

# VPN Use and Data Privacy Stats for 2021

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 [vpnmentor.com/blog/vpn-use-data-privacy-stats](https://vpnmentor.com/blog/vpn-use-data-privacy-stats)



In this golden era of data security awareness, we ventured to find out just how informed people are about their safety and privacy online.

The research we conducted showed particularly surprising – and even concerning – results. We asked questions like, where are people using VPNs? Who is using the Dark Web? And which government requests the most personal data from Google?

Most people (78%) still have no idea what their government does with their data. For Generation Z, however, it doesn't matter as much – they're the least worried about data protection, even though their exponentially higher online presence exposes them to many risks.

Here you will find updated VPN and Data Privacy Statistics, utilizing our own research, internal metadata, and expert analysis.

## Data Privacy

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In the face of recent global crises, 2021 will prove to be a watershed year, especially in terms of public focus on data privacy issues.

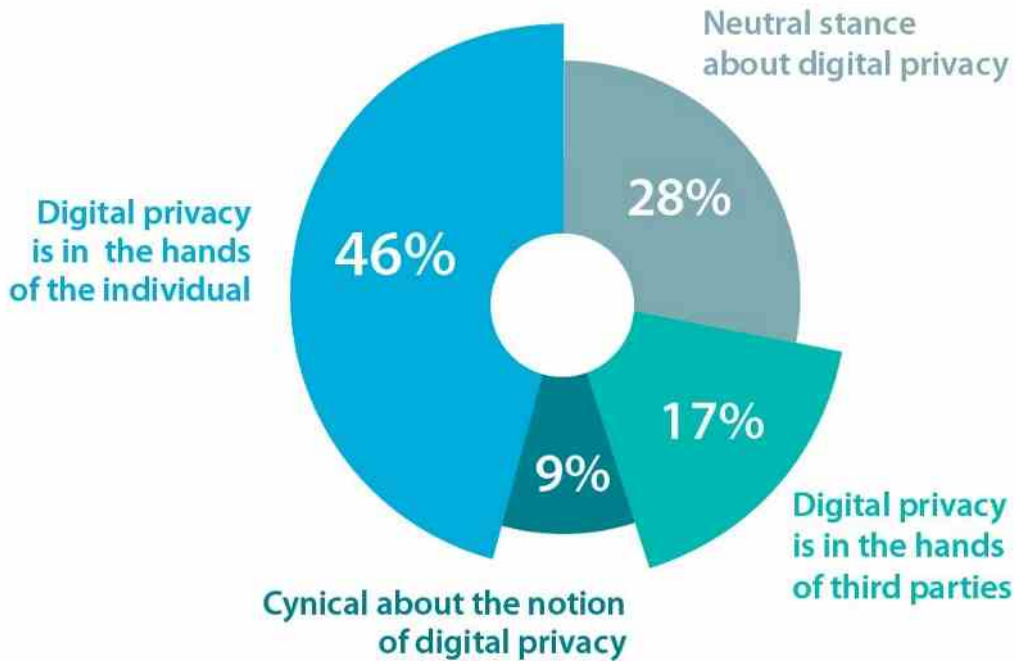
### What Does Digital Privacy Mean?

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The notion of digital privacy can mean different things to different people. In a poll, web users were asked, "what does digital privacy mean to you?" The biggest group of respondents were adamant that, as a whole, having control over personal information is a

key element in the matter.

## How do people feel about online privacy?



### Control Over Personal Data

Most people feel like they lack control over their own data and privacy on the web. There are ways to keep your online activity protected, including using one of the best VPNs.

What is disconcerting about the results of this poll is that the respondents have essentially equated private companies and the government in the control they have over individuals' sensitive information.

## What control do you have over your own data?





American adults were surveyed about their thoughts on how private companies and the government each use data they collect about them



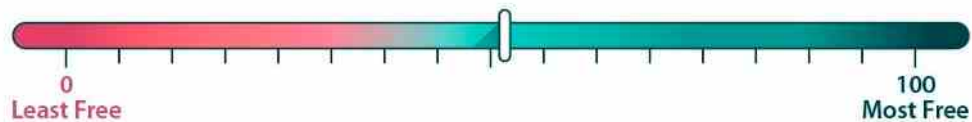
Web

## Online Freedom

The Freedom House Index measures the degree of internet freedom for citizens across many different countries. Nations that score the highest, with a maximum of 100 index points, are those which allow users to utilize the web with minimal restrictions.

