

Australian views on preferred energy mix & the drive to phase out coal power generation

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Solar, wind and hydro are favourites among preferred energy mix. See page 2 for graphic comparing 2014 and 2015 findings.

- + Solar was the most preferred energy source for Australia: when presented with eight sources to choose from, 84% of respondents placed solar energy within their top three preferred options. This is up 2 points from 2014.
 - + Women are solar energy's strongest supporters, with 86% ranking it as their top choice compared to 81% of men.
- + Wind energy was the second most preferred option, with 69% supporting it in their preferred energy mix.
 - + Again views differentiated between the sexes, with women being bigger supporters. 76% of women ranked wind as their second preferred energy source, compared to 60% of men.
 - + Australians under 34 years of age are most supportive of wind, with 74% choosing it among their top three preferred energy sources, compared to an average of 67% of those over 34.
 - + Despite vigorous campaigns against wind in the regions, its popularity is virtually the same 69% cities vs 68% regional Australia.
- + Nearly half (47%) ranked hydro as their third choice.

Gas has lost a lot of supporters.

- + Gas last year ranked 4th with 28% support as preferred energy source, but this year has dropped to 6th spot with 21%.
 - + Among the states, Queensland is least keen on gas, with only 15% choosing it compared to 23% in Victoria and Tasmania, 25% in Western Australia and 21% in South Australia and New South Wales.
 - + Regional Australians are less keen (16%) on gas than urbanites (23%).
- + Middle aged Australians, those 35-54, are most supportive (29%) compared to an average of 17% of those under 35 and those over 55.

Coal and nuclear are least preferred.

- + Coal and nuclear are least preferred across geographic locations, with only a 13% backing each as a top three choice.
 - + There is a significant gender split on views on nuclear, with 19% of men backing it vs only 8% of women.
 - + Also nuclear is more popular among Australians over 55 years of age (17%) compared to all those under 55 (average of 11.5%).

Tidal/wave has gained the support lost by gas.

- + Tidal/wave has gained the support lost by gas, with 30% supporting the technology, up 9% from 2014.
 - + 33% of men prefer wave/tidal compared to 28% of women.

Renewable energy is seen as a jobs creator and an area that the government should support, including a phase out of coal for clean energy sources.

- + 71% think that tackling climate change creates opportunities for new jobs and investment and renewable energy. 70% held this view last year.
- + Two thirds of Australians (65%) agree that reducing investment in wind farms and reducing the subsidies for household solar power is the opposite of what is needed. Only 11% disagree.
- + 71% agree that it is inevitable that Australia's current coal fired generation will need to be replaced.
 - + Men are more likely to hold this view (78%) compared to women (65%).
- + 72% think that governments need to implement a plan to ensure the orderly closure of old coal plants and their replacement with clean energy.

[See Page 2 for graphic.](#)

Figure 1: Preferred energy mix comparison 2014 and 2015.



This year's results are based on a nationally representative online survey conducted by Galaxy Research 27-29 July, 2015 among 1,016 Australians aged 18+. The maximum margin of error on a sample of 1,016 interviews is +/- 3% at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error will be larger for sub-samples.

For more information visit: www.climateinstitute.org.au/climate-of-the-nation-2015.html