

By the end of 2023 Reddit reached 39% (18.3m) of UK online adults, up by 2.7 million since May that year. It increased further in March 2024, with an additional 3.2 million UK adult visitors compared to the previous month (total UK adults: 44%, 20.8m).[89] This growth may partially be due to the publicity around Reddit's £5.0bn IPO; it began trading on the New York Stock Exchange on 21 March 2024.[90] By June 2024 Reddit reached over half (52%, 24.6m) of UK online adults.[91]

[87] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Reddit, May 2023 and May2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[88] Reddit blog, Key Facts to Understanding Reddit's Recent API Updates, 15 June 2023.
[89] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Reddit, December 2023 and March 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[90] Reddit, Inc. SEC filing on 22 February 2024.
[91] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Reddit, June 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

Quora can be considered Reddit's nearest rival in terms of its functional similarity as a knowledge-sharing platform where users ask, answer, and discuss a wide range of questions. Quora has also grown steadily over the past year, reaching 31% (14.6m) of online adults by May 2024, a year-on-year increase in adult reach of 24% (+2.9m) (May 2023: 25%, 11.8m), and now ranking in 8th place, having overtaken Pinterest. [92]

Reddit's adult gender composition is fairly evenly split; its UK adult audience comprised 52% men and 48% women in May 2024. However, there is a skew towards men in total time spent: 61% of the total UK adult time spent on Reddit in May 2024 was by men and 39% by women. Although Quora's gender composition was also evenly split (men 48% vs women 52%), 70% of the total time spent by UK adults on Quora was by men (30% women). Within the top ten high-reaching social media services, Quora had the largest share of total time spent by men - see Figure 31.[93]

[92] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Quora, May 2024 and May 2023, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[93] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Reddit and (BG) Quora, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 28: UK online adult reach of top ten social media sites/apps, and time spent on services: May 2022, 2023 and 2024**

| May 2024 reach rank | Social media | UK total adult reach in month | | | | UK online adult reach | Average daily UK adult reach in month | | | Average time spent per day by UK adult visitor | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | May 2023 vs May 2024 Year-on-year change | May 2024 | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 |
| 1 | YouTube | 44.0m | 43.6m | 44.5m | +2% | 94% | 20.1m | 20.4m | 25.4m | * | * | 47 minutes |
| 2 | Facebook / Messenger | 45.0m | 43.9m | 43.1m | -2% | 91% | 32.1m | 29.5m | 30.5m | * | 28 minutes | 39 minutes |
| 3 | Instagram | 34.2m | 34.7m | 36.1m | +4% | 76% | 15.6m | 16.6m | 19.6m | 10 minutes | 12 minutes | 17 minutes |
| 4 | TikTok | 16.6m | 21.2m | 24.0m | +13% | 51% | 5.4m | 6.7m | 7.6m | 27 minutes | 26 minutes | 27 minutes |
| 5 | Reddit | 14.9m | 15.6m | 22.9m | +47% | 48% | 3.3m | 3.6m | 4.9m | 5 minutes | 5 minutes | 4 minutes |
| 6 | X | 26.8m | 24.0m | 22.1m | -8% | 47% | 10.3m | 9.5m | 8.6m | * | 10 minutes | 9 minutes |
| 7 | LinkedIn | 18.6m | 18.9m | 18.3m | -3% | 39% | 4.7m | 5.3m | 4.3m | 2 minutes | 2 minutes | 2 minutes |
| 8 | Quora | 11.2m | 11.8m | 14.6m | +24% | 31% | 1.2m | 1.5m | 1.6m | 1 minute | 1 minute | < 1 minute |
| 9 | Pinterest | 14.0m | 12.5m | 13.2m | +6% | 28% | 2.1m | 1.9m | 2.1m | 1 minute | 1 minute | 1 minute |
| 10 | Snapchat | 9.8m | 10.3m | 10.1m | +1% | 21% | 5.2m | 5.8m | 6.1m | 22 minutes | 29 minutes | 31 minutes |

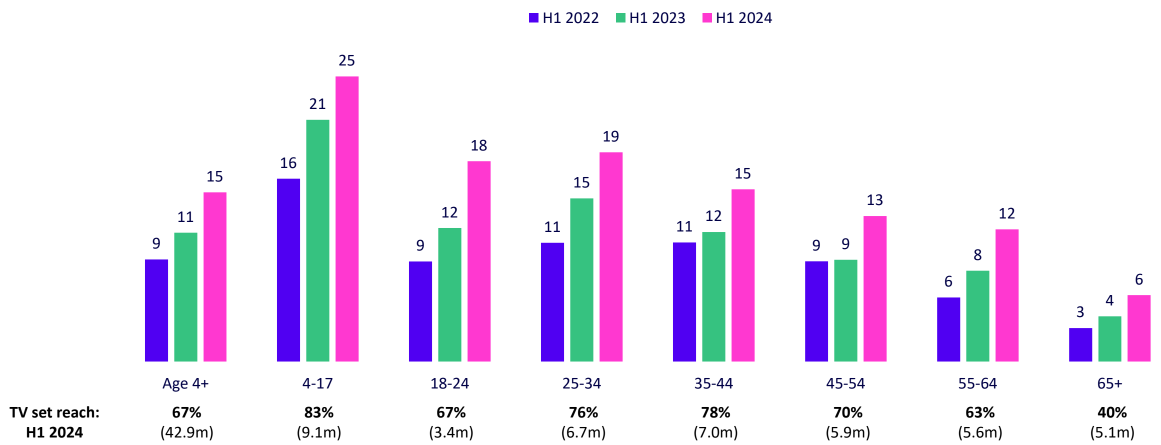
*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: Social Media and Online Forums, May 2022/2023/2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: TV set and smart display use not included. Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month divided by number of days in month. *Due to methodology enhancement YouTube time-spent data cannot be compared to previous years. Improvements to synthetic app data to more closely align with the minutes metric with the weighted panel data resulted in Facebook apps and Twitter (now X) data in 2022 to not be comparable to 2023 onwards. Green boxes indicate year-on-year increase, red boxes decrease.*

## The TV screen is increasingly important for YouTube, with growth largely driven by children and young adults

According to Ipsos iris, YouTube remains the highest-reaching social media service among UK online adults using smartphones, tablets or computers, in-or out-of-home, with more than nine in ten (94%, 44.5m) visiting it in May 2024, and over half (54%, 25.4m) of online adults visiting YouTube daily in May 2024, an 11pp increase (43%, 20.4m) since May 2023. On average, YouTube adult visitors spent 47 minutes per day across smartphones, tablets or computers on the service in-or out-of-home in May 2024, with an average of 21 videos viewed. More than half this time (54%, or 26 minutes per day), was spent on the service on smartphones, with the remainder split evenly between tablets and computers (11 minutes (23%) on each device).[94]

Data from Barb found that total in-home video viewing on YouTube over a broadband connection, which includes use on the TV set, grew from an average of 35 minutes per individual aged 4+ per day in the first half of 2023 to 38 minutes in the first half of 2024, up by 9%. Over this period the average time spent viewing YouTube on a TV set increased by 31%, from 11 minutes in H1 2023 to 15 minutes per day in H1 2024. Children and young adults appear to be driving the growth on TV set viewing, with children aged 4-17 viewing 25 mins in H1 2024, up by 18% since H1 2023, and 18-24-year-olds spending 18 mins in H1 2024, up by 50% since H1 2023.[95]

**Figure 29: Average time spent per day viewing YouTube at home on a TV set, by age: 2022-2024 (minutes)**




*Source: Barb as viewed on TV sets only, individuals 4+*

## TikTok and Snapchat visitors aged 18-24 spend about an hour per day on each service

There are clear demographic differences in the amount of time internet users spend on some social media services. For YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat, the time spent by users decreases with age – see Figure 30 below. Snapchat is largely used by young people: among online 18-24-year-olds in the UK it was the sixth-highest-reaching social media service, reaching 69% (3.7m) in May

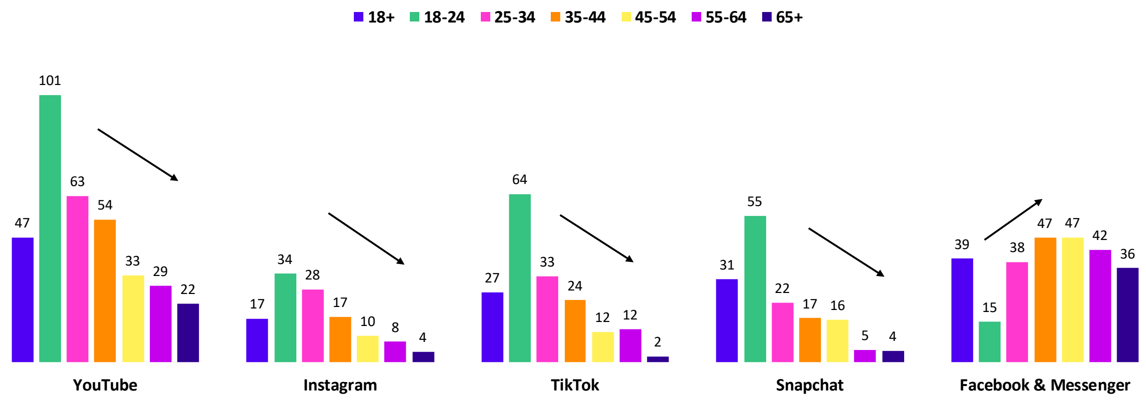
[94] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) YouTube, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month, divided by number of days in month.
[95] Barb as-viewed data captures YouTube video consumption on TV sets and on other devices via the home's WiFi network; any viewing outside the home or viewing via mobile networks is not included.

2024, compared to tenth place among all adults – see Figure 28.[96] Sixty-four per cent of the total time spent on Snapchat by UK adults in May 2024 was by 18-24s, who spent on average 55 minutes per day on the service in May 2024, while visitors aged 65+ spent 4 minutes.

Seventy-four per cent (3.9m) of online 18-24-year-olds visited TikTok in May 2024, spending an average of 64 minutes per day on the service, while just 28% (2.5m) of internet users aged 65+ visited the service, spending on average 2 minutes per day. Thirty-nine per cent of the total time spent on TikTok by UK adults in May 2024 was spent by adults aged 18-24. Sixty per cent (3.2m) of 18-24s visited both Snapchat and TikTok.[97]

Facebook users aged 18-24 are the least engaged with the service, spending an average of 15 minutes a day on the platform, much lower than the average time spent by adults overall (39mins). It is notable that only 4% of the total time spent on Facebook by UK adults in May 2024 was spent by those aged 18-24.[98]

**Figure 30: Average daily time spent by UK adult visitors to selected social media services ranked within the top ten reaching services by age (arrows indicate increase/decrease in time spent as age increases): May 2024 (minutes)**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month divided by number of days in month. Time spent across smartphone, tablets and computers only.*

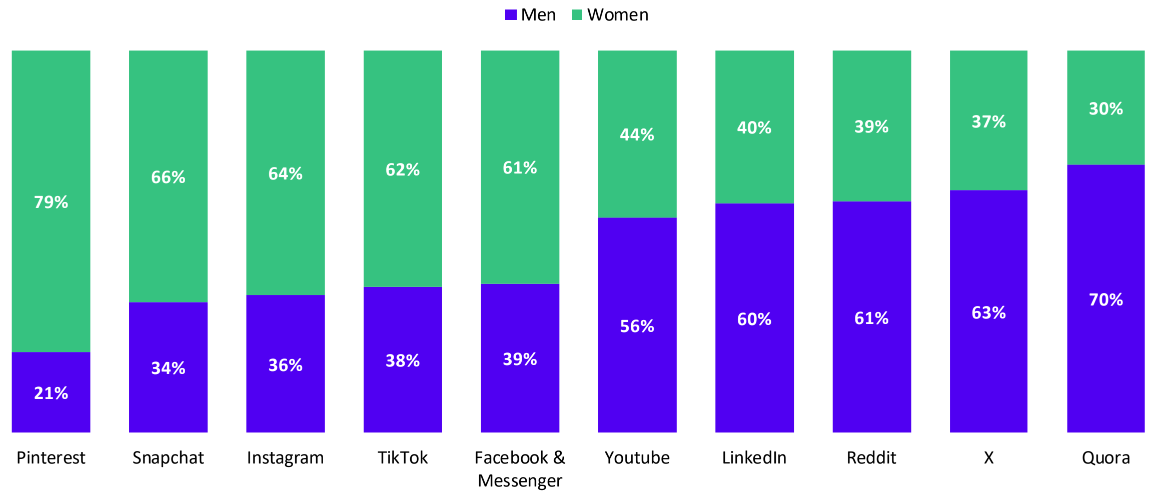
## Women accounted for the majority of time spent on Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok and Facebook

Four-fifths (79%) and two-thirds (66%) of the total time spent by UK adults on Pinterest and Snapchat respectively in May 2024 was by women. On average, female Snapchat users spent 36 minutes per day on the service, while men spent 26 minutes. Breaking this down by age, women aged 18-24 were spending 67 minutes on the service per day while 18-24-year-old men were spending 42 minutes. For TikTok, on average, female visitors spent 29 minutes on the service per day in May 2024, unchanged since May 2023 (30 minutes). However, the average time spent by men increased from 19 minutes per day in May 2023 to 23 minutes per day in May 2024. Women aged 18-24 who visited TikTok spent on average 1 hour 17 minutes on the service, while men in this age group spent 29 minutes less (48 minutes). The proportion of time spent on Quora by male visitors

[96] The top five social media services for 18-24-year-olds rank similarly as all adults.
[97] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month divided by number of days in month.
[98] Ibid.

has also increased from 64% in May 2023 to 70% in May 2024, while the proportion of time spent by female visitors to Reddit has increased from 35% to 39%.[99]

**Figure 31: Share by gender of total time spent on the top ten highest-reaching social media services, UK adults: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: Social Media and Online Forums, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.*

## A year after its release, Meta's microblogging service Threads was the 12th highest-reaching social media service, but remained far behind X

In July 2024 – the same month of launch the previous year – Threads reached 11% (4.3m) of UK online adults, having become the 12th highest-reaching social media service, six places behind leading microblogging service X. The average adult visitor spent in total 1 hour 26 minutes on the service in July 2024.[100]

Although X remains the highest-reaching microblogging service, its UK adult reach continues to gradually decline. In 2021, before its acquisition by Elon Musk, the UK average monthly adult reach was 27.9 million. This declined by 1.5 million in 2022, resulting in a monthly average of 26.5 million. Following Musk's acquisition in October 2022, X's UK reach has continued to decline, with a 2023 UK adult monthly average of 23.7 million, a decline of 2.7 million year on year. In the first nine months[101] of 2024, monthly average reach was 22.1 million, a loss of another 1.6 million adult visitors. X achieved its highest daily reach to UK adult audiences in 2024 on 5 July (9.8m, 21% of UK online adults), the day after the UK General Election.[102]

Bluesky a microblogging service conceptualised by former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and developed in parallel with Twitter – now X. X initially funded Bluesky, but since Musk's purchase of X, Bluesky has

[99] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month divided by number of days in month.
[100] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Threads website or app, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[101] Data available up to September 2024 at time of writing.
[102] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, X app and site, Threads includes app and site Threads.net, May 2024 & July 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

been independent of X.[103] In May 2024 80k (0.2%) UK online adults visited Bluesky (website or android app), its reach slightly increased in August to 127k (0.3%), however there was a sizeable increase of 263% in September 2024 reaching 461k (1.0%) UK online adults. X and Threads remained the leading microblogging services in September 2024, reaching 21.2 million (45%) and 6.6 million (14%) UK online adults respectively.[104]

**Figure 32: X vs Threads, UK online adult key metrics: July 2024**

| In July 2024: | X | | THREADS |
|---|---|---|---|
| UK online adult visitors to web or app: | 23.5 million (50%) | VS | 5.3 million (11%) |
| Among social media services UK online adult reach rank: | 6th | | 12th |
| Average daily UK online adult visitors: | 9.1 million (19%) | | 2.1 million (4%) |
| UK online adult visitors to the app in month: | 14.3 million (30%) | | 4.6 million (10%) |
| Proportion men vs women visitors in month: | 56% vs 44% | | 49% vs 51% |
| Average time spent per UK adult visitor per day: | 9 minutes | | 3 minutes |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, July 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month divided by number of days in month.*

# Messaging and calling

Messaging services enable users to send and receive messages that can only be viewed or read by a specific recipient or group of people. Some services apply encryption to messaging. In addition to text, most of these services allow users to share voice notes, images and videos, and make and receive video calls. Some high-reaching messaging services are also social media services; these social media services are explored in the Social Media section.

As Ipsos iris measures the visits to websites and apps, Ofcom conducted a survey to understand use of messaging services, both on popular multi-service sites such as social media services, which include messaging and call functionalities as part of their overall proposition (such as Facebook Messenger on Facebook), and on dedicated messaging and call services (such as Telegram). The survey was conducted on 2-3 July 2024 and asked about use of the services in the past month (i.e. June 2024).

[103] Techcrunch, What is Bluesky? Everything to know about the app trying to replace Twitter, 24 July 2023
[104] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, August 2024 and September 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## Meta-owned WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Instagram direct are the top three messaging and call services among UK internet users aged 16+

Meta-owned WhatsApp (web or app) continued as the highest-reaching messaging service, reaching 87% of UK online adults in May 2024. Sixty-four per cent of UK online adults accessed WhatsApp per day in May 2024, an increase of 6pp compared to May 2023 (58%).[105] Ofcom's survey similarly found that 86% of UK internet users aged 16+ had used WhatsApp in June 2024, followed by Facebook Messenger with 59% and Instagram direct messages[106] with 30%.[107]

While WhatsApp's gender audience composition was fairly evenly split in May 2024 (men 47% vs women 53%), some services skew to a male audience. Sixty-six per cent of adults who visited Telegram in May 2024 were men (34% women), and Discord's adult audience was similarly split by gender (66% men vs 34% women).[108] This broadly aligns with the figure from Ofcom's Adults' Media Literacy Tracker, which shows that men account for over three in five of both console and PC gamers - the main communities served by Discord.[109]

Although our July survey did not include Microsoft Teams and Apple Facetime, our Adults' Media Literacy tracker found that 24% of over-15s used Microsoft Teams and 31% used Facetime in 2023.[110]

**Figure 33: UK online adult reach of ten highest-reaching online messaging / call services and average time spent: May 2024**

| Rank | Messaging or call service | Total adult audience in month | | | | UK online adult reach in May 2024 | Average time spent by visitor in May 2024 (hrs:mins) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | Year-on-year change | | |
| 1 | WhatsApp | 40.0m | 40.9m | 41.4m | +0.5m | 87% | 07:41 |
| 2 | Facebook Messenger* | 32.8m | 33.4m | 30.4m | -3.0m | 64% | 03:39 |
| 3 | Google Messages | 9.7m | 10.7m | 12.7m | +2.0m | 27% | 01:16 |
| 4 | Zoom | 8.6m | 7.1m | 6.7m | -0.4m | 14% | 00:45 |
| 5 | Discord | 4.4m | 5.9m | 6.2m | +0.3m | 13% | 04:41 |
| 6 | Phone by Google app | 4.7m | 5.0m | 5.4m | +0.4m | 11% | 02:33 |
| 7 | Telegram | 2.6m | 3.2m | 3.4m | +0.3m | 7% | 01:14 |

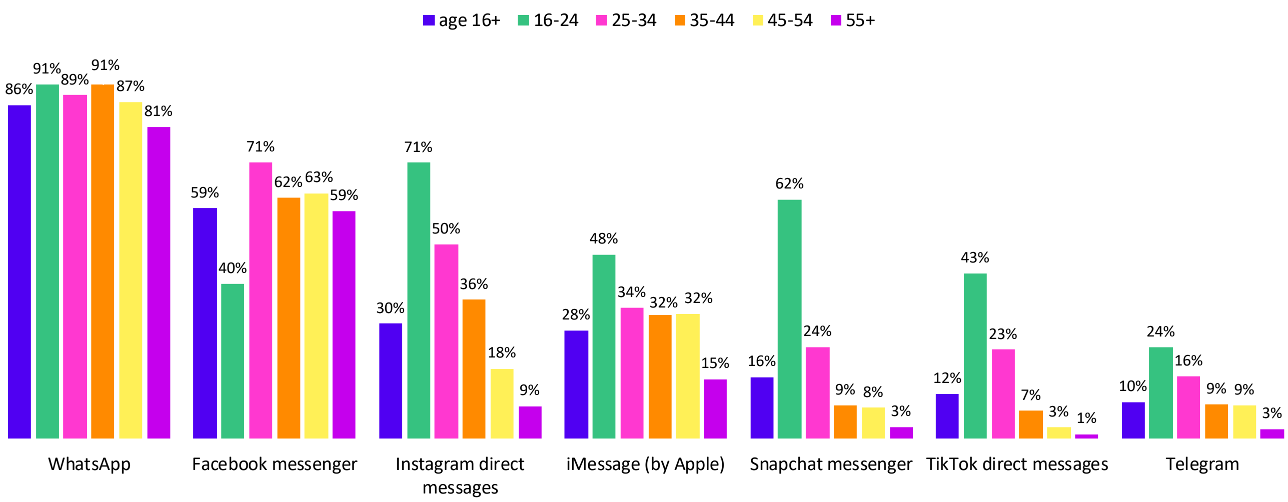
[105] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) WhatsApp, May 2023 & May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[106] As Instagram direct messages is not a standalone site it is not measured in Ipsos iris.
[107] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[108] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[109] Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023.
[110] Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023. Note: These are not reported on in Ipsos iris or the Ofcom Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

| Rank | Messaging or call service | Total adult audience in month | | | | UK online adult reach in May 2024 | Average time spent by visitor in May 2024 (hrs:mins) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | Year-on-year change | | |
| 8 | Google Meet | 118k | 3.2m | 3.0m | -0.3m | 6% | 00:17 |
| 9 | Skype | 1.7m | 1.9m | 1.7m | -0.2m | 4% | 01:13 |
| 10 | Signal | 943k | 1.1m | 1.2m | +0.1m | 2% | 02:24 |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom-defined list by Ofcom. *Facebook messaging service can be accessed via the main Facebook platform and is not counted here. Includes Facebook Messenger app or messenger.com visitors. Microsoft Teams not included as desktop app use not measured. Green boxes indicate May 2024 year-on-year increase, red boxes decrease.*

WhatsApp was the highest-reaching messaging and calls service, across all age groups. However, there were notable differences by age group between some of the other popular services. Instagram direct message was the second-highest-reaching service among UK online 16-24-year-olds (71%) followed by Snapchat messenger (62%). And although Facebook Messenger is the second-highest-reaching service among online users aged 16+, its reach is predominantly driven by those aged 25+; it is the sixth-highest-reaching service among online 16-24s (40%), and second-highest for all other adult age groups.[111]

**Figure 34: Messaging and call services used by UK internet users aged 16+: June 2024**



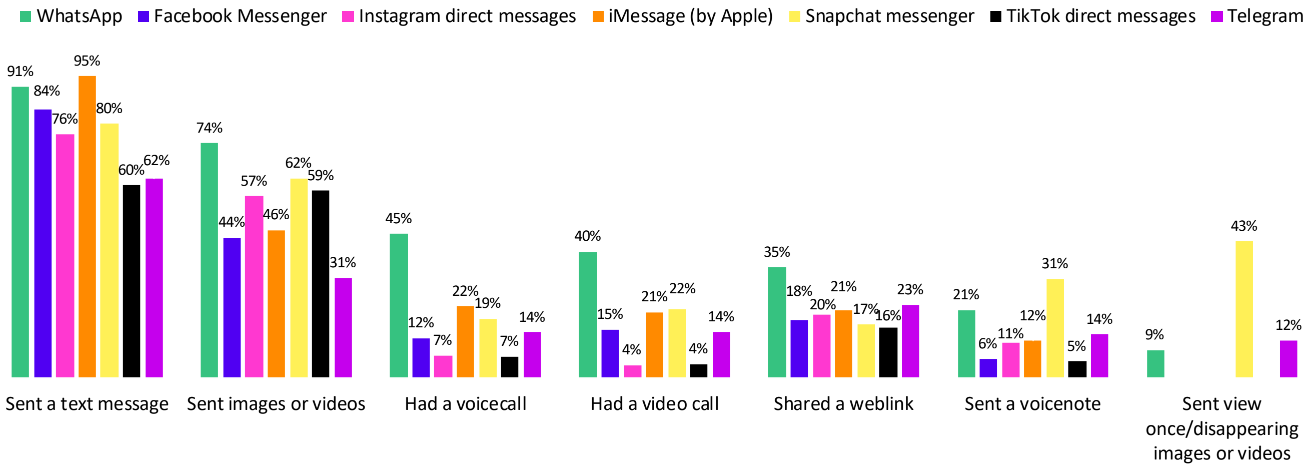

*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 7: Thinking about the past month (i.e. since the start of June)... Which, if any, of the following communication services have you used? (Please select all that apply). Responses for Google messages not shown. 'None of these' and 'don't know' responses also not shown. Base: UK internet users. Age: 16+ (2100).*

[111] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

## Forty-three per cent of Snapchat Messenger UK users aged 16+ sent a disappearing image or video on the service in June 2024

Some messaging services offer users the ability to send 'disappearing' messages, also referred to as ephemeral messaging; WhatsApp refers to this functionality as 'view once' – the message automatically disappears from the recipient's screen once it has been viewed. Sending disappearing images or videos is the third most popular functionality on Snapchat, behind text messaging and sending images or videos. Fifty-seven per cent of 16-24-year-old Snapchat users have used it to send a disappearing image or video. WhatsApp and Telegram were the other services in our current research which offer view once or disappearing images/videos functionalities: they were cited to have been used by 9% and 12% of users respectively. The most popular form of communication on all the services asked about in our research was sending text messages.[112]

**Figure 35: Functionalities used by those aged 16+ who said they used the selected messaging and calls services: June 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 8: Which, if any, of the following activities have you done on the communication services you've used in the past month? (Please select all that apply for each row). Responses for Google messages not shown. 'None of these' and 'don't know' responses also not shown. Not all messaging and call services offer disappearing/view once functionality. Apple Facetime calls can be started from iMessage which may be the reason respondents selected iMessage. Base: UK internet users age: 16+ who have used selected communication services in the past month (183-1803).*

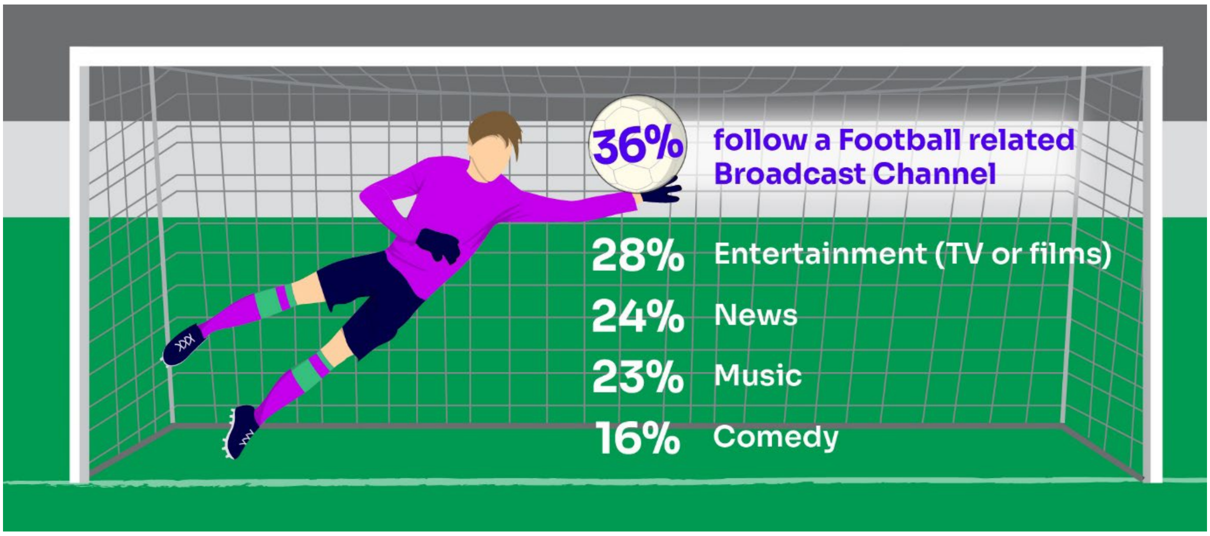
[112] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

## Twenty-four per cent of UK internet users aged 16+ said they followed a broadcast channel on a Meta-owned service

Broadcast channels are a one-way broadcasting feature within the messaging section of some Meta-owned services – WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook Messenger. Users can follow information from people and organisations they are interested in. Channel administrators can send text, photos, videos, stickers, and polls. At the time of our research users following the broadcasts could only react to the broadcasts or vote in polls.

