

Social Media and Online Awareness

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#BoljiOnline



Intro

I am Aura Radočaj and I am in the 5th grade of elementary school. I am working on the project **"Social Media and Online Awareness"**, the goal of this project is to make my peers aware of the dangers lurking on the internet.

The inspiration for this project came to me because of the current situation in our country and in the world where hate speech, threats and many terrible things that happen in the online world are common, and we are all online, on the networks and surfing a lot of time.

I noticed that many people are not at all familiar with all the dangers in the online world based on what they do and what they post on social networks. That is why I wanted to do a project on this topic. I also noticed that terrible things are happening and going on around me, such as inappropriate WhatsApp groups, hate speech, inappropriate comments ...

As part of the project, I decided to do a survey to get results and observe the situation in my school. I compiled 11 questions and distributed the survey sheet in my school. The survey was conducted with students in grades four, five, six, seven and eight. 85 children at my school completed the survey.

After that, I reviewed and analyzed the survey.

I put the survey analyses and results into graphs to make the results easier to understand.

I conducted the "Social Media and Online Awareness" survey to find out from children about their experiences with the online world, such as whether they have ever been victims of cyberbullying, whether they receive suspicious friend requests and whether they accept them, whether they know who to contact in case of problems in the online world, how much time they spend on social networks, which application they use the most...

My research showed that my assumptions were correct and that many children (as I mentioned) are not aware of all the dangers of the online world and that many have been victims of cyberbullying and hate speech. Through research and reviewing the surveys, I also noticed that my peers do not know that they can contact institutions such as the Safer Internet Centre and the Zagreb Child and Youth Protection Center which we have in our country and in the city.

Only one person out of all those surveyed would turn to a therapist.

It is also important that they know that they can turn to institutions and the police if they need help because of the dangers they are facing in the online world.

I will include all these numbers in my brochure to help my peers know to whom they can report inappropriate content, cyberbullying and get help. It is also important to explain to them that all institutions protect our privacy and protect us, because we are all afraid of reports and worried that those who threaten us will find out and become even worse.

We must all fight together against violence in the online world and for a better online world.

Report inappropriate content via the **HOTLINE** service on Hotline - **Csi.hr**
For help, call the toll-free number **0800 606 606**, available on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
You can also report the content to the police through the **RED BUTTON** service





The most important part of this research are the questions which my peers asked in the survey.

With the professional help of institutions and experts, I will provide answers in the brochure regarding what we do not understand and what the students asked.

In this way, we will help the students of my school and all those who are not from my school but have the same questions.

Questions

Internet & phone

How can you be safe online?

—

What is the most dangerous thing online?

—

Why are children addicted to phones?

—

From what age should children be allowed online?

—

Why do we spend so much time on social media?

—

What do you do without your phone?

—

How much time spent on the phone would be considered a healthy amount?

—

I would like to know about why we use social networks and why we spend so much time online?

—

How does it affect our sleep and eyesight?

How does social media affect our health?

—

How much of our time should we spend on social media?

—

What is the most dangerous app you can use online?

—

How much time do most 10-15-year-olds spend on their phones?

—

How do you flag an app and where?

—

Should social media platforms be sued for causing kids to become addicted or is this legal?

—

Which app is used the most?

—

Have you ever been in an online relationship/ friendship, and do you consider such a thing to be real?

Cyberbullying

Do we need a useful website against cyberbullying that could help us?

—
Are lots of people victims of hate speech on the internet (ask someone who has been cyberbullied and a victim of hate speech)?

—
What else do you do instead of watching videos, chatting with friends or playing games?

—
What would you do if someone hacked into my mum's phone?

How can cyberbullying be prevented?

—
Does cyberbullying occur often? How should you tell a friend to take down a video of you?

—
How can cyberbullying be stopped? MOST FREQUENT QUESTION.

—
Have you ever been hacked?

—
SHOULD I RESPOND IF SOMEONE CYBERBULLIES ME?

How do people cyberbully others? What are the stages of cyberbullying?

—
Is cyberbullying dangerous? I want to learn how to hack my hackers. Is it possible?

—
What are some bad things and some good things about social media?

—
How much time do you spend on social media?

Social media

I would like to know in which country is TikTok or YouTube used the most?

—
How many people use these 2 applications in Croatia?

—
Who invented social media?

—
What is the average screen time?

—
How much time do people usually spend on social media?

—
How does social media influence young people?

Are there any benefits of social media?

—
Why is social media so addictive?

—
How does social media function?

—
Is social media appropriate for specific ages?

—
Do you use social media to talk to:
a) family
b) friends
c) strangers?

—
What is considered as social media?

How to raise awareness about the internet & social media?

—
Is social media safe?

—
How many people use social media?

—
What to do if somebody sends me friend requests over and over again?

—
Is social media good or bad?

Tea Čičić, mag. act. soc.

Expert Associate – Social Worker, Center for Missing and Abused Children

Why are social media platforms only for kids over 13?

You've gotten your first mobile phone, you have access to the internet, and you use it every day, but you still can't open your first profile on TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook?

Even though you are not 13 years old, most of your friends have their own profiles on social media, but your parents don't allow you to open one?

Social media platforms, like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, can seem really fun and appealing. You can share pictures, videos, chat with friends, and watch interesting content on them. Although some of your friends have profiles on social media, there is a reason why most social networks require you to be at least 13 years old before you can create a profile.



Privacy protection

Children under the age of 13 often do not know enough about how to protect their data online. On social media, we share pictures, personal information, locations, and much more.

If you don't know how to set your profile privacy, it may be possible for unknown individuals to obtain access to your information. Someone can "steal" your name and pictures and impersonate you.

Also, someone can misuse your data and use it for inappropriate or even illegal activities.

That's why it is important to know how to set privacy when you're old enough to use social media.

Communication with strangers

Social networks were originally designed for mutual communication. Children under the age of 13 sometimes don't understand how dangerous it can be to talk to strangers on the internet. You might find yourself meeting someone who seems to be a child, and through conversation with them, you discover that they have similar interests as you, that they love everything you love. However, behind the screen, there can sometimes be an adult hiding who is misrepresenting themselves, a person who is pretending to be someone else. Such individuals may use lies and manipulation to exploit children, which can be very dangerous.

How comments and likes affect us

Comments, likes, and even the number of followers can affect how we feel. Children over 13 have a more developed emotional maturity, so they handle criticism and the pressures that come with social media more easily.

If you receive a bad comment on a photo you've posted, it can affect your mood.

