

2026

EU Kids Online



Generative artificial intelligence through the eyes of Czech children and adolescents

Findings from the EU Kids Online V project

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Please, cite this report as:

Jaron Bedrosova, M., Dvorak, V., Machackova, H., Jansova, I., Bielikova, K., Jurikova, M., & Kozumplikova, K. (2026). *Generative artificial intelligence through the eyes of Czech children and adolescents: Findings from the EU Kids Online V project*. Masaryk University.

Funding

This work has been funded by a grant from the Programme Johannes Amos Comenius under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic from the project “Research of Excellence on Digital Technologies and Wellbeing CZ.02.01.01/00/22_008/0004583“ which is co-financed by the European Union.



Co-funded by
the European Union



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Key Findings

Key findings from the representative survey, where we asked about generative AI use in the past month.

- Generative AI is widely used among Czech children and adolescents, especially for **schoolwork – 42% used it for writing essays/stories and 39% for summarising or explaining texts.**
- Everyday use is common, with about one-third of children and adolescents reporting the use of generative AI in the past month for **recommendations on what to do, watch, listen to, or buy (29.5%).**
- Generative AI as a companion or advisor is used by roughly one-fifth of children and adolescents for **talking about their worries (22%) or getting advice on fitness and health (20.8%).**
- **Creative use** of generative AI (creating images or videos with tools like DALL-E or Midjourney) was reported in the past month by **23.4%**, while only a small minority (**4.2%**) reported **creating deep fakes.**
- **Generative AI use increases with age** for nearly all activities, except creating deep fakes, which is very rare.
- **Gender differences are generally small**, but girls are more likely to use generative AI for talking about worries and seeking advice, while boys are slightly more likely to use it to create images or videos, including creating deep fakes.

Key findings from the qualitative exploration

- Children and adolescents use generative AI in **diverse ways**, most commonly as a **support tool for learning**, as well as for **practical everyday tasks** and **creative experimentation.**
- Generative AI is often **used as a starting point rather than a replacement**, with children and adolescents editing, expanding, or combining AI outputs with their own work. **Saving time and reducing effort in routine tasks** are key motivations.
- Many children and adolescents demonstrate **critical and ethical awareness, including concerns about overreliance** on AI and “**cognitive offloading.**”
- **Some** children and adolescents actively **verify information**, while **others tend to trust AI-generated outputs** if they appear convincing.
- Across ages, children and adolescents emphasise **the need for education, guidance, and support from** adults in generative AI usage.
- Children and adolescents **expect generative AI to become increasingly important in the future, particularly in education and work**, and call for **clear, transparent, and consistently applied rules**, especially in schools, to help them use generative AI responsibly.

Key Recommendations

Recommendations for parents, teachers, and other adults:

- **Encourage safe, creative, and responsible use:** Support children and adolescents in using generative AI for schoolwork, learning, and creative projects, while helping them understand ethical boundaries. At the same time, promote balanced use by encouraging moderation and limiting unnecessary use, helping children maintain their own thinking, creativity, and ethical decision-making.
- **Make rules clear, transparent, and consistent:** Develop and communicate clear, well-explained, and consistently applied rules for generative AI use, particularly in schools. Rules should clearly distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable uses and explain the reasons behind them. Inconsistently applied AI rules across home and school environments risk confusing children and undermining responsible AI use.
- **Support AI literacy for adults:** Teachers and parents should actively develop their own AI literacy so they can confidently guide children and adolescents. Many children expressed concern that adults may not fully understand generative AI and, therefore, cannot clearly explain its rules or guide responsible use.
- **Involve adults:** Alongside verifying the accuracy of AI-generated information, children should be clearly encouraged to seek help from trusted adults – parents, teachers, or other caregivers – who can explain, contextualise, and support their understanding.
- **Discuss ethical use:** Talk openly about potentially harmful uses on people, like deep fakes and risk of cyberaggression, the importance of consent and privacy online. Additionally, discuss potentially harmful uses of AI on nature, like extreme water use.
- **Promote critical thinking:** Encourage children and adolescents to evaluate AI-generated content carefully, question provided recommendations and verify generated information.
- **Support safe emotional use:** Recognise that some children and adolescents use generative AI as a companion or advisor; guide them on healthy ways to seek advice and share worries.

Introduction

About EU Kids Online

EU Kids Online is a multinational research network that seeks to enhance knowledge of European children's online opportunities, risks and safety. The network employs multiple methods to map children's and parents' experiences of the internet and seeks to build a comprehensive evidence base to inform national, European and international policies to advance children's rights in relation to the digital environment.

We take a children's rights perspective, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and General comment No. 25 on Children's rights in relation to the digital environment. This means taking a holistic approach to children's digital that values and seeks to enhance child participation, protection, privacy, provision, dignity and voice.

The network is widely recognised for contribution to the European 'Better Internet for Kids' ecosystem. This contribution relies on the network's expertise and independent voice, its cross-nationally comparative insights, and its capacity for high quality evidence generation with and for children and young people.

