

Internet use by individuals

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

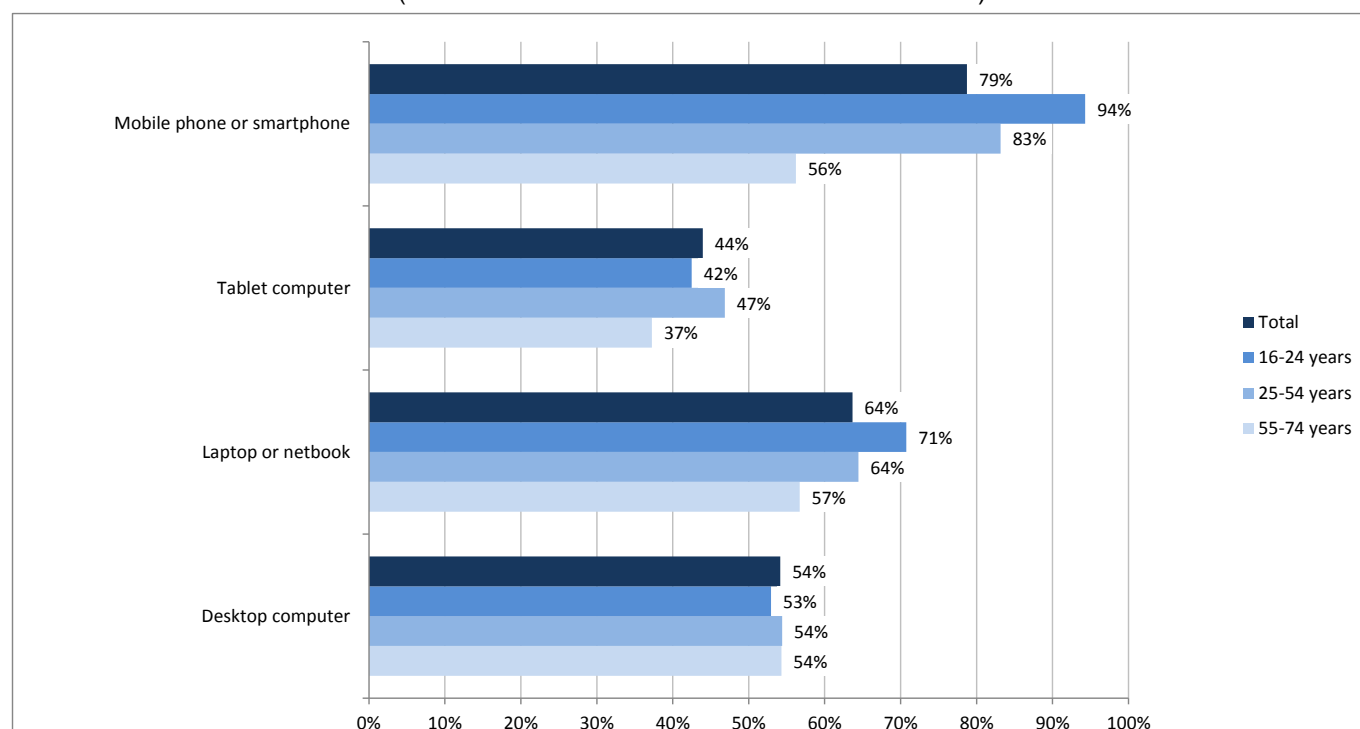
## Different patterns across Member States in managing personal information

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

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

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

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



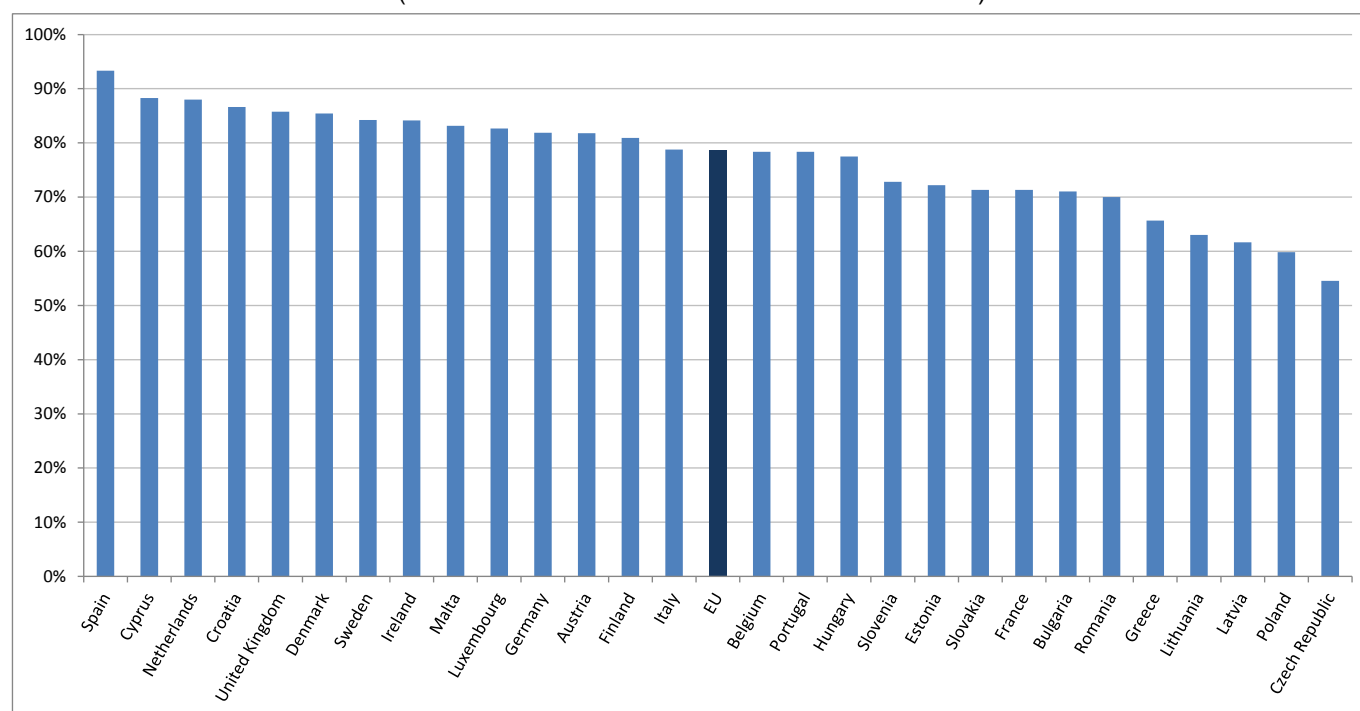
## Highest shares of surfers via mobile phone or smartphone in Spain, Cyprus and the Netherlands

