



Improving the ecosystem

A digital responsibility report

The internet has the potential to improve our lives – but only if it is safe to use and balanced. Brought together by a commitment to empowering consumers, Euroconsumers and Google have partnered to improve the digital ecosystem.

Our research project sheds light on the challenges internet users face, so we can enhance existing solutions and start developing new ones to drive positive change.



The partnership

The Euroconsumers and Google partnership consists of two key elements:

- 01 European research** to gain an understanding of consumers' behaviours, attitudes and expectations relating to digital activities, with a focus on: Digital Wellbeing, Family Safety and Online Privacy & Security.
- 02 Joint local activities** by Google and Euroconsumers' consumer groups in Italy, Belgium, Spain and Portugal. They are intended to educate and empower consumers by providing programs, products and tools to keep consumers safe online and overcome digital concerns and challenges.

Objectives of the partnership:

- ✓ **Raise awareness** of Google's and Euroconsumers' commitment and joint initiatives to improve internet safety.
- ✓ **Open up and lead a constructive dialogue** about digital consumer challenges with European policymakers and provide solutions and commitment to tackling these challenges.



Across September and October 2019, we partnered with Ipsos to conduct a representative online survey in Europe.*

The study included three samples:

MAIN SAMPLE

**General online population
aged 18-74**

Sample size: 14,259

Balanced by age, gender, region and education to be representative of the online population of each country.

Aggregated results across the 7 countries have been weighted according to each country's population size.

PARENT SUBSAMPLE

**Parents to children
aged 2-17**

Sample size: 2,788

A subsample of parents was taken from the main sample and asked to complete a questionnaire module about their children's internet usage.

CHILDREN SAMPLE

**Children and young adults
aged 10-17**

Sample size: 2,821

Interviews conducted after a parent had consented for their child to respond to the survey.

Balanced by age and gender to be representative of the population 10-17 of each country.

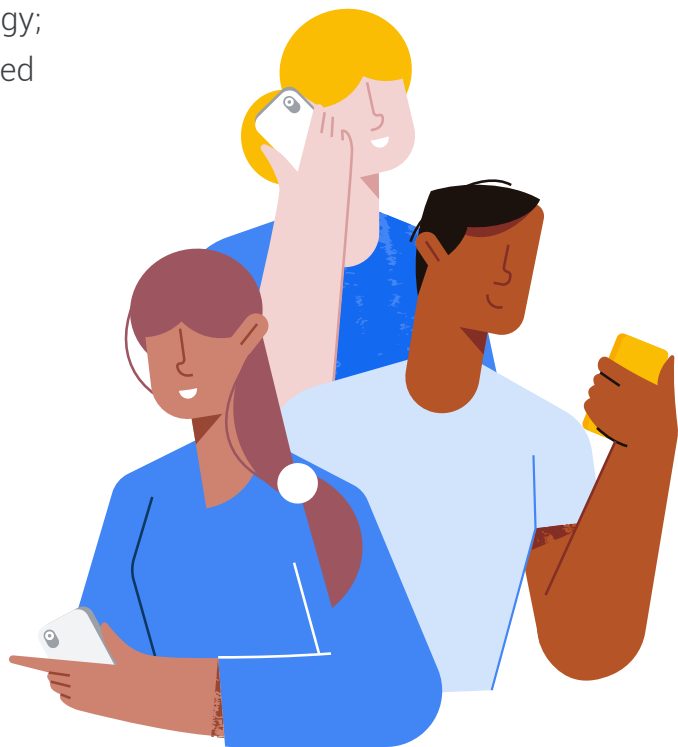
Aggregated results across the 7 countries have been weighted according to each country's population size.

*The study included three samples in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom

Digital wellbeing

Our research shows that although the majority is not very concerned about their own use of digital technology, it's more common to be concerned about other people's usage – in particular that of children and teenagers.

