



National Energy Foundation

Energy Poll

Headline findings



8th September 2014

METHODOLOGY

Methodology Note

ComRes interviewed 2,058 GB adults online between 5th and 7th September 2014. Data were weighted to be representative of all GB adults aged 18+.

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- The client commissioning the survey
- Dates of interviewing
- Method of obtaining the interviews (e.g. in-person, post, telephone, internet)
- The universe effectively represented (all adults, voters etc.)
- The percentages upon which conclusions are based
- Size of the sample and geographic coverage.

Published references (such as a press release) should also show a web address where full data tables may be viewed, and they should also show the complete wording of questions upon which any data that has entered the public domain are based.

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HEADLINE FINDINGS

Summary

- 1) Three in five (58%) British adults say that they feel well-informed about energy issues. Older people and those from higher social grades (AB) are most likely to feel informed.
- 2) Three quarters (73%) of British adults say that they regularly seek information about energy issues. The most important of these sources are news and documentary programmes on the TV and radio (42%), searching on the internet (32%) and via energy companies directly (22%).
- 3) Most British adults say they would like to reduce their energy consumption, either because of the financial cost of using energy (four in five, 81%) or because of the environmental impact (seven in ten, 70%).
- 4) Three in five British adults say they know how much energy their home uses (58%). However, only one in ten (11%) say the same of their place of work.
- 5) British adults look to private companies to train their employees to in order to use energy more efficiently (79%), and also to the Government for education of the public (76%) and in schools (73%).
- 6) Two in five (41%) British adults know that the UK's electricity supply comes mainly from fossil-fuel combustion. This means that the majority (three in five, 59%) do not know the principal source of the UK's electricity supply.
- 7) Around two thirds of British adults (64%) do not know the most effective way to make a typical home energy efficient (loft insulation). This is despite three in five (56%) saying they would be confident in making improvements to their home to make it energy efficient.
- 8) British adults are not consistent in their estimation of energy consumption across a range of everyday, household items. While a majority (61%) assume the correct energy consumption for a light bulb, less than half accurately estimate the correct energy consumption of everyday household appliances such as a power shower (44%), a kettle (42%), an electrical convector heater (42%) and a tumble drier (38%).

Results

Information about energy

Q1. In general, how informed or otherwise do you feel about energy issues?	
NET: Well informed	58%
Very well informed	6%
Fairly informed	53%
Not very well informed	32%
Not at all informed	6%
NET: Not well informed	38%
Don't know	4%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- Three in five (58%) British adults say that they feel informed about energy issues.
- A significant minority of British adults (two in five, 38%) say that they are not well informed about energy issues.
 - More than half of 18-24 year olds (55%) say that they feel they are not well informed about energy issues compared to just a third (32%) of 55-64 year olds and a quarter (28%) of those aged 65+.
 - A greater proportion of those from social grades A and B (two thirds, 68%) say they feel informed about energy issues. This compared to just over half for grades C to E (55% of C1, 56% for C2 and 54% for DE).

Q9. Which, if any, of the following sources do you regularly use to inform yourself about energy issues?

NET: Any source used	73%
News or documentary programmes on TV or radio	42%
Searching on the internet	32%
Energy companies	22%
Broadsheet newspapers	16%
Tabloid newspapers	16%
Information from national Government or my local council	14%
Charities and NGOs	4%
I never look for information about energy issues	22%
Don't know	5%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- Three quarters (73%) of British adults say that they seek out information about energy issues.
 - This increases to 85% of those who feel well-informed about energy issues, and drops to 59% among those who do not feel well-informed.
 - Older people are more likely to use any source of information (79% of those aged 55-64 and 65+ compared to just 62% of those aged 18-24).
 - Those from social grades AB are also more likely to seek information on energy issues (82%, compared to 73% of all adults).
- News and documentary programmes on the TV and radio are the most used sources of information about energy (42%), followed by searching on the internet (32%) and seeking information from energy companies directly (22%).
 - As well as being more likely to use information from news and documentary broadcasts (52% and 55% of those aged 55-64 and 65+ respectively, compared to 42% of all adults) and broadsheet newspapers (23% of those aged 65+, compared to 14% of all adults), older people are also more likely to use information from the

national Government or their local council (22% of those aged 65+, compared to 14% of all adults).

