

## Summary - Kids & Media 2015

### Facts about children's use and experience of the media, ages 9-18

#### Foreword

For a majority of young people in Sweden - and for many parents - digital media are now fully integrated in their everyday lives. Both traditional and new media are self-evident sources of information and entertainment, as well as tools for maintaining social contacts. Who could have imagined only a few decades ago that we now carry with us almost all the information in the world in our pockets and can access it wherever and whenever we want to? "Using the internet" is no longer about hurrying home from school to be able to sit down at your desk and turn on the computer. The difference between being on-line or off-line is almost non-existent. With the correct setting in your mobile phone, you are on-line around the clock.

When the first "Kids & Media" survey was carried out in 2005, the average age for starting to use the internet was nine. Today, most children have been on the internet by the time they are 3. As recently as 2010, only 7 % of 16 year-olds used their mobile phone to connect to the internet. The figure is now 96 %. Mobile internet use is still increasing, but the mobile internet explosion took place in 2010–2012. In this year's survey it is the possession of technology that is behind the dramatic changes. Smartphones have almost entirely replaced traditional mobile phones, and children's ownership of tablets has multiplied many times since 2012/13. Tablets enable younger and younger children to use digital media. The proportion of under two's who play digital games has almost quadrupled in two years: from 7 % in 2012/13 to 26 % in 2014. But not everything is new. Television is still the most popular form of media for children until they reach their teens. Then internet-related activities gain the upper hand.

The Kids & Media survey has now been carried out for the sixth time since 2005. The report is the result of the largest national survey of media habits and attitudes to media among children between 0 and 18 years old. It is published in three separate reports: "Little kids & Media 2015" on children 0-8 years, "Kids & Media 2015" on children and young people 9–18, and "Parents & Media 2015", in which parents or legal guardians of children 9–18 give their opinions about children's media habits and experiences. The aim is to provide a knowledge bank and source of facts that is easily accessible for parents, teachers and others who work with, or have an interest in, children and young people and their media life. The reports are available for download at [www.statensmedierad.se/ungarochmedier](http://www.statensmedierad.se/ungarochmedier).

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## **Introduction, background, methodology, and reading instructions**

This is a presentation of the results of the survey of habits and attitudes regarding media among children aged 9–18. Results are reported throughout in three age groups, which are referred to with figures in body text: 9–12 (years), 13–16 (years) and 17–18 (years).

The first Kids & Media surveys were carried out in 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2010. The Swedish Media Council in its current organisational form was then not formed yet, and the survey was carried out by a committee under the Swedish Ministry of Culture, also called the Swedish Media Council. The now existing Swedish Media Council took over the job in the 2012/13 survey.

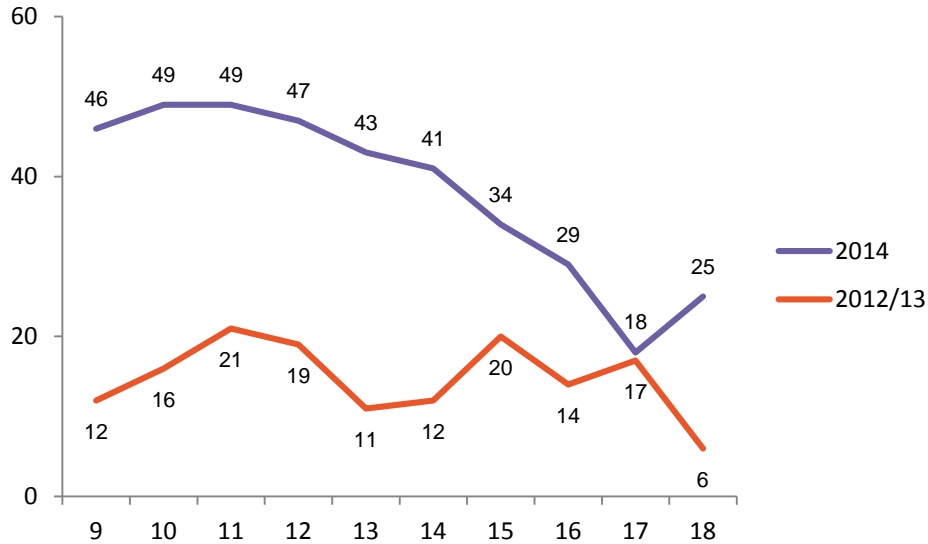
The first four studies, however, only went up to the age of 16, so that the results from the 17–18 group cannot be compared with the results from previous surveys. The media landscape is changing rapidly, causing certain new issues to be added while others lose their relevance. This has resulted in some questions being reformulated and some response options being changed, which means that direct comparisons over time are not always possible. The surveys of 2005, 2006 and 2008 differ so much from the present study that they have not been used in any comparisons. In cases where there is comparable data from the 2010 survey, this is reported in the body text and tables. At the same time as this report, two other reports are also being published. These are “Little kids & Media 2015”, where parents of children 0–8 were asked about their children's media habits and their own attitudes regarding media, and “Parents & Media 2015”, where parents of children 9–18 were asked about their attitudes to children's use of media.

