



## Expedia.com – 2008 International Vacation Deprivation™ Survey Results

### History:

- This is the eighth year of the annual Expedia.com Vacation Deprivation™ survey which spotlights the growing trend of employed American workers not taking all of their vacation days. Starting in 2005, Expedia expanded the survey globally to compare and contrast vacationing habits internationally. In the 2008 Vacation Deprivation™ survey, vacation habits are analyzed among employed workers in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, and Austria.

### Why does Expedia.com care?

- Expedia.com believes that everyone deserves and needs a vacation. Regardless of the number of days people receive or how they want to take them, Expedia.com is a key vacation resource that connects travelers around the globe with great selection and prices for all of their vacation needs.
- Expedia.com has also launched a special site dedicated solely to this topic:  
[www.expedia.com/vacationdeprivation](http://www.expedia.com/vacationdeprivation).

***Please note: This document provides key international and domestic stats that should be credited to Expedia.com if used in the media. Please contact Erin Krause at 425.679.4317 or [press@expedia.com](mailto:press@expedia.com) to request an interview or clarify any of this information.***

*All surveys were conducted online by Harris Interactive®. One exception: The survey in Canada was fielded by Ipsos-Reid. See the end of the document for a full methodology statement.*

## United States

**Many U.S. employed adults may not be making full use of their vacation days and may not be getting sufficient time away from work. A substantial minority may be sacrificing vacation time for work. And more than one in four employed adults have trouble coping with stress from work at some point in the vacation cycle.**

- About one-third of employed U.S. adults (31%) usually do not take all of the vacation days they receive each year – representing a decrease from 35 percent reported in 2005, and 33 percent reported in 2006. Possible barriers to full use of vacation days include:
  - The need to schedule vacation time in advance (12%);
  - Getting money back for unused vacation days (11%); and,
  - Work is life and it's too hard to get away (9%).
- About two in five employed U.S. adults (37%) report regularly working more than 40 hours per week.
- As in 2007, a sizable minority – 24 percent – of employed adults check work email or voicemail while vacationing.
- About one in five employed adults also reported that they've cancelled or postponed vacation plans because of work (18%).
- Nearly two in five employed U.S. adults (39%) reported feeling better about their job and feeling more productive upon returning from vacation.
- Employed U.S. adults most commonly anticipate using the majority of their vacation time for 2007 by taking a power week (39%) (taking at least one full week of vacation and using the remaining time here and there); a much smaller number (14%) plan to take a full 2 week vacation in 2008.
- More than one-fourth of employed U.S. adults (29%) often have trouble coping with stress from work at some point during the vacation cycle.
- According to employed U.S. adults, employers could encourage them to take their allotted vacation time if:
  - Their boss encouraged them to take vacation time (22%)
  - Their company's vacation policies required a minimum number of vacation days to be taken (21%), flexible/unlimited number of vacation days (19%), or a fair vacation policy (12%).
  - Work loads were not so heavy (19%)
  - Their company's culture actually supported employees using their allotted vacation time (18%)
  - They were confident that taking a vacation would not be perceived negatively (17%)
  - Their boss actively helped them find resources to cover their job responsibilities while on vacation (17%)
  - Upper management demonstrated the importance of taking time off by taking their own vacation days (16%)

- There are non-work related aspects that would also prompt employed U.S. adults to take vacations.
- Top reasons include:
  - If a family event was scheduled (e.g., wedding, reunion, visit with family) (44%)
  - If they could afford to take a vacation (43%)
  - If they found a great deal on a vacation (e.g., flight, hotel, vacation package) (41%)
- More than one-third (35%) of employed U.S. adults are most likely to find summer (June, July, and August) to be the most convenient and least stressful time of year to take their vacations.

## **Employed U.S. Men VS Employed U.S. Women**

**Summary:** Employed men are still more likely than their female counterparts to work more than 40 hours per week and men receive about one more vacation day per year than women. Men are also more likely than women to check voicemail and email while on vacation. However, women are more likely than men to feel guilty about taking time off from work.

