



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

DECC Public Attitudes Tracker – Wave 7

Summary of key findings

5 November 2013

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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 seventh quarterly wave of the survey.

The seventh wave of data was collected between 25 and 29 September 2013 using face-to-face in-home interviews with a representative sample of 2,103 households in the UK. The wave 7 questionnaire was the same as the previous quarterly questionnaire (wave 6, July 2013), but without the questions on radioactive waste and Geological Disposal Facilities.

The headlines of the September 2013 survey results are compared with those of September 2012 (wave 3) and July 2013 (wave 6). Please refer to the Excel tables for a full comparison of wave 7 findings with the six previous waves: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-attitudes-tracking-survey>

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM WAVE 7

Summary findings from the September 2013 survey are broadly consistent with waves 1-6 and largely unchanged from September 2012.

ENERGY BILLS AND SWITCHING: concern about energy bills remains high, with plans to switch supplier unchanged

- 48% of people are worried (very/fairly) about paying their energy bills, similar to the same period last year (September 2012) when 45% were worried, but higher than 40% recorded in July 2013.
- There was an increase in the proportion of people who are more worried about paying their energy bills (13%) than paying other household bills. This was up from 8% in September 2012 but in line with levels over the last 3 waves.
- 34% of people say they will or may switch energy supplier in the next 12 months, unchanged since September 2012.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY: no change in energy saving behaviours

- The proportion of people giving a lot (28%) or a fair amount (49%) of thought to saving energy in their home is very similar to September 2012.
- Three quarters of people (78%) try to at least occasionally keep rooms they are not using at a cooler temperature, unchanged since September 2012 (79%).
- 43% of people say they leave the heating on at least occasionally when they go out for a few hours, in line with 45% in September 2012.

RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES: support levels steady

- Three-quarters of people (76%) continue to support the use of renewable energy sources to generate the UK's electricity, fuel and heat, similar to the September 2012 figure of 79%.
- Support for individual renewable energy sources (off shore wind, biomass, onshore wind, wave and tidal and solar) was largely unchanged since September 2012.

ENERGY SECURITY: levels of concern about future energy supplies largely unchanged

- 84% of people are concerned about steep rises in energy prices in the future, unchanged from September 2012 (83%).
- 63% are concerned about UK supplies of fossil fuels not being sufficient to meet UK demand, unchanged from 64% in September 2012

NUCLEAR ENERGY: views remain mixed overall

- 36% of people support the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity in the UK, similar to 38% in September 2012. Overall, views remain split with 26% opposed and 36% neither supporting nor opposing its use.

Technical notes

The results shown here are based on 2,103 face-to-face in-home interviews conducted with a representative sample of UK adults aged 16+. Fieldwork was conducted between 25 and 29 September 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.

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