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## **World Internet Project Report Finds Large Percentages of Non-Users, and Significant Gender Disparities in Going Online**

The Internet may seem like a pervasive presence in much of the world, yet in many countries -- including some developed ones -- going online is a far from universal experience, according to findings by the World Internet Project (WIP).

In the current project conducted by the Center for the Digital Future at the USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism, only half of the 10 reporting countries found that more than a majority of their respondents are users of the Internet.

Both developed and less-developed countries reported relatively low percentages of Internet users, including Mexico (32 percent), Portugal (37 percent), Cyprus and Colombia (45 percent), Czech Republic (51 percent), and Chile (55 percent).

Only three countries and regions report more than 60 percent of respondents as Internet users: Macao (61 percent), the United States (78 percent), and Sweden (80 percent).

“These findings reinforce that the Internet is not yet part of life for hundreds of millions of people around the globe -- even in technologically advanced countries,” said Jeffrey I. Cole, director of the Center for the Digital Future, which created and manages the World Internet Project. “And we are seeing large numbers of non-users even in countries with high levels of education and employment, long histories of Internet use, and high percentages of broadband installation.”

“Countries that reported an average of five or more years of Internet use found key disparities in access to online technology,” Cole said. “For example, many countries have a long way to go to increase Internet equality among men and women.”

### **Gender Differences in Internet Use**

The World Internet Project found notable differences between men and women in their use of online technology. In six of the WIP countries, eight percent or more men than women use the Internet (Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Italy, Macao, Mexico). The gender gap is the largest

in Mexico (16 percent more men than women are Internet users) and Colombia (15 percent more men than women).

However, in four of the WIP countries, the gap in Internet use between men and women is four percent or less, with the Czech Republic, Portugal, Sweden, and the United States reporting only slightly higher percentages of men than women as users.

### **Age and Internet Use**

All of the World Internet Project countries and regions report that levels of online use are related to age.

In general, Internet use increases as age decreases. In all of the WIP countries, large percentages of respondents under age 24 use the Internet; all of the reporting countries except Mexico reported that 79 percent or more of adults between 18 and 24 years old go online.

However, the WIP countries also reported continued low percentages of use and a wide range of use among the older groups of respondents. Only the United States (42 percent) and Sweden (41 percent) reported more than 40 percent of respondents aged 65 or older go online. Six countries report that 10 percent or less of those 65 or older go online (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Italy, Macao, Mexico, and Portugal).

“Bringing the Internet to more older people has now become a global concern,” said Cole. “Most countries have large aging populations that don’t use the Internet at all, which is a significant issue as increasingly more of the world’s important information is available primarily online.”

### **Internet Non-Users**

Why are people not online? Perhaps surprisingly, the expense of accessing the Internet is not the primary explanation.

In six of the 10 WIP countries in the current study (Cyprus, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, Sweden, and the United States), “no interest/not useful” is the most-cited reason by non-users. “No interest” or “not useful” was cited by a study-high 78 percent of non-users in Sweden, and more than half of non-users in Cyprus (55 percent).

The cost of going online is not a significant factor in most of the WIP countries. In all of the countries except the Czech Republic less than 15 percent of respondents said that going online is too expensive or they cannot afford the fees.

However, eight of the ten WIP countries and regions in the current study reported at least 20 percent of non-users who said they don’t go online because they don’t know how to use the Internet or they are confused by technology. The highest percentages giving this response were reported in Macao (55 percent of non-users) and Italy (37 percent).

## **Internet Purchasing**

While going online to shop is routine in some countries, purchasing online is not yet a typical experience for Internet users in most of the WIP countries and regions.

The WIP countries and regions report a wide range of online buying frequency. In seven of the reporting countries and regions, more than 60 percent of Internet users never go online to buy.

However, only 13 percent in the United States and 22 percent in Sweden report never buying online, compared to 87 percent in Colombia and 78 percent in Mexico. Even a region like Macao, which reported 61 percent of residents as Internet users, found that 72 percent of them never buy online.

## **Concerns about Credit Card Security**

One possible reason why Internet purchasing may continue to be low in much of the world is that levels of concern about the security of credit card information during online purchasing are very high. At least two-thirds of Internet users aged 18 or older in all of the WIP countries and regions report some level of concern when or if they bought something online.

Only Cyprus reported more than 30 percent of Internet users with no concern when or if they bought online.