Attitudes towards consumption and production

Q2. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the energy you use in buildings (e.g. gas and electricity supplies to the home, workplace or other buildings you visit)?	Agree (NET: Strongly / tend to)	Disagree (NET: Strongly / tend to)	Not applicable	Don't know
I would like to reduce my energy consumption in order to lower the cost of the energy used	81%	10%	2%	6%
I would like to reduce my energy consumption in order to reduce the environmental impact of the energy use	70%	19%	2%	9%
I know how much energy my home uses	58%	32%	2%	9%
I know how many miles per gallon my car does	53%	19%	20%	8%
I would not be confident in knowing what improvements I can make to my home to reduce its energy consumption	32%	56%	3%	10%
I know how much energy my workplace uses	11%	37%	39%	13%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- Four in five British adults (81%) say they would like to reduce their energy consumption in order to reduce the cost of energy they use, while seven in ten (70%) say they would like to do so in order to lessen their impact on the environment.
 - British adults seem therefore to be a little more motivated to reduce their energy consumption to in order to reduce the financial cost (81%) than to lessen their environmental impact (71%).
 - Older adults are more likely to say that they would like to reduce the amount of energy they use in order to lower the cost. Nine in ten of those aged 55-64 and 65+ (88% and 89% respectively) compared to three in five (58%) of those aged 18-24 and three quarters (78%) of those aged 25-34.

- Those from social grades A and B are more likely than lower social grades to be motivated to reduce their energy consumption by both the cost (85%) and the environmental impact (75%).
- British adults are far more likely to say they know how much energy their home (58%) and car (53%) use than their workplace (11%).
 - Men are more likely than women to say they know how much energy their home uses (63% compared to 52%) as well as how many miles per gallon their car does (62% compared to 44%).
 - Older adults are more likely to say they know how much energy their home uses (71% of those aged 55-64 and 76% of those aged 65+, compared to just 46% of those aged 25-34 and just 25% of those aged 18-24). They are also more likely to say they know how many miles per gallon their car does (64% of those aged 55-64 and 72% of those aged 65+, compared to a quarter, 28%, of those aged both 18-24 and 40% of those aged 25-34).
- More than half (56%) of British adults say they would be confident in knowing what improvement to make to their home to reduce its energy consumption, while a third (32%) say they do not feel confident.
 - Older adults are most likely to say that they are confident with regards to energy-saving home improvements (63% of 55-64 year olds and 71% of those aged 65+), compared to just 39% of 18-24 year olds, 48% of 25-34 year olds and 51% of 35-44 year olds.
 - Two thirds (64%) of those from social grades A and B say that they feel confident in knowing what improvements to make to their home to reduce its energy consumption (compare to 56% of all adults).

Q10. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about solving energy problems in future (such as, for example, combatting climate change and ensuring the UK has a secure supply of energy for the future)?	Agree (NET: Strongly / tend to)	Disagree (NET: Strongly / tend to)	Don't know
Private companies should train their employees to help them to use energy better at work	79%	10%	11%
The Government needs to place greater emphasis on educating the public to help solve energy problems	76%	12%	12%
The Government needs to place greater emphasis on energy education in schools	73%	14%	14%
Tackling climate change should be the priority when it comes to looking for solutions to energy problems	60%	26%	14%
Technology will find a way of solving energy problems	57%	25%	18%
Energy problems are exaggerated by energy suppliers to justify charging high prices	53%	32%	15%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- There is a strong appetite for private companies taking responsibility for energy problems with four out of five (79%) saying that companies should train their employees to help them to better use energy.
 - Older people are more likely to think private companies should provide training (93% of those aged 65+ and 87% of those aged 55-64, compared to 79% of all adults).
- There is also strong appetite for the Government to take action on education about energy, with three quarters saying that the Government should place greater emphasis on educating the public (76%) and in schools (73%).
 - Older people are more likely to think the Government should so more to educate the public (88% of those aged 65+, compared to 76% of all adults) and in schools (78% of those aged 55-64 and 84% of those aged 65+, compared to 73% of all adults).
- Three in five (60%) say that tackling climate change should be a priority when it comes to looking for solutions to energy problems.