As you learn how to deal with criticism and rejection in real life, you can also learn how to handle such things online. However, it is important to prepare for it and develop confidence in yourself.

What can you do on the internet before the age of 13?

If you are under 13 years old, it doesn't mean you can't enjoy the internet. There are fun and safe networks specifically designed for children, such as YouTube Kids or educational games on the Friv4schools platform. You can explore the internet with the help of your parents and watch educational content and learn new things in a safe way. You can also use apps for learning foreign languages, or apps for drawing and creative expression.

When you turn 13, you will be more prepared for social media because you will have more experience and knowledge about how to stay safe online. Until then, use the internet wisely and safely with the help of your parents and other trusted adults.

Who are predators?

The internet provides us with countless opportunities for socializing and forming friendships.

Sometimes it's hard to resist the need and desire to form friendships with those we meet online.

- Do the people on the other side of the screen always have the same intentions as us?
- Is it possible that behind the profile of a player who presents themselves as your peer, there is somebody else?
- Is it okay for adults to be friends with children?

Unfortunately, some adults use social media and video games to lure and then harm children and young people. We call them **PREDATORS**.

Some may pretend to be children or young people, and after gaining the victim's trust and personal information, secrets, or even intimate photographs, they start to blackmail them.

Others, on the other hand, may pretend to have similar interests as the victim or, for example, claim to have mutual friends.

If they are not already talking in private conversations, they will try to move the communication somewhere private where others cannot see it. They will

try to get close to the younger person, which can last for several months or years, all with the aim of exploiting them in some way. This is a process we call '**GROOMING**'.

Predators lure both girls and boys.

How to recognize a predator?

Predators use various tactics to manipulate their victims and gain their trust, some of which are:

- Pretending to be someone they are not (using fake photos and false profiles)
- Pretending to share common interests (e.g., sports, music, or other hobbies)
- Wanting to befriend you or start an online relationship.
- Giving excessive advice and understanding everything you tell them.
- Sharing their problems and difficulties.
- Giving you a lot of attention and excessively speaking highly of you.
- Buying you gifts online and offline.
- Sharing secrets and private information and encouraging you to share yours.
- Offering money for you sending them intimate photos.

- Wanting to keep your friendship a secret, asking you if it can be kept secret as something special that only the two of you understand.
- Wanting to talk to you only when you're alone.
- Changing their behavior when you mention that a parent or another close person is in the room.
- Showing interest in your private information shortly after getting to know you.

What to do?

Sometimes it is very clear and obvious that another person is trying to groom you because they are older than you and/or they are behaving inappropriately.

On the other hand, attempts at grooming can be harder to notice if you think you're talking to your peers and people you trust. If you believe there is even the slightest chance that the person you're talking to isn't who they claim to be, reach out to trusted adults.

Even if the other person has your personal information, your parents or other adults can help you stay safe!

- Remember that it's not your fault and that you are not alone.
- Tell someone you trust so they can support you in seeking help.

- Stop communicating with the predator.
- Do not give in to their threats by sending money or more intimate content.
- Keep evidence of their blackmail and threats on your device.

It is important to report predators to the police. Your trusted individuals can also help you with that, as well as the experts from the Safer Internet Centre.

You can always reach out to the Safer Internet Centre via the free and anonymous hotline 0800 606 606, every weekday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

How to communicate with online “friends”?

RULES:

- Do not share personal information (e.g., school name, address, phone number),
- If someone wants to “talk privately,” be cautious.
- If something sounds strange to you or someone is bothering you – tell an adult.
- Never arrange an in-person meeting or video call with strangers without your parents’ knowledge!

Why is TikTok an unsafe place for elementary school students?

TikTok is fun, but there is a lot of content that is not suitable for children. The app collects a lot of personal data and it is easy to come across:

- inappropriate content (profanity, violence, health-endangering challenges),

- fake profiles and adults posing as children,
- peer violence (cyberbullying),
- pressure to look, behave, or dance in a certain way.

Why is forbidden content the most appealing, and what if we do look into it anyway?

Forbidden things often seem “interesting” to us because they are mysterious. It’s normal – the brain loves things that are “new” and “dangerous”, but:

- If you watch something inappropriate, TikTok (and the algorithm) remembers this and starts suggesting similar videos to you.
- Solution? Stop watching, remove the likes, and click “Not interested” when such a video pops up.
- Talk to a parent or teacher if something upsets you.

What about the bots that reach out to you?

Bots are fake profiles – automated accounts that look like real people. They can send you messages, comment or offer “free rewards” – don’t believe them! These are scams that can cause you to lose your account or personal information.

- Never open links that are sent to you.
- Immediately report such an account and block it.





What are the basic rules for a better internet?

1. Think before you click or post.
2. Be kind – there are real people behind the screen.
3. Protect your privacy – everything you put online can stay there forever.
4. Report violence, insults, or harassment to an adult who you trust or to the Safer Internet Centre at 0800 606 606.
5. Use the internet for entertainment, knowledge, and socializing – but use it safely and responsibly.

How can we report inappropriate speech without being excluded from society?

You can always report offensive comments or messages anonymously using the “Report” option within the app, as well as via the [csi.hr/hotline/](https://www.csi.hr/hotline/) link on the website of the Safer Internet Centre. You can contact our experts at the toll-free and anonymous number 0800 606 606, every weekday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

If someone keeps sending you mean messages, take a screenshot of the message and show it to an adult you trust – not to “report” someone, but to protect yourself and others.

How can you permanently block people you don’t want?

On every social media platform, there is a “Block” option.

1. Go to their profile page.
2. Click on the three dots or the menu.
3. Select “Block.”

When you block someone:

- They can’t contact you.
- They can’t see your profile, comments, or posts.

- You also no longer see them.

How to keep your profile private from the public?

1. In the privacy settings, set your profile to “private”.
2. Turn off profile visibility in search.
3. Review who is sending you requests and do not accept unknown individuals.

Note: Even private profiles can be screen captured (screenshot, screen recording) – so always think about what you post.

How to limit your followers?

You can remove someone from your followers even if they have already been accepted.

On Instagram, for example:

- Go to the list of followers.
- Click “Remove” next to the person.

In the settings, you can choose who is allowed:

- to comment on your posts,
- to watch your stories,
- to send you messages.

Is it possible to remove something we posted – and how can we do it permanently?

You can delete a post by removing it from your profile (on TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.).

BUT! If someone has already recorded it or shared it, you can’t completely erase it.

That’s why the best protection is to think before you post.