Twenty-four per cent of UK internet users aged 16+ said they followed a broadcast channel: 17% followed a broadcast channel on WhatsApp, 14% on Instagram and 13% on Facebook Messenger. Young people were more likely than older adults to follow a broadcast channel; 42% of online 16-24-year-olds followed at least one broadcast channel on any of the three Meta-owned services, while only 19% of those aged 55+ did the same. Among those who follow a broadcast channel, the most popular topic was football, with 36% saying they followed such a channel. The next most popular sport-related topic was tennis (9%), followed by cricket (8%); this may have been influenced by the timing of the research, which took place shortly after Wimbledon and the Cricket World Cup.[113]

**Figure 36: Top 5 Topics followed by broadcast channel users in the UK aged 16+: July 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 10: You previously said you follow broadcast channels on at least one Meta-owned service...Which, if any, of the following topics do you follow using a broadcast channel(s)? (Please select all that apply). Base: UK internet users age: 16+ who follow Meta broadcast channel (512).*

[113] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

# Dating

Online dating services provide users with the opportunity to form romantic connections or forge new friendships via messaging and calls. Users are often paired using algorithms which use the information users enter when creating their profiles. Users can typically filter by demographic features and location.

Many dating services operate a freemium business model, where the service is offered free with limited features, but users can upgrade to paid services. Revenue streams include subscriptions and/or in-app purchases.

## There has been a decline in UK adults' use of each of the top three highest-reaching dating services

In May 2024 one in ten (10%, 4.9m) UK online adults visited an online dating service, in line with last year's figure of 11% (May 2023). Almost 4% of UK online adults (3.8%, 1.8m) visited an online dating service daily in May 2024. Match Group's dating services, which includes Tinder, Hinge, Plenty of Fish and Match.com, together reached 6% of UK online adults (2.9m) in May 2024 (down from 3.2 million the year before). Tinder remains the highest-reaching of Match Group's portfolio of dating services, reaching 1.9 million (4%) UK online adults, but this figure has declined by 600k (5%) from 2.5 million visitors in 2023. Bumble Inc., which owns Bumble and Badoo, reached 1.4 million UK online adults (3%) in May 2024 (down 300k from 1.7 million in 2023); 2% visited Bumble, while 1% visited Badoo.[114]

While this decline in UK online adult visitors since last year is only slight, some analysts speculate that for younger people, particularly Gen Z, the novelty of dating apps is wearing off.[115] Match Group has reported declines in Tinder subscribers for several consecutive quarters.[116] In January 2024 the group said that Tinder's team will be focusing on "*shaping an in-app experience that resonates better with today's younger users*", having found that its Gen Z users were seeking *"a lower pressure, more authentic way to find connections"*.[117] In July 2024 it announced that Tinder would be *"working to deliver high-quality user outcomes, especially for women"* and testing some new features accordingly. Nevertheless, the declines in audiences and time-spent figures for online dating services have been small and further monitoring is required to see if the current decline becomes a trend.

New entrants to this year's top ten highest-reaching dating services are Sniffies and Scruff, which are marketed as LGBTQ+ dating and social networking services for men. Last year Scruff ranked in 14th place with 0.3% UK adult visitors (122k) and this year ranks in 9th place with 0.4% (182k). The base size for Sniffies was too low for there to be reportable data in May 2023, although in May 2022 it

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[114] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: Online dating services, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[115] Bustle, Dating apps are in their flop era, 8 January 2024, [accessed 19 July 2024]; New York Times, It's not you: dating apps are getting worse, 16 March 2024, [accessed 19 July 2024]; CNN, Tinder downloads are falling but the dating app era isn't over yet, 14 February 2024, [accessed 19 July 2024]; BBC, Tinder parent company cuts jobs as subscriber numbers slump, 31 July 2024, [accessed 31 July 2024].
[116] Match Group, Letter to Shareholders, Q2 2024, 30 July 2024, [accessed 31 July 2024]. As cited in: BBC, Tinder parent company cuts jobs as subscriber numbers slump, 31 July 2024, [accessed 31 July 2024].
[117] Match Group, Letter to Shareholders, Q4 2023, 30 January 2024. As cited in: CNN, Tinder downloads are falling but the dating app era isn't over yet, 14 February 2024, [accessed 19 July 2024].

had 112k visitors (0.2%). The low average time spent on the service may suggest that visitors are being directed to the site from other online services and may not be dedicated users.[118]

Many people use more than one dating service, with Tinder being widely visited by those who also use other dating platforms. Over half of visitors to Bumble (57%), Hinge (56%) and Plenty of Fish (54%) also visited Tinder during May 2024. Fifty-three per cent of Bumble visitors and 41% of Tinder visitors also visited Hinge during the month, and the majority (82%) of those who visited Scruff also visited Grindr.[119]

**Figure 37: UK online adult reach and time spent on top ten high-reaching dating services: May 2024**

| | Service | Total UK adult reach in May 2022 | Total UK adult reach in May 2023 | Total UK adult reach in May 2024 | Year-on-year change | UK online adult reach in May 2024 | Average time spent in May 2024 (hrs:mins) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Tinder** | 2,155k | 2,488k | 1894k | -594k | 4.0% | 01:03 |
| **2** | **Hinge** | 1,042k | 1,510k | 1378k | -131k | 2.9% | 02:34 |
| **3** | **Bumble** | 1,220k | 1,440k | 1072k | -368k | 2.3% | 02:09 |
| **4** | **Grindr** | 790k | 924k | 913k | -11k | 1.9% | 07:02 |
| **5** | **Badoo** | 490k | 482k | 521k | +39k | 1.1% | 01:49 |
| **6** | **Squirt** | 460k | 530k | 438k | -92k | 0.9% | 00:07 |
| **7** | **Plenty of Fish** | 537k | 625k | 378k | -247k | 0.8% | 01:34 |
| **8** | **Sniffies** | 112k | - | 310k | - | 0.7% | 00:01 |
| **9** | **SCRUFF** | 117k | 122k | 182k | +60k | 0.4% | 00:50 |
| **10** | **Match** | 287k | 209k | 182k | -27k | 0.4% | 01:34 |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Dash represents data unavailable for that period.*

## While Tinder remains the highest-reaching service, the time spent there was much lower than on other platforms

Visitors spent an average of just over an hour (1 hr 3 mins) on Tinder in May 2024, compared with two and a half hours spent on Hinge (2 hrs 34 mins) and two hours spent on Bumble (2 hrs 9 mins). The fifth-highest-reaching dating service, Grindr, had by far the longest time spent per visitor; the average visitor spent seven hours (7 hrs 2 mins) on the platform in May 2024. These timings remain similar to last year.[120]

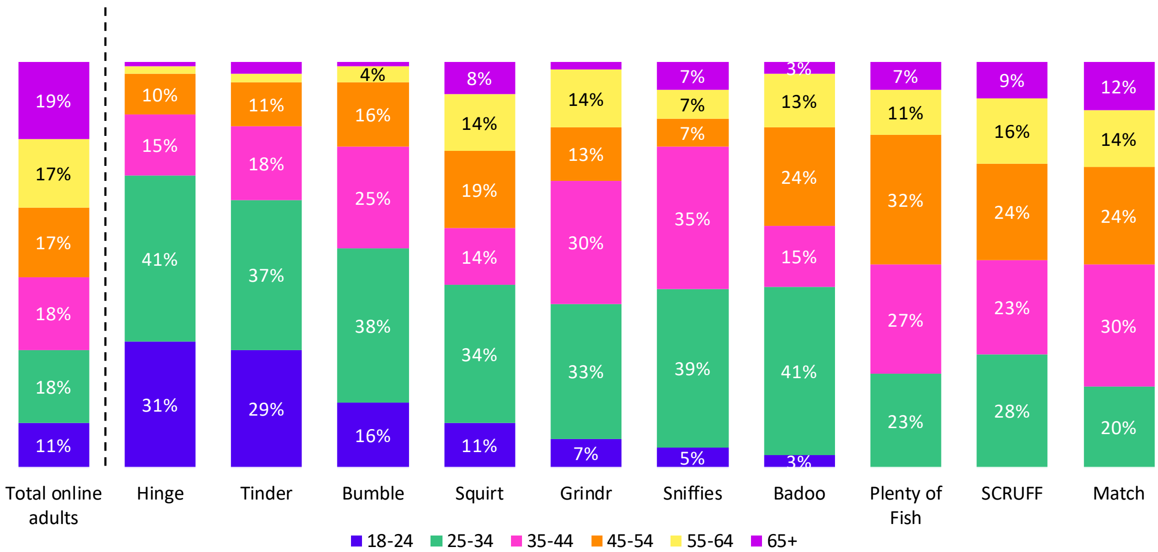
[118] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[119] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[120] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## Dating services were visited by nearly one in five UK online 18-24-year-olds in May 2024

Online dating services reached 18% (943k) of 18-24-year-olds in May 2024, the highest reach to any adult age group. The second-highest cohort were 25-34-year-olds, with 17% (1.5m) visiting at least one dating service in the month. However, the 25-34 age group spent on average an hour longer than 18-24-year-olds on dating services in the month (3 hours 7 minutes compared to 2 hours 6 minutes). Although only a small proportion (6%, 468k) of 55-64-year-olds visited an online dating service in May 2024, those who did visit spent the most time there: an average of 5 hours 43 mins on online dating services in the month.[121]

In terms of which dating service different age groups were most likely to visit, Hinge skewed most heavily towards younger adults, with 72% of its visitors aged 18-34, followed by Tinder with 66%. Plenty of Fish, Match and Scruff's visitors skewed more towards older adult users; more than half of visitors were aged 35-54 for Plenty of Fish (59%) and Match (54%).[122]

**Figure 38: Top ten dating services by adult reach, adult audience composition by age: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, adults age: 18+, UK internet users.*

## While men still outnumber women on online dating services overall, Hinge was more popular among women in May 2024

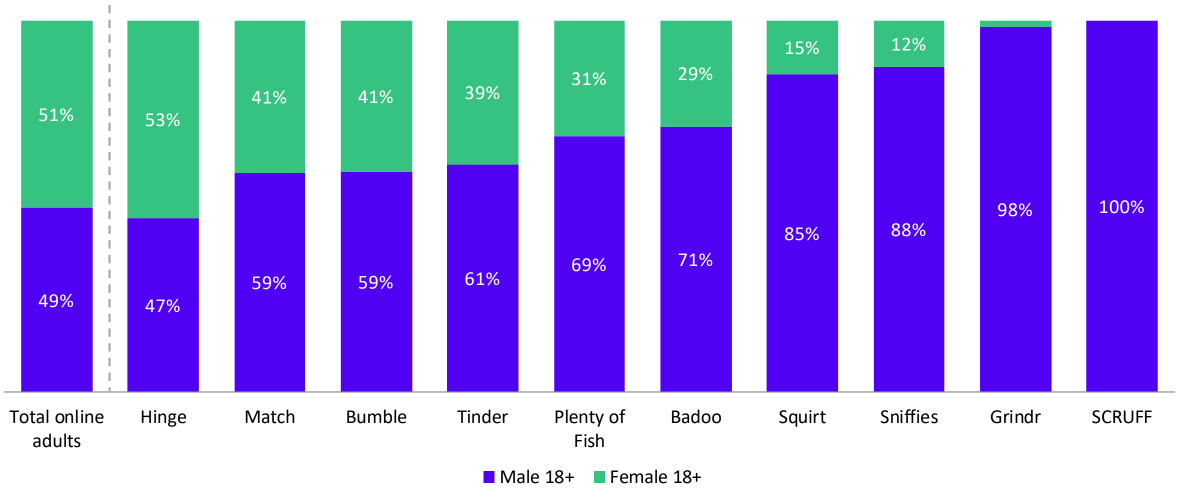
Of the overall adult visitors to online dating platforms in May 2024, 65% were men and 35% were women, compared to 61% men and 39% women in the previous year (May 2023). Men still outnumber women on most online dating services. Hinge was the only service in the top ten where women outnumbered men; of Hinge's adult visitors in May 2024, 53% were women, a 3pp increase compared to May 2023 (50%).[123]

Match and Bumble both had the next highest proportion of women visitors in May 2024, with 41% for each. Bumble, known for allowing only women to initiate conversations with matches, in Spring

[121] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[122] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[123] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

2024 introduced a new 'Opening Move' feature which (in heterosexual connections) allows male matches to send a first message in response to a woman's pre-written 'Opening Move' message.[124] Bumble explained that the new feature *"lightens the load of initiating a chat but still allows women to control their experience"*.[125] Meanwhile, LGBTQ+ dating services Scruff, Grindr, Sniffies and Squirt have high proportions of male visitors.[126]

**Figure 39: Top ten dating services by adult reach, adult audience composition by gender: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.*

## Nearly 2 million UK adults visited an online dating service on Valentine's Day 2024

Four per cent (1.91m) of UK online adults visited an online dating service on Wednesday 14th February 2024, spending an average of 19 minutes across the services. Reach on Valentine's Day was not markedly higher than usual, however; total online dating services' adult audience exceeded 2 million per day on the weekend after Valentines Day (17th February 2.03m, 18th 2.00m). Four percent of UK online adults (1.87m) visited an online dating service daily in February 2024. More than half (55%) the visitors were aged 18-34, representing 8% (1.0m) of this online age group. While the majority of all adult visitors on this day were men (61% male vs 39% female), among 18-34-year-olds the gender split was more even; of the 18-34-year-old visitors, 54% were male and 46% were female.[127]

The top five most-visited services on that day, in order of reach, were Tinder (711k), Hinge (669k), Bumble (448k), Grindr (389k) and Plenty of Fish (170k). New entrants, compared to the May 2024 ranking, were Feeld (57k) in 8th place and Boo (32k) in 10th place.[128]

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[124] In non-binary and same gender connections either person can set and respond to an 'opening move'. Source: Bumble, Opening Moves, [accessed 12 July 2024].
[125] TechCrunch, Bumble's Opening Move feature takes the pressure off women to come up with a new message every time, 30 April 2024,; Forbes, Men Can Now Initiate Conversations On Bumble—Here's Why It Matters, 3 May 2024.
[126] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[127] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[128] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

Among adult women, however, Hinge was the most popular dating service on Valentines Day 2024, which aligns with the May 2024 data. More adult women visited Hinge on this day (320k) compared to Tinder (260k) and Bumble (168k). Meanwhile, after Tinder (451k), more adult men visited Grindr (384k) than Hinge (349k).[129]

## Services for pornographic content

Services for pornographic content[130] primarily provide, or enable the sharing of, pornographic content (sometimes also described as 'adult content'). This content can be published or displayed in the form of text, videos and images or audio, or provided in a live or interactive format. Users can also sometimes search for user-generated content and connect with one another. Some services are known as 'tube sites' and focus on uploaded pre-recorded images or videos. Others are known as 'cam sites' which content creators use to livestream content to customers, and may enable interaction between performers and viewers. Some content creators may use 'fan platforms' where they sell access to content on a subscription basis or on 'clips marketplaces' where they sell access to discrete pieces of content.[131] Paid content is common on services for pornographic content, but many free-to-use services rely on advertising to generate large proportions of their revenue. Some services, often run by studios which produce content, require users to buy a monthly subscription.

### Twenty-nine per cent of UK online adults accessed a pornographic content service in May 2024

Twenty-nine per cent (13.8m) of UK online adults accessed a pornographic content service in May 2024, remaining stable with the previous two years (May 2023: 29%, May 2022: 31%).[132] For the first half of 2024, monthly average time spent on pornographic content services by UK adult visitors was 1 hour 33 minutes; a 10% decrease (-11 minutes) compared to the first half of 2023 (monthly average 1 hour 44 minutes).[133] The UK nation with the highest online adult reach was Northern Ireland, with 34% (431k) visiting pornographic content services in May 2024, followed by Wales (32%, 694k), Scotland (30%, 1.2m) and England (29%, 11.5m).[134]

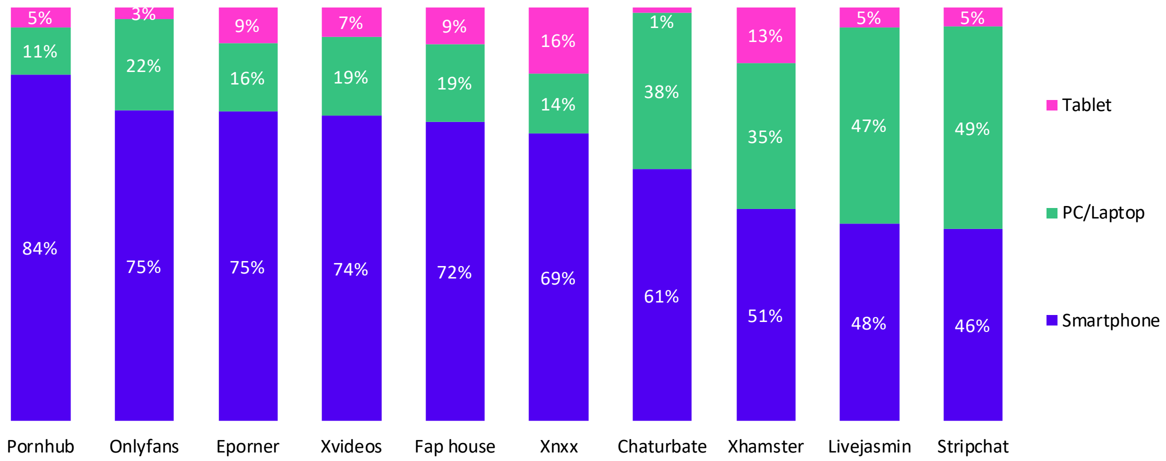
### Pornhub continued to be the most popular pornographic content service for UK online adults

Pornhub continued to be the highest-reaching pornographic content service across nations, for both men and women, and all adult age groups, visited by 18% (8.4m) of UK online adults in May 2024. This is consistent with the previous two years. Adult visitors spent an average of 50 minutes on Pornhub in the month (May 2023: 52 minutes). 25-34-year-olds made up the largest share of

[129] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, 14 February 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[130] Note that Ipsos iris data for pornographic content services may be base figures as panellists may choose to use non-tracked devices to visit such sites.
[131] Free speech coalition, Guidance for service providers publishing pornographic content, accessed 10 September 2024
[132] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: general x-rated adult, May 2022/2023/2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[133] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: general x-rated adult, monthly average: January - June 2023 and January - June 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: 1 hour 32 minutes for May 2024.
[134] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: general x-rated adult, May 2024, age: 18+, internet users, UK nations.

Pornhub's adult audience (31%, 2.6m), and reach within this online age group was the highest (30%) of any age group. Smartphones were the device most likely to be used by UK adults to visit Pornhub, with 84% of total time spent on Pornhub in May 2024 attributed to smartphones, a higher percentage than any of the other top ten highest-reaching pornographic content services.[135] According to Pornhub, the UK was the fifth-highest country in terms of daily traffic to its website in 2023, dropping three places and being overtaken by the Philippines, France and Mexico (the USA remains top).[136]

**Figure 40: Share of total time spent by UK online adults on the top ten highest-reaching pornographic content services, by device: May 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: general x-rated adult, May 2024, age: 18+, UK. Note: Custom defined list by Ofcom.*

Chaturbate was the second highest-reaching pornographic content service, reaching 10% (4.8m) of UK online adults in May 2024, steadily increasing its adult audience by 22% (865k) since May 2022 (8%, 3.9m). The heavily marketed Chaturbate added an additional 550k to its total UK adult audience in May 2024 compared to April 2024, and increased its reach to 11% (5.3m) by August 2024 (+515k).[137] Chaturbate operates a model whereby account holders are encouraged and financially rewarded for redirecting traffic from other services. Eporner (May 2024: 3% reach, 1.3m) has increased its monthly audience by 59% since May 2023 (2% reach, 810k) and nearly trebled it since May 2022 (1% reach, 440k).[138]

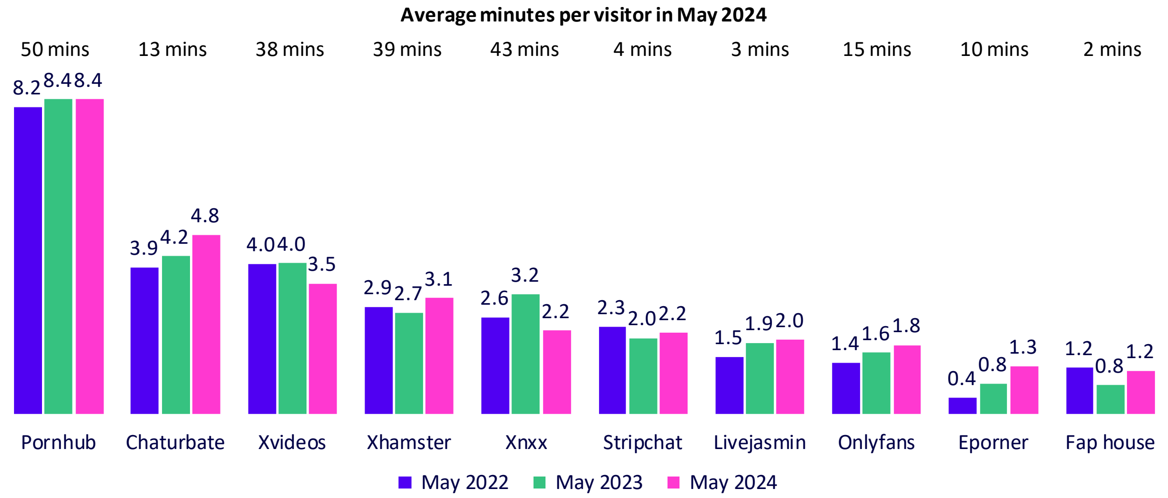
The biggest declines in reach among the top ten pornographic content services were WGCZ-owned site Xvideos (May 2024: 7%, 3.5m), which lost 13% (523k) of its May 2022 audience, and Xnxx (May 2024: 5% reach, 2.2m) which lost 14% (366k) – see Figure 41 below.[139]

Stripchat (4 minutes), Livejasmin (3 minutes) and Fap house (2 minutes) had low average minutes per visitor in May 2024 compared to the time spent on the other pornographic content services in

[135] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Pornhub, May 2023/2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[136] Pornhub Insights, Year in review 2023, 9 December 2023.
[137] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, April 2024 to August 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[138] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[139] ibid.

the top ten.[140] This could be due to a high number of accidental or required clicks to prominent banner or pre-roll advertisements on other pornographic content services, leading to small amounts of average time spent on these services.

**Figure 41: Top ten highest-reaching pornographic content services used by UK online adults in May 2024, average time spent by visitors (millions): 2022-2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: general x-rated adult, May 2022/2023/2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom defined list by Ofcom.*

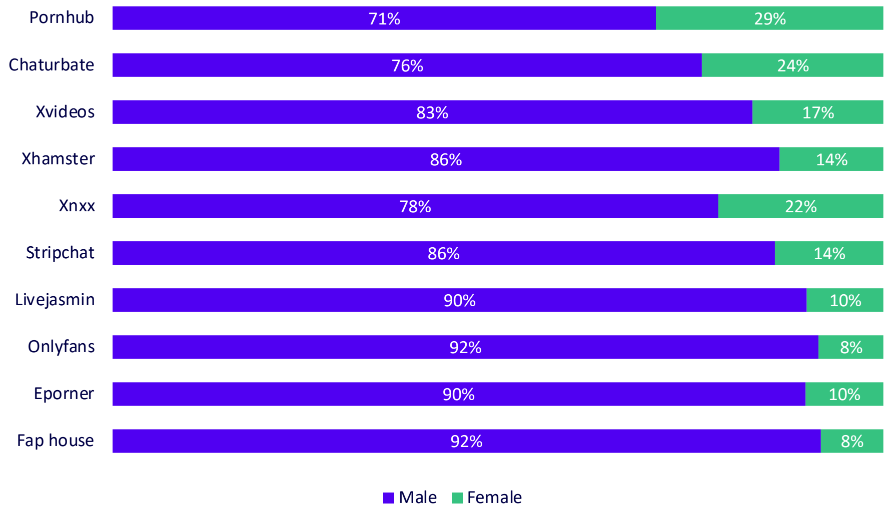
## Men are more than twice as likely as women to visit a pornographic content service

Men remained far more likely to visit a pornographic content service, comprising 72% of the UK adult pornographic content services audience in May 2024 (women 28%), consistent with the previous year (May 2023: men 73%, women 27%). This was a reach of 43% (10.0m) of UK online men, compared to 16% (3.8m) of UK online women. Male visitors spent on average 1 hour 44 minutes visiting pornographic content services in May 2024, while female visitors on average spent one hour.[141]

Pornhub's audience had the highest proportion of women visitors of any top ten service (29%), slightly ahead of the category average of 28%. OnlyFans was the most heavily male-dominated service; only 8% of its adult visitors were women. Looking at the wider top 50 sites, there were only two other services, text-based erotic fiction service Literotica (May 2024: 1% reach, 542k) with 45% female share, and Xcams (May 2024: 1% reach, 381k) with 52%, which had a women visitor share higher than the category average. Bellessa, ranked 107th (0.2% reach, 113k) – a pornographic video, fiction and retail service specifically aimed at women – retained the highest proportion of female users of any service at 66% in May 2024, in line with 65% in May 2023.[142]

[140] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[141] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: general x-rated adult, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[142] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 42: Gender composition and reach of top ten highest-reaching pornographic content services:  May 2024 (millions)**




| | UK online adult reach in May 2024 | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Male** | **Female** |
| Pornhub | 25% (5.9m) | 10% (2.5m) |
| Chaturbate | 16% (3.7m) | 5% (1.1m) |
| Xvideos | 12% (2.9m) | 2% (593k) |
| Xhamster | 11% (2.7m) | 2% (418k) |
| Xnxx | 7% (1.7m) | 2% (479k) |
| Stripchat | 8% (1.9m) | 1% (306k) |
| Livejasmin | 8% (1.8m) | 1% (197k) |
| Onlyfans | 7% (1.7m) | 1% (156k) |
| Eporner | 5% (1.2m) | 1% (131k) |
| Fap house | 5% (1.1m) | <1% (95k) |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: Custom defined list by Ofcom.*

# News

Online news services can be delivered by traditional broadcast or print news providers while some are online-native (e.g. Huffington Post, Tortoise Media). There are also online intermediaries such as news aggregators (e.g. Apple News), social media and search engines which bring together news stories from multiple sources. Ofcom research found that six in ten UK adults (59%) said they used some form of online intermediary for their news consumption. Meta (40%) and Google (32%) are the most commonly used intermediaries, reaching three-quarters of all adults. Four of the top ten individual news sources are now social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and X).[143]

Online news services generate their revenue primarily through advertising, although subscriptions have grown consistently over the last few years. Digital advertising revenues for news brands in the UK amounted to £592m in 2023, falling from £634m in 2022, according to AA/WARC.[144] The BBC is the only news organisation in the UK which does not employ either business model, as it is primarily supported by the TV licence fee.

