Date
23/11/2020

Press release from AFRY

AFRY and Gapminder to fight misconceptions related to UN Sustainable Development Goals

AFRY has teamed up with the Gapminder Foundation to identify, highlight and counteract misconceptions about the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. To raise awareness, a knowledge test will soon be launched by Gapminder and a pre-study of the test shows an extensive need to update public knowledge.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the member states in 2015 to resolve the climate crisis as well as reduce poverty and injustice by 2030. If the goals are to be achieved, governments, the business sector and civil society must work together. To increase knowledge about the SDGs and their targets, a knowledge test has been developed, consisting of 18 questions, to which AFRY has contributed with fact checking and advice. The test forms part of a long-term collaboration between AFRY and the Swedish foundation Gapminder.

"If we are to succeed in accelerating the sustainable transformation of society, wide-ranging cooperation is needed to raise knowledge levels. That's why we are highlighting the importance of a fact and science-based worldview. We believe that when you know better, you do better," says Jonas Gustavsson CEO of AFRY.

Non-profit foundation Gapminder was founded by Anna Rosling Rönnlund, Ola Rosling and Hans Rosling and aims to increase the use of statistics and data for better insight into global development. Gapminder knowledge tests have been used by over a million people around the world and this is the first time they will be used to test the knowledge about the Sustainable Development Goals.

A pre-study of the test conducted in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland confirms that knowledge levels are very low. Respondents were presented with 18 questions connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and for each one, asked to select the correct option out of three alternatives. The results show widespread misconceptions – 8 out of 10 answers given were incorrect. This means that respondents did worse than if they had picked one of the three alternatives at random.

"Time and time again, our tests show widespread and systematic misconceptions about the world around us. We are now testing the knowledge of the global goals, as it is crucial that we have accurate information if we are to succeed in solving our biggest challenges – otherwise we risk focusing on the wrong things," says Anna Rosling Rönnlund, co-founder of Gapminder Foundation.

About Gapminder
Gapminder is an independent non-profit foundation that aims to contribute to positive global development by making statistics on social, economic and climate-related issues

easily accessible and easy to understand.

About the UN Sustainable Development Goals
The UN Sustainable Development Goals represents the most ambitious agenda for sustainable development adopted by member states. The aim is to eliminate extreme poverty, reduce inequality and injustice in the world, promote peace and justice and resolve the climate crisis by 2030.

About the knowledge test
The UN Goals Test consists of 18 questions, all of which are connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The test will shortly be available free of charge on gapminder.org.

About the pre-study
A survey was carried out by Novus on behalf of AFRY and Gapminder between the 20th and the 27th of October 2020. A total of 1,036 random and representative interviews were conducted with members of the public (18–79 years of age) in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland.

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