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

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

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

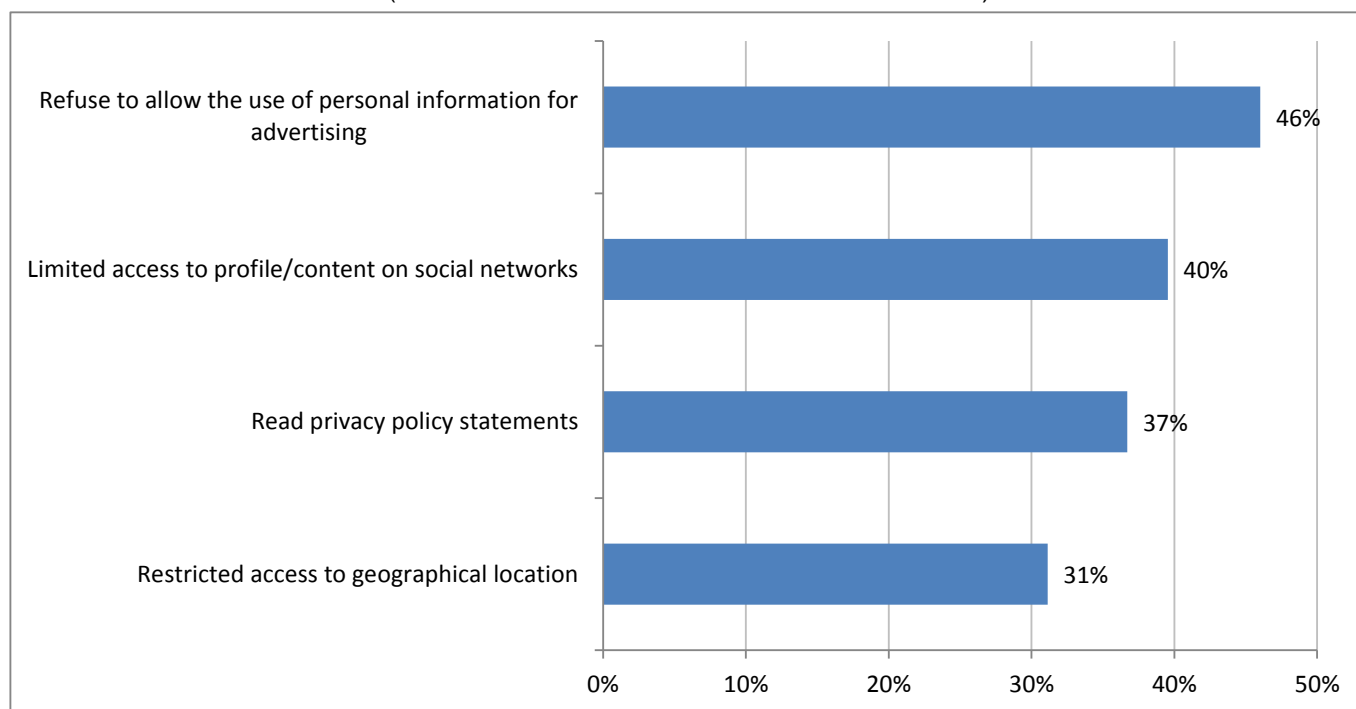
### Internet users having accessed the internet via a mobile phone or smartphone in the EU, 2016 (as % of internet users over the last three months)



## Disparities in ways used to manage access to online personal information

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

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



### Geographical information

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

### Methods and definitions

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

### Timetable

A news release on [the use of internet advertising by enterprises](#) was published on 14 December 2016.

### For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) on digital economy and society statistics.

Eurostat [database](#) on digital economy and society.

Eurostat Statistics Explained articles on [internet access and use](#) as well as on [e-commerce](#) for households and individuals.

European Commission [Digital Single Market strategy](#).

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

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

Respondents could report more than one device.

: Data not available

## Main actions undertaken to manage access to personal information on the internet, 2016

(as % of internet users over the last twelve months)

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

Respondents could report more than one action.  
: Data not available