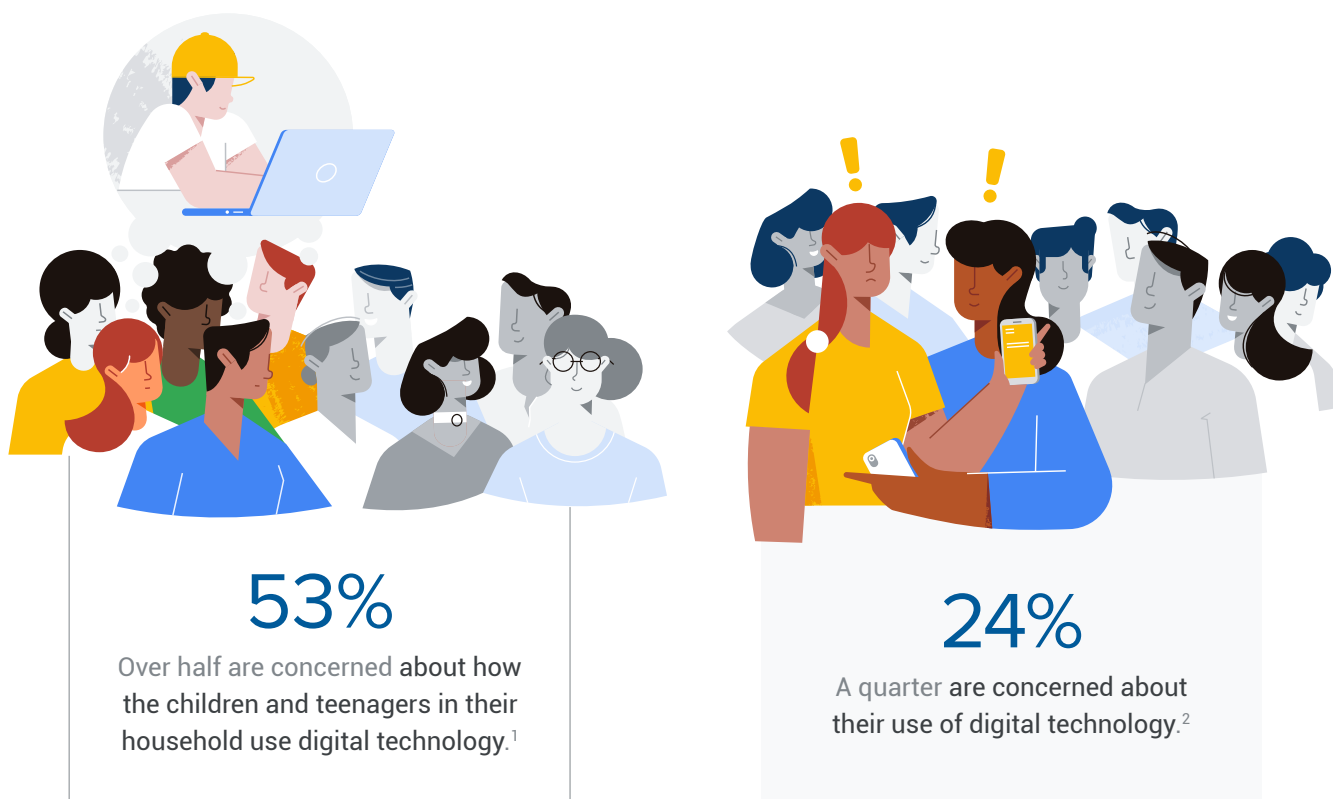
The results also highlight the duality of our relationship with digital technology; we're seeing evidence of how attached some people are to it, but also evidence that people are seeking to achieve a more balanced usage by reducing the amount of time they spend online. To help people find a healthy balance, we're providing the tools they need to develop their own sense of digital wellbeing.



Euroconsumers and Google first started working together on digital wellbeing in 2019, together with Altroconsumo in Italy, launching an ad hoc campaign under the initiative “Vivi Internet al Meglio”.

The objective was to educate teens and their carers about online safety topics, with a special focus on how to establish a balanced relationship with technology. The initiative was launched during the Altroconsumo festival in the presence of the Minister of Families and Equal Opportunities in Italy.