Those who score among the lowest greatly restrict online activity and access, which is why their citizens rank higher among the users of VPNs, allowing them to use Facebook, watch YouTube, and search Google freely.

## Internet Freedom by Country



### HIGH

Iceland	95
Estonia	94
Canada	87
Germany	80
Australia	77
United States	77
United Kingdom	77
Armenia	76
France	76
Italy	75
Georgia	75
Japan	73
South Africa	72
Hungary	72
Argentina	72

### MIDDLE

Kenya	68
Colombia	67
Philippines	66
Tunisia	64
Brazil	64
Angola	64
Nigeria	64
South Korea	64
Ecuador	61
Kyrgyzstan	61
Mexico	60
Zambia	58
Malawi	57
Malaysia	57
Uganda	56
Singapore	56
Ukraine	56
Morocco	54
Lebanon	52
Indonesia	51
Sri Lanka	49
Libya	49
The Gambia	48
Jordan	47
Bangladesh	44
Cambodia	43
Zimbabwe	42
Rwanda	41

### LOW

Azerbaijan	39
Turkey	37
Myanmar	36
Belarus	35
Thailand	35
Kazakhstan	32
Bahrain	29
Ethiopia	28
United Arab Emirates	28
Pakistan	26
Egypt	26
Uzbekistan	26



Russia	51	Saudi Arabia	23
Venezuela	30	Sudan	25
		Vietnam	24
Iran	15	Cuba	22
China	10	Syria	17



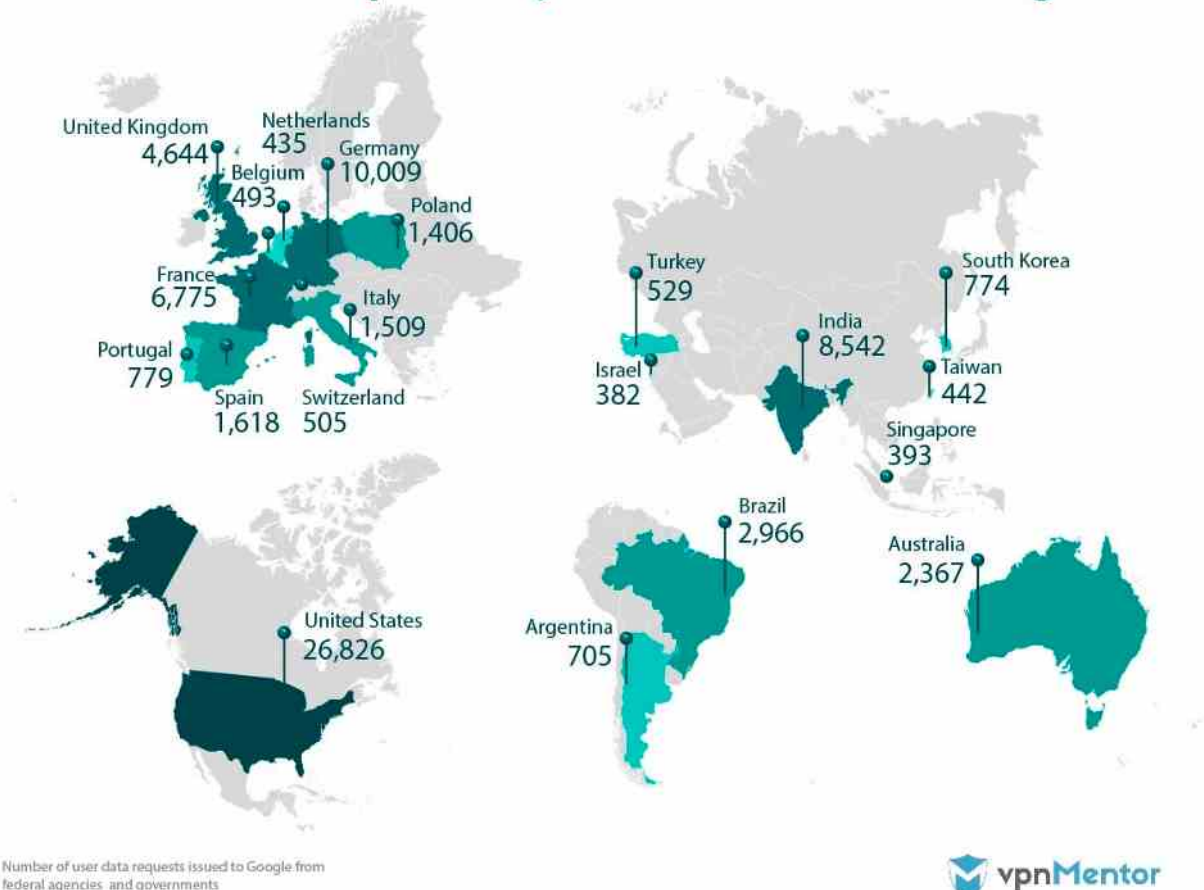
According to the Freedom House Index 2019 (index points)