Rule: “If I wouldn’t show it to my teacher or grandmother – I shouldn’t post it.”

What is cyberbullying and why is it dangerous?

Cyberbullying occurs when someone uses technology, such as social media, messaging apps, or games, to intentionally hurt others.

This can include offensive messages, sharing private photos without permission, spreading lies, or even creating fake profiles with the aim of humiliating a person.

The consequences of cyberbullying can include anxiety, depression, and a sense of isolation. Unlike traditional bullying, this form of violence can occur 24 hours a day and spread quickly, which makes it particularly difficult for victims.

Cyberbullying can leave lasting consequences, but getting support can make a big difference.

Victims often feel shame and fear, but friends can help them realize that they are not alone and that there is a way out of that situation.

How to recognize if your friend is a victim of cyberbullying?

Your friend may not directly say that they are a victim of cyberbullying, but there are signs to look out for.

You might notice that they are withdrawn, upset after using their phone or computer, or they suddenly stop using social media. Some of the signs include changes in mood, social withdrawal, or a sudden drop in self-esteem.

If you notice any of these, approach them with understanding and offer your help. Don't force them to tell you everything right away; instead, give them space to share what they want to share.



How can you help?

1. Listen and support.

Your first step is to show your friend that you care. Sometimes, just being there for them can make a big difference. You can ask them questions like, "How do you feel about this?" or "Can I help you in any way?". It's important not to diminish their feelings with statements such as "It's just the internet, ignore it." For victims, cyberbullying is real and can be very painful.

2. Seek help from adults.

If the situation becomes serious, inform an adult you trust. It can be a parent, teacher or school psychologist. Support from adults is crucial in addressing such problems and preventing further violence.

3. Help them report the bullying.

Most social media platforms have the option to report offensive content. Help your friend to report messages or posts that offend them. On platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or Snapchat, you can collectively block individuals who harass others and report them on the platforms.

4. Don't spread the problem.

If you come across hurtful comments or images that offend your friend, don't share them with others.

By sharing, you only make the situation worse and further hurt your friend.

Don't stop at just one conversation. Regularly ask your friend how they are feeling and show them that they are not alone. The continuous support of friends gives victims a sense of security and helps them.

Where and how to report?

You can report inappropriate content in several ways:

1. Safer Internet Centre:

- You can report inappropriate content via their HOTLINE service at csi.hr/hotline/.
- For assistance, call the toll-free number 0800 606 606, available on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

2. Police:

- You can report content to the police via the RED BUTTON service.

3. Social network:

- Find the 'Report' option - next to the post, comment, message, video, or profile, look for the three dots (⋮), a flag icon, "Report", or a similar option.
- Select the reason for reporting - e.g., hate speech, violence, harassment, sexual content.
- Follow the instructions provided by the platform - it usually guides you through simple steps to application confirmation.

Who should I contact for help?

It's important to know that adults are here to protect you. You can always turn to an adult for help. A trusted adult in your surroundings - for example, this could be your parents, older siblings, sisters, teachers, or school counselors.

The experts from the Safer Internet Centre are also at your disposal. You can reach them via a toll-free number **0800 606 606** every weekday from **8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, through social media and at the email address **info@csi.hr**.

How to stop cyberbullying?

BREAK THE CYCLE OF BULLYING

If you know someone who is abusive, tell them to stop. Explain to them that they are behaving like a bully.

If you see that cyberbullying is happening, break the cycle: don't forward malicious messages. Don't add emojis to offensive posts, and don't spread rumors in person with your friends.

Do not encourage bullying - break the cycle!

Show the person who has been bullied that they are not alone! Tell them you stand by them. Show them support through a message.

GATHER EVIDENCE

Become a detective fighting against bullying! Save images or messages related to cyberbullying.

Take screenshots or videos. These are evidence of bullying. Show your evidence to your parents, teachers, or other trusted adults.

REPORT

The best way to stop cyberbullying is to report it!

Report incidents of bullying to the school and to your parents. Also, report the incident to the app, game, or website on which it occurred.

Your school probably has a way to report bullying anonymously. Applications, games, and websites also offer options for anonymous reports. This means that no one will know that you reported the bullying.

What are the positive aspects of social media?

Social media can bring various benefits if used in a positive and balanced way.

Here are some key benefits that social networks can provide:

▪ CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Maintaining contact: Using social media allows you to stay connected with friends and family, even if they are not physically close. This is especially important when they move to a different city or state.

Building and maintaining relationships: You can build new friendships and maintain existing ones through shared interests and appropriate communication.

▪ ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Learning and education: Many social networks provide access to useful information and educational content. Following experts from various fields, scientists, or activists can expand your knowledge on various topics, such as health, ecology, technology.

Online courses and resources: On platforms like YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok, you can find a wealth of educational videos and tips that can help you in school, learning new skills, or hobbies.

▪ EXPRESSION AND CREATIVITY

Creative expression: Social media provides a platform for sharing one's interests, hobbies, and talents with others. Whether you are into photography, writing, music, or art, you can use social media to express your creative ideas.

Inspiration: Following inspiring people or creative projects can spark your own ideas and projects, as well as motivate you to try something new.

▪ DEVELOPING SOCIAL AWARENESS

Awareness of social issues: Many social networks provide information about current social issues, humanitarian actions, and movements. You can get involved in campaigns that interest you and be part of positive changes in society.

Activism: You have the opportunity to participate in global and local movements, stay informed about important issues, and contribute to raising awareness on topics that interest you, such as climate change, human rights or social justice.

▪ SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT

Finding support: There are groups and communities on social media that provide support to people facing similar challenges. It can be especially helpful when you feel lonely or when you need emotional support.

Positive role models: Social media allows you to follow people who inspire you with their life stories, which can help you build up your own self-confidence.

▪ FUN AND RELAXATION

Access to entertainment: Social media offers an unlimited amount of fun, from memes to viral videos, which can help you unwind after a long day.