In seven of nine countries that reported on this question, 40 percent or more of respondents are very concerned or extremely concerned about the security of credit card information when buying online: Chile (89 percent), Colombia (64 percent), Macao (51 percent), Mexico (53 percent), Sweden (51 percent), Italy (49 percent), and the United States (46 percent).

Even in Cyprus, with its relatively high level of non-concern, 39 percent of users nevertheless reported that they are very concerned or extremely concerned about online purchasing.

## **Internet Use: Contact with Family and Friends**

The World Internet Project found that, in general, Internet use has a positive effect on contact with family and friends.

In six of the WIP countries and regions, at least 30 percent of users said that Internet use increased contact with their families. And more than 40 percent of users in Chile, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, and the United States reported that contact with friends somewhat increased or greatly increased because of Internet use.

However, six of the countries and regions reported at least double-digit percentages of users who said that going online decreases contact with their families. Only one country (Cyprus) reported a double-digit percentage of users who said using the Internet decreases contact with friends.

## **Internet Use and Productivity at Work**

In all of the WIP countries and regions except Sweden, large percentages of Internet users who use the Internet at work said that using the Internet at work has improved their performance or productivity.

The highest percentages who reported that the Internet improved work performance or productivity somewhat or a lot were in Chile, Cyprus, and Italy (81 percent). Only Sweden reported under half of Internet users (39 percent) who said going online at work improved performance or productivity.

In all of the WIP countries and regions, very small percentages (8 percent or less) report that the Internet has diminished their productivity. The largest of these percentages were reported in Sweden (eight percent) and the United States (six percent).

## **Information on the Internet: Is it Reliable? Is it Important?**

The World Internet Project found widely divergent views about the reliability or the importance of information found online.

In all of the WIP countries and regions, 40 percent or more of users said that only half or less of information on the Internet is reliable. Countries and regions in which a majority of respondents said that about half, a small portion, or none of the information online is reliable were: Macao (79 percent), Sweden (65 percent), Chile (65 percent), Colombia (62 percent), Mexico (60 percent), the United States (57 percent), Italy (55 percent), and the Czech Republic (52 percent).

In spite of these high percentages, the Internet is nevertheless considered an important source of information for them by large majorities in all of the WIP countries and regions.

More than 60 percent of users in all of the WIP countries and regions except for Sweden said that the Internet is an important or very important source of information for them.

## **Using the Internet to Look for News**

Large percentages of Internet users in most of the WIP countries and regions go online to seek local, national, or international news. In all of the reporting countries and regions other than Colombia, more than 25 percent of users go online to look for news at least daily, and more than half go online for news at least weekly.

The highest percentages of users who go online at least weekly were in Macao (80 percent), Chile (74 percent), Italy (71 percent), and Sweden (70 percent).

In all of the WIP countries and regions except Colombia and Cyprus, less than 20 percent of users never go online to look for news.

## **The Internet and School-Related Work**

Very large percentages of Internet users who are students go online to find information for their school-related work. In all of the WIP countries and regions except Italy, more than two-thirds of students go online for school-related work at least weekly. In six of the WIP countries and regions, more than 30 percent of Internet users who are students go online at least daily to get information for school work; Mexico reported the highest daily use by far (76 percent).

Even though large percentages of students go online for school-related work in all of the WIP countries and regions, a surprising number of students never go online for schoolwork, or do so less than monthly. All of the WIP countries and regions except Chile, Mexico, and the United States reported double-digit percentages of these students.

### **The Center for the Digital Future: Nine years of exploring the digital realm**

The findings are part of the 2010 report of the World Internet Project (WIP), which includes findings from 10 of the 30 countries and regions in North America, South American, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Australasia.

The World Internet Project is the first global partnership of research institutions that compiles data on the behavior and views of Internet users and non-users.

The Center for the Digital Future and its partner countries and regions produced findings in 87 subject areas that reveal remarkable similarities as well as significant differences in the way users utilize, rely, and are affected by the Internet.

The Center for the Digital Future at the USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism created and organizes the World Internet Project, which includes the Digital Future Project and similar studies in Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Macao, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States.

On a yearly basis since 2000, the center has been conducting the Digital Future Project, the most comprehensive year-to-year study of the Internet and online technology on Americans, examining the behavior and views of a national sample of Internet users and non-users.