Our European researchers endorse the following principles in all our work:

- **High quality science:** We conduct scientific research using rigorous and transparent methodologies appropriate to the research task, including to enable cross-country comparisons.
- **Ethical:** We follow the highest standard of ethical principles and practices in research with children and young people.
- **Balanced analysis:** We seek to be informed and balanced in our approach, and to critique overly optimistic, alarmist, moralistic or reductive accounts of technology's impacts on children.
- **Evidence based policy:** We actively seek to expand and deepen academic, policymaker and public understanding of children's digital lives by promoting relevant and high-quality research, also noting research weaknesses and gaps as appropriate.
- **Open:** We disseminate our findings fairly and honestly, using open-access and/or peer-reviewed outlets wherever possible.
- **Independence and transparency:** We engage with multiple stakeholders, including government, policymakers, industry and civil society, sustaining an independent approach and avoiding conflicts of interest.
- **Integrity:** We conduct all our research and collaborations with integrity, and to be transparent about our sources of funding.

For more resources, visit the EUKO website: www.eukidsonline.net.



This Report

This report presents findings from the **EU Kids Online V** (EUKO V), including a **representative survey of 2,607 Czech children and adolescents** aged 9 to 17, and a qualitative exploration based on **16 semi-structured interviews with children and adolescents** aged 13 to 17. Both types of data were collected in spring **2025**. Together, they provide a comprehensive picture of the experiences of Czech children and adolescents in today's digital environment.

To capture the rapidly evolving digital landscape, one of the new key focuses of EUKO V is an investigation of children's and adolescents' experiences with **generative artificial intelligence** (also called GenAI).

Generative AI, particularly tools powered by Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Copilot, and Gemini, has become rapidly accessible to the general public, including children and adolescents. Despite their growing presence in homes, schools, and informal learning environments, there remains a limited empirical evidence of **how children and adolescents engage with these technologies**, interpret AI-generated content, and learn from their interactions with them. This gap is especially significant given the speed at which generative AI tools are being adopted and the likelihood that children and adolescents will increasingly encounter them as part of their everyday digital experiences.

Generative AI presents both opportunities and challenges in children's and adolescents' educational and creative contexts. These tools can support creative expression and confidence by enabling storytelling, idea generation, and exploratory play, and may also enhance personalised learning through adaptive content and tailored instructional support. However, concerns remain that current GenAI systems are not yet fully designed with children and adolescents in mind, particularly regarding bias, transparency, and the potential erosion of children's and adolescents' agency. As a result, there is growing agreement on the importance of participatory and inclusive approaches that involve children, educators, and families to ensure GenAI supports children's and adolescents' learning, creativity, and well-being.

Who is this report for?

The report can serve as a resource for children and adolescents, parents and caregivers, but also for policymakers, academics, teachers, educators, professionals working with children and families, and for the interested general public.

Representative Survey

In the representative survey, this **definition of generative AI** was provided for the participating children and adolescents:

Generative AI is a kind of artificial intelligence that can create new content when you ask it to (like write a text, chat with you, or create music or images). The results can seem to be made by a human being! It's also known as Gen AI. For example, apps like Chat GPT, Gemini, DALL-E, MidJourney are Gen AI.

Next, we asked children and adolescents about their use of Generative AI in the **past month**, providing a list of potential ways they might have used it for them to select from:

- *To write essays or stories for schoolwork.*
- *To summarise or explain a longer text.*
- *To create images or videos about different things (e.g. using DALL-E or Midjourney, etc.).*
- *To create 'deep fakes' – that is, photos or videos that make it look like someone is doing or saying something they never actually did.*
- *To get recommendations on what to do, watch, or listen to or good products to buy.*
- *To talk to and get advice on my physical health or fitness.*
- *To talk to about my worries and get advice.*
- *Something else.*

Qualitative Exploration

In the qualitative part, we explored children's and adolescents' experiences of generative AI in greater depth through semi-structured interviews. The interviews addressed participants' engagement with generative AI, guided by the following questions:

- How they use generative AI tools in their everyday lives.
- How parents, teachers, and peers influence or support their use of generative AI.
- How they assess trust, accuracy, and safety when engaging with AI-generated content.
- Their perceptions, feelings, and relationships with generative AI tools.
- Their views on ethics, rights, and responsibilities when using generative AI tools
- Their understanding of how generative AI works and their level of AI literacy.
- Their hopes, expectations, and concerns about the future use of generative AI.

Methods

This report is based on findings from two connected studies – **a representative survey** and a **deeper qualitative exploration**, each with a different methodology.

Representative Survey

The survey data come from a representative sample of **2,607 Czech children and adolescents aged 9 to 17** who attend schools in the Czech Republic. The data were collected using an online questionnaire administered by a trained interviewer (from Focus Agency) to children and adolescents in 99 Czech schools in **May–June 2025**. The survey included a range of questions about children’s and adolescents’ online activities and experiences, including a set of questions on their generative AI use.

The participants’ age was from 9 to 17 ($M = 13.1$, $SD = 2.6$). Among the participants, **50.2% were girls** ($n = 1293$) and **49.4% were boys** ($n = 1274$). Ten participants were nonbinary, and 30 participants did not disclose their gender. In our presentation of findings on gender differences, this small group of children and adolescents ($n = 40$) has been excluded; however, they are included in all other survey findings in this report (i.e., those in which gender differences are not compared).

Before the questionnaire was introduced, written informed consent from the legal representatives and oral consent from the children and adolescents were obtained. The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Masaryk University. Children and adolescents were guaranteed anonymity and were given the opportunity to choose the option *I don’t know* or *Prefer not to say* for the

questions (these responses are not included in this report), or they were allowed to skip the question.