## Seven in ten UK online adults visited at least one news service per day in May 2024

In May 2024, Ipsos iris[145] found that 97% of UK online adults (45.8m) visited a news service, spending an average of 11 minutes on these services per day in the month, level with the previous

[143] Ofcom, News Consumption in the UK 2024.
[144] Advertising Association / WARC Expenditure Report 2023.
[145] Where news publishers have implemented Ipsos iris' tagging methodology visits to their articles, via Google AMP and Facebook, Instant Articles will pick up content consumed through these platforms and attribute reach and time spent to the relevant publisher. Apple News content was categorised in October 2023 there may be incremental increases in reach for some services when comparing year-on-year data.

year (May 2023: 97%, 12 minutes). Average daily reach for these services was also high, with on average almost seven in ten UK online adults (69%, 32.7m) visiting at least one news service per day in May 2024.[146]

The BBC had both the highest reach (75%, 35.8m) and the highest average daily audience (33%, 15.7m) in May 2024. UK adult reach was up two percentage points year on year (May 2023: 73%, 34.9m) but was down slightly compared to May 2022 (77%, 36.6m). The Sun was the second-highest-reaching service among adults (49%, 23.1m) in May 2024, experiencing a gradual decline in reach, losing 3.0 million adults since May 2022 (55%, 26.1m).

News aggregation app Apple News, together with the Apple Weather app, was the eighth-most-visited service overall (40%, 19.0m), but taking Apple News app on its own, 25% (11.9m) of online adults visited it in May 2024, a slight year-on-year decrease (May 2023: 27%, 12.9m). The most popular publisher visited on the Apple News app was The Mirror, visited by 9.28% (4.4m) of online adults, followed by The Guardian (9.27%, 4.4m) and The Times and The Sunday Times (9.27%, 4.4m).[147]

## Among UK nations, only Wales and Northern Ireland have a local title that reaches more than half the population

The BBC, The Sun and Mail Online featured in the top four news services for all UK nations, although national titles retain high levels of reach in Wales and Northern Ireland.[148]

Wales Online was the second-highest-reaching service among adults in Wales in May 2024 (55% reach, 1.19m), increasing its year-on-year reach (May 2023: 52% reach, 1.16m). Apple News incl. Weather (32%, 695k) and The Telegraph (30%, 647k) both appeared in the May 2023 top ten in Wales, and both had increased visitor numbers since the previous year, although the greater increases for Yahoo! (42%, 910k) and Metro (33%, 709k) pushed them out of the top ten in May 2024. Apple devices were used by only 46% of online adults in Wales in May 2024, compared to the UK average of 55%, which could explain the relatively low ranking of Apple News (incl. weather) due to its status as an iOS-only app.[149]

Local title Belfast Telegraph had the third highest reach among adults in Northern Ireland (51%, 635k). Elsewhere in Northern Ireland, visitors to Metro increased significantly, up from 362k (29%) in May 2023 to 468k (37%) in May 2024, making it the tenth most-visited service, displacing Apple News (May 2024: 34%, 423k) from the top ten. Over a slightly longer period it appears that Metro's May 2023 position was an outlier, as visitor levels in May 2022 were notably higher (39%, 512k). The Guardian saw a similar dip in Northern Ireland visitors in May 2023 compared with the surrounding years. In common with Wales, online adults in Northern Ireland using Apple devices in May 2024 stood at 40%, 14 percentage points lower than the UK average, but of those using an Apple device, 90% used the Apple News or Weather app.[150]

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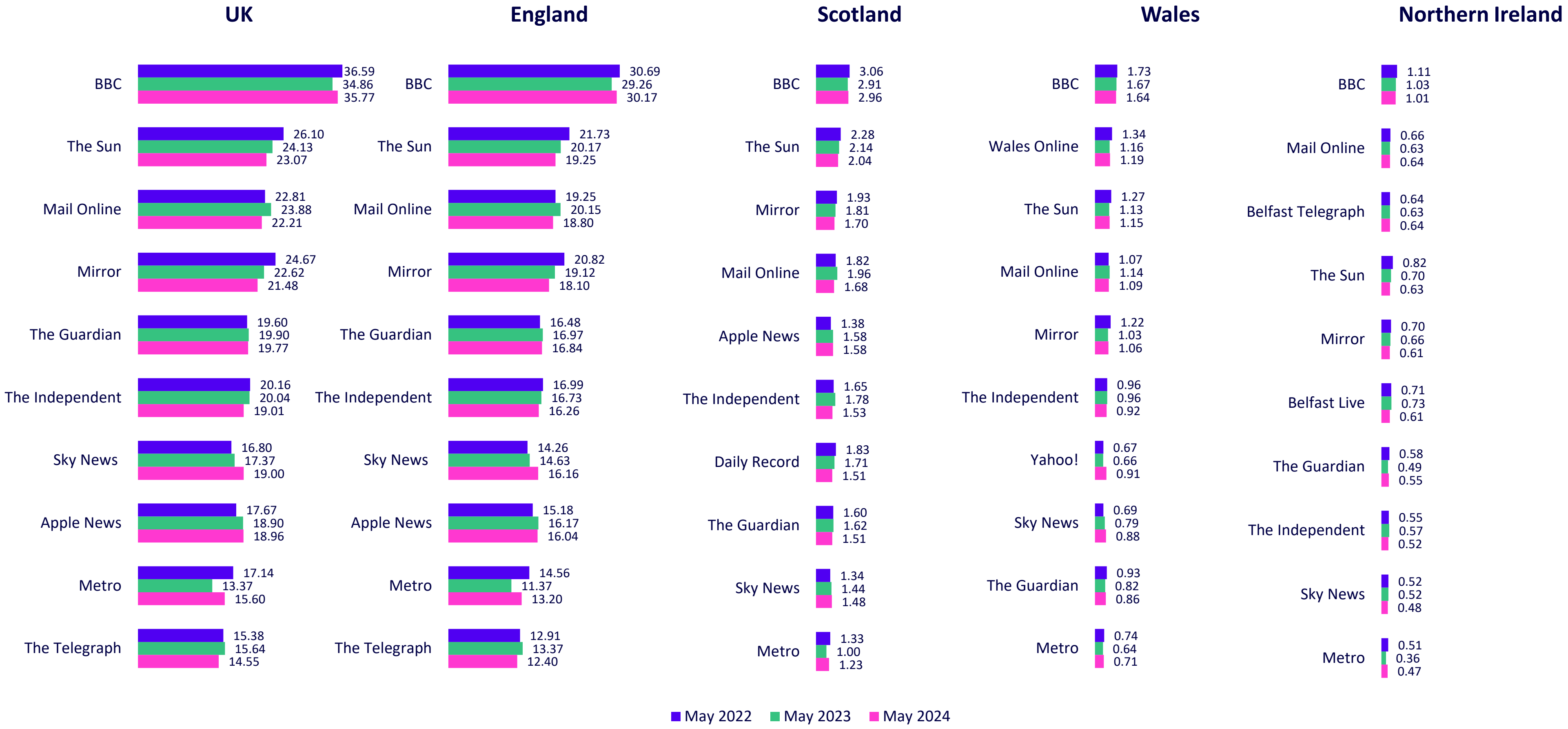
[146] Ipsos, Ipsos Iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: News category includes a wide range of services, covering topics including arts & culture, business & money, education, entertainment, lifestyle, politics, technology among others.
[147] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[148] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[149] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[150] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

In Scotland the Daily Record (39% reach, 1.5m) and The Scotsman (25%, 985k) had slight declines in visitor numbers compared with May 2023 (43%, 1.7m and 29%, 1.2m respectively), and the growing audiences for other services, including Sky News (1.4m to 1.5m) and Metro (995k to 1.2m), nudged The Scotsman out of the May 2024 top ten (ranked 14th).[151]

The July 2024 UK General Election had a limited impact on online news consumption across May to July. The biggest change was among 18-24-year-olds: 58% reported an interest in news and current affairs during this period compared with 39% at other times. However, across all adults, interest in news and current affairs (48%) remained stable with non-election periods (50%). Social media sites or apps (26%) were the most prominent source of online news and information on the General Election.[152] On 5 July, the day after the election, 23.0 million (49%) UK online adults visited the BBC, the largest single day adult reach in the month (average reach per day in month: 37%, 17.5m).[153]

[151] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[152] Ofcom, UK General Election news and opinion-formation survey 2024, June and July 2024, age: 18+, UK.
[153] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, The BBC, July 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 43: UK online adult reach of top ten online news services, by UK nation (millions): May each year 2022-2024**



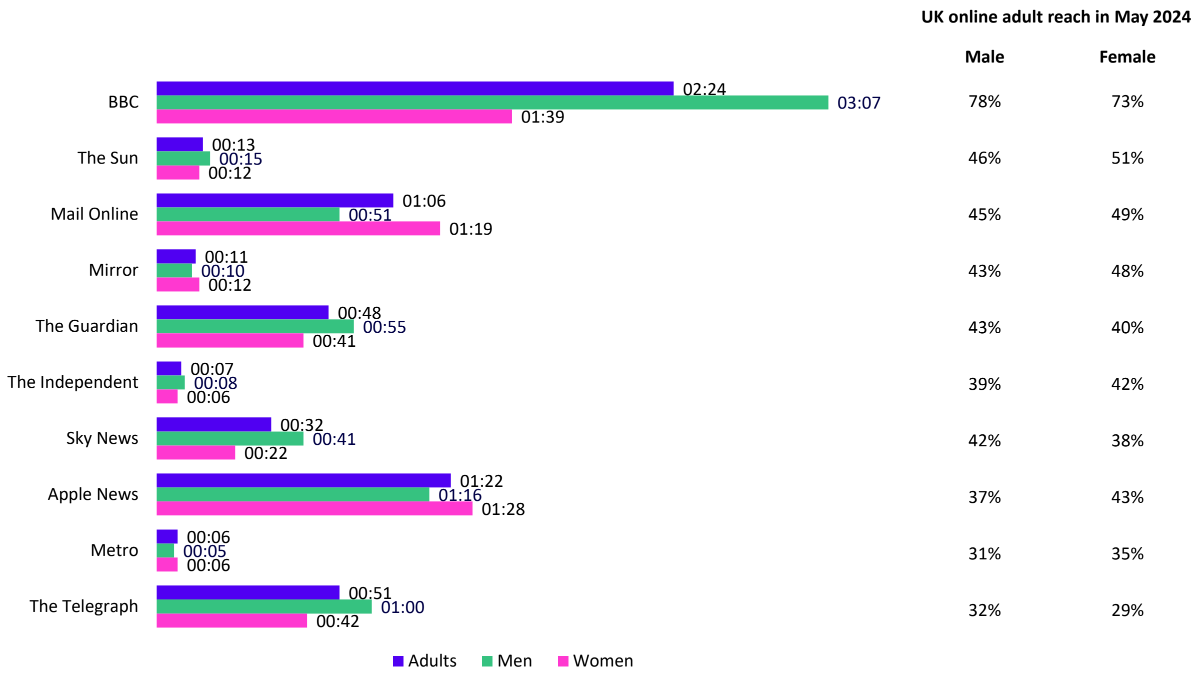

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18, internet users. Note: Top ten based on 2024 news category ranking. News includes weather. Apple News includes Apple News and Apple Weather apps. Apple News content was categorised in October 2023 there may be incremental increases in reach for some services when comparing year-on-year data.*

## On average, UK men spent 39% longer than women on the top ten news services

The overall online news audience reach is balanced between genders, with 51% of those visiting a news service being female and 49% male in May 2024. This remains largely true for the top ten services, with only minor variance between individual services. Apple News (incl. Weather app) has the highest divergence with 55% of the audience female and 45% male in May 2024,[154] probably linked to the higher levels of Apple device ownership among women.[155]

However, average time spent visiting news services diverges significantly by gender, with men (4 hours 49 minutes) spending an average of 39% more time than women (3 hours 28 minutes) on the top ten news services in May 2024. Across the top ten, time spent varied significantly by news service. Men who visited the BBC spent twice as long on the news service (3 hours 7 minutes) as women visitors (1 hour 39 minutes) in May 2024, and Sky News was similar, with men spending 80% more time than women (men: 41 minutes, women: 22 minutes). Conversely, female visitors to Mail Online spent an average of 55% longer than men on the service across the month (women: 1 hour 19 minutes, men: 51 minutes).[156]

**Figure 44: Average time spent by adult visitors to top ten highest-reaching online news services, by gender: May 2024 (hours:minutes)**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users, category: news. Apple News includes Apple News and Apple Weather apps.*

[154] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[155] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QM9. Thinking of your main mobile phone, does it use an Apple or an Android operating system? Base: Where have a smartphone.
[156] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

# Health and wellbeing

## Over half of UK online adults visited NHS online in May 2024

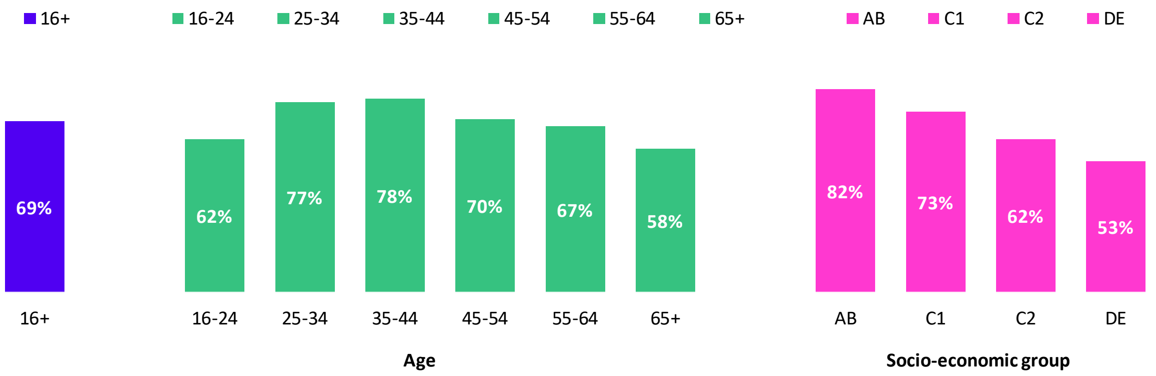
Sixty-nine per cent (32.5m) of UK online adults visited one of the top ten health and wellbeing websites or apps in May 2024, up from 66% for the same sites the previous year. The nhs.uk website was the highest-reaching NHS-owned site or app, reaching 47% (22.5m) of UK online adults, followed by the NHS app, visited by 21% (10.0m) of UK online adults in May 2024. Fifty-eight per cent (23.0m) of adults in England visited NHS-owned sites or apps in May 2024, 53% (1.1m) in Wales, 39% (1.5m) in Scotland and 35% (437k) in Northern Ireland.

By some distance, the NHS was the highest-reaching health and wellbeing online service provider, with 56% of UK online adults (26.5m) visiting either the NHS.uk website or NHS-owned apps in May 2024, a considerable lead (42pp) on the next-most-visited service, US-based health information provider Healthline (14%).[157] The use of NHS online services peaked in December 2021, as the Covid-19 Omicron variant spread rapidly and the NHS Covid Pass became mandatory in settings such as hospitality venues in England,[158] reaching 81% (38.4m) of UK online adults. With the roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccines and easing of restrictions, reach declined in 2022 and stabilised in 2023 (monthly average: 25.6m).[159]

Ofcom's Technology Tracker survey found that 69% of internet users aged 16+ go online to book and/ or access healthcare services; the 35-44 age group was the most likely to do this (78%), while those in the DE socio-economic group were the least likely (53%). Fifty-five per cent of internet users aged 16+ use online services for personal health or fitness/lifestyle monitoring, and those in the AB socio-economic group are more likely to do this than those in the DE group (70% vs 38%).[160] Ofcom's Adults' Media Literacy Tracker found that 76% of adults used apps or websites for wellbeing. This included using them to relax (40%), to look up health symptoms (32%) or to 'improve your mood or feel happy' (30%).[161]

[157] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[158] Gov.uk, Prime Minister confirms move to Plan B in England, 8 Dec 2021.
[159] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[160] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024.
[161] Ofcom, Adults' Media Literacy Tracker, 2023.

**Figure 45: UK internet users aged 16+ who have used apps or websites to book or access healthcare services: 2024**




*Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024, QE9. For each activity listed below, please indicate whether you do each activity on a mobile phone and/or another device, or not at all. Activity: Using apps or websites to book and/or access healthcare services (e.g. consultation with hospital or GP.)  Base: Where use internet at home or elsewhere age 16+ (3798).*

## Post-pandemic, many health and wellbeing services are seeing declining audience sizes

Sites that primarily serve as a source of health information dominated the top ten most-visited health and wellbeing sites, with the NHS (56%), Healthline (14%), National Institutes of Health (10%), WebMD (10%), Medical News Today (8%), Mayo Clinic (8%) and MSN Health and Fitness (6%) all featuring prominently. Several of the largest health and wellbeing services have had declining audience numbers over the past three years. Healthline has had the largest reduction, losing 23% of its UK audience (2.7m) over three years. WebMD and Medical News Today have lost 15% (770k) and 19% (869k) respectively. This may be due to a reduction in people seeking the latest information on Covid-19. [162]

Services for monitoring fitness and exercise[163] also featured in the top ten, with Google's Fitbit reaching 8% of UK adults, Strava 7%, and Samsung Health 6% in May 2024. Fitbit and Strava have had diverging fortunes: Fitbit has lost almost a million visitors (980k, -20%) from its audience since May 2022, while Strava has gained 11% (340k).[164] Google purchased Fitbit in 2019 and has incorporated features from Fitbit into its Google Pixel Watch, such as premium Fitbit features that are available free of charge; Google's plan not to release new versions of some Fitbit ranges may be contributing to the decline in reach of the Fitbit site.[165]

[162] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[163] Apple Health app not measured by Ipsos iris.
[164] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[165] Techradar, [RIP Fitbit smartwatches – an end we could see coming a mile away](), 18 Aug 2024.

## Fifty-seven per cent of NHS sites' adult visitors in May 2024 were women

There was a notable gender disparity in visitors to health and wellbeing sites, with women 10% more likely than men to visit one or more sites within the category (women: 88%, men: 80%).[166] In May 2024 57% of the NHS sites' adult visitors were women while 43% were men. This disparity was particularly pronounced among visitors to sites such as Healthline, WebMD, Fitbit, Medical News Today and Mayo Clinic: all attracted about twice as many women as men. Only two services in the combined top ten had a larger male than female audience: MSN Health and Fitness more than 49% more likely to be men (1.7m) than women (1.2m) and Strava 39% more likely (men: 2.0m, women: 1.5m).[167]

The composition of the top ten services also varied between gender: in the men's top ten, two additional exercise trackers, Garmin (6%) and gamified step-tracker Sweatcoin (5.4%) featured as the seventh and tenth most-visited apps respectively. Mayo Clinic (5.4%), Fitbit (4.9%) and Medical News Today (4.6%) did not appear in the men's top ten. In the women's top ten, MyFitnessPal (7.3%) appears, although Samsung Health (6.5%) and Strava (6.1%) do not. The menstrual and ovulation tracker, Flo, (7.1%) also appears, as does Patient Access (7.3%) which enables users to book GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions and access other NHS services. MSN Health and Fitness (4.8%) did not make the women's top ten. [168]

[166] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Category: Health, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[167] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[168] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 46: UK online adult reach for top health and wellbeing services**

| Rank | Adults | | | | | Men | | | | | Women | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Service | UK total audience in month | | | Online reach % May 2024 | Service | UK total audience in month | | | Online reach % May 2024 | Service | UK total audience in month | | | Online reach % May 2024 |
| | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | |
| 1 | NHS | 28.8m | 24.8m | 26.5m | 56% | NHS | 12.6m | 10.5m | 11.3m | 48% | NHS | 16.2m | 14.3m | 15.2m | 63% |
| 2 | Healthline | 9.5m | 7.4m | 6.8m | 14% | Healthline | 3.2m | 2.4m | 2.3m | 10% | Healthline | 6.4m | 5.0m | 4.6m | 19% |
| 3 | National Institutes of Health | 3.9m | 4.3m | 4.7m | 10% | Strava | 1.9m | 1.8m | 2.0m | 9% | WebMD | 3.6m | 2.6m | 3.1m | 13% |
| 4 | WebMD | 5.3m | 3.9m | 4.5m | 10% | National Institutes of Health | 1.5m | 1.6m | 1.7m | 7% | National Institutes of Health | 2.4m | 2.8m | 3.0m | 13% |
| 5 | Fitbit | 4.9m | 4.5m | 3.9m | 8% | MSN Health & Fitness | 781k | 1.1m | 1.7m | 7% | Fitbit | 3.4m | 3.2m | 2.8m | 12% |
| 6 | Medical News Today | 4.7m | 3.8m | 3.8m | 8% | Samsung Health | 1.6m | 1.6m | 1.5m | 6% | Medical News Today | 3.3m | 2.6m | 2.7m | 11% |
| 7 | Mayo Clinic | 4.0m | 3.5m | 3.7m | 8% | Garmin | 1.1m | 1.2m | 1.5m | 6% | Mayo Clinic | 2.7m | 2.5m | 2.5m | 10% |
| 8 | Strava | 3.2m | 3.3m | 3.5m | 7% | BBC News – Health | 1.7m | 1.5m | 1.4m | 6% | Patient Access | 1.8m | 1.8m | 1.8m | 7% |
| 9 | Samsung Health | 3.3m | 3.0m | 3.0m | 6% | WebMD | 1.6m | 1.3m | 1.4m | 6% | MyFitnessPal | 2.1m | 2.1m | 1.7m | 7% |
| 10 | MSN Health & Fitness | 1.4m | 2.3m | 2.8m | 6% | Sweatcoin | 1.2m | 1.4m | 1.3m | 5% | Flo | 992k | 1.3m | 1.7m | 7% |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: NHS includes NHS UK, nhs.wales and nhs.scot apps and site. Note: Apple Health app not measured by Ipsos iris. Note: Custom defined list by Ofcom.*

# Gaming

Gaming covers a wide variety of experiences. These experiences can vary depending on the device used, from consoles, mobiles and computers through to headsets. The experience also varies depending on the types of game played; for example, some games require internet access to download the game but can be played offline, while other games can be played on or offline.

Online gaming can offer various functionalities, and these can differ by service and be applied in combination; for instance, enabling user-to-user interaction in partially or fully simulated virtual environments. Users may interact by creating or manipulating avatars, objects, and the environments themselves, and/or by using voice and text chat. Some services use matchmaking systems to match users with each other based on parameters such as network characteristics, hardware, user preferences, availability and skill. This section will explore the take-up of devices that can be used for online gaming, gaming subscriptions, and console/PC games as well as mobile games that are popular in 2024.

## Pre-schoolers and primary aged children are increasingly gaming online

Ofcom's 2023 Media Literacy research found that gaming among adults has continued to decline, with 52% of people in the UK aged 16+ stating that they played games on devices,[169] either on or offline,[170] a 4 percentage point (pp) year-on-year decrease (2022: 56%). This follows a similar decrease the previous year, down from 60% in 2021.[171] A key factor driving this decline among those aged 16+ may include a continuing adjustment from the peak of gaming seen during and shortly after the Covid-19 period. However, the same is not true for children, for whom gaming remains very popular; 90% of 3-15s play games on devices, either on or offline. There has been a notable increase in 3-4-year-olds and 5-7-year-olds gaming online, increasing by 5pp and 7pp to 23% and 41% respectively in 2023.[172] Ofcom's Children's Media Lives found that children aged 8-17 who were gaming appeared to place greater importance on it as a means of connecting and socialising with friends rather than just simply enjoying playing the game.[173]

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[169] Devices include smartphone, consoles, tablet, computer/laptop, VR headset, app on TV or wearable technology.

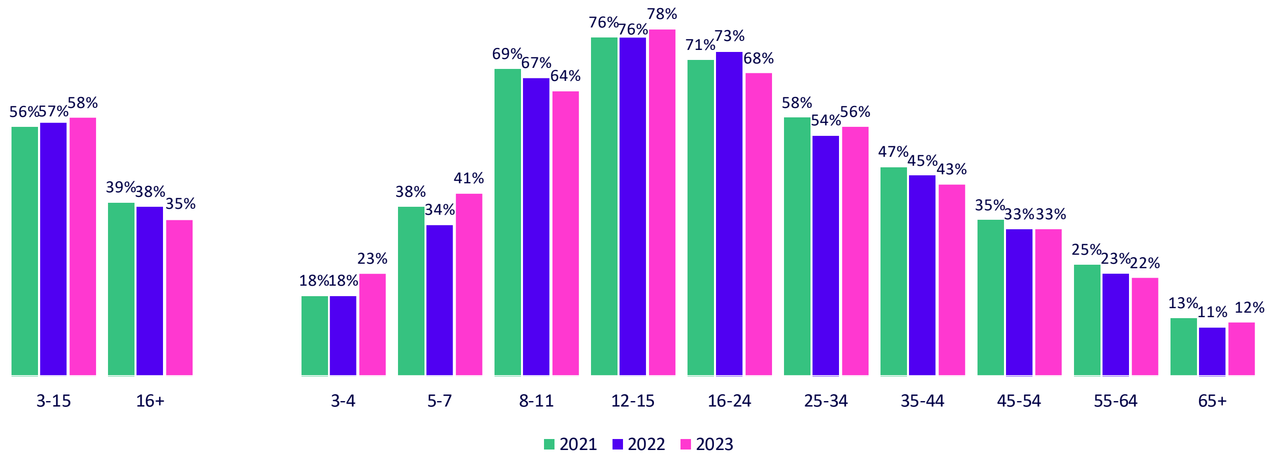
[170] Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023.

[171] The Adults' Media Literacy Tracker Core survey in 2021 had a different methodology due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2023 and 2022, the Core survey combined face-to-face surveys with online surveys, while in 2021 the methodology was postal surveys. Any differences between 2021 and 2023 are therefore indicative only.

[172] Ofcom Children's and Parent's Media Literacy Tracker 2023.

[173] Ofcom Children's Media Lives 2024 report.