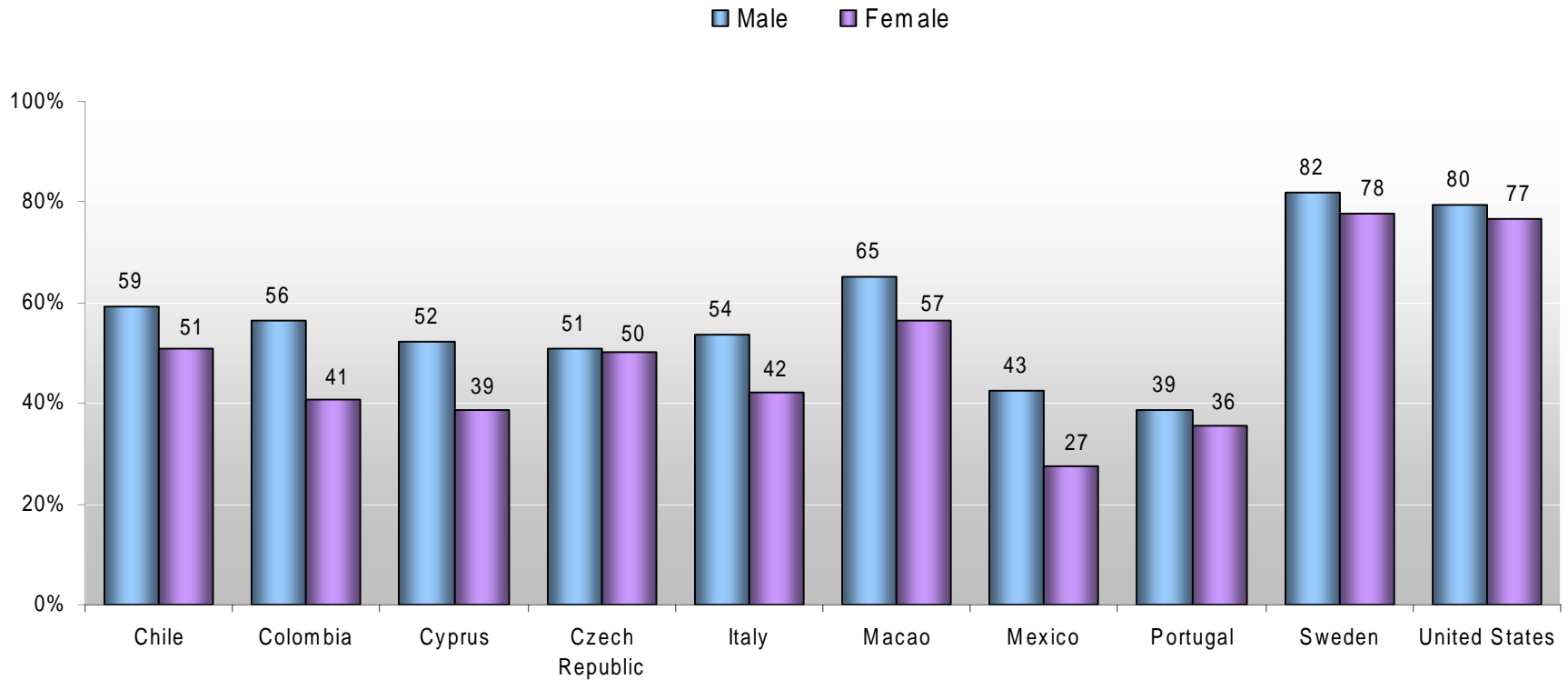
For highlights of the 2010 World Internet Project Report, or to order a copy of the complete report, visit [www.digitalcenter.org](http://www.digitalcenter.org).

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## Are you currently using the Internet?

(Percentage of adult respondents : by gender )