The basis for this report consists of two different surveys that were sent out to 1,999 children aged 9–12 and 1,999 children aged 13–18. Compared with the 2012/13 study, this one has twice as many respondents and is Sweden's largest statistical survey of children's media habits. In order to compare it with previous studies, children in the age range 13–18 were divided into two age groups in the analysis: 13–16 and 17–18. Parents could answer the questions on the internet or using traditional postal forms. Statistics Sweden carried out data collection, which took place between 2 September and 17 November 2014. The selection of respondents was an independent, random sample stratified by age: 9–12 and 13–18. The response rate was 40.4 % for 9–12 and 39.5 % for 13–18. This is slightly lower compared with the Kids & Media survey of 2012/13. Declining response rates are not unique for Kids and Media, or even for media habit surveys, but have been observed over a long time period for different types of surveys with random selection, both in Sweden and internationally. The reasons for this are not fully understood, but a reasonable assumption is that a general increase in the number of studies - academic as well as market research - have led to a more widespread reluctance to respond to surveys. Time will tell if it is possible to continue with questionnaire surveys with independent random selection, or if it is possible to use alternative methods of data collection.

## Summary

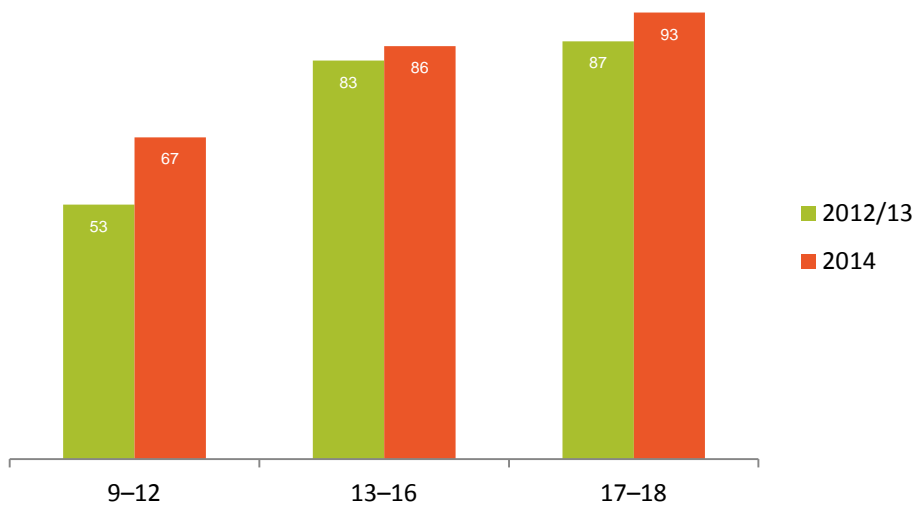
This section summarises the results where the differences are greatest between different groups, or where there has been a significant development over time compared with previous studies. The survey shows that the media device which has most clearly made inroads into children's media life is the tablet.

### Access to own tablet, 2012/13 and 2014 (%)



The ownership of tablets has risen sharply since 2012/13, particularly among younger children. Among nine year-olds it has almost quadrupled, from 12 % to 46 %. The ownership decreases with increasing age; tablets therefore seem to be mainly media devices used by younger children rather than young people. Since the first Kids & Media survey was carried out in 2005, children and young people's computer ownership has increased with each new measurement. In this report it has fallen for the first time. This applies to all groups except 17-18. There is, however, an explanation for this decrease: the tablet.

