

Social networking most popular among young people in Western Europe

Western Europe will boast more than 267 million internet users in 2012. By 2016, nearly 290 million will be online—69% of the region's residents.

Germany, with the largest population overall, also has the greatest number of web users: some 57 million in 2012, and 10 million more than the UK. In France, over 40 million people will be online this year. While in Italy and Spain, the internet population will be nearer to 30 million. "Many patterns of online behavior are similar throughout the EU-5," said Karin von Abrams, eMarketer senior analyst and author of the new report, "Western Europe Internet Usage: Variations on a Theme." "Email and search are universally popular. But there are notable differences, too. For example, Spain's web users are more likely than those in other countries to be active in social networking. In addition, the reach of social networks is rising faster in France, Germany and Italy than in the UK."

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