

Civility, safety and interaction online: 2021

In an effort to promote safer, healthier, and more respectful online interactions among all people since 2016, Microsoft has been surveying teens and adults around the world about the state of digital civility. This latest survey marks the sixth straight year of that research, where we again asked respondents about their exposure to 21 different online risks across four categories: behavioral, sexual, reputation, and personal/intrusive. The effects of COVID-19 continued to impact perceptions of digital civility. In total, over 11,000 respondents in 22 countries participated, equally divided between teens and adults. The research was completed in April and May 2021. Read on for a summary of the latest results, some of which may surprise you.

Digital Civility Index (DCI)* score nears all-time best at 65

*DCI: lower scores mean lower risk exposure

36%

of countries reported significantly improved DCI

90%

of YoY improvement was accounted for by males



Teen boys experienced significantly fewer risks

The burden of risk mostly fell on women

Women experience

57% of risks

- ⚠️ All time high for females
- More consequences
- More worry
- More pain



"I became less trusting of other people online"

"I worry about unwanted sexual attention happening to me again"

50%

Women

40%

Men

44%

Women

37%

Men

* % extremely, very or somewhat worried

Perceptions about online civility during Covid-19 were less positive

While personal exposure to risks declined (DCI), perceptions about the overall state of online civility worsened



30%

reported civility worsened during the pandemic



82%

of countries surveyed reported civility was net worse during covid



All ages & genders agreed that the state of civility was not as good

Positive outcomes **decreased**



-12%

A greater sense of community



-11%

See more people helping other



-11%

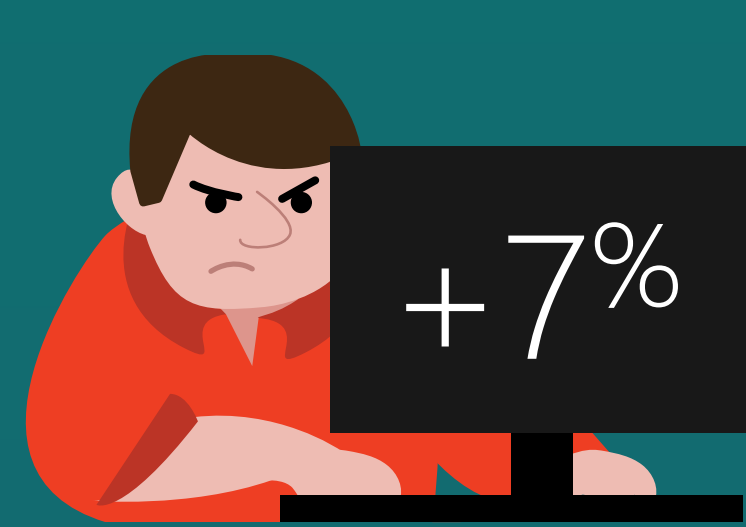
A greater feeling we're all in this together



-8%

People are more encouraging to each other

Signs of covid fatigue



I see more people taking out their frustrations online



I see less tolerance of other people

Incivility is becoming the "new normal" for Gen Z and Millennials

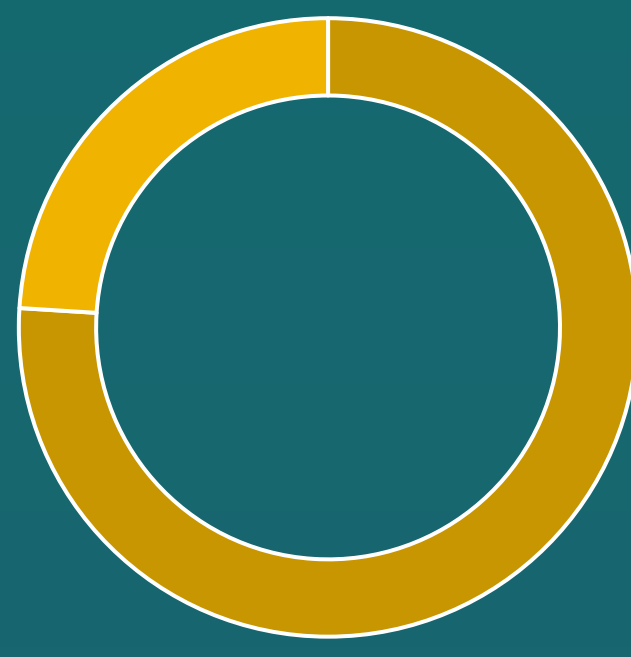
"Today, I get less upset than in the past when I encounter someone online who is uncivil to me"

41%

50%

"I feel like I encounter incivility almost every time I go online"

Online meetings & classes drove online civility



76%

Respondents who said online meetings and classes drove an improvement in greater civility

Base: civility in online meetings/classes were more/same level of civility as other online experiences

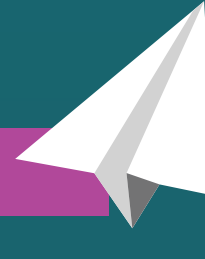
Frequency of encountering incivility



Work meetings



School classes



33% Online

36% In person

62% Social media (outside work)

35% Online

47% In person

65% Social media (outside class)

How can we improve online civility?

Education



88%

We need to educate people better about how to make the digital world safer

Social media moderation



75%

Social media companies should more closely moderate harmful online speech

No more anonymity?



72%

People should not be allowed to post comments online anonymously since they can be uncivil without facing any consequences

Top 10 countries



#1: NETHERLANDS

52% Netherlands

55% Germany

55% United Kingdom

★ 57% Canada

57% Singapore

58% United States

★ 60% France

61% Australia

★ 62% Chile

★ 64% Italy

★ Not in the top 10 in 2020

A Latam country was present in the DCI top 10 list for the first time