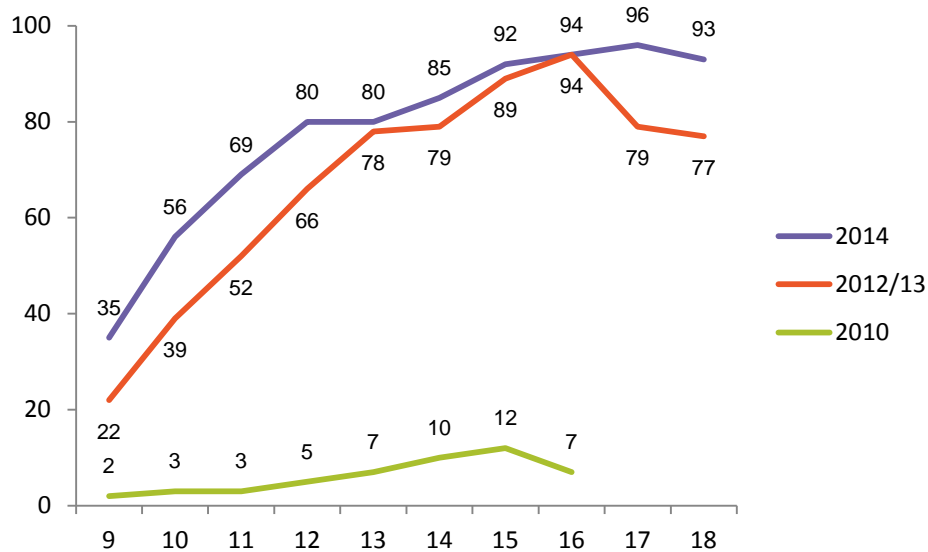
### Access to own tablet and/or own computer, 2012/13 and 2014 (%)



If we merge ownership of a tablet and ownership of a computer, it is clear that ownership of digital devices (excluding mobile phones) is still on the increase, despite the fact that computer ownership has not increased since 2012/13. Clearly, more and more young people have come to rely exclusively on a tablet, where previously they used a computer. Computer ownership is still significantly higher than that for tablets, though, apart from in the youngest groups.

Children's mobile phone ownership continues to remain at high levels: 86 % of all 9 to 12 year-olds have their own mobile phone and 78 % have their own smart phone; 98 % of all 13–18 year-olds have their own mobile phone. The overall percentage of children who have their own mobile phone has not increased compared with 2012/13; however, the proportion of smartphones has increased by between 6 and 16 percentage points. The large proportion of smartphones also affects children's use of the internet.

**What do you use your mobile phone for? Internet 9–18.  
2010, 2012/13 and 2014 (%)**



The explosive development of internet usage in mobile phones between 2010 and 2012/13 has slowed down, but is still continuing. As can be seen from the graph above, the increase in mobile phone internet usage in 2012/13 and in 2014 is clearest in the age groups 10–12 and 17–18. The increases in these groups are between 14 and 17 percentage points.

Watching a film/video clip on a mobile phone is an activity that has become increasingly common with the rising age of respondents, and it has also increased since 2012/13. This development is largely a result of the increased availability of mobile internet and follows a similar development curve as the use of the mobile internet: a powerful increase 2010–2012/13 and a continued, but not equally sharp, increase between 2012/13-2014. In the youngest age groups there is a very significant increase, though, and among 9 year-olds, the proportion who watch films/videos on their mobile phone doubled, from 16 % to 32 %. For the other age groups the increase varied between 5 and 19 percentage points.

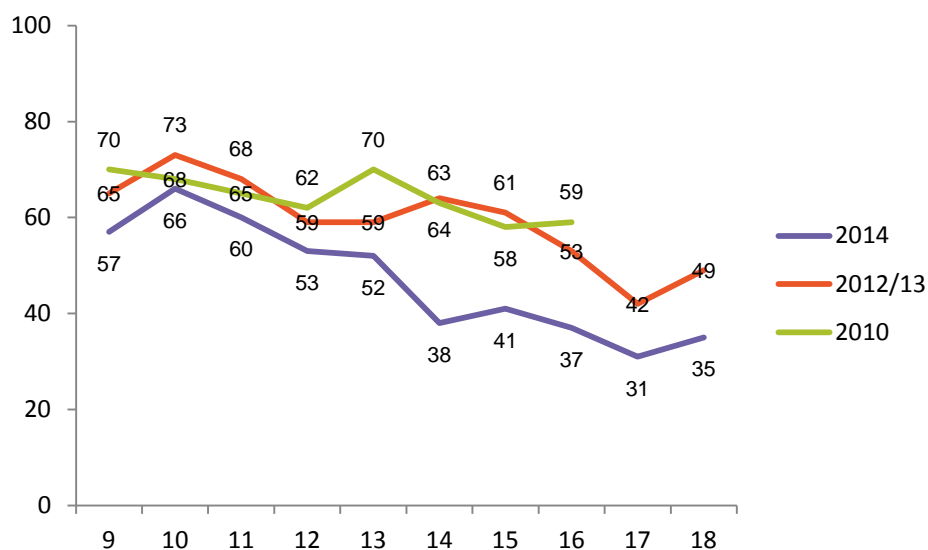
As mentioned previously, a smartphone is much better adapted to these activities than traditional mobile phones. This also applies to other mobile phone activities such as photography, filming and social media. These have also increased in comparison with 2012/13.