- Middle-aged people are more likely to agree with prioritising climate changes (67% of those aged 45-54, compared to 60% of all adults) while older people are more likely to disagree (36% of those aged 65+, compared to 26% of all adults).
- Three in five (57%) of British adults say that technology will find a way of solving energy problems.
- Half (53%) of British adults say that energy problems are exaggerated by energy companies to justify charging high prices.

Q8. Which of the following do you think scientists say is the fastest and most effective way to address our energy needs?

Generate more energy from low carbon sources such as wind turbines, wave power and solar	29%
Use less energy, for example, by switching off lights and appliances and improving energy efficiency	23%
Build more nuclear power stations	23%
Develop local gas supplies by "fracking"	18%
Import more energy to meet our needs	4%
Raise the price of energy to encourage consumers to use less	2%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- There is no overwhelming consensus on what British adults say scientists think will be the fastest and most effective way to address our energy needs in the future. While generating more power from low carbon sources (29%) is cited by more respondents than any other of the options, there is an even split of responses between using less energy (23%) and building more nuclear power stations (23%).
 - Younger to middle-aged respondents are more likely to say that generating more low-carbon energy, such as with renewable power sources, is the most effective option (around a third of those aged 18-24, 25-34, and 45-54, 34%, 35% and 36% respectively, compared to 29% of all adults).
 - Older adults are more likely to say that building more nuclear power stations and fracking are the most effective ways to address our energy needs (34% of those aged 65+ compared to 23% of all adults and 23% of those aged 55-64 respectively compared to 18% of all adults).

Knowledge of specific energy issues

Q3. Thinking about the electricity supply in the UK, which of the following do you think is used to generate the most electricity each year?

Fossil-fuelled stations (coal, gas and oil)	41%
Nuclear power stations	22%
Imported through undersea cables from Belgium and France	12%
Renewable energy sources (such as wind, hydro or solar power)	6%
Don't know	19%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- Two in five (41%) British adults say they think fossil-fuelled powered stations are used to generate most energy in the UK. This means that three in five (59%) do not know the UK's principal source of electricity.
- One in five British adults (22%) think nuclear power stations generate most electricity in the UK, while a further one in five (19%) say they don't know which source is used to generate most energy in the UK.
 - The proportion of British adults who say that fossil-fuelled stations generate the most electricity increases to 46% among those who say they feel informed about energy issues.
 - Younger adults are more likely to think that renewable energy generates the most electricity in the UK each year (11% of those aged 18-24 and 7% of those aged 25-34) while older adults are more likely to think that fossil-fuels produce the most electricity (48% of those aged 65+, compared to 41% of all adults).

Q4. Please place the following different kinds of light bulbs in order, according to the amount of energy each uses.	Most energy	Second most energy	Third most energy	Least energy
Tungsten filament	52%	26%	15%	8%
Compact fluorescent	27%	40%	25%	8%
LED	13%	15%	22%	50%
Low voltage halogen	8%	19%	38%	35%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- British adults are most likely to say that the bulb which used the most energy is tungsten filament (52%) and that the bulb that uses the least energy LED (50%).
- British adults tend to say that the compact fluorescent bulbs use a higher amount of energy (with two thirds, 67%, saying that these bulbs use the most or second most energy of those tested), while low voltage halogen bulbs use a relatively lower amount of energy (with three quarters, 73%, saying these use the lowest or second lowest amount of energy).

