



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

DECC Public Attitudes Tracker – Wave 6

Summary of key findings

3 September 2013

DECC Public Attitudes Tracker

DECC set up a tracking survey in early 2012 to understand and monitor public attitudes to the Department's main business priorities. The survey runs four times a year and consists of one longer, annual survey and three shorter, quarterly surveys which focus on a subset of questions where we think attitudes might shift quickly or be affected by seasonal changes. This summary note presents headline findings from the sixth, quarterly, wave of the survey

The sixth wave of data was collected between 3 and 7 July 2013 using face-to-face in-home interviews with a representative sample of 2,124 households in the UK. The wave 6 questionnaire was essentially the same as the wave 4 questionnaire but 2 new questions - on radioactive waste and Geological Disposal Facilities - were included at wave 6.

This summary provides selected headlines and reports changes between wave 6 and wave 2, which covered July 2012. Please refer to the Excel tables for a full comparison of wave 6 findings with the five previous waves

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change/series/public-attitudes-tracking-survey>

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM WAVE 6

RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES: support levels sustained

- 76% of people support the use of renewable energy sources to generate the UK's electricity, fuel and heat, similar to the wave 2 level of 77%.
- Support for individual renewable energy sources (off shore wind, biomass, onshore wind, wave and tidal and solar) was stable.

ENERGY SECURITY: levels of concern largely unchanged

- 82% of people are concerned about steep rises in energy prices in the future, similar to 84% in wave 2.
- 63% are concerned about UK supplies of fossil fuels not being sufficient to meet UK demand, slightly down from 66% in wave 2.

ENERGY BILLS & SWITCHING: concern about energy bills down slightly

- Concern about energy bills fell to 40%, from 46% in wave 2. Concern about other bill types (food, transport and mortgages) fell by similar amounts. It should be noted that the weather was unusually hot during the fieldwork period.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY: no change in energy saving behaviours

- The number of people giving a lot (23%) or a fair amount (51%) of thought to saving energy in the home is unchanged since wave 2.

- Three quarters of people (75%) try at least sometimes to keep rooms they are not using at a cooler temperature, unchanged since wave 2 (76%).
- 43% of people say they leave the heating on at least sometimes when they go out for a few hours, similar to 44% in wave 2.

NUCLEAR ENERGY: views remain mixed overall

- More than a third of people (37%) support the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity in the UK, similar to 38% in wave 3, when the question was first asked. Overall, views remain split, with 27% opposed and 34% neither supporting nor opposing its use.

RADIOACTIVE WASTE (new questions): low public awareness levels

- 81% of people know little or nothing about the way the UK disposes of radioactive waste.
- 56% of people have never heard of Geological Disposal Facilities and 20% are aware of them but don't really know what they are.

Technical notes

The results shown here are based on 2,124 face-to-face in-home interviews conducted with a representative sample of UK adults aged 16+. Fieldwork was conducted between 3 and 7 July 2013 on the TNS UK Omnibus, which uses a random location quota sampling method.

The questionnaire was designed by DECC and TNS BMRB drawing on a number of questions from previous surveys. Questions were refined through cognitive testing.

The representativeness of the data was controlled through sample design, fieldwork quotas and post-fieldwork weighting. Data were weighted for the following characteristics: sex, age, social grade, region and tenure. Results included here are based on weighted data.