Qualitative Exploration

The qualitative findings are based on **16 semi-structured interviews with children and adolescents aged 13 to 17**. The interviews were conducted in the **first half of 2025** and aimed to explore children’s and adolescents’ experiences with and perspectives on the use of generative AI in greater depth. The sample included **12 boys and 4 girls**.

Interviews focused on children’s and adolescents’ use of generative AI tools, the contexts and purposes of use, and their perceptions, attitudes, and concerns related to these technologies. Additional attention was given to mediation by parents, teachers, and peers, issues of trust and fact-checking, children’s understanding of how generative AI works (AI literacy), and their views on ethics, rights, and responsibilities, as well as their hopes and concerns regarding the future role of generative AI in their lives.

As with the survey, written informed consent from legal representatives and oral consent from the children and adolescents were obtained prior to participation. The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Masaryk University. Participants were guaranteed anonymity and were informed that they could choose not to answer any question or withdraw from the interview at any time without providing a reason. All first names used in this research report have been changed in order to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Generative AI Use

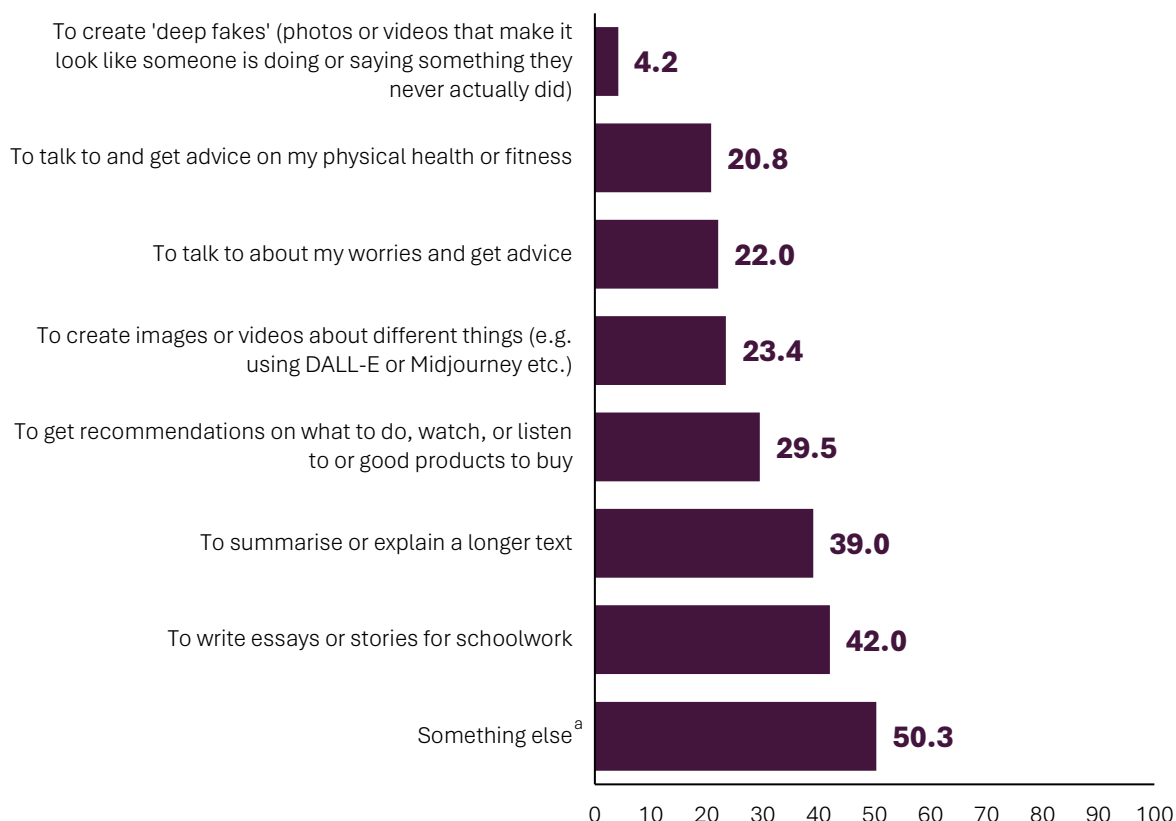
Representative Survey

Our results show that using generative AI is common among Czech children and adolescents; **all survey participants (100%) reported using generative AI for at least one activity in the past month**. An overview of their selected activities is provided in **Figure 1**. Most of them use it for **school-related tasks**. Specifically, 42% have used generative AI to help write essays or stories for schoolwork, and 39% have used it to summarise or explain longer texts.

Generative AI is also popular among children and adolescents for **everyday advice and recommendations**. About one-third (29.5%) of them use it to get ideas on what to do, watch, or listen to, or to find good products to buy.

Some children and adolescents use generative AI to **discuss personal, health, or emotional matters and seek advice**. Around 22% have used it to talk about their worries and get advice, and 20.8% have used it to get advice on their physical health or fitness.

Figure 1. Using generative AI during the past month (%).



