

DIGI-STORY

Digital Storytellers: Empowering Youth Through Media Literacy and Transmedia

Young People's Online Behaviour:

A Cross-National Study

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1. Executive summary

This common report provides a comparative analysis of **youth online behaviour in Portugal, Spain, and the Czech Republic**, combining survey data and expert insights. It shows that while young people are highly active online, particularly on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, important gaps remain in media literacy, responsible behaviour, and content creation.

A key finding is the mismatch between perceived digital competence and actual practices, especially regarding misinformation, algorithms, and ethics. These results highlight the need for practical, behaviour-focused education and directly inform the development of the online behaviour guide.

2. Introduction

The Digi-story project aims to empower young people as critical and responsible digital citizens by strengthening their media literacy and promoting transmedia storytelling skills.

As part of wp2 – research and analysis, activity A2 focuses on understanding young people’s online behaviour and their role as “prosumers” (both consumers and creators of digital content).

This common report consolidates the findings from the national reports developed by partners in:

- Portugal
- Spain
- Czech Republic

The objective is to:

- Identify common trends and differences across countries
- Detect key challenges and gaps in digital behaviour
- Define priority areas for intervention
- Support the development of the online behaviour guide

3. Methodology

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection:

3.1 Quantitative Component

- Online questionnaire administered in each country

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- Approx. 50–65 respondents per country
- Target group: young people aged 15–30
- Data analysed using descriptive statistics

3.2 Qualitative Component

Focus groups were conducted with experts in media literacy, education, and youth work to validate the findings and identify key strategic priorities.



This methodology enables a comprehensive understanding of both:

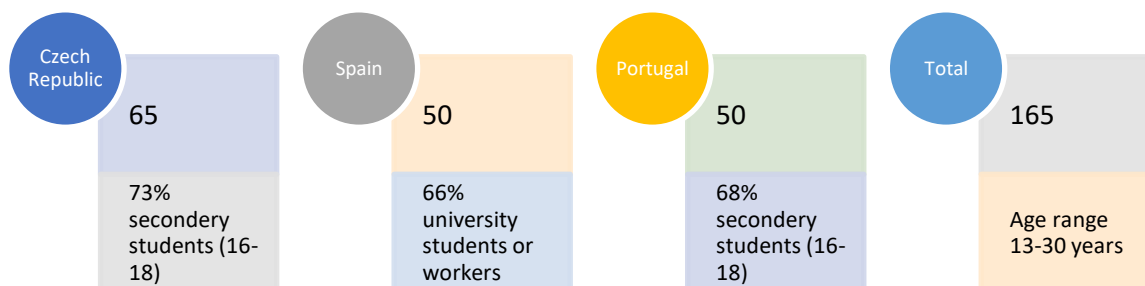
- Self-perception of digital competences
- Actual online behaviours and practices

4. Profile of participants

Across the three countries, the sample presents a high level of consistency:

- Predominantly students (secondary and higher education)
- Age range: 15–30 years old
- Strong representation of youth under 25

This demographic profile ensures comparability across countries and reliability of findings.

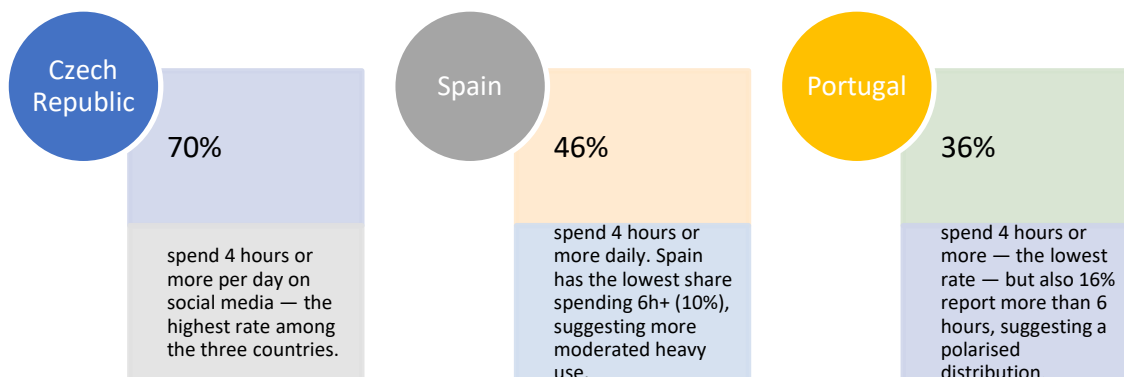


5. Comparative Analysis of Key Findings

5.1 High Digital Engagement

All countries confirm intensive use of social media:

