



GERMAN CONSUMERS: In the Middle

Greendex Score: 50.2 (Rank: Tied for 7th of 14)

German consumers' overall Greendex falls right in the middle of the rankings, though among wealthy countries they are virtually tied with consumers in Great Britain and Australia for the highest ranking.

German respondents score highest among Western countries for **household** sustainability. They are the most likely to live in residences that have undergone efficiency upgrades in recent years (e.g., 41% have gotten insulation in recent years, 44% thermal windows, and 26% energy-saving heating), and — among G7 countries — have one of the smallest household footprints (40% have three rooms or fewer). German respondents are also the most likely of all those surveyed to minimize the use of fresh water often or all the time. Finally, Germans are second only to Australians in reporting that green electricity is easily or generally available to them (44%).

Transportation: As is the case with their counterparts in other developed countries, most German consumers own or lease one or more cars/trucks, and 50% drive alone daily (above average). Germans put more mileage on their cars/trucks each year than other consumers surveyed, and just 18% take public transportation daily (below average). On a positive note, however, a third of Germans with bicycles say they used their bikes somewhat or a lot more last year vs. the prior year.

German consumers fare well on the **food** sub-index, with frequent consumption of locally produced food. By contrast, however, 72% drink bottled water daily, by far the highest among countries surveyed. Though not part of the index, German consumers report the highest availability of organic meats, fruits, and vegetables, along with Britons.

German consumers rank 10th of 14 on the **goods** sub-index, with mixed performance on the factors comprising this score. They are below average in their frequency of avoiding environmentally unfriendly products (13% do all the time) and buying environmentally friendly products (8%), and are among the most likely to own laundry machines and dishwashers. However, 53% always recycle, and 51% always use their own shopping bags, both among the highest for countries surveyed.

Attitudinally, German consumers are less likely than others to say that they are working hard to reduce their own negative environmental impact; they are also less concerned about environmental problems in general and about the effects of global warming in particular. These findings may reflect the fact that environmental priorities were institutionalized in Germany well before most (if not all) other countries.

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