Note: ^a Other uses of generative AI among children and adolescents are described by qualitative data. Results for the total sample ($N = 2,607$) of children and adolescents aged 9–17 years old. Question: *Which of the following purposes, if any, have you used Gen AI for during the PAST MONTH? Please tick as many boxes as needed.*

Creative use, specifically **creating images or videos** with generative AI is also fairly common, with 23.4% of children and adolescents reporting they have done this for various purposes using tools like DALL-E or Midjourney. In contrast, only a small number (4.2%) have used AI to make **deep fakes** – images or videos that inaccurately attribute statements or actions to an individual.

Lastly, about half (50.3%) of the children and adolescents stated they use it for **something else** beyond the specific activities listed in the survey. This might suggest that children and adolescents are experimenting with generative AI in a wide range of ways that may be harder to clearly define or categorise.

Qualitative exploration

The **qualitative interviews** provide further insight into the **broad spectrum of ways children and adolescents use generative AI** in their everyday lives.



School-related tasks

Since many children and adolescents use generative AI for school-related tasks, it is important to examine in more depth how they perceive and apply it in their learning.

Some participants described using generative AI primarily as **a learning assistant**, particularly to support understanding of school topics, summarise texts, improve writing, or prepare for assessments.

“I really think it helped me with learning – especially this year, when I was really overwhelmed or missed school, or just didn’t have time to study with someone. And there was no one to explain it to me. I think it’s even better than YouTube videos because you can ask the chat exactly what you want explained – the exact part – and

it can explain it in great detail. I’d always ask it to explain things to me like I’m a ten-year-old when I didn’t understand, and it actually did – so that’s really great.” (Tamara, F, 16)

Some children and adolescents reported using generative AI to clarify difficult concepts, brainstorm ideas, or receive feedback on drafts, often treating it as **a supportive guide** rather than a final authority. Relatedly, several participants described using generative AI in a manner similar to **a search engine**, especially when they wanted quick explanations or examples.

“Mainly for searching information – for example in biology. That’s where we really use it the most. We get a worksheet with questions, so I ask it those questions, it answers them, and it can even list the sources.” (Roman, M, 14)

At the same time, children and adolescents emphasised that **AI-generated outputs were often starting points** rather than finished products. Some reported generating text or materials and then editing, rewriting, or personalising the content themselves, while others used generative AI to practice presentations.

“For example, when I have to make a presentation, it can create an outline for me. Like, I’ll say 8 slides for 7 minutes, and it gives me a structure – an introduction, for example, what should be there, and then maybe one or two sentences about what could be included. Then I can either copy it and edit it, or look things up elsewhere and expand on it myself.” (Oliver, M, 13)

Many were aware, though to varying degrees, of the need to verify AI-generated information and content. Some children and adolescents described **approaching AI-generated content cautiously** – checking details, comparing information with other sources, or questioning whether content was real or fabricated.

“I think I’m pretty good at spotting it, but when I showed it to my friends, they sometimes had a problem, because it looked very realistic. The only thing that was actually wrong was the shade of the house in the background, and they didn’t really notice that. So they basically believed it was real.” (Ladislav, M, 13)

Others tended to accept outputs at face value, particularly when responses appeared confident or authoritative.

“I think I can’t really tell – like, if I ask a question about something I know nothing about, then I basically can’t tell whether the answer is right or wrong, or if there are small mistakes or big ones. But I kind of assume that it gives the correct answer, if I can put it that way.” (Zdislava, F, 15)

These differences underline the continuing importance of education, guidance, and adult support in helping children and adolescents develop the skills needed to use generative AI safely, critically, and in an informed way.

A recurring theme across interviews was also the use of generative AI as **a time-saving tool**, helping children and adolescents complete tasks more efficiently or reduce effort in routine activities.

“In ChatGPT, there’s a system where you can click a button so it doesn’t make things up and instead searches directly on the

web. That way it finds the information you’re actually asking about. But the problem is that sometimes it still doesn’t find the right information. Still, in my opinion, it could be used at school.” (Radoslav, M, 13)



Everyday advice and recommendations

Beyond learning-related uses, children and adolescents also described more **practical and everyday applications** of generative AI. These included seeking help with cooking, consulting AI for sports training or fitness, and using it for appearance-related tasks such as dyeing hair.

“Yeah, I really use it for everything. For example, when I was dyeing my hair, I wrote to it to help me choose a colour and things like that. When I can’t decide about something, I write to it to summarise the pros and cons. Or even when I don’t know how to phrase something for Google, I just write directly to ChatGPT, because I can be more specific and I know it will find exactly what I want to know.” (Tamara, F, 16)

At the same time, some participants demonstrated **critical awareness of misleading or commercial content**, particularly in relation to product recommendations. They described being able to recognise fake, exaggerated, or overly promotional outputs and reported that they did not automatically trust AI-generated suggestions.

“Those are actually AI-generated ads and AI-generated people claiming that they’ve been making luxury handbags for like 30 years, and now there’s a big sale – and once they’re sold out, you’ll never be able

to buy them again. But in reality, they're just products from AliExpress."
(Radoslav, M, 13)



Advice on personal, health, or emotional matters

Beyond schoolwork and everyday tasks, some children and adolescents turn to generative AI for **guidance on personal, health, or emotional issues**.

With regard to **health- and well-being-related uses**, some participants described experimenting with generative AI for **fitness or training advice**, for example, to plan workouts or improve performance. However, most emphasised that they would still prefer to consult parents, coaches, or other trusted adults for health-related information.