After that, we announced the **European joint research on Digital Responsibility** at the **Web Summit in Lisbon** last year. The introduction was followed by an informative and engaging session on how to manage your own digital wellbeing by Aidan Healy, co-founder of Unplug HQ.



¹. % respondents who answered “Very concerned” or “Fairly Concerned” on a 4-point scale with the range “Not at all concerned”, “Not very concerned”, “Fairly concerned”, “Very concerned” and “Don’t know”.². % respondents who answered “Very concerned” or “Fairly Concerned” on a 4-point scale with the range “Not at all concerned”, “Not very concerned”, “Fairly concerned”, “Very concerned” and “Don’t know”.

Digital wellbeing



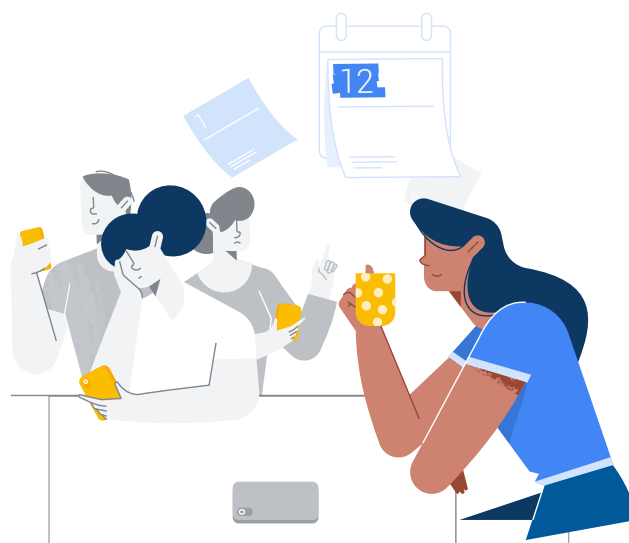
2 in 5

40% are concerned about how adults use digital technology. Among those concerned, 60% cite the psychological and social consequences.⁴



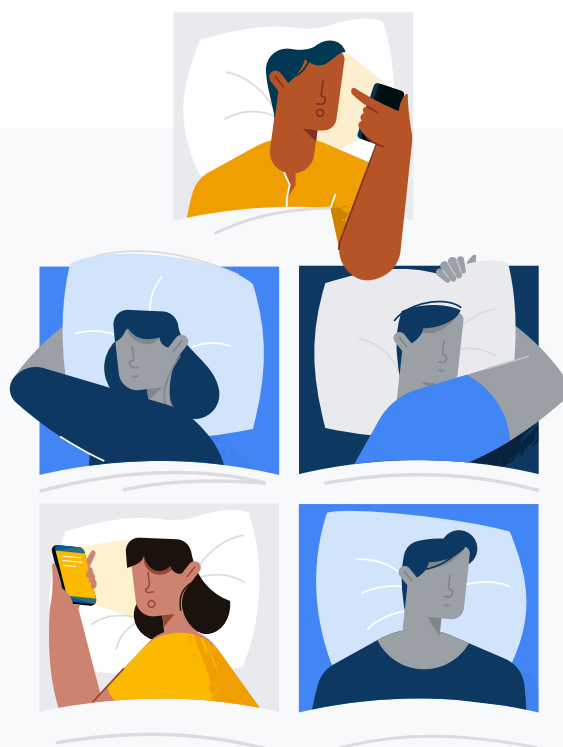
³ % respondents who answered "(Almost) Always" or "Frequently" on a 4-point scale with the range "(Almost) never", "Occasionally", "Frequently", "(Almost) always", "Prefer not to say". ⁴ % respondents who answered "Very concerned" or "Fairly Concerned" on a 4-point scale with the range "Not at all concerned", "Not very concerned", "Fairly concerned", "Very concerned" and "Don't know".