The use of mobile phones - regardless of what it is used for - has increased among 9–12 year-olds; among 13–16 year-olds and from 17–18 the changes are marginal.

Daily use of the internet has increased among 9–12 year-olds, 65 % up from 2014 as compared with 55 % from 2012/13; in the older age groups, the proportion increased from 93 % (2012/13) to 95 % (2014). The increase is probably linked to the increased availability of smart phones and mobile internet.

Daily film and TV viewing have decreased in all age groups.

**Watch films and/or TV programmes every day.  
2010, 2012/13 and 2014 (%)**



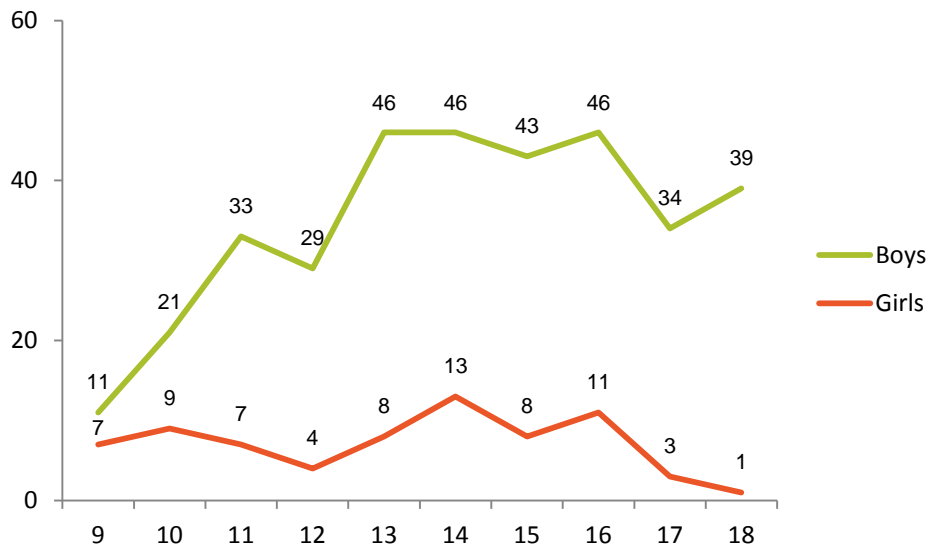
While watching films and TV programmes remained largely unchanged between the surveys in 2010 and 2012/13, this has now clearly decreased in all age groups. Most obvious is the fall among teenagers. It is also possible to identify a decrease in the daily reading of magazines and books in the age group 17-18: In 2012/13, 23 % read these daily, but in 2014 the figure had fallen to 13 %. Such a large drop is not reflected in the younger age groups.

In the previous surveys, the category of "high consumers" was defined as individuals who spent more than three hours/day on a specific form of media. The sharp increase in internet and mobile phone usage means that the concept has lost its meaning as a description of extreme media consumers. Today, a majority of all children over 12 are high consumers of internet services and all over 13 are high consumers of mobile phone services. Yesterday's high consumers are thus today's average users. It is in fact very difficult to make temporal distinctions between online and offline (i.e. using the internet or not), since digital mobile technology means that children are potential internet users all the time they have their smartphones with them.

The proportion of high consumers of video games/TV games/tablet games has increased among young groups (10–11) as well as among 13–14 year-olds, compared with 2012/13. In other age groups the differences are marginal (or have fallen slightly) compared with 2012/13. Thus, there are no clear trends in high consumption of games.

Gaming is the media area where the differences between boys and girls is greatest, both regarding how much they play and what games are preferred. However, there is no difference between boys and girls aged 9–12 concerning whether they play or not – 98 % of boys and 97% of girls play computer games/video games and/or tablet games. This is a major change compared with previous studies, and a greater proportion of girls playing games on tablets has removed the difference in the 9–12 group, and decreased it among 13–16 and 17–18 year-olds. Gender differences are very clear in terms of how much time the child spends on games, however.