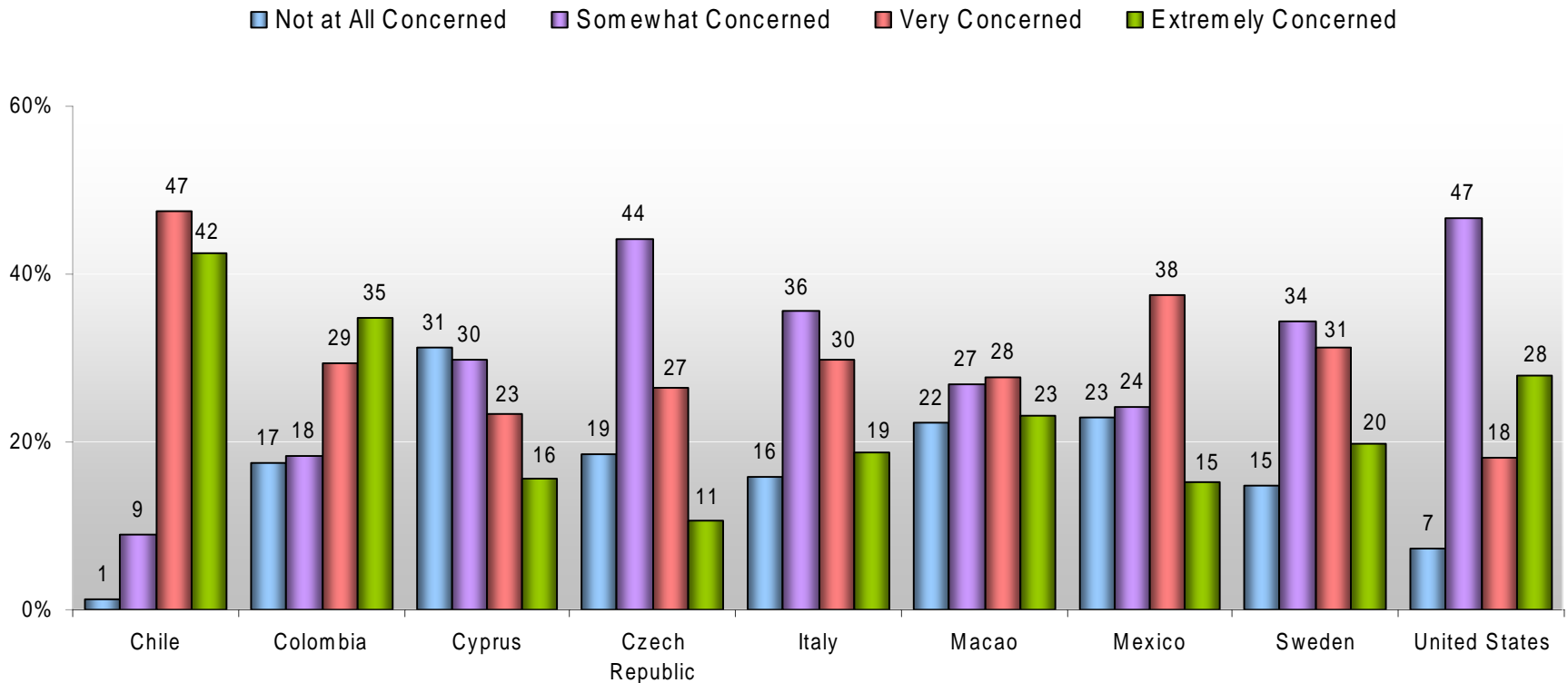


**BASE: Adult respondents**



# WORLD INTERNET PROJECT: International Report 2010

**How concerned would you be about the security of your credit card information when or if you ever bought something online?**  
(Percentage of adult Internet Users)



