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The Internet in Greece

World Internet Project
Final Report

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The Internet in Greece

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Usage

Internet use in Greece is relatively high. Over 60% of the population aged 15 and over report themselves as internet users. More than 80% of non-users state that the main reasons for not using the internet are lack of technical knowledge and lack of interest. Almost all internet users connect to internet via a home internet connection, while two thirds of them use the internet via a mobile connection. Nearly half of the employed users and students connect to the internet via a connection at work and at school respectively, while more than one third of them go online using a public connection or a connection at their neighbors'. Computers are the most widely used devices to connect to the internet, while phones are used by 80 per cent of the users. Tablets and e-readers are less popular as they are used by less than half of the user population.

Digital Divides

A divide in internet use is noticed between urban and rural areas, as urban residents use the internet significantly more than rural residents. A smaller but visible division is found between genders as men connect to the internet more than women. Age seems to be negatively associated with internet use, while education and income exhibit a positive, almost linear, association. Internet use among students is almost universal, while employed and unemployed respondents also exhibit remarkably high usage percentages. Moreover, more than half the housewives/ househusbands identify themselves as internet users, while on the contrary, internet use among retired people remains significantly low with only one fourth of the respondents confirming internet use.

Online activities

Communication

Electronic mail and instant messaging are by far the most common online communication activities. Phone calls over the internet are also quite popular, although most users report that they post their own original content online or share other people's content once a month or less frequently.

Information

Internet use for obtaining various kinds of information, involves mostly reading news online. Additionally, reading blogs and looking for product information is very common, as more than half of the respondents engage in these activities on a weekly basis or more frequently. Similarly, nearly two thirds of the respondents are looking for health information and comparing product

prices at least once a month or more often, while, on the contrary, accessing information for job placements and travel information are not very popular activities among Greek internet users.

Transactions

Overall, using the internet for online transactions is very rare among Greek internet users. The majority of the respondents report that they use the internet less than once a month in order to make online purchases or online sales, book travel reservations, pay bills or use online banking services. Also, nearly all the respondents said that they never make online investments.

Entertainment

On the contrary, internet activities for entertainment are very popular among Greek users, with visiting social networking websites being the most common activity. Music and video downloading are also very popular activities, followed by playing online games. Visiting religious websites and websites with sexual content are less common, while the overwhelming majority reports that they never gamble online or visit websites for online dating

Learning activities

As far as online learning activities are concerned, Greek internet users frequently turn to the internet for fact checking or looking up a word. Also, an overwhelming majority of the interviewed students report using the internet in order to complete school-related work, while participation to online academic or professional training courses is very rare.

Internet dependency

Overall, Greek internet users express moderate dependence on the internet as they place themselves marginally over the middle in a scale showing how much they would be affected if their internet access expired. Young and highly educated people, as well as people with the highest income, exhibit the highest dependence on the internet.

Internet reliability

Greek users are uncertain regarding the reliability of information on the internet, as the vast majority assumes a neutral or moderate position on that question. Very few respondents are certain that all online information is either reliable or unreliable.

Online victimization is low or of minor significance among Greek users. Phenomena of online harassment are rare, as are cases of credit card fraud, banking fraud and online purchases fraud. Accidentally arriving to pornographic content is more frequent, as is receiving computer viruses.

Privacy online

Privacy violations over the internet are very uncommon among Greek users and, when they occur, the consequences are usually limited to users' embarrassment without creating any other significant problem. Although most respondents state that they have nothing to hide, the majority reports that they are actively protecting their privacy online, expressing concerns about privacy violations by corporations, the government as well as other people.

Political efficacy

The respondents' attitudes towards internet-related political efficacy seem ambivalent. Although most respondents believe that using the internet helps them to better understand politics, the majority of them do not expect that using the internet will increase their ability to affect government decisions or that public officials will be more interested in their opinions. Overall, WIP participants in Greece are divided on whether or not internet use will increase their political power.

Freedom of expression

Greek internet users show similar ambivalence towards matters related to self-reported political expression online. An overwhelming majority recognizes people's right to criticize the government and most users report that they feel comfortable in expressing their political opinions, and contend that people should be free to express even extreme opinions online. However, the majority of them believes that it is not safe to express their political opinions online and would agree if the government was to impose more regulations on the internet.

INTRODUCTION

About Greece and Greek ICT infrastructure

Greece is situated in the Southern tip of the Balkan Peninsula, in a strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa, a country combining towering mountains of the mainland and an archipelago of about 2,000 islands. Greece has been the 10th member that joined the EC in 1981 and the 12th member of the European Economic and Monetary Union, the "Eurozone", in 2001. It is a founding member of the United Nations as well as member in numerous other international organizations such as the Council of Europe, NATO, OECD, OSCE, WTO.

The population almost reaches the number of 11.000.000 comprising of about 92% Greek citizens, according to the latest census of 2011, while more than 20.000.000 tourists visit the country per year. More than 3 million people live in the capital city, Athens, while urban population throughout the country consists the 78% of the total. The Greeks enjoy a high level of literacy (98% of the total population) and education and there is religion homogeneity among them (98% Greek Orthodox).

According to World Bank's indicators (2015), Greece has a GDP 194.9 billion dollars, a -0,2% GDP growth, an inflation -0,8% in 2016, a declining GNI per capita of $20.270 (2015). GDP is composed by 82.8% services, 13.3% industry and 3.9% agriculture (2015), while tourism provides 18% of GDP lying mostly within the services sector share. Notably, Greece is one of the world's largest shipping powers, a top tourist destination and the public sector accounts for about 40% of its GDP[1].

Following global financial crisis in 2009 and under special circumstances Greece lost its credit rating and since 2010 has been engaged in three bailout agreements, which allowed it to cover significant debt payments to its Eurozone governments and International Monetary Fund creditors and ensure the banking sector retained access to emergency liquidity, but having contracted its economy by 26% due to the accompanying restrictive measures imposed to income, spending and cash flow. This serious crisis that Greek economy has gone through the last seven years has severely negatively affected growth rate, yet recovery is being expected ahead. As a consequence of the aforementioned economic crisis Greece has the two highest scores within EU countries, those of government debt (177.4% of the country's GDP) and of unemployment rate (23%).

[1] According to OECD indicators (2016), the per capita GDP is 26.793 US dollars, the government debt 182% and the household debt 119% of a disposable income. OECD (2017), Investment by sector (indicator). doi: 10.1787/abd72f11-en (Accessed on 04 June 2017).
OECD (2017), General government debt (indicator). doi: 10.1787/a0528cc2-en (Accessed on 04 June 2017).

Despite the recession, Greek skilled workforce in combination with development of ICT initiatives structures (Research & Development centers, clusters, incubators etc.) shape a dynamic sector of economy and an increasingly developing digital environment. Greece, motivated by the fact that had undertaken the Olympic Games in (2004) and taking up opportunities offered by the Information Society within the framework of European Operational Program for IS (3rd Community Structural Fund), achieved to acquire adequate ICT infrastructure and meet the digitalization demand of Greek public and private sector. Modern telecommunication networks reach all areas and a plethora of broadcasting media is offered to wider audiences. The internet use is widespread within Greece and is recorded constantly rising pointing more than 7 million (7,072,534) users - 65.6% Internet penetration- on June, 2016 (http://www.internetworldstats.com/europa.htm#gr). Also, according to the same source, the Greek Facebook subscribers on June 2016 amounted to 5,000,000, i.e. 46.4% penetration rate). According to OECD indicators (https://data.oecd.org/greece.htm) the Internet access in Greece in 2015 was 68.1 per cent of all households.

According to the Hellenic National Telecommunications and Post Commission (HTPC)[2], the development of the total number of domain names over time (including the sub-domains, i.e. com.gr), for the period 2001-2015, has grown from 50.000 to 433.000.

The number of broadband Internet subscribers has been kept rising and approximated 3,440,018 lines at the end of 2015 compared to only 174.000 at the end of 2000 (dial-up and broadband) and up 283,947, compared to end December 2014. Nowadays, Greece's gap from the European average in broadband penetration has been almost bridged and that, in itself, shows that Greece is clearly converging with the rest of Europe: In June 2015, fixed broadband penetration, namely the number of broadband connection per 100 inhabitants, reached in the EU 31.6% while in Greece was 30.8%. That means that Greece ranks in the 11th place among the EU member states up from the 13th position in December 2014.

[2] http://www.eett.gr/opencms/opencms/EETT_EN/Journalists/MarketAnalysis/MarketReview/ (2005-2015)

The WIP 2nd wave in Greece

The World Internet Project in Greece is implemented by the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE), as part of the World Internet Project (http://www.digitalcenter.org/world-internet-project-partners/), an international ongoing research program launched in 1999 and directed by the Annenberg School Center for the Digital Future at the University of Southern California. Currently the WIP is currently comprised by 39 international partners. The first wave of the survey in Greece was conducted in November and December 2015. The current report includes a presentation of the results of the second wave of the survey which was conducted from the 31st of January to the 21st of February 2017. This report presents the findings of the 2017 wave of the survey and explores the development of internet penetration among the Greek population by providing comparative data on several aspects of the respondents' internet-related behavior between the two waves.

This report includes descriptive presentations of the results analyses as well as charts including mostly relative frequencies and in some cases variable means. The relative frequencies and means are included in the charts in order to allow the reader to have a clear overview of the exact percentages.

Methodology

During WIP 2nd wave-survey 1222 interviews have been conducted over the phone (CATI), with people who were able to express themselves in Greek. The research methodology was designed by the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) and the phone calls and interviews were conducted by trained interviewers from EKKE's web lab.

Geographical Coverage

The thirteen districts of the Hellenic Republic have been covered in the eligible sample of population.

Statistical Units

Households with at least one member aged 15+ years old - Individuals aged 15+ years old.

Data Collection Period

31 January – 21 February 2017.

Sampling Method

A random stratified cluster sample design was applied. At the first stage, the digital phone directories of several providers were identified as the sampling frame, which included both landlines and mobile phone numbers. The sampling frame was then stratified into 74 strata by district units. Households were allocated proportionally in each stratum so as to correspond with the Greek population, according to the 2011

Population Census. Upon that, independent samples were selected by each stratum using a random calling method.

At the second stage, respondents were selected in each household using age and gender quotas proportionate to the total population according to the Population Census of 2011. In each household only one interview was conducted.

Response Rate

The response rate was 25.5%. Specifically, 13,292 phone calls were made and 1,222 effective interviews were obtained. Refusal by the person who answered the phone accounts for 28.55%. Also, 18.38% of the randomly assigned numbers did not exist, while in 27.64% of the cases there was no reply on the phone. Further 6.25% represents phone numbers of businesses and another 2% were recorded as busy. Finally, in 4.7% of the cases the interview was interrupted by the respondent and in another 2.8% no interview was conducted as the respondents did not match the quotas set by the population census.

Data Collection Method

Data was collected over the phone on a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was formulated based on the World Internet Project guidelines and included some additional national questions of theoretical interest. The data was manually introduced in an online platform using RM+ software and was then filtered and transferred to statistical analysis software. Also, the dataset was then weighted according to the 2011 Population Census and the Labor Force Survey. The Labor Force Survey accounts only for private households and is weighed according to the 2011 Population Census and the natural population mobility, including deaths, births and migration flows.

Interviewers

A number of 10 interviewers were employed in the survey; they received a four day training seminar on the research topic and the interview ethical code and technique. During the last day of training pilot interviews were conducted. In total, interviewers conducted 1,222 interviews, while they were monitored by two supervisors, who also conducted quality control checks on 26.75% of the sample.

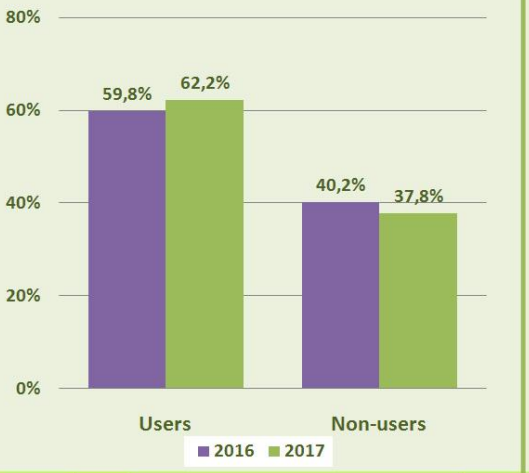


Figure 1.1
Are you currently using the internet?

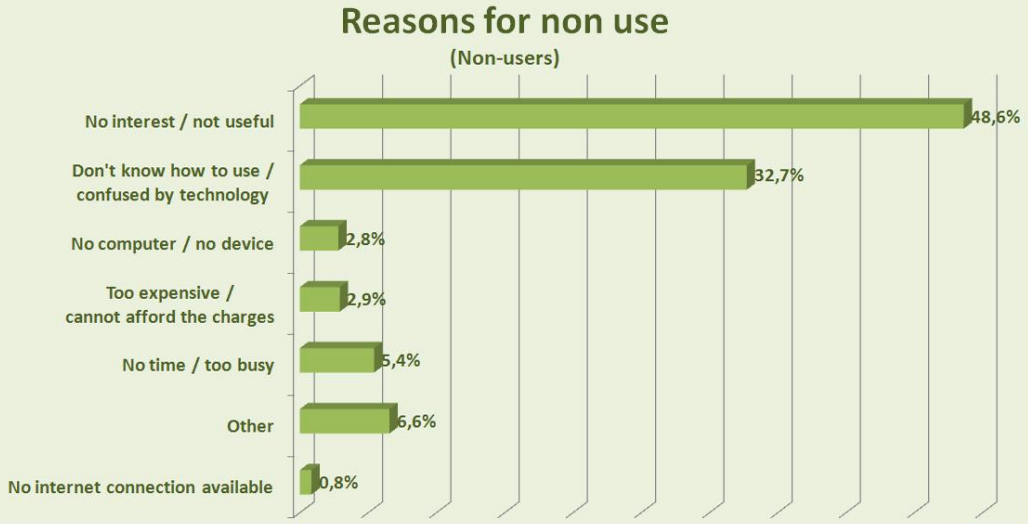


Figure 1.2
What is the main reason you do not use the internet?

INTERNET ACCESS AND USE

Internet use

Internet use in Greece is quite widespread and expanding as 62.2% of the population identify themselves as internet users[3], showing a 2.4% increase from the 2016 WIP Greece measurement. Among the 37.8% (Users: n=760, Non users: n=462) of non-users, 32.7% (n=151) state that the most important reason for not using the internet is lack of technical skills and knowledge. Another 48.6% (n=225) expressed no motivation in using the net (not interested in/ not useful). Around 5.4% (n=25) claim that they are too busy to spend time online, 3% (n=14) said that they find it too expensive, while another 6.6% (n=30) suggested other reasons for not using the internet, such as health reasons, fear of technology and not wanting to expose their children to online content. According to our findings, the relatively high percentages of digital illiteracy as well as "resisters" and/or excluded" suggest that Greece is an underway information society.