As technology becomes more and more integral to everything we do, it can sometimes distract us from the things that matter most to us. At Google we believe technology should improve life, not distract from it. Google is committed to giving everyone the tools they need to develop their own sense of [digital wellbeing](#). For this reason, we have created our **new digital wellbeing toolkit for COVID-19**. [Learn more](#).



28%

Over a quarter have tried to reduce the amount of time they spend online in the last 12 months.⁵



2 in 5

43% say they frequently or always use their smartphone or tablet in bed before sleeping.⁶

⁵ % respondents who answered "Completely agree" or "Tend to agree" on a 5-point scale with the range "Completely disagree", "Tend to disagree", "Neither agree nor disagree", "Tend to agree", "Completely agree", "Don't know". ⁶ % respondents who answered "(Almost) Always" or "Frequently" on a 4-point scale with the range "(Almost) never", "Occasionally", "Frequently", "(Almost) always", "Prefer not to say".

Family safety

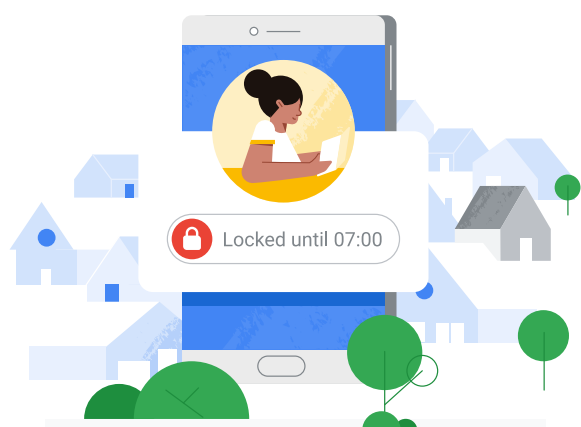
Our research shows that although fewer than half of parents think their children are aware of the potential dangers online, many parents are taking steps to guide their children by talking to them about what they're doing online, what is appropriate to be shared on social media, and so on.

Many have also established "house rules" or limits to their children's internet usage. To support families, we're helping children to boost their confidence and safety online.



Children today are growing up with technology, not growing into it like previous generations. For this reason, Google and Euroconsumers are working together with local experts to help parents and kids use technology in a way that's right for their family – by setting digital ground rules, building family-friendly experiences and helping children be confident explorers of the online world.

Google partnered with Euroconsumers' associates across Europe to drive locally relevant initiatives. We have highlighted the main ones in partnership with Altroconsumo in Italy, Test Achats in Belgium, OCU in Spain and Deco Proteste in Portugal.



¹. 96% of parents to 2-9 year-olds and 88% of parents to 10-17 year-olds. % respondents who answered any of "Yes, very rigid rules", "Yes, fairly rigid rules", "Yes, but fairly flexible rules", "Yes, but very flexible rules" (and didn't answer "No, there are no rules"). ². 39% of parents to 2-9 year-olds and 28% of parents to 10-17 year-olds.

Family safety

What we're doing



ITALY

Google & Altroconsumo

"Vivi Internet al Meglio"

The joint initiative from Google, Altroconsumo and Fondazione Mondo Digitale aims to help youngsters, their parents and teachers become responsible digital citizens. The main elements of the program are:

- 01 A [Quiz](#) available on Altroconsumo's website to help parents test their knowledge of online safety.
- 02 A [Family guide](#) on the "Vivi Internet al Meglio" site to spark thoughtful conversations and identify healthy habits that work for the whole family.
- 03 Parent workshops with Altroconsumo and Fondazione Mondo Digitale.
- 04 [Teacher training](#) on digital civic education available on Fondazione Mondo Digitale's website.
- 05 A [Resource](#) on Google's IT Safety Center to help people avoid cyber scams during Covid-19.
- 06 [Interland video game](#) and [YouTube creators](#) to educate youngsters on online safety.



44%

Fewer than half of parents think their children are aware of potential dangers online.³



77%

Around three in four parents talk to their children (2-17 yo) about what their children do online.⁴

³. 25% of parents to 2-9 year-olds and 61% of parents to 10-17 year-olds. ⁴. % respondents who answered "Often" or "Sometimes" on a 4-point scale with the range "Never", "Rarely", "Sometimes", "Often".

