[PT] Study released by media regulator shows that Portuguese children are increasingly digital

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Portuguese homes in which children grow up are increasingly digital. This is one of the main conclusions of the study released in February 2017 by the state media regulatory body, ERC ("Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social"), entitled "Growing up between screens: Use of electronic devices by children (3-8 years)". The study was focused on the use of electronic media by children aged three to eight years old and sought to identify the environments of screens, in which children live (namely television, computers, consoles, mobile phones, tablets), their modes of access and uses, as well as parents' guidance of these uses, their attitudes and concerns.

The empirical work was comprised of two parts: a national survey in 656 homes (including questionnaires to both parents and children) and a complementary direct observation in 20 households with children of these ages who made use of the Internet.

According to the results of the research, Portuguese children aged three to eight years old are digital natives and the technological apparatus at home gives them a wide range of possibilities. The national survey pointed out that television is the most common screen at home (99% of the houses have at least one), followed by mobile phone (92%), laptop (70%), and tablet (68%). Television plays mostly an entertainment role and there is an intense and frequent viewing by parents and children, in particular in common family spaces (as the living room and the kitchen). At the same time, there is also the "babysitting" role performed by television, as parents assume the tendency to use it when they need to take care of domestic tasks. In fact, 94% of the children in the study watch television on a daily basis. On average, they spend 1 hour and 41 minutes watching television, and this period increases on weekends.

In two thirds of the homes where there is a tablet children use it, and in 63% of the cases it is a personal device. While 38% of the children access the Internet, the tablet is the most frequent device used for this purpose. The segment of children who play more games are those aged six to eight years old. The type of games depends on the device used (tablet, smartphone, or other) but, when it is on laptops, there is a greater level of supervision by siblings or adults. Another

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finding illustrated by this study is that parents are also very familiar with digital devices: 80% of them state that they are Internet users, and in 68% of the cases it is a daily use, mostly at home.

Most of the parents are concerned about the unsupervised use of different gadgets. They specifically focus on the children's use of Internet and time spent watching television, mainly due to violent and sexual content, inappropriate language, and nudity.

ERC, "Growing up between screens: Use of electronic devices by children (3-8 years)", February 2017

http://www.erc.pt/download/YToyOntzOjg6ImZpY2hlaXJvIjtzOjM4OiJtZWRpYS9lc3R1ZG9zL29iamVjdG9fb2ZmbGluZS84Ni4yLnBkZiI7czo2OiJ0aXR1bG8iO3M6NTA6Imdyb3dpbmctdXAtYmV0d2Vlbi1zY3JlZW5zLXVzZS1vZi1lbGVjdHJvbmljLWRldmljIjt9/growing-up-between-screens-use-of-electronic-devic

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