▪ DEVELOPING DIGITAL SKILLS

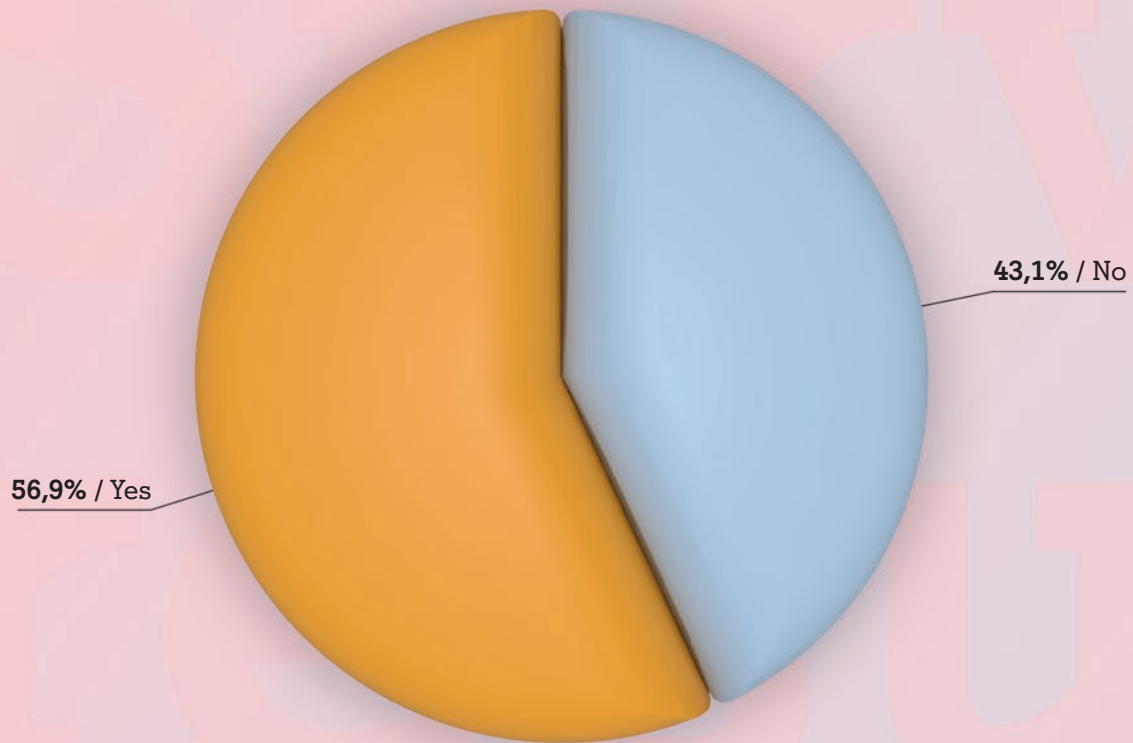
Technical and digital skills: Using social media can help you better understand how the digital world works, which is useful for future career opportunities. You will develop skills such as managing an online profile, creating digital content, or even basic understanding of marketing and analytics.

Basics of online communication: You will learn how to express yourself effectively and responsibly in online space, which is a key skill in the digital age.



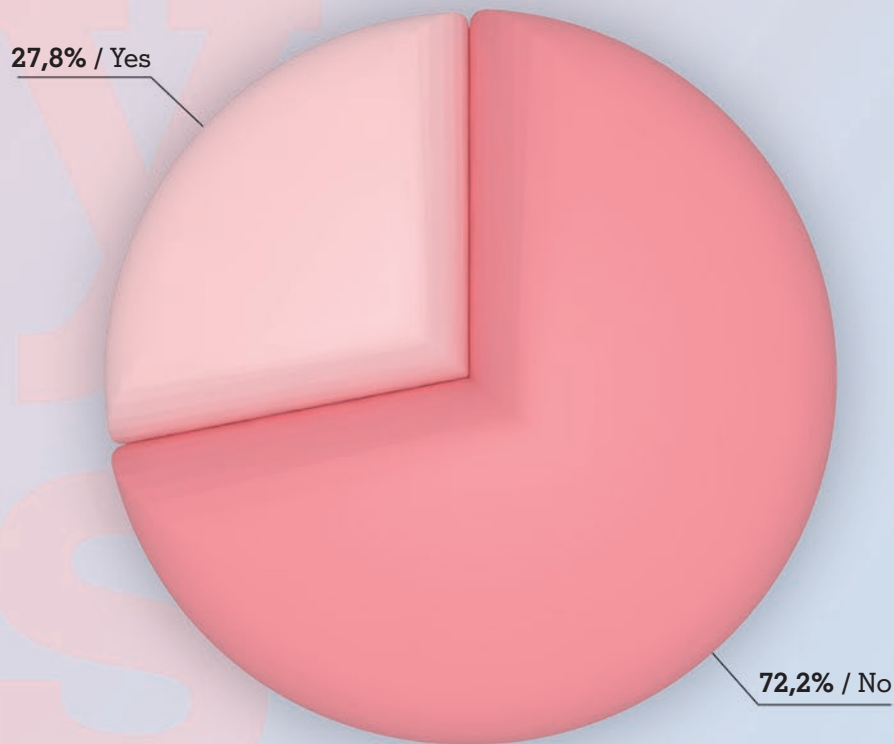
Social media can be beneficial if you use it in a way that fosters your creativity, growth, and learning. Connect with your friends, access new information, or participate in social interactions. It is also essential that you use them responsibly and consciously, ensuring that time spent online is a quality and positive experience, while also maintaining a balance with your activities in the offline world.