What we're doing



ITALY

Google & Altroconsumo

"Vivi Internet al Meglio"

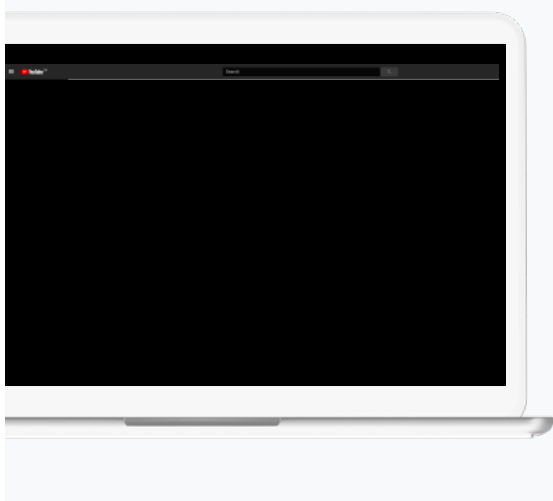
The program has been promoted through institutional activities including:



A [digital panel with the Ministry for Education](#) and Altroconsumo, launching the Interland video game and communicating Fondazione Mondo Digitale as the new partner of the program.

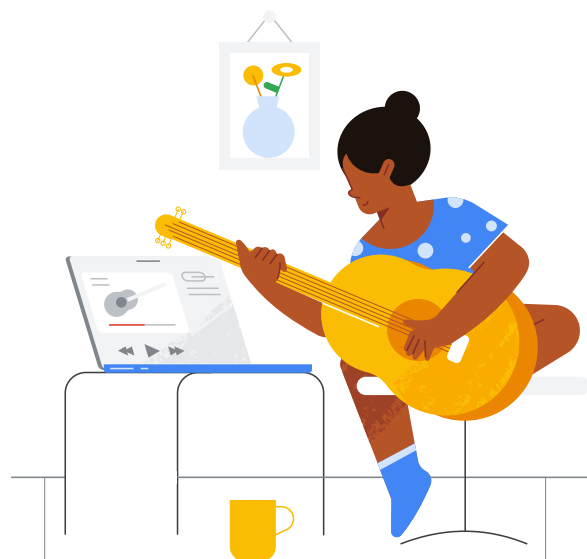


A [digital panel with the Ministry for Innovation](#) and Altroconsumo to share a point of view on the future of Italy thanks to digital and the role of contact tracing apps.



3 in 4

79% of parents talk to their children (10-17 yo) about what is appropriate to be shared on social media, and 72% about how to behave and interact on messaging apps.⁵



1 in 3

36% of parents say their children use the internet to develop new skills or learn new things.⁶

⁵. % respondents who answered "Often" or "Sometimes" on a 4-point scale with the range "Never", "Rarely", "Sometimes", "Often". ⁶. 28% of parents to 2-9 year-olds and 43% of parents to 10-17 year-olds.

Family safety

What we're doing



BELGIUM

Google & Test Achats

["Cybersimple"](#)

[CyberHeroes](#): is an education program in partnership with Test Achats, Child Focus and Bibliothèques Sans Frontières. The initiative empowers parents and teachers to educate kids to use the web safely and wisely, so they can be confident explorers of the online world. It provides tools and resources for home settings to families with kids >8 years old. The number one goal of these activities is facilitating parent-child communication and learning in an environment of trust and mutual listening.



CyberSquad: (launching Nov 25th) Google & Test Achats are supporting Child Focus to launch "CyberSquad" a peer-to-peer community where young people (and through Child Focus professionals) can assist each other on issues related to eSafety. In addition, Cybersimple.be will be extended with a new chapter on 'teens and online safety' for parents and adults.