[3] According to the most recent survey on the use of information and communication technologies by households and individuals – 2015, conducted annually by the Hellenic Statistical Authority during the period 01/01/2016-31/03/2016, 69.1% of the Greek population aged 16 -74 uses the Internet (http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SFA20/-). The WIP project covers countries population aged 15 and over. By considering only those aged 16-74, the Internet use percentage for WIP increases to 69.1%, a result which exactly agrees with the aforementioned provided by the Hellenic Statistical Authority.

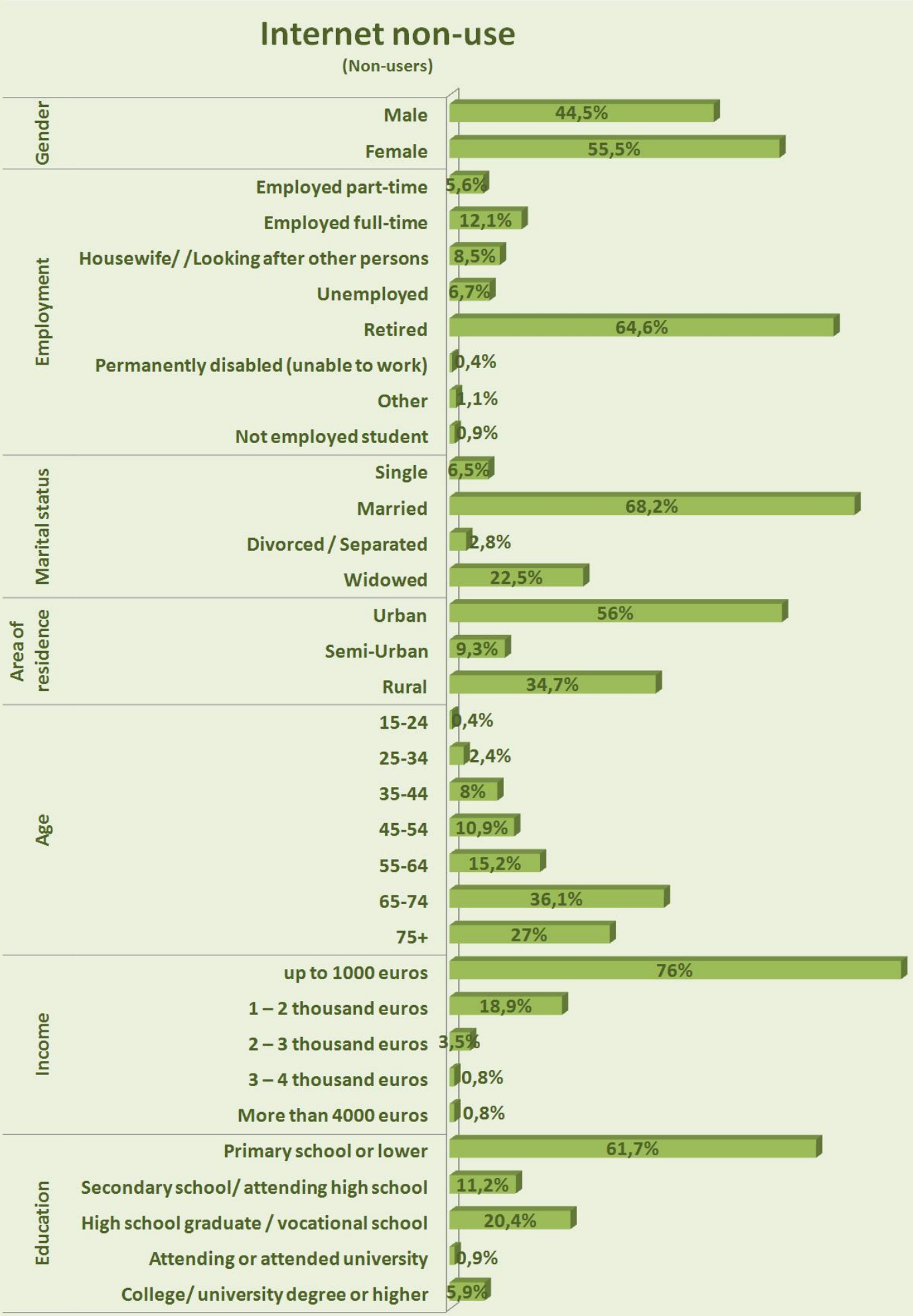


Figure 1.3
Demographic characteristics of internet non-users

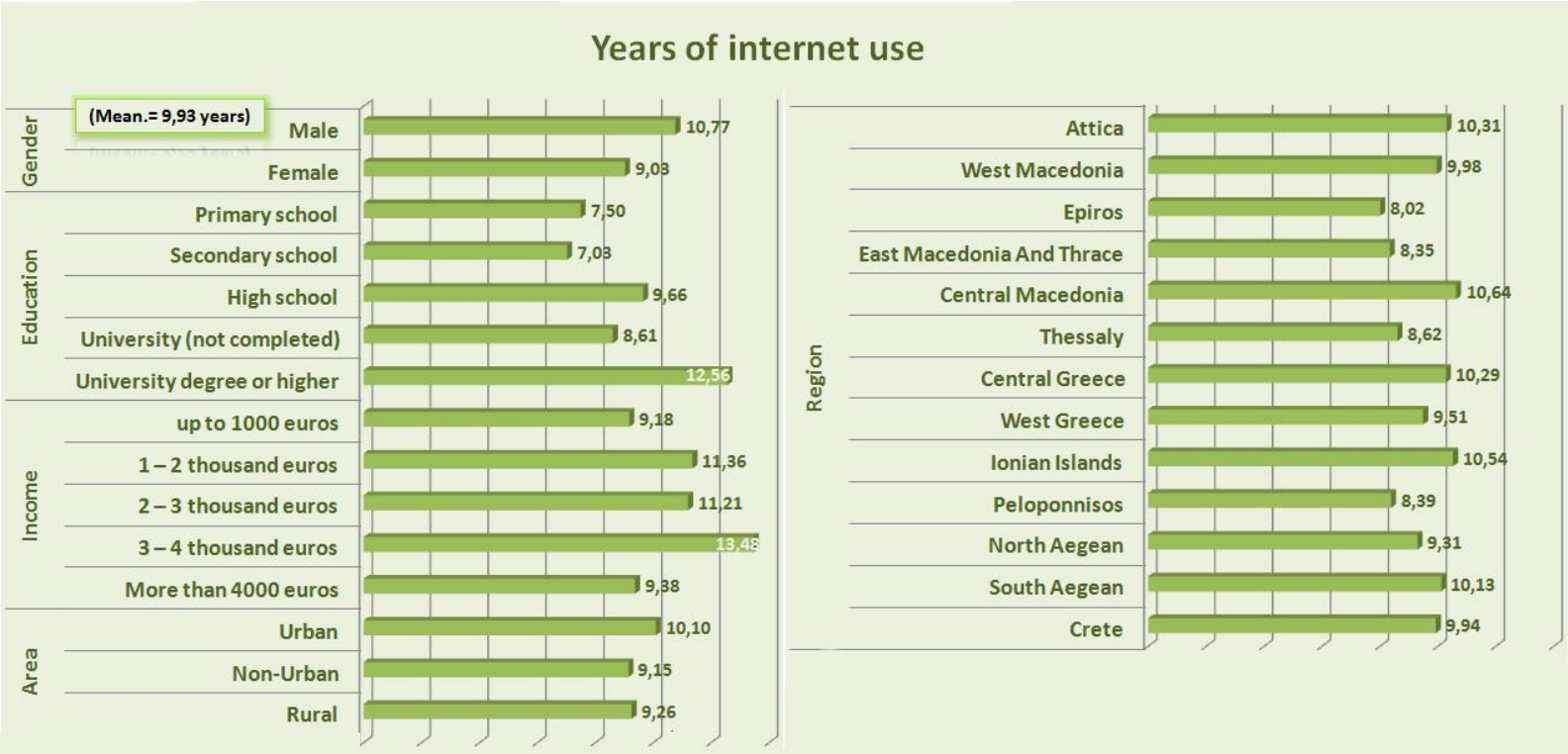


Figure 1.4
How many years have you been using the internet?

Nevertheless, most Greeks are quite experienced internet users with an average of almost 10 years of experience (Mean= 9.93 years), comparable to countries like Israel (10.3 years) and Czech Republic (9.5 years) and higher than Russia (7.1 years)[4]. More specifically, only 24.8% of the interviewed internet users have started using the internet during the last five years while 32% have more than 10 years of experience of internet use. Findings indicate that on average men begun using the internet almost 2 years earlier than women and residents of urban areas are significantly more experienced than residents of non urban and rural areas. Also, income and education seem to be positively associated with years of internet use as shown in Figure 1.4.

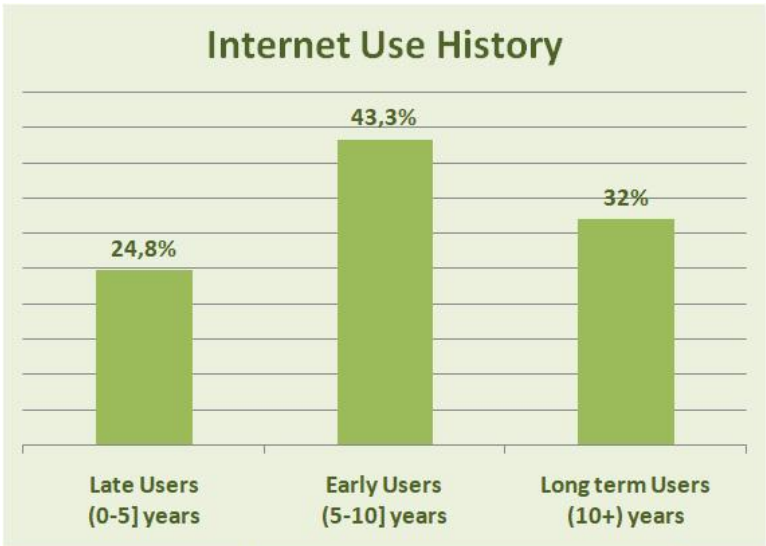


Figure 1.5
How many years have you been using the internet?

[4] 2017 WIP International report 7th edition (www.digitalcenter.org).

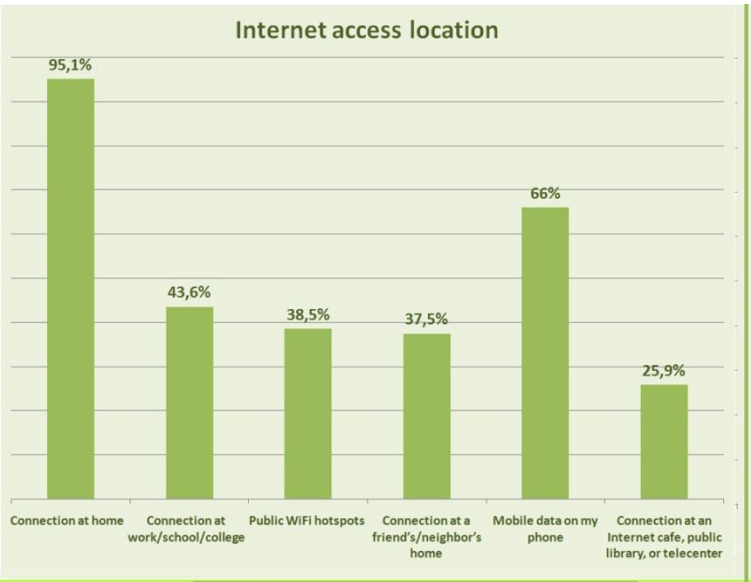


Figure 1.6
In the last month, how did you connect to the internet?

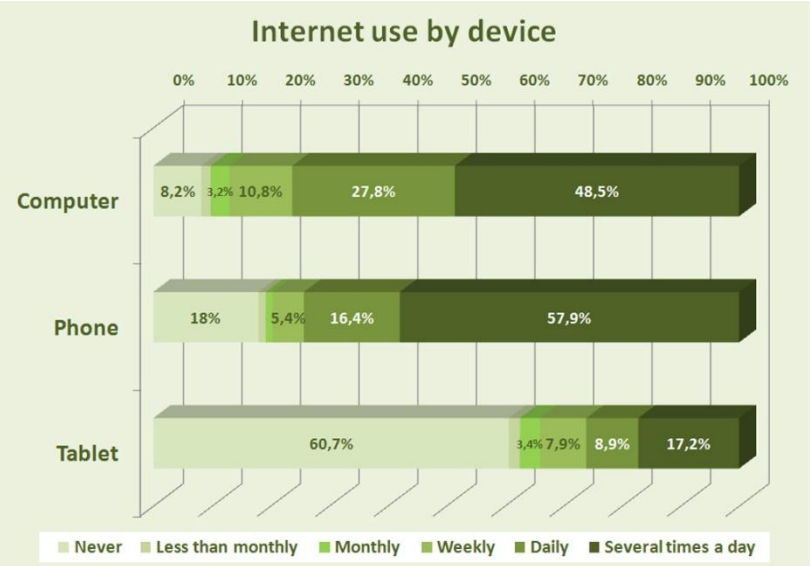


Figure 1.7
How often do you connect to the internet with each device?

Internet Access

Nearly all Greek internet users access the internet at home (95.1%). Additionally, only 43.6% of employed respondents and students use the internet from their work or educational environment, respectively. Also almost two thirds of the users connect to the internet from their mobile phones, through their service providers' data plan. Additionally, one third of the users report that they connect through public wi-fi hotspots and one in four accesses the internet via public connections such as libraries and internet café.

