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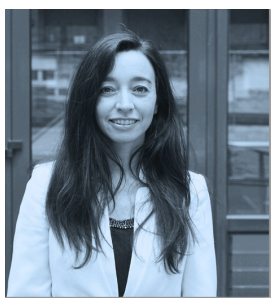
Cristine Montañola-Sales

IQS – Universitat Ramon Llull (Barcelona)

MobilePressure:

Understanding Peer Pressure and Early Smartphone Ownership in Childhood

In many societies, smartphones have become a near-universal feature of adolescence, with children acquiring them at increasingly younger ages. This rapid shift in childhood experience is driven not only by technological change, but also by powerful social norms, peer dynamics, and parental concerns. In Spain, current policies lag behind the recommendations of leading paediatric, psychological, psychiatric, and neurological associations, which advise delaying unsupervised smartphone use until late adolescence. In July 2025, these professional bodies joined forces in the new *Control Z platform* to call for regulatory change. *MobilePressure* investigates how parents navigate the tension between their preferred age for giving a smartphone and the social pressure to conform, drawing on diverse sources, from existing research to emerging community-based initiatives. The project examines factors such as fear of social exclusion, household characteristics, and notions of maturity, and considers how collective agreements or school policies might shift these dynamics. This talk will present key elements from recent research, connect them to international debates on childhood and technology, and invite discussion on how the social sciences can contribute to shaping healthier digital environments for children.



Cristina Montañola-Sales is an Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Data Analytics at IQS – Universitat Ramon Llull (Barcelona) and a researcher in social dynamics and digital well-being. She holds a degree in Computer Engineering and a PhD in Statistics and Operations Research from the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC-BarcelonaTech), Spain. Her work spans interdisciplinary projects in epidemiology, anthropology, and education, with a focus on how collective behaviours emerge and change. Her research integrates empirical data, cross-cultural analysis, and ethical reflection to inform public debates and policy on technology and childhood.

20. avgust 2025 | 11.00

Dvorana štirih letnih časov ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 4, Ljubljana

*Predavanje bo potekalo v angleškem jeziku.