Family safety

What we're doing



SPAIN

Google & OCU["Vive Internet Seguro"](#)

The second edition of "Vive Internet Seguro", in collaboration with OCU, launched last year. The program included a comprehensive guide and tips for children, parents, educators and senior citizens on how to stay safe online. In order to enhance the content on the website, we worked with well-known Spanish influencers to launch a social media campaign to share safety tips and raise awareness of the importance of digital responsibility and online safety.



PORTUGAL

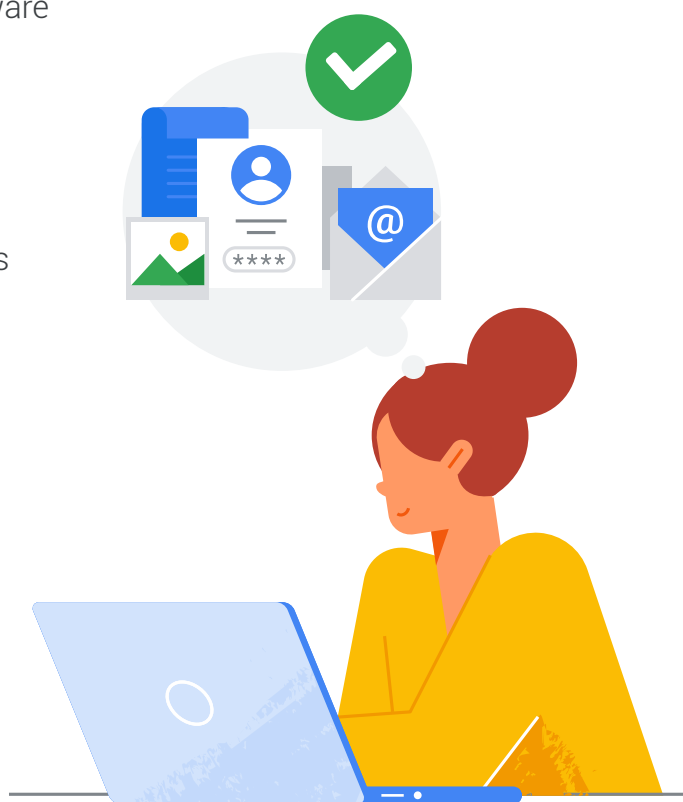
Google & Deco Proteste["Net viva e segura"](#)

This initiative has been launched to educate Portuguese consumers on online safety. The roadshow in 2019 reached and trained +1300 students and +8000 teachers face to face. The program has been recognised as part of INCoDe.2030, a government initiative for digital skills. Another important campaign within the broader partnership is set to launch by the end of 2020, aimed at educating senior citizens on online safety. New targeted content will be available on the website together with local activations.

Privacy & Security

Our research indicates that many people think online companies are not open enough about the personal data they collect and how it's used.

It also shows that the majority of users of the biggest online platforms are aware that they can view and adjust their privacy and security settings – and many are doing so. Most think the amount of personal data collected online makes it difficult for consumers to protect their privacy and few feel in control of what personal data is collected about them. We're working together to help more users to be in control over their data, by always protecting their privacy and raising online privacy industry standards.



“We welcome Google’s initiatives to improve consumers’ control over their data and encourage them to continue building a framework that protects consumers’ privacy at all times.”