- Majority spend 2–6+ hours per day online
- Czech Republic: over 70% exceed 4 hours daily



Daily social media use is substantial across all three countries, with **Instagram** and **YouTube** as universal anchors and notable country-specific variations in secondary platforms. These platforms shape a highly visual, fast-paced, algorithm-driven ecosystem.

"Discord is used by 51% of Czech respondents and 44% of Portuguese, but only 8% of Spanish youth — suggesting strong gaming and community culture differences between countries."

5.2 Predominance of Passive Consumption

Most young people across all three countries **have created and shared digital content** — but the majority still see themselves primarily as audience members. The gap between actual behaviour and self-identity represents a key opportunity for DIGI-Story.

Although many young people **create content occasionally**:

- Most identify primarily as consumers
- Portugal: only 6% active creators
- Spain: approx. 8% active creators
- Czech Republic: 12.3% active creators

This demonstrates that the prosumer role remains underdeveloped.

Key Gap	Spain	Czech Republic
Tool literacy is low: 20% of CZ and 28% of ES respondents say they have "no knowledge" of basic digital production tools. Even among those who create, most create rarely and with basic skills.	Spain shows the strongest interest in transmedia (44% interested/very interested) and social change content (74% "maybe" or "definitely"). This is the country most aligned with DIGI-Story's core mission.	Czech respondents are the most indifferent to transmedia (52% not interested). They also show lower motivation to create content for social purposes, preferring entertainment and personal expression.

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5.3 Overestimation of Digital Competence

Across all countries:

- High confidence in understanding algorithms
- Limited ability to explain or apply this knowledge

Example:

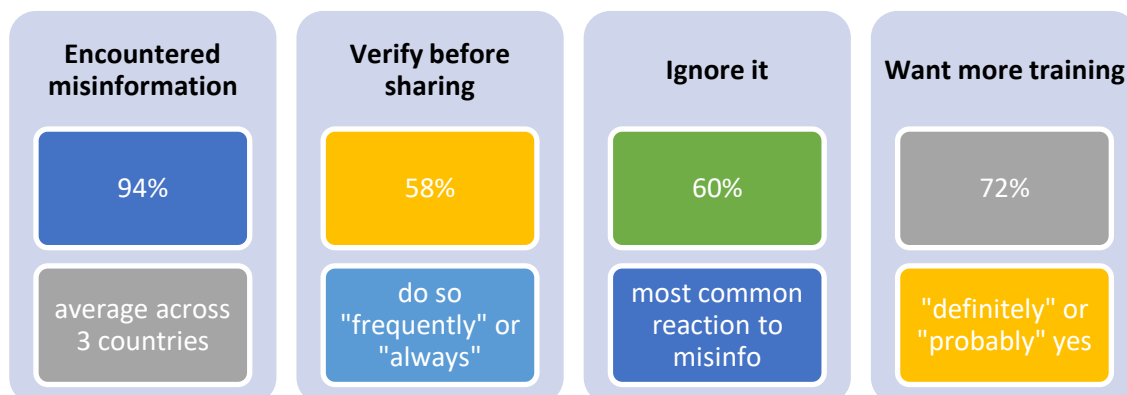
- Czech Republic: 74% claim understanding, but many lack practical clarity
- Portugal: 96% report confidence, but behaviour suggests gaps

👉 this indicates a systematic gap between perception and competence.

5.4 Misinformation: Awareness Vs Behaviour

An overwhelming majority of young people across all three countries have encountered false or misleading information online — yet their responses, verification habits, and confidence in detecting it vary significantly.