**Figure 47: UK individuals who play games online**




*Source: 3-15-year-olds: Ofcom Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker 2021/2022/2023: Online Behaviours and Attitudes survey. Base: All children aged 3-15 (2021: 5,774; 2022: 5,889; 2023: 2,949). 16+: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2021/2022/2023: Core survey. G3A. Do you play games online? (single coded). Base: All adults (2021: 3660; 2022: 3651; 2023: 3643).*

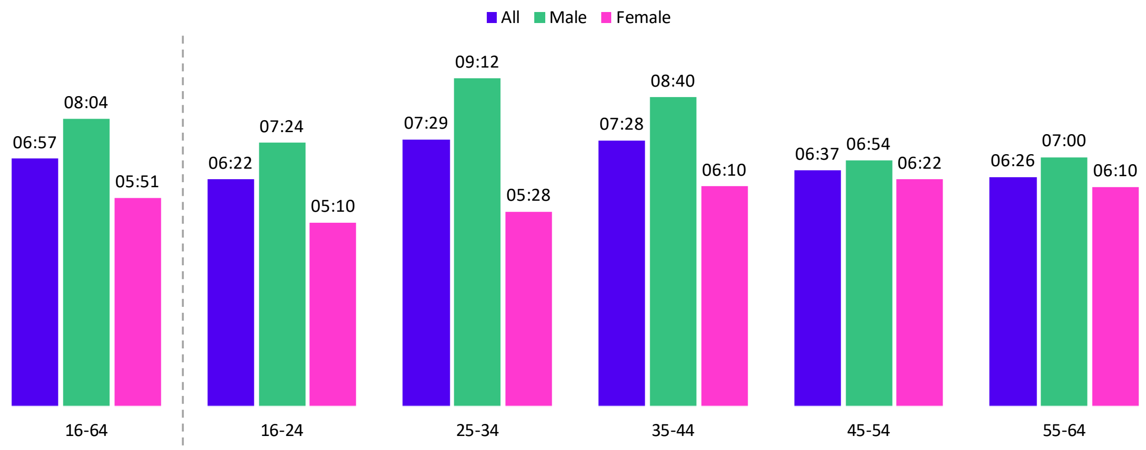
## UK gamers aged 16-64 spent on average almost 7 hours per week gaming

Ampere Analysis research in Q2 2024 found that the time that UK 16-64-year-old gamers reported they spent gaming, either on or offline, had remained fairly stable: from an average of 6 hours 52 minutes a week in Q2 2023 to 6 hours 57 minutes in Q2 2024. Of all the age groups reported on, 25-34-year-olds gamers spent the most time gaming: 7 hours 29 minutes a week, an increase of 38 minutes (+9%) year on year (Q2 2023: 6 hours 51 minutes). Only the 16-24 age group showed a year-on-year decrease in the time spent gaming per week but this was a large fall – down by 18% from 7 hours 47 minutes to 6 hours 22 minutes.[174]

Male gamers aged 16-64 on average spend more time gaming per week than female gamers (8 hours 4 minutes vs 5 hours 51 minutes), and this is particularly apparent among 25-34-year-old gamers: males spend on average 3 hours 44 minutes longer than females per week. However, while average time spent by male gamers aged 16-64 has remained stable, increasing by just 2 minutes (+0.4%) from 8 hours 2 minutes in Q2 2023 to 8 hours 4 minutes in Q2 2024, the time spent by female gamers has increased by 18 minutes (+5%) (Q2 2023: 5 hours 33 minutes). This increase among females is being driven by older adults; younger adults spend less time gaming than in 2023.[175]

[174] Ampere Games – Consumer Q2 2022/Q2 2023/Q2 2024, gamers aged: 16-64, UK.
[175] Ampere Games – Consumer Q2 2022/Q2 2023/Q2 2024, gamers aged: 16-64, UK.

**Figure 48: Average weekly hours spent gaming by UK gamers aged 16-64, by age and gender: Q2 2024**




*Source: Ampere Games – Consumer, Q2 2024, gamers aged: 16-64, UK.*

## PlayStation 5 is the UK's most popular games console, just nudging ahead of Xbox

Overall, 38% of people aged 16+ live in a household with at least one games console, and 22% said that they personally used a console, up from 20% in 2023. PlayStation 5 nudged ahead of Xbox Series X or S as the console most likely to be actively used. Thirty per cent of households with at least one games console have the PlayStation 5, up from 23% in 2023, while 29% have the Xbox Series X or S, an indicative decrease of 4pp.[176] Thirty-four per cent of those aged 16+ who go online play, or have downloaded games, on their phones.[177] Four per cent of UK adults in 2023 play games on a VR headset (3%: 2023), and 16-24-year-olds are more likely than those aged 65+ to do this (9% vs 1%).[178] All these devices can be used to play games online.

Ampere Analysis research found that few gamers played exclusively on one type of device, and the proportion of gamers exclusively using a single device type is in decline. Twenty-three per cent of smartphone gamers played only on a smartphone, down from 26% in Q2 2023; 19% of console gamers played only on a games console, down from 25% in Q2 2023; and 8% of PC gamers played exclusively on PCs, either on or offline.[179]

[176] The decrease in the percentage of respondents with at least one console in the household owning an Xbox Series X and/or S in 2024 is not significant compared to data collected in 2023.
[177] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2023 and 2024. QD3. What games consoles do you or members of your household actively use? QE10. in the last three months, have you or has anyone else in your household used any of these gaming subscription services?
[178] Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023.
[179] Ampere Games – Consumer Q2 2023 and Q2 2024, gamers aged: 16-64, UK.

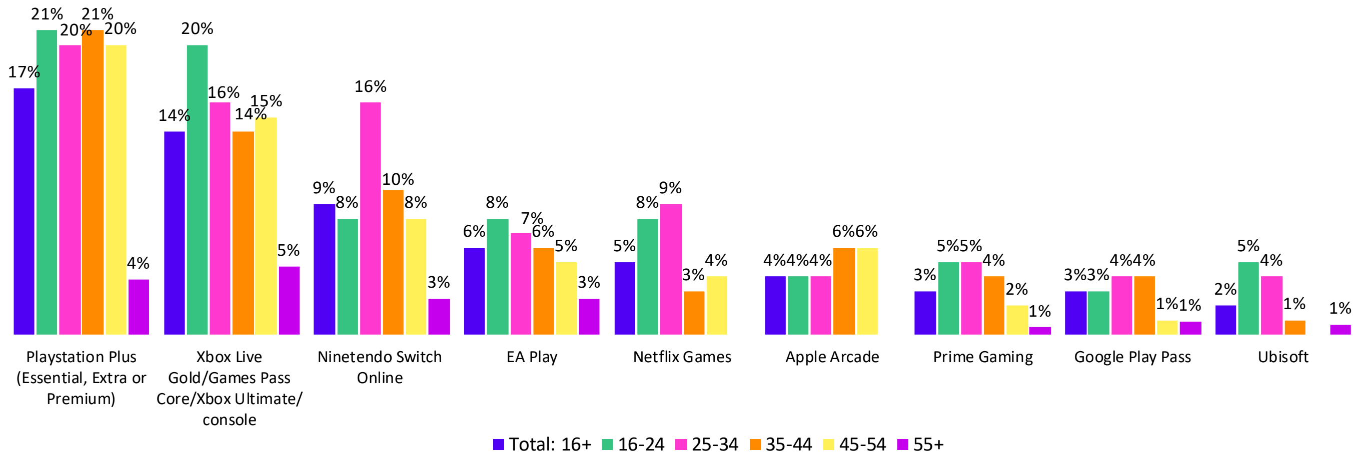
## 36% of gamers subscribe to a gaming subscription service in 2024

Gaming subscription services offer a variety of functionalities to users, such as direct access to gaming catalogues, access at a reduced additional cost and/or online multiplayer functionalities. Some subscription services may also provide access to cloud gaming/streaming. Over a third (36%) of gamers (defined as those who go online to play or download games or have games app on their smartphone) subscribe to a gaming subscription service in 2024. Young gamers are most likely to subscribe to a service, with 45% of 16-24-year-olds saying they used a games subscription, while 12% of 55+ say the same. Male gamers aged 16+ are more likely to subscribe to online gaming services, at 41% vs 30% females.[180]

PlayStation Plus is the most popular gaming subscription service, used by 17% of UK gamers aged 16+. This is closely followed by Xbox subscriptions, used by 14%. Overall, 32% of gamers aged 16+ have a console multiplayer games subscription, with males (38%) more likely to subscribe than females (26%). Males are more likely than females to subscribe to PlayStation plus (20% vs 13%) and Xbox (18% vs 10%). Nintendo Switch online uptake is largely equal by gender, with 9% of males and 8% females saying they subscribe.[181]

Ampere forecasts that in 2024 the UK will spend £5,676m on games content and services, a 0.6% increase on 2023 (£5,644m) having previously risen from £5,560m (1.5%) in 2022. Spend on mobile specifically is forecast to increase from £1,772m in 2023 to £1,888m in 2024, a 6.6% increase. Spend on consoles has been decreasing and Ampere predicts that it will decrease by 4.4% from £2,954m in 2023 to £2,824m in 2024.[182]

**Figure 49: Games subscription services used by UK gamers aged 16+: 2024**




*Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QE10. in the last three months, have you or has anyone else in your household used any of these gaming subscription services? Note: Xbox games pass includes ultimate/console/PC version. 'A game streaming service e.g. Google Stadia, GeForce Now' 1% not shown on chart. Base: age 16+ those who go online to play or download games or have games app on their smartphone (1913).*

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[180] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024. QE10. in the last three months, have you or has anyone else in your household used any of these gaming subscription services?
[181] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2023 and 2024. QE10. in the last three months, have you or has anyone else in your household used any of these gaming subscription services?
[182] Ampere Games – Markets.

## EA Sports FC 24 was the most popular title across PlayStation, Xbox and Steam platforms

EA Sports FC 24[183] was the game with the highest number of active users across Xbox, PlayStation and Steam[184] in the UK in May 2024, at 2.93 million active users. EA Sports FC 24 gamers spent an average of 23 hours on the game during the month. Interestingly, the game was made available to PlayStation Plus Essential subscribers in May and June 2024 to coincide with The UEFA European Football Championship, leading to a 17% surge in monthly active players from April to May 2024. FIFA 23, the former iteration of EA Sports FC, was the top game in May 2023 with 2.99 million users.[185]

Fortnite remains the second most popular game, with its reach slightly decreasing from 2.78 million in May 2023 to 2.65 million in May 2024. Fortnite gamers[186] spent an average of 17 hours in the game in May 2024 across Xbox and PlayStation.[187] Fortnite can also be played on other devices: Ipsos iris found that 241k UK adults visited the Fortnite website in May 2024.[188] Fortnite, Call of Duty HQ and Grand Theft Auto V/Online maintained their year-on-year ranking positions (see Figure 50 below), although Rocket League dropped from fifth to seventh in the ranking. Roblox and Fallout 4 are new entrants to the top ten, with Roblox likely entering the top ten following its launch on PlayStation in October 2023. Fallout 4 likely entered the top ten as a result of the release of the *Fallout* TV series released on Amazon Prime in April 2024.

Five of the top ten titles are free-to-play games, while nine have multiplayer functionalities. All the titles are available on consoles, with the exception of Counter-Strike 2, which is exclusively available on PCs through Steam.[189]

**Figure 50: Top ten games across Xbox, PlayStation and Steam, based on active users in the UK: May 2024**

| Rank | Title | Free-to-play or multiplayer mode available? | Device brand | Active users in May 2023 | Active users in May 2024 | Year-on-year difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **EA Sports FC 24 (FIFA 23 – for May 2023 data)** | Multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation, Steam | 2.99m | 2.93m | - |
| 2 | **Fortnite** | Free-to-play, multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation | 2.78m | 2.65m | -0.13m |
| 3 | **Call of Duty HQ** | Free-to-play, multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation, Steam | 1.80m | 1.76m | -0.04m |
| 4 | **Grand Theft Auto V/Online** | Multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation, Steam | 1.77m | 1.36m | -0.41m |
| 5 | **Minecraft** | Multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation | 1.33m | 1.27m | -0.06m |
| 6 | **Roblox** | Free-to-play, multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation | 0.48m (Xbox only) | 1.22m | +0.74m |

[183] EA Sports FC 24 also available for play on other platforms.
[184] Windows, macOS, and Linux support Steam.
[185] Ampere Games - Analytics, May 2023, May 2024 and June 2024.
[186] Fortnite is not available via Steam.
[187] Ampere Games - Analytics, May 2024
[188] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[189] Ampere Games - Analytics, May 2024

| Rank | Title | Free-to-play or multiplayer mode available? | Device brand | Active users in May 2023 | Active users in May 2024 | Year-on-year difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **7** | **Rocket League** | Free-to-play, multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation | 1.46m | 1.11m | -0.35m |
| **8** | **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege** | Multiplayer | Xbox, PlayStation, Steam | 0.71m | 0.83m | +0.12m |
| **9** | **Fallout 4** | | Xbox, PlayStation, Steam | 0.12m | 0.67m | +0.55m |
| **10** | **Counter-Strike 2** | Free-to-play, multiplayer | Steam | 0.83m | 0.61m | -0.22m |

*Source: Ampere Games - Analytics, May 2024. Active users by accounts, so it is per user/account. The user does need to be connected to the internet to be measured, but they do not need to playing a game online to be tracked. This data exclusively measures active users on games, and could differ from other market data, such as sales volume. Green boxes indicate year-on-year increase, red boxes decrease.*

## Candy Crush Saga remains the mobile game with the highest adult audience, but Roblox and Monopoly GO! are gaining users

Thirty-six per cent of UK smartphone users aged 16+ use at least one games app on their smartphone, down 3pp from 39% in 2023.[190] Candy Crush Saga remained the highest-reaching games app across smartphone and tablets, visited by 2.2 million adults in May 2024, a fall of 305k adults year on year (May 2023: 2.5m). Twenty-six per cent of Candy Crush Saga's adult audience were aged 55-64 – its largest age cohort, while 18-24s made up its smallest age cohort (5%). Roblox continued to gain users and became the second most popular games app among UK adults in May 2024. The Roblox website and app combined reached 5% (2.4m) UK online adults across computers, smartphones and tablets. Monopoly GO! has continued its growth since launch in 2023, almost doubling its audience in the past year, and rising to the fifth spot. Crossword Puzzle Redstone is a new entrant to the top ten, attracting 900k adults in May 2024, reaching just under 2% of online adults. Taking the top ten high-reaching games apps in May 2024 together, their combined adult audience reach skewed towards women, who made up 60% of the adult audience (men: 40%). All of the top ten high-reaching games apps skewed towards women.[191]

[190] Ofcom Technology Tracker 2023 and 2024. QM15. Do you use any of the following types of apps on your smartphone?
[191] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 51: UK online adult reach and average time spent per visitor of top ten reaching gaming apps on mobile devices: May 2024**

| May 2024 rank by reach | Gaming app | Adult audience in month | | | | Online adult reach in May 2024 | Average time spent per day by visitor in month (mins:secs) | | | Adult gender composition in May 2024 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | May 2022 | May 2023 | May 2024 | Year-on-year change | | May 2023 | May 2024 | Year-on-year change | Men | Women |
| **1** | **Candy Crush Saga** | 2.13m | 2.54m | 2.23m | -305k | 4.7% | 23:46 | 15:37 | -08:10 | 30% | 70% |
| **2** | **Roblox** | 1.26m | 1.63m | 1.90m | +276k | 4.0% | 14:53 | 20:53 | +06:00 | 42% | 58% |
| **3** | **Royal Match** | 0.70m | 1.98m | 1.88m | -101k | 4.0% | 10:27 | 11:52 | +01:26 | 35% | 65% |
| **4** | **Pokémon GO** | 1.62m | 1.87m | 1.72m | -149k | 3.6% | 27:35 | 22:53 | -04:42 | 43% | 57% |
| **5** | **Monopoly GO!** | - | 0.90m | 1.71m | +813k | 3.6% | 11:51 | 25:06 | + 13:15 | 41% | 59% |
| **6** | **Solitaire - Grand Harvest** | 1.47m | 1.52m | 1.33m | -186k | 2.8% | 17:08 | 11:17 | -05:51 | 23% | 77% |
| **7** | **Dominoes - Classic Edition** | - | 1.44m | 1.23m | -209k | 2.6% | 00:19 | 00:11 | -00:08 | 44% | 56% |
| **8** | **Wordscapes** | 0.88m | 1.11m | 1.22m | +112k | 2.6% | 13:47 | 15:09 | +01:22 | 29% | 71% |
| **9** | **Coin Master** | 1.03m | 1.45m | 1.10m | -352k | 2.3% | 11:33 | 23:22 | +11:49 | 47% | 53% |
| **10** | **Crossword Puzzle Redstone** | - | - | 0.90m | - | 1.9% | - | 04:07 | - | 33% | 67% |

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Dashes represent where data is unavailable for the time period. Time spent based on monthly average time per visitor in month divided by number of days in month. Green boxes indicate year-on-year increase, red boxes decrease.*

# Retail

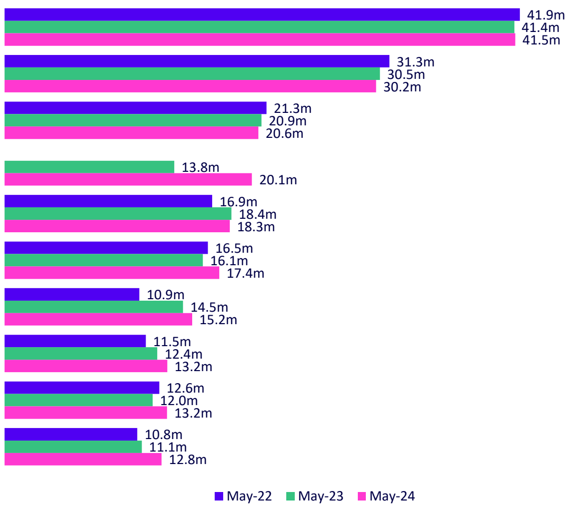
Online retail services allow users to purchase goods or services directly from a website or app. Users can typically browse, search, and pay for products through the service. Some retail services also allow users to review products and post messages. Online marketplaces such as eBay and Etsy allow users to buy and sell goods or services. They often allow users or providers to create pages that advertise their products. Users can often search for content and send direct messages to other users. Retail services generate revenue via a range of revenue streams including sales, hosting third-party sellers, subscriptions and advertising.

## On an average day 35% of UK online adults visited Amazon, the UK's leading online retailer

Eighty-eight per cent (41.5m) of UK online adults visited Amazon in May 2024, consistent with the same period in the previous two years (May 2022: 88%, May 2023: 87%). On average, 16.4 million (35%) UK online adults visited Amazon per day in May 2024. On the 16th-17th July 2024 Amazon held its annual Prime Day deal event, offering personalised deals for Prime members. Amazon experienced an increase in adult reach on these two days with 48% (22.8m) and 45% (21.5m) of UK online adults visiting Amazon on the 16th and 17th of July respectively; in comparison, the average reach of online adult visitors per day in July (excluding Prime Days) was 37% (17.5m).[192] In 2023, Amazon's total UK sales revenues for its activities in the UK amounted to £26.37bn (2022: £24.96bn) a 5.65% year-on-year increase.[193]

**Figure 52: UK online adult audience and average time spent per visitor for top ten high-reaching retail services in May 2024: May each year 2022- 2024 (millions)**

| | May 2024 | |
|---|---|---|
| Retail service | Average time spent per visitor (hours:minutes) | UK online adult reach % |
| Amazon | 02:16 | 88% |
| eBay | 01:27 | 64% |
| Apple | 00:20 | 43% |
| Temu | 01:25 | 42% |
| Tesco | 00:26 | 39% |
| Argos | 00:11 | 37% |
| ASDA | 00:23 | 32% |
| Marks & Spencer | 00:19 | 28% |
| Boots | 00:09 | 28% |
| Lidl | 00:24 | 27% |



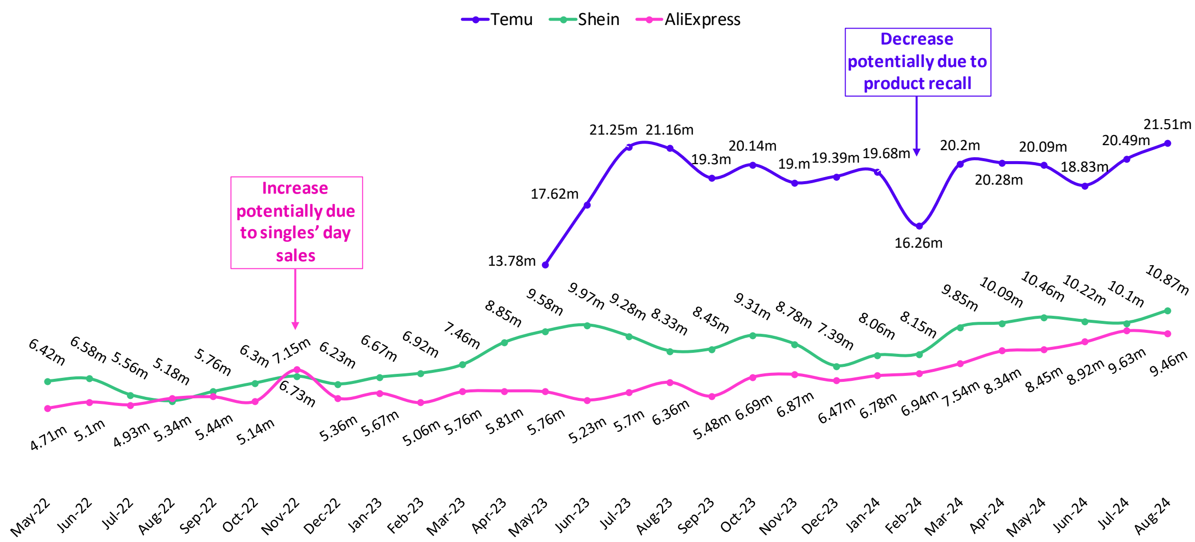

*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: custom defined list by Ofcom. No data for Temu in 2022 as it launched in April 2023.*

[192] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.
[193] Amazon SEC Form 10K filing, 31 Dec 2023. Note: currency converted from USD to GBP using Bank of England exchange rates for 30 Dec 2022 and 29 Dec 2023.

## Chinese-owned Temu, AliExpress and Shein are the fastest-growing online retail services in the UK

As reported in our Online Nation 2023 report, Chinese e-commerce company Temu experienced rapid growth in the first few months after its launch in April 2023. Temu peaked in July 2023 at 45% (21.2 m) UK online adult reach, and has since remained relatively stable (apart from an outlier dip to 16.3m in February 2024, possibly related to a prominent product recall on safety grounds).[194] By May 2024, Temu reached 42% (20.1m) of UK online adults (May 2023: 29%, 13.8m). Two other relatively new China-based entrants to the sector appeared in the top 20 retail services: fast fashion retailer Shein was the 14th highest-reaching online retailer, reaching 22% (10.5m) of UK online adults in May 2024, an increase of 63% (+4.0m) since May 2022 (13%, 6.4m). AliExpress was the 17th most-visited online retail service, reaching 18% (8.4m) of UK online adults, an increase of 47% (+2.7m) on May 2023 (5.8m), and 79% (+3.7m) on May 2022 (4.7m).[195] UK users may be attracted to the competitive pricing offered by these Chinese retailers as households navigate the cost-of-living crisis.

**Figure 53: UK online adult reach of AliExpress, Temu and Shein, by month: May 2022 – August 2024**




*Source: Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Measurement Service, (BG) AliExpress, (BG) Temu and (BG) Shein, monthly: May 2022 – August 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.*

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[194] BBC, [TikTok and Temu pull cheap heaters after testing revealed fire risk](), 9 February 2024.
[195] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Measurement Service, May 2022, May 2023 and May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

## eBay is the most popular online marketplace, followed by Facebook Marketplace

In recent years there has been a rise in the use of online marketplaces where users buy, sell or exchange goods from other users of the platform and can interact with these users. Ofcom research found that 75% of the UK online population aged 16+ said they had used an online marketplace[196] in Q2 2024, with 57% using eBay.[197] As seen in Figure 52 above, eBay was the second-highest-reaching retail service overall among UK adults in May 2024.[198] Facebook Marketplace[199] was the second-most-used online marketplace in our survey (40%).[200]

Launched in 2014, Vinted grew significantly during the pandemic, potentially driven by users having a clear-out. In May 2022 10% (4.8m) of UK online adults visited Vinted, by May 2023 this had doubled to 20% (9.4m), and then rose to 24% (11.4m) by May 2024. In comparison, eBay's reach has remained stable over the past three years. In May 2024, eBay's adult gender composition was evenly split (men: 49% vs women 51%), but Vinted skewed heavily towards women (78% vs 22% men) as did both Depop and Etsy (both 66% women vs 34% men). A quarter (25%) of Vinted's adult audience was aged 25-34, its largest age cohort, followed closely by 35-44s, at 23% (18-24s: 14%). Depop's adult audience mostly consisted of 18-24 year-olds (44%) followed by 25-34s (27%).[201]

While the most popular activity undertaken on online marketplaces in Q2 2024 was to browse the service (66%), a third of UK online aged 16+ said that they had communicated with a buyer or seller.[202]

[196] Based on response in use of eight online marketplaces: Ebay, Facebook Marketplace, Etsy, Vinted, Depop, Vestaire Collective, Shpock and Poshmark

[197] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

[198] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Measurement Service, (BG) eBay, May 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

[199] Ipsos iris does not report on Facebook Marketplace as it is encompassed within the overall Facebook platform.

[200] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

[201] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Measurement Service, (BG) eBay, Vinted, Etsy and Depop, May 2022/2023/2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

[202] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

**Figure 54: UK top five online marketplaces and activities undertaken, internet users aged 16+: Q2 2024**

| | | Activities undertaken on marketplace as proportion of all UK internet users aged 16+ | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Online marketplace | UK online 16+ who said they used service in Q2 2024 | I have browsed the service | I have posted items for sale | I have purchased items | I have interacted/ chatted with a buyer/seller |
| Ebay | 57% | 45% | 14% | 35% | 15% |
| Facebook Marketplace | 40% | 34% | 14% | 11% | 13% |
| Etsy | 36% | 29% | 2% | 18% | 7% |
| Vinted | 31% | 24% | 15% | 17% | 14% |
| Depop | 10% | 7% | 3% | 3% | 3% |

*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 11: Thinking about the past three months (i.e. since the start of April)... Which, if any, of the following activities have you taken part in on the listed online marketplaces during this time? (Please select all that apply). Responses for Vestiaire Collective, Poshmark, and Shpock not shown. 'Something else' responses not shown. Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2100).*

# Cloud storage

Cloud storage services allow users to store digital content, such as documents, photos and other images and videos online. The content is transferred and accessible via the internet. Users can share access to the digital content with others through weblinks (such as unique URLs or hyperlinks) that lead directly to the content, or by inviting other users to access the content. Some services allow users to edit digital content in real time alongside other users. Some services employ subscription models to generate revenue, while others use online advertising.