Survey



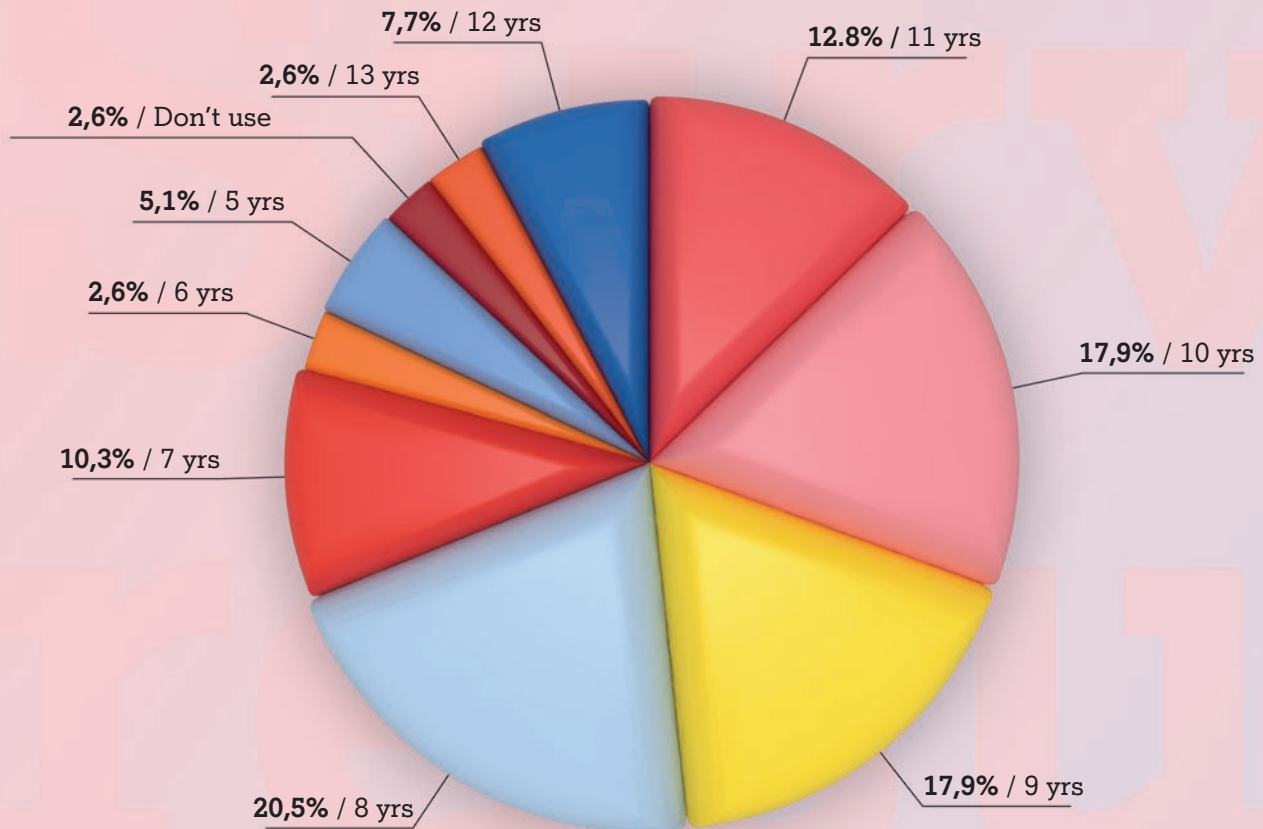
Have you ever received negative comments
or a suspicious friend request?

results



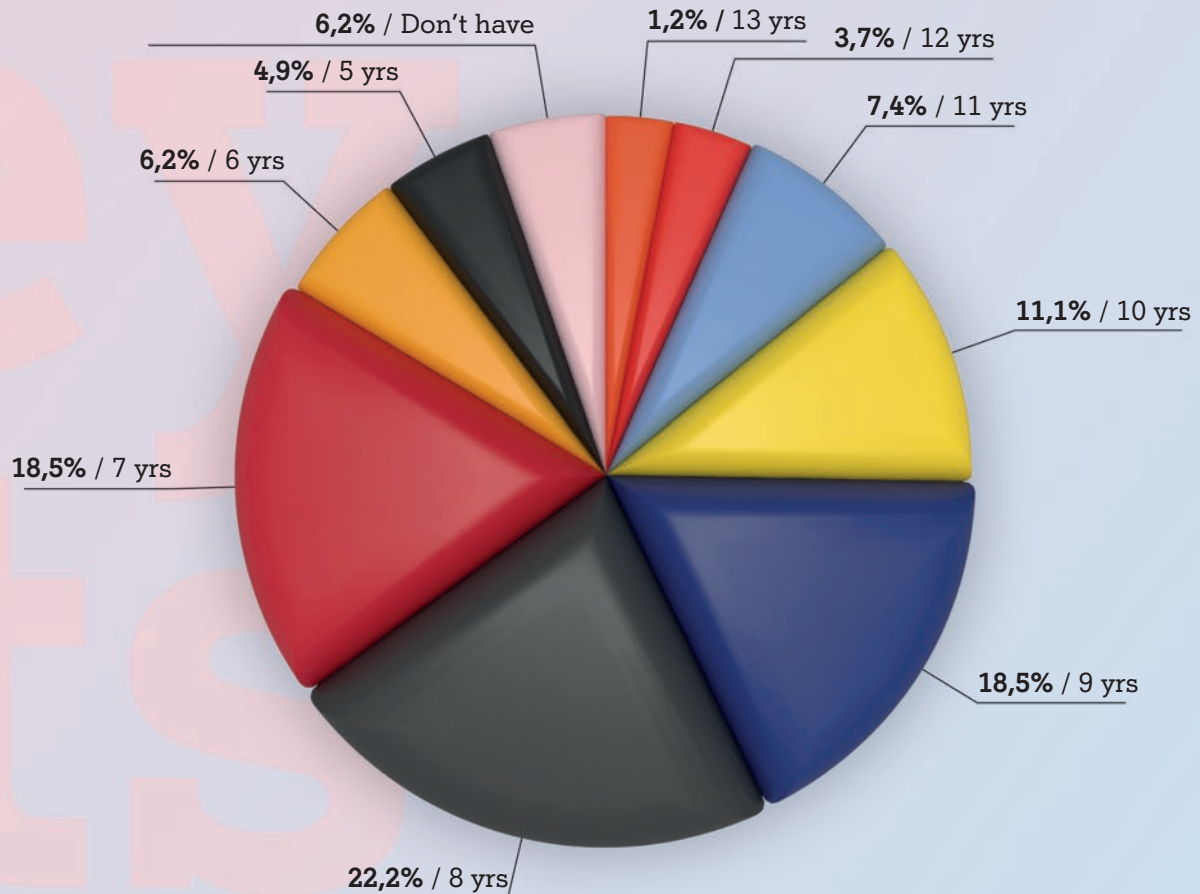
Have you ever been a victim of hate speech on social media such as WhatsApp and similar?