"I definitely wouldn't trust it. I wouldn't even ask it – I'd just go straight to my parents so they could talk to a doctor or something. If I was worried about something. I'd only ask about something minor, like if I have a runny nose."
(Oliver, M, 13).

A similar pattern emerged in relation to **mental health and personal worries**. While several participants expressed reservations about relying on generative AI for serious issues, some noted that AI could feel easier to talk to in certain situations because it does not judge them or react emotionally.

"A person might judge you – but a chatbot won't." (Sebastián, M, 13)

Nevertheless, some participants expressed a clear preference for consulting real people, such as friends, parents, or teachers.

"I feel like if you really want to tell someone something, then tell it to a person."

Because a person can understand it best – and help you. Or at least they should help you. But tell someone you trust."
(Ladislav, M, 13)



Creative use

Participants also discussed creative uses, particularly **experimenting with images, video, or music generation** for fun.

Some children and adolescents reflected on the **limits of authorship and originality**, especially when they invested effort in shaping prompts, editing outputs, or combining AI-generated content with their own work. These suggest an emerging awareness of creativity as a collaborative process rather than something fully delegated to the technology.

"Well, I think in music – like, music is about creativity, and if the composer puts some of their love into the music, then I don't think it's such a big deal. But if you just flat-out write, 'make me a song,' and it generates something random, then I don't really think so." (Ladislav, M, 13)

Participants described these activities as playful and exploratory rather than harmful and often framed them as a form of entertainment rather than a serious use of generative AI.

"I started using AI about a year or two ago, when I discovered generative AI that turns images into videos with my friends. We were making all kinds of silly things. I still have it saved to this day, because it's stored on one account." (Radoslav, M, 13)



Deep fakes and harmful use

Though deep fakes can also be created for fun and with consent, they present a

potentially harmful activity.

Across the interviews, children and adolescents consistently described **creating deep fakes**, particularly about classmates or peers, as inappropriate or harmful. Most indicated that this was something they would not do, associating it with **bullying, embarrassment, or causing harm to others**. This aligns with the low prevalence observed in the survey.

“I think that’s wrong — that’s bullying. It could really lead to some serious psychological consequences for the new classmate. I’d probably ask them to send it to me and then go to the teacher or the principal or someone like that to say it’s not okay and they should do something about it.” (Ladislav, M, 13)

However, our findings also show that participants **were not particularly worried about generative AI encouraging harmful behaviours, such as suicidal thoughts**, noting that such concerns were more relevant for younger children or for peers who might be more vulnerable.

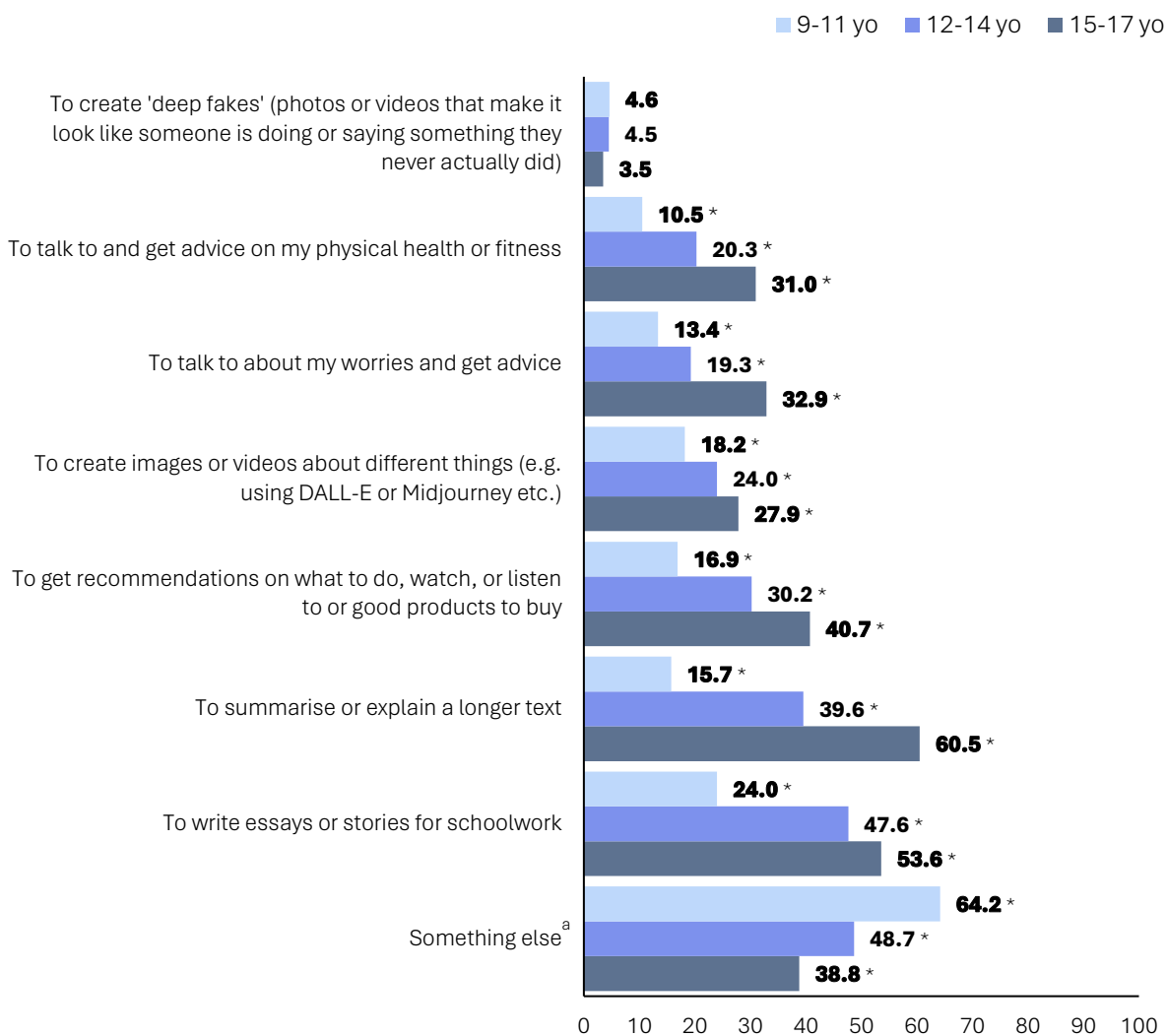
“I’m not afraid of it, more for younger children – which doesn’t really concern me anymore.” (Miloslav, M, 13)