## Government User Data Requests to Google

Can you trust companies to not share your data? Regardless of a company's policies or users' presumptions of privacy, many governments have requested information on user data and activity. Here we can see that Google is one of those companies, particularly overloaded with requests from the U.S. government for said data.

### User Data Requests by Governments to Google



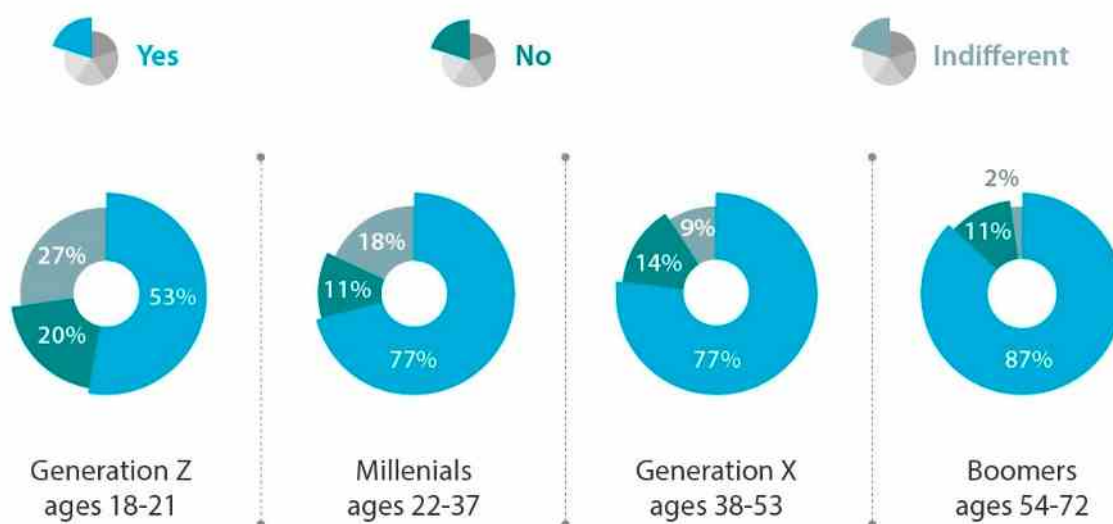
## Data Privacy Laws & Regulations

Registered voters were polled about their thoughts on data privacy. When asked how much of a priority creating laws that will guard the data of consumers (similar to the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation – or GDPR for short), the Baby Boomer generational group placed the most importance on the matter.



The most indifferent group was by far the youngest, Generation Z. It is reasonable to presume that because they have come of age during a time without significant expectations of privacy online.

## Does your country need better data protection laws?



\* Registered voters in the U.S. were polled about their thoughts on whether or not Congress should prioritize data protection laws in 2020



## VPN Use 2021

Of course, VPN use and data privacy have strong correlations. By accessing a separate server for internet use, VPNs make it much more difficult for hackers and/or 3rd parties to track online activities. The following charts examine the current state of VPN use around the globe.

### Top Markets for VPN Use

VPN usage around the world tells many stories. There are those who seek to broaden their options when it comes to streaming sites, citizens looking for the ability to even access some of the sites considered 'basic' and 'essential' by their counterparts in other countries, and others who simply want their privacy online. Regardless of the multitude of reasons that internet consumers have for choosing to use a VPN, we can honestly say it's no surprise that some of the biggest markets for the industry are located in countries where many or all of those reasons converge.