**BASE: Adult Internet users**

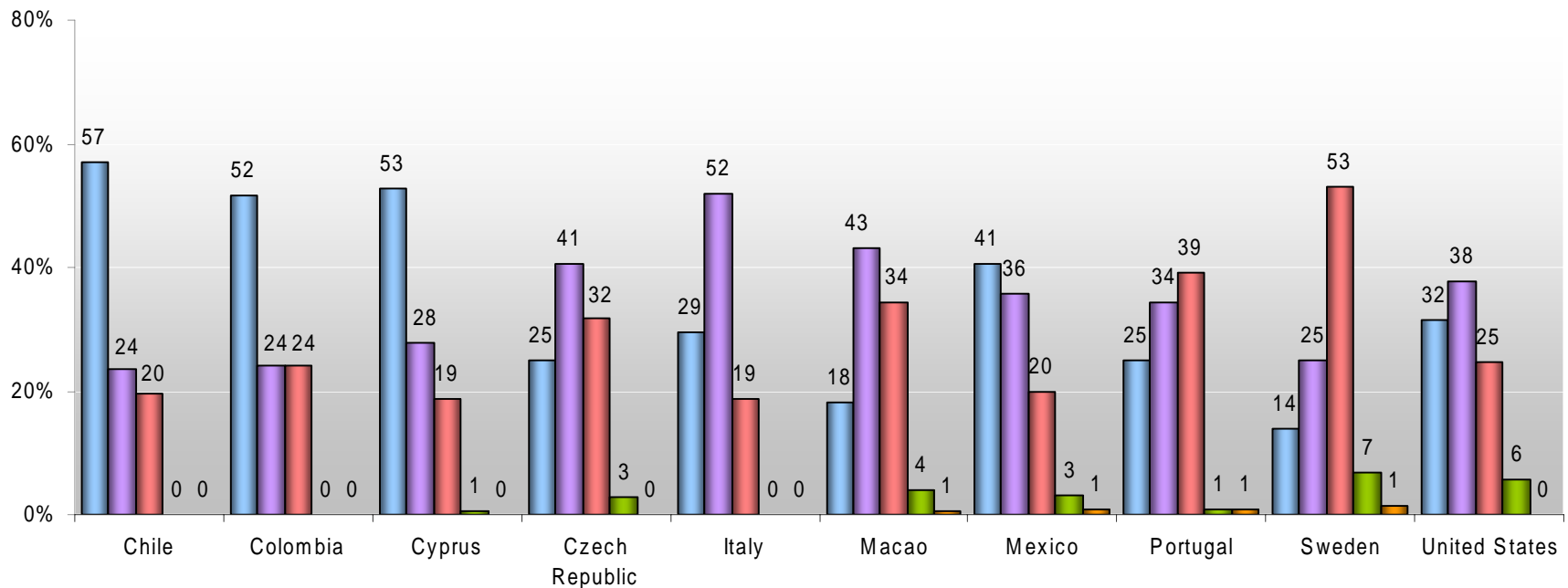


# WORLD INTERNET PROJECT: International Report 2010

**Because of your Internet access at work, do you feel that your work performance/productivity has improved a lot, improved somewhat, stayed the same, worsened somewhat, or worsened a lot?**

(Percentage of adult Internet users)

■ Improved a Lot   ■ Improved Somewhat   ■ Stayed the Same   ■ Worsened Somewhat   ■ Worsened a Lot

