



# ONLINE SHOPPER SURVEY

## KEY FINDINGS



JANUARY 2016

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary	4
Methodology - Introduction	8
Methodology - Research design	9
Methodology - Scope	10
Demographics	12
Customer preferences	17
Customer experience	28

# ONLINE SHOPPER SURVEY

## KEY FINDINGS

JANUARY 2016





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### RESEARCH

The 2015 IPC Online Shopper Survey researches the delivery preferences and experiences of frequent cross-border online shoppers, who have bought physical goods online at least once in the last three months. The research was undertaken with 4,075 respondents across 17 countries in 11 languages in September - October 2015.

The research was conducted with an online sample of 240 consumers reflective of age and gender for each of the following countries: Austria, Australia, China, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States.

In order to assist postal operators understand and meet the evolving needs for cross-border e-Commerce, this research will be repeated annually. In 2016 the sample size will be increased to 1,000 respondents per country.

### CONSUMER PREFERENCES

The majority of frequent cross-border online shoppers (77%) live in urban areas and 74% are above the age of 34. Chinese consumers stand out as the most active online cross-border shoppers with a quarter of them shopping cross-border every week. On average, 63% of frequent cross-border online shoppers shop at least once a month. In China this figure rises to 99% and the Chinese are followed in terms of the frequency for shopping cross-border online at least once a month by consumers in the UK at 86%, the US at 80% and Germany at 80%.

In all but one country the computer is still the preferred device for cross-border online shoppers (77%). However in China, 53% of frequent cross-border online shoppers prefer to make purchases on a smartphone or a tablet, compared with 26% in the US and 4% in Hungary.



Comparing age profiles of frequent cross-border online shoppers, 56% of consumers who prefer to make purchases on a smartphone are between 16 and 34, compared with just 2% of consumers aged over 65.

The majority of consumers (76%) prefer to have their cross-border parcels delivered to their home address. This figure is lower for consumers in Norway (44%) and Iceland (48%), where delivery to a post office is more popular. The research identifies the delivery preference by country for alternative delivery options including delivery to a post office, retail outlet, office, or to a parcel locker. Retail outlets were the favourite delivery point for 14% of the frequent online shoppers in France and 17% in Norway.

Cross-border shoppers prefer to pay using PayPal or equivalent (49%), or a credit or debit card (43%). Only 2% of consumers expressed a preference for cash on delivery which was most popular in Greece (9%) and Hungary (8%).

E-mail is the preferred channel (77%) for receiving information on the delivery progress of cross-border parcels. Consumers in China however favour notification by SMS (39%), or mobile applications (34%).

When cross-border goods are delivered within Europe, only 45% of frequent cross-border online shoppers accept that cross-border delivery will take longer than 5 days.

When cross-border goods are delivered within the US, only 42% of frequent cross-border online shoppers accept delivery will take longer than 7 days, compared to 45% when delivering into Australia and New Zealand.

In rating the importance of different features when shopping online cross-border, reliability was rated the highest, followed by a simple returns process and then the provision of a landed cost calculator at check-out.

### CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

The next section of the research asked frequent cross-border online shoppers to provide information on a particular cross-border purchase.

The majority, (80%) of frequent cross-border online shoppers bought goods from China (29%), the United Kingdom (19%), Germany (14%), the United States (13%) and France (5%).

In total, clothing, footwear and apparel was the largest category (25%) for frequent cross-border online shoppers, followed by consumer electronics (14%), and books, music and media (11%).

In regard to the value of the goods bought by frequent cross-border online shoppers, the majority (59%) were between €10 and €100. However in China, the average value of goods purchased was higher, with 65% between €101 and €300. Items valued above €500 were bought by only 1% of the sample.

Free shipping was offered to 59% of the frequent cross-border online shoppers. This varied between Hungary (75%) and Norway (49%). Consumers in the three largest European markets were offered free shipping on parcels imported into France (63%), Germany (65%) and the UK (57%).



Only 4% of frequent cross-border shoppers returned orders.

Tracking was available for just 60% of items purchased by frequent cross-border shoppers.

The majority of cross-border parcels were light weight with 31% weighing less than 0.5kg, 69% less than 2kg and 84% less than 4kg. As the most popular category of goods ordered online was clothing, footwear and apparel, it is not surprising that despite being relatively light weight, 61% of the cross-border parcels did not fit through the mailbox/letterbox.

In regard to the overall delivery experience, 84% of frequent cross-border shoppers were either satisfied or very satisfied with their delivery experience. There was no significant difference between delivery experience satisfaction between postal operators or their competitors.



The IPC Online Shopper Survey aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the trends and drivers shaping cross-border e-Commerce from the perspective of online consumers. The study focuses exclusively on online cross-border shopping for goods requiring physical delivery. In order to assist postal operators understand and meet the evolving needs for cross-border e-Commerce, this research will be repeated annually.

The research was conducted with an online sample of consumers reflective of age and gender per country. Only responses from online shoppers who shopped **at least once per quarter** for **physical goods** which were **purchased outside the country of residence** (cross-border) were included within the research. **Domestic** and **non-frequent online shoppers** were **excluded**.

IPC conducted this research in conjunction with Qualtrics, the world's leading insight technology provider with over 7,000 clients worldwide and used by 99 of the top 100 business schools. Qualtrics has over 1.8 million users and over 250,000 active projects at any point in time and is the leading online survey platform. All respondents were recruited from the Qualtrics professional panel database in each country and the demographics are included within this report. Qualtrics partners with the largest and most well-known panel providers in the world (over 20 online panel providers) to supply a network of diverse and quality respondents. The majority of Qualtrics samples come from traditional, actively managed market research panels, however social media is also used to gather respondents.

This report includes key findings from research in 17 countries with 4,075 respondents and the research was undertaken in September-October 2015. In 2016 the sample size for this research will be increased to 1,000 respondents per country.



**The IPC Online Shopper Survey** investigates e-Commerce consumer online shopping preferences, expectations and experiences from the perspective of the online buyer.

The survey provides insights into online shoppers' preferences and expectations, specifically in relation to the delivery experience and it identifies opportunities for posts to enhance cross-border e-Commerce services to better meet the needs of cross-border online shoppers.

### Topics covered by the research include:

- Alternative delivery
- Costs in relation to value of order
- Dimensions and packaging
- Overall shipping / user experience
- Return services
- Routing of cross-border items
- Transit times
- Variety of payment options



**Scope of the research:** The Online Shopper Survey covers 17 countries in 11 languages. This report presents the key findings from the following countries: Austria, Australia, China, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

**Target group:** Frequent cross-border online shoppers, who have bought physical goods online at least once in the last three months. The target group was determined by quotas based on an even gender split and spread across the following age ranges:

16 to 24 years old	45 to 54 years old
25 to 34 years old	55 to 64 years old
35 to 44 years old	Over 65 years old

**Methodology:** Quantitative research using online access panels with quotas on age and gender for each country.

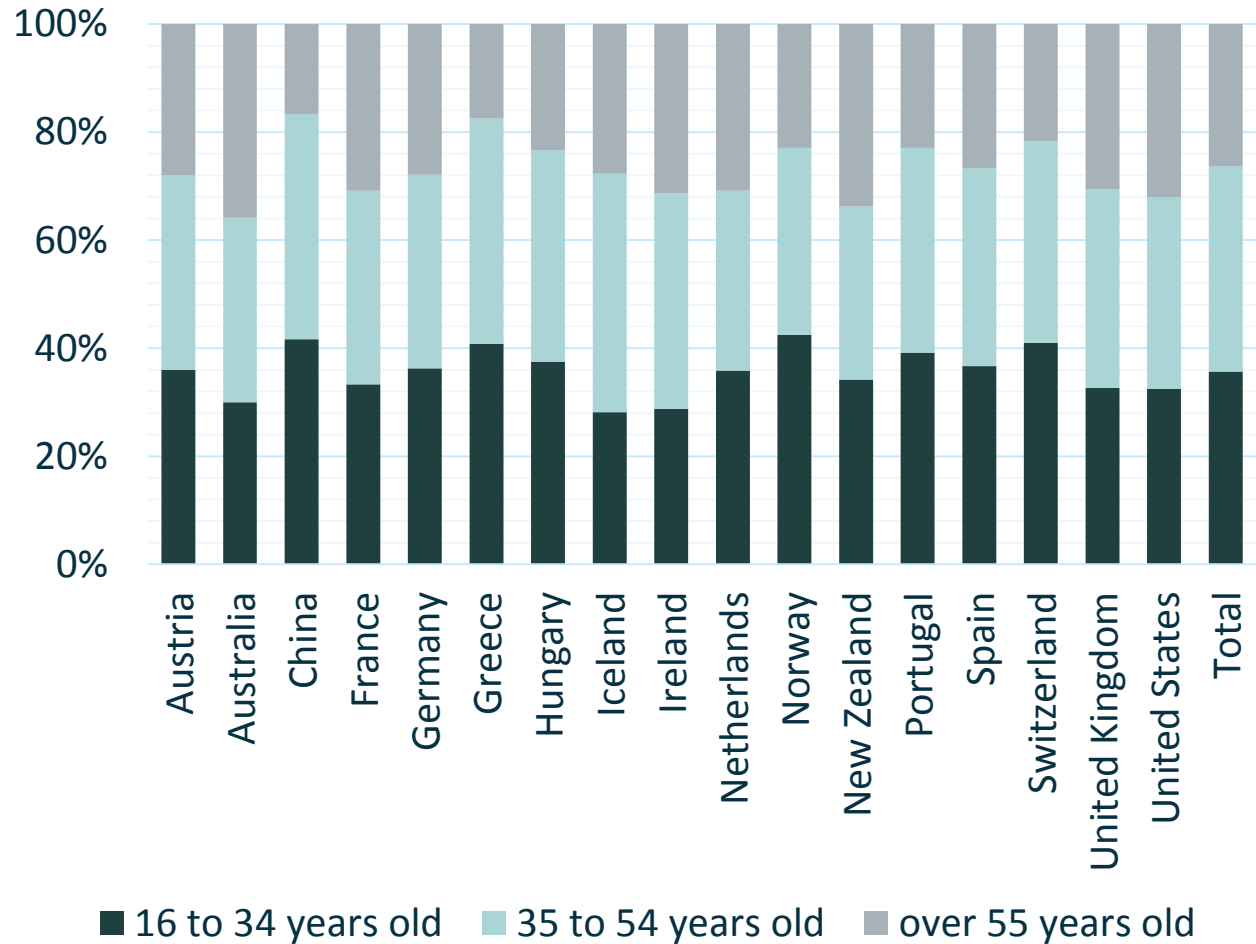
**Sample size:** 4,075 completed responses for all the markets

**Confidence level:** 90% with a margin of error of +/- 5.31%

**Qualification:** Only responses from online shoppers who shopped at least once per quarter for physical goods purchased outside the country of residence (cross-border) were included within the research. The only exception was Iceland, where less frequent cross-border shoppers were included, due to difficulties in recruitment.