VPN USAGE AROUND THE WORLD



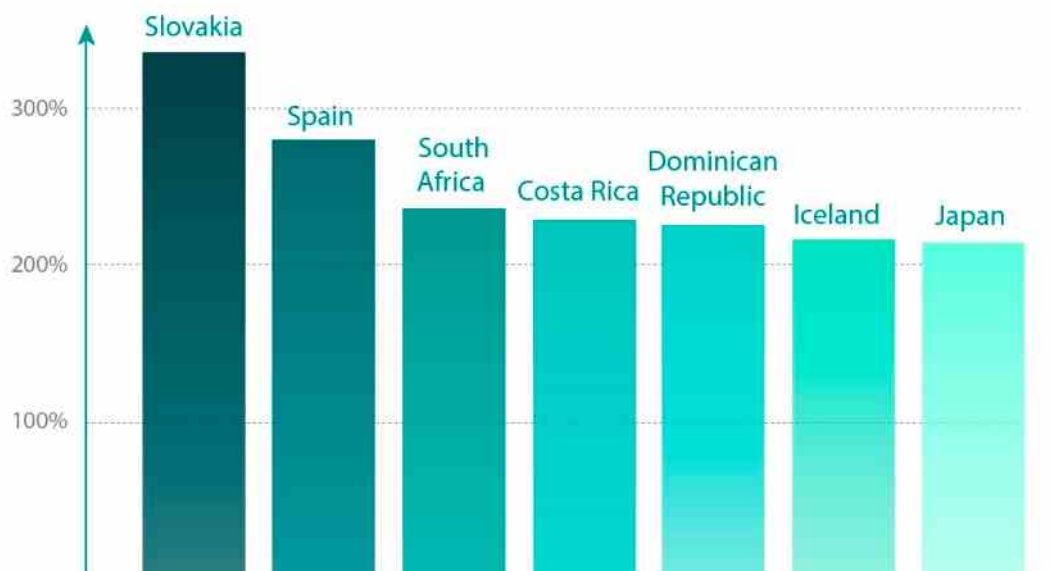


Percentage of internet users who've used a VPN server within the last month, by location.



The fastest-growing markets for VPNs, however, tell a slightly different story. From our internal data sources, we can see users from Slovakia have an increasing interest in the service, growing by over 300% within the last year, with countries like Spain, South Africa, and Japan not far behind.

## Top 7 Fastest Growing Markets for VPNs



## Top 10 Reasons for VPN Use

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Approximately one out of four people are using a VPN globally, mostly to access entertainment content and browse anonymously. The main reasons given for choosing to utilize a VPN are:

1. Unlocking geoblocked entertainment content
2. Accessing networks and sites restricted by government
3. Safety when using public and shared WiFi networks
4. Surfing sites frowned upon at work
5. Accessing blocked sites at school
6. Using torrents, such as The Pirate Bay
7. Hiding online behavior from the government, ISP, or employer
8. Safe communication among journalists and sources
9. Engaging in subversive political activity
10. Reaching local sites while traveling internationally

### People who use their VPN while travelling internationally



## What Kind of People Use a VPN?

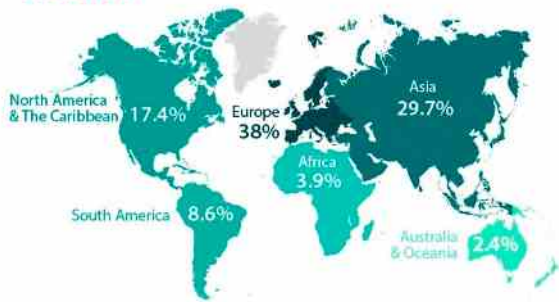
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Out of internet users broken down by demographic, we are able to get a picture of what an average VPN user looks like.

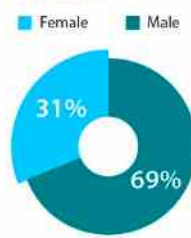
Men are more likely than women to use a VPN, especially those who are between the ages of 25-34. As a whole, those residing in Europe and Asia more readily use VPNs when compared to their African and Australian counterparts. Where do you fit in?

# Who Uses VPNs?

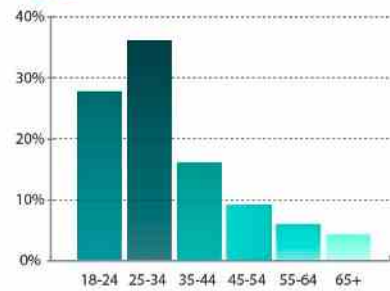
## LOCATION



## GENDER



## AGE



## Can You Trust Your Own Government?

National governments have been known to establish units focusing on monitoring citizens' activities online. There is little proven certainty of the extent to which they'll go, nonetheless, the concern stays with web users around the world.

