

Germans Prefer To Buy Used, Rather Than New Cars

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A comparative study of the European car market in the aftermath of the scrappage scheme

Findings of the 2010 GfK Consumption Trend Sensor survey conducted by the GfK Association

Now that most of the scrappage or environmental schemes which applied in many European countries have expired, development in the European automotive markets is proving to be extremely diverse.

While consumers in France, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Poland favor used cars, the desire for a new car is more pronounced in Italy, Spain and Russia.

These are the findings of the current GfK Consumption Trend Sensor 2010 survey carried out by the GfK Association in 9 countries.

New or used?

When the scrappage or environmental schemes expired, marked differences became evident on the automotive markets of the individual countries. In Italy, 12% of consumers said they were aiming to buy a new car in the next two years, with only 4% expressing a preference for a used car.

In Spain and Russia also (7% and 5% respectively), the majority of potential buyers said they intended to buy a new car, while conversely, in France (20%), the UK (19%), the Netherlands (13%), Germany (11%) and Poland (9%), a clear preference for used cars was expressed.

Only the Austrians favored used and new cars to more or less the same degree (15% and 12%). Different countries, different drive systems

Consumers in Austria (7%), France (6%) and Spain (5%) are particularly keen on cars with a diesel engine. In Russia and the UK, on the other hand, 6% of consumers plumped for a new car with a petrol engine.

At 4% for each type, Italians expressed themselves to be equally in favor of petrol, diesel and LPG drive systems when considering buying a car.

Only in France and the Netherlands do more than 1% of potential car buyers consider cars with alternative systems, such as hybrid or electric.

As Raimund Wildner, Managing Director of the GfK Association, comments: "In Germany, the scrappage scheme generated a steep increase in purchases of smaller cars with petrol engines, but now, diesel engines are set to catch up again."

The majority of individuals planning on buying a car are men under 40

In the nine European countries surveyed, it was men under 40 in particular, who were planning on buying a new or used car (12% resp. 16%) within the next two years. Conversely, only 9% of women under 40 said they were intending to buy a new car, while 15% of potential female buyers said they would prefer a used car.

The majority of younger male Britons (16%), Spaniards and Italians (14%), Russians (14%) and French (12%) favored a new car. The desire for a used car was more frequently expressed by younger men in the UK (33%), France (32%), the Netherlands (28%), Austria (26%) and Germany (18%).

The survey

These findings are taken from the 2010 GfK Consumption Trend Sensor. A total of around 10,200 consumers in nine European countries comprising Germany, France, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Spain, Poland and Russia were surveyed for the study on behalf of the GfK Association.

The survey is representative of 439 million private Europeans consumers aged upwards from 14 or 15 years. The study reveals the basic trends in private consumption in the nine European countries surveyed.

The GfK Association

For further information, visit www.gfk-association.org

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