Greek internet users access the internet mostly through computers and mobile phones. Computers are the most widely used device as only 8% of the users report that they never use a computer to get online, while mobile phones seem to be used more frequently, as 58% of the users said that they use their phones several times a day in order to connect to the internet[5]. Overall, three quarters of internet users access the internet through their computers or mobile phones on a daily basis, while tablets and e-readers are less popular with only one in four users connecting to the internet every day, using these devices. Nevertheless, it should be noted that a different picture is revealed when experienced and less experienced users are examined separately. More specifically, late users appear to make less frequent use of all devices and

[5] According to the HTPC, at the end of 2015 only 34.1% of Greeks access the Internet via their mobile phones when the respective EU percentage is 53.9% (http://www.eett.gr/opencms/opencms/EETT_EN/Journalists/MarketAnalysis/MarketReview/)

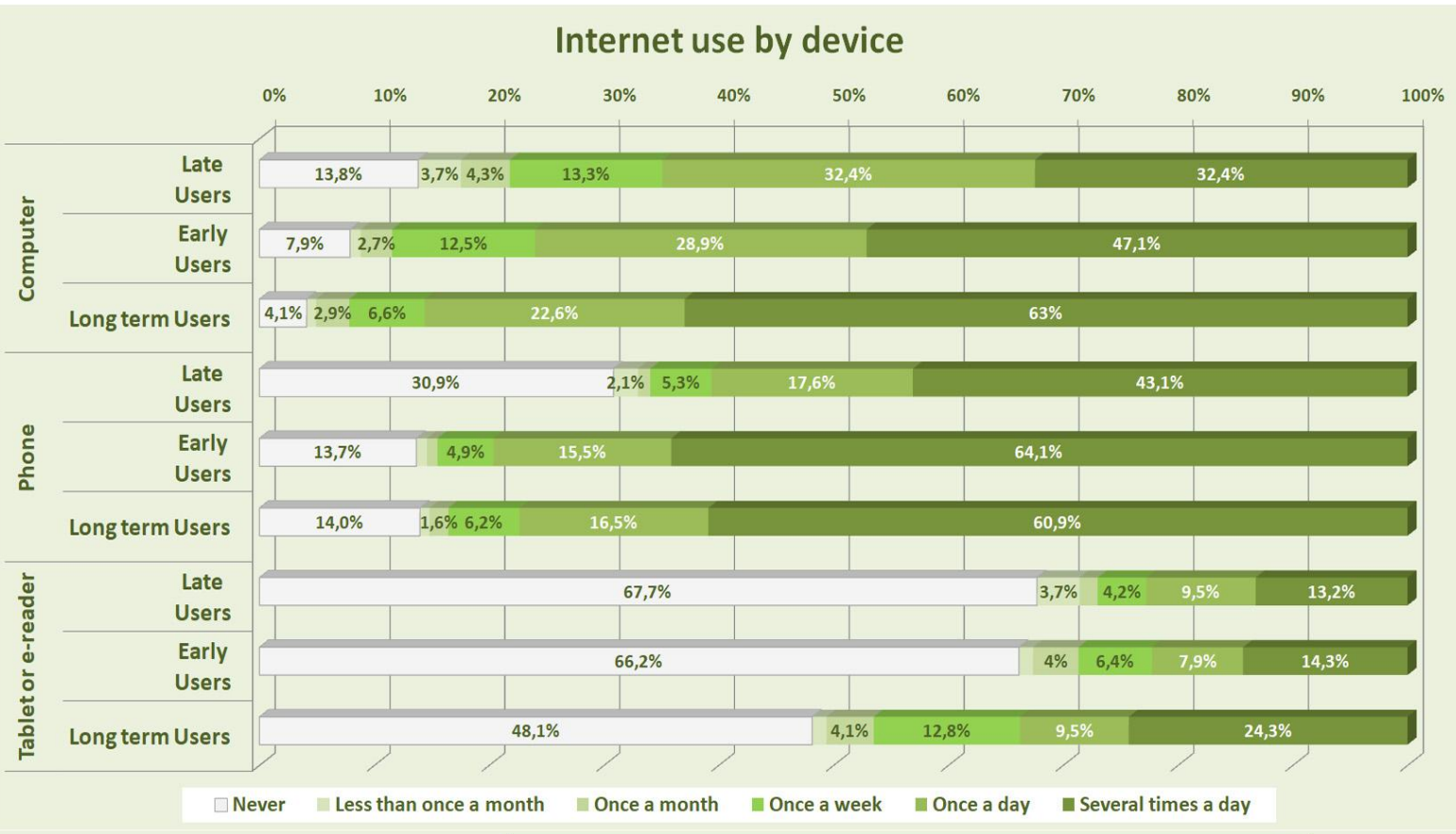


Figure 1.8
How often do you connect to the internet with each device?

frequency of use seems to increase with experience. Therefore, nearly 85% of long term users, with more than ten years of internet use history, report connecting to the internet through their computers, on a daily basis, while two thirds of them get online every day using their mobile phones and one third using their tablets. However, it should be noted that early users (5-10 years of experience) are the most vigorous mobile phone users as their daily access percentage approaches 80% exceeding that of long-term users due to the fact that early users are young people compared to long-term users. Long term users exhibit the highest percentage of daily tablet use, as one third of them access the internet via their tablets every day, while two thirds of the less experienced report that they never access the internet through their tablets.

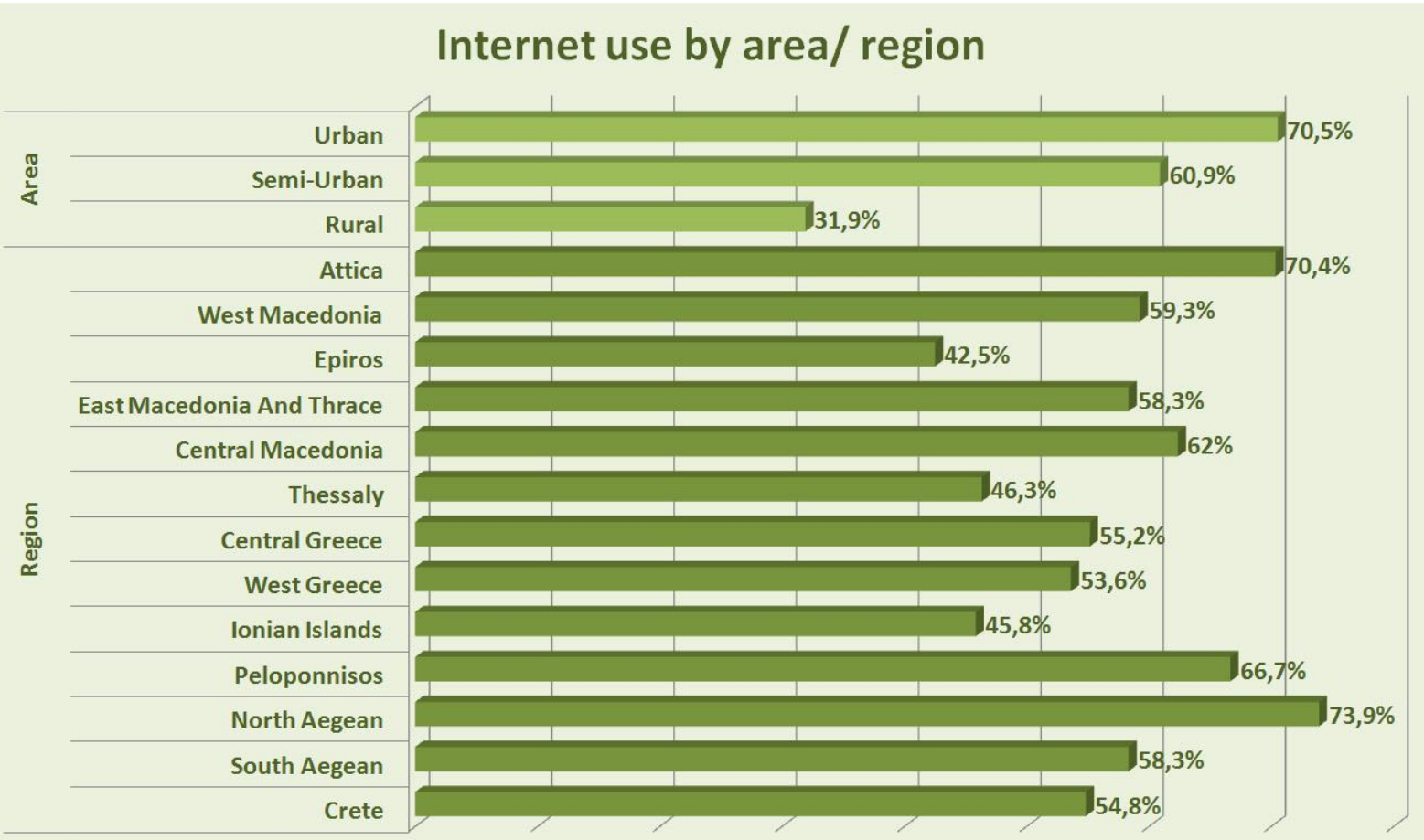


Figure 2.1
Internet use by Area / Region of residence

DIGITAL DIVIDES

Although internet use is quite widespread in most regions of the country, a significant divide is noticed between residents of urban and rural areas, with residents of semi-urban areas standing in between. As shown in Figure 2.1 more than 70% of urban residents identify themselves as internet users, while less than a third of rural residents report using the internet. Thus, it seems that proximity of residence to the urban centers is positively associated with internet use. This is apparent by the fact that internet use reaches 70% in Attica and 62% in Central Macedonia, where the two major Greek cities are situated, while the lowest percentages of internet use are depicted in the most rural regions of Epirus and Thessaly. It should also be noted that the highest internet penetration is depicted at the North Aegean islands (73.9%).

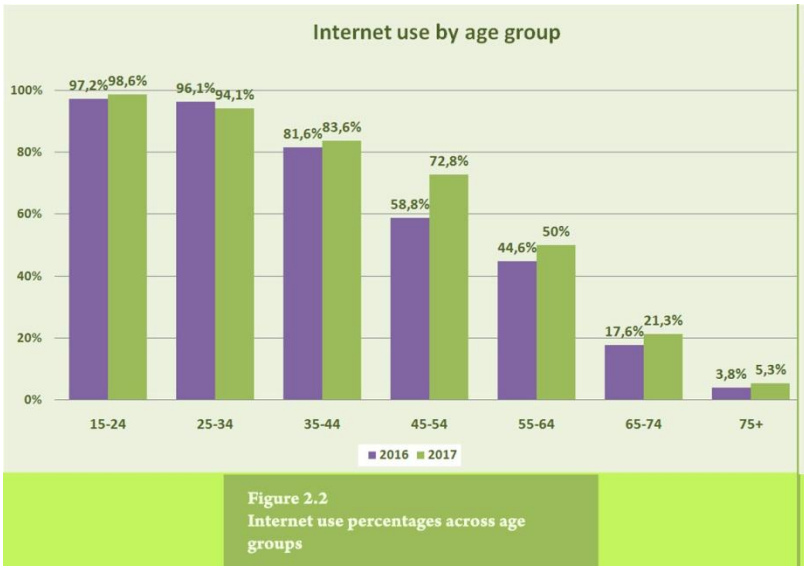


Figure 2.2
Internet use percentages across age groups

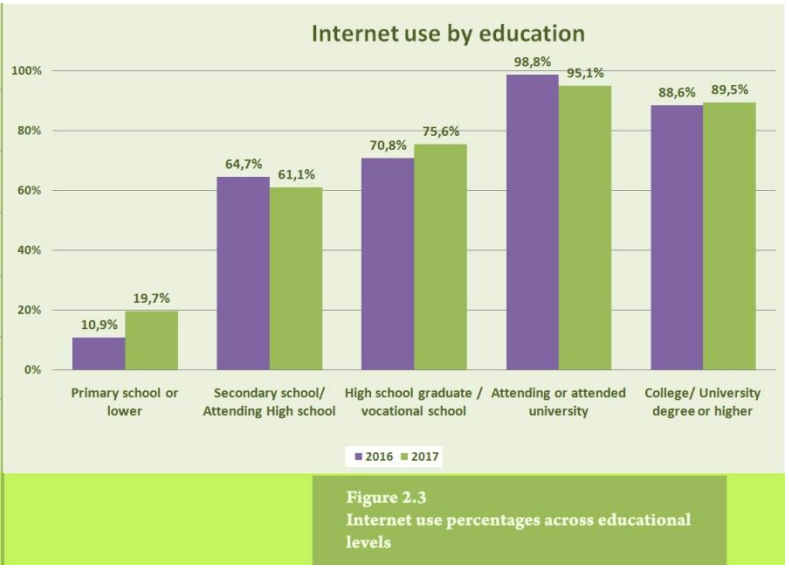


Figure 2.3
Internet use percentages across educational levels

Internet usage seems to decrease with age, as shown in Figure 2.2. While internet use approximates 100% in the age groups below 35 years, there is a steady decrease in the following age groups that reaches only 5.3% for the eldest 75+ group. However it should be noted that internet use seems to be increasing across almost all age groups, as we can see in comparison to 2016 findings. The most notable increase in internet use is depicted within the 45-54 age-group which it seems to have increased by 14 percentage points in one year.

An opposite trend is outlined with regard to the level of educational attainment. As Figure 2.3 clearly shows higher education competencies are associated with higher internet use. The only exception is that university students exhibit higher use percentages than university graduates, but this could be explained by the fact that, for educational purposes, students are required to use the internet more often than graduates.

It should also be noted that internet use among the group representing the lowest educational level, although it remains the

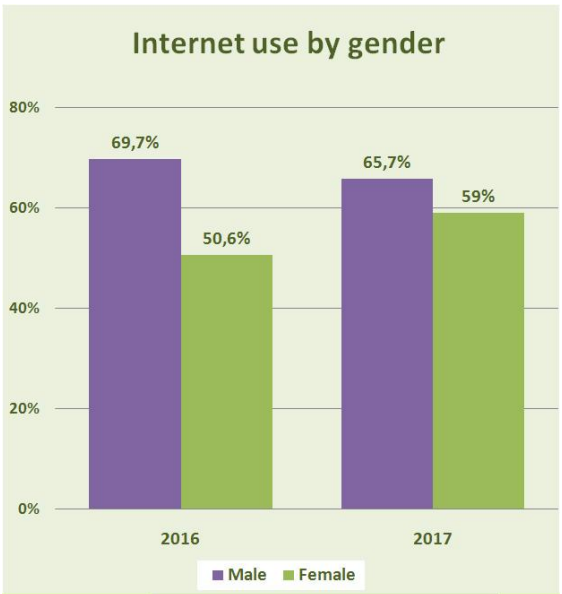


Figure 2.4
Internet use percentages across genders

across educational groups, seems to be rising significantly, as it has increased by nearly 9 percentage point in only one year.

Additionally, gender gap in internet use seems to be decreasing. As shown in Figure 2.4, internet use among women has risen by nearly 9 percentage points, and, in combination to a slight decrease in internet use among men the divide has fallen to almost 7% from 19% in 2016.