The two countries with citizens concerned about their governments spying on them online are Hong Kong and the United States, each tying for the notorious top spot in the category. Where does your country fit in?

## Are you concerned about your government spying on you?



Respondents per country who feel their government spies on their digital activity.



## How Far Will You Go to Protect Your Privacy?



The Dark Web is a very small portion of what makes up the Deep Web, although among the non-tech savvy, both terms are often used interchangeably. The Onion Routing project (TOR) and Invisible Internet Project (I2P) are just two of the ways to access the Dark Web. Using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) alongside these portals is a key way to ensure your privacy is protected, but it does not mean those who use it are engaging in illegal or morally questionable activity.

## Who's Using the Dark Web?



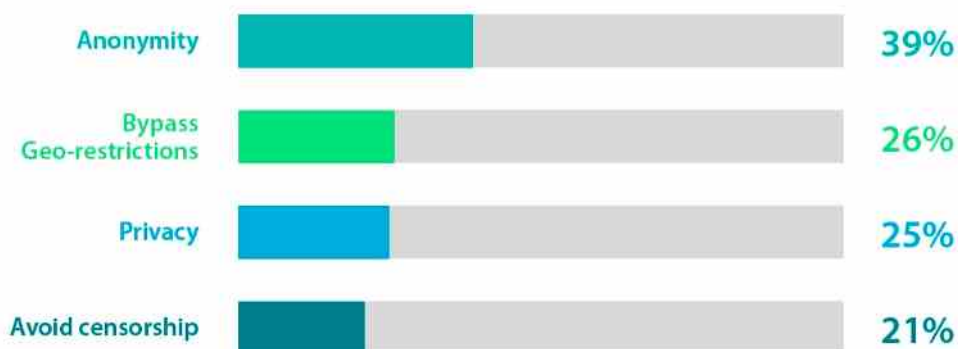
\*Percentage of population per country



All in all, just 12% of internet users across the globe admit to having used tech that allows access to the Dark Web, with India ranking among the highest.

## Why Do People Use the Dark Web?

Nearly 40% simply prefer to be anonymous online



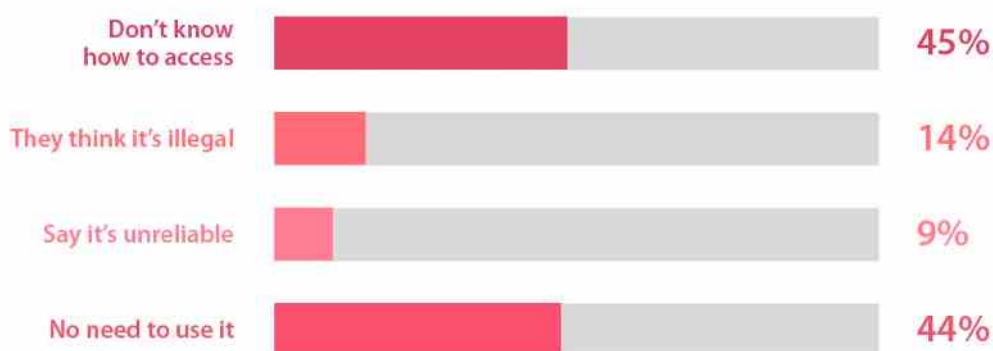
\*Percentage of population per country



The vast majority do not use these technologies to engage in illegal activities, instead insisting that their main goal is privacy. Out of people who do not use these technologies, most state that they simply do not understand them.

## Why Do People **Avoid** the Dark Web?

Nearly half simply don't know how to use them



\*Percentage of population per country



## Summary of VPN Use Stats

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The market for internet privacy continues to grow, led by the same global regions as recent years. In addition, access to streaming content continues to be a major motivator for VPN users, despite the claims of Netflix that they represent a small section of its overall user base.

For more related digital statistics, we have also presented a host of research analysis about vital internet trends in a previous article.