- Exposure to misinformation is nearly universal (90–98%)
- Most common response: ignore it



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Examples:

- Portugal: 64% ignore misinformation
- Czech Republic: 61.5% ignore it

Verification and reporting behaviours remain limited.

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A passive majority: Across all countries, ignoring misinformation is the dominant response (CZ: 62%, ES: 52%, PT: 64%). Only 13% of Czech, 26% of Spanish, and 16% of Portuguese respondents report actively verifying information before reacting. This passivity is a key gap that DIGI-Story's programmes can directly address.

5.5 Digital Responsibility and Ethics

Findings highlight gaps in:

- Copyright awareness
- Privacy considerations
- Ethical content sharing

Spain:

- 44% always consider ethics, but 42% only sometimes

Czech Republic:

- 30.8% indifferent to ethics and privacy

5.6 Digital Well-Being and Environmental Awareness

Key challenges include:

- Difficulty disconnecting (digital detox)
- Exposure to harmful content (cyberbullying, hate speech)
- Low awareness or concern about digital carbon footprint

Czech Republic:

- 63.1% aware but indifferent

Portugal:

- 24% unaware of digital environmental impact

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Czech Republic — concern	Portugal — positive	All countries
63% of Czech respondents are aware of digital carbon costs but don't care — the highest indifference rate. 32% are permanently online and cannot do a digital detox. These are strong indicators of digital dependency.	Portugal leads in digital detox capacity (46% do it regularly) and in actively limiting digital activity for ecological reasons (40%). Portuguese youth show the healthiest digital wellbeing indicators among the three samples.	Privacy management confidence is relatively high (>55% confident across all countries), but this may reflect overconfidence rather than actual skill, given the broader gaps in media literacy observed elsewhere.

5.7 Demand for Digital Literacy Training

There is strong demand for structured learning:

- Portugal: 76% support more training
- Czech Republic: 66.1% demand training

Preferred formats:

- Video-based
- Interactive content
- Transmedia approaches

Traditional formats (e.g., pdfs) are largely rejected.

6. Focus Group Synthesis

Across countries, experts identified a central issue:

- A structural gap between awareness and behaviour.

Key priority areas:

- Algorithm literacy (practical application)
- Fact-checking and verification skills
- Digital identity and footprint management
- Ethical content creation
- Emotional and psychological resilience online

Experts emphasise:

- Shift from knowledge-based to action-based learning
- Need for experiential and scenario-based education

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7. Key Challenges Identified

The analysis highlights five major cross-country challenges:

1. Overconfidence in digital skills
2. Passive behaviour towards misinformation
3. Weak prosumer identity
4. Limited ethical and environmental awareness
5. Lack of behavioural application of knowledge

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8. Implications For the Online Behaviour Guide

The findings strongly inform the design of the project's main output.

The **online behaviour guide** should:

- Focus on behavioural change and practical skills
- Include real-life scenarios and interactive exercises
- Use transmedia storytelling approaches
- Address both technical and emotional aspects
- Promote active digital citizenship and responsibility

9. Conclusion

The comparative analysis confirms that young people across Portugal, Spain, and the Czech Republic are highly active in digital environments but face significant challenges in navigating them critically and responsibly.

Despite national differences, the findings show remarkably consistent patterns, reinforcing the need for a coordinated and innovative educational response at the European level.

This common report provides a solid evidence base for the next phase of the digi-story project, particularly the development of the online behaviour guide, which aims to transform young people from passive consumers into empowered, critical, and responsible digital prosumers.

10. Annexes

Annex I – Questionnaire Structure

A) Demographics

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1. Country

- Czech Republic
- Portugal
- Spain

2. Age

- 13 – 15
- 16 – 18
- 19 – 25
- 26 – 30

3. Current Occupation

- Student (Lower Secondary)
- Student (Upper Secondary)
- Student (University)
- Working

B) Online Behaviour & Media Consumption (SO1)

4. How many hours per day do you spend on social media platforms?

- 0–2 hours
- 2–4 hours
- More than 4 hours

5. Which social media platforms do you use most frequently? (Select up to 3)

- Instagram
- TikTok
- YouTube
- Facebook
- X / Twitter
- Snapchat
- LinkedIn
- Reddit
- Discord
- Other (please specify)