Age Differences

Findings about age differences are based on the **quantitative survey**. Here, we see that the **use of generative AI increases with age for nearly all the purposes** we looked at. **Figure 2** shows the differences across three

age groups of our participants: 9–11 years, 12–14 years, and 15–17 years. The only two activities that do not fall in this pattern are using AI for ‘something else’ and the activity of creating deep fakes.

Figure 2. Age differences in using generative AI during the past month (%).



Note: ^a Other uses of generative AI among children and adolescents are described by qualitative data. * Age differences for these activities were statistically significant (Chi-squared test). Results for the total sample (N = 2,607) of children and adolescents aged 9 – 17 years old. Question: *Which of the following purposes, if any, have you used Gen AI for during the PAST MONTH? Please tick as many boxes as needed.*

Interestingly, reporting the use of AI for **'something else'** actually decreases with age (64.2% among 9-11-year-olds, 38.8% among 15-17-year-olds). This may suggest that the pattern of use could be quite different for younger users, engaging in different activities from those prevalent in older ages. Unfortunately, these were not captured via our questionnaire, and insight from qualitative investigation is also limited, considering that we asked 13-17-year-olds. Alternatively, this might also reflect the fact that younger children might be more unsure or less able to describe how they use generative AI, whereas older children may have a clearer idea of the specific ways they use it.

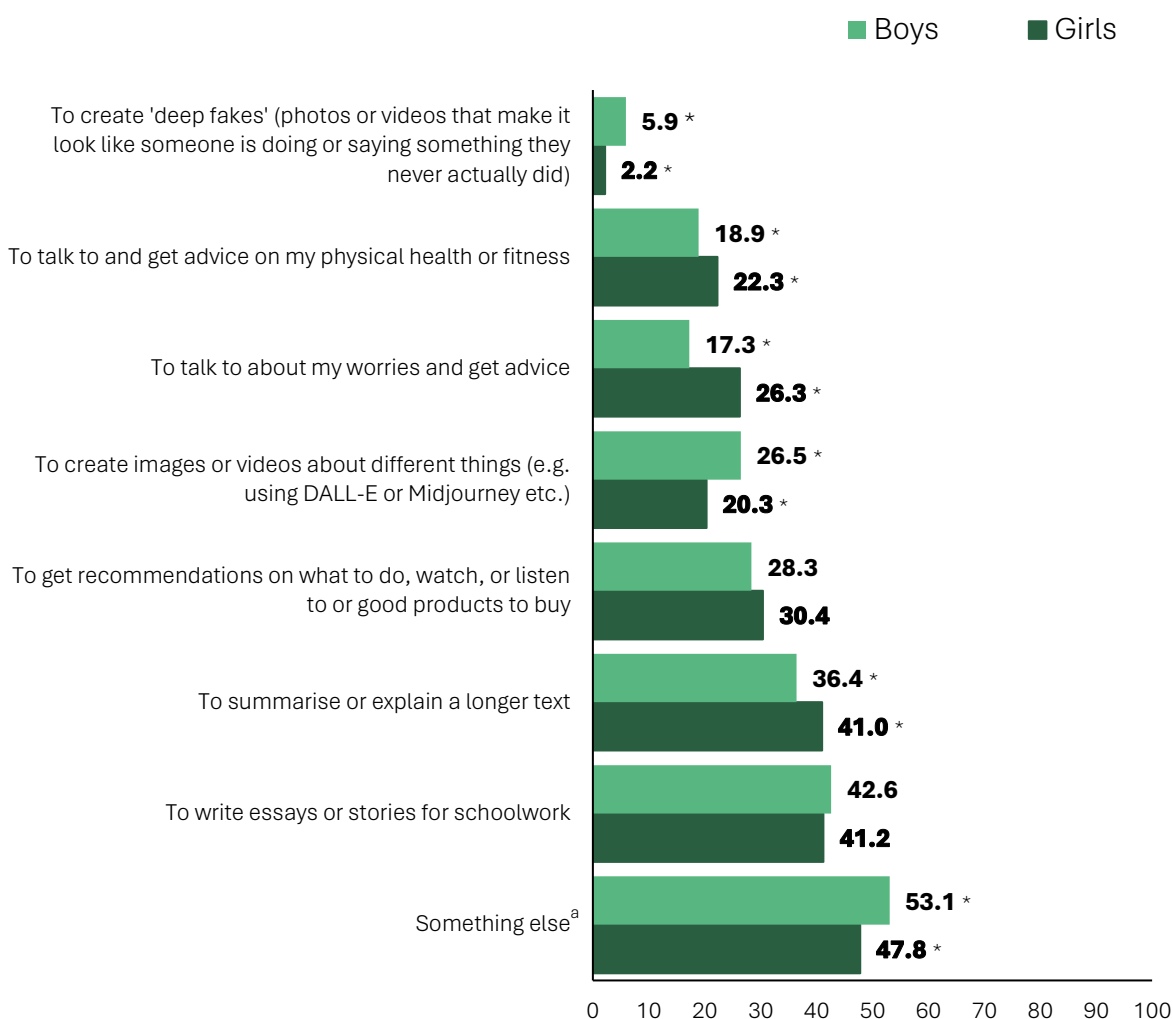
Similarly, **creating deep fakes shows a slight decrease across age groups**, with older adolescents reporting this activity the least (3.5%) and younger children the most (4.6%). However, this difference is very small and negligible.

