

# Belief in fuel-efficient petrol engines on the rise

Survey by “Produkt + Markt“

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**Osnabrueck. So much for e-cars: The number of German motorists who consider fuel-efficient petrol-powered cars to be the future has increased significantly over the course of the past five years.**

Are fuel-efficient petrol engines the future? Five years ago, only 11 per cent of respondents thought so; now there are 29 per cent. This is the result of a nationwide survey on motorcar mobility conducted by the polling firm Produkt + Markt from Wallenhorst.

Even though everyone is talking about them, e-cars still have a hard time winning ground in Germany. According to the survey, which compares today's results to responses from 2012, 28 per cent (plus 2 per cent) of motorists do believe in this technology. However, the e-car industry is far from experiencing a noticeable boost. One must not be misled by success messages. Admittedly, in Germany, the number of new registrations of electric vehicles from the passenger car sector has never been as high as during the first four months of 2017 (6,473 vehicles). However, this number still makes up just a small fraction (less than 1 per cent) of the total number of new registrations nationwide; in comparison, i.e. in Norway one in four newly registered vehicles is an e-car. — And all that despite the „National Development Plan for Electric Mobility“ issued by the Merkel government, which pursues the ambitious political objective to have about 1 million electric vehicles on Germany's roads by 2020.

In Germany, owners of cars powered by petrol or diesel are far from being completely unconcerned about the environment. According to the study, about one in two of them is seriously worried about air pollution caused by motor traffic. Only one in ten respondents does not care about this issue. This undertone is expressed even more clearly when it comes to their own car. More than 50 per cent of respondents claim they would feel notably better if they drove a car with lower exhaust emissions. 63 per cent are even in favour of smog-related driving bans for vehicles with high particulate emissions. According to the study, a majority of respondents consider e-car technology „exciting“ (57 per cent), and view appropriate funding as „a step in the right direction“ (56 per cent). 15 per cent vindicate the rather radical point of view that only electric vehicles should be sold now.

Nevertheless, the respondents also did acknowledge the disadvantages of e-cars, such as their limited range (84 per cent), the small number of charging stations (83 per cent), or higher purchase prices (83 per cent). About half of the respondents claimed that they would need a lot more information before being able to determine whether an e-car was for them. Particularly the power consumption and the concomitant cost of energy are a closed book for three out of four car owners.

By the way: Compared to 12 per cent in 2012, the current survey shows that natural gas has taken a back seat in the respondents' heads in terms of future-relevant fuel for cars (2 per cent). While hybrids also lose 5 percentage points, they do retain a relatively stable spot (29 per cent) in the leading group.

According to their own accounts, Produkt + Markt, the conductor of this study on electric mobility, is one of the largest owner-managed market research institutes in Germany.

By Dr. Berthold Hamelmann