Press Release

A large majority of Poles expect positive effects from innovation and favor European cooperation

**A large majority of Polish citizens expect innovation and technological progress to have a positive impact on their lives in the years to come. They anticipate progress particularly in the areas of mobility, energy supply and security. They express confidence in the innovative capacity of Poland and of Europe as a whole, and want greater European-level cooperation in fostering an innovative economy – especially in view of the coronavirus pandemic.**

*Brussels, 12 November 2020 -* A large majority of Poles expect innovation and technological progress to have primarily positive effects on their personal lives in the years to come, for example through digital transformation. In this regard, they are more optimistic than most other Europeans. At the same time, they show less concern about intensifying international competition. They rate the innovative capacity of their own country, and of Europe as a whole, as being comparatively good. They show the greatest amount of concern with regard to jobs and the protection of personal data. These are the findings of a pan-European survey of more than 12,000 citizens in 28 European counties, including 1,100 adults in Poland, conducted on behalf of Germany’s Bertelsmann Stiftung.

According to the study, 77 percent of Poles expect innovation to have primarily positive effects within their own personal lives. A total of 19 percent anticipate very positive effects. Only 12 percent instead envisage negative effects, with only three percent expecting very negative outcomes. This means that Polish citizens are significantly more optimistic than the average European with regard to their expectations for the future impact of innovation.

**Positive effects expected for mobility and energy supply, concerns about jobs and data protection**

Polish citizens are most likely to expect positive effects from innovation over the next 15 years in the area of mobility, with 41 percent holding this opinion. A total of 39 percent anticipate improvements with regard to energy supply. Similarly, 30 percent envisage positive effects in the area of environmental protection and the fight against climate change, while 28 percent counts on progress in the area of defense and security.

Only four percent of the population does not anticipate positive effects in any of the surveyed areas. Polish respondents most frequently expressed a fear of negative effects in the area of job creation, with 34 percent expressing this concern. A total of 31 percent see threats to the protection of personal data.

In comparison to a similar survey conducted in 2019, this year’s survey shows that the desire for more innovation in specific areas has again grown significantly over the course of the coronavirus crisis. For example, 59 percent wants more support to be provided for innovation in the healthcare sector, an increase of 19 percent as compared to the previous year. A total of 58 percent of respondents anticipate more support for innovation in the area of job creation (+ 16%). In comparison, 39 percent wants more innovation in the fight against climate change (+ 4%), while 22 percent feels similarly in the area of security (+ 4%).

**Little concern about international competition**

Poland’s citizens feel very confident with regard to their own country’s innovative capability, and that of Europe as a whole. For example, 61 percent feel that Poland performs fairly well or very well in international comparison with regard to technological innovation. By contrast, only 33 percent said that Poland performs fairly poorly, while nine percent said the country’s capacities in this area are very poor. The Polish respondents gave mostly positive ratings to the policy framework and economic conditions for innovation in their own country. For example, 50 percent said Poland’s domestic conditions were good or very good, while only 37 percent judged these conditions as being bad.

Polish citizens’ views of innovative capability across Europe as a whole are also surprisingly optimistic. For example, 82 percent of Polish respondents rated innovative capacity in the EU as being good or very good in international comparison. Europe is also rated highly in direct comparison with the most important countries for innovation with respect to key technologies such as artificial intelligence. Asked about AI, big data and blockchain technology, only 46 percent of Polish respondents regarded the United States as being ahead of European countries, and only 50 percent saw China as being more advanced. In other EU countries, a significantly larger share of the populations tends to see these countries as having a technological lead.

**More European cooperation**

At the same time, a significant majority of 62 percent of Polish citizens favor stronger cooperation between EU states in the area of innovation. Just 19 percent said that such efforts are already sufficient, while an additional 13 percent was in favor of less European-level activity, but more national initiatives. As the comparison with the 2019 survey shows, the desire for more European cooperation has declined during the coronavirus crisis (from its previous level of 68%).

Brigitte Mohn, a member of the Bertelsmann Stiftung board of directors, sees the findings as a clear appeal to policymakers and the business sector: “Particularly in the area of innovation and the promotion of cutting-edge technologies, we in Europe must cooperate with one another much more vigorously instead of seeking to go it alone on the national level. Enhancing our technological competitiveness while at the same time working to solve urgent societal problems requires ambitious innovation-policy goals and implementation mechanisms more efficient than those currently in place. Moreover, in the current crisis, we must not shy away from investment in innovation; rather, we need to invest more, in a countercyclical manner, in order to unlock future potential.”

**Additional information:**

The “European Opinion Survey on Popular Attitudes Toward Innovation” was carried out by Dalia Research on behalf of Germany’s Bertelsmann Stiftung (eupinions project) in August 2019. The survey was conducted in 28 EU member states, with a total of 12,263 participants. The survey sample reflects the EU’s current population distribution in terms of age (16–65 years), sex and region/country. In a follow-up survey conducted in June 2020, questions from the original survey were repeated in order to gauge the possible effects of the global coronavirus pandemic on Europeans’ opinions.

eupinions is an independent platform for European public opinion. They collect, analyse and comment on what the European public thinks about current political issues and megatrends. eupinions employs cutting-edge data collection techniques. Every quarter, they collect samples from each EU member state in 22 languages. The data meets the highest scientific standards and is representative with regard to age, gender, education and country/region. eupinions is a project of Bertelsmann Stiftung. The data is collected by Dalia Research.

Further information: <https://eupinions.eu/de/home>

The survey is part of the global research being conducted in association with the Bertelsmann Stiftung’s Reinhard Mohn Prize 2020. The theme of the Reinhard Mohn Prize 2020 is “Fostering innovation. Unlocking potential.” It is looking for solutions that may enable Europe to generate technological change that benefits society. The Reinhard Mohn Prize 2020 is being awarded to Nechemia (“Chemi”) Peres, chairman of the Board of Directors of Israel’s Peres Center for Peace and Innovation. With this award, the Bertelsmann Stiftung is honoring the entrepreneur for his exceptional commitment to fostering innovation, which has benefited economic goals and the broader society in equal measure. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the award ceremony will be held in 2021.

About the Reinhard Mohn Prize:

The Reinhard Mohn Prize is given in memory of the Bertelsmann Stiftung's founder, Reinhard Mohn († October 2009). Since 2009, the Bertelsmann Stiftung has awarded the €200,000 prize to internationally renowned individuals who have played a key role in developing forward-looking solutions to social and political challenges. The prize is given based on a global search for innovative concepts and exemplary solutions to challenges that will have a decisive impact on Germany’s future.

For more information, visit: [www.reinhard-mohn-preis.de](http://www.reinhard-mohn-preis.de)

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**About the Bertelsmann Stiftung: Inspiring people. Shaping the future.**

The Bertelsmann Stiftung is committed to enabling social participation for everyone – politically, economically and culturally The issues we address are education, democracy, Europe, health, values and the economy. In doing so, we focus on people, since only they can change the world and make it better. We share knowledge, promote expertise and develop solutions. A nonprofit foundation, the Bertelsmann Stiftung was established in 1977 by Reinhard Mohn. For more information, please visit: [www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de](http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de)