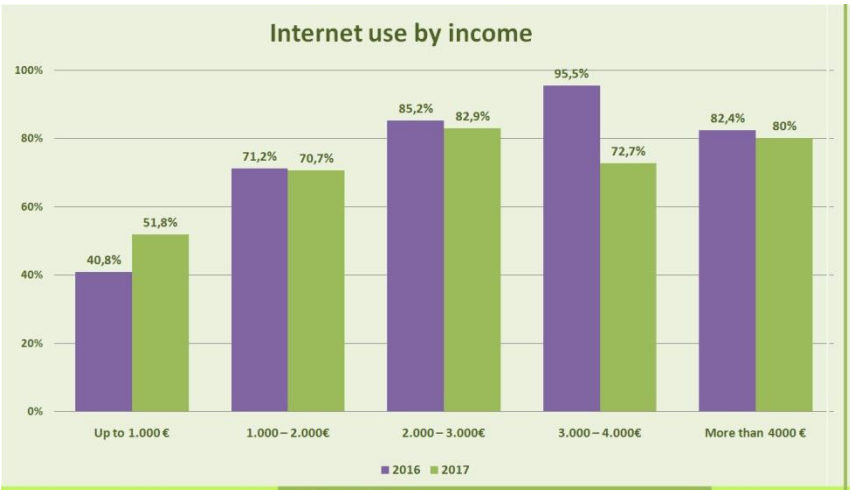


Figure 2.5
Interent use percentags across income cotegories

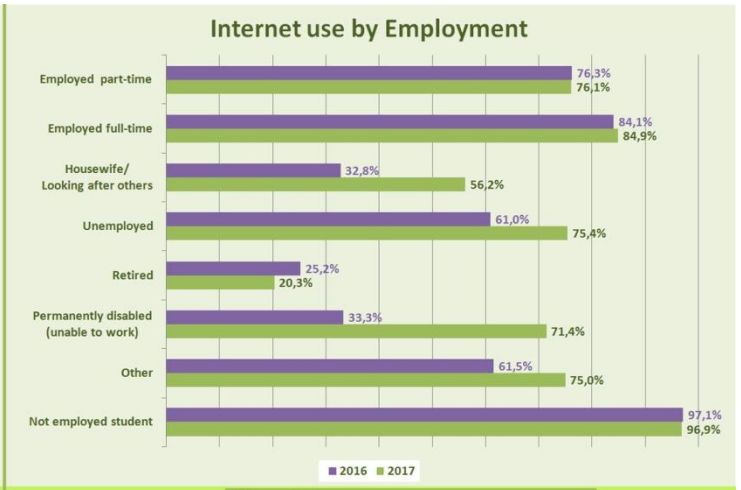


Figure 2.6
Internet use percentages across employment stautus categories

Similarly, a positive association occurs between income and internet use as shown in Figure 2.5. Higher incomes are associated with higher internet use percentages. Nevertheless, for income categories exceeding 3,000€ per month, internet use exhibits a significant decline, but this could be explained by the small number of cases in the upper end of the income scale. Also, it should be noted that a significant increase in internet use is depicted at the lowest income category (below 1,000€ per month) as it has increased by 11 percentage points. This might be associated with the fact that salaries in Greece have been in a steady decline since 2010, which is evident by the fact that people reporting gross monthly income below 1,000€ has increased by 5 percentage points, while all other income groups have shrunk. Therefore, it is possible that internet users from higher income categories have move to the lowest end of the scale, causing internet usage to increase within this group as well.

Also, according to the latest data, internet use seems to be increasing among individuals from almost all walks of life (Figure 2.6). Internet use among not employed students remains almost universal, while full-time and part-time employees maintain high internet usage rates of 84.9% and 76.1% respectively. However, internet use exhibit significant increases among unemployed respondents (14% increase), housewives (23% increase), people that are unable to work (38% increase) and individuals with other employment status (13.5% increase). Pensioners are the only groups exhibiting a decrease in their already low internet usage rates, as it has dropped to only 20.3% from 25.2% in 2016.

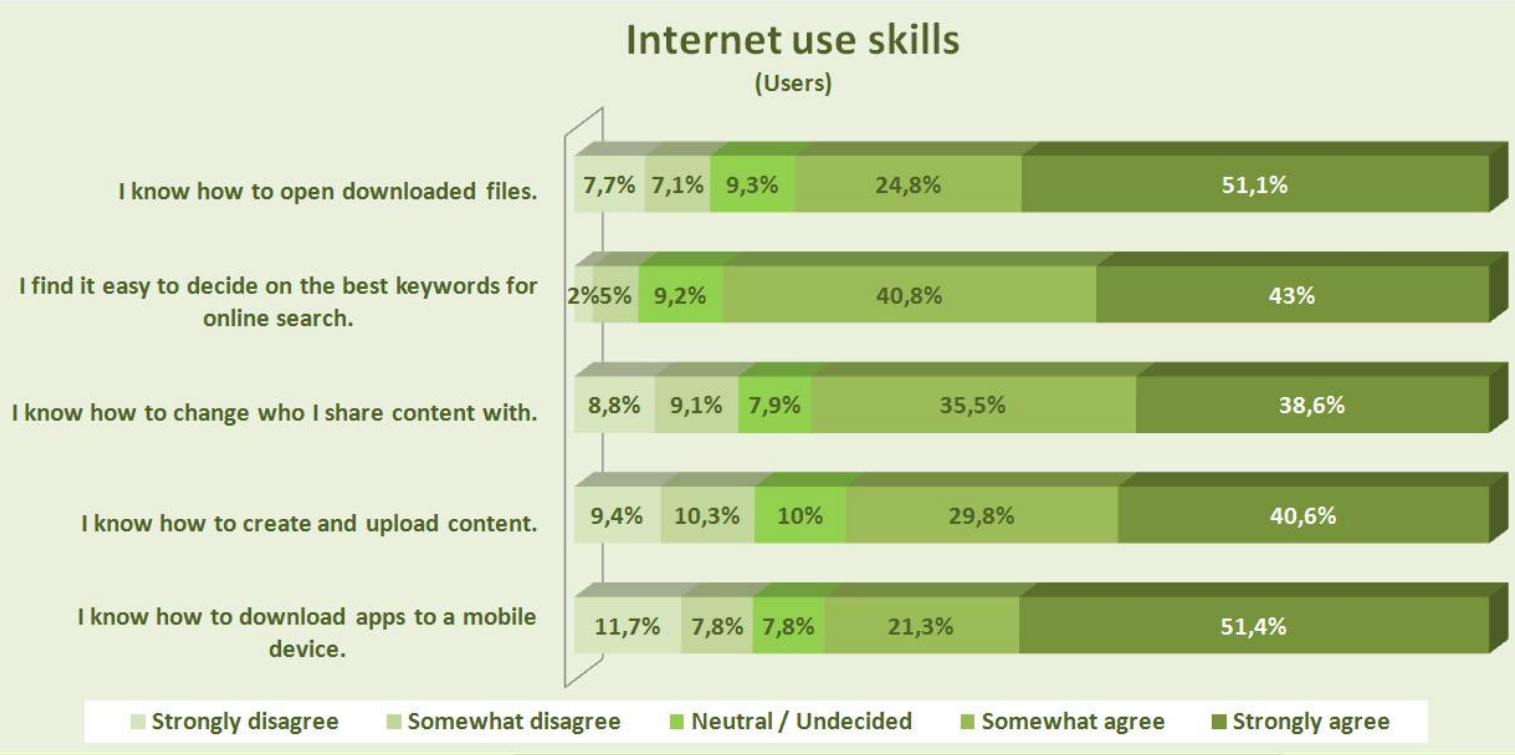


Figure 2.7
How much do you agree with the following statements about internet skllls?

Internet Skills

As far as computer and internet use skills are concerned, the majority of Greek internet users feel confident that they know how to perform a series of tasks that are essential for using the internet. More specifically, nearly 85% of the users self-report that they can easily decide how to select the appropriate keywords for searching online content, while more than 75% report that they know how to open downloaded files (Figure 2.7). Similarly, more than 70% of the users declare that they know how to change their privacy settings for sharing content on the internet, how to download applications in their mobile phones and how to create and upload content.

In order to trace a possible digital divide after access among our respondents we constructed a "digital skilling scale" ranging from 5 to 25, according to the items and the available responses. The scale was divided into three categories (Low=5-11, Medium= 12-18, High= 19-25). No statistical correlation was found with regards to the gender, household income, and the residence area variable. Very strong correlation was found (see Figure 2.8) between digital skilling and age, education level, internet use history, and internet dependency (chi-square .000). This means that a distinct digital divide exists among internet users in Greece when it comes to younger age cohorts and users of higher educational background early and heavy users are definitely more skilled than late users, and, of course, those who are more dependent on the internet are more sophisticated users.

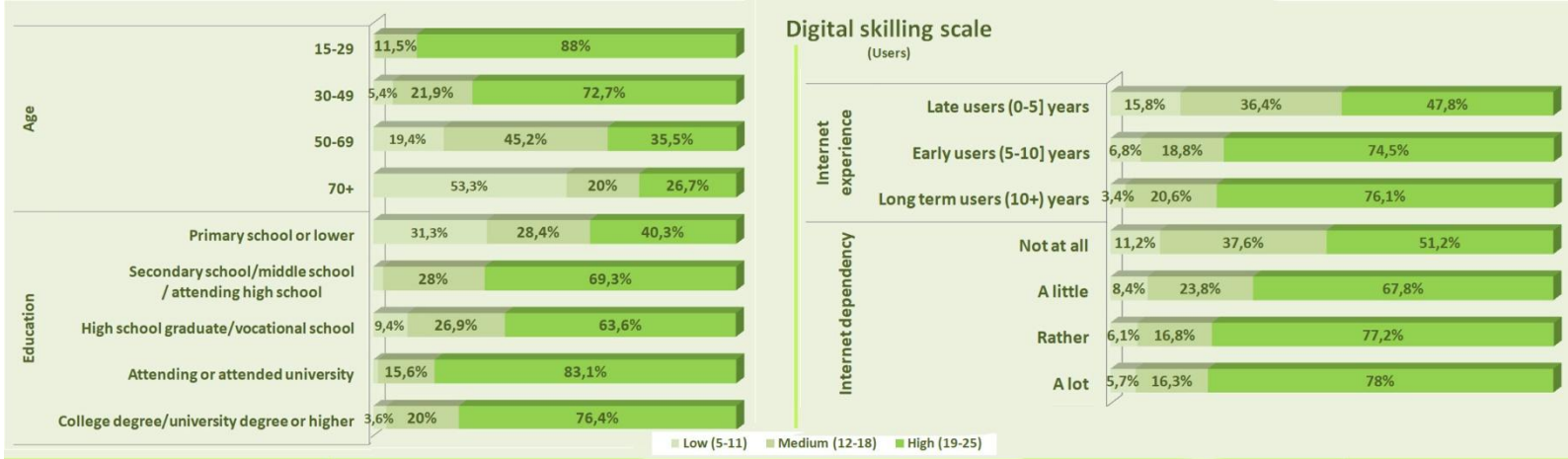


Figure 2.8
Digital skills by age, education, internet experience & internet dependency

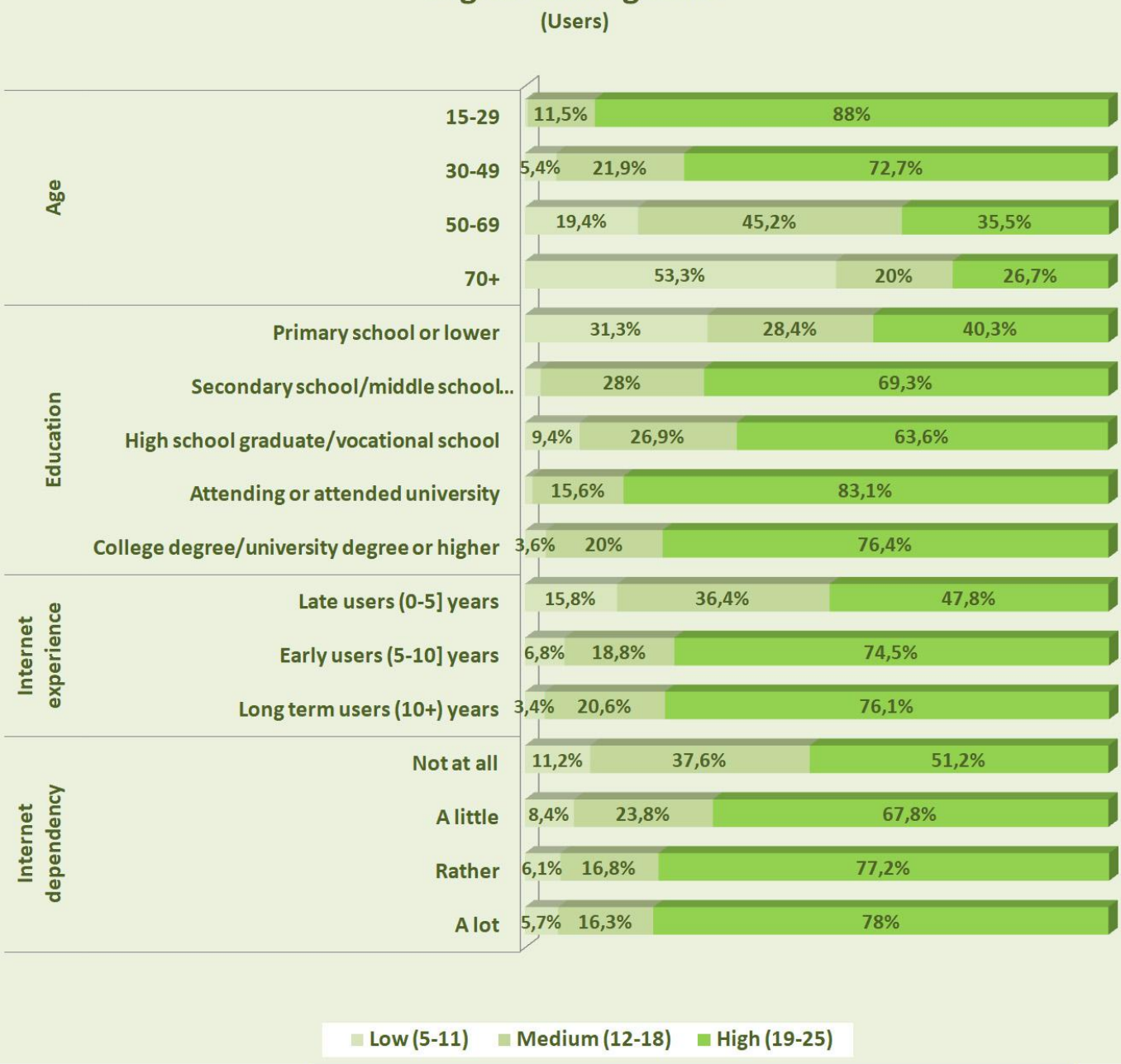


Figure 2.9
Digital skills by age, education, internet experience & internet dependency