## Fifty-seven per cent of UK internet users aged 16+ said they had used a cloud storage service in the past week

Ofcom's survey conducted on 2-3 July 2024 found that 57% of UK internet users aged 16+ said they had used a cloud storage service in the past week. Younger people were more likely than older adults to have done this (16-24: 81% vs 55+: 36%). Overall, 77% said they had used a cloud storage service in the past year. Google Drive was the most popular service, used by half of UK internet users aged 16+ in the past year (see Figure 56). Most of those using Google Drive used it for personal reasons (78%), followed by 27% for work and 14% for study; 43% of 16-24-year-olds who used Google Drive used it for reasons related to study. Microsoft OneDrive was equally likely to be used for work or study with 51% saying they had used it for work in the past year and 51% for study. Most

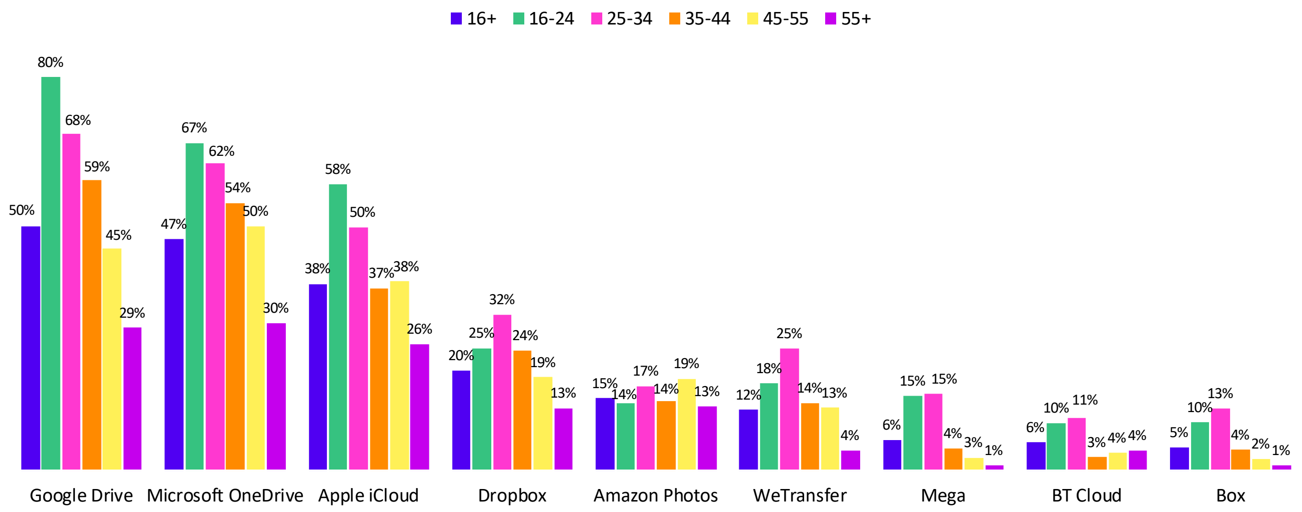
(92%) Apple iCloud users had used the service for personal reasons the past year, while 8% said they used it for work and 5% for study.[203]

**Figures 55: UK internet users aged 16+ who used a cloud storage service in the past year (July 2023 - June 2024)**

| Age: | 16+ | 16-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **UK internet users who have used a cloud storage service in the past year** | 77% | 95% | 90% | 84% | 79% | 61% |

*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 1: Which, if any, of the following statements best describes when you last used each of the listed cloud storage services? Those who selected in the past week/in the past month/in the past year. Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2100).*

**Figures 56: UK internet users aged 16+ who have used selected cloud storage services in the past year: July 2023 – June 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 1: Which, if any, of the following statements best describes when you last used each of the listed cloud storage services? Those who selected in the past week/in the past month/in the past year. Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2100).*

[203] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

## Three in ten Google Drive users have shared content or weblinks from Google Drive with others in the past year

File storage was the most popular reason for using cloud storage services across all our surveyed cloud storage services except for WeTransfer, the online file transfer service, on which, unsurprisingly, the most-used functionality was sharing content or weblinks with others (64%). Collaborating on shared files was the second most popular functionality cited by Microsoft OneDrive users (37%), the highest user proportion to cite this functionality across all the cloud storage services surveyed. [204]

**Figure 57: Features and functionalities of selected cloud storage services used by UK internet users aged 16+ (July 2023 – June 2024)**

| | | Among those who used service in the past year | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | UK internet users aged 16+ who have used service | Cloud file storage (e.g. documents, photos and videos) | Sharing content and/or weblinks with others | Commenting on or reacting to content shared by others | Collaborating on shared files (e.g. editing documents) |
| Google Drive | 50% | 77% | 30% | 11% | 30% |
| Microsoft OneDrive | 47% | 75% | 32% | 15% | 37% |
| Apple iCloud | 38% | 88% | 11% | 7% | 8% |
| Dropbox | 20% | 57% | 40% | 9% | 16% |
| Amazon Photos | 15% | 73% | 14% | 11% | 8% |
| WeTransfer | 12% | 18% | 64% | 10% | 16% |
| Mega | 6% | 42% | 36% | 21% | 18% |
| BT Cloud | 6% | 45% | 30% | 26% | 16% |
| Box | 5% | 40% | 38% | 29% | 33% |

*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Question 3: What features and functionalities do you typically use? Responses for 'some other feature or functionality' not shown. 'Don't know' responses also not shown. Base: UK internet users age 16+ who have used selected cloud storage services in past 12 months (96-1028).*

## Apple iCloud+ is the most popular paid cloud storage service subscribed to by UK households

A quarter (26%) of UK internet users aged 16+ said their household had access to a paid Apple iCloud subscription. The most popular Apple iCloud subscription is the paid Apple iCloud+ 50GB of storage

[204] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

tier, cited by 15% of UK internet users aged 16+, followed by the free 5GB tier (9%), the 200GB tier (8%) and the 2TB tier (3%).[205] Google's free 15GB cloud storage tier was the most popular Google subscription, cited by 22%, followed by the basic 100GB tier (9%) and the Google subscription provided by work or educational institutions (4%). Microsoft OneDrive access was the most likely to be provided by work or educational institutions (14%), followed by the free 5GB version (12%) and then the Microsoft 365 Basic (100GB) or Personal (1TB) tiers, both cited by 5% of UK internet users aged 16+.[206]

### Figure 58: UK internet users aged 16+ reporting that their household has access to a cloud storage subscription service

| | Apple iCloud(+) | Google OneDrive | Microsoft OneDrive |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Any subscription (free or paid)** | 36% | 40% | 39% |
| **Any paid subscription** | 26% | 14% | 13% |

*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024. Questions 4-6: Which, if any, of the following [cloud storage service] subscriptions that allow access to additional storage and features, do you or anyone else in your household currently have access to? Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2100).*

[205] Other tiers also included in survey, each cited by less than 0.5%. See Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[206] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces, July 2024, age: 16+, UK.

# 5. The online experience

## Introduction

This chapter looks at adults' and children's experiences of being online and focuses both on the positive and beneficial experiences people have, and on the potentially harmful content or behaviour they encounter. Where possible, the chapter examines adults' and children's online experiences separately.[207]

### A note on research methodology and terminology regarding 'potential harms'

Although being online provides adults and children with many benefits, the online environment also has the potential to expose internet users to harm. Not all occurrences of potentially harmful content or behaviour online result in actual psychological (or financial) harm, so in this chapter they are referred to as 'potential harms'.

The data relating to type and prevalence of potential harm refers to responses from internet users encountering a 'potential harm' in the four weeks before completing Ofcom's Online Experiences Tracker (OET) survey. Further OET data relating to the location and impact of, and response to a potential harm relate to the 'most recently encountered potential harm', indicating the most recent potentially harmful content encountered by respondents in the four weeks before completing the survey. To capture this data, survey respondents are prompted with a list of potential harms, and their responses are based on their recall and judgement of the content and behaviours which they consider align with those listed in the questionnaire.

The list of harms in the OET questionnaire covers content that is potentially harmful to children, falling within the scope of the Online Safety Act, and also extends to other types of content and behaviour, in order to capture a wider range of experiences online.[208] The data is also based on users' own categorisations of platform type, so reference to platform type in this chapter may not align with the categorisation of platform type referenced in the earlier chapters or within the Online Safety Act. Differences explored among subgroups, compared to the average internet user or total, refers to UK internet users aged 13+. Unless otherwise stated, the data has been significance tested at a 95% or 99% confidence interval.

In addition to data collected from the OET, we include data from Ofcom's Video Sharing Platforms (VSP) Tracker, which explored awareness of platform 'rules', and users' expectations about the online content and behaviour they encounter.[209]

[207] Unless referenced otherwise, the figures cited throughout this chapter are from our OET data. The data are referred to as follows: June 2023 (published Oct 2023); January 2024 (published April 2024) and June 2024 (published October 2024). Publication dates differ, so in this report we refer to the date when the fieldwork for each wave was carried out.

[208] A full list of potential harms used to prompt participants can be found in the questionnaire.

[209] Please note, when we refer to potential harms for the VSP tracker data, this is defined within our survey as videos that are perceived by users as 'violent, abusive or inappropriate.'

## The benefits and drawbacks of the internet

### In June 2024, two-thirds of adults believed the benefits of being online outweighed the risks, although the proportion was declining

Ofcom's OET found that, when asked to consider the impact of being online, the majority (67%) of adult internet users agreed that for them personally, the benefits of being online outweighed the risks, with just 7% disagreeing. Although the majority recognised the benefits, the proportion doing so had decreased since the previous two waves of the tracker, from 71% in June 2023 and 68% in January 2024. Over the past year, users have become increasingly more likely to say they feel 'neutral' on the topic (June 2023: 23% vs June 2024: 26%).

Certain demographic groups of adults were *less* likely than the average to say that the benefits outweighed the risks; as seen in the June 2024 data this includes women (65%), 18-24-year-olds (59%), age 65+ (64%), C2DE (62%) and those from minority ethnic groups (62%). Only half of adults who identify as Muslim thought the benefits outweighed the risks – the lowest proportion of any demographic group where data was available. Young adults (11%) and minority ethnic (10%) groups were also more likely than average to believe the risks outweighed the benefits.

**Figure 59: Adults' attitudes towards the personal benefits and risks of going online: *'The benefits of going online outweigh the risks'* vs. '*For me personally, the risks of going online outweigh the benefits*': June 2024**

| Demographic groups | | Benefits outweigh risks | Neutral | Risks outweigh benefits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | Adults age 18+ | 67% | 26% | 7% |
| **Gender** | Women | 65% | 28% | 7% |
| | Men | 70% | 23% | 7% |
| **Age** | 18-24 | 59% | 29% | 11% |
| | 25-34 | 70% | 22% | 8% |
| | 35-44 | 72% | 23% | 5% |
| | 45-54 | 69% | 26% | 5% |
| | 55-64 | 67% | 28% | 5% |
| | 65+ | 64% | 29% | 7% |
| **Socio-economic group (SEG)** | ABC1 | 71% | 22% | 6% |
| | C2DE | 62% | 31% | 7% |
| **Ethnicity** | White | 70% | 24% | 5% |
| | Minority ethnic | 62% | 29% | 10% |
| **Sexual orientation** | Heterosexual | 67% | 26% | 7% |
| | Gay or lesbian | 78% | 19% | 4% |
| | Bisexual | 75% | 20% | 5% |
| **Any limiting or impacting condition** | Yes | 66% | 27% | 7% |
| | No | 70% | 24% | 6% |

*Sig greater than total at 95% confidence* *Sig lower than total at 95% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q1. 'For me personally, the benefits of going online outweigh the risks' vs. 'For me personally, the risks of going online outweigh the benefits' Base: UK internet users, aged 18+ (7280).*

## Most adult internet users felt they had a good balance between their online and offline lives, yet many still had strategies in place for managing the amount of time that they spend online

In June 2024, Ofcom's OET survey found that 67% of adult internet users felt they had a good balance between their online and offline lives, with this proportion remaining stable year on year (June 2023: 67%). Despite the majority feeling that they had a good balance between their online and offline lives, our Adult Media Literacy survey found that more than two-thirds (68%) of adult users had strategies in place for managing their online time and wellbeing: 27% of adults set aside time for themselves when they are not online, 26% of adults disable notifications on devices or use 'do not disturb', and 21% of adults chose not to take devices such as phones and tablets to bed with them.[210]

Although a small proportion of adult users felt that they did not have a good balance between their online and offline lives (14%), young adults were more likely to disagree than older adults (18-24 year olds: 21% vs 55+: 7%). Young adults' concerns may be linked to their social media use: Ofcom's Adults' Media Literacy Tracker found that 48% of social media-using 16-24-year-olds thought they spent too much time on social media compared to just 8% of those aged 65+ (all 16+: 28%).[211]

## Almost half of children aged 8-15 were worried about how much time they spent online

Ofcom's screentime poll conducted in March 2024 found that 43% of children aged 8-15 in Great Britain said they had tried to spend less time online on at least one type of online app or service, directly reflecting the 44% of 8-15-year-olds who said they were concerned about how much time they spent on at least one type of service online.[212]

Children's concerns about time spent online increased with age, with 35% of 8-9-year-olds, 46% of 10-12-year-olds, and 51% of 13-15-year-olds reporting concern about how much time they spent on at least one service type. The online services that 8-15-year-old users were particularly concerned about were video-sharing platforms (VSPs, 23%), online games (23%), and social media (20%).[213]

When asked why they were concerned about spending too much time online, most children said the mental (49%) and physical (46%) health effects of spending time online, followed by concerns about homework (38%), and relationships with their family members (29%).[214]

Boys in Great Britain were more likely than girls to be concerned about spending too much time gaming (25% vs 20%); and were also more likely to have tried to reduce time spent gaming (23% vs 16%). Of those children who said they had tried to reduce time spent on at least one service type, 15% said they had never been successful. The most selected reason for why it was difficult to reduce time spent was they '*felt like [they were] missing out'* (53%), followed by wanting to '*stay connected with friends and family'* (35%), and they '*needed to find out information about something'* (23%). Almost half (46%) of the children reported that they had received a notification prompting them to log back in.[215]

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[210] Ofcom, Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023.
[211] Ofcom, Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023.
[212] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Children's screentime, March 2024, age: 8-15, GB.
[213] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Children's screentime, March 2024, age: 8-15, GB.
[214] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Children's screentime, March 2024, age: 8-15, GB.
[215] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Children's screentime, March 2024, age: 8-15, GB.

## Being online was seen to provide a wide range of personal opportunities for internet users, and gave some a voice they felt they may not have offline

Ofcom's research showed how being online can provide adults with opportunities for connection, education, entertainment and creativity. Seven in ten adults (72%) agreed that being online had helped them to learn a new skill, and 77% agreed that being online had helped them broaden their understanding or view of the world.[216]

For children, access to the online world provides opportunities for socialising and connecting with their friends. For example, 81% of all 3-17-year-olds used apps for messaging and voice/video calls, indicating a strong affinity for interacting with others online. For children aged 12-17, other benefits reported included helping them with school/homework (80%), finding useful information about any problems they may have (59%) and learning a new skill (52%).[217]

Further to this, 40% of internet users aged 13+ in June 2024 said they can '*share their opinions and have a voice*' more easily or effectively online than offline, up from 37% in June 2023. Demographic groups particularly likely to agree with this were children aged 13-17 (50%), adults aged 18-24 (54%) and 25-34s (47%), minority ethnic (54%), Muslims (53%) and those with a limiting or impacting condition (44%). Men (44%) were more likely to agree with this statement than women (36%).

In addition, more users agreed that they '*feel more free to be themselves online'* at 32% in June 2024 compared to 28% in June 2023; and more users (34%) said that being online had a '*positive overall effect on their mental health*' compared to June 2023 (32%).

## Although most users felt that the benefits outweighed the risks for them personally, only 40% agreed that the internet is good for society

While two-thirds (67%) of adult internet users said the benefits of being online outweighed the risks for them personally, only two-fifths (40%) agreed with the statement that the internet is '*good for society*'. A minority (15%) said that the internet is '*damaging society*' and 45% said they felt neutral on the subject.

Male users were more likely than female users to say the internet is good for society, minority ethnic more likely than white, and those with a limiting or impacting condition more likely than those without.

[216] Ofcom, Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2023.
[217] Ofcom, Children and Parents: media use and attitudes report, 2024.

**Figure 60: Online adults' attitudes towards the positives and negatives of the internet for society: *'The internet is good for society'* vs. *'The internet is damaging to society'* by demographic: June 2024**

| Demographic groups | | Internet is good for society | Neutral | Internet is damaging society |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | Adults 18+ | 40% | 45% | 15% |
| **Gender** | Women | 34% | 50% | 16% |
| | Men | 47% | 39% | 14% |
| **Age** | 18-24 | 39% | 43% | 19% |
| | 25-34 | 43% | 42% | 14% |
| | 35-44 | 40% | 45% | 16% |
| | 45-54 | 40% | 45% | 15% |
| | 55-64 | 37% | 47% | 16% |
| | 65+ | 39% | 46% | 15% |
| **Socio-Economic Group (SEG)** | ABC1 | 42% | 44% | 14% |
| | C2DE | 36% | 46% | 18% |
| **Ethnicity** | White | 39% | 45% | 16% |
| | Minority ethnic | 42% | 43% | 15% |
| **Sexual orientation** | Heterosexual | 40% | 45% | 15% |
| | Gay or lesbian | 49% | 38% | 12% |
| | Bisexual | 43% | 43% | 14% |
| **Limiting or impacting condition** | Yes | 36% | 47% | 18% |
| | No | 43% | 43% | 14% |

*Sig greater than total at 95% confidence* *Sig lower than total at 95% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q1. 'The internet is good for society vs. The internet is damaging to society.' Base: UK internet users, aged 18+ (7280).*

## There are high levels of concern about online harms, with concern levels higher among women than men

In June 2024, 97% of adult users were concerned about at least one of the online harms that we asked them about, in line with June 2023 (97%) and January 2023 (96%). Online teens aged 13-17 (90%) were less likely to be concerned about potential harms online compared to those aged 18+ (97%), though online teens were not shown codes for some of the most serious potential harms online.[218] Women tended to be more concerned than men (98% vs 97%), and teenage girls tended to be more concerned than teenage boys (94% vs 86%).

In June 2024, adult users were most concerned about child sexual abuse content. Between June 2023 and June 2024, concern about these potential harms remained relatively consistent, but in June 2024 adult women were significantly more concerned than men about some potential online harms, particularly extremism (87% vs 77%), human trafficking (86% vs 76%), suicide content (86% vs 77%), female genital mutilation content (85% vs 74%) and hateful or offensive content (83% vs

[218] Child respondents to the OET are not shown the following response codes: Content depicting the sexual abuse […] of children; Promotion of female genital mutilation; Content which advertises prostitution […]; Content facilitating human trafficking.

67%). There were no specific online harms where concern levels were higher for men than for women.

Suicide remained a major concern for users aged 13-17, with 70% concerned in June 2024, up from 64% in January. Concerns about threats to share, or the sharing of intimate images (64%), and extremism (63%) had also increased among 13-17-year-olds compared to January 2024 (53% for both). In June 2024, girls aged 13-17 were significantly more likely to be concerned about a number of potential online harms than boys of the same age, including sexual or pornographic content (67% vs 48%), misogynistic content (60% vs 51%), content depicting violence or injury (64% vs 52%), content promoting self-harm (75% vs 59%), and content promoting excessive or unhealthy dieting/exercise (51% vs 37%). Boys of the same age were less likely to be concerned about most of the harms listed, and significantly less so for those listed above.

**Figure 61: The five potential harms with the highest levels of concern among online adults and 13-17s, based on the percentage who rated their concern level as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.**

| Adults' concerns, top 5 | Jun 2023 | Jan 2024 | Jun 2024 | Children's (13-17) concerns, top 5 | Jun 2023 | Jan 2024 | Jun 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children | 89% | 87% | 88% | Content promoting suicide | 66% | 64% | 70% |
| Content encouraging extremism | 82% | 80% | 81% | Content depicting animal cruelty | 67% | 64% | 68% |
| Content facilitating human trafficking | 81% | 80% | 81% | Content promoting self-harm | 61% | 61% | 67% |
| Content promoting suicide | 80% | 79% | 81% | Persistent bullying online | 60% | 62% | 65% |
| Content depicting animal cruelty | 80% | 77% | 79% | Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content | 60% | 56% | 61% |

*Sig greater wave-on-wave at 99% confidence* *Sig lower wave-on-wave at 99% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2023 Q7. Below is a list of things that someone may come across on the internet. Please tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means 'mildly concerned' and 5 means 'very concerned', A net was created combining 4 and 5 to demonstrate high concern. Base: UK internet users 18+ (June 2023: 13205, January 2024: 7068, June 2024: 7280) and 13-17s (June 2023: 976, January 2024: 543, June 2024: 557).*

# Internet users' encounters with potential harm online

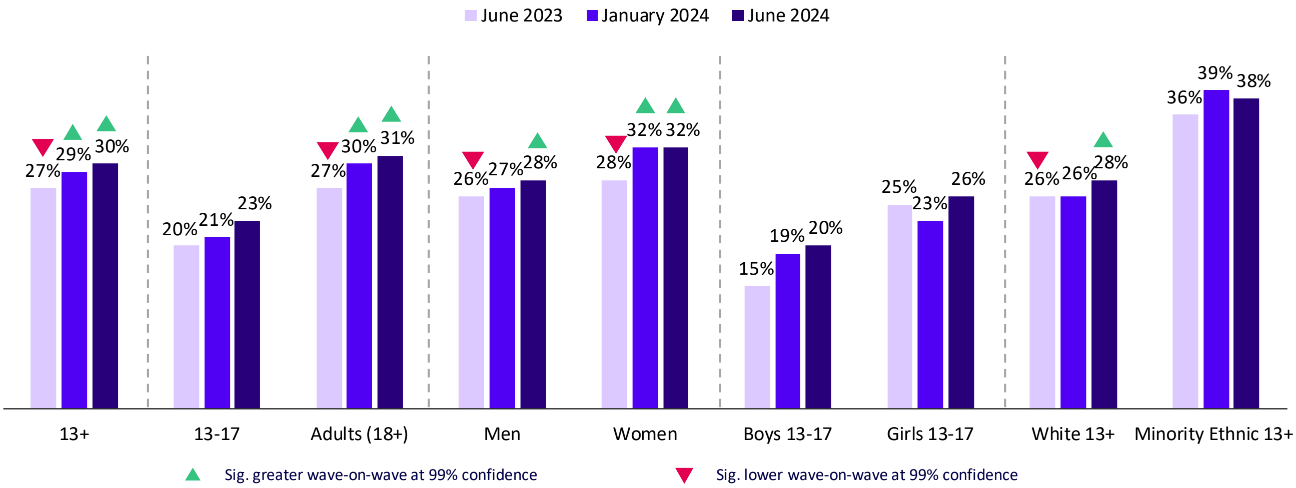
## More internet users spontaneously claimed to have recently seen something upsetting online, compared to the previous year

In June 2024 three in ten (30%) UK internet users aged 13+ said they had seen something (unspecified at this stage in the survey) in the last four weeks that made them feel uncomfortable, upset or negative, a 3pp increase since June 2023 (27%). When examining differences within groups of users, we found that 18-24-year-old users (45%) were more likely to say this than most other age groups; and minority ethnic individuals (38%) were 10pp more likely than white internet users (28%).

Similarly, those identifying as LGB+[219] (48%) were 20pp more likely than heterosexuals to say this (28%).

The higher amount of time users aged 13+ said they spent online per week (outside of work or school), the more likely they were to say that they saw something uncomfortable, upsetting or negative online. High volume users, (saying they spent above 23 hours online a week), were significantly more likely (35%) than medium volume users (6-22 hours, 29%) and low volume users (less than 6 hours, 24%), to have encountered something upsetting or negative online in the last four weeks.

**Figure 62: Proportion of UK users who had encountered something uncomfortable, upsetting or negative online in the last four weeks, by demographic**




*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q6a Thinking back over the last 4 weeks, did you come across anything on the internet that made you feel uncomfortable, upset or negative in any way? Base: UK internet users 13+ (June 2023: 14181, January 2024: 7611, June 2024:7837).*

Although there have been year-on-year increases across most age groups in those reporting seeing something upsetting or negative online, child users aged 13-17 generally report this at lower levels (20% in June 2023; 23% in June 2024) than adult users (27% in June 2023; 31% in June 2024). In particular, boys aged 13-17 were the group least likely to say they had seen something upsetting or negative, at 20% in June 2024, although the proportion of boys saying this increased 5pp year-on-year (June 2023: 15%). By comparison, in June 2024 26% of girls said they saw something upsetting or negative, remaining stable year-on-year (June 2023: 25%). Teen users with limiting and impacting conditions, including mental health conditions, were particularly likely to say they had seen something upsetting or negative, at 32% (no limited and impacting condition: 19%).

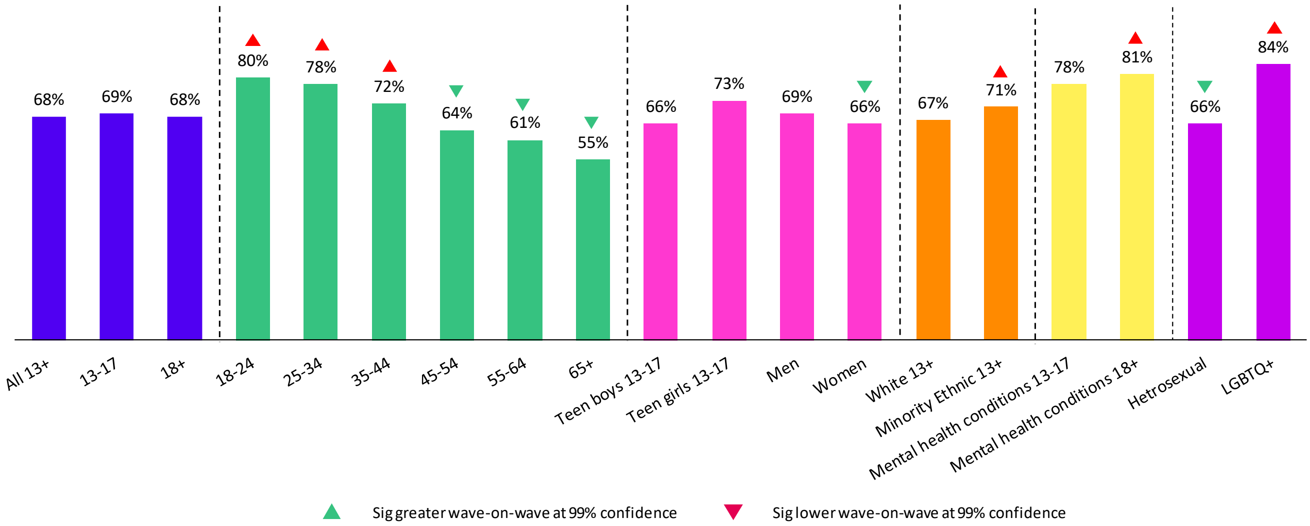
[219] Note: This group is a NET of sexual orientation codes, including lesbian, gay and bisexual, and does not cover gender identity.

## The proportion of users (68%) who had seen at least one or more harms from a list of 47 potential harms remained the same as in previous surveys

Moving from claimed encounters with unspecified 'uncomfortable, upsetting or negative' potential harms to claimed encounters with any potential online harms from a list of 47, in June 2024 68% of users aged 13+ said they had encountered at least one potential harm in the past four weeks, the same proportion as reported in June 2023 and in January 2024. Users aged 13+ in Scotland were more likely to say they saw potentially harmful online content or behaviour online (71%) compared to 68% in England, 68% in Wales and 66% in Northern Ireland.

Although there was little difference between adults and children overall (69% vs 68%), as adult age increases, the likelihood of coming across potential harm online decreases (18-24: 80%, 25-34: 78% 65+: 55%), which in part may be due to younger adults spending more time online compared to older adults (as discussed in the Online Landscape chapter).