**74%**

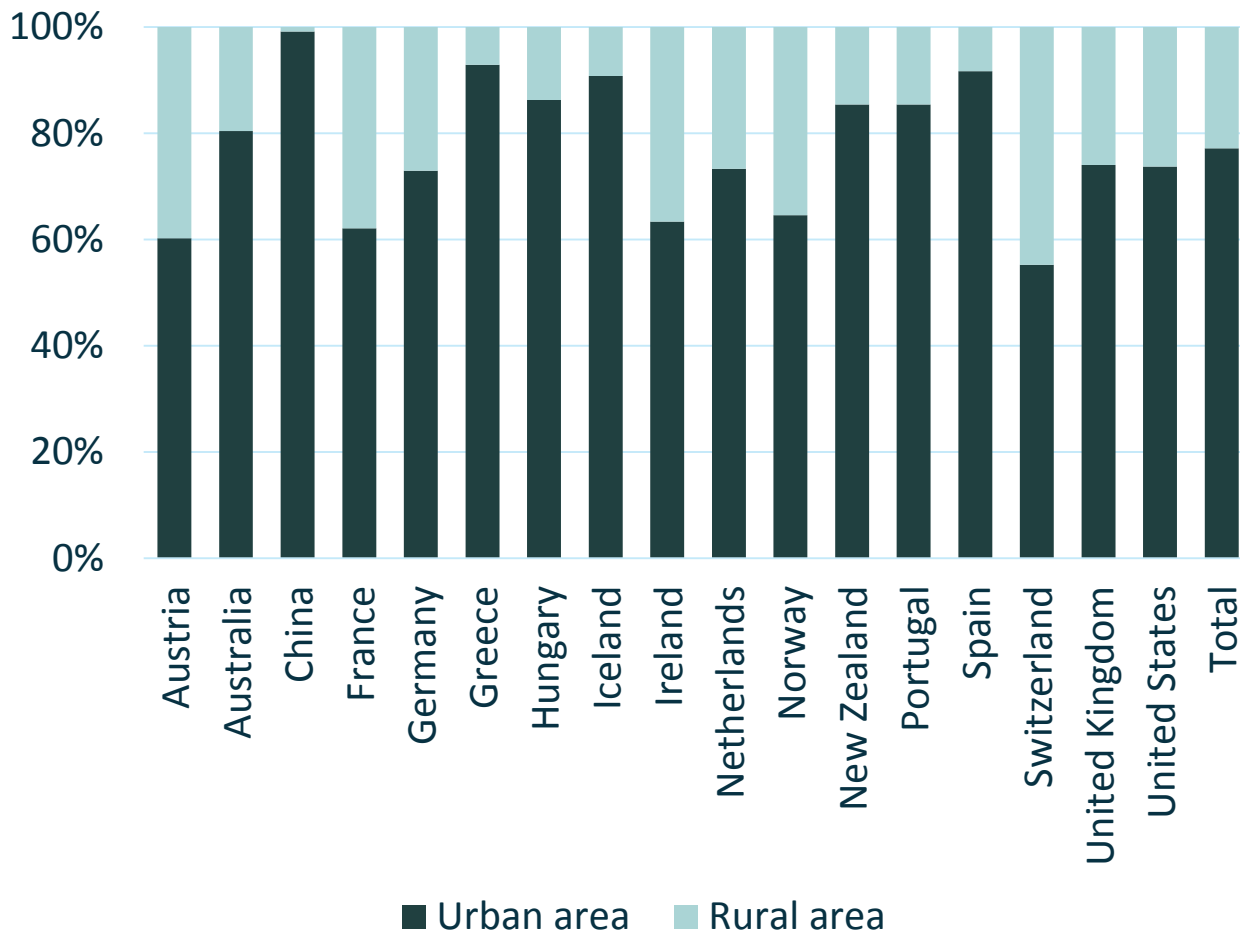
**OF FREQUENT  
 CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS  
 ARE ABOVE THE AGE OF 34**



All base  
 How old are you?



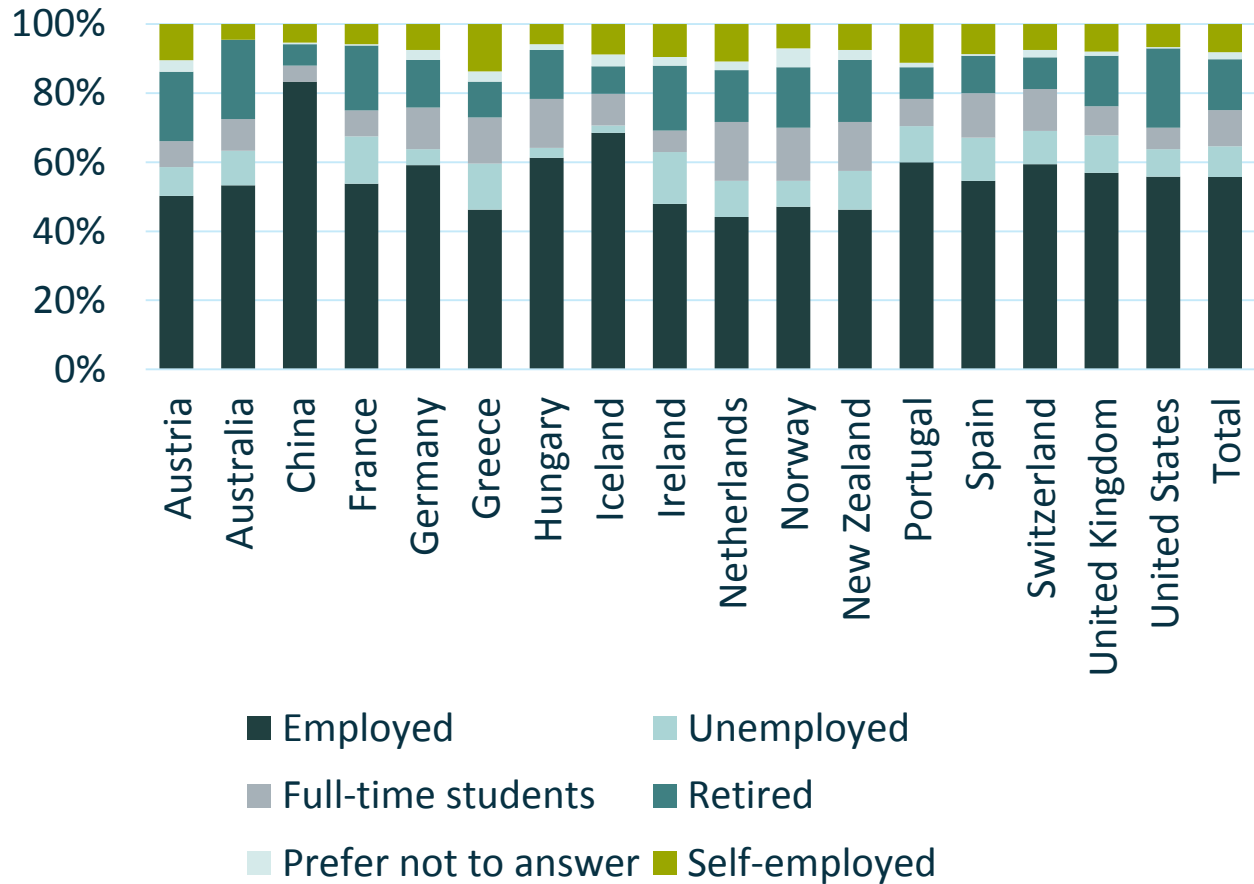
**77%**  
 OF FREQUENT  
 CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS  
 LIVE IN URBAN AREAS



All base  
 What is the settlement type you currently live in?



**56%**  
 OF FREQUENT  
 CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS  
 ARE EMPLOYED



All base  
 What is your employment status?





# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

THE FOLLOWING SLIDES REFER TO THE PREFERENCES  
EXPRESSED BY THE RESPONDENTS

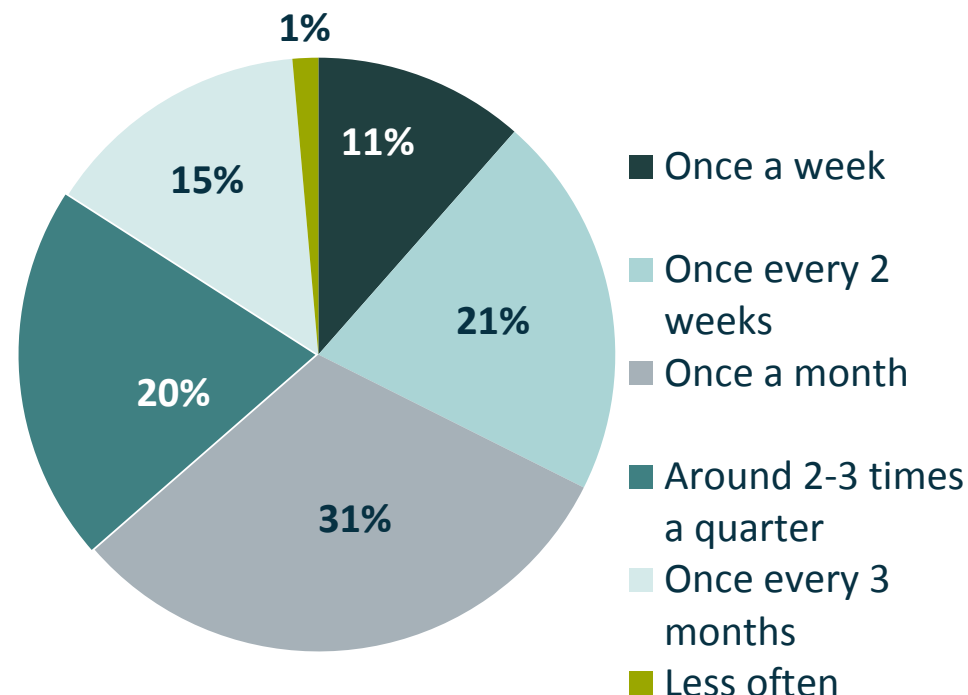
# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

## FREQUENCY OF PURCHASE

ON AVERAGE

# 63%

OF ALL FREQUENT  
CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS  
SHOP AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH



All base  
Over the past 12 months on average how often have you purchased physical goods online?



# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

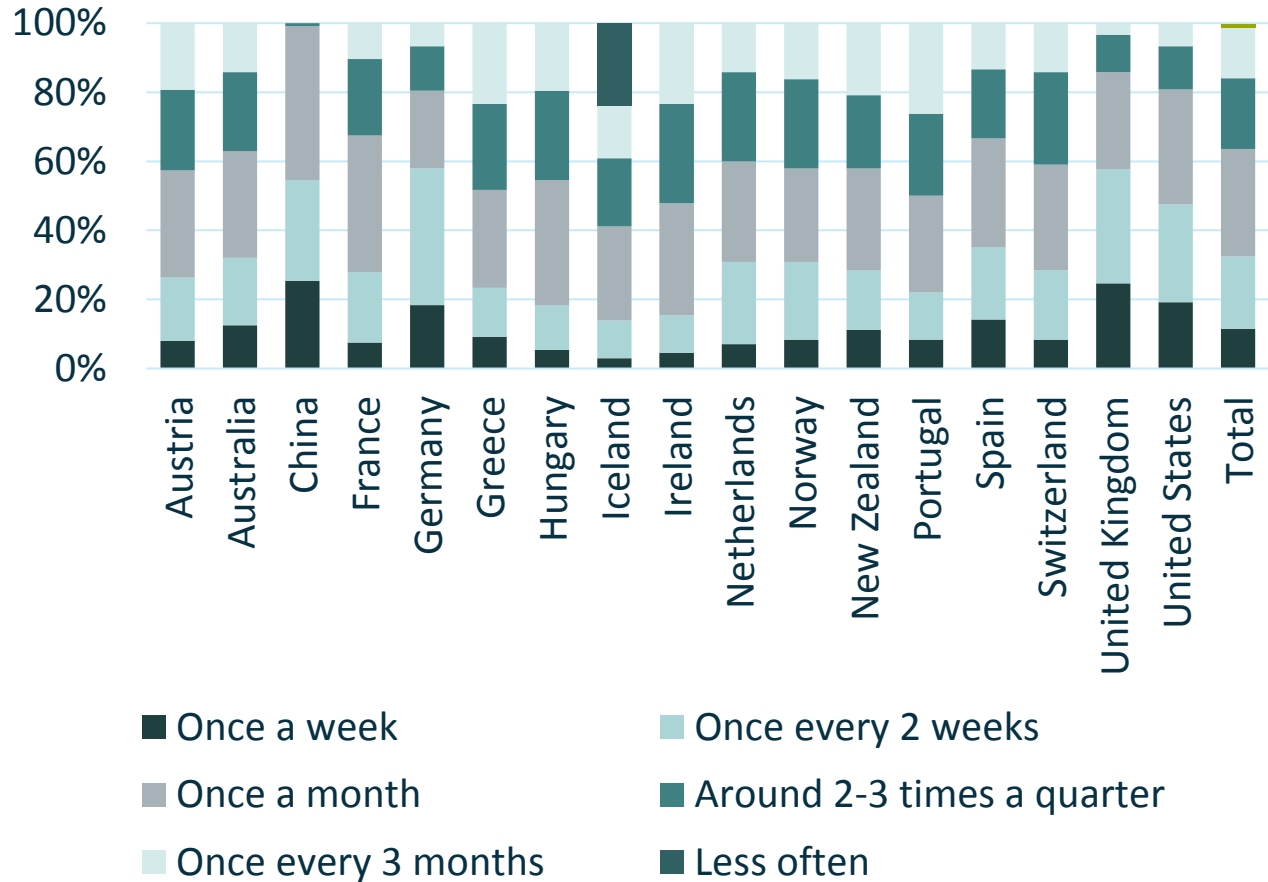
## FREQUENCY OF PURCHASE

99%

OF CHINESE CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS SHOP AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH AND

25%

SHOP AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK



All base

Over the past 12 months on average how often have you purchased physical goods online?

Please specify your country





# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

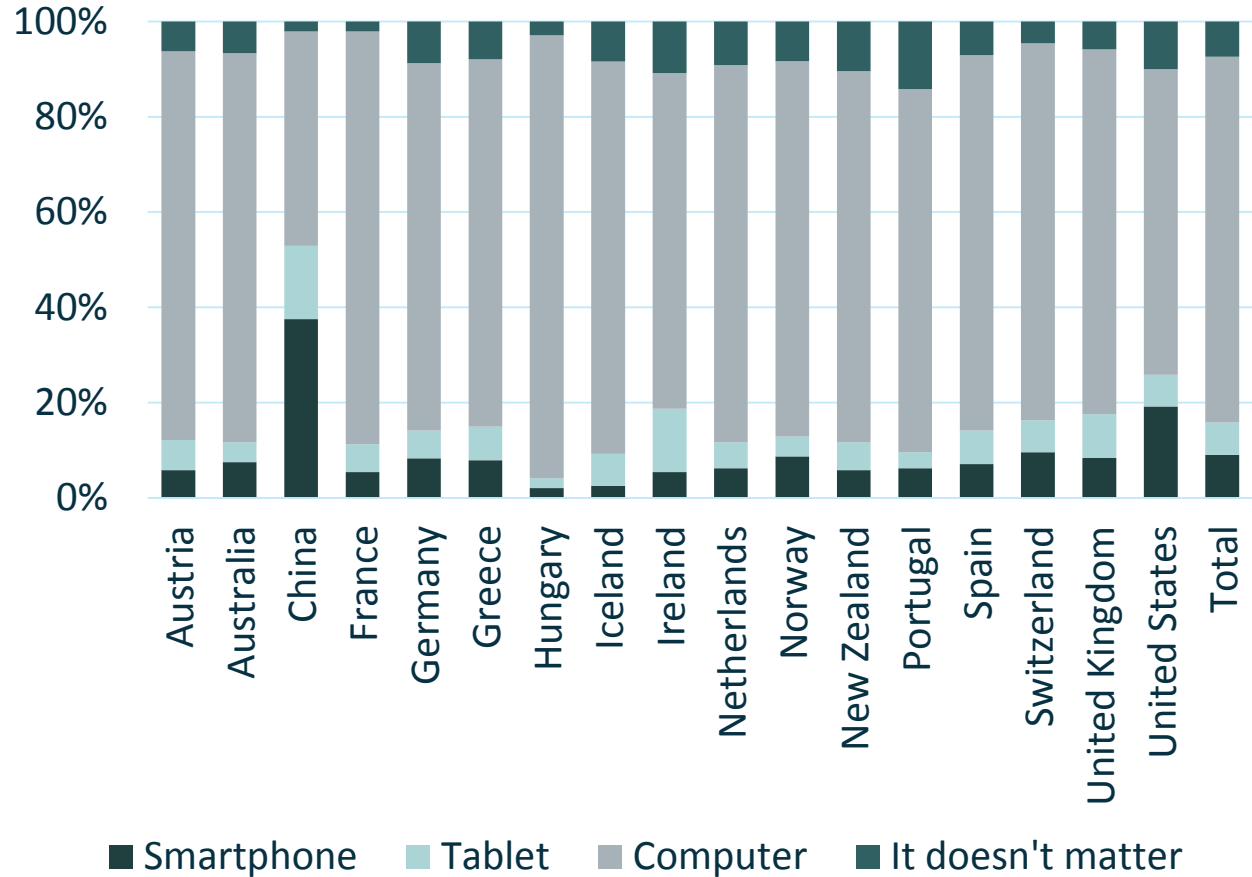
## DEVICE PREFERENCE

**77%**

OF ALL CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS PREFER TO ORDER ON A COMPUTER - HOWEVER IN CHINA

**53%**

PREFER A TABLET OR SMARTPHONE



All base  
Which is your preferred device when placing an order?  
Please specify your country



# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

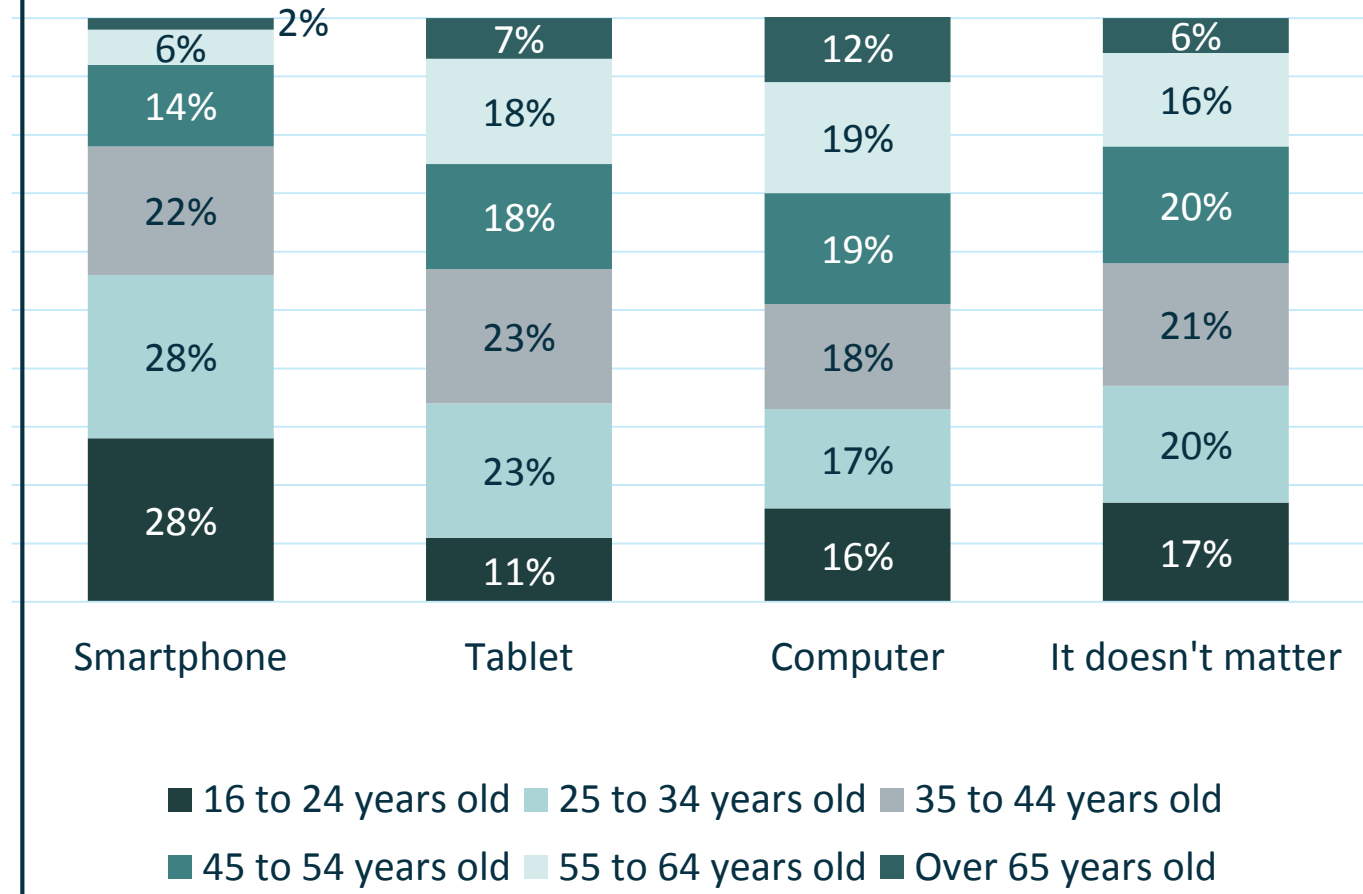
## DEVICE PREFERENCE BY AGE

**56%**

OF CONSUMERS WHO PREFER TO SHOP ON A SMARTPHONE ARE BETWEEN 16 AND 34 - COMPARED WITH JUST

**2%**

OF CONSUMERS OVER 65



All base  
Which is your preferred device when placing an order?  
How old are you?

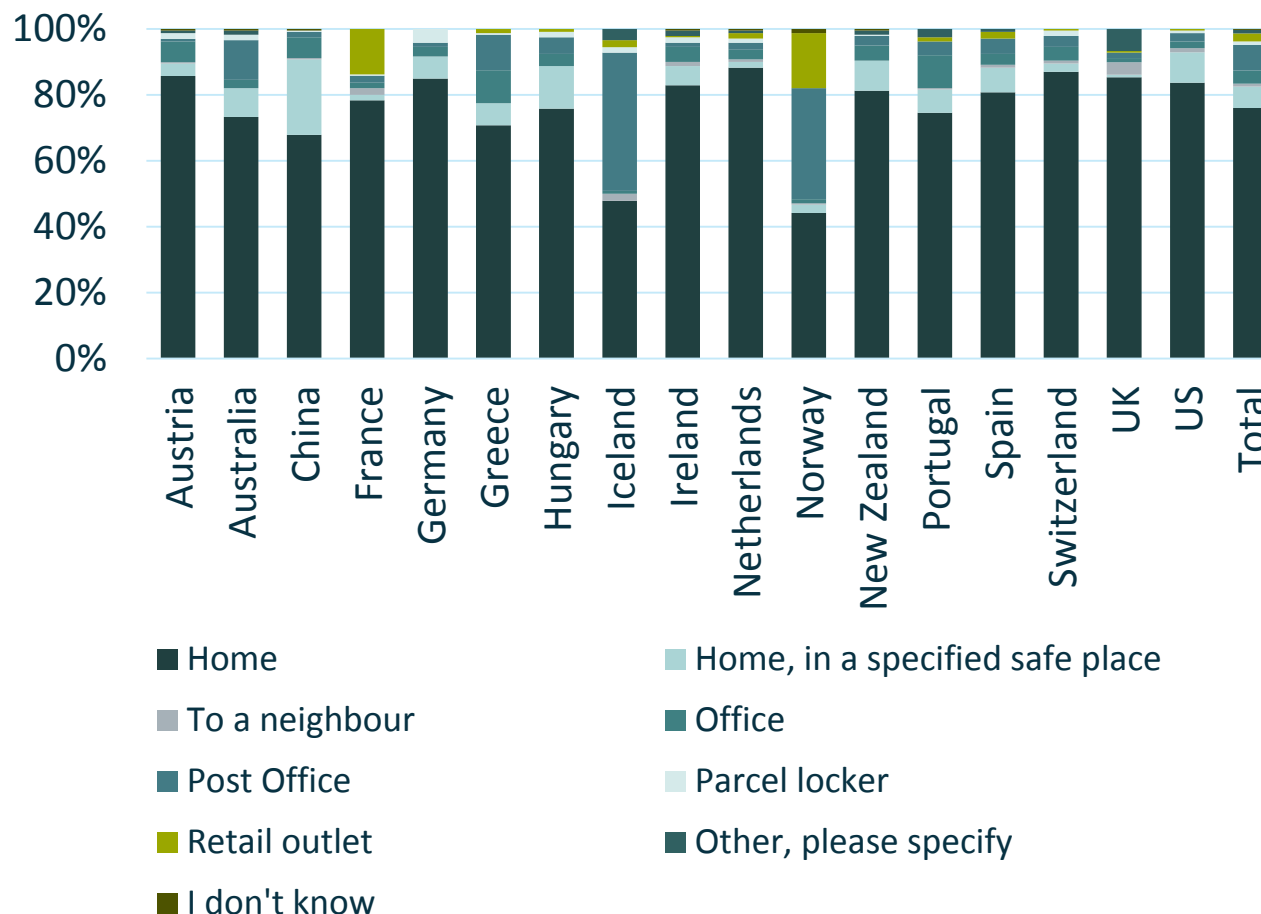


# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

## DELIVERY PREFERENCE

# 76%

OF CONSUMERS PREFER TO HAVE  
THEIR CROSS-BORDER PARCELS  
DELIVERED TO THEIR HOME ADDRESS



All base  
Which is your preferred option for the delivery of your parcels?  
Please specify your country



# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

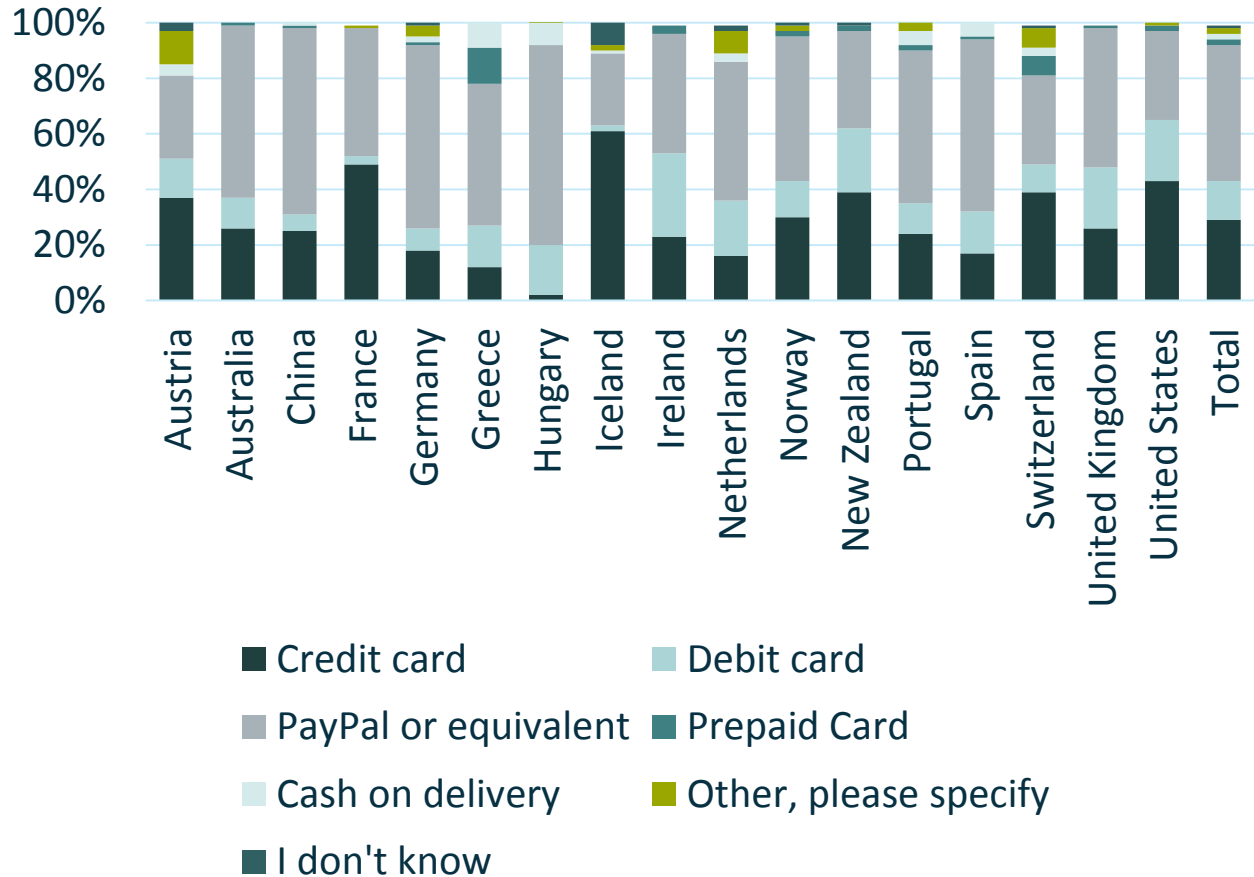
## PAYMENT PREFERENCE

49%

OF FREQUENT CROSS-BORDER  
ONLINE SHOPPERS PREFER TO PAY  
USING PAYPAL OR EQUIVALENT

43%

PREFER A CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD



All base  
Which is your preferred payment method?  
Please specify your country



# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

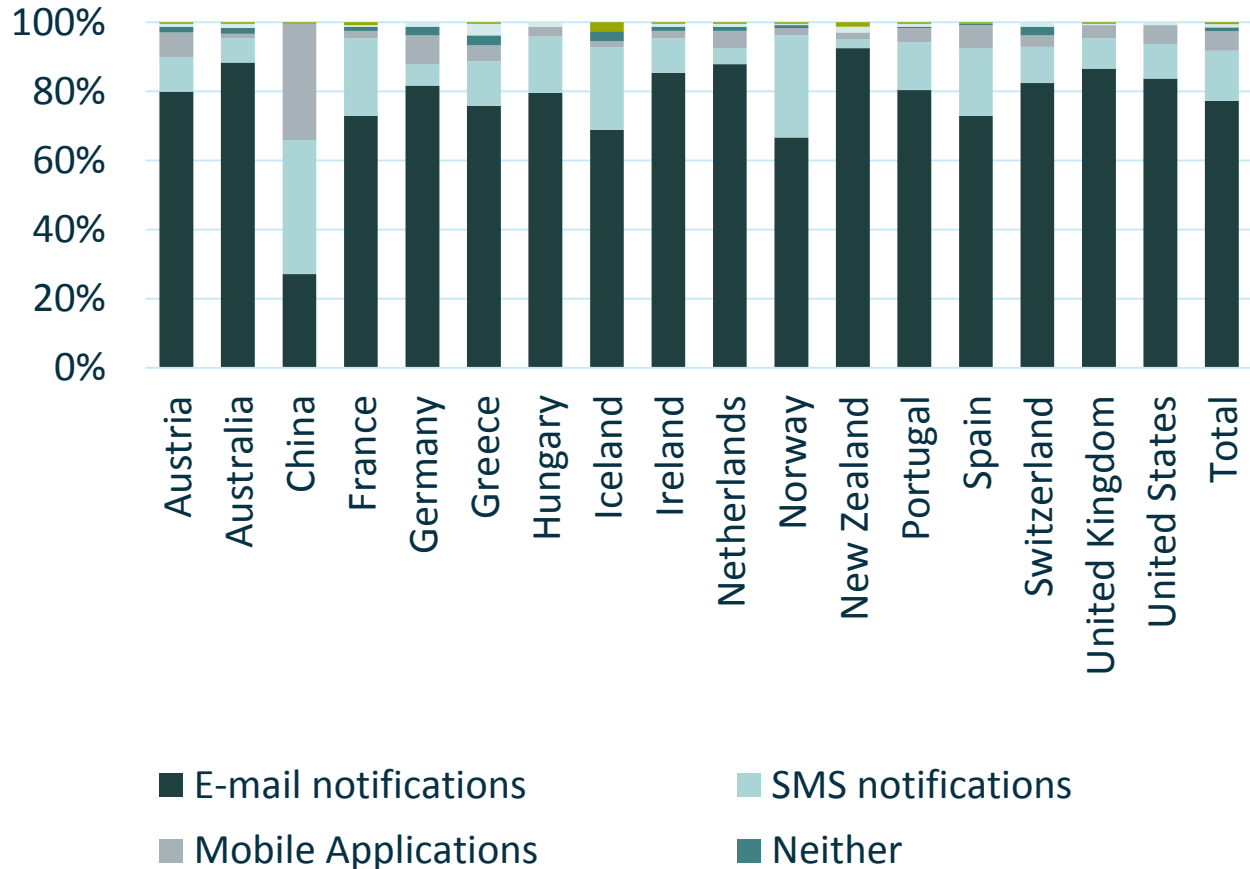
## COMMUNICATION CHANNEL PREFERENCE

77%

OF ALL SHOPPERS PREFER EMAIL FOR  
NOTIFICATION ON DELIVERY  
PROGRESS – HOWEVER IN CHINA

73%

PREFER SMS OR MOBILE APPS



All base  
Which is your preferred channel for receiving information on the state of the delivery of your parcels?  
Please specify your country



# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

## TRANSIT TIMES EXPECTATIONS - EUROPE

ONLY

# 45%

OF SHOPPERS ACCEPT CROSS-BORDER DELIVERY WITHIN EUROPE WILL TAKE MORE THAN 5 DAYS

	Next day	2-3 days	4-5 days	6-7 days	8-9 days	10 or more days	Don't Know
Into Europe – Within EU	2%	16%	<b>31%</b>	22%	12%	11%	6%

All base  
Which are your expectations in terms of number of days you would be willing to wait for your online orders to be delivered?



# CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

## TRANSIT TIMES EXPECTATIONS – ASIA / US / AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND

ONLY **42%**

OF SHOPPERS ACCEPT CROSS-BORDER DELIVERY INTO THE US WILL TAKE MORE THAN 7 DAYS

COMPARED TO **45%**

INTO AU AND NZ

	Next day	2-3 days	4-5 days	6-7 days	8-9 days	10 or more days	Don't Know
Into Asia	1%	3%	11%	12%	13%	42%	17%
Into US	2%	5%	14%	20%	17%	25%	17%
Into Australia / New Zealand	4%	10%	16%	20%	18%	27%	5%

All base

Which are your expectations in terms of number of days you would be willing to wait for your online orders to be delivered?





# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

THE FOLLOWING SLIDES REFER TO A PARTICULAR  
PURCHASE BOUGHT ONLINE

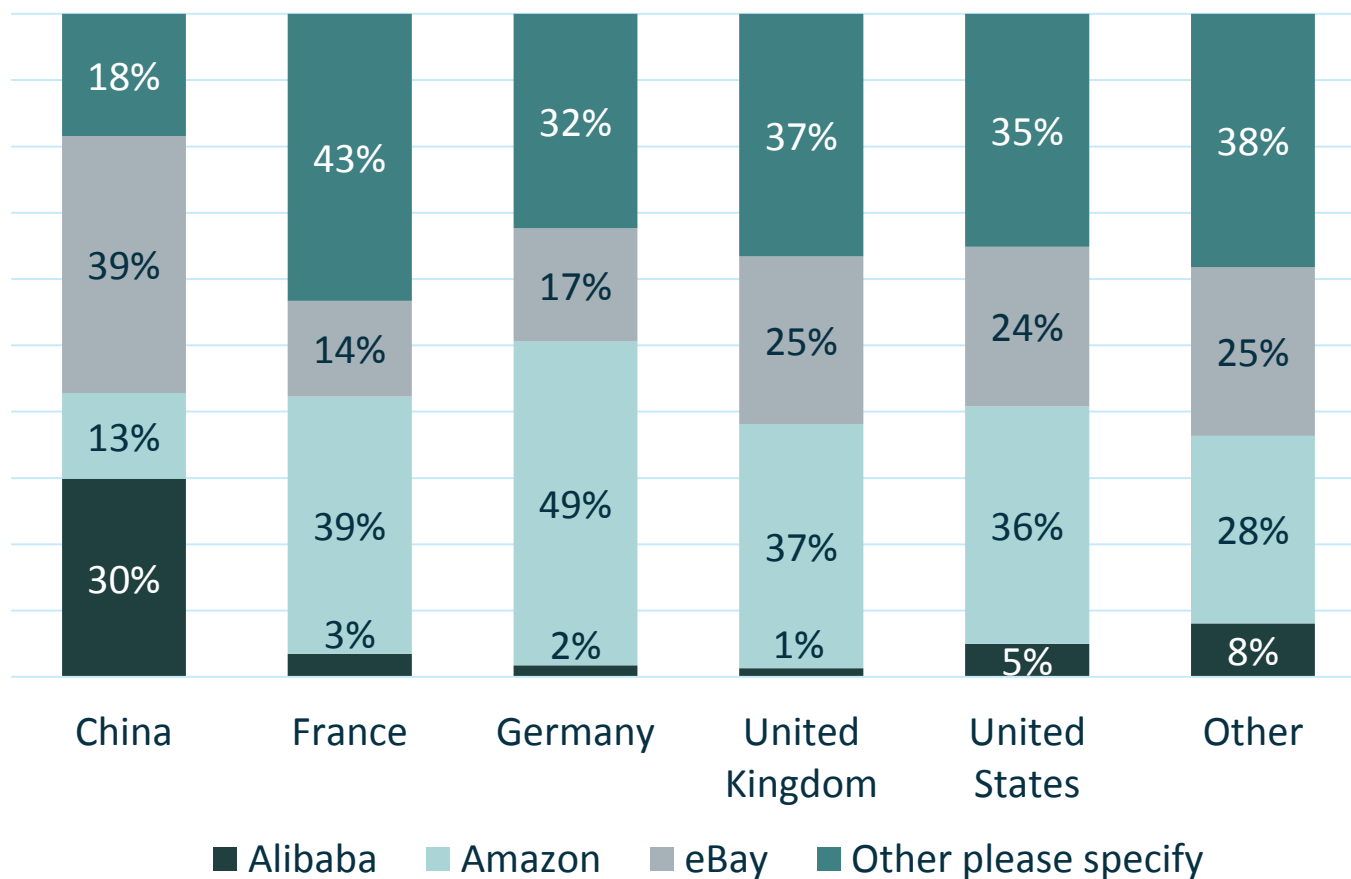


# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## MAIN CROSS-BORDER RETAILERS AND EXPORT MARKETS

# 80%

OF FREQUENT CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS BOUGHT GOODS FROM CHINA (29%), THE UK (19%), GERMANY (14%), THE US (13%) AND FRANCE (5%)



All base  
Please specify the country from which you bought this particular purchase?  
Please identify which retailer you bought this particular purchase from?



# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

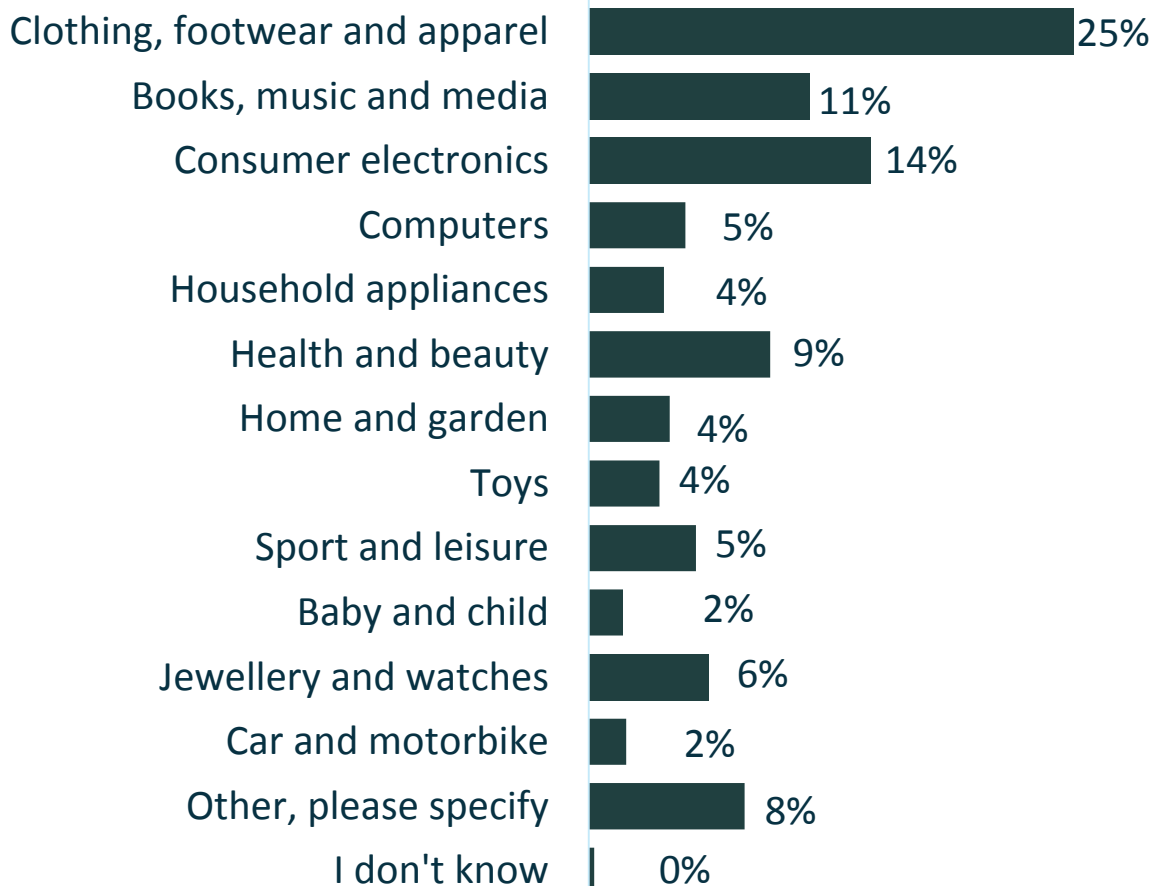
## CATEGORIES OF GOODS BOUGHT ONLINE

# 25%

OFTOTAL CROSS-BORDER SHOPPING  
WAS FOR CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR AND  
APPAREL FOLLOWED BY

# 14%

FOR CONSUMER ELECTRONICS



All base

For this particular parcel, please specify what category of goods you purchased?



# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

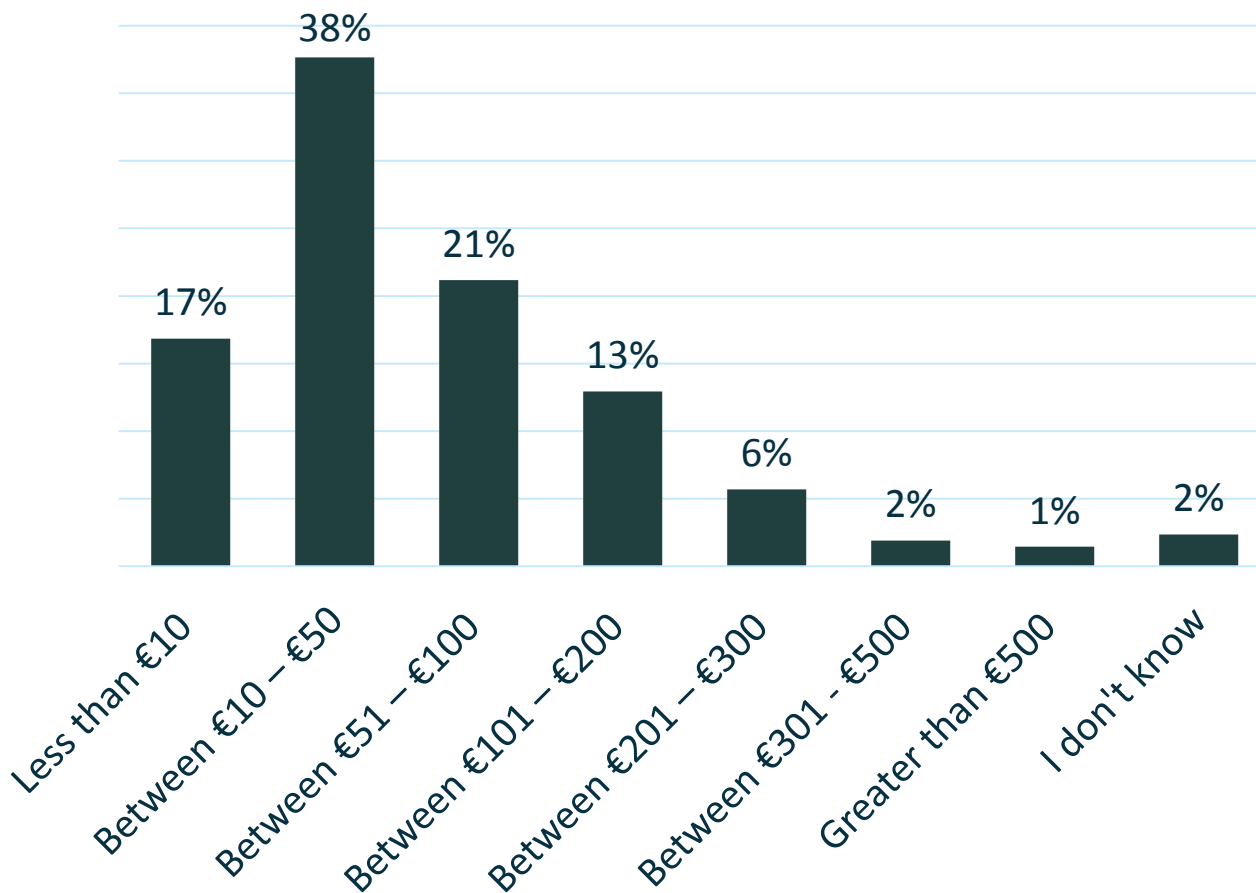
## COSTS OF GOODS PURCHASED CROSS-BORDER

# 59%

OF GOODS BOUGHT BY FREQUENT  
CROSS-BORDER ONLINE SHOPPERS  
COST BETWEEN €10 AND €100

ONLY **1%**

OF GOODS WERE VALUED OVER €500



All base  
Please specify the approximate costs of goods within this particular parcel



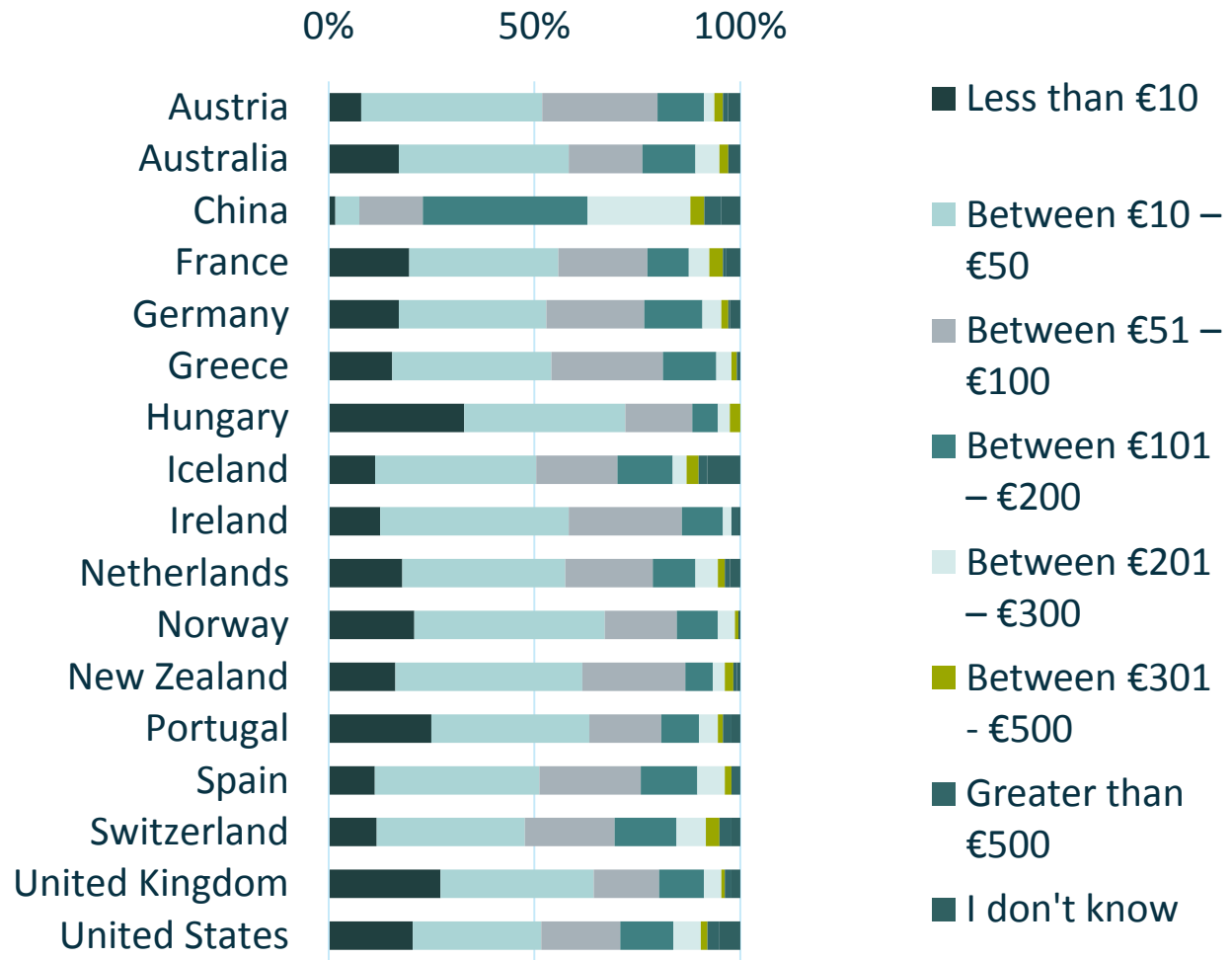
# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## COSTS OF GOODS PURCHASED CROSS-BORDER