Survey



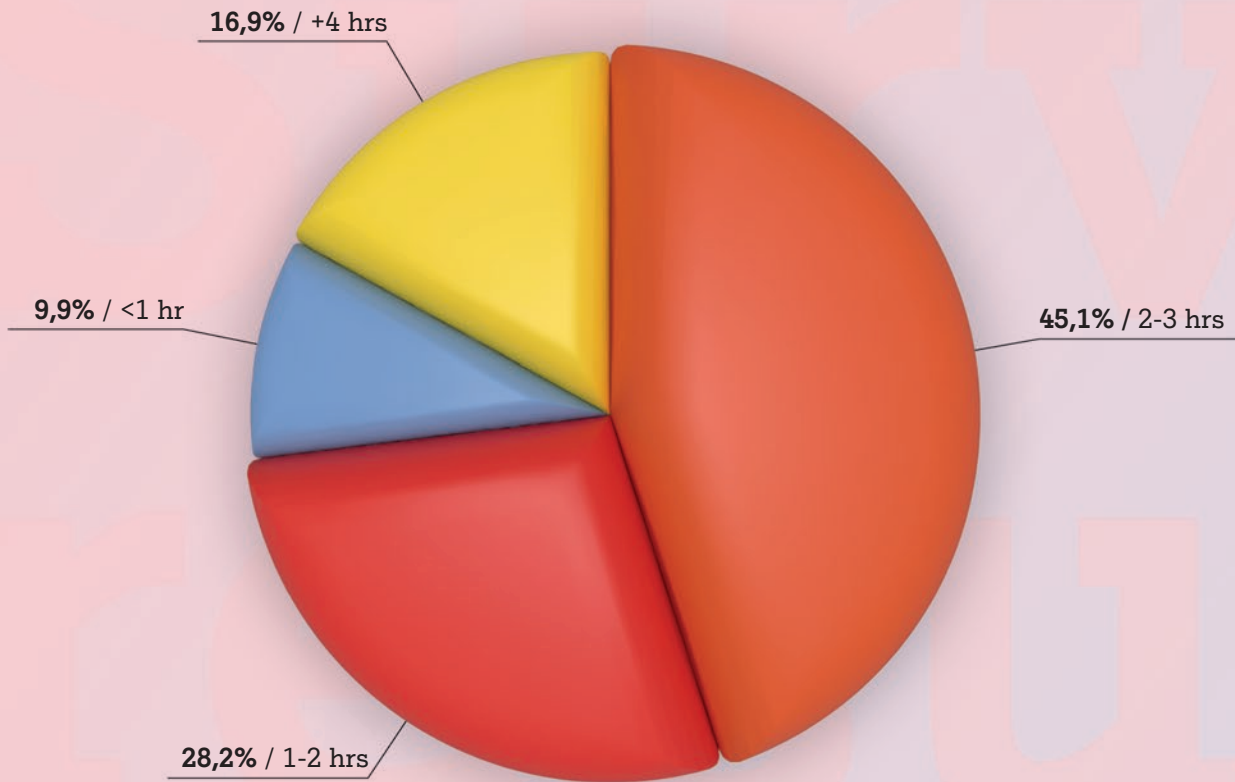
How old were you when you started using social media?

results



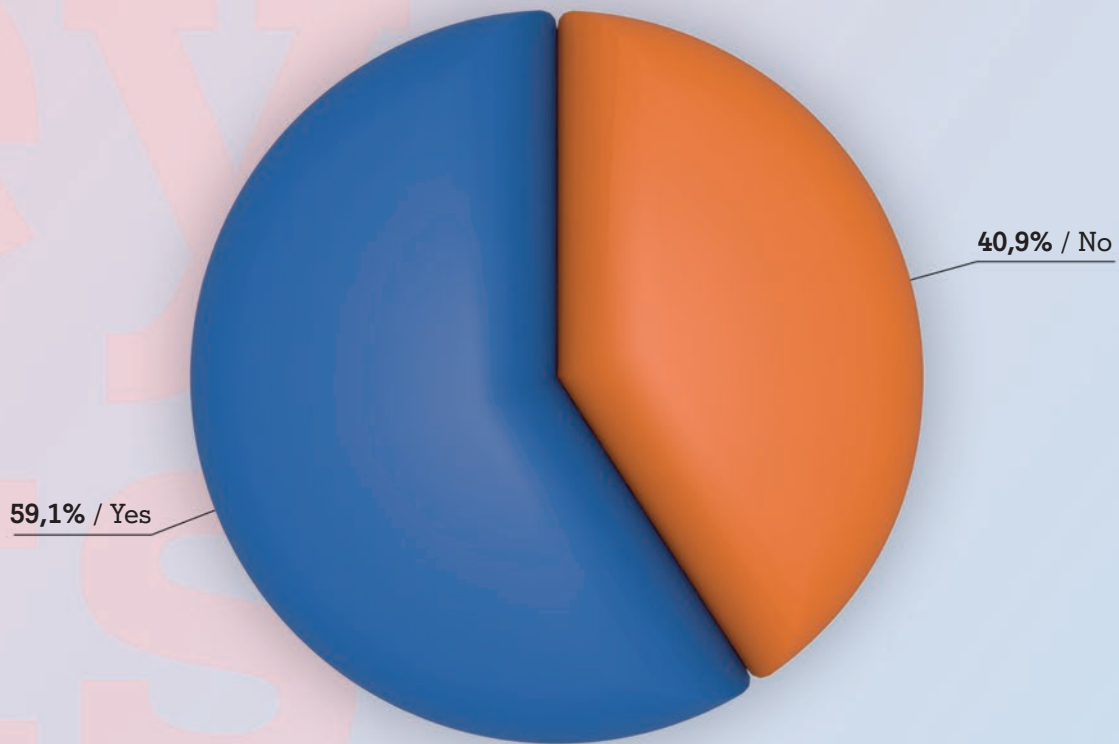
When did you get your first smartphone?