Gender Differences

Findings about gender differences are again based on the **quantitative survey**. Overall, our results indicate that gender has only a small influence on how children and adolescents use generative AI. **Figure 3** shows that the differences between boys and girls are generally minor.

Larger gender differences appear when generative AI is used as a **companion or advisor**. Girls (26.3%) are more likely than boys (17.3%) to use generative AI to talk about their worries and seek advice, and girls (22.3%) also report using it more often than boys (18.9%) to get guidance on fitness and physical health.

Figure 3. Gender differences in using generative AI during the past month (%).



Note: ^aOther uses of generative AI among children and adolescents are described by qualitative data. * Gender differences for these activities were statistically significant (Chi-squared test). Results include only answers from girls and boys (N = 2,567), nonbinary participants (n = 10) and participants who did not disclose their gender (n = 30), due to the small prevalence, are not included in the figure. Children and adolescents aged 9 – 17 years old. Question: *Which of the following purposes, if any, have you used Gen AI for during the PAST MONTH? Please tick as many boxes as needed.*

We also observed a gender difference in the **creation of images and videos** using generative AI. Boys (26.5%) were more likely than girls (20.3%) to use AI for creating images or videos in general. There was also a small difference in the activity of creating **deep fakes**. About 5.9% of boys, compared to 2.2% of girls, stated they created them.

When it comes to using generative AI for **school-related tasks**, there are very few differences between boys and girls. Girls (41%) reported using generative AI more than boys (36.4%) for summarising or explaining longer texts.

Differences were also small when it came to using generative AI for **everyday advice and recommendations**, such as what to do, watch, listen to, or buy. Boys (28.3%) and girls (30.4%) reported using AI for these purposes at very similar rates, with girls reporting it slightly more.

The ambiguous category of using generative AI for **'something else'** was also reported slightly more often by boys (53.1%) than girls (47.8%), suggesting that boys may either experiment more broadly with these tools or be less specific when describing how they use them.

Children’s and Adolescents’ Concerns About Generative AI

This section explores children’s and adolescents’ concerns about generative AI, as well as their perspectives on how it should be used responsibly in their daily lives. The following findings are based on the qualitative interviews with them.

Many **children and adolescents approach generative AI with a notable degree of agency, critical thinking, and ethical awareness**. While participants recognised potential risks associated with generative AI use, they were consistently **concerned that overreliance on AI could lead to cognitive offloading and weaken their own thinking and learning**. As a result, many described a clear preference for using generative AI as a supportive tool – to assist, check, or inspire – rather than allowing it to replace their own effort in tasks such as homework or problem-solving.

“I feel like kids can get used to not thinking anymore – they just throw it into AI, and instead of becoming genuinely smart students, what comes out is more like a trained monkey that knows how to type a prompt into AI and let it generate stuff.” (Ladislav, M, 13)

Children and adolescents also showed awareness that **adults, including parents and teachers, may be struggling to keep pace with generative AI developments**. Several participants highlighted the need for adults to strengthen their own AI literacy in order to provide meaningful guidance, rather than relying solely on rules or restrictions. This suggests that children do not see AI education

as their responsibility alone, but as something that requires shared learning and intergenerational support.

“It seems to me that a lot of teachers don’t really know exactly how it works – like, they understand the basic idea, but they don’t know everything it’s actually capable of. So I don’t think they’re fully prepared for it.” (Tamara, F, 16)

While most participants could still imagine living without generative AI today, they expressed a clear awareness **that generative AI is likely to play a growing role in their future lives**. Many linked this expectation to school and work, indicating that learning how to use and understand AI is becoming a necessary competence rather than an optional interest.