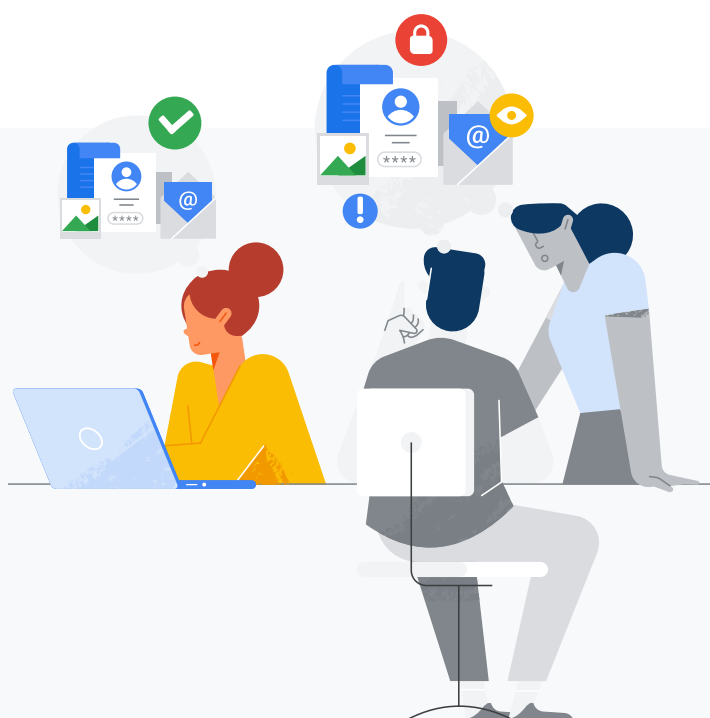
Ivo Mechels, CEO Euroconsumers

Further efforts and improvements claimed by Euroconsumers

Trust is key to empowering consumers to thrive in the new data economy and drive it to its full potential. That is why it is crucial that tech companies provide easy-to-use tools that put consumers in full control of their data and ensure a solid framework that guarantees their privacy is protected every step of the way.

69%

Over two thirds of online users think the amount of personal data collected online makes it difficult for consumers to protect their privacy, with 21% feeling in control of what personal data is collected about them.¹



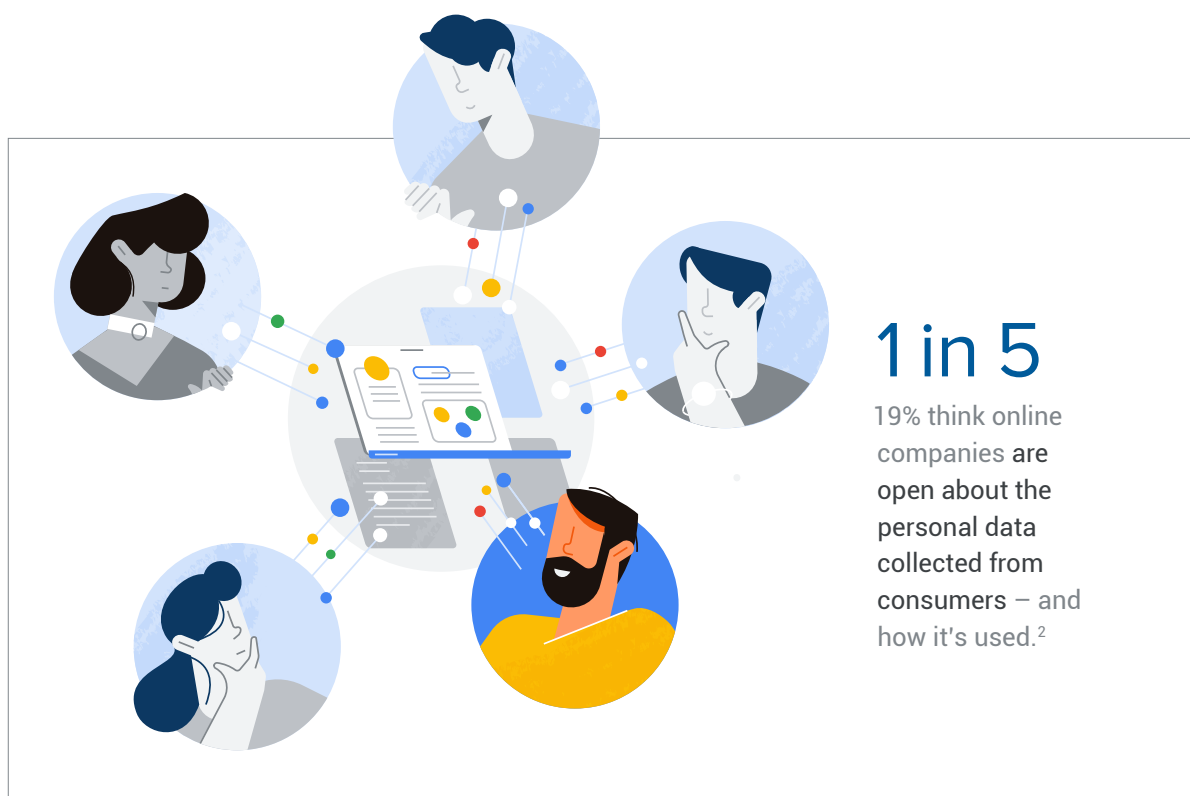
¹. % respondents who answered “Completely agree” or “Tend to agree” on a 5-point scale with the range “Completely disagree”, “Tend to disagree”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “Tend to agree”, “Completely agree” and “Don’t know”