**Figure 63: Proportion of UK internet users who had encountered any of a list of potential harms online in the past 4 weeks by demographic: June 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q8 Which, if any, of the following have you seen or experienced online in the last 4 weeks? This includes any images, videos, audio or text, either comments, posts or messages you have seen and/or those shared directly to you. Please select all that apply. Base: UK internet users 13+ (June 2023: 14181, January 2024: 7611, June 2024:7837).*

## Against the backdrop of geopolitical events, internet users are more likely to encounter hateful, offensive or discriminatory content online

Adult users were increasingly reporting seeing hateful, offensive or discriminatory content, this becoming the fifth most encountered harm (26%) in June 2024, overtaking trolling (22%). There was a small year-on-year rise in content depicting or encouraging violence +2pp (to 11%) by June 2024 and content encouraging extremism +4pp (9%) being encountered by adult users. Encounters with the other most prevalent potential harms by adult users either remained stable or declined since June 2023. No potential online harm encountered decreased by more than 2pp year on year.[220]

**Figure 64: Proportion of UK online adults who encountered the ten most prevalent potential online harms, ranked in order of June 2024 data**

| Potential harm | June 2023 | January 2024 | June 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Misinformation** | 39% | 37% | 39% |
| **Generally offensive or 'bad' language** | 36% | 34% | 35% |
| **Scams, fraud or phishing** | 36% | 34% | 34% |
| **Unwelcome friend or follow requests** | 30% | 27% | 28% |
| **Hateful, offensive or discriminatory content** | 23% | 24% | 26% |
| **Trolling** | 23% | 21% | 22% |
| **Misogynistic content** | 22% | 22% | 22% |
| **Fake or deceptive images/videos** | 18% | 16% | 18% |
| **Content stigmatizing certain body types** | - | 16% | 18% |
| **Paid for or sponsored content not marked as such** | 17% | 16% | 18% |

*Sig greater wave-on-wave at 99% confidence* *Sig lower wave-on-wave at 99% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q8 Which, if any, of the following have you seen or experienced online in the last 4 weeks? Base: UK internet users 18+ (June 2023: 13205, January 2024: 7068, June 2024:7280). The OET prompted participants with a list of 47 harms, this table shows the top 10.*

When comparing encounters with the ten most prevalent potential harms by gender, we found that men were more likely than women to encounter misinformation, scams or fraud, hateful content, fake or deceptive content or paid for/sponsored content, whereas women were more likely than men to report experiencing unwelcome friend or follow requests, misogynistic content and body image related content.

[220] Please note: fieldwork was conducted before the summer 2024 riots had taken place across the UK. Other events such as the wars between Russia and Ukraine, and Israel and Gaza, were ongoing during fieldwork for the January 2024 and June 2024 surveys.

**Figure 65: Proportion of adult users who had encountered the ten most prevalent potential online harms by gender: June 2024**

| Potential harm | Men | Women |
|---|---|---|
| Misinformation | 41% | 37% |
| Generally offensive or 'bad' language | 35% | 34% |
| Scams, fraud or phishing | 36% | 31% |
| Unwelcome friend or follow requests | 26% | 30% |
| Hateful content | 27% | 24% |
| Trolling | 21% | 22% |
| Misogynistic content | 19% | 23% |
| Fake or deceptive images/videos | 20% | 16% |
| Content stigmatizing certain body types | 13% | 21% |
| Paid for or sponsored content not marked as such | 19% | 15% |

*Sig greater than men/women at 95% confidence* *Sig lower than men/women at 95% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q8 Which, if any, of the following have you seen or experienced online in the last 4 weeks? Base: UK internet users 18+ (men: 3442, women: 3717). The OET prompted participants with a list of 47 harms, this table shows the top 10 by incidence.*

## Twenty-two per cent of 8–17-year-olds with a social media profile had an adult user age, increasing their potential exposure to harm

Ofcom's 'User Age' research conducted in August 2024 found that 22% of 8–17-year-olds (and 20% of 8-15s) with a social media profile on at least one of the platforms listed in our study, had a user profile age of at least 18, meaning they are at greater risk of seeing adult content; this remained consistent with data from February 2024 and September 2023 (8-17: 21% and 22%, 8-15: 20% for both). The research also estimated that a third (36%) of children aged 8-15, with a social media profile on at least one of the listed platforms, had a user/profile age of at least 16, again, this was consistent with the same research conducted in February 2024 and September 2023 (35% and 34% respectively).[221]

Boys aged 8-17 were more likely than girls in the same age group to have a user age of at least 18 (25% vs 19%). Among children aged 8-15, boys and girls were equally likely to have a user age of 16+ (37% and 36%).[222]

Children with a user/profile age of 16+ or 18+ may be exposed to features or functionalities on their social media profile that platform policies restrict to 18+ users, such as direct messaging from strangers or having the ability to see adult content, thereby potentially exposing them to harm online. Although the proportion of children with a user age of 16+ or 18+ remained consistent between September 2023, February 2024 and August 2024, when compared to September 2023, children aged 8-17 in August 2024 were more likely to say that they had been asked to verify their date of birth on their profile on several online services (including Facebook: 10% vs 25%, Instagram:

[221] Ofcom, Children's User Age, September 2023 and February 2024, August 2024.
[222] Ofcom, Children's User Age, September 2023 and February 2024, August 2024.

9% vs 18%, Snapchat: 8% vs 14%, TikTok: 13% vs 19%, X/Twitter: 10% vs 20% and YouTube: 10% vs 14%).[223]

## Teenagers overall were less likely than adults to report seeing or experiencing most types of listed potential harms online

In June 2024, 'generally offensive or 'bad' language' remained the most likely potential harm which child users aged 13-17 said they had encountered (35%), although this was down by 12pp from the previous year (47%). Users aged 13-17 were less likely than adult users to report experiencing most types of listed potential harm, with the exception of 'intentional harassment' during gaming, e.g. 'griefing' (9%); content promoting self-harm (7%), and content promoting suicide (6%), compared with adults (5%, 4% and 3% respectively).

There were also a number of harm types shown exclusively to the teenagers in the research: content showing dangerous stunts or online challenges (24%); content encouraging gambling (22%); content advertising alcohol or cigarettes (17%); sexual or pornographic content (14%) and content that promotes and/or encourages children to eat or ingest harmful substances such as bleach or detergent (6%). Hateful content ranked outside the ten most prevalent harms (11th) for teenagers, with 17% seeing or encountering this in June 2024, decreasing from 21% the previous year.

The potential harms which showed the greatest changes since the previous year, after 'generally offensive or 'bad' language', included: content showing dangerous stunts or challenges (24%, down from 30% in June 2023); content which advertised alcohol or cigarettes (down 5pp to 17%); sexual/pornographic content ( down 4pp to 14%) and content relating to eating disorders (down 4pp to 11%). There were no online harms that increased year on year by more than 2pp.

**Figure 66: Proportion of UK child users aged 13-17 who had encountered the ten most prevalent potential harms online, ranked by June 2024 data**

| Potential harm (Children 13-17) | June 2023 | January 2024 | June 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Generally offensive or 'bad' language | 47% | 40% | 35% |
| Misinformation | 34% | 31% | 33% |
| Unwelcome friend or follow requests | 30% | 31% | 27% |
| Content showing dangerous stunts | 30% | 23% | 24% |
| Scams, fraud or phishing | 25% | 19% | 24% |
| Content encouraging gambling | 25% | 26% | 22% |
| Trolling | 23% | 22% | 21% |
| Misogynistic content | 22% | 23% | 18% |
| Fake or deceptive images/videos | 16% | 17% | 18% |
| Content stigmatizing certain body types | -- | 20% | 18% |

*Sig greater wave-on-wave at 99% confidence* *Sig lower wave-on-wave at 99% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q8 Which, if any, of the following have you seen or experienced online in the last 4 weeks? Base: UK internet users 13-17 (557). The OET prompted child participants with a list of 44 harms; this table shows the top ten.*

[223] Ofcom, Children's User Age, September 2023 and February 2024, August 2024.

## Encounters with potential online harms relating to body image were particularly prevalent among teen girls

When we compared boys and girls for each of the harms, we found that boys aged 13-17 were more likely than girls to encounter content showing dangerous stunts (29% vs 19%). Conversely, girls aged 13-17 were more likely than boys to report having encountered unwelcome friend or follow requests (33% vs 21%), misogynistic content (23% vs 14%), content stigmatizing certain body types (25% vs 11%), content promoting excessive or unhealthy eating/exercise (19% vs 9%), group shaming (19% vs 10%) and content relating to eating disorders (17% vs 5% boys 13-17).

**Figure 67: Proportion of child users aged 13-17 who had encountered the ten most prevalent potential harms online, by gender: June 2024**

| Potential Harm (children aged 13-17) | Boys | Girls |
|---|---|---|
| **Generally offensive or 'bad' language** | 34% | 37% |
| **Misinformation** | 31% | 35% |
| **Unwelcome friend or follow requests** | 21% | 33% |
| **Content showing dangerous stunts** | 29% | 19% |
| **Scams, fraud or phishing** | 24% | 23% |
| **Content encouraging gambling** | 25% | 19% |
| **Trolling** | 18% | 23% |
| **Misogynistic content** | 14% | 23% |
| **Fake or deceptive images/videos** | 17% | 19% |
| **Content stigmatizing certain body types** | 11% | 25% |

*Sig greater than boys/girls at 95% confidence* *Sig lower than boys/girls at 95% confidence*

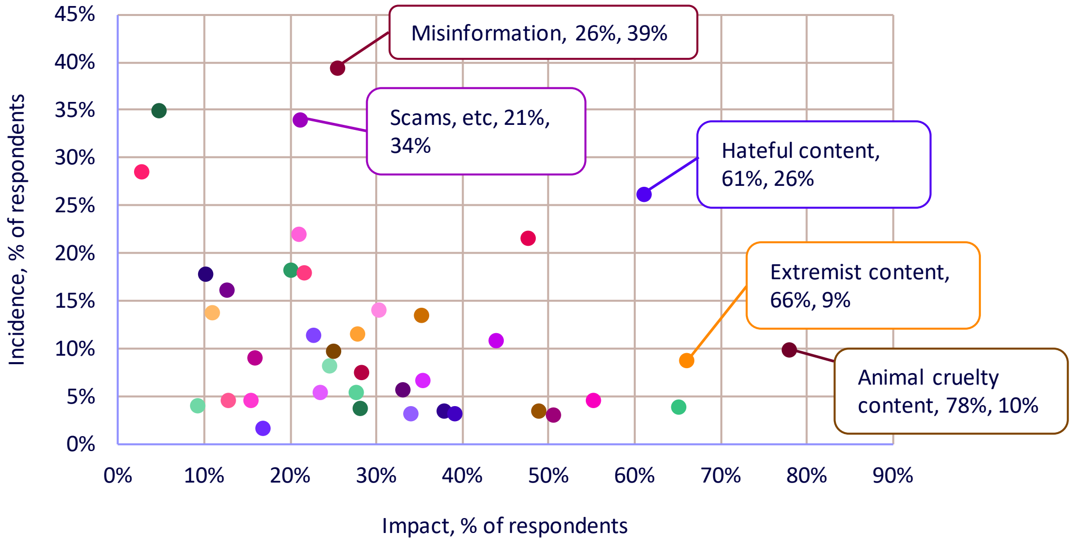
*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q8 Which, if any, of the following have you seen or experienced online in the past four weeks? Base: UK internet users 13-17 (Boys: 290, Girls: 261). The OET prompted participants with a list of 44 harms; this table shows the top ten.*

## Women and girls, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, LGB+ adults and those with mental health conditions were more likely to be adversely impacted by potentially harmful content online

In June 2024, 24% of users aged 13+ were 'really bothered or extremely offended' by their most recent encounter of any specified potential harm online, continuing the trend of small increases from the previous two waves of tracking (23% in January 2024, 22% in June 2023). Those aged 13-17 were less likely to say they were really bothered or extremely offended than those aged 18+ (17% vs 25%). In particular, girls aged 13-17 and women were more likely to be really bothered (24% and 29%) than boys aged 13-17 and men (11% and 19% respectively). Those from minority ethnic groups (30%), Jewish people (49%), people with limiting and impacting conditions (27%) and LGB+ people (29%) were also more likely than the total group of users (aged 13+) to say they were extremely offended. There was a 9pp significant increase in impact reported by minority ethnic individuals from June 2023 (19%) to January 2024 (28%), with the increase continuing to June 2024 (+ 2pp, 30%). For both Muslim and Jewish respondents, January 2024 saw the highest levels of impact upon encountering potentially harmful content, with 33% and 58% of each group saying they were extremely offended by their most recent experience.

Looking at specific types of harm by incidence level compared with claimed high impact level on adults, animal cruelty had a very high impact (78%) with a relatively low incidence of 10%. Extremist content also had a high impact (66%), along with hateful content (61%) but on lower incidence levels. Harms with a relatively lower impact level but with a higher incidence level included misinformation (26% impact with 39% incidence) and scams and fraud (21% and 34%).

**Figure 68: High psychological impact (score of 3 on a 3-point scale) vs incidence of types of potential online harms for adult users, June 2024**




*Source: Age 18+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q14b We would like you to think again about the last time you saw or experienced [potential harm]. On a scale of 1 to 3, where '1' means 'It didn't bother me at all/It didn't offend me' and '3' means 'It really bothered me/I found it extremely offensive', when you last saw or experienced [potential harm], would you say the content or experience was…(x axis) compared to Q8 Which, if any, of the following have you seen or experienced online in the last 4 weeks? (y axis). Base: Adults 18+ Q14b (4613) and Q8 (7280).*

## Certain harms tended to be influenced by news and world affairs; others by emerging technology

Users aged 13+ who encountered hate speech, bullying, abusive behaviour or threats were asked about which groups or characteristics of people in society this targeted. The findings have varied wave-on-wave, most likely in response to the news and current affairs agenda. In June 2023, users most frequently (at 41%) identified hateful content as being directed towards transgender people; at the time, the UK government had recently blocked the Scottish Gender Recognition Reform Act, and news items often discussed transgender peoples' identities and experiences.[224] The next most frequent hateful content was directed at sexual orientation at 29%, ethnicity at 25%, women and girls at 25% and asylum seekers at 23%.

In January 2024, potentially in response to the conflict in Gaza that began in October 2023,[225] hateful content towards people because of their ethnicity or religion rose sharply for adult users to 36% and

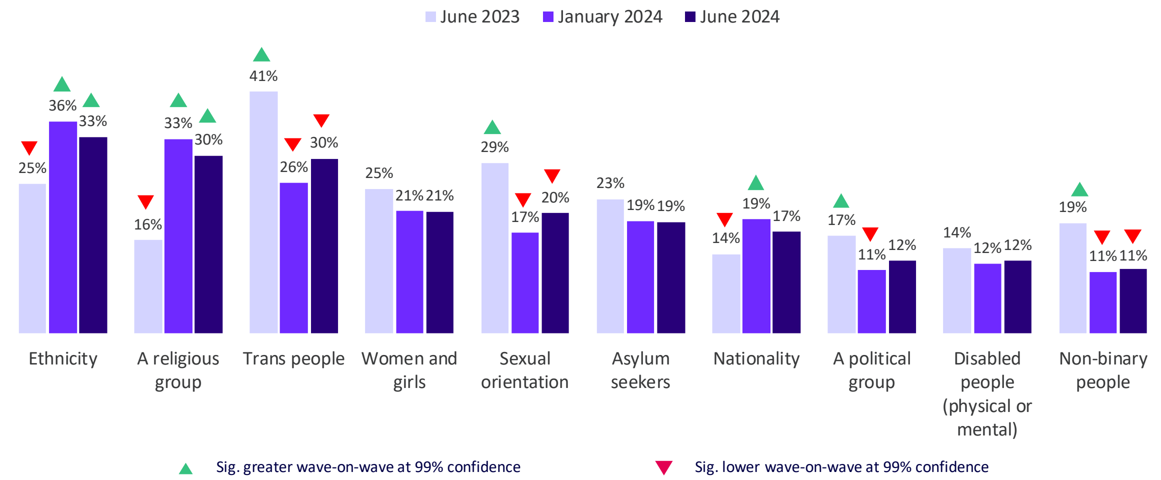
[224] Institute for Government, 'The use of Section 35 of the Scotland Act to block the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill' 9 October 2023; The Guardian, 'Rishi Sunak accused of mocking trans people in joke to Tory MPs', 19 June 2023.
BBC News, Brianna Ghey: Boy and girl in court charged with murder, 15 February 2023.
[225] BBC News, 'Israel Gaza war: History of the conflict explained', 5 April 2024.

33% respectively from 25% and 16% respectively in June 2023, and correspondingly, hate towards transgender people and based on sexual orientation decreased to 26% and 17%, respectively.

In June 2024, the proportion of hate towards different groups shifted, with hate towards people due to ethnicity and religion remaining high (33% and 30%) for adult users. Hate towards gender and sexual minorities saw small increases from January 2024 (30% and 20%). The rise in hate based on gender and sexual identities could be linked to fieldwork taking place in June 2024, coinciding with the 2024 UK General Election, where gender identity was discussed in public debates and news articles.[226]

There were some significant gender differences in encountering hateful content. Women were more likely, at 26%, to say they had seen hateful content against women and girls, compared to 13% of men; in contrast, men were more likely to say they had seen hateful content against most other groups than women. One factor behind this could be personal experience: women and girls were much more likely to say they had encountered misogynistic online content or language, whereas the figure was lower for men and boys (23% vs 18%).

**Figure 69: Internet users aged 13+ reporting the target of hateful, offensive or discriminatory content they had encountered**




*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q13 Which group or characteristic, if any, was the bullying, abusive behaviour, threats or hate speech you experienced directed towards? This could include bullying, abusive behaviour, threats or hate speech directed towards you personally. Base: UK internet users 13+ (June 2023: 1162, January 2024: 637, June 2024: 728).*

Misinformation was the most prevalent potential harm in June 2024 when taking online adult and children aged 13+ responses together (39%). Internet users aged 13+ who said they had seen misinformation in the last four weeks were also asked follow-up questions. With the UK General Election announced on 22 May 2024, there was a small but significant increase from January to June 2024 of internet users aged 13+ citing political or electoral misinformation (25%, up from 22%).

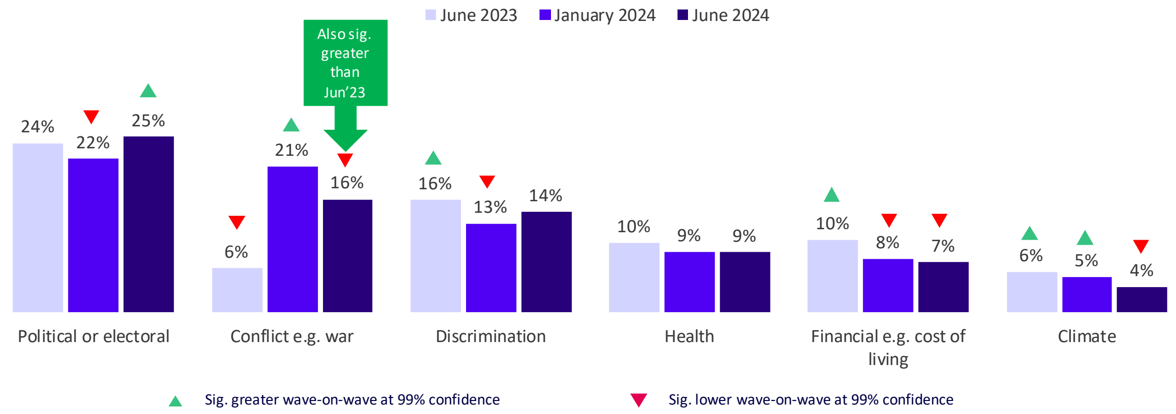
In January 2024, reports of misinformation about 'conflict e.g. war' rose significantly to 21% from 6% six months' prior, likely as a result of the war in Gaza which began in October 2023. This proportion fell in the most recent survey in June 2024, to 16% of respondents, albeit remaining higher than the number reported in June 2023.

The most prominent source of misinformation encountered by internet users aged 13+ in June 2024 was from 'Someone I don't know online e.g. a stranger on social media' at 44%. This was followed by

[226] BBC News, 'What are the parties saying about women's rights and gender identity', 29 June 2024.

15% saying they had seen misinformation from ‘a public figure or celebrity or influencer’, 12% saying ‘a media outlet or organisation’, and 10% saying ‘a news organisation or journalist.’

**Figure 70: Types of misinformation encountered by internet users aged 13+**




*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker 2024. Q32a1 Which of the options below best describes the misinformation you saw. Discrimination was phrased in survey as: Discrimination on grounds of gender, age, sexuality, ethnicity or other 'protected characteristics'. Base: UK internet users 13+ (June 2023: 5567, January 2024: 2800, June 2024: 3051)*

## Over two in five (43%) UK internet users aged 16+ believed they had experienced a deepfake in the first half of 2024

The term 'deepfake' usually refers to an AI-generated video, image or piece of audio content that is designed to mimic a real-life person or scene and may be used to spread false information. Ofcom commissioned a survey to understand UK internet users’ experience of deepfakes, conducted in June 2024, among UK online people aged 16+ and British online children aged 8-15-year-olds.

Over two in five (43%) UK internet users aged 16+ believed they had encountered a deepfake in the first half of 2024. The survey also found that as age increased among those aged 16+, the likelihood of reporting an encounter of a deepfake decreased. Male users aged 16+ were more likely than females to have come across at least one piece of content they believed to be a deepfake in the first half of 2024 (51% vs 35%). Overall, few users (9%) felt confident in identifying deepfake content.[227]

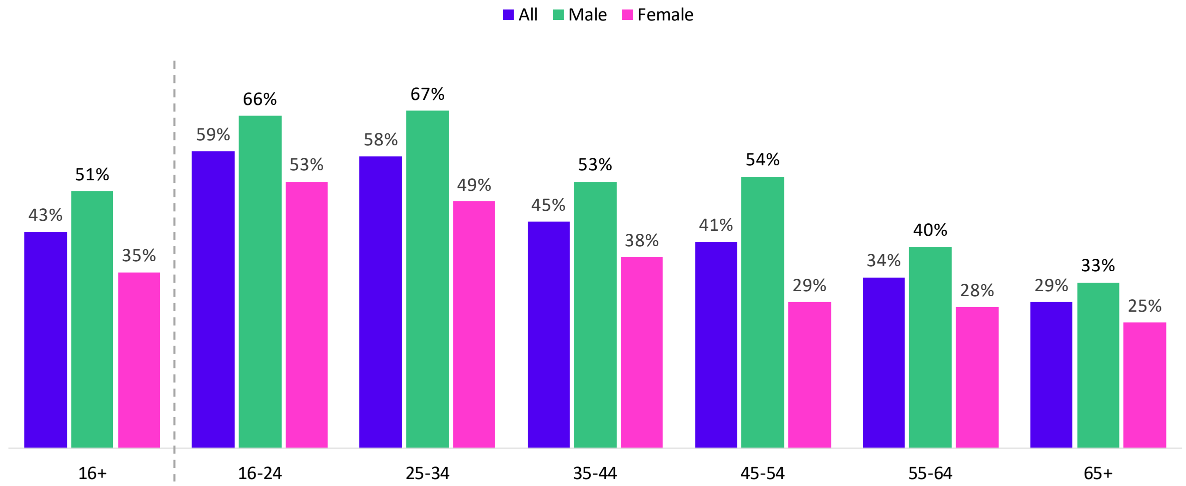
An Ofcom survey conducted across the UK General Election period in June and July 2024 found that more than a quarter (27%) of adults believed they had encountered information regarding the General Election that they felt might have been a deepfake at least once in the past week. Reflecting the low confidence in recognising deepfakes, 46% of respondents in the survey said they didn’t know if they had seen one in the past week. Younger people aged 18-24 (39%) were more confident in their ability to spot deepfakes than all other adult age groups (21% on average) and males were more confident than females (28% vs 14%). The majority (57%) of adults from our General Election survey said they were either quite or very concerned about the impact of deepfakes during the General Election campaign.[228]

Users aged 16+ who came across a deepfake reported the top three sources of this content to be social media (74%), VSP (47%) or on an email (11%). Younger people (16-24: 59%) were more likely to come across a deepfake on a VSP than older adults, (55+: 38%). While male and female users

[227] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[228] Ofcom, UK General Election news and opinion-formation survey 2024, June and July 2024, age: 18+, UK.

were equally likely to come across a deepfake on social media (73% and 76% respectively), males were more likely to come across a deepfake on a VSP (53% vs 39% female).[229]

**Figure 71: Proportion of UK internet users aged 16+ who came across at least one example of what they believed to be a deepfake in the last six months**




*Source: Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024. Question 2: Thinking about the past 6 months (i.e. since December 2023)...How many times, if any, have you encountered content that you suspected to be a deepfake? Base: UK internet users age: 16+ (2520).*

## Younger people were more likely to come across humorous, sexual or educational deepfakes, while older adults were more likely to come across political or fraudulent ad deepfakes

Deepfake content varies by content form and by content theme. In terms of content form, the type of deepfake content users 16+ had come across was most commonly an image (68%), a video (60%) and text (29%). In terms of content themes, almost half (49%) of users aged 16+ who reported coming across a deepfake, said they saw it relating to a politician or political event, followed by humorous or satirical deepfake (47%) and fraudulent or scam advertisement (45%). There were some age and gender differences on content themes, with older adults more likely to come across a fraudulent or scam advertisement (16-24: 33% vs 55+: 54%), and younger people more likely to come across humorous or satirical deepfakes (16-24: 52% vs 55+: 40%), educational deepfakes (16+: 14%; 16-24: 25% vs 55+: 6%) and sexual deepfakes (16+: 14%; 16-24: 20% vs 55+: 6%). Male users aged 16+ were more likely to say they had seen deepfake content that was sexual in nature (19% vs 8%), about a politician or political event (53% vs 44%), or of a humorous or satirical nature (50% vs 42%), compared to female users.[230]

## Half of child users aged 8-15 in Great Britain also believed they had encountered a deepfake in the first half of 2024

Older children aged 13-15 were more likely than children aged 8-12 to have come across at least one deepfake (57% vs 46%) and boys aged 8-15 were slightly more likely than girls of the same age to come across a deepfake (52% vs 48%). Children claimed to be more confident in identifying a

[229] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.
[230] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024, age: 16+, UK.

deepfake than users aged 16+ (20% vs 9% respectively). Boys were more confident (24%) than girls (16%), and older children aged 13-15 (24%) were more confident than children aged 8-12 (18%).[231]

VSPs (54%) were the most likely online service type for British children aged 8-15 to come across a deepfake, followed by social media (49%) and livestreaming services (16%). Females were more likely to come across a deepfake on social media (55% vs 45% male).[232]

In terms of content form, the type of deepfake content users aged 8-15 had come across was an image (63%), a video (61%) and text (21%). Children were most likely to come across funny or satirical deepfakes (58%), followed by scam adverts (32%) or deepfakes relating to a politician or political event (28%). Boys aged 8-15 were more likely than girls to see deepfake content that was funny or satirical (62% vs 53%).[233]

# Platforms and services where potential harms were encountered

## Social media was by far the most likely place to encounter potential harms

Since tracking began in June 2023, social media has remained the location where the majority (June 2024: 56%) of UK internet users aged 13+ have encountered their most recent harm online. At a much lower level, there has been an increase in the proportion of those aged 13+ experiencing potential harms via VSPs in the most recent wave, from 7% in January 2024 to 9% in June 2024.

The proportion of child users aged 13-17 encountering their most recent potential harm on social media was much lower than for adults, at 38% versus 57% respectively. Child users aged 13-17 were more likely to encounter the potential harm on VSPs than adults (20% vs. 8%).

Among adult users, there was a decrease in reporting encountering their most recent potential harm via email, from 12% in June 2023 to 9% in June 2024. Older adults were more likely to report email as a location than younger people (aged 55+: 17% vs 18-24s: 2% June 2024). Older adults were also more likely to encounter a potential harm via a news website or app (aged 55+: 7% vs 18-24s: 2% June 2024). In contrast, those aged 18-24 were more likely to encounter a potential harm via online dating sites at 2%, compared to 1% for the total group of respondents, although this harm was reported at a very low level.