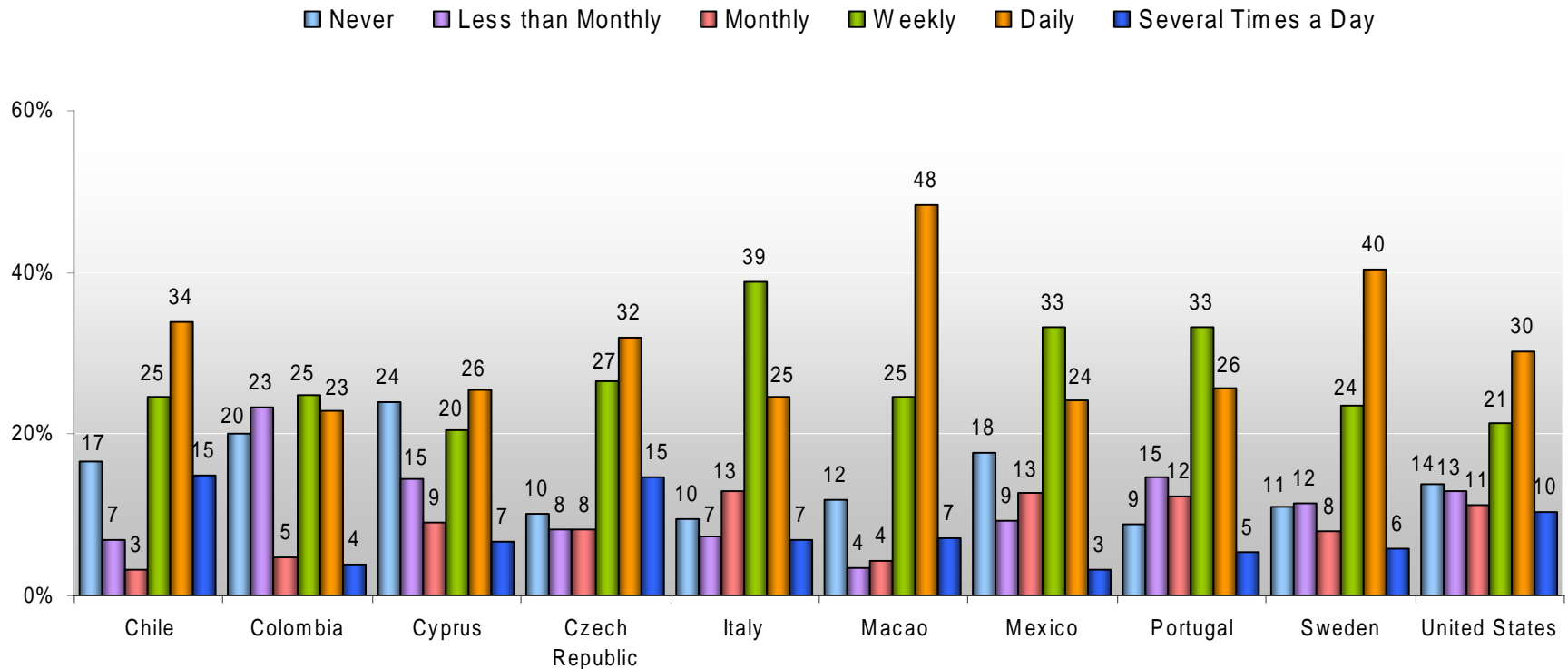


**BASE: Adult Internet users who use the Internet at work**



# WORLD INTERNET PROJECT: International Report 2010

## How often do you use the Internet to look for news (local, national, international)? (Percentage of adult Internet users)



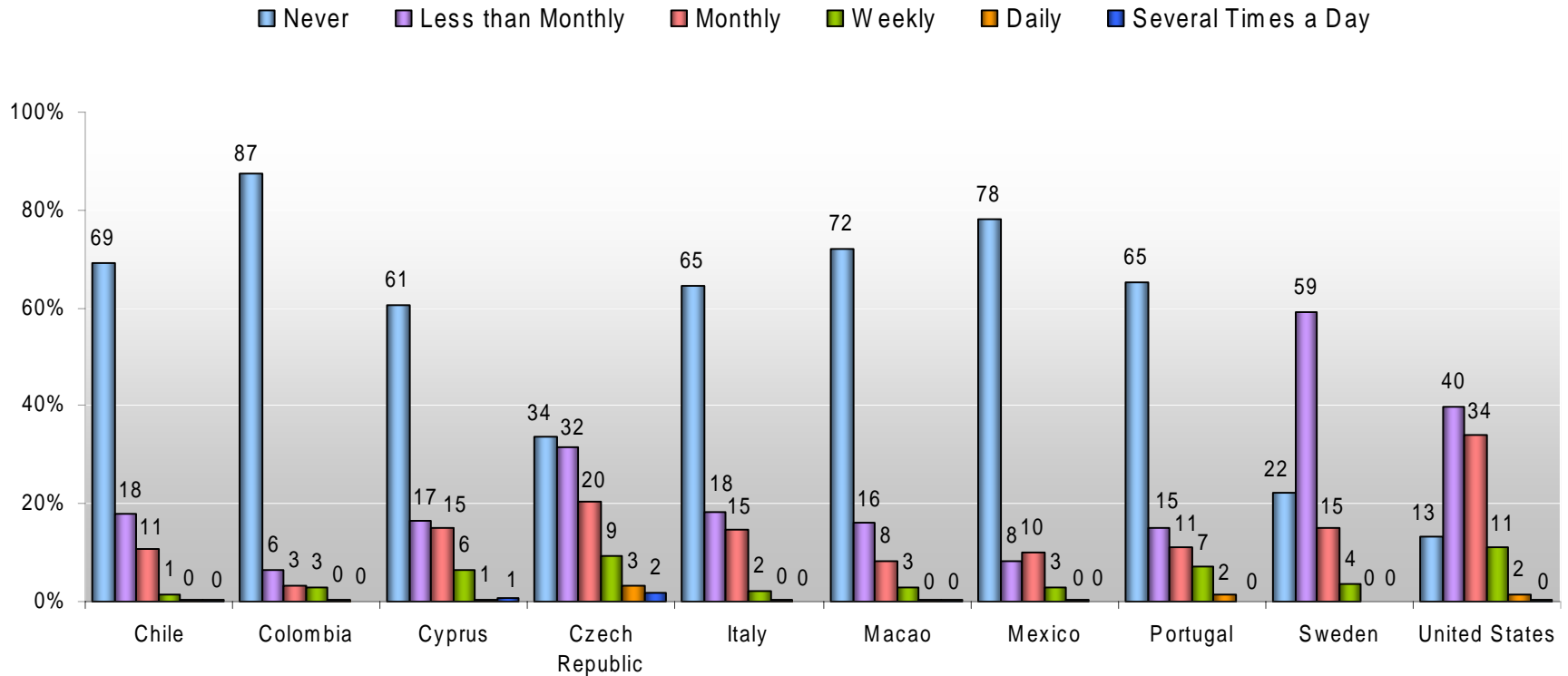
**BASE: Adult Internet users**



# WORLD INTERNET PROJECT: International Report 2010

## How often do you use the Internet to buy things online?

(Percentage of adult Internet users)



**BASE: Adult Internet users**