

## Press Release

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Marion Krämer-Bongartz  
GfK Marktforschung  
Energie & Umwelt  
Tel. +49 911 395-3014  
Fax +49 911 399-211  
marion.kraemer-  
bongartz@gfk.com

Ursula Fleischmann  
Corporate Communications  
Tel. +49 911 395-2745  
Fax +49 911 395-4041  
ursula.fleischmann@gfk.com

### **GfK Global Green Index – How green are German consumers really?**

**Nuremberg, November 16, 2011 – When it comes to sustainable consumption, considerations of cost and use generally outweigh concern for the environment. However, in other areas, such as the national energy supply or waste disposal/recycling, Germans have a decidedly higher awareness of green issues. These are the findings of the latest GfK Global Green Index, a new representative survey carried out by GfK Marktforschung in October 2011.**

Not least since the Fukushima reactor disaster has German consumer awareness once again turned the spotlight on green issues. Since August 2011, the GfK Global Green Index has been measuring the central issues relating to environmental awareness. In addition to general attitudes, the survey also shows whether and to what degree consumers are prepared to carry the cost of eco-friendly habits. The individual findings have been summarized in the GfK Global Green Index, the most recent GfK analysis of the environmental awareness of the German population.

### **Consumption and production: consumers will have to pay more for eco-friendly products**

When buying, the majority of the German population does not check whether a product has been manufactured in an environmentally compatible process, or if it carries the corresponding organic or eco-friendly seals. However, one in two Germans signalled a willingness to pay a higher price for products produced in a more eco-friendly way or whose use is less detrimental to the environment than other products.

### **Energy supply: Germans want energy, but not nuclear power**

The ramifications of Fukushima and the energy-political debate it sparked in Germany are reflected most in the statements made concerning this issue. More than 70% of Germans are currently prepared to accept an expansion of the German power grid in their immediate vicinity, but only if this contributes to the end of nuclear power plants. In principle, as many as 80% of Germans are even of the opinion that the use of nuclear power plants cannot be justified in the long run, on account of the still unresolved problem

GfK SE  
Nordwestring 101  
90419 Nuremberg

Tel. +49 911 395-0  
Fax +49 911 395-2209  
public.relations@gfk.com  
www.gfk.com

Management Board:  
Prof. Dr. Klaus L. Wübbenhorst  
(CEO)  
Pamela Knapp (CFO)  
Dr. Gerhard Hausrucking  
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Debra A. Pruent

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of what to do with the spent radioactive material. Beyond this, the frequently mentioned issue of a secure power supply is an argument in favour of nuclear power accepted only by the minority. In fact, on the contrary, virtually 70% believe that renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, could entirely replace nuclear power.

### **Waste disposal/ recycling: Germans are setting a good example**

In the matter of separation of waste materials, by their own admission, German behavior is generally exemplary. More than 80% of those surveyed said that they were highly motivated separating their waste and put it into the right bins for disposal or take it to a recycling plant. Again, more than 80% are already making a conscious effort to cut down on waste from the outset by buying refillable packs. However, only one in three Germans said they were prepared to pay higher charges for environmentally compatible disposal of domestic, bulky and special waste.

### **Domestic energy: any measures to be taken must be viable**

In Germany, the willingness to undertake energy efficiency measures, such as installing heat insulation, is strongly contingent on the additional costs payable. A total of 80% of Germans would only be prepared to institute such measures if they were economically viable. When buying energy efficient domestic equipment, at least 60% said that in general, they would only be prepared to pay more if this would reduce their own energy consumption.

### **Mobility and tourism: one third of Germans sometimes leave their cars at home**

Even in individual areas like mobility and tourism, considerations of cost and use play a decisive role for consumers. On the question of whether the use of public transport might be promoted, for example, by raising car tax, as many are currently in favour as are against. Yet one in three Germans quite often leave their cars at home and use alternative means of transport. However, when booking vacations, green issues are not yet uppermost in the minds of most Germans, with just 20% saying that they would choose their destinations according to whether or not they practised environmentally sustainable tourism.

### **Commitment to environmental protection: still some way to go**

Only a minority of consumers are actively committed to environmental protection. Just 14% of Germans give regular support to nature protection organizations, with 15% actively engaged in environmental protection projects in their region.



### **GfK Global Green Index**

The individual findings for all the subject areas have been compacted into index values. A glance at the current indicators shows that the environmental awareness of German consumers differs greatly from one subject area to another. While awareness of green issues in terms of energy supply and waste disposal/recycling is above-average, it is below average in the areas of consumption, domestic energy, commitment to environmental protection and tourism. The index rating for mobility records average environmental awareness, so that the views for and against individual criteria are currently balancing each other out.

The GfK Global Green Index is composed of individual indices aggregated into one overall value. Since the individual indicators vary greatly, it follows that in spite of some positive individual ratings, there is still significant potential for improvement.

The table below gives the values for the individual indicators for October 2011:

	October 2011 Range between 0 and 200 points
Consumption and production	60.0
Energy supply	149.3
Waste disposal/recycling	171.9
Domestic energy	35.0
Mobility	110.8
Tourism	39.2
Commitment to environmental protection	20.5
<b>GfK Global Green Index</b>	<b>90.6</b>

### **The survey**

These findings are extracted from the survey conducted by GfK and the GfK Verein. They are based on approximately 2,000 personal interviews with private households conducted in August and October 2011.

Further information: Marion Krämer-Bongartz, tel.: +49 911 395-3014, marion.kraemer-bongartz@gfk.com



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Responsible under press legislation  
GfK SE, Corporate Communications  
Marion Eisenblätter  
Nordwestring 101  
90419 Nuremberg  
Germany  
Tel. +49 911 395-2645  
Fax +49 911 395-4041  
[public.relations@gfk.com](mailto:public.relations@gfk.com)