[231] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024, age: 8-15, GB.
[232] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024, age: 8-15, GB.
[233] Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Deepfakes, June 2024, age: 8-15, GB.

**Figure 72: Sites and services where adult and child (13-17) users had their most recent potentially harmful encounter online**

| Top ten sites where users encountered harm | Adults 18+ | | | Children 13-17 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Jun' 23 | Jan' 24 | Jun' 24 | Jun'23 | Jan'24 | Jun'24 |
| Social media website or app | 57% | 56% | 57% | 35% | 35% | 38% |
| Email | 12% | 11% | 9% | 3% | 2% | 3% |
| VSP | 7% | 6% | 8% | 23% | 17% | 20% |
| Instant messenger website or app | 5% | 6% | 5% | 9% | 9% | 7% |
| News website or app | 4% | 4% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| A search engine | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 3% | 4% |
| An in-game chat / chat room | 1% | 1% | 1% | 9% | 6% | 6% |
| Online dating websites or apps[234] | 1% | 1% | 1% | - | - | - |
| Gaming platform website or app | 1% | 1% | 1% | 6% | 11% | 9% |
| Blog website or app | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% |

*Sig greater wave-on-wave at 99% confidence* *Sig lower wave-on-wave at 99% confidence*

*Source: Age 13+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q21. What type of site or service were you using when you most recently experienced? Base: Adults 18+ (June 2023: 8414, January 2024: 4444, June 2024: 4613) 13-17 (June 2023: 634, January 2024: 351, June 2024: 347)*

## Women were significantly more likely than men to encounter potential harms on social media platforms and VSPs

Looking at social media and VSPs, 63% and 9% of adult women encountered their most recent potential harm on these platforms respectively, compared to 52% and 7% of men. Men are significantly more likely to encounter a potential harm via email, instant messaging sites, news sites, search engines and blog sites than women.

Users aged 13-17 had comparable experiences in that boys and girls were equally likely to encounter potential harms on a VSP (18% for girls and 21% for boys), on in-game chat (6% for girls and 7% for boys) and on video-on-demand sites (2% for girls and 3% for boys). However, boys were more likely than girls to encounter a potential harm on gaming platforms (12% vs. 5%).

[234] Child respondents (13-17) are not shown the code 'Online dating websites or apps' at Q21.

**Figure 73: Sites and services where men and women had their most recent potentially harmful encounter online**

| Top ten sites where users encountered harm | Men | | | Women | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Jun' 23 | Jan' 24 | Jun' 24 | Jun'23 | Jan'24 | Jun'24 |
| Social media website or app | 52% | 50% | 52% | 62% | 62% | 63% |
| Email | 14% | 12% | 10% | 11% | 10% | 7% |
| VSP | 7% | 6% | 7% | 7% | 6% | 9% |
| Instant messenger website or app | 4% | 6% | 6% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| News website or app | 5% | 5% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| A search engine | 2% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| An in-game chat / chat room | 1% | 1% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| Online dating websites or apps** | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 1% |
| Gaming platform website or app | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 1% |
| Blog website or app | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 0% |

*Sig greater wave-on-wave at 99% confidence* *Sig lower wave-on-wave at 99% confidence*

*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q21. What type of site or service were you using when you most recently experienced? Base: Adults 18+ (June 2023: 8414, January 2024: 4444, June 2024: 4613)*

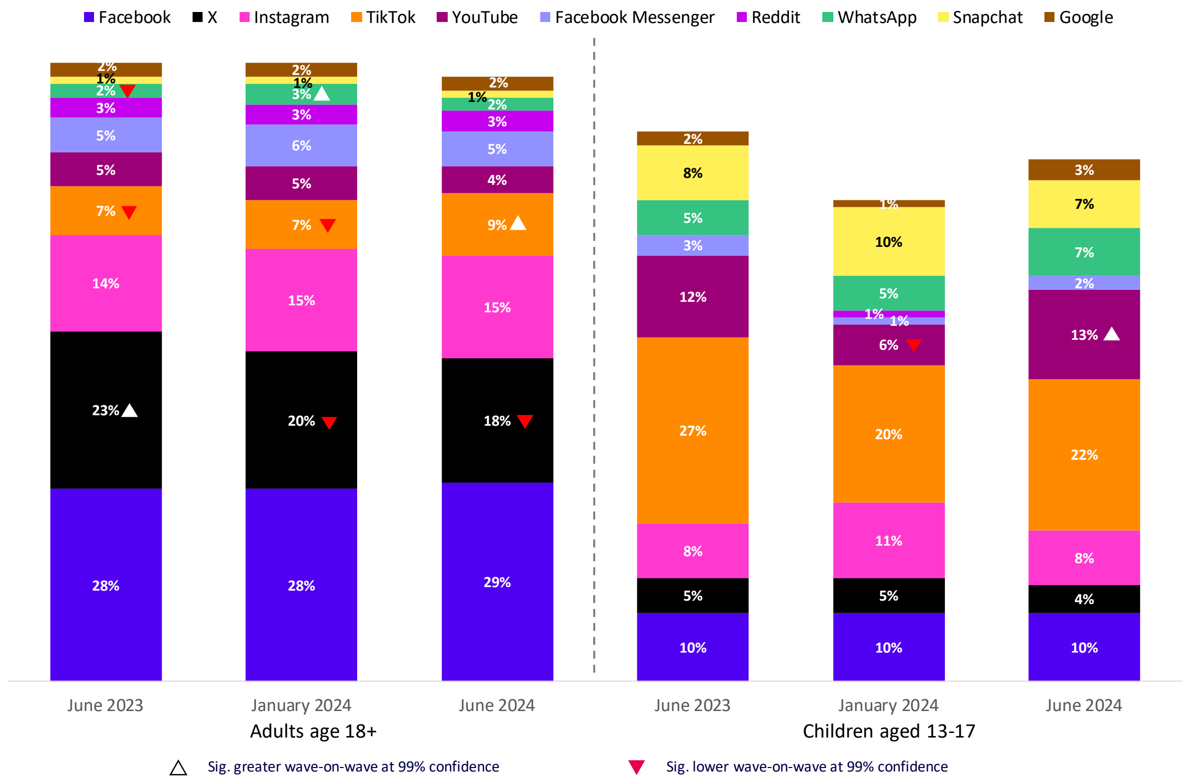
## Three in ten adult users reported encountering their most recent online potential harm on Facebook, while TikTok and YouTube were the most likely services for teenagers, at 22% and 13% respectively

Facebook was the most likely platform for adult users to encounter potential harms on, across all waves (June 2024: 29%), this was followed by X (June 2024: 18%), which has seen a reduction in reports over the past year (June 2023: 23%). Older adults were significantly more likely to have encountered their most recent potential harm on Facebook, (55+: 45% vs. 18-24: 8%) and Facebook Messenger (55+: 8% vs. 18-24: 4%). This may be because older adults spend more time than younger adults on Facebook / Messenger (average time spent by Facebook / Messenger visitors aged 55+: 45 minutes vs 18-24s: 18 minutes in June 2024).[235] Users aged 18-24 were more likely to encounter harm on X (21%), Instagram (20%), TikTok (20%), Snapchat (3%) and Tumblr (1%), and less likely on Facebook (8%).

Children 13-17 were significantly more likely than adults to encounter their most recent potential harm on TikTok (22% vs 9%), YouTube (13% vs 4%), Snapchat (7% vs 1%) and WhatsApp (7% vs 2%). Additionally, 3% of those aged 13-17 said they had encountered their most recent potential harm on Roblox.

[235] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, (BG) Facebook / Messenger, June 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note: As messenger is part of Facebook's main site and app, Ipsos iris in unable to report on each service individually.

**Figure 74: Nine most reported sites and services where adults and children had their most recent potentially harmful encounter online**

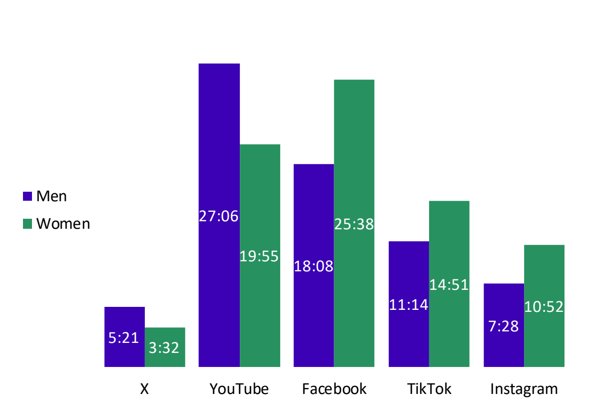
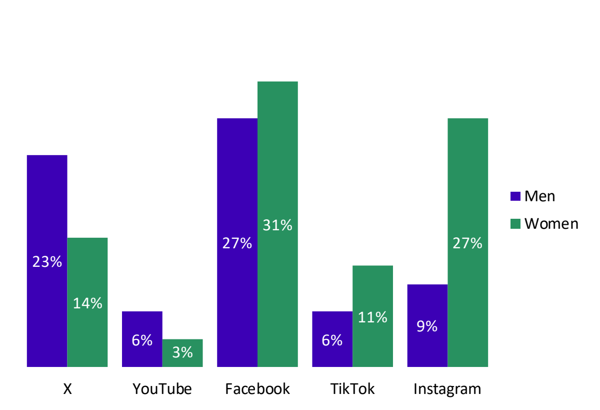



*Source: Age 13+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q22_Q29 Platforms/apps combined. Base: Adults 18+ (June 2023: 6082, January 2024: 3211, June 2024: 3453), Children 13-17 (June 2023: 473, January 2024: 263, June 2024: 261)*

A correlation between time spent on a particular service and likelihood to encounter potential harm on that service was also apparent when looking at differences by gender. Women were significantly more likely than men to have come across their most recent potential harm on Facebook (31% vs 27%), while men were more likely than women to have encountered a potential harm on X (23% vs 14%) – this pattern has been consistent over the past year. According to Ipsos iris data, women on average spent the most time on Facebook / Messenger compared to men (25 hours 28 minutes vs men: 18 hours 8 minutes), while most of the time spent on X was by men (5 hours 21 minutes vs women: 3 hours 32 minutes) in June 2024.[236]

[236] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, June 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users.

**Figure 75: Time spent, and where, most recent harm was encountered, by gender: June 2024**

| Average time spent by UK adult visitor in June 2024, by gender (hours:minutes) | Services where most recent potential harm encountered, by gender |
|---|---|
|  |  |





*Sources: Time spent chart - Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, June 2024, age: 18+, UK internet users. Note time spent across smartphone, tablet and computer only. Harm experience chart - Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, June 2024. Q22_Q29 Platforms/apps combined. Base: (Men 18+: 1557, Women 18+: 1817). The services listed are the top five most-reported services where harm was encountered.*

Among 13-17s, comparing the same five services as adults, boys were more likely than girls to come across a potential harm on YouTube (20% vs 7%), Facebook (12% vs 9%) and X (6% vs 2%), while girls were more likely to encounter potential harm on TikTok (26% vs 18%) and Instagram (9% vs 5%). Girls were also more likely than boys to encounter a potential harm on WhatsApp (12% vs 2%) and Snapchat (9% vs 4%).

## Looking more closely at service locations and functionalities, user feeds were the most likely places to encounter a potential harm, with differences by gender

For adult users, scrolling through their feed or 'For You' page was the most likely place for potential harm to be encountered (35%), consistent with previous waves. There have been increases in the proportion of users encountering a potential harm while watching content that was selected for them by autoplay, from 5% to 6% and then 7% in June 2024, and while watching content they had chosen to watch, from 8% in June 2023 to 10% in both January and June 2024.

Men were more likely to encounter potential harm while watching content they chose to watch (12% vs 8% for women), reading articles and reviews (11% vs 7%) and reading emails (10% vs 7%). Women were more likely to encounter harm while scrolling through their feed or 'For You' page (37% vs 31% for men), and in the comments or replies to a post, article or video (23% vs 21%).

There were also age differences in the ways in which adult users encountered potential harm; younger adults (18-24, 25-34) were more likely to experience it while scrolling through their feed (45% and 41%), in the comments (24% for both), or while watching content they had chosen or which had been recommended (15% and 11%), as well as in private messages (12% and 9%). Older adults (55+) were more likely to experience it while reading articles and reviews (12%), or emails (16%), as well as in advertisements (for age 65+ specifically: 8%).

For children users aged 13-17, the pattern was similar to adults, except for a higher proportion experiencing potential harm when watching content they chose to watch (June 2024: 20%), or content selected for them by autoplay (June 2024: 11%). Children were also significantly more likely to encounter potential harm in a group chat, or while using the private or direct message function with more than one other user. Livestreaming was also more likely to be a source of potential harm for those aged 13-17, at 8%, compared to 3% for adults for recent online harms encountered during this activity.

**Figure 76: Sites and services where adults and child users had their most recent potentially harmful encounter online**

| Top ten activities where users encounter harm, (based on most recent harm encountered) | Adults 18+ | | | Children 13-17 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Jun 23 | Jan 24 | Jun 24 | Jun 23 | Jan 24 | Jun 24 |
| Scrolling through your feed / the 'For You' page | 35% | 32% | 35% | 26% | 24% | 26% |
| In the comments or replies to a post, article or video | 22% | 23% | 22% | 15% | 19% | 15% |
| Watching content (you chose to watch) | 8% | 10% | 10% | 21% | 19% | 20% |
| Reading articles / reviews | 9% | 9% | 9% | 6% | 8% | 6% |
| Reading emails | 12% | 11% | 8% | 3% | 2% | 3% |
| Using the private or direct message function with one other user. | 6% | 7% | 7% | 7% | 13% | 8% |
| Watching content selected for you by autoplay | 5% | 6% | 7% | 9% | 6% | 11% |
| In an advertisement* | - | 6% | 6% | - | 8% | 7% |
| In a group chat / using the private or direct message function with more than one other user | 3% | 4% | 4% | 17% | 14% | 14% |

*Sig greater wave-on-wave at 99% confidence* *Sig lower wave-on-wave at 99% confidence*

*Source: Age 13+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q21a. Activity on site when experienced harm. Base: Adults 18+ (June 2023: 8133, January 2024: 4264, June 2024: 4421), Children 13-17 (June 2023: 597, January 2024: 331, June 2024: 328)*

# Internet users’ response following exposure to potential harm

Ofcom commissioned research to understand people's experiences of using VSPs, and their attitudes towards safety measures on these services as part of its duties under the VSP regime.[237] Fieldwork took place among internet users aged 13+ and was run twice in 2024 – February and August. The following section draws on findings from this research and Ofcom’s Online Experiences Tracker (OET).

## Half of users aged 13+ said without prompting that they were aware of any safety measures on the VSPs they used

When asked, without prompting from a list, whether they were aware of safety measures on the VSPs they had used in the past three months, 50% of users aged 13+ said they were aware, up from 46% in February 2024. Of those who said they were *not* aware of safety measures on VSPs (50%), the most-selected reason was because they ‘did not have a reason to look for them’ (48%, consistent with February 2024: 50%), followed by ‘not believing they needed them’ (August 2024: 35%, February 2024: 36%).[238]

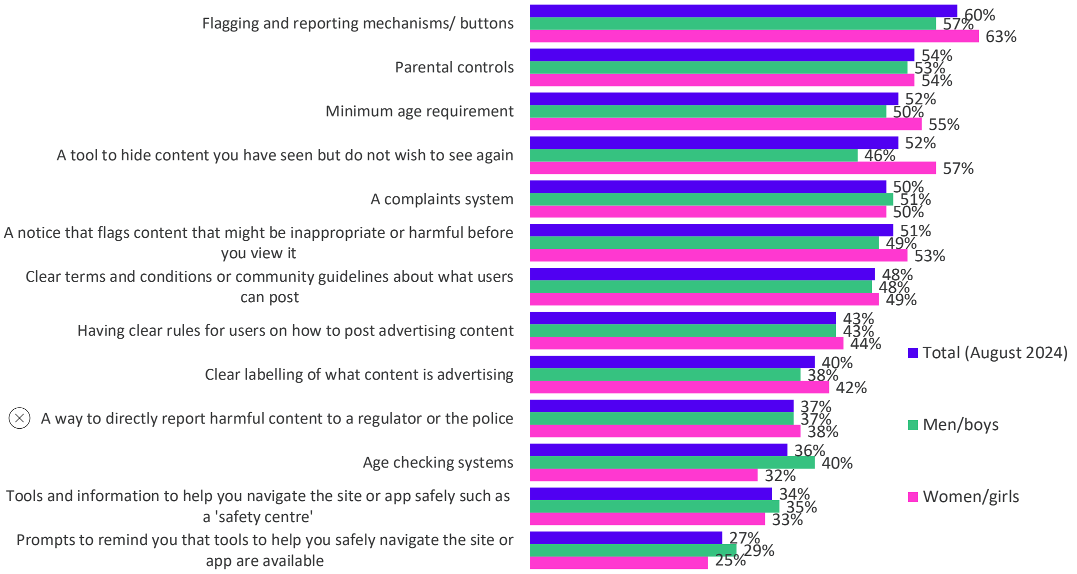
Without being prompted, a higher proportion of male than female users said they were aware of safety measures (53% vs 48%). When prompted with a list of safety measures and tools, 92% of VSP users said they were aware of them, the same as in February 2024. Female users were more likely to be aware than males (94% vs 90%). But as Figure 77 below shows, more male VSP users said they were aware of a complaints system, age checking systems, tools and information (such as a safety centre) to help users navigate the VSP safely and prompts to remind users of those tools are available on the VSP.[239]

[237] On 26 October 2023, the Online Safety Act (‘the OS Act’) received Royal Assent. The OS Act sets out the process for repealing the VSP regime which includes how VSPs will move from being regulated under the VSP regime to being regulated under the OS Act. For more information please refer to our website: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/repeal-of-the-vsp-regime/

[238] Ofcom, VSP tracker, February 2024 and August 2024, age: 13+, UK.

[239] Ofcom, VSP tracker, February 2024 and August 2024, age: 13+, UK.

**Figure 77: Proportion of users (aged 13+) who said they were aware of the listed safety measures on the VSPs they had used in the past three months**




*Source: Ofcom VSP Tracker 2024. Q10. Which of the following rules or safety measures do you think these sites and apps have in place? Base: VSP users who have used a VSP in the past three months (August 2024: 1114). The X symbol on the chart represents dummy measures included to assess over-claim.*

## Two-thirds of users aged 13+ said they took any kind of action in response to experiencing a potential harm online

In June 2024, 61% of users aged 13+ said they took any kind of action in response to experiencing a potential harm online in the past four weeks. This is consistent with the previous OET survey in January 2024 (62%), which saw a 3pp increase in those taking any kind of action since the June 2023 survey (59%). Of this 61%, the most likely action taken by users was to report or flag the offending content (35%). In June 2024 we found an increase since the previous year in users choosing to disengage or change their engagement behaviour, at 18% compared to 16% in June 2023.

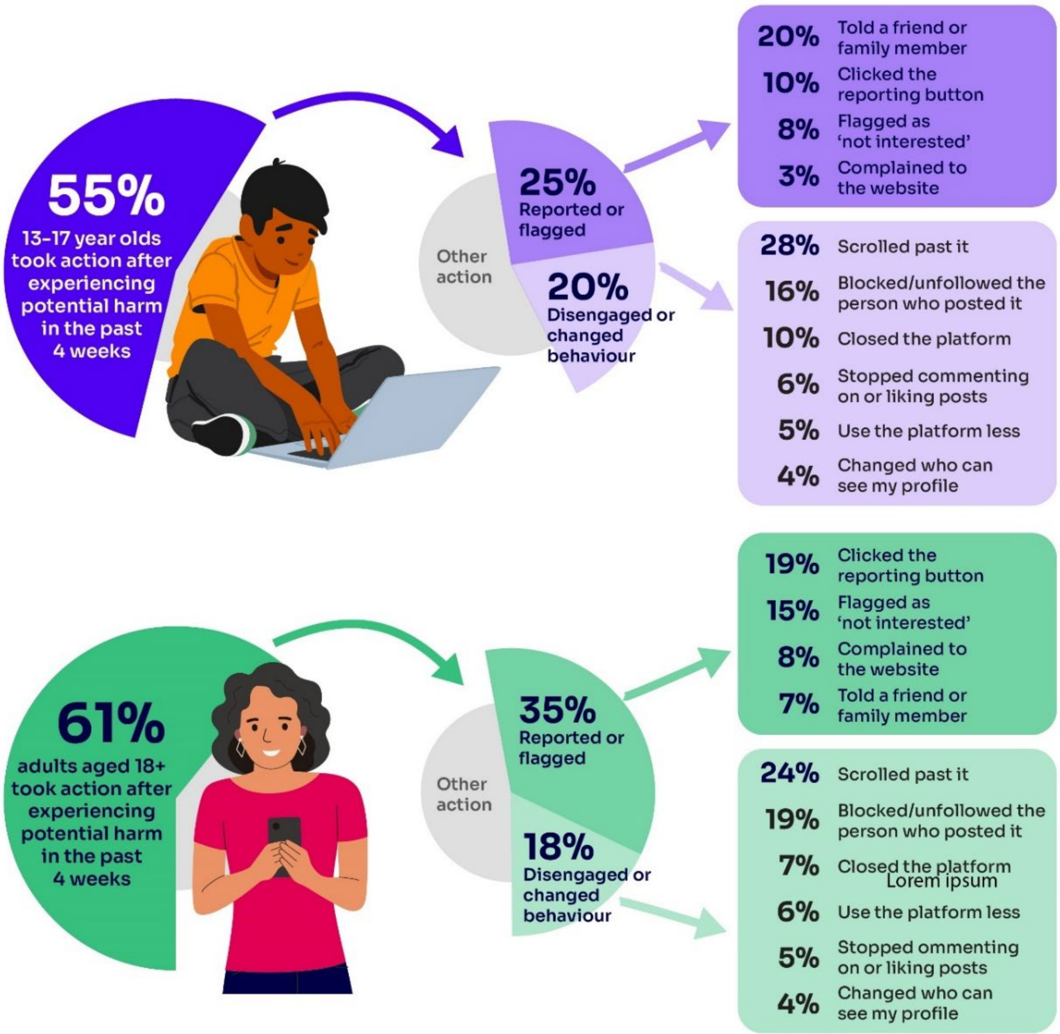
Ofcom's VSP tracker in August 2024 found that 51% of VSP users aged 13+ said they had used a flagging and reporting mechanism in the past, an increase from 42% in February 2024. Of those who had used reporting and flagging mechanisms, 89% said they would use one again, consistent with February 2024 (87%). The main reasons users said they would use them again were that they were easy to use (61%) or easy to find (50%); again, consistent with February 2024 (66% and 56%).[240]

Forty-seven per cent of parents, who were aware of flagging and reporting mechanisms, said these should be made easier for children to use and access, while 9% said they were already easy enough for children to use and access, similar to February 2024 (50% and 8%).[241]

[240] Ofcom, VSP tracker, February 2024 and August 2024, age: 13+, UK.
[241] Ofcom, VSP tracker, February 2024 and August 2024, age: 13+, UK.

Less than a third (27%) of VSP users had used a complaint system[242] in response to potentially harmful content, and 8% of users found them hard to use or hard to find, similar to February 2024 (at 25% and 9%).[243]

**Figure 78: User responses to experiencing potential harm in the past four weeks: June 2024**




*Source: Age 13+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker. Q15. When you saw [potential harm] on that occasion, which of the following actions did you take, if any? Base: Users 13+ (June 2024: 4960).*

## Men and young adults were more likely to be aware of some sort of action taken by the platform following their reporting of a potential harm

Thirty-eight per cent of adults who chose to report or flag content or activity were aware of the outcome of their report; an increase on the last two waves of the survey (32% in January 2024, 30%

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[241] Within our questionnaire we define complaints systems as 'a complaints system that allows users to complain about a site's decision, this may be about content that they have reported, or where their account has been temporarily suspended, for example'. Ofcom, VSP tracker, February 2024 and August 2024, age: 13+, UK.

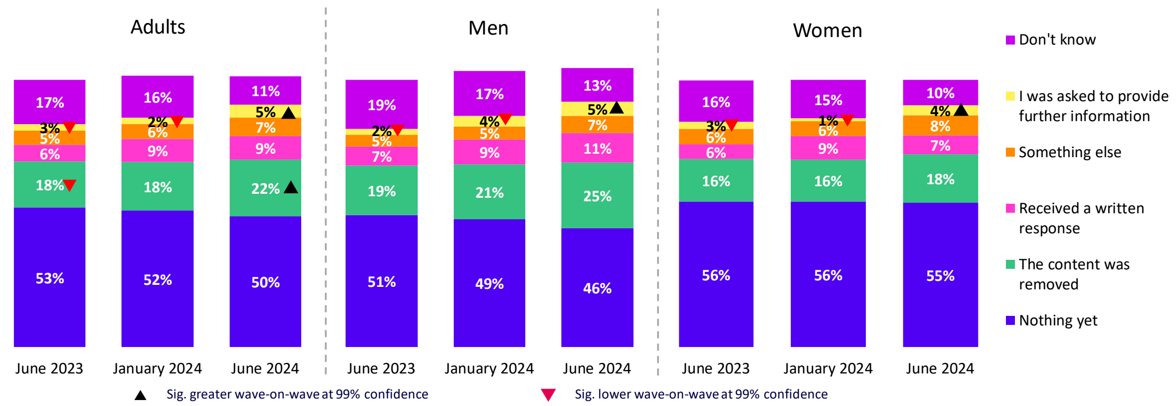
[243] Ofcom, VSP tracker, February 2024 and August 2024, age: 13+, UK.

in June 2023). However, half of adults said ‘nothing yet’ had happened as a result of their reporting/flagging the most recent harm they had encountered. Twenty-two per cent said they had seen the offending content removed, marking a 4pp increase since January 2024 (18%), while 9% had received a written response, an increase from the previous year (June 2023: 6%, +3pp).

18-24-year-olds were the least likely adult group to have heard ‘nothing yet’ in response to their report (33%). 18-24-year-olds were more likely to say that the content they reported had been removed (40%) than the total group of adult respondents (22%). Those aged 55+ were less likely than other groups to say they had seen content removed (16%).

Women were more likely than men to have heard ‘nothing yet’ in response to their report (55% vs 46%) in June 2024. Men were more likely to have received a written response (11% vs women 7%) and were more likely to be aware of the result of reporting (42% vs 35%). In June 2024, a quarter of men said that their reported content had been removed, while 18% of women said the same.

**Figure 79: Outcome following UK adults reporting a potential harm, by gender: 2023-2024**




*Source: Age 18+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q17. You mentioned you reported/complained about the [potential harm]. What happened as a result? [multi-select response] Base: Adults 18+ (June 2023: 1983, January 2024: 1044, June 2024: 1033).*

Adults’ satisfaction following reporting potential harmful content has been increasing; from 31% in June 2023 to 40% in June 2024.[244] This may be related to the increase in awareness of the result of reporting content (e.g. content removal, written response etc), over the same time period, from 30% in June 2023 to 38% in June 2024.

The proportion of adult users who said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied decreased from 32% in June 2023 to 25% in June 2024, while the proportion of those dissatisfied remained stable, from 37% in June 2023 to 35% in June 2024. Younger adults (18-24s) were more likely to be satisfied, at 62%, a 29pp increase since June 2023. Again, this may be connected to this group’s increase in awareness of the result of reporting content, from 40% in June 2023 to 56% in June 2024.