“Privacy is at the heart of everything we do.”

Sundar Pichai, CEO Alphabet & Google

Google commitment to Privacy & Security

Google leads the industry in creating and sharing safety technologies that raise industry standards for everyone. As new threats arise and user needs evolve, we are continuously innovating to automatically protect the private information of every user, at every risk level, across all our products. To build on that commitment we opened the **Google Safety Engineering Center (GSEC)** in Munich, Germany, [the global hub for Google's internet safety work](#).



². % respondents who answered “Completely agree” or “Tend to agree” on a 5-point scale with the range “Completely disagree”, “Tend to disagree”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “Tend to agree”, “Completely agree” and “Don't know.”

Online privacy

Users' privacy is protected by responsible data practices. Data plays an important role in making the products and services users use every day more helpful. Google is committed to treating that data responsibly and protecting their privacy with strict protocols and innovative privacy technologies. [Our privacy policy](#) helps users understand what information we collect, why we collect it, and how they can update, manage, export, and delete their information.

**66%**

Two in three users of the biggest online platforms are aware they can view and adjust the privacy and security settings on their account.

57%

Over half of users of the biggest online platforms have checked or adjusted their privacy and security settings in the past 12 months. 50% of them could easily locate or access the settings and 53% found it easy to make changes.³



³ % respondents who answered "Very good" or "Fairly good" on a 5-point scale with the range "Very poor", "Fairly poor", "Neither good nor poor", "Fairly good", "Very good" and "Don't know".

What we're doing

Google Privacy & Security tools

we have developed and improved over the years:

- ✓ You can find key info, privacy, and security settings all in your **Google Account**.
- ✓ Within the Google Account, you'll find **Privacy and Security Check-ups**, tools to help you go through your privacy and security settings.
- ✓ **My Activity** gives you transparency over data collected from your activity across Google services, and features privacy controls which allow you to switch the collection and use of data on or off.
- ✓ And **Auto-Delete** controls allow users to choose to have Google automatically and continuously delete their location, search and voice activity data — after 3 months or 18 months. And now when you turn on Location History and Web & App Activity for the first time, your data will be set to the 18-month auto-delete option.

What's next

Our latest and upcoming joint initiatives



OCTOBER

5th

Launch of "Family Helpfulness" digital media campaign featuring Altroconsumo.

14th

Launch of media literacy narrative with Altroconsumo with the objective of empowering and educating consumers on how to find information from multiple and reliable sources, including a video game to educate teens and infographic with top 10 tips on how to spot misinformation.

26th

Launch of retail activation with Unieuro, with Safety corner showcasing Vivi Internet al Meglio, Interland, Family Link and YouTube Kids in collaboration with Altroconsumo.



NOVEMBER

25th

Virtual roundtable on media literacy at Altroconsumo festival with IT Undersecretary for publishing affairs, YT Creators The Show, and Fondazione Mondo Digitale.

25th

Launch of Cybersquad with Test Achats and Child Focus in Belgium in order to offer a helpline to teenagers.



DECEMBER

Launch of new initiative with Deco Proteste in Portugal to engage and educate senior citizens on the topic of safety online.



For more information visit:

euroconsumers.org/activities/digital-responsibility-report

safety.google