- Men are more likely than women to regularly work more than 40 hours per week (46% men vs. 27% women).
- Men and women, on average, receive 13-14 vacation days per year (14.1 men, 13.2 women).
- Men are more likely than women to take a 2-week vacation (16% men vs. 11% women).
- In addition, men are more likely than women to check work messages (email and voicemail) while on vacation (29% men vs. 19% women).
- However, women are more likely than men to feel guilty about taking time off from work (38% women vs. 28% men). This is in contrast to 2007 where men were more likely than women to feel guilty from taking time off work (39% men vs. 30% women).

## **Key Regional Findings in the U.S.:**

- Employed workers from the West are more likely than those residing in other regions of the country to usually not take all of their allotted vacation days (40% West vs. 26% Northeast, 27% Midwest, and 31% South).

## **International Stats**

- **Employed adults on average will earn the following number of vacation days in each country in 2008**  
*(Note: based upon the mean of results including people who did not receive vacation days)*
  - Employed adults in the United States on average receive about 14 vacation days per year, compared to 14 days in 2007 and 2006 and 12 days in 2005.
  - Employed adults in Canada on average receive about 17 vacation days per year.
  - Employed adults in Great Britain on average receive about 26 vacation days per year, compared to 24 days in 2007 and 2006 and 23 days in 2005.
  - Employed adults in France on average receive about 37 vacation days per year, compared to 36 days in 2007 and 39 days in 2006.
  - Employed adults in Germany on average receive about 27 vacation days per year, compared to 26 days in 2007 and 27 days in 2006.
  - Employed adults in Spain on average receive about 31 vacation days per year, compared to 30 vacation days in 2007.
  - Employed adults in Italy on average receive about 33 vacation days per year.
  - Employed adults in the Netherlands on average receive about 28 vacation days per year.
  - Employed adults in Austria on average receive about 28 vacation days per year.
  
- **Each employed adult on average will not take or will “leave on the table” the following number of days per country**  
*(Note: based upon the mean of results including people who did not take vacation days)*
  - Employed adults in the United States on average leave 3 vacation days per year on the table, compared to 3 days in 2007, 4 days in 2006 and 3 days in 2005.
  - Employed adults in Canada on average leave 1 vacation day per year on the table.
  - Employed adults in Great Britain on average leave 3 vacation days per year on the table, compared to 3 days in 2007 and 1 day in 2006.
  - Employed adults in France on average leave 2 vacation days per year on the table, compared to 3 days in 2007, 2 days in 2006, and 1 day in 2005.
  - Employed adults in Germany on average leave 2 vacation day per year on the table, compared to 1 day in 2007 and 2006.
  - Employed adults in Spain on average leave 4 vacation days per year on the table, compared to 2 days in 2007.
  - Employed adults in Italy on average leave 6 vacation days per year on the table.
  - Employed adults in the Netherlands on average leave 4 vacation days per year on the table.
  - Employed adults in Austria on average leave 4 vacation days per year on the table.

- **Percentage of employed adults who usually don't take all of their vacation days in each country**

(Note: based upon the mean results including people who did not receive vacation)

- Percentage of employed adults in the United States that usually don't take all of their vacation: 31%
  - 35% in 2007; 33% in 2006; 31% in 2005
- Percentage of employed adults in Great Britain that usually don't take all of their vacation: 23%
  - 24% in 2007; 19% in 2006; 21% in 2005
- Percentage of employed adults in France that usually don't take all of their vacation: 20%
  - 19% in 2007; 20% in 2006; 17% in 2005
- Percentage of employed adults in Germany that usually don't take all of their vacation: 19%
  - 17% in 2007; 21% in 2006; 18% in 2005
- Percentage of employed adults in Spain that usually don't take all of their vacation: 24%
- Percentage of employed adults in Italy that usually don't take all of their vacation: 47%
- Percentage of employed adults in the Netherlands that usually don't take all of their vacation: 49%
- Percentage of employed adults in Austria that usually don't take all of their vacation: 41%