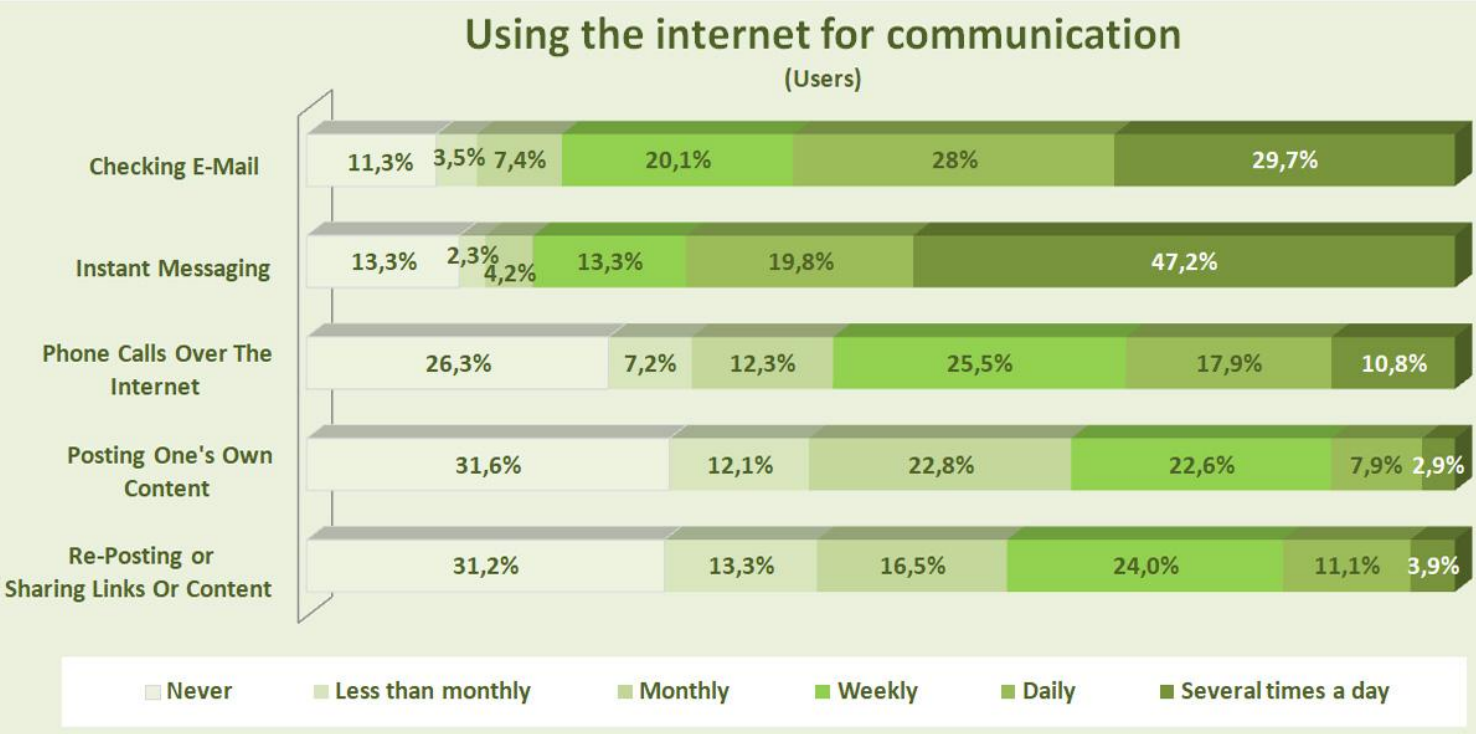


Figure 3.1
How often do you use the internet for each of these communication activities?

INTERNET USES

Communication

Internet uses for communication purposes are very common among Greek users. As it is commonly found in most countries participating in the WIP over last ten years or so, electronic mail is one of the most popular activities, with 57.6% of the user population checking their emails at least once a day (Figure 3.1). Instant messaging is also very popular in Greece, as 67% of users exchange messages on a daily basis, which is higher among the countries included in the 2017 WIP International Report (Cyprus as represented by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Communities, Taiwan, USA, Sweden, Israel, Czech Republic, and Russia)[6]. Moreover, phone calls over the internet are also popular among Greek users as more than 50% report making online calls at least once a week, while other activities such as posting original content as well as sharing / reposting content happen a bit less frequently.

[6] 2017 WIP International Report, 7th edition. According to other sources, 32% of the Greek population over 18 years (i.e. 2.851.000 individuals) have an account in social media which are trusted as much as 35%. See Greek Social Issues 12-2016: «Social Media», Public Issue, http://www.publicissue.gr/12728/soc-media-2016/ (March 2016).

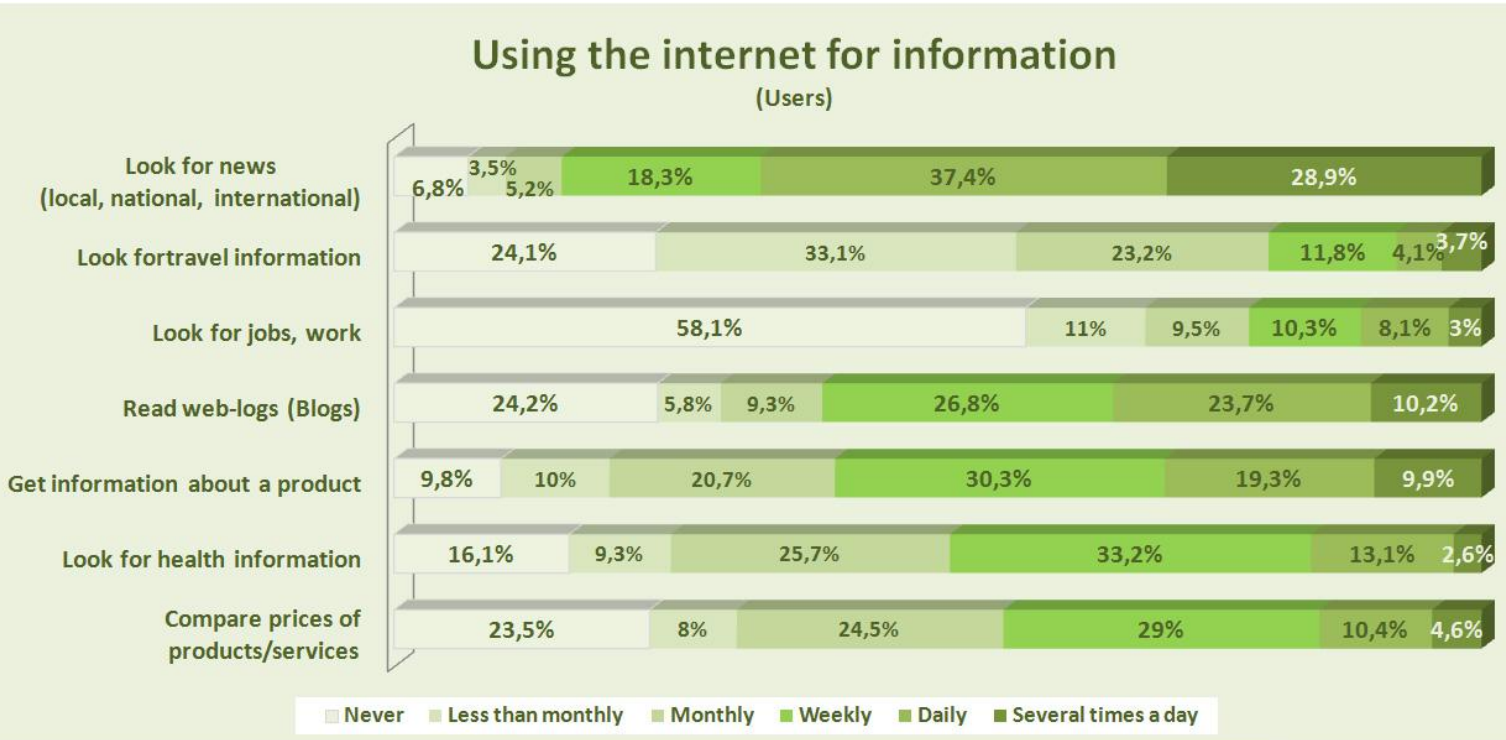


Figure 3.2
How often do you use the internet for each of these informational activities?

Information

Internet use as information source involves mostly searching for news; 66.3% turn to the internet for news consumption every day[7], which is identical with Russia (66%) and similar with the Greek Cypriots and Israelis (67%) concerning users looking for news online daily or several times a day. Quite less is this recorded in the Czech Republic (54 percent), and the United States (52 percent)[8]. Less popular, but still very prevalent on a weekly basis is reading blogs. Similarly, it is common among Greek internet users to go online in order to acquire information about products and compare prices, while nearly 50% of them access quite often the internet to search for issues related to their health.[9] Looking

[7] The likelihood is that this is due to the limited credibility of other news media among the Greek public (see later in this report).

[8] 2017 WIP International Report, 7th edition.

[9] A research of the Economic University of Athens found that, in general, 80% of the Greek users consult medical sites for health information (https://www.eltrun.gr/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/YpsiliXrhshtouInternetsthn_Ygeia_me-problhmatismou_aksiopistia.pdf).

for employment opportunities as well as for travel information are the least popular internet uses for acquiring information.

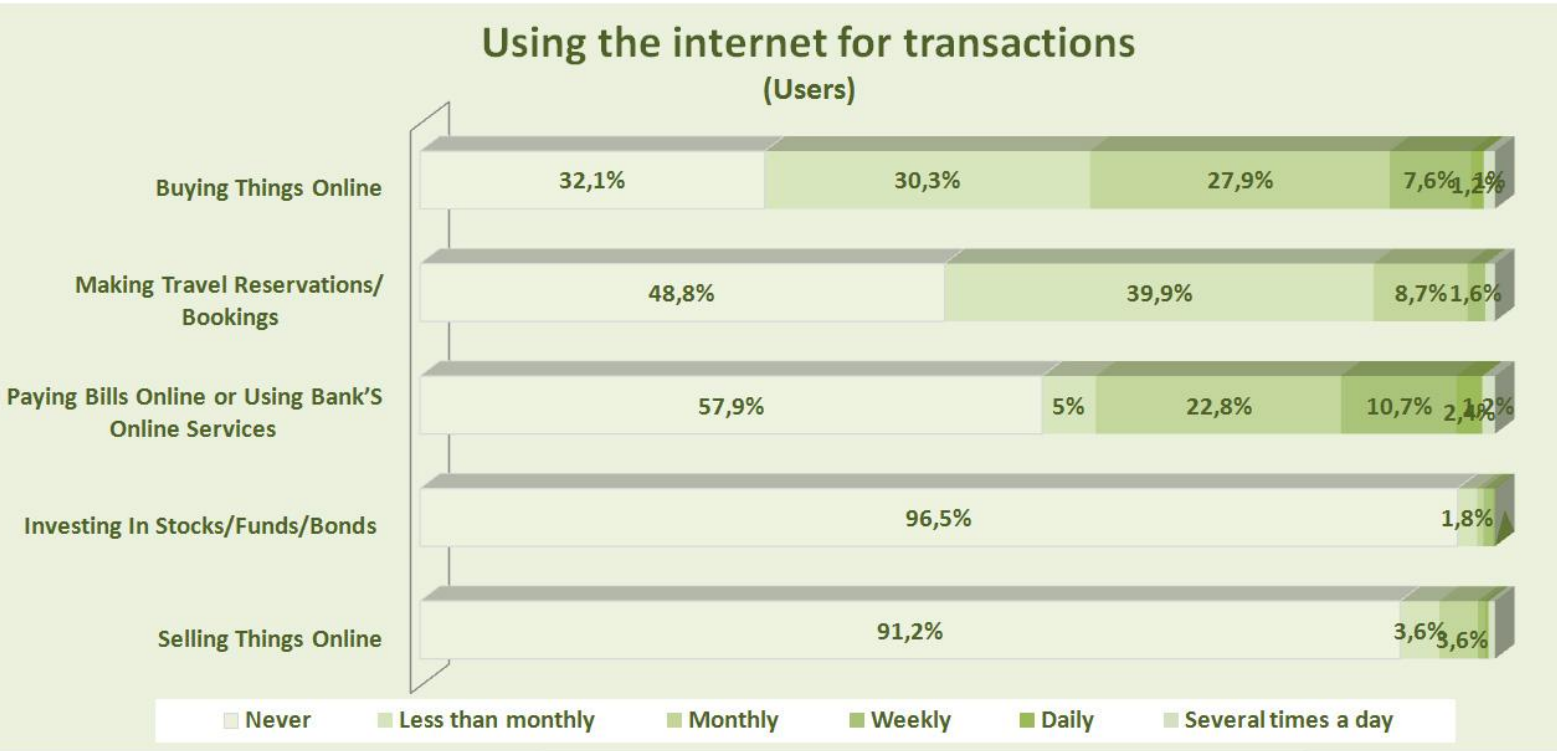


Figure 3.3
How often do you use the internet for each of these transactions?

Online Transactions

Internet use for transactions is very rare among Greek internet users, and is mostly limited to buying products on a nearly monthly basis. In fact, 38% of internet users report buying things online at least once a month, which is relatively high, considering that in only ten other WIP countries report that one third of the users go online to make purchases at least once a month. Other types of transactions such as paying bills online or using internet banking services are not very developed in Greece. Despite the imposed capital controls at summer 2015, a factor that normally leads people to e-banking, nearly 60% of users report that they never utilize these services, which are used by other WIP countries. More than 90% of the respondents said that they never use the internet in order to sell things, or to make online investments, which is very common for most WIP countries.