“I think it will progress really fast, because it feels like it’s constantly getting better and better – almost insanely. So I’m not sure whether it will completely replace some jobs, but in places like restaurants or in certain support jobs, I think it will definitely help a lot.” (Tamara, F, 16)

Finally, children and adolescents highlighted **the importance of clear, transparent, and well-explained rules governing the use of generative AI, particularly in schools**. Several participants described uncertainty about what was actually permitted, noting that while direct submission of AI-generated work was clearly understood as unacceptable, using generative AI for support or assistance often fell into a grey area. This

lack of clarity – where generative AI use was neither explicitly allowed nor clearly prohibited – left children unsure how to act and concerned about potential consequences. Participants suggested that rules would be more effective if they clearly distinguished between acceptable and unacceptable uses, explained the reasons behind them, and were applied consistently, rather than leaving children to navigate ambiguity on their own.

“Basically, if we straight-up had a text generated and then just read it out, and if the teacher found out the truth, then that probably wouldn’t be good – I don’t think it would be a good grade. But for help, it’s kind of like we’re allowed to use it – she didn’t ban it, but she didn’t officially allow it either, so nobody really knows.”
(Ladislav, M, 13)

Conclusion

Generative AI is becoming a significant part of the everyday lives of Czech children and adolescents. They widely use it for school-related tasks, everyday advice and recommendations, creative projects, and, in some cases, as a form of companion or advisor.

Generative AI use increases with age, reflecting the growing autonomy and digital competence children and adolescents develop as they grow older. Gender differences were present but generally modest – girls more often reported using generative AI for advice, reassurance, or emotional support, while boys were slightly more likely to engage in creative experimentation, including riskier practices. Overall, most uses were constructive, educational, or exploratory. Only a very small minority of children and adolescents engaged in potentially harmful activities, such as creating deep fakes, underscoring the importance of open discussion with children and adolescents about responsible and ethical generative AI use, including potential impacts for victims affected by it.

The qualitative findings add important nuance to these patterns by showing that children and adolescents are not passive users of generative AI. Some of them approach these tools with a strong sense of agency, critical thinking, and ethical awareness. Our participants expressed concern about overreliance on AI, particularly the risk of cognitive offloading and the potential weakening of their own thinking and learning skills. As a result, some described a clear preference for using generative AI as a supportive resource – helping to check work, generate ideas, or provide inspiration – rather than as a replacement for their own effort,

especially in schoolwork and problem-solving.

Importantly, children and adolescents also expressed concerns that adults – particularly parents and teachers – may struggle to keep pace with rapid developments in generative AI. They emphasised the need for greater adult AI literacy and meaningful guidance and expressed a desire for shared learning and intergenerational support, suggesting that responsibility for safe and effective AI use should not rest solely on children and adolescents themselves.

While most children and adolescents could still imagine living without generative AI, they recognised that it is likely to play an increasingly important role in their future, especially in education and work. Learning how to use and understand generative AI was therefore seen not as an optional interest but as an emerging competence. At the same time, children and adolescents highlighted uncertainty around existing rules, particularly in school settings, where acceptable and unacceptable uses of generative AI were often unclear. Where AI-related rules were introduced, children and adolescents called for them to be transparent, well-explained, and consistently applied, with clear distinctions between supportive and misuse. Such rules would help them navigate AI responsibly rather than leaving them to manage this ambiguity alone.

Taken together, these findings show that generative AI presents both opportunities and risks for young people. Czech children and adolescents are already engaging with these technologies in thoughtful and diverse ways, but their experiences also point to the need for clearer guidance, improved adult AI literacy,

and supportive frameworks grounded in ongoing dialogue that recognise their own agency while protecting their well-being and learning.

Acknowledgements

This research was conducted within the EU Kids Online (EUKO) network, a multinational research network on European children's online opportunities, risks, and safety. See www.eukidsonline.net for more information.

The report draws on the EU Kids Online V Children Comparative Dataset (2026), a collaborative effort of researchers in the EU Kids Online network. The questionnaire builds on previous EU Kids Online surveys, and was updated and designed by Elisabeth Staksrud, Ellen Helsper, Vilde Kalin, Sonia Livingstone, Bojana Lobe, Giovanna Mascheroni, Kjartan Ólafsson and Mariya Stoilova, in collaboration with EU Kids Online national team members.

We thank the national research teams across Europe, and the children and parents who participated. For details, see www.eukidsonline.net.

Additionally, the report draws on the EU Kids Online “Children & AI” qualitative comparative research involving 13-to-17-year-olds.

This research was coordinated by Giovanna Mascheroni. The interview protocol and the coding scheme were designed by Giovanna Mascheroni, Veronica Kalmus, Sonia Livingstone, Signe Opermann, Andra Siibak and Mariya Stoilova in collaboration with the national research teams. We thank the national research teams across Europe, and the children who participated. For details see www.eukidsonline.net.

Questionnaire citation:

Staksrud, E., Helsper, E., Kalin, V., Livingstone, S., Lobe, B., Mascheroni, G., Ólafsson K., Stoilova, M. (Eds.) - with members of EU Kids Online. (2025). *The EU Kids Online V Children's Questionnaire*. EU Kids Online.

Qualitative dataset citation:

EU Kids Online Network. 2025. *EU Kids Online V Qualitative Children & AI Dataset*. EU Kids Online.

Participating countries and national EUKO teams

EU Kids Online members acknowledge the support of institutions which enabled the survey to be carried out in 17 countries and the qualitative interviews in 15 countries. We also thank all the research agencies, teachers and school staff who helped to administer the survey and helped in the research process, as well as all the children and young people who participated.

Photo on the title page by Freepik.



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