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World Publics Say Oil Needs to Be Replaced as Energy Source

Most Think Price Will Go Much Higher

Americans Think Their Governments Are Acting as if Oil Will Not Run Out

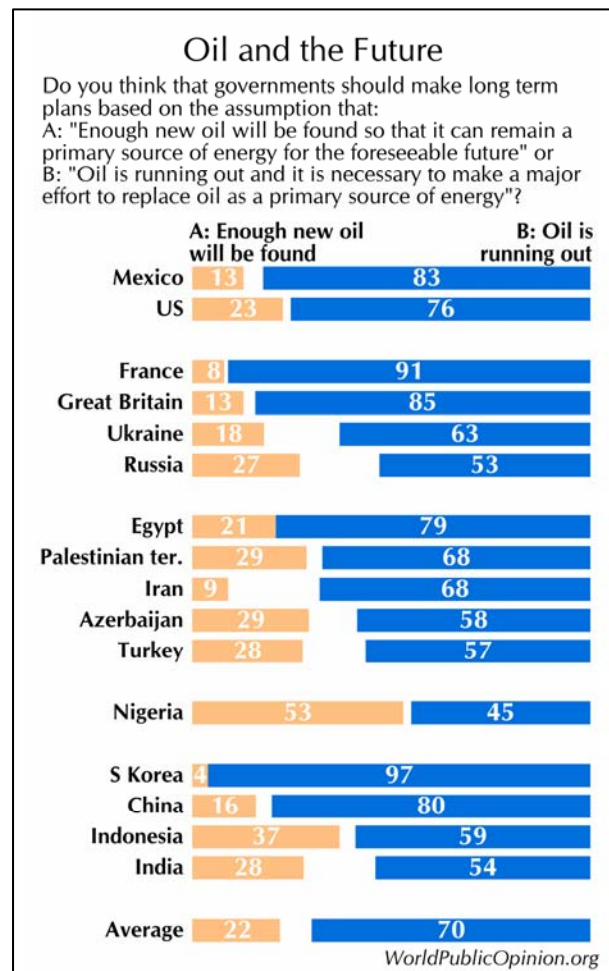
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A new WorldPublicOpinion.org poll finds that majorities in 15 of 16 nations surveyed around the world think that oil is running out and governments should make a major