



Press Release

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Majority of Japanese lose confidence in nation's nuclear plant safety and are critical of handling of crisis

Recent AP-GfK Poll also finds there is still some public support for nuclear power

Nuremberg, September 1, 2011 – The earthquake, subsequent tsunami and the consequential nuclear disaster in Fukushima in March of this year have shaken Japan's confidence in the safety of its power plants. According to the findings of a recent AP-GfK survey, there is also wide-ranging criticism of the way in which the crisis was handled and of the policies surrounding release of information to the public. Reconstruction and redevelopment of new energy sources are the most important objectives for the next decade as far as the population is concerned. However, nearly four in ten Japanese believe that the number of nuclear power plants should remain at their current level or be increased.

A recent AP-GfK Poll of the Japanese population, which was a representative sample, reveals that the events of March 11th this year and the consequent nuclear disaster have left a deep impression on Japan's citizens. Around three quarters of Japanese surveyed say they feel less safe now than before the natural disaster.

A total of 80% of the population was left with the feeling that in the aftermath of the disaster, the government was not truthful about what was actually happening. The same proportion questions whether the government could really help them if they were to become a victim of a disaster themselves. Around two thirds of those surveyed are worried about how the disaster might affect their own lives, jobs and future.

Asked about the way in which the crisis was managed in the wake of the disaster, only the self-defense forces are given good marks, with nearly 90% of the population rating their performance positively. On the other hand, the recently resigned prime minister Naoto Kan is widely criticized, with three quarters of the Japanese population disapproving of the way in which he handled the effects of the disaster. The agency for nuclear and industrial safety is given a similarly poor rating, and TEPCO, operator of the



Fukushima nuclear power station, is criticized by more than 80% of the population.

The majority of Japanese are not convinced about the safety of the nuclear power plants currently operating in the country. A total of 60% of the population say they have no or very little confidence in the safety of the plants. On this issue, a definite gender disparity becomes evident, with 54% of men sharing this opinion, whereas for women it is 66%.

Around half of the Japanese would be in favor of reducing the number of nuclear power plants currently on stream in Japan. Even here, the number of women in favor is higher. Conversely, around one third of the population expresses the opinion that the number of nuclear power plants should remain at their current level, with an additional 4% in favor of expanding nuclear power. However, the fact that as an industrial nation, Japan will have to change its energy policy, is undisputed by the population. For 84% of Japanese, the development of new energy sources is one of the most important objectives for the coming decade. Only the reconstruction of those regions destroyed by the earthquake and the tsunami is regarded as more important, with a total of 96% of the Japanese population saying this is extremely or very important.

The survey

The current AP-GfK survey was carried out in Japan by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Corporate Communications during the period from July 29 to August 10, 2011. 1,000 respondents aged 18+ participated in the representative survey. The poll's margin of error is 3.8 percent.

For further information visit www.ap-gfcpoll.com

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