Reference: 02302164

Information Requests
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27 October 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about UK usage of AI chat services since 2020.

We received this request on 14 October 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request

From 1 January 2020 to the date of this request. I recognise that many services launched after 2020, so please start each service from the earliest date for which you hold data.

INFORMATION REQUESTED

1. Usage figures by service and day For each AI chat service for which Ofcom holds UK data

please provide the number of searches, queries, prompts, sessions, visits or users in the UK (whichever measure you hold), for each day, from the earliest date held.

If daily figures are not held, please provide the most granular figures that are held (for example weekly, monthly or quarterly), and say what the time unit is.

2. Breakdown by type of request

Where Ofcom holds any breakdown of this usage by type or category of request (for example information seeking, writing help, coding, image generation, or other categories), please provide it, with the categories used and the definition of each.

I am not asking for the content of any individual user's queries or for any personal data. Aggregate counts or percentages are sufficient.

3. Sources and methodology

For each dataset provided, please state:

(a) the source (for example a commissioned panel, a purchased dataset, a survey, or information supplied by a service provider under Ofcom's information-gathering powers); (b) the methodology, sample size and any weighting; and (c) the definition of a "search" or "request" used.

4. Information supplied by providers

Please provide any aggregate UK usage figures for AI chat services that Ofcom has received from the providers themselves, including under its powers in the Communications Act 2003 or the Online Safety Act 2023.

Our response

It may first be helpful to explain our remit in relation to the regulation of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Ofcom is responsible for enforcing the Online Safety Act 2023 (OSA) and is limited to only taking action on online harms covered by the OSA.

The OSA applies to user-to-user services, search services, and services that publish pornographic images, video or audio online. AI chatbots will only be covered by the OSA rules where they meet the definitions of these services, or are part of one of these types of services. This means some chatbots or the content they produce are not covered by the OSA and are not regulated by Ofcom. For example, chatbots are not subject to regulation if they:

- Only allow people to interact with the chatbot itself and no other users;
- Do not search multiple websites or databases when giving responses to users; and
- Cannot generate pornographic content.

More information on the scope of Ofcom's regulation of AI chatbots can be found on our website. We also refer you to the Open letter to UK online service providers regarding Generative AI and chatbots that we published in November 2024.

It is also important to note that there is no legislative definition of "generative AI chat service" under the OSA. Ofcom does not use this term or maintain a list of services that are defined as such. We have therefore taken this reference in your request to encompass any 'Generative AI' service as defined in our November 2024 open letter. For reference this is "*AI models that can create text, images, audio and videos in response to a user prompt*".

In response to questions one and two, we confirm that Ofcom does not hold comprehensive daily (or weekly, monthly or quarterly) usage figures by service for generative AI services. The relevant service providers have no legal obligation to provide their usage figures to Ofcom.

However, Ofcom has published a number of reports which refer to the use of AI by UK adults and/or children which contain some information relevant to your request. These reports contain references to the data used.

- Our Online Nation 2023 report (see particularly pages 31-35, and links to the data from page 100) and online interactive report - *Online, Generative AI tools*.
- Our Online Nation 2024 includes findings from our *Ofcom, Online research panel poll: Generative artificial intelligence, June 2024 survey* (see particularly pages 32-38), and links to the data on page 113).
- Our Online Nation 2025 report (see particularly page 31).
- Our Generative AI Search qualitative research study published in September 2025.
- Our Children's Passive Measurement study includes findings on children's use of AI chatbots (see particularly pages 25-27 of the May 2026 report).
- Our report published in September 2026 titled 'AI in telecoms markets: the impact on consumers' experiences so far and how it may develop'. This report refers to our Technology Tracker from August 2026.

- Our annual 'Adults media use and attitudes' reports and the underlying Adults' Media Literacy Tracker data from 2024 to 2026 contain some information on the use of AI by UK adults.

In response to question three, each piece of research referred to above sets out the relevant source of the data and the methodology used.

In response to question four, as stated above, we confirm that we do not hold this information.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review
If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further
If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to complain to the Information Commission .