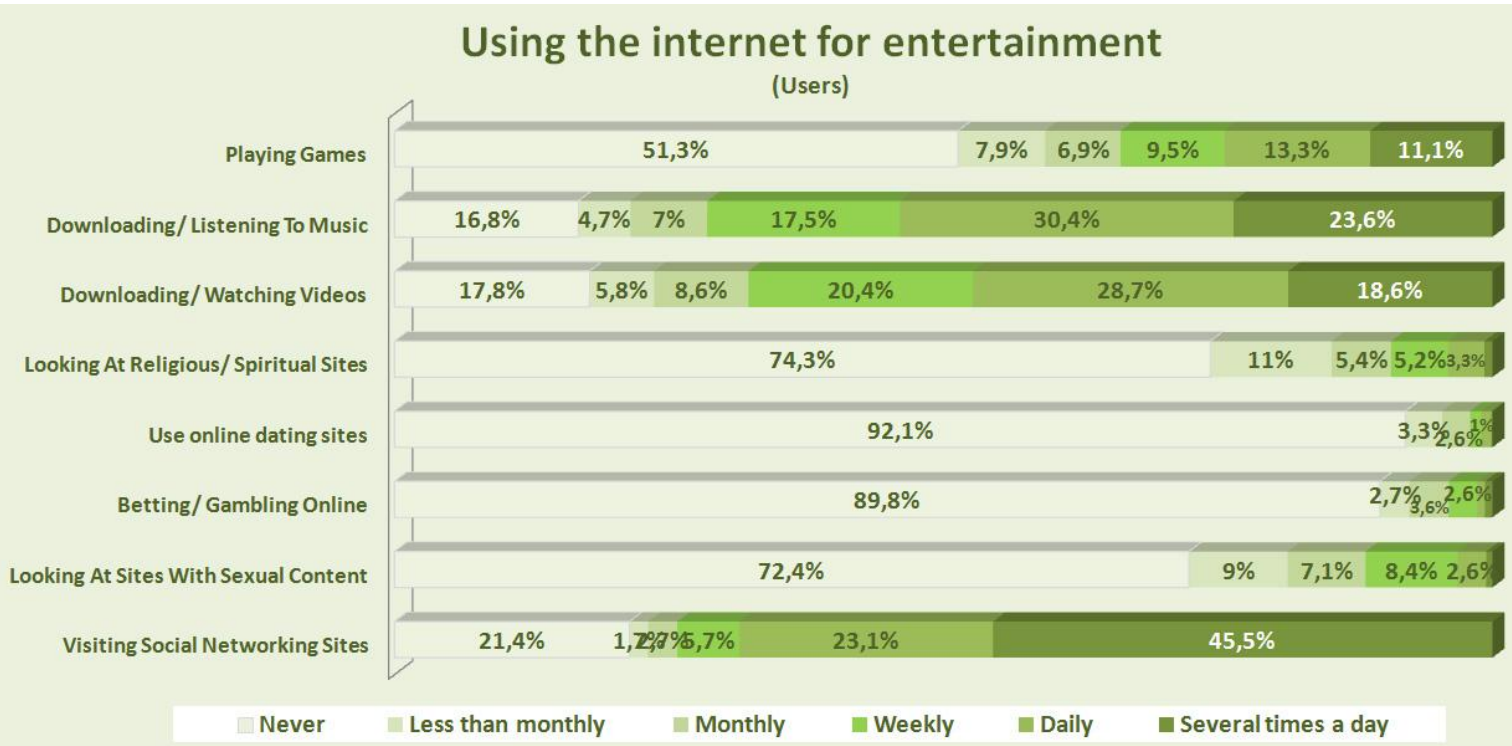


Figure 3.4
How often do you use the internet for each of these entertainment activities?

Entertainment

As far as entertainment uses of the internet are concerned, the most frequent activity of Greek users is browsing the web, followed by visiting social networking websites, as 80.4% and 63% respectively engage in these activities on a daily basis, which are the highest percentages compared to the other WIP countries. Downloading music and videos are also very popular among Greek internet users, with the overwhelming majority reporting that they download or listen to music and download or watch videos at least once a week. Playing videos games, looking for humorous content are also quite popular. Also, Greece is one of the few countries ever where more than 50% of the users report listening to online radios. In the 2017 WIP International Report no country has reaches such a percentage. Also, the majority of Greek internet users said that they never visit spiritual or religious websites, gamble online or look for websites with sexual content.

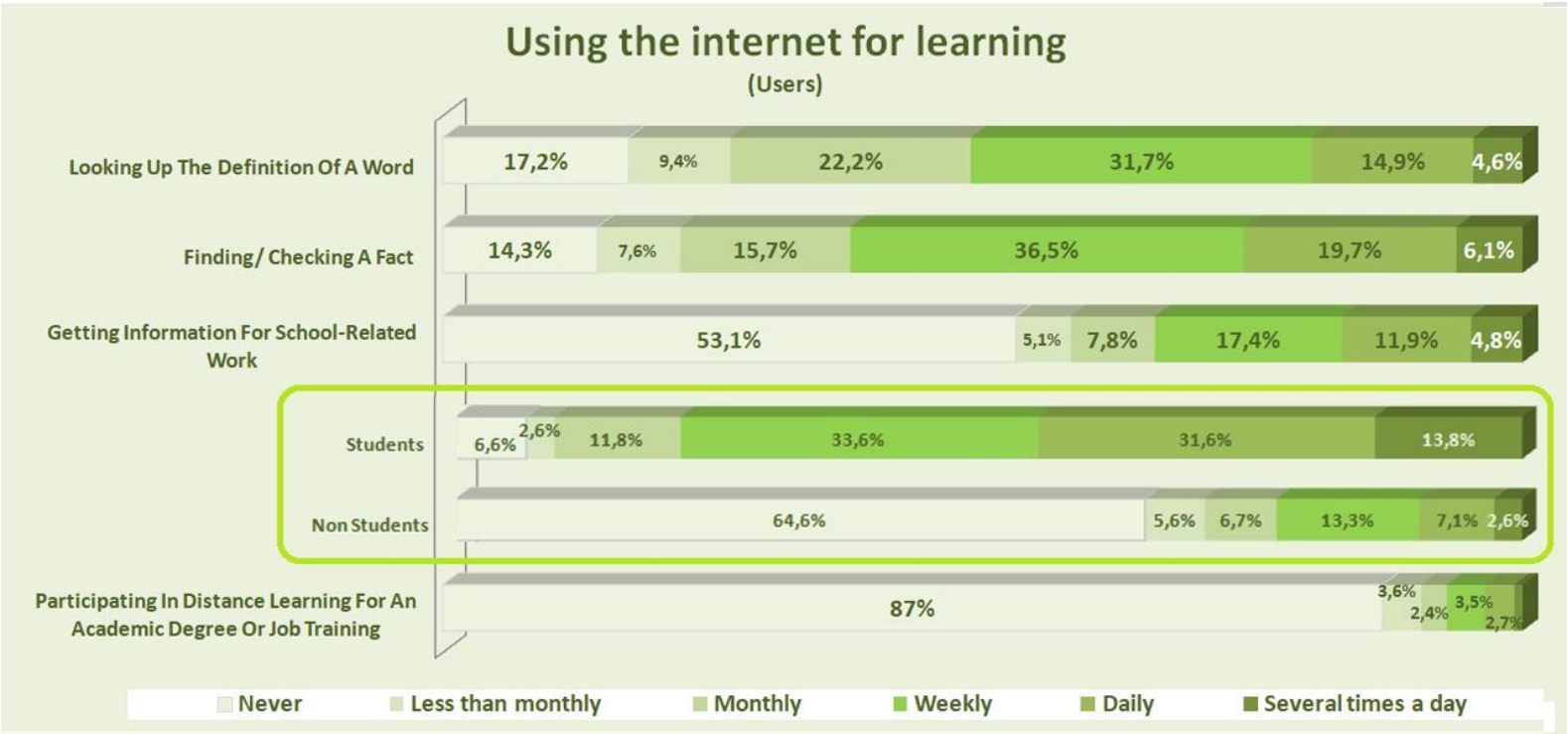


Figure 3.5
How often do you use the internet for each of these learning activities?

Learning

Educational uses of the internet by Greek users involve mostly fact checking and looking up word definitions, as the majority looks such information up at least once a week. Finding information on school-related work is not very common for the majority of the respondents, which is expected as most of them are not students. However, as shown in Figure 3.5, examining students separately reveals that nearly 8% of the student population in Greece goes online at least once a week in order to look for information related to their school work. Finally, the data shows that very few respondents participate in distant learning courses; however this is a common feature in the majority of countries participating in WIP International Reports.

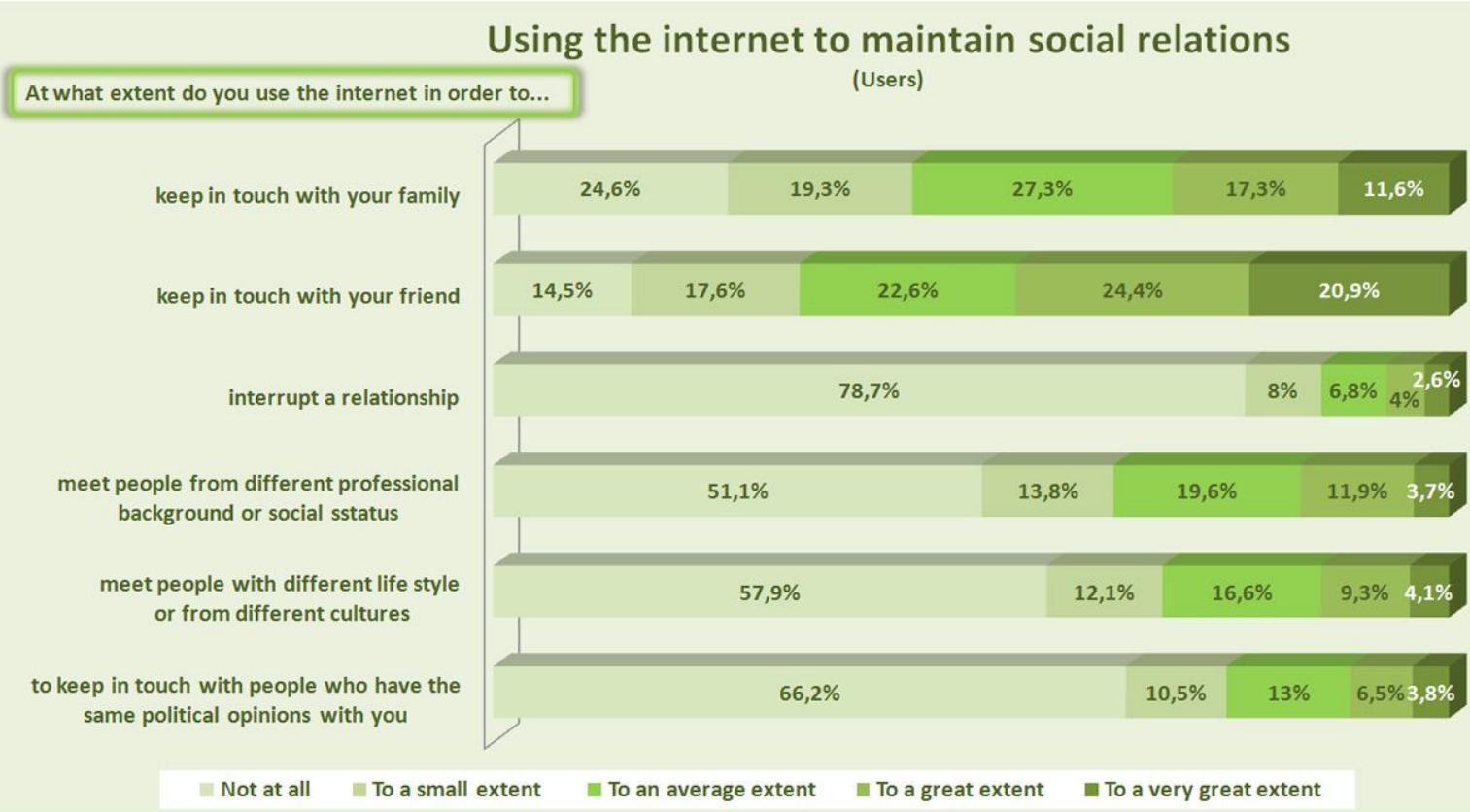


Figure 3.6
How much do you use the internet for maintaining social relations?

Social relations

Using the internet in order to maintain, initiate or even interrupt social relations is quite unusual among Greek internet users. Therefore, it appears that internet is not their preferred mean for social contacts. Those who report use of internet more often aim at personal relations, since 45.3% use internet to keep in touch with their friends and another 28.9% to maintain contact with their families. In addition, the majority of the users do not prefer the internet in order to expand their social network. More specifically, hardly 15.6% of the users report using the internet for meeting new people from different cultural, professional and social backgrounds, and hardly 13.4% use it for meeting people with different life style or from different countries. Besides, hardly 10.3% confess internet use for meeting people with similar ideological or political views. Lastly, the vast majority (86.7%) avoid the use of internet in order to announce their decision for interruption of a relationship.

PERCEPTIONS, EXPRIENCES AND CONCERNS

Perception on Internet Information's Reliability

Internet users in Greece seem to be skeptical regarding the reliability of information they find online. As Figure 4.1 reveals, very few respondents expressed certainty that information on the internet is either completely reliable or completely unreliable, while more than 98% assumed a position in between those extremes. Amidst a general distrustful stance towards media of communication, the likelihood is that – among internet users – the internet as a medium of communication survives popular confidence since about 22% report that all or most of the information conveyed on the net is reliable. If one adds to this that 45.5% of the respondents think that about half of the information online is reliable, one gets a quite less gloomy picture regarding the internet's reliability in comparison to other media of communication. As matter of fact, Greece ranks notably low (49%) among EU28 with respect to a media trust index[10]. According to the latest *Eurobarometer* (#452), among the EU publics, respondents in Greece (26%) are the least likely to agree that their national media provide trustworthy information (EU mean score=53%). Radio is most likely to be considered reliable (40%), followed by newspapers (33%) and television (16%). [11]

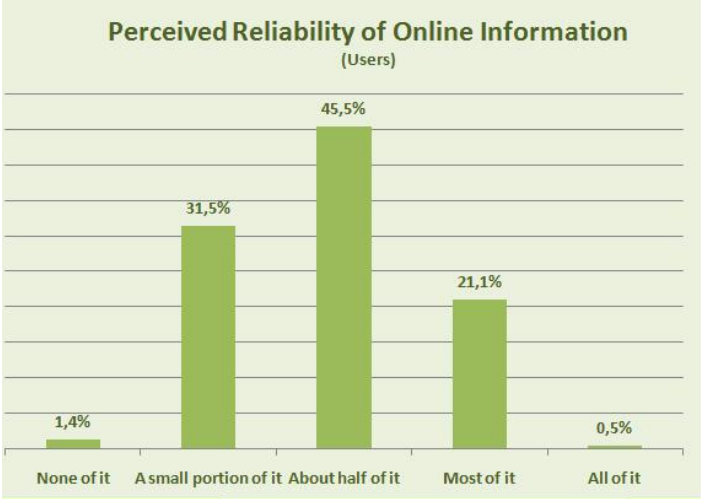


Figure 4.1
How much of the information you find online do you think is reliable?

[10] The media trust index has been constructed on the basis of levels of trust in each of the five media analyzed (television, radio, written press, the Internet and social networks) in the *Eurobarometer*.

[11] http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/yearFrom/1974/yearTo/2016/surveyKy/2119.

