



Press Release

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Climate change stimulates domestic demand

Findings of a GfK survey on "The impact of climate change on consumption"

Nuremberg, April 2, 2007 – One in two German consumers believes that climate scientists have given a realistic portrayal of the worldwide consequences of global warming. More than a third of Germans even believe that the actual situation is already worse than indicated by the scientists. Only a minority of 13% believe the environmental debate to be highly exaggerated. The majority of consumers aim to counteract climate change by taking steps themselves, particularly by investing in more environmentally-friendly technology in the home. This is likely to stimulate domestic demand in future. These are the findings of the survey carried out by GfK-Nürnberg e.V.

German consumers are largely in agreement that climate change is on the way. 50% believe that scientific portrayals of the subject are realistic and 35% of Germans are even of the opinion that the actual situation is already worse than this. Only a minority of 13% believe the environmental debate to be highly exaggerated, however, in this, there is a clear division of opinion between East and West Germany. In what was previously West Germany, just under 12% of consumers believe the debate to be highly overrated, whereas in the new federal states, the figure is almost a fifth.

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Opinions on climate change in %

	Total	Former West Germany	New federal states
I think the portrayal of climate change and its consequences for the entire population of the earth is realistic	50.2	50.3	50.1
I think climate change is already worse today than scientists say	34.7	35.8	30.6
I think the whole climate change and global warming debate is highly exaggerated	13.2	11.8	18.7
Don't know	1.9	2.2	0.6

Source: GfK-Nürnberg e.V. 2007

Active steps to counteract climate change at home and when shopping

What's good for the climate is also good for the German economy: in future, consumers will stimulate domestic demand with their intentions to change their own shopping habits and investing in environmentally-friendly technology for the home.

However, what exactly can Germans do to help the environment? Four out of five consumers intend to stop keeping their electrical appliances on standby and replacing traditional light bulbs with the energy-saving variety, which use less power (59%) and finding regional products on the shelves (57%) to cut down on energy consumption and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Adapting mobility to climate change

However, when it comes to mobility, consumers are rather less willing to take steps against global warning. Buying a more economic new or used car and driving less are future options which just under one in three consumers are considering, certainly more often in what was formerly West Germany than in the new federal states. At 35%, more women than men (29%) are apparently willing to give up their cars. 35% of consumers stated that they intended to take fewer flights in future and in this respect, consumers in the higher income brackets and older pensioners (38% each group) said they were willing to change their living habits.

Intention to change habits in %

In future, I will definitely/probably ...	Total	Former West Germany	New federal states
...stop keeping electrical appliances on standby	80.5	80.9	79.0
...replace traditional light bulbs with energy saving ones	77.4	79.6	68.7
...buy new domestic appliances which use less power	58.5	59.0	56.3
...give preference to buying regional products	57.1	57.5	55.5
...take fewer flights than before	35.0	35.2	34.3
...buy a more economic car	32.3	34.0	25.7
...drive less	31.8	33.5	25.2
...cut down on heating	31.4	32.5	26.7
...improve the heat insulation in my apartment/house	24.9	25.8	21.2
...eat less meat than before	21.5	22.2	19.0
...install a more economic heating system	15.7	17.2	9.7

Source: GfK-Nürnberg e.V. 2007



Better heat insulation and heating at home

Here again, just under one third of German consumers regard keeping their homes at a lower temperature as another possible way of cutting their energy consumption. Improving the heat insulation of an apartment or house is another intention one in four consumers say they will be actively pursuing in the future. Another 16% of Germans want to contribute to the savings by installing a new heating system, particularly in the Western part of Germany, where 17% were prepared to make this type of investment, while in the new states, the figure was just below a tenth. In this sector, in particular, there is still a high level of potential in Germany, since three out of four apartments were built before 1980 and a proportion of these still have inadequate heat insulation.

Another possible way of reducing the emission of greenhouse gases is to cut meat consumption, since mass animal husbandry generates substantial volumes of methane gas in the atmosphere. Like carbon dioxide, methane contributes to global warming. At least one in five consumers are currently prepared to cut down on meat consumption – women (28%) markedly more so than men (15%).

The survey

In the context of the survey on “The impact of climate change on consumption” commissioned by GfK-Nürnberg e.V. in March 2007, GfK Marktforschung surveyed a total random sampling of 2,075 consumers in Germany. The survey is representative of 64.9 million German consumers aged 14+.

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GfK-Nürnberg e.V.

GfK-Nürnberg e.V. was established in 1934 and is a society promoting the development of market research with a membership of approx. 600 companies and individual members. The purpose of the society is to develop the principles of research, to promote the education and training of market researchers and to carry out regular surveys in Europe and throughout Europe to be made available to members of the society. With a stake of over 57%, GfK-Nürnberg e.V. is the majority shareholder of GfK Aktiengesellschaft. For details, visit www.gfk-verein.com.



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