IN CHINA THE VALUE OF CROSS-BORDER GOODS PURCHASED WAS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITH

**65%**

OF GOODS IMPORTED INTO CHINA BETWEEN €101 AND €300



All base  
Please specify the approximate costs of goods within this particular parcel  
Please specify your country

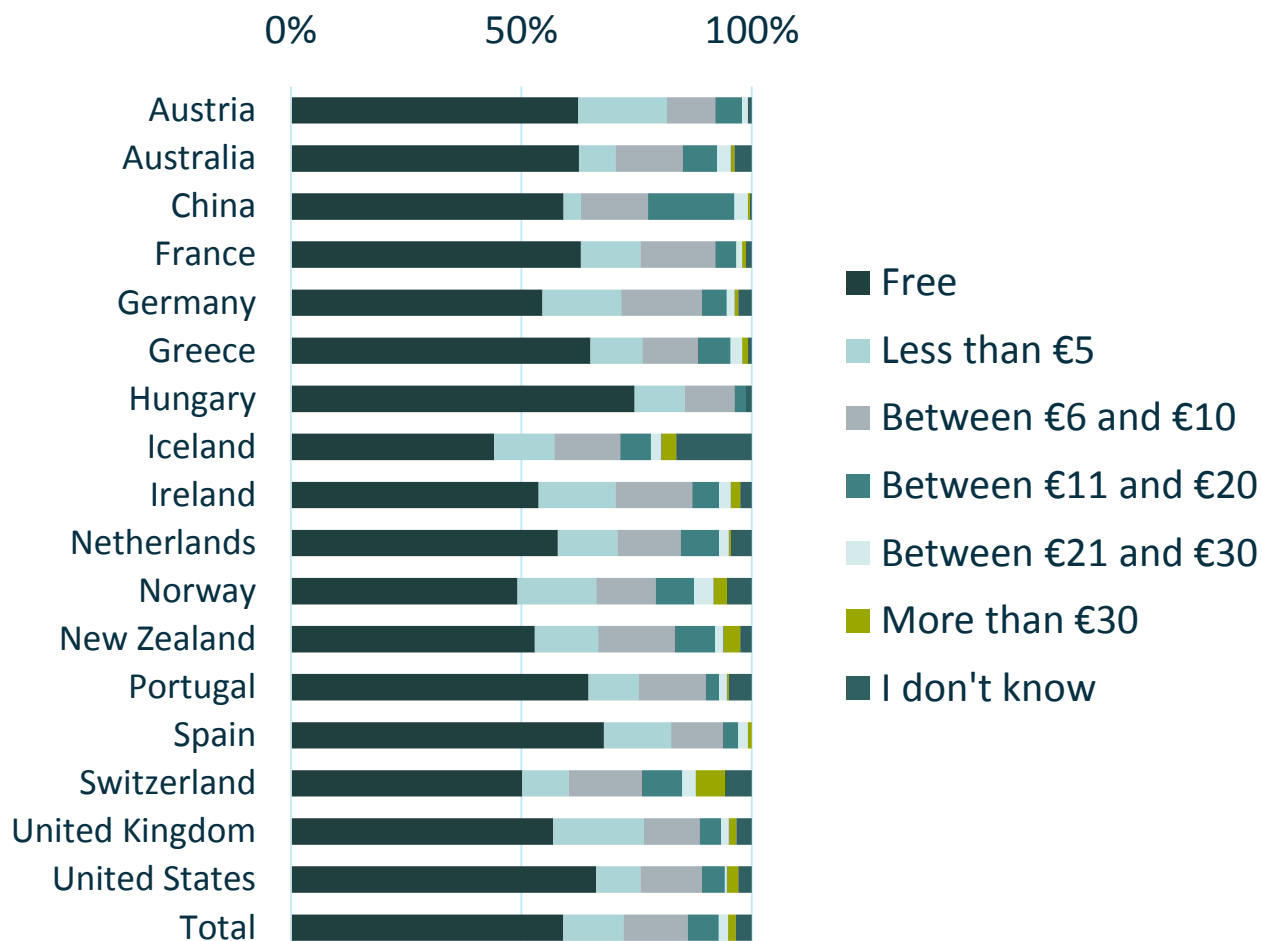


# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## SHIPPING COSTS

# 59%

OF ALL FREQUENT CROSS-BORDER  
ONLINE SHOPPERS WERE OFFERED  
FREE SHIPPING



All base

Please specify whether the shipping costs (in currency paid) for this particular parcel were:

Please specify your country



# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## RETURNS – HOW MANY PARCELS WERE RETURNED AND WHY

ONLY  
**4%**  
OF FREQUENT  
CROSS-BORDER SHOPPERS  
RETURNED ORDERS



N=148

What was the main reason you returned this parcel?



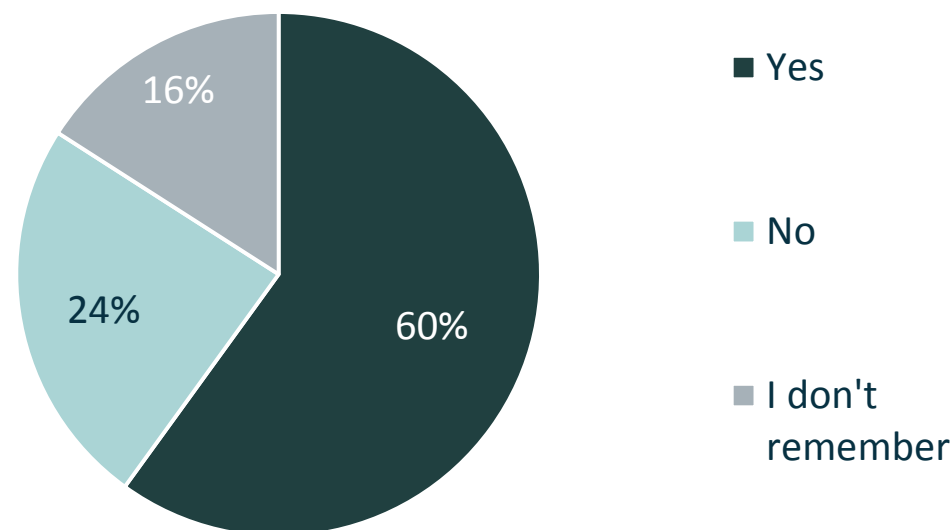
# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## VISIBILITY TO TRACK THE STATUS OF THE DELIVERY

TRACKING WAS AVAILABLE FOR JUST

# 60%

OF ITEMS PURCHASED BY FREQUENT  
CROSS-BORDER SHOPPERS



The tracking platform was integrated (N=2444):

On the e-retailer website	48%
On the delivery company website	40%
Other, please specify	3%
I don't know	9%

All base  
Were you offered visibility to track the status of your delivery for this particular purchase?  
The tracking platform offered was integrated... N=2444



# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

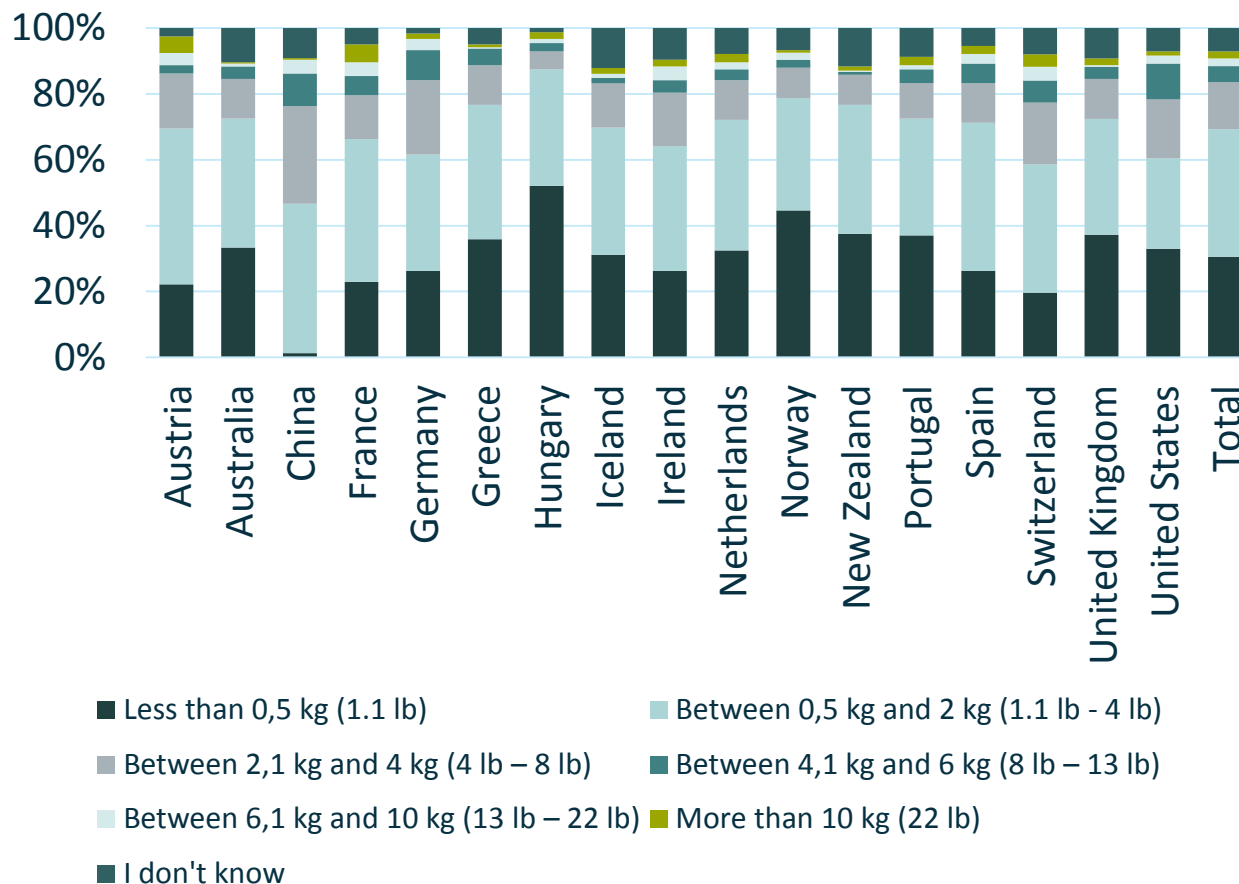
## WEIGHT OF PARCELS

**69%**

OF ALL CROSS-BORDER  
PARCELS WEIGHED  
LESS THAN 2 KG

**84%**

WEIGHED LESS THAN 4KG



All base  
What was the approximate weight of this particular parcel?  
Please specify your country



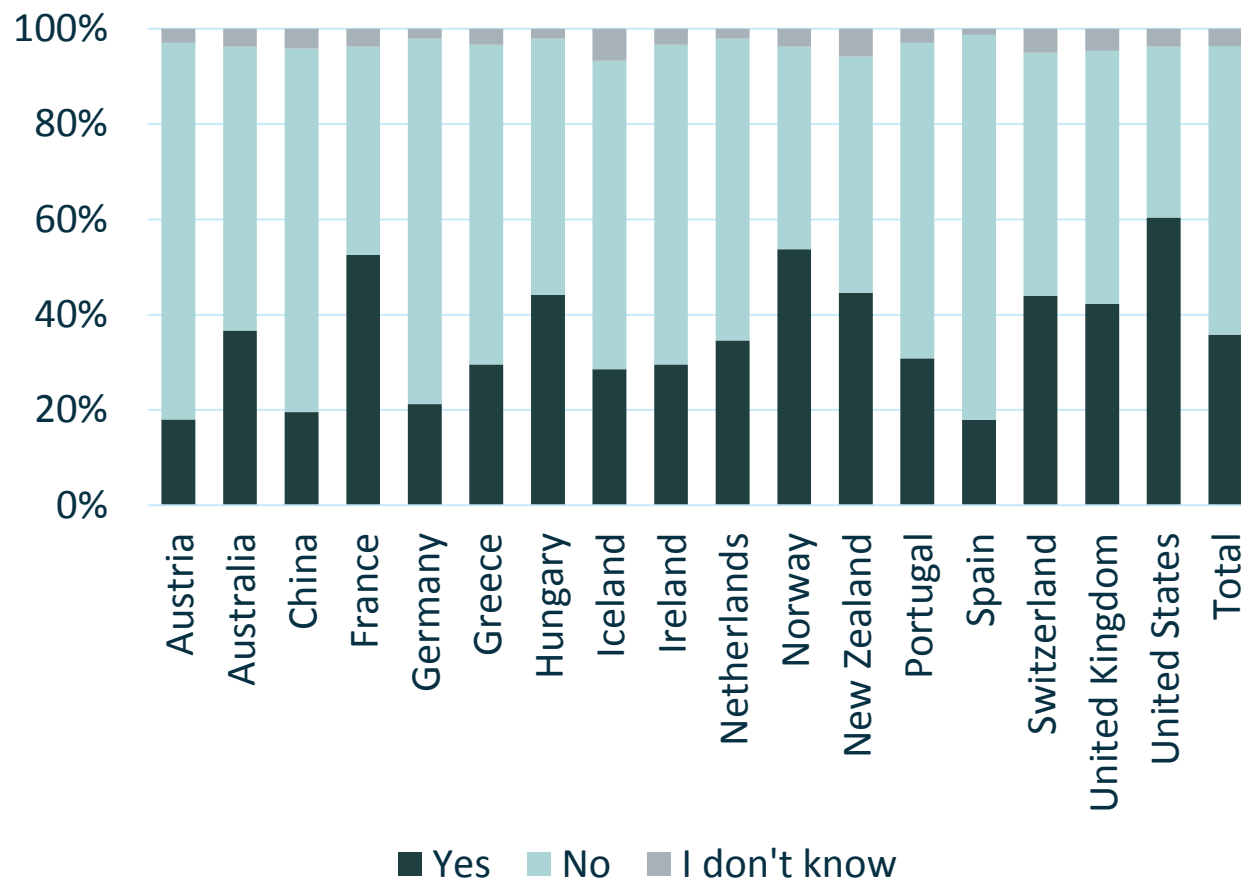


# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## SIZE OF PARCELS – DO THEY FIT IN A MAIL BOX / LETTER BOX

# 61%

OF CROSS-BORDER PARCELS  
DID NOT FIT THROUGH THE  
MAILBOX / LETTERBOX



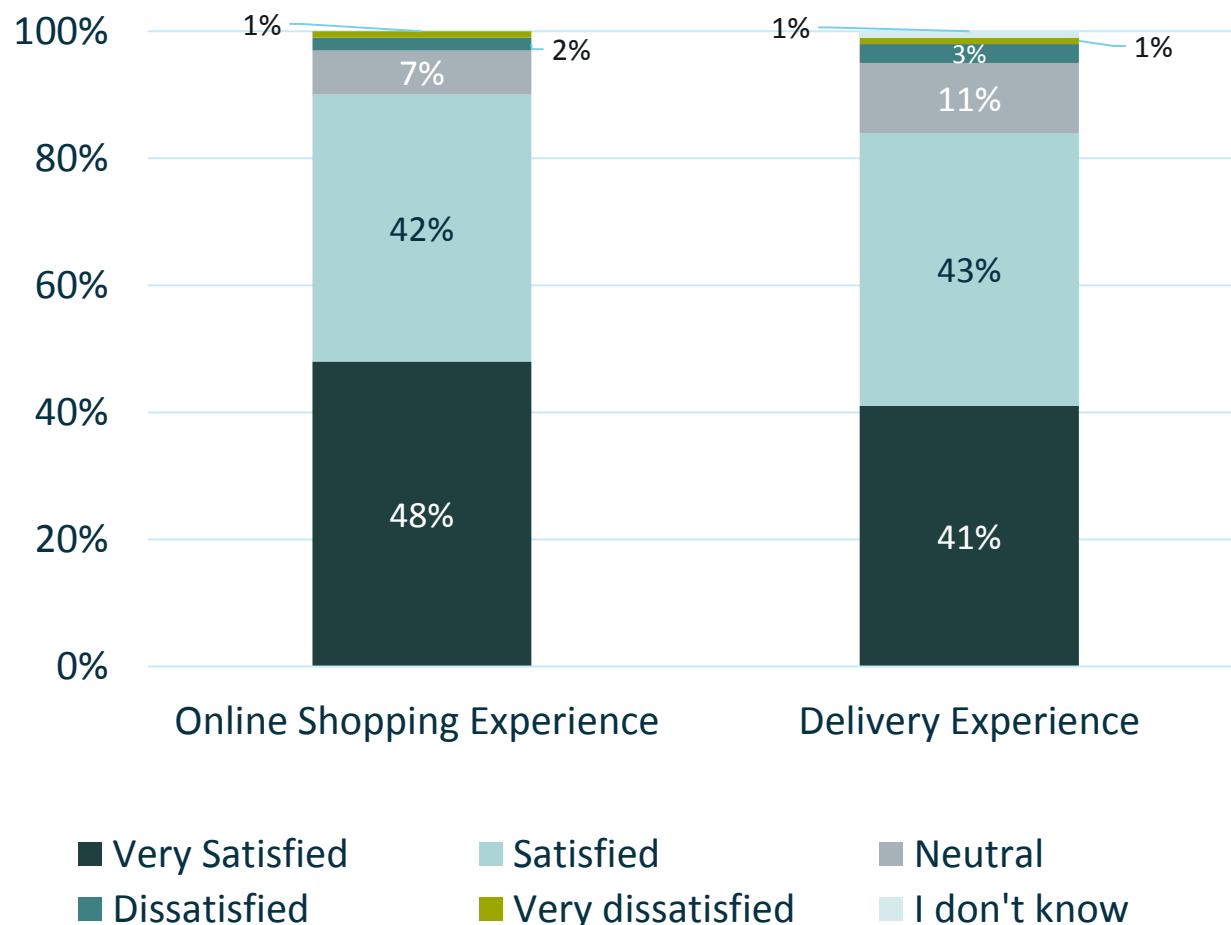
All base  
Did this particular parcel fit in your mailbox/letterbox?  
Please specify your country

# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## LEVEL OF SATISFACTION - OVERALL VS DELIVERY EXPERIENCE

84%

OF CROSS-BORDER SHOPPERS WERE  
EITHER VERY SATISFIED OR SATISFIED  
WITH THEIR DELIVERY EXPERIENCE



All base

How satisfied were you with the overall online shopping experience for this particular purchase?

How satisfied were you with the delivery experience for this particular purchase?



**International Post Corporation**

Avenue du Bourget 44

1130 Brussels, Belgium

Tel +32 (0)2 724 72 11

Fax +32 (0)2 724 72 32

[www.ipc.be](http://www.ipc.be)

© 2016 - ipc.be