



Press release

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The challenge of sustainability: How consumers fight for their values in everyday life

New GfK Sustainability for October 2022 published

Nuremberg, November 10, 2022 – Despite permanent crises and high inflation, consumers in Germany continue to buy sustainably and are still willing to pay higher prices for sustainable products. However, the new GfK Sustainability Index shows that consumers have more difficulty maintaining their value standards for everyday necessities.

Despite the current crises, sustainability remains relevant: This is reflected by the GfK Sustainability Index for October 2022, which remains stable with a current value of 39.7. It thereby has risen back to the level of April 2022 after a value of 39.2 in July.

Sustainable consumption for major purchases

26 percent of Germans have made major purchases with sustainability in mind in the last twelve months. In particular, young people between the ages of 18 and 39 and consumers with higher incomes continue to buy sustainably.

The current GfK Consumer Climate Index for October shows that the general propensity to consume has stabilized at a low level. The propensity to buy sustainable products also remains stable: Just as in July, 27 percent of people still plan to pay attention to sustainability when making major purchases over the next twelve months.

More Germans buy sustainably, but less frequent

Almost three quarters of Germans (70 percent) said in October that they had bought sustainable everyday products in the last month. In July, the figure stood at 66 percent. The proportion of Germans planning to buy sustainable FMCG products in the next four weeks remained almost stable at 66 percent.

"Despite smaller budgets, consumers remain true to their values and continue to buy sustainably," notes **Petra Süptitz, sustainability and**

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consumer insights expert at GfK. "Nevertheless, we are observing the effects of smaller wallets: consumers are now reaching for sustainable everyday products less frequently than a few months ago." In July, for example, 26 percent of consumers stated they frequently bought sustainable products. In October, by contrast, only 23 percent did so. Instead, almost half (47 percent) now only occasionally buy sustainable products. This is a significant increase compared to 40 percent in July.

Consumers invest in energy-saving products

Sustainable products are often more expensive than conventional alternatives. When it comes to larger purchases, the proportion of those consumers who plan to buy and are willing to pay a higher price for a sustainable product has risen significantly to 75 percent, up from 68 percent in July. "Because of skyrocketing energy prices, consumers are currently looking specifically for energy-saving products such as household appliances. They are accepting a higher purchase price for these more sustainable products," says **Petra Süptitz**, explaining the growth. "On the other hand, there are fewer opportunities for financial compensation in the case of food or hygiene articles, and here consumers are saving on purchases." In the case of everyday products, the proportion of consumers who want to buy sustainably and are prepared to dig deeper into their pockets to do so has decreased from 69 to 66 percent.

The GfK Sustainability Index has been published for the third time. It is released every three months. The next GfK Sustainability Index is expected to be available in February 2022.

Information on the survey

The GfK Sustainability Index shows the importance of sustainability aspects in purchasing decisions for major purchases as well as fast-moving consumer goods and measures changes. The index covers past purchases under sustainability aspects, planned purchases and the willingness to pay a higher price for sustainable products. For this purpose, GfK surveys a representative group of about 1,000 consumers in Germany every three months.

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