Survey



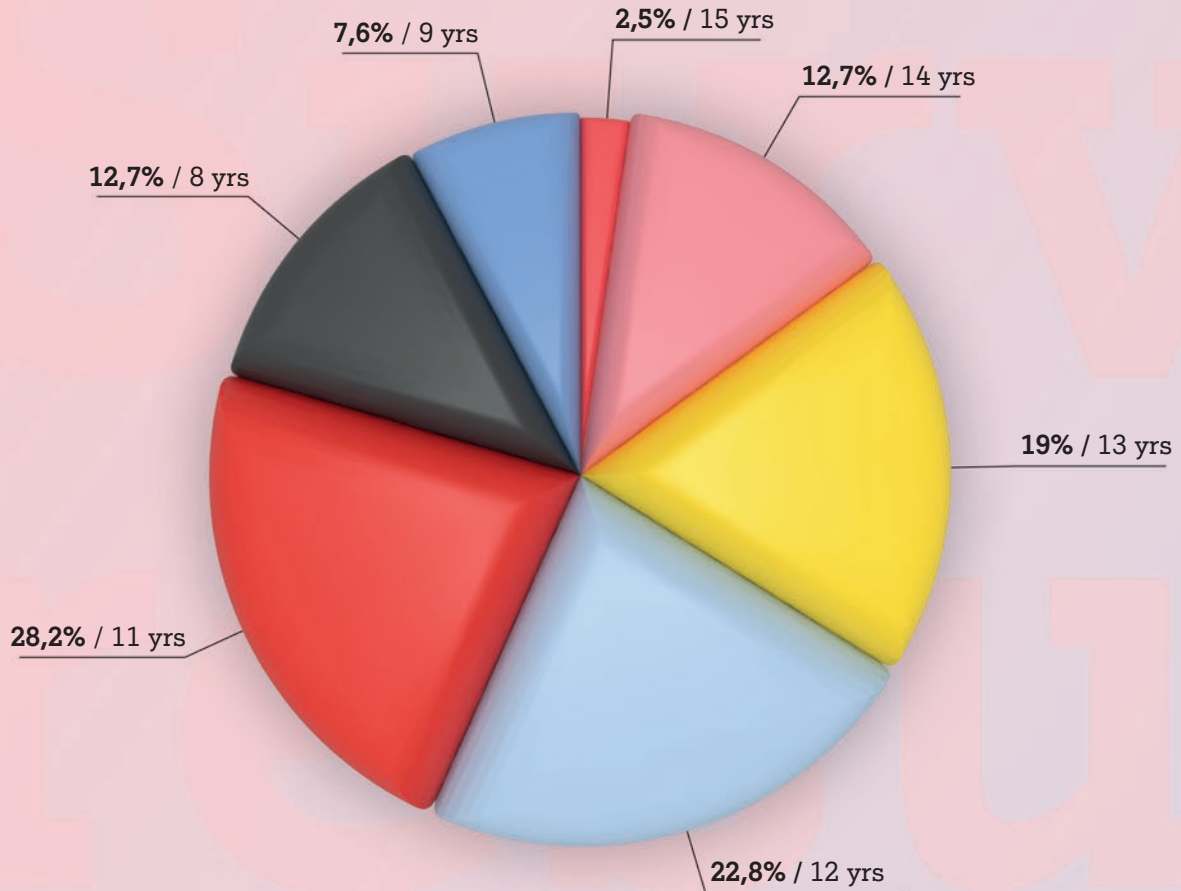
How much time do you approximately spend on social media?

results



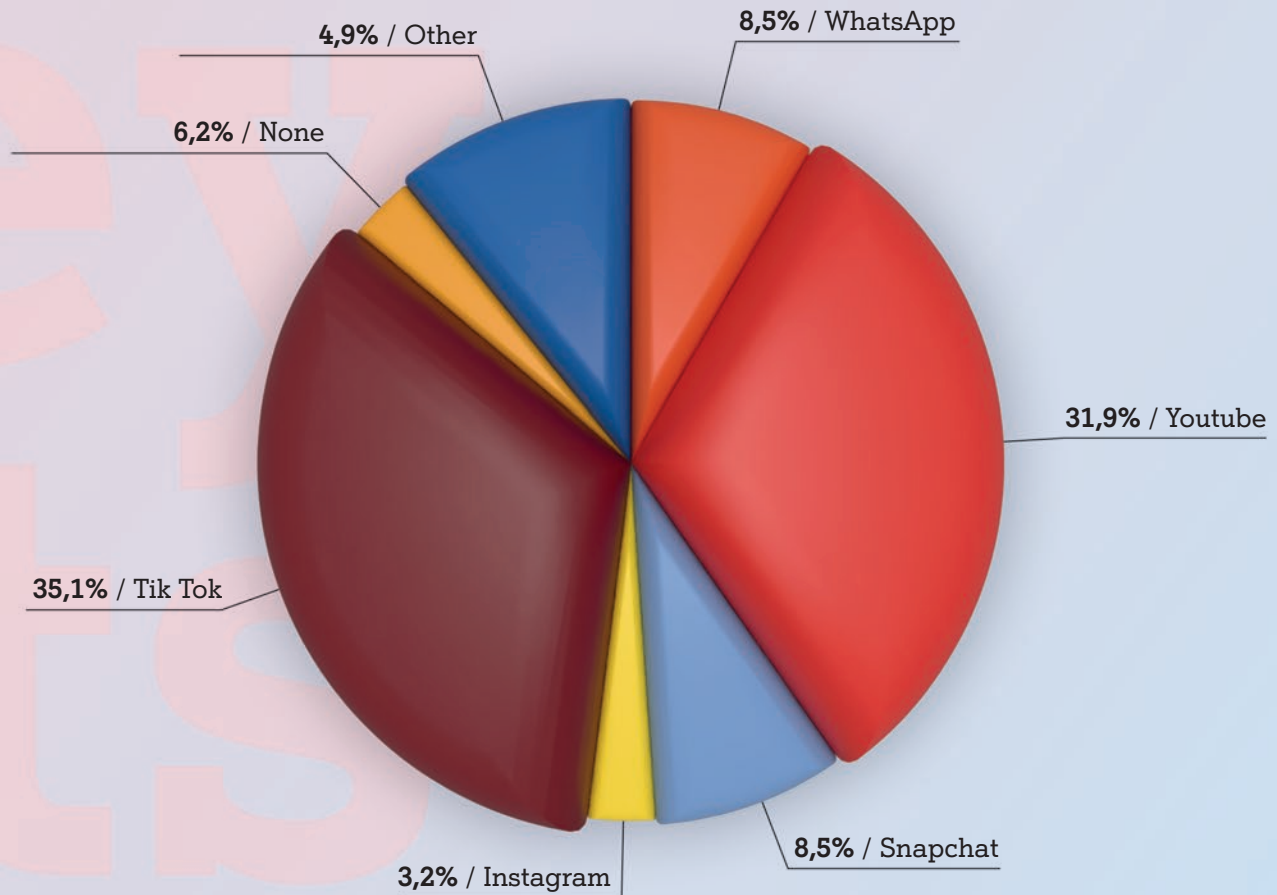
Have you ever been cyberbullied?