Older adults were less likely to say they were satisfied, at just 38% of those aged 55+. Both men and women experienced increases in satisfaction, but men were more likely than women to be satisfied with the outcome of their reporting (June 2024: 44% vs 37%, June 2023: 41% vs 32%).

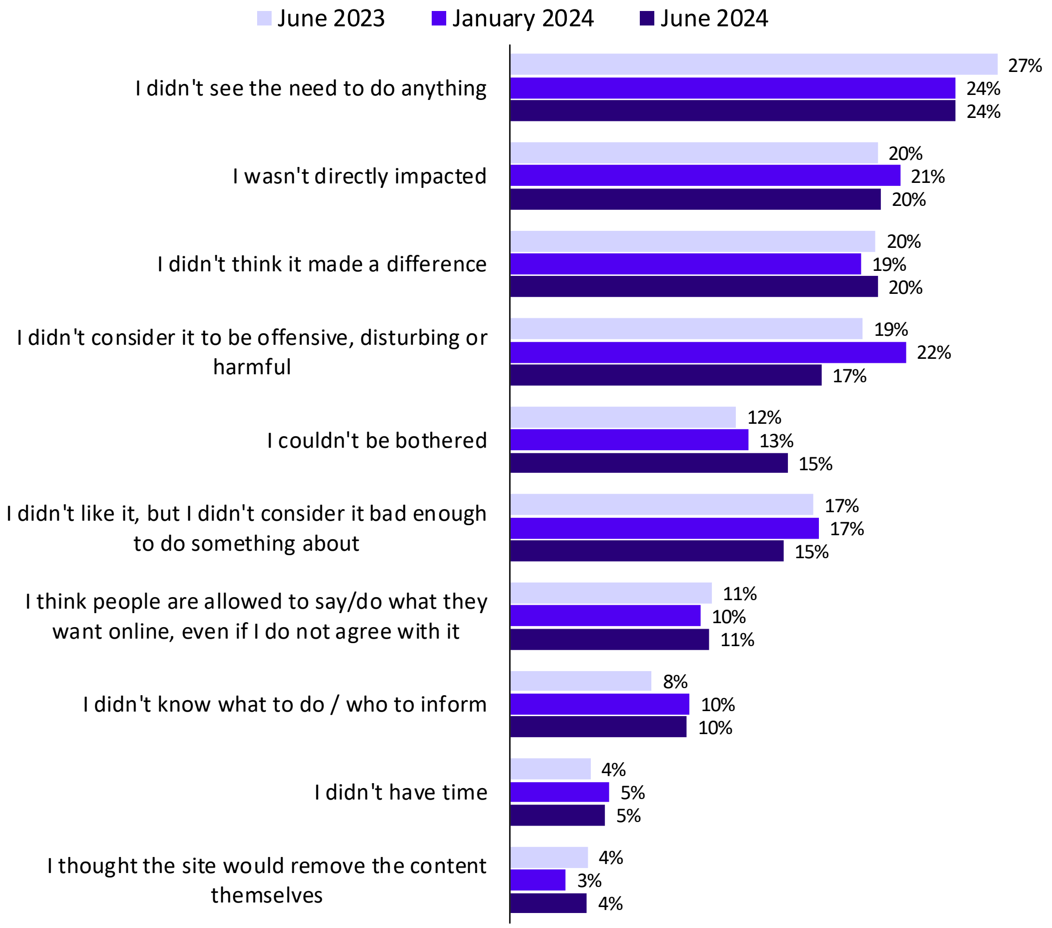
[244] Satisfaction here refers to a NET of ‘somewhat satisfied’ and ‘very satisfied’ in response to Q18 of the OET.

## Most of the adults who didn't take action didn't consider the potential harm serious or harmful enough

Thirty-nine per cent of adults said they took no action in response to their most recently encountered potential harm; in the main, this was because they didn't think the content they encountered was serious or harmful enough (44%). This marks a 5pp decrease from previous waves.

Older adults aged 55+ were the most likely group to say that they didn't like the content but didn't consider it serious enough to do something about (24%). 18-24-year-olds were more likely to say that they 'couldn't be bothered' to take any action (23%). Men were more likely than women to say that they 'didn't see the need to do anything' (30% vs 19%).

**Figure 80: Reasons why adults did not take any action when they came across a potential harm online: 2023-2024**

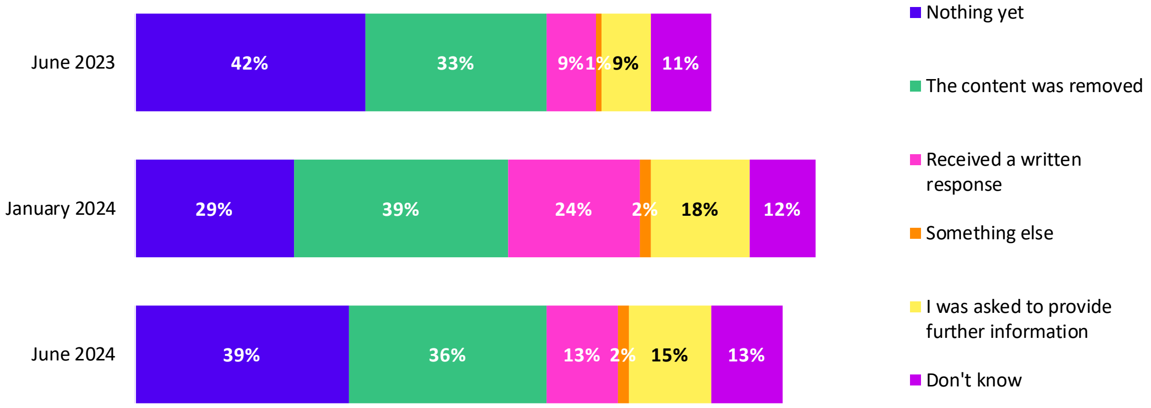



*Source: Age 18+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q16. You mentioned you did not take any action. Why was this? Base: Users 13+ (June 2023: 1536, January 2024: 740, June 2024: 733).*

## In line with June 2023 and January 2024, in June 2024 nearly half (48%) the children aged 13-17 who chose to report or flag the content or activity were aware of the outcome of their report

Thirty-nine per cent of children (13-17s) said they had 'not heard anything yet'. Of those who were aware of the outcome of their report, 36% said the content had been removed, 13% said they had received a written response, and 15% had been asked for further information. Satisfaction, following reporting potential harmful content, indicatively increased among users aged 13-17: from 48% in June 2023 to 62% in June 2024, with the proportion of those dissatisfied remaining fairly stable at 21% in June 2023 vs. 18% in June 2024.

**Figure 81: Outcome following UK teenagers aged 13-17 reporting a potential harm: 2023-2024**




*Source: Age 13-17, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q17. You mentioned you reported/complained about the [potential harm]. What happened as a result? Base: Children 13-17 (June 2023: 78*, January 2024: 47**, June 2024: 52*). Please note users were able to select multiple answers for this question, hence the chart above does not add to 100%. *low base size **very low base size.*

# User attitudes and approaches to staying safe online

## Four in ten (39%) of UK adults believed that platforms and search engines should have responsibility for user safety

When asked in June 2024 whether the onus should be on the website and app to have responsibility for user safety on platforms where user-generated content is posted, or on the individual to ensure that what they post is appropriate for other users, 39% of adult users thought the responsibility was with the platform. This response has seen small but significant increases over the past year: 37% in June 2023, 38% in January 2024. An increasing proportion of adults aged 55+ said the onus falls on the platform, up from 36% in June 2023 to 40% by June 2024.

When asked specifically about search engines, 41% of adults said it was the responsibility of search engines to control what is presented in search results, rather than for individuals to ensure they have the correct settings in place to be presented only with what is appropriate for them. This was a small but significant increase of 2pp since January 2024. Women were more likely than men to place the onus on search engines (45% vs 38%). Among adult age groups, 25-34-year-olds were the most likely to feel that the onus was on the search engine (46%), while 18-24s were the least likely (38%).[245]

[245] For more data on search engines please refer to our interactive report

**Figure 82: Response to attitudes on platform vs individual responsibility by adult demographic groups: June 2024**

| Demographic groups | | 'Onus on platform' | Neutral | 'Onus on the individual' |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 18+ | 39% | 41% | 20% |
| **Gender** | Women | 40% | 43% | 17% |
| | Men | 38% | 39% | 23% |
| **Age** | 18-24 | 34% | 42% | 24% |
| | 25-34 | 41% | 41% | 18% |
| | 35-44 | 39% | 44% | 17% |
| | 45-54 | 38% | 43% | 19% |
| | 55-64 | 40% | 41% | 19% |
| | 65+ | 40% | 36% | 25% |
| **Ethnicity** | White | 39% | 42% | 19% |
| | Minority ethnic | 38% | 40% | 23% |

*Sig greater than total at 95% confidence* *Sig lower than total at 95% confidence*

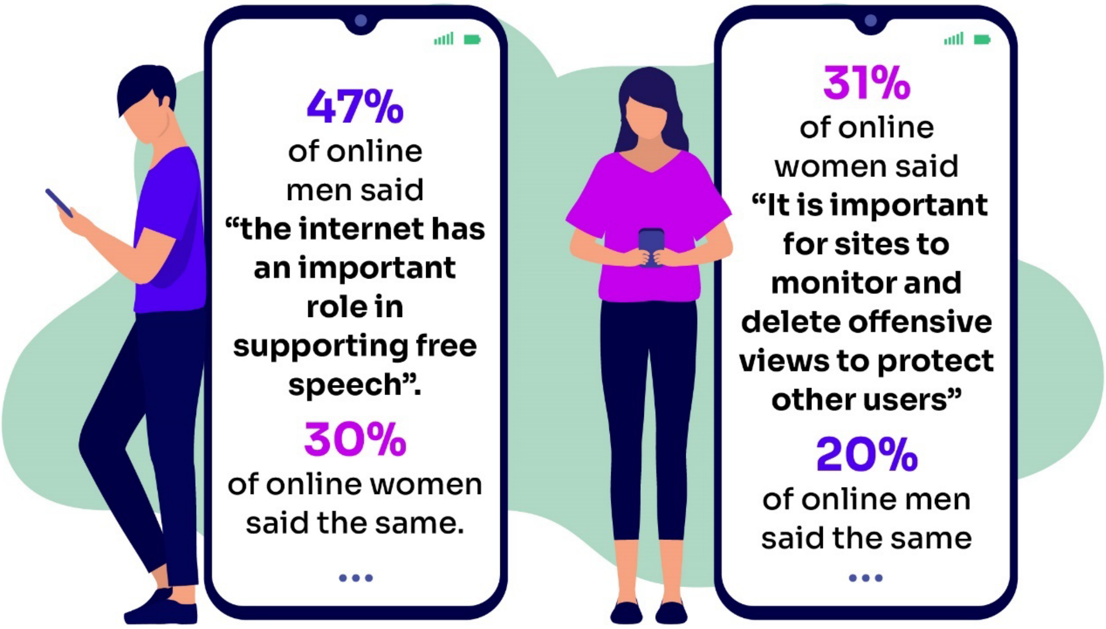
*Source: Age 18+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q1. It is the responsibility of the website or app to control what is posted on their site vs. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure what they are posting is appropriate for other users. Base Adults 18+ (June 2023: 13205, January 2024: 7068, June 2024: 7280)*

By June 2024 there were slightly more adults users (12%) saying they were not confident in their ability to stay safe online than in previous waves (11% in January 2024 and 10% in June 2023). However, most adult users were confident overall (June 2024: 61%). The majority of adult users in June 2024 also believed that common sense was enough to prevent them from seeing harmful or offensive content, at 56%, although this represented a significant decrease from the 61% who said the same the year before.

## An increased proportion of online adults agreed that it was important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views

More online adults in June 2024 than in the previous year thought it was *'important for sites to monitor and delete offensive views to protect other users'*, at 26% compared to 24% in June 2023. However, a higher proportion of adults (38%) felt that '*the internet has an important role in supporting free speech*'. Men were more likely to be advocates of free speech, with 47% agreeing with this statement compared to 30% of women. But 37% of online adults felt 'neutral' on the topic, illustrating the diversity of opinion around moderating online content.

**Figure 83: Views on the role of internet, by gender: 2024**




*Source: Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q1. ‘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’. Base: Adults 18+ (June 2024: 7280).*

## Over the past year a growing proportion of adults have felt that further safety measures are needed online

This belief was held by 44% of adult users in June 2024, compared to 42% in January 2024 and 40% in June 2023. This attitude was especially true for women, those aged 55+ and those from minority ethnic groups. In contrast, men, younger adults and those identifying as LGB+ were more likely to say that existing safety measures are sufficient (see Figure 84 for details). The proportion of online adults who felt neutral about safety measures declined slightly, from 36% in June 2023 and January 2024, to 34% in June 2024. Twenty-two per cent of adult users said that the existing safety measures meet the needs, consistent with June 2023 (23%) and January 2024 (22%).

**Figure 84: Adult differences in attitudes to on-platform safety measures, by demographics: June 2024**

| Demographic groups | | 'Measures meet needs' | Neutral | 'More safety measures needed' |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 18+ | 22% | 34% | 44% |
| **Gender** | Women | 14% | 33% | 53% |
| | Men | 31% | 35% | 35% |
| **Age** | 18-24 | 20% | 40% | 40% |
| | 25-34 | 25% | 31% | 43% |
| | 35-44 | 23% | 35% | 42% |
| | 45-54 | 26% | 34% | 40% |
| | 55-64 | 18% | 32% | 49% |
| | 65+ | 18% | 31% | 51% |
| **Ethnicity** | White | 23% | 33% | 44% |
| | Minority ethnic | 19% | 36% | 45% |
| **Sexual orientation** | Heterosexual | 21% | 33% | 45% |
| | LGB+ | 26% | 36% | 38% |
| | Bisexual | 24% | 34% | 42% |

*Sig greater than total at 95% confidence* *Sig lower than total at 95% confidence*

*Source: Age 18+, Ofcom, Online Experiences Tracker, Q1. 'There are enough online safety measures in place' vs. 'There should be more online safety measures in place'. Base: Adults 18+ (June 2023: 13205, January 2024: 7068, June 2024: 7280).*

# A1. Methodology

## Ofcom research sources

### Ofcom Online Experiences Tracker

The Online Experiences Tracker is a quantitative tracking survey that examines people's attitudes to, and experiences of using online services and platforms in the UK. Ofcom carries out this research twice a year using the YouGov online panel of over 2.7 million people who live in the UK.

Wave 6 of the Online Experiences Tracker was conducted among a nationally representative sample of 7,280 UK internet users aged between 13 and 84. Fieldwork was conducted over a ten-day period between 23rd May and 8th June 2024. The data has been weighted to be representative of the UK internet user population on age within gender, and overall, to regional and SEG profiles.

All respondents who took part in the research were drawn from the YouGov panel. Children aged 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.

For more information, please see the Technical Report.

### Ofcom Video-Sharing Platform (VSP) Tracker

The VSP Tracker is a quantitative survey that serves to understand and track VSP users' awareness, perceptions and claimed experiences of the safety measures and tools available on VSPs, within the broader context of their use of VSPs.  A total of 1,155 online interviews among children and adults aged 13+ were conducted by YouGov in Wave 6. Wave 6 fieldwork took place in August 2024.

For more information, please see the Technical Report.

### Ofcom Technology Tracker

The Technology Tracker is an annual survey conducted among UK people aged 16+, which collects information about people's ownership and use of technologies, including TV, radio, mobile phones, the internet and smart technology. In 2024, the fieldwork was conducted by BMG Research with 4,000 people between January and April, and was a mix of 80% face-to-face and 20% online surveys which were via a postal invitation. It is worth noting that comparisons with 2021 data are not possible for the Tech Tracker, as the methodology in 2021 had to change to push-to-web and push-to-post due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker

The Adults' Media Literacy Tracker is an annual survey providing evidence on media use, attitudes and understanding among UK people aged 16 and over.

This year, the Tracker comprised three surveys:

- Core survey: One wave a year, conducted face-to-face in-home/on the doorstep with additional online interviews conducted through a research panel, with a total sample of 3,645 aged 16+ (2,121 face-to-face and 1,522 online). The fieldwork was conducted in September-November 2023. This survey explored the topics of breadth of internet use, device use and attitudes, and gaming.

- Online Behaviours and Attitudes: Two waves a year, delivered via online panel, with a total sample of 6,182 aged 16+ (3,083 in wave 1 and 3,099 in wave 2). The fieldwork for wave 1 was conducted in May 2023, and for wave 2 in October-November 2023. This survey explored the topics of social media, online attitudes and wellbeing.
- Online Knowledge and Understanding: One wave a year, delivered via online panel, with a sample of 3,093 aged 16+. The fieldwork was conducted in October-November 2023. This survey explored the topics of critical understanding, personal data, trust and online advertising.

## Ofcom Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker

The Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker provides evidence on media access, use, attitudes and understanding among children and young people aged 3-17. The survey also asks parents' views about their children's media use, and how parents of children and young people aged 3-17 monitor and manage their children's use.

This year, the Tracker comprised three surveys:

Online behaviours and attitudes: One wave a year, delivered via an online panel, with a total sample of 3,383 children aged 3-17. The fieldwork was conducted in October-November 2023.

Online knowledge and understanding: One wave a year, delivered via an online panel, with a sample of 2,080 children aged 8-17. The fieldwork was conducted in October-November 2023.

Parents only: One wave a year, delivered via a mix of online panels and post-to-web surveys, with a sample of 2,480 parents of children aged 3-17. The mixed methodology enabled us to reach a broader sample of respondents. The fieldwork was conducted in October-November 2023.

Further details on the methodology of the Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker 2023 can be found in the [2023 Technical Report].

## Ofcom Children's Media Lives

The Children's Media Lives project follows, as far as possible. the same group of 21 children aged 8 to 17, conducting filmed interviews each year to learn about their media habits and attitudes. This research began in 2014 as a way of providing a small-scale, rich and detailed qualitative complement to Ofcom's quantitative surveys of media literacy.

It provides evidence about the motivations and the context for media use, and how media is a part of their daily life and domestic circumstances. The project also provides rich details of how children's media habits and attitudes change over time, particularly in the context of their emotional and cognitive development.

## Ofcom Online Research Panel

Ofcom works with YouGov Plc UK on the Online Research Panel project, which allows Ofcom to conduct online interviews administered to members of the YouGov UK panel of 2.5 million+ individuals who have agreed to take part in surveys. Emails are sent to panellists selected at random from the base sample. The email invites them to take part in a survey and provides a generic survey link. Once a panel member clicks on the link, they are sent to the survey that they are most required for, according to the sample definition and quotas. Invitations to surveys do not expire and respondents can be directed to any available survey. The responding sample is weighted to the profile of the sample definition to provide a representative reporting sample.

These are the sample definitions for each poll:

**Children's screentime** – Total sample was 1121 participants aged 8-15, weighted and representative of children internet users aged 8-15 in Great Britain. Fieldwork was undertaken between 19th and 26th March 2024.

**Cloud storage, messaging and online marketplaces** – Total sample was 2100 participants aged 16+, weighted and representative of UK internet users aged 16+. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2nd and 3rd July 2024.

**Deepfakes (older teens and adults)** – Total sample was 2520 participants aged 16+, weighted and representative of UK internet users aged 16+. Fieldwork was undertaken between 7th and 10th June 2024.

**Deepfakes (8-15 year-olds)** – Total sample was 1051 participants aged 8-15, weighted and representative of child internet users aged 8-15 in Great Britian. Fieldwork was undertaken between 7th and 13th June 2024.

**Generative artificial intelligence and deepfakes (older teenagers and adults)** – Total sample was 2520 participants aged 16+, weighted and representative of UK internet users aged 16+. Fieldwork was undertaken between 7th and 10th June 2024.

**Generative artificial intelligence and deepfakes (8-15 year-olds)** – Total sample was 1051 participants aged 8-15, weighted and representative of child internet users aged 8-15 in Great Britian. Fieldwork was undertaken between 7th and 13th June 2024.

## Ofcom Children's Online User Ages

To understand the extent to which children are bypassing age assurance measures, Ofcom commissioned YouGov to conduct quantitative research to estimate the proportion of children who have online profiles with 'user ages' that make them appear to be older than they actually are. Fieldwork for the most recent survey was undertaken in August 2024 and was completed by 1,709 children aged 8-17.

To be eligible for the survey children were required to use and have their own profile on at least one of the following ten platforms: YouTube (not including YouTube Kids), Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Discord, Pinterest, Twitch, X, Vimeo (or any other platforms they specified in the survey). Boosts were applied to ensure a minimum base size of 50 per platform per age group, sufficient for robust analysis.

For more information, please see the Technical Report.

## Ofcom Communications Affordability Tracker

The Communications Affordability Tracker aims to provide Ofcom with continued understanding of consumer affordability issues in the UK communications markets (covering mobile, landline, fixed broadband, pay TV and on-demand TV services). The tracker has been running since June 2020 with fieldwork being conducted on a quarterly basis via a telephone omnibus. The data included in this report is based on fieldwork conducted in October 2024 among 1,089 UK adults, who identify either as the sole or joint decision-maker for communications services in their household and/or those who personally use a mobile phone.

## Ofcom News Consumption Survey

The News Consumption Survey (NCS) is a bi-annual survey with fieldwork for 2024 taking place across two waves: from 6th November – 3rd December 2023 and 26th February – 23rd March 2024, reaching a sample of 5,466 nationally representative UK individuals aged 16+.

The aim of the News Consumption Survey is to help us understand:

• News consumption across the UK and within each UK nation

• The sources and platforms used for news

• The perceived importance of different outlets for news

• The attitudes towards individual news sources, and local news use

Please see the Ofcom Statistical Release Calendar 2024 for the News Consumption Survey 2024 technical report, published data tables and questionnaire.

## Ofcom UK General Election news and opinion-formation survey 2024

The survey was fielded four times during the General Election period to nationally representative samples of UK adults (2,000 respondents per wave), using YouGov's political omnibus.

Fieldwork was conducted on the following dates: 19th-20th June (W1); 26th-27th June (W2); 3rd-4th July (W3); 10th-11th July (W4). The UK General Election was held on 4th July 2024, so the research provided three waves of fieldwork in the run-up to the election, and one wave in the week after. Minimal differences were observed across between the four waves. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, we use the rolled figures made from combining all four waves of the tracker.

The survey consisted of 24 questions split across three sections:

5.1 Sources of news and current affairs: The sources that respondents used to find out news and current affairs both outside and during the General Election period.

5.2 Attitudes towards news and current affairs: Respondents' attitudes towards news and current affairs to do with the General Election, how they formed their opinions and the role of different media sources in this process.

5.3 Misinformation and deepfakes: Respondents' experiences of perceived misinformation and deepfakes during the General Election period.

# Third-party research sources

## Ipsos – Ipsos iris

Launched in early 2021, Ipsos iris is the UKOM-endorsed currency for the measurement of audiences of online content of UK adults aged 15+ who use the internet at least once a month.

Ipsos iris uses a hybrid methodology with several data sources including:

- A passive single-source panel of over 10,000 adults who use the internet. Panellists install passive tracking software onto personally used digital devices and in some instances those who also use their device for work (smartphones, computers, and tablets) which access the internet, with data collected continuously. The panel is recruited to be representative of the internet population demographically, geographically and by device type use.

- Census measurement of publisher websites and apps to collect visit measures for time spent and page views at a total level.
- A high-quality Establishment Survey, to produce universe targets. The Ipsos iris panel is then weighted to the internet population of UK adults and demographic subgroups.
- External first-party data from accredited and approved sources with additional website or app level targets.

Reporting on daily and monthly data, all sources are fused together to create a synthetic dataset with more than one million records to represent the UK online infrastructure of websites and apps. These can be analysed and reported at many demographic and geographic levels. As this is a synthetic dataset, it is not possible to provide confidence intervals/ranges for extrapolated population estimates. However, all extrapolated population figures provided are estimates that will have some margin of error.

Due to a methodology enhancement of the Ipsos iris data set average total time spent data for the YouTube brand, total app and website cannot be compared to previous years.

Where news publishers have implemented Ipsos iris' tagging methodology visits to their articles via Google AMP and Facebook Instant Articles will pick up content consumed through these platforms and attribute reach and time spent to the relevant publisher. Apple News content was categorised in October 2023, there may be incremental increases in reach for some services when comparing year-on-year data. More detail on the Ipsos iris methodology can be found at https://iris.ipsos.com/what-we-offer/.

For the reports used here, we have mainly used Ipsos iris monthly data from May 2024. The passive panel for this month covered a continuously measured sample of 10,700 adults. The panel size by age and nation is below. Note that as this is a continuous panel, the reporting profile in other months will be similar.

| Demographic | May 2022 Ipsos iris panel size | May 2023 Ipsos iris panel size | May 2024 Ipsos iris panel size | May 2024 UK proportions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| UK age 18+ | 10,871 | 10,542 | 10,700 | 99.4% |
| England 18+ | 8,946 | 8,717 | 8,862 | 82.3% |
| Scotland 18+ | 1,040 | 983 | 990 | 9.2% |
| Wales 18+ | 623 | 561 | 548 | 5.1% |
| Northern Ireland 18+ | 262 | 281 | 300 | 2.8% |

## Ampere Analysis – games

Ampere Analysis is a research and data analysis company which focuses on media and communications. This year we have included data from three of Ampere's Games products:

- Ampere Games – Consumer, Q2, UK data. Two surveys are run within Q2:
  One is a survey numbering 2,000 respondents aged 16-64 which is nationally representative of the UK online population. The second is a much smaller survey of UK 13-15-year-olds (120) which is not nationally representative. Where age groups are not defined, these two sets of responses are combined together.
- Ampere Games – Analytics, May 2023 and May 2024 UK data: Analytics tracks title activity across the Xbox and PlayStation console platforms, title inclusion within multi-game subscription catalogues, and provides Ampere's proprietary Popularity metric for leading games.
- Ampere Games – Markets: Markets tracks total games market performance and forecasts across device categories, monetisation models, and distribution types.

## Barb – YouTube viewing on TV sets

Barb Audiences Ltd (Barb), is the industry's standard for understanding what people watch. Barb uses a hybrid approach, integrating people-based panel data with census-level online viewing data to provide the official broadcast TV measurement for the industry. Barb has had a nationally representative panel of approximately 5,300 homes (approximately 12,000 individuals). Over the last couple of years they have been expanding the panel, this completed earlier in 2024 and now consists of 7,000 homes (approximately 16,000 people). The data that Barb collects includes viewing of broadcast TV through TV sets and via any devices attached to TV sets, such as computers, streaming devices, or set-top boxes. Barb also captures device-based 'big data' whenever anyone in the UK watches a broadcaster's video-on-demand (BVoD) service on a connected device, as well as some viewing data for video watched on online streaming services and video sharing platforms. This includes video viewing on devices not connected to the TV being watched at home via WiFi. Barb does not capture out-of-home viewing. Barb analysis has been taken from the AdvantEdge TV analysis software.

### References to other third-party sources

Ofcom references publicly-available information and third-party data sources throughout the report. These include press releases, blogs, earnings reports, transparency reports and other publicly-available corporate information. Other third-party providers cited in Online Nation include:

- Advertising Association
- Amazon
- Bank of England
- BBC News
- Bumble
- Bustle
- CHILDWISE
- CNN
- Forbes
- Free Speech Coalition
- Gov UK
- IAB
- Institute for government
- Match Group
- Meta
- Met Office
- Microsoft
- New York Times
- Open AI
- Pornhub
- Reddit
- Techradar
- The Guardian
- TechCrunch