**High consumers (more than 3 hours/day) computer games/TV games broken down by gender (%)**



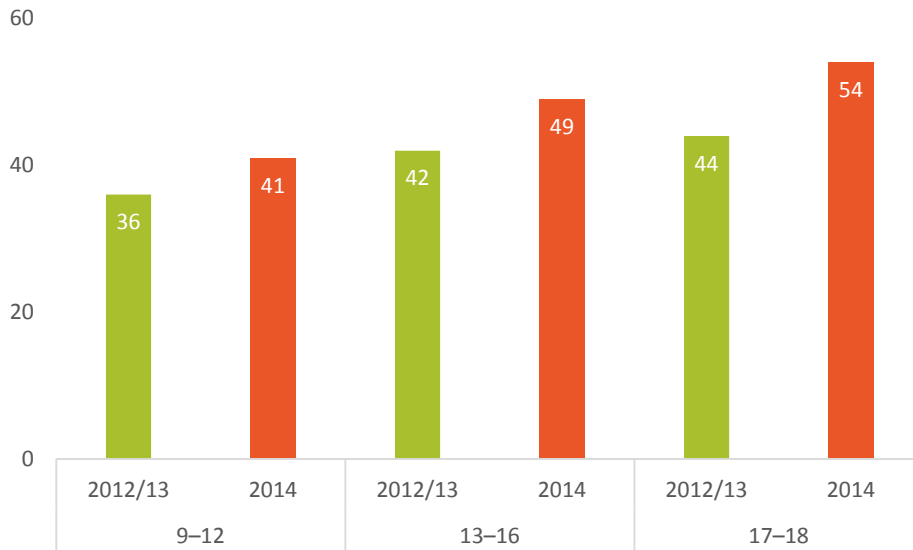
The proportion of high consumers of computer/video games is consistently higher among boys than girls. At the age of 9, the difference is only 4 percentage points between boys and girls, but this difference then increases rapidly. Almost every other boy plays for more than three hours/day at the age of 13, while the proportion of girls who play that much does not vary to a great extent with age; it is mainly between 5 % and 10 %. The same trend could be observed in the 2012/13 survey, but the gender difference was even more, mostly because girls played even less. The proportion of girls who are high consumers of games has increased in most age groups compared with 2012/13.

In 2012/13 a clear gender difference could be seen in the age group 9–12 as regards the use of the internet: boys spent considerably more time on the internet (22 % spent more than 3 hours/day) compared with girls (8 %). This difference has disappeared in the present survey.

The increasing gender gap with rising age can also be seen in the use of mobile phones; girls from 10 and up consistently spend more time on phones than boys do. Gender differences have increased since 2012/13, mainly due to the fact that girls' use of mobile phones has increased more than that of boys. Among 16–17 year-olds the difference between girls and boys is all of 30 percentage points regarding high consumption of mobile phone services. Girls also spend more time on social media than boys do. The differences are not as great in the 9–12 group, but then they increase rapidly and in the 16–18 group the differences are between 17 and 25 percentage points.

A relatively large proportion of children think that they spend too much time on mobile phones (37 % of the 13–16 group), social media (35 % of 17-18), the internet (38 % of 17-18) and computer games/video games/tablet games (23 % of 9–12). A very large proportion also consider that they spend too little time reading books and magazines: 41 % of the 9–12 group, 49 % of 13–16, and 54 % of 17–18. This is also a significant increase compared with 2012/13.

### Proportion who feel they devote too little time to books/magazines, 2012/13 and 2014 (%)



In all age groups, kids are most dissatisfied that they devote too little time to books and magazines. A relatively large proportion also consider that they devote too little time to sports and exercise and homework/schoolwork.

The use of social media is the most common internet activity at 13–16 and 17–18. 71 % of 13–16 and 81 % of 17–18 use social media daily. A majority in all age groups are active on social media: 58 % of all 9–12, 91 % of all 13–16, and 95 % of all 17–18 use social media. In 2010 and 2012/13 Facebook was the most popular social medium, but is now completely overtaken by Instagram among the youngest and even among 13–16 year-olds, Instagram is more popular than Facebook. Changes are wide and rapid; the second most popular social medium among 9–12, Kik, was not even on the list in 2012/13. The most obvious gender difference - which applies to all three age groups - is that girls use Instagram to a greater extent than boys. This trend also appeared in “Kids & Media 2012/13”.

Compared with 2012/13, children's news consumption has moved away from traditional news channels such as newspapers and TV to digital platforms via the internet. In particular, news consumption via mobile phones has become increasingly common (this applies to all ages 9–18). It is only among 9–12 year-olds that it is more common to watch the news on TV compared with news via online platforms. Traditional newspapers are losing readers in all age groups.