Survey



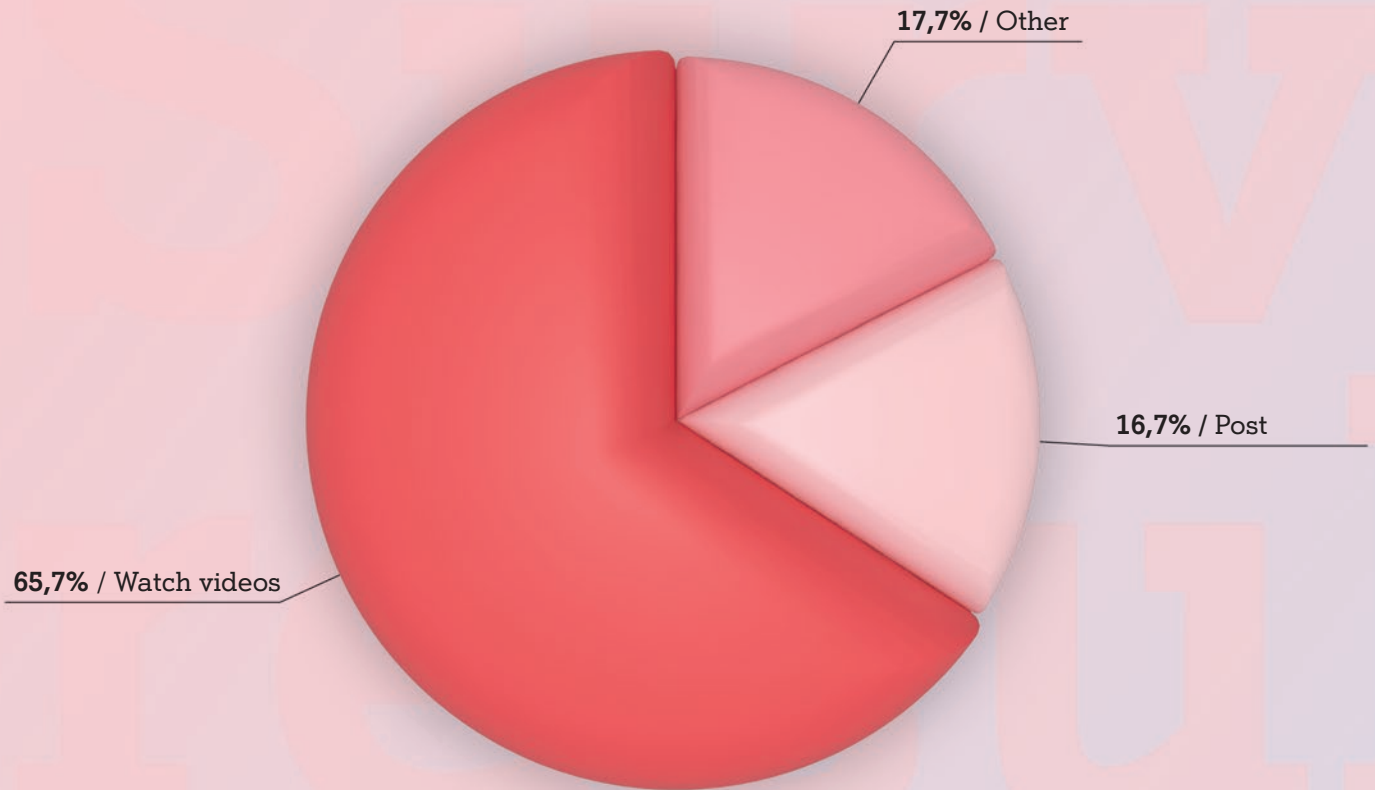
What is your age?

results



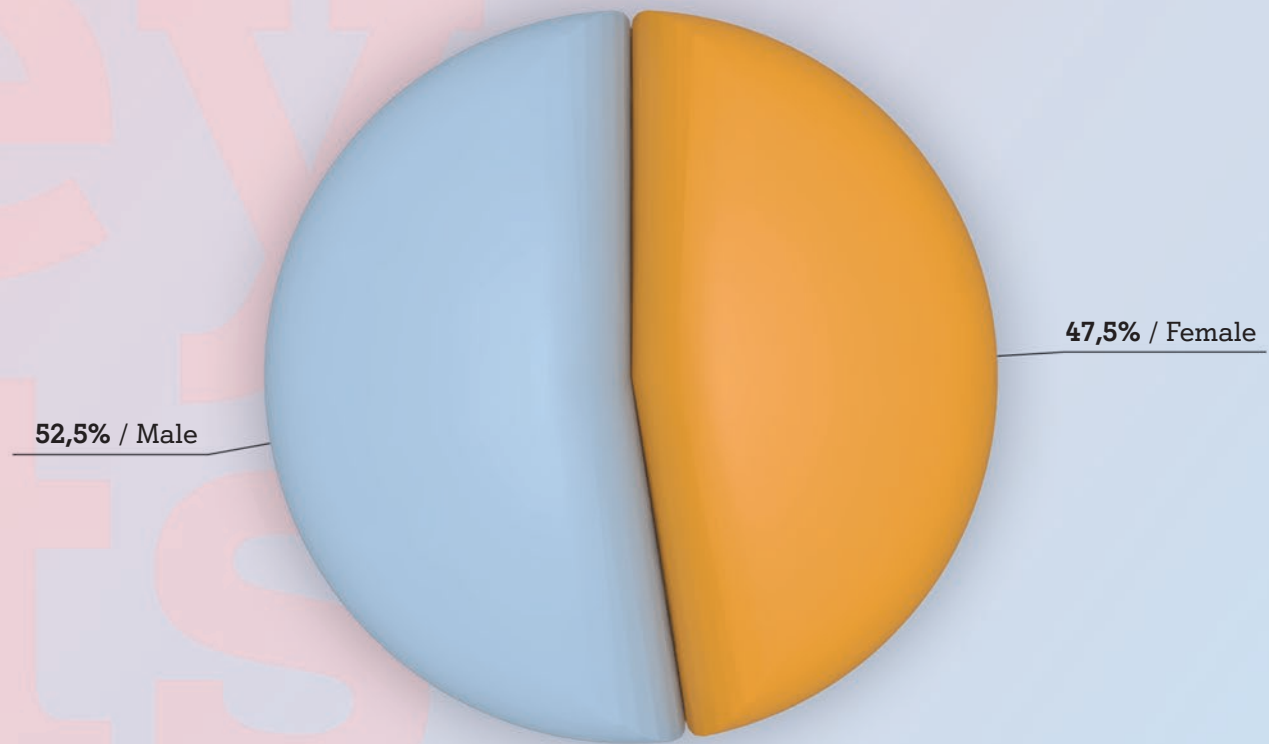
Which app do you use the most?

Survey



What do you do on social media?

results



What is your gender?



#BoljiOnline is a platform where you can learn how to be safe, responsible, and respectful in the online world. You'll find out how to recognize dangers on the internet, how to protect your personal information, and what to do if you or a friend experience something unpleasant. You'll learn who you can turn to for help and that you are never alone. There's also #BOB, a smart chatbot you can talk to anonymously, who always gives useful advice. #BOB is your digital friend who helps you navigate the internet and stay safe. Visit boljionline.hr and ask him for advice!