Q5. In each of the following locations, which uses the most energy; heating the space and water, lighting, power for electrical items excluding those used for cooking?	Home	School or office
Space and water heating	42%	38%
Power for electrical equipment and appliances, excluding ovens, microwaves and hobs	27%	27%
Cooking (i.e. ovens, microwaves and hobs)	24%	4%
Lighting	7%	30%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- Heating of the space and water is the activity which British adults think consumes the most energy in both the home (42%) and workplace buildings such as schools and offices (38%).
 - Older adults are more likely to say that heating of the space and water uses the most energy in both the home (51% of those aged 55-64 and 53% of those aged 65+, compared to 42% of all adults) and in the office or school (43% and 52% of those aged 55-64 and 65+ respectively, compared to 38% of all adults). Meanwhile younger adults are more likely to think that electrical appliances use most energy in the home (34% of

18-24 year olds compared to 27% of all adults) and lighting uses the most in the school or office (43% of 18-24 year olds compared to 30% of all British adults).

- A quarter of British adults (27%), think that power for electrical appliances (excluding those used for cooking) takes up the most energy both in the home and in the school or office.
- Perhaps unsurprisingly, more British adults say that power for cooking takes up the most energy in the home (24%) than in the office or school (4%).
- Only 7% of British adults say that lighting takes up the most energy in the home. However, this increases to around a third (30%) for the home and/or office.

Q7. Thinking about a typical semi-detached home built in the 1930s, which, of the following improvements or actions do you think would save the most energy?

Installing 150mm (6 inches) of loft insulation	36%
Filling cavity walls with insulation	31%
Replacing the windows with low-emissivity double glazing	25%
Switching off phone chargers at the plug at night	4%
Blocking draughts from the chimneys with a chimney balloon	4%

Base: All respondents (2,058)

- Approximately a third of British adults say that installing loft insulation (36%) and filling cavity walls (31%) are the most effective ways to save energy in a typical home, of those actions tested.
- A quarter (25%) of British adults says that installing low-emissivity double glazing windows is the most effective improvement to save energy.
 - A higher proportion of older people say that loft insulation is the most effective improvement (49% of those aged 65+, compared to 36% of all adults). More younger people tend to think that cavity wall insulation is the most effective improvement to make (40% of 18-24 year olds and 36% of 25-34 year olds, compared to 31% of all adults).

Q6. The table below shows the typical number of kWh used for a range of household appliances. Please match the appliance to the amount of electricity it would use.	0.1 kWh	0.25 kWh	1.7 kWh	2.5 kWh	6.0 kWh
11W light bulb used for 9 hours	61%	18%	10%	6%	5%
Kettle (1 litre) used for 5 minutes	22%	42%	20%	10%	7%
Power shower used for 10 minutes	9%	26%	44%	14%	7%
Tumble drier used for 1 hour	4%	7%	12%	38%	39%
Electrical convector heater used for 2.0 hours	5%	8%	13%	32%	42%

Base: All respondents (2,058). Correct responses bold and italicised.

- While a majority (61%) assume the correct energy consumption for a light bulb, less than half accurately estimate the correct energy consumption of everyday household appliances such as a power shower (44%), a kettle (42%), an electrical convector heater (42%) and a tumble drier (38%).
 - Older adults are more likely to estimate the correct consumption of most appliances, including; a light bulb (70% of those aged 55-64 and 78% of those aged 65+ say this is 0.1 kWh, compared to 61% of all adults), a kettle (51% of those aged 65+ say this is 0.25kWh, compared to 42% of all adults) and a power shower (48% of 55-64 year olds and 50% of those aged 65+ say this is 1.7kWh, compared to 44% of all adults).
 - Those who say they feel well-informed about energy issues are also a little more likely to identify the correct consumption of a light bulb, (66% identify 0.1 kWh as the correct consumption compared to 61% of all adults). However, they are no more likely to suggest the correct consumption for other appliances tested.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information please contact:

Hannah Lewis

Senior Research Analyst

020 7871 8638

hannah.lewis@comres.co.uk