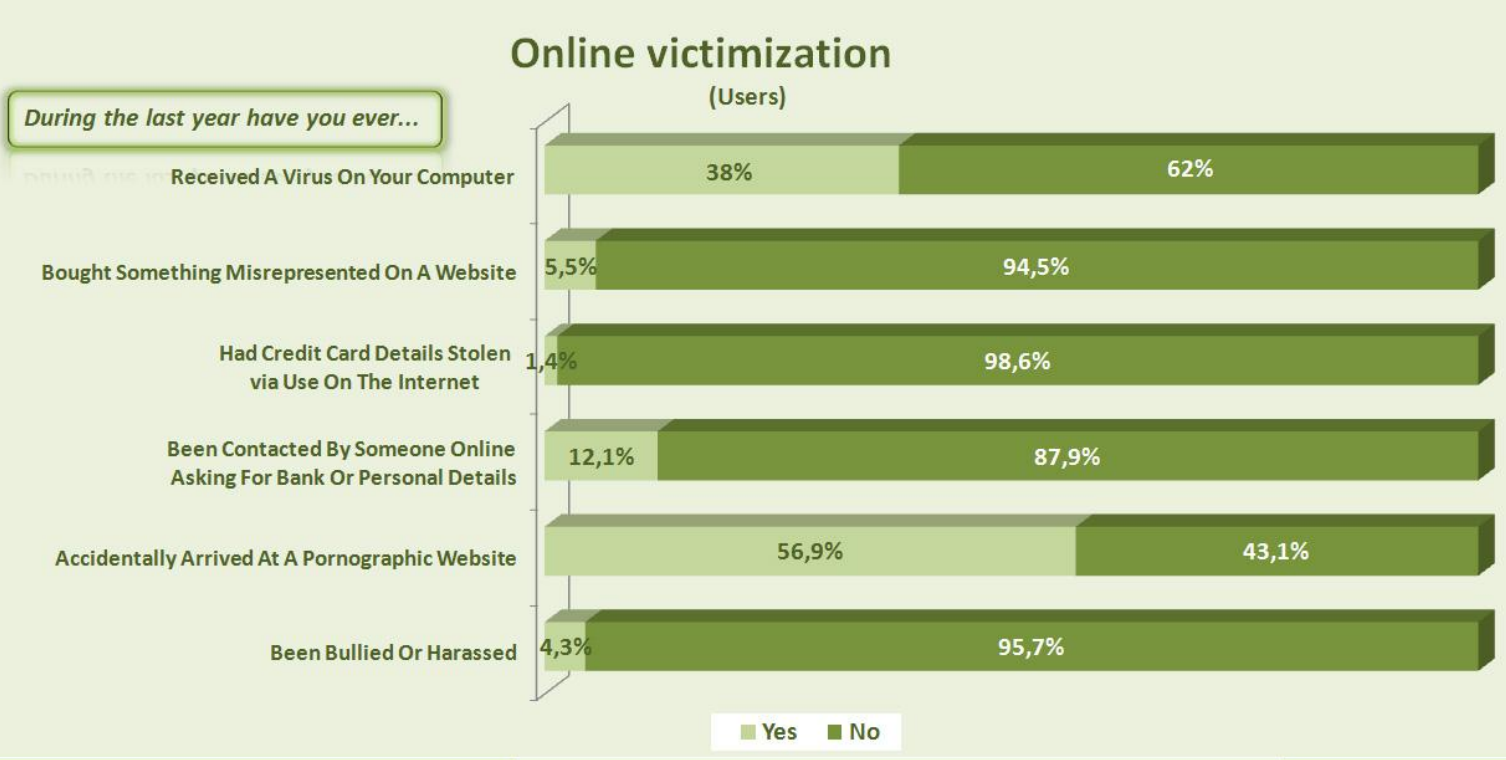
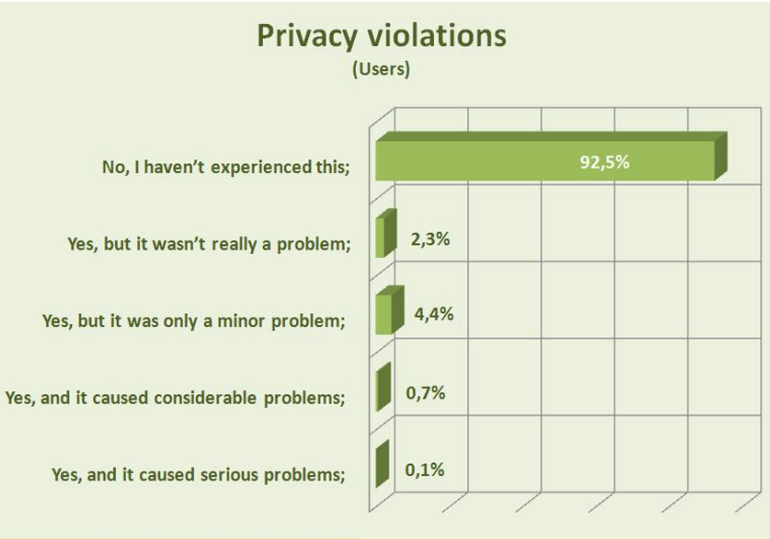
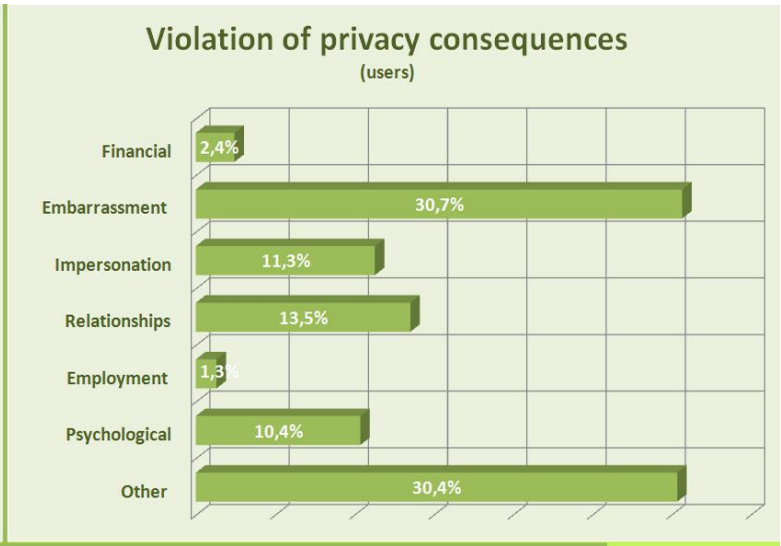


Figure 4.2
Online victimization of Greek users

Online victimization

As Figure 4.2 shows, victimization is low among Greek internet users. The most common cases of online victimization involve computer viruses and accidental exposure to pornographic content, while more serious cases of victimization such as online bullying or harassment are limited to 4.3% of users. The least common type of online victimization involves credit card fraud as only 1.4% of the users report having their credit card details stolen. Also, 5.5% report having bought products that were misrepresented on the website from which they made the purchase, while 12.1% said that they have been contacted by an individual/s asking for their personal or banking information.





Figures 4.3 - 4.4
In the past year, have you had your privacy violated online and, if so, how much of a problem was this?

Privacy Violations

Greek respondents state that violations of privacy are very uncommon, as more than 90% said they have never experienced a violation of their privacy online. Moreover, most of the users that reported having their privacy violated over the internet said that it was a violation of minor importance that did not have any significant personal, financial or professional consequences. Among those who reported that they had experienced privacy violations during the last year,

30% report that the violation only caused them embarrassment, and another 30% said that the violation had other consequences like break of private space, intrusion of intimate environment and so on. Also, 13% reports violations that had negative consequences for their relationships, 11% report that someone had impersonated them through the internet while 10% said that violations of their privacy had a negative impact on their psychological state. However, it should be noted that a very small amount of the reported violations had any effect of their professional life or caused them any financial damage.

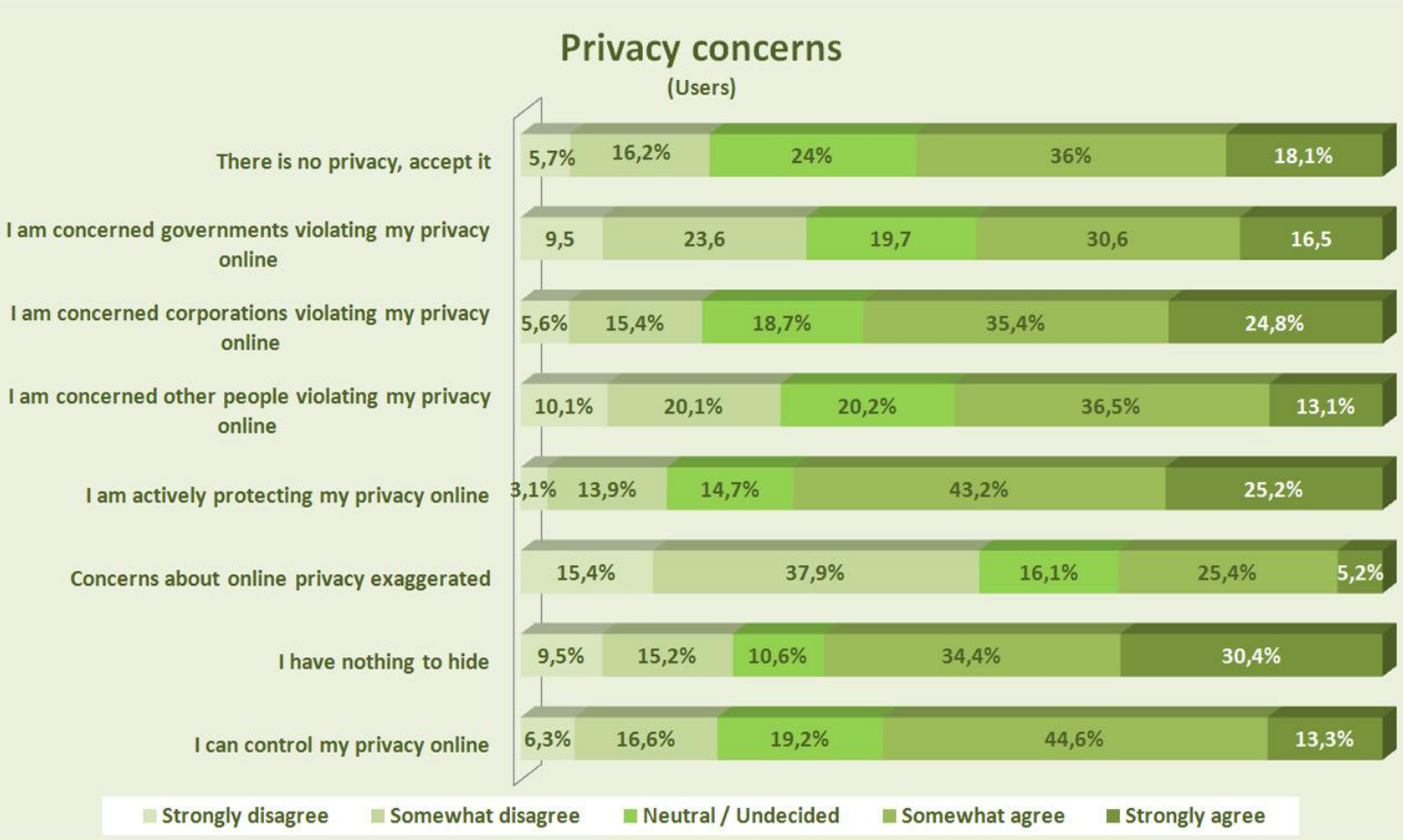


Figure 4.5
How much do you agree with the following concerns about privacy online?

Privacy Concerns

Despite the fact that, on one hand, most internet users in Greece exhibit a sort of fatalism regarding protection of privacy online, and, on the other hand, that nearly 65% of them agree with the statement that they have nothing to hide, Figure 4.5 indicates that the majority expresses various kinds of concerns regarding their personal privacy on the net. Specifically, most users agree with the statement "there is no privacy, accept it" (54.1%) but they report that they do actively protect their privacy online (68.4%), with 58% saying that they can even control their online privacy. Greek internet users are not convinced by reassurances that "concerns about online privacy are exaggerated", as less than one in three agree with the statement and they are primarily concerned with their privacy being violated by private corporations (60%) or other people (40%) and less so by governments (36%).

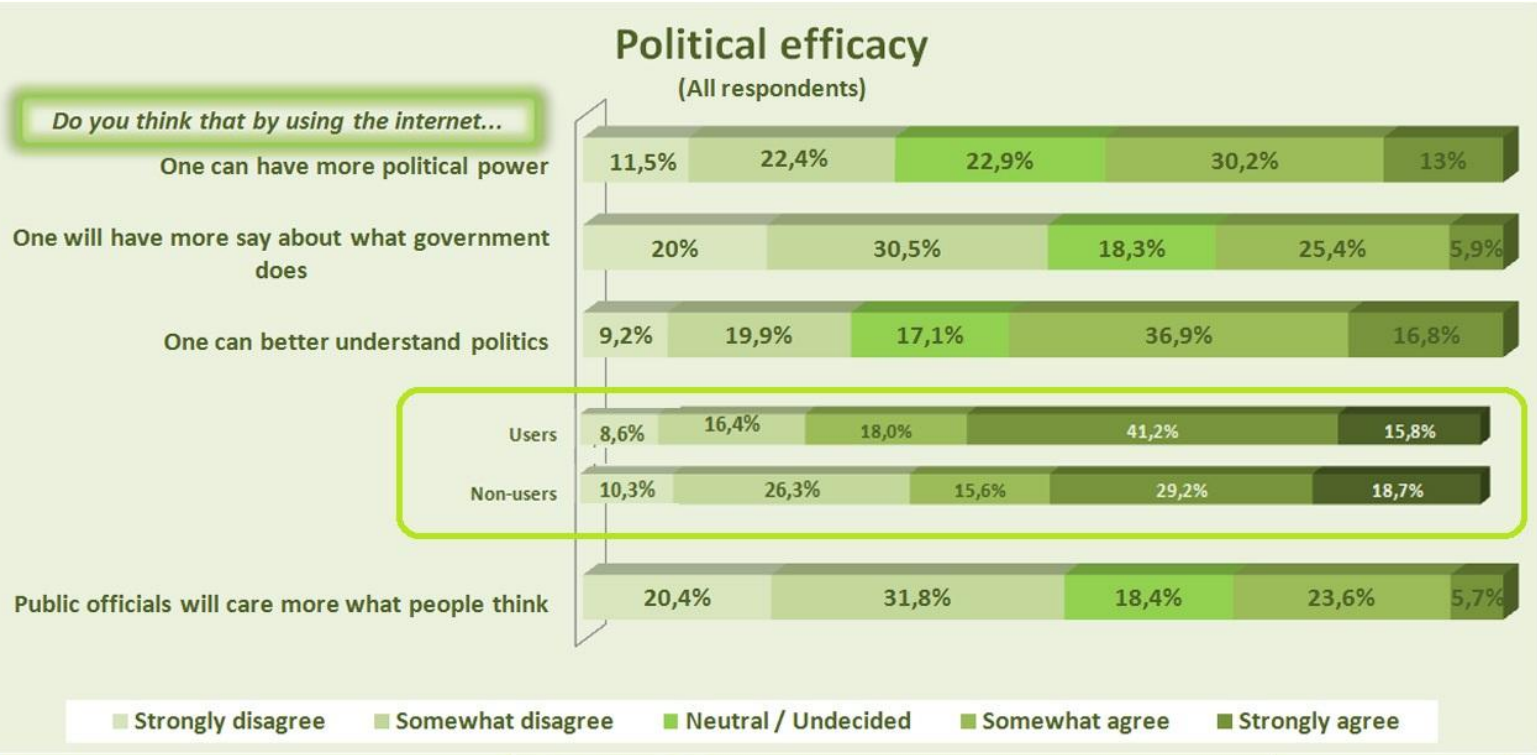


Figure 5.1
How much do you agree with these statements on political efficacy?