<b>Global Primary Statistics</b>								
<i>Based upon the mean of all employed adults</i>	<b>USA</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>Austria</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>Italy</b>
<b>Amount of Vacation Days Received</b>	14	26	28	28	37	27	31	33
<b>Average Amount of Vacation Days Each Employed Person Gives Back</b>	3	3	4	4	2	2	4	6
<b>Estimated Vacation Days USA Gives Back Each Year</b>	<b>460 Million Vacation Days</b> (3 * 153,374,000 employed Americans - Bureau of Labor & Statistics)							
<b>Estimated Value of Vacation Days Given Back</b>	<b>\$65.52 billion</b> (460 million days * 8 hours * avg hourly wage of \$17.80 from the Bureau of Labor & Statistics)							

## **Who Vacations The Best? And the Worst?**

### **The Best:**

- France wins the distinction for receiving and taking the most vacation days out of those countries surveyed.
- Employed adults in France receive an average of 37 days of vacation each year, compared to 14 days for U.S. employed adults and 26 days for employed adults in Great Britain.
- And French workers take an average of 34 vacation days per year, compared to 13 days for U.S. employed adults and 23 days for employed adults in Great Britain.

### **The Worst:**

- Throughout the eight years that the Vacation Deprivation survey has been conducted, the U.S. has long-held the dismaying distinction of being the country with the worst vacationing habits. Employed adults in the United States receive the least vacation days per year (14 days). This year, however, workers in the Netherlands win the distinction for being the most likely to leave vacation days on the table (49%).

## **How did the countries fare overall?**

### **United States – Still gets the least and takes the least vacation.**

- **Supporting Statement:** Even though U.S. employed adults gained an average of 2 vacation days since 2005 (14 vacation days received on average in 2008, 2007, and in 2006, versus 12 days in 2005), they still received the least amount of vacation days among the countries surveyed. In fact, less than one-third (31%) do not always take all of their vacation days and it's estimated that U.S. employed adults will be giving back a total of 460 million vacation days in 2008. (*Note – see above chart for calculation.*)

### **Great Britain – The most under vacationed country in Europe.**

- **Supporting Statement:** On average, employed adults in Great Britain receive less vacation days (26 days) than employed adults in the other European countries surveyed (France – 37 days, Germany – 27 days, Spain – 31days, Italy – 33 days, The Netherlands – 28 days and Austria – 28 days).

### **France – The reigning vacation champions – receives and takes the most vacation days.**

- **Supporting Statement:** In 2008, employed French adults on average receive 37 vacation days (including both Conge payes and RTT days) and take 35 vacation days.

### **Germany – Vacation lovers, with the majority of employed adults leaving no vacation days on the table.**

- **Supporting Statement:** 81% of employed German adults leave zero vacation days on the table, more than employed adults in any other country surveyed. (France takes a close second place with 80%)

### **The Netherlands – Most likely to leave vacation days on the table.**

- **Supporting Statement:** Nearly one-half of employed Dutch (49%) do not usually take all of their vacation days (Italian workers are in second place with 47%).



## **Methodology Statements**

### ***All Countries – Except Canada***

Harris Interactive® fielded the online survey on behalf of Expedia.com between March 14 and March 18, 2008 among a nationwide cross-section of 1,617 employed adults aged 18+ in the United States. The European survey was conducted between March 19 and March 28, 2008 among nationwide cross-section of 506 employed adults aged 16+ in Great Britain, 527 employed adults aged 16+ in France, 467 employed adults aged 16+ in Germany, 578 employed adults aged 16+ in Spain, 588 employed adults aged 16+ in Italy, 459 employed adults aged 16+ in the Netherlands, and 579 employed adults aged 16+ in Austria. The European data were weighted to be representative of the total adult populations of each country on the basis of region, age, sex, education, income and propensity to be online. The U.S. data were weighted to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity and propensity to be online.

In theory, with probability samples of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results for the U.S. sample have a sampling error of plus or minus 2 percentage points, the results for the British, French, Italian, Austrian, and Spanish samples have a sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points and sampling error for the German and Netherlands sample is plus or minus 5 percentage points. This online sample is not a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

*Note: The Canadian data referenced in this was not gathered by Harris Interactive Inc.*

### ***Canada***

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Expedia from 03/25 to 03/28, 2008. This online survey of 2,032 employed adult Canadians was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.*

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