6. What type of content do you consume most often online? (Select up to 3)

- News
- Entertainment (humor, memes, lifestyle)
- Tutorials / How-to guides
- Educational content
- Gaming content
- Activism / social issues
- Influencer content
- Reviews / product recommendations
- Art & creative content
- Other (please specify)

7. How confident do you feel in understanding how algorithms influence what you see online?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

8. How often do you verify the accuracy of information before sharing it?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

9. Have you ever encountered disinformation or misleading content online?

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, occasionally
- No, rarely
- No, never

If yes, how do you usually react?

- I ignore it
- I report it
- I check the information before reacting
- I warn others
- I sometimes share it without verifying
- Other (please specify)

10. How confident do you feel in identifying unreliable or deceptive content online?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

C) Content Creation & Digital Production (SO2)

11. Have you ever shared digital content created yourself? (videos, posts, stories, reels, blogs, podcasts, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how often do you create and publish content?

(If answering “No” above, skip this question.)

- Daily
- Several times per week
- Once per week
- A few times per month
- Rarely
- Never

12. What motivates you to create content online? (Select up to 3)

- Self-expression
- Fun / entertainment
- Sharing knowledge
- Connecting with others
- Raising awareness about social issues / activism
- Building a personal brand
- Entrepreneurship / income generation
- School or professional projects
- Other (please specify)

13. How familiar are you with basic digital production tools (editing apps, graphic design tools, storytelling apps)?

- Very familiar – I use them regularly
- Familiar – I use them sometimes
- Somewhat familiar – I know the basics
- Not very familiar
- Not familiar at all

14. How do you see yourself in digital world - content creator or audience (consumer of content)?

- more likely consumer, sometimes I post
- active content creator (videos, blogs, graphics, etc.)

15. How confident do you feel in understanding ethics of publishing content?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

16. When creating or sharing content do you consider copy rights and privacy of people appearing in video/photo/... ?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never, I don't care

D) Creativity, Initiative & Entrepreneurship (SO3)

17. Have you ever created content with the goal of informing or influencing others on a topic?

- Yes, often
- Yes, sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

18. How interested are you in learning how to develop creative digital narratives (e.g., transmedia storytelling)?

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- Very interested
- Interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not very interested
- Not interested at all

19. Would you like to use digital content creation to promote social change or raise awareness?

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- Yes, definitely
- Yes, maybe
- I'm not sure
- Probably not
- No
- Other (please specify)

D) Responsible & Safe Online Behaviour (SO1 + Digital Transformation Priority)

20. How aware are you of your digital footprint (what stays online about you)?

- Very aware
- Aware
- Somewhat aware
- Not very aware
- Not aware at all
- Other (please specify)

21. Do you feel confident managing your privacy settings on social media?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

22. Have you experienced or witnessed harmful behaviour online (e.g., hate speech, cyberbullying, discrimination)?

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
- Prefer not to say

23. Do you think schools, youth centres or organisations should offer more training on digital literacy and responsible online behaviour?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, probably
- Not sure
- Probably not
- No
- Other (please specify)

F) Digital Ecology & Well-being

24. Green Digital Footprint: are you aware that digital activity (saving data to cloud, streaming in high resolution, ...) has its carbon footprint?

- Yes, I try to limit digital activity
- I heard about it but I don't care
- I didn't know about it

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25. Can you consciously do a "digital detox" (at least one day without your cell phone)?

- I do it regularly
- I try, but it's hard
- No, I'm online nonstop

G) Transmedia Format

26. What format do you prefer for learning about safe and responsible online behaviour?

- a) Traditional PDF guide
- b) Video-based content
- c) Interactive transmedia storytelling
- d) Quizzes and gamified activities
- e) A mix of formats

Data Protection

Consent to the processing of personal data pursuant to Act No. [add number of act] on Personal Data Protection for the [name of organization] organisation, based in [add address].

Annex II – National Reports

- [National Report Czech Republic](#)
- [National Report Spain](#)
- [National Report Portugal](#)