POLITICAL EFFICACY

Four items were used in order to assess the perceived effects of internet use on political efficacy. These items tap both internal and external political efficacy. As indicated in Figure 5.1 respondents expressed ambivalence as to the impact of internet use on their political efficacy. While the majority (53.7%) of the respondents stated that using the internet could have positive effects on their understanding of politics, half of them did not believe that internet use would increase their ability to influence what the government does (50.5%), neither public officials' attention to their opinion (52.2%). In the same vein, respondents were divided almost equally on the question of whether internet use could increase their political power. It should be noted here that when users and non-users were examined separately, it was revealed that users tend to have more positive attitudes regarding internet's potential to improve their understanding of politics, which could suggest that internet use might have some positive impact on users' internal political efficacy.

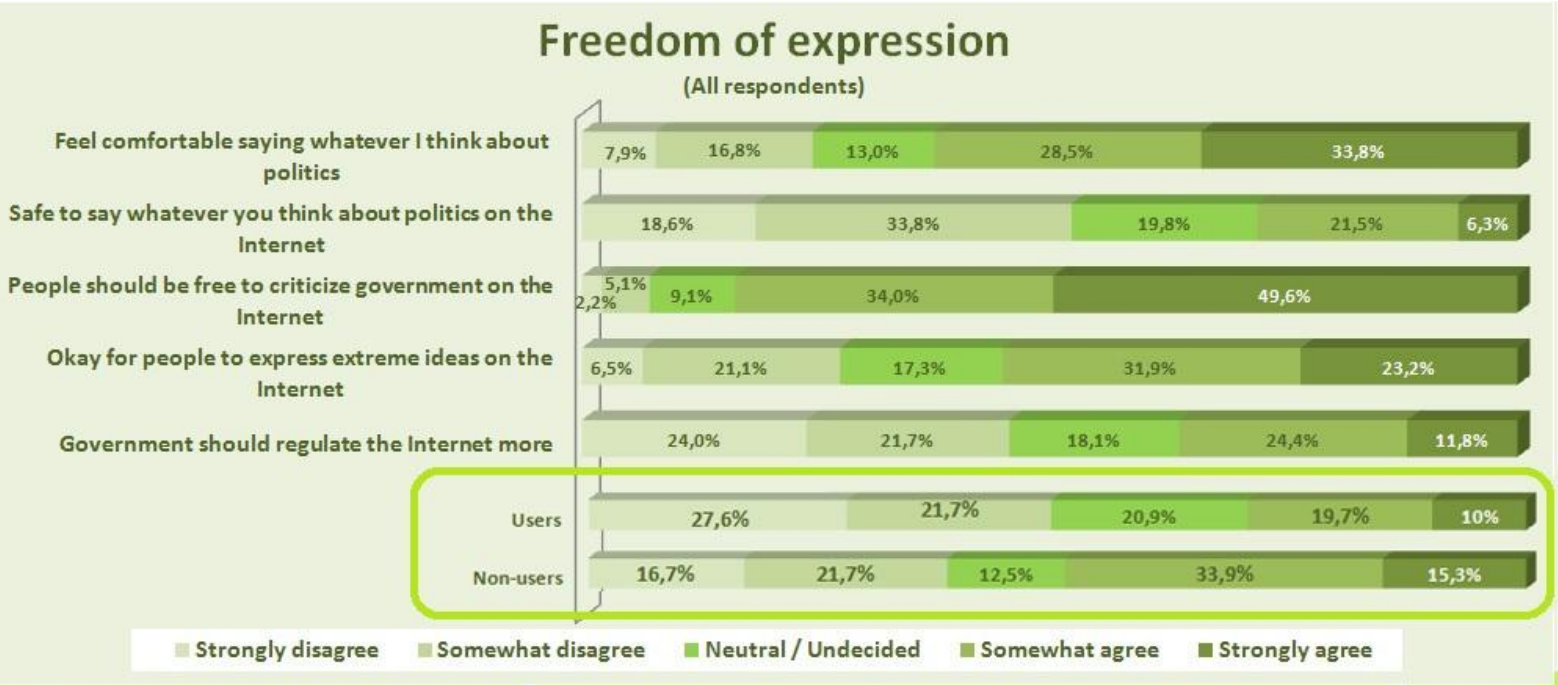


Figure 5.2
How much do you agree with the following statements on freedom of expression?

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Findings suggest that although most Greeks feel strongly for freedom of expression, they do not consider the internet a safe space for expressing themselves. As Figure 5.2 shows, nearly two thirds of the respondents feel comfortable expressing their opinion. In a similar vein, an overwhelming majority of our respondents (84.6%) believe that people should be free to express their criticism towards the government online, while 55.1% agree that people should be free to express even extreme ideas on the internet. Nevertheless, only 27.8% of the respondents believe that it is safe to express one's political opinions online, while a third of them believe that there should be more regulation of the internet by the government. However, it should be pointed out here that users and non-users take completely different positions on this matter, as while 50% of non-users agree with the idea of more regulation of the internet, only 29.7% of users support this position. Thus, it seems that, although internet users qua «Netizens» do not consider the internet a safe place to express political opinions, they consider governmental interference as unnecessary or even unacceptable.

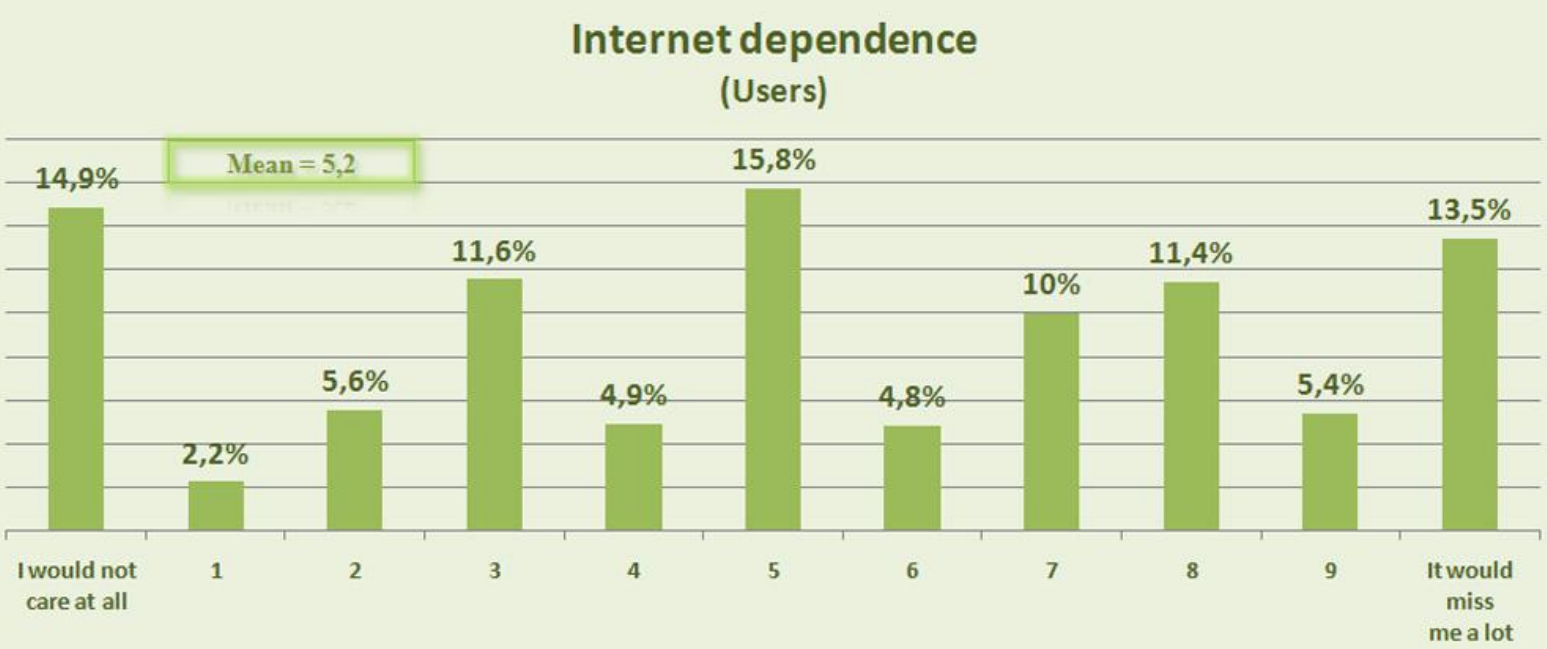


Figure 5.3
How much would it affect you if you were not able to connect to the internet from any device or location?

INTERNET DEPENDENCY

Dependence on the internet was measured by asking the respondents to evaluate, on a scale from 0 to 10, how much their lives would be affected in case they were not able to connect to the internet from any device or location. The results suggest that internet dependence is moderate with a mean value of 5.2 (std. dev. 3.282).

Additionally, internet dependency appears to be among users with average experience in internet use. Figure 5.4 shows the mean values of internet dependency, according to users' years of experience with the net, indicating that early users express greater dependence on the internet. It is possible that this is due to the fact that, on the one hand, internet use is not yet deeply embedded in late users' every day routines, while on the other hand, long term users experience allows them to recognize the true value of the internet and use it more efficiently without getting carried away by the unlimited access to content.

This leaves early users as the most susceptible group of users, they already use the internet enough time to make it part of their everyday routine, while they do not possess enough experience in managing its use without exaggerating. Early users , when looking to the primary data, are quite young people using the internet in every day routine.

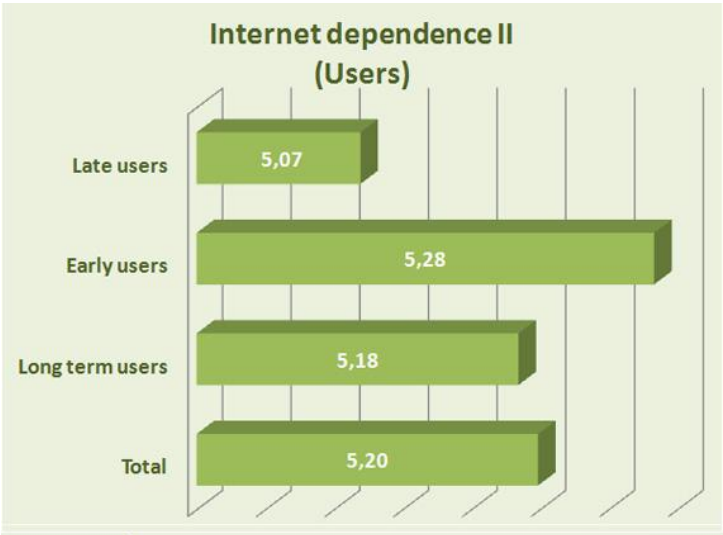


Figure 5.4
How much would it affect you if you were not able to connect to the internet from any device or location?

DEMOGRAPHICS

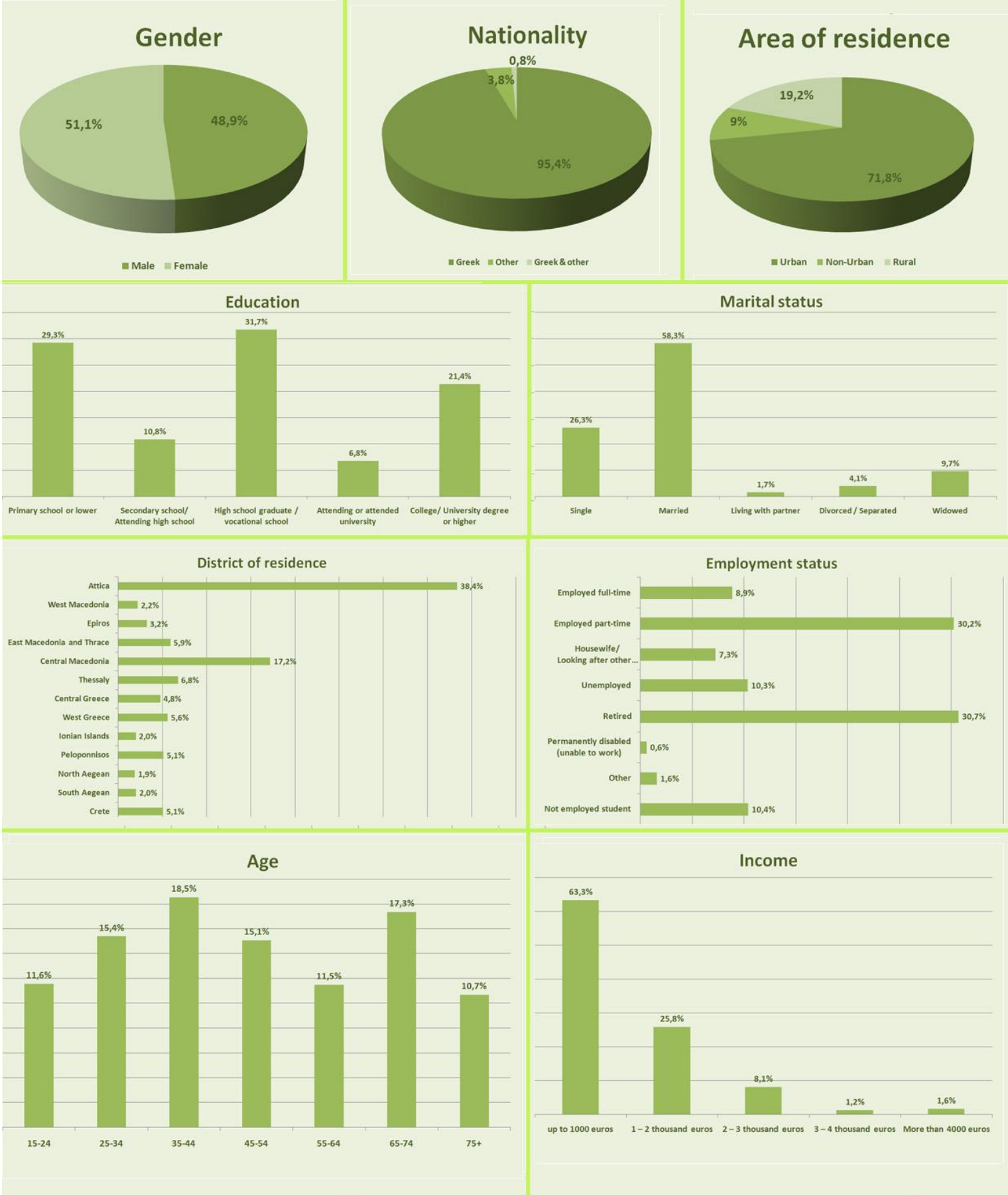


Figure 6
Demographic composition of the sample