## Cyber Crime

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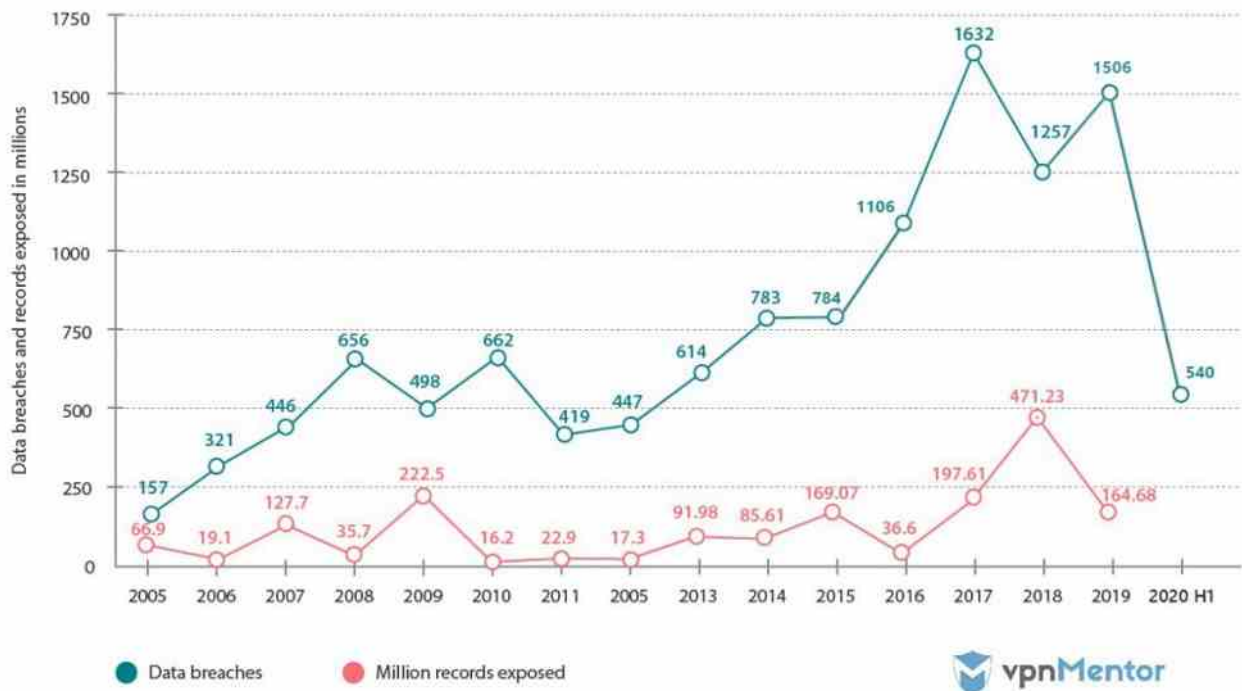
Cyber crimes continue to evolve. As shown in the following charts, the amount of breaches remains high and the challenges for both consumers and businesses to protect against evolving threats are abundant.

## Data Breaches

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The most recent numbers show a decrease in data breaches, after a period of continued increase. Specifically, in the United States, statistics from the first half of 2020 estimate that data breaches have decreased by almost a third.

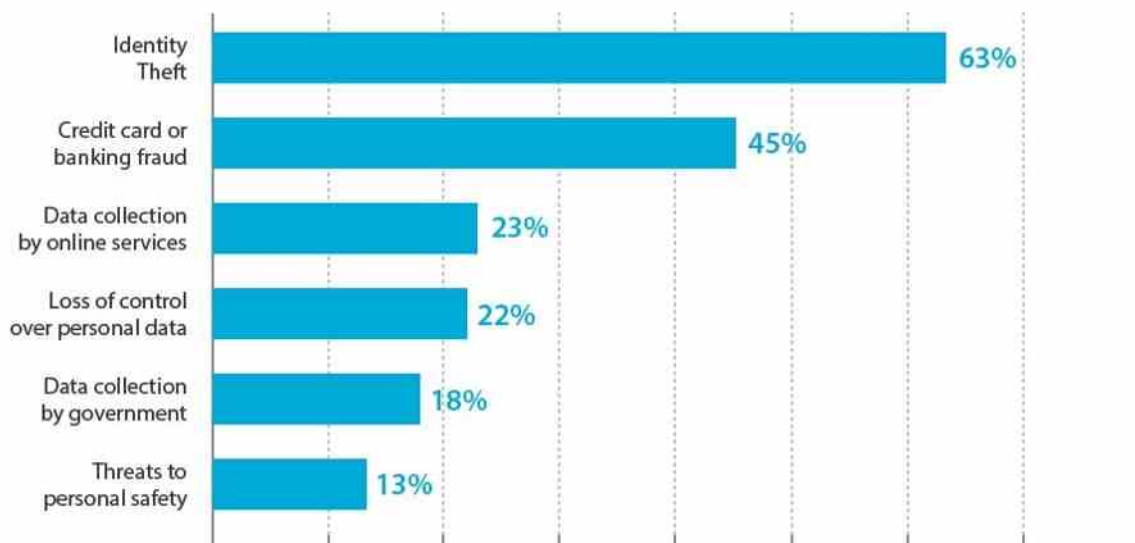
## Records Exposed in U.S. Data Breaches, Annually



## Online Privacy Threats

According to Americans, identity theft is the largest cyber crime concern in the U.S.

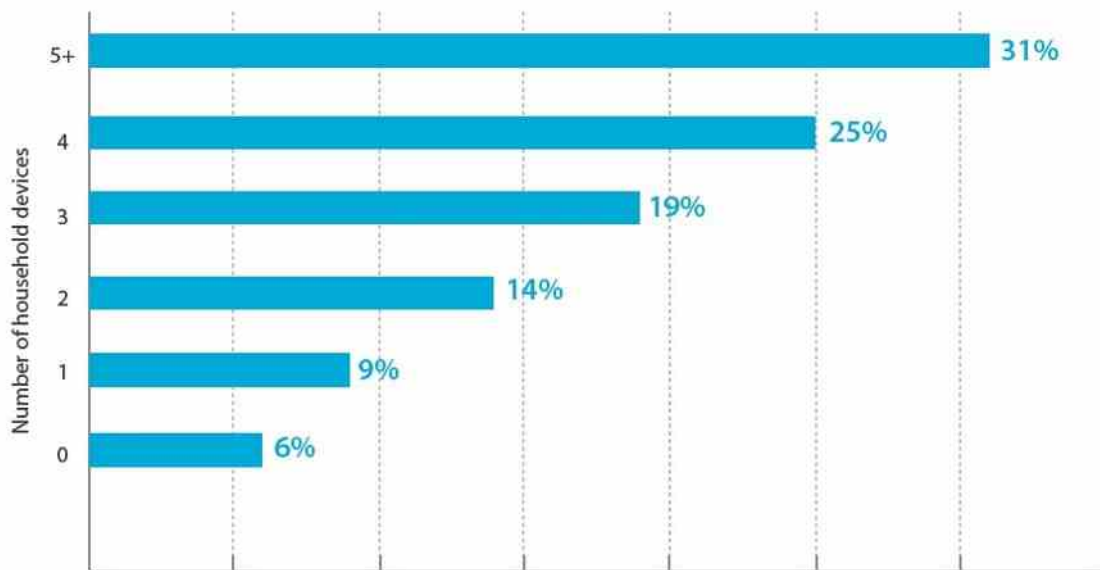
## Households concerned about the following threats:



## Cyber Crime and Number of Household Devices

The threat of cyber crimes against individual consumers increases dramatically as the number of household devices rises.

### Households who have reported breaches



Note: Households reporting zero device types did not indicate use of a desktop, laptop, smartphone, tablet, TV connected device, or wearable device, but reported using the internet from some location of the 1,388 households in this category, only 297 reported using the internet home.

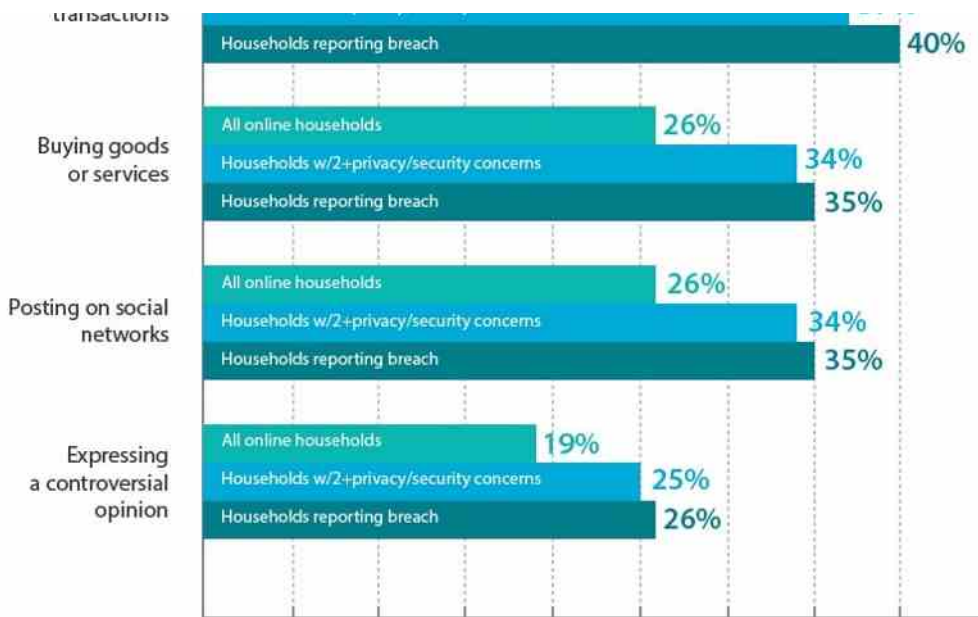


## Cyber Crime Fears Create Major Online Behavior Changes

The threat of identity theft and other cyber crimes has caused almost 30% of all U.S. Internet users to avoid conducting financial transactions online at one time or another. This number increases with awareness of data security issues.

### Online activities avoided due to privacy or security concerns





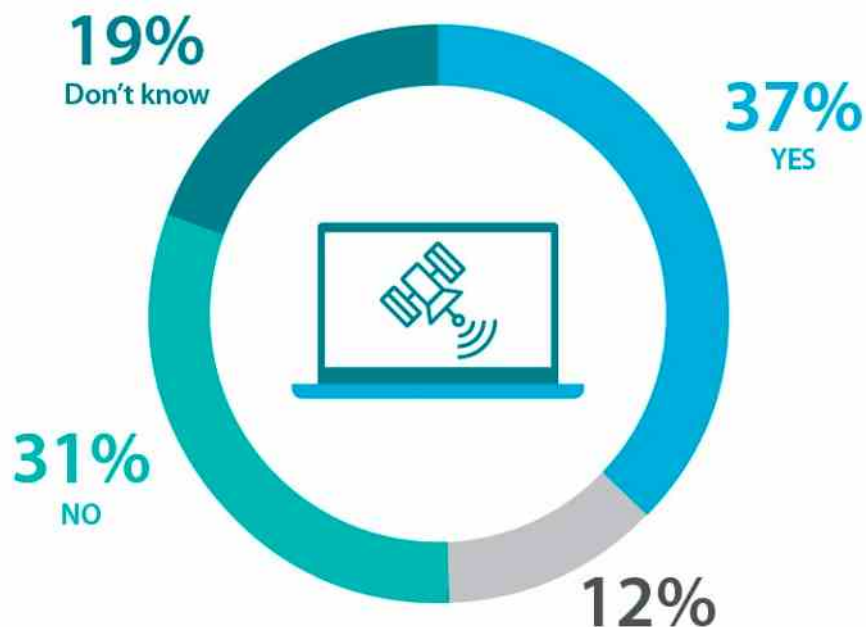
Note: Categories depicting online activities avoided by different groups are not mutually exclusive. Fifty percent of online households reporting an online security breach also expressed two or more privacy or security concerns. Conversely, 24 percent of online households expressing multiple concerns also experienced a security breach.



## Cyber Crime Against Businesses and Organizations

For businesses and professional organizations, the threat of cyber crimes far outdistances their preparedness to deal with an attack. In fact, 63% of businesses do not have a fully operable incident response plan.

## Is your business ready for a cyber attack?





We're  
working on it

Businesses were asked if they have real response plans in place to deal with cyber attacks



## The Challenges of Protecting Online Privacy

There are a myriad of reasons why data privacy protection often fails, but the number one reason is an insufficient understanding and overall awareness of data privacy.

## The Challenges of Protecting Online Privacy



## Summary of Cyber Crime Stats

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With threats such as zero-day vulnerabilities and ransomware attacks growing more powerful and sophisticated, consumers' online behaviors will continue to be adversely affected. Additionally, as more households acquire more devices, the risk for successful attacks will increase. What's your plan for preparedness against cyber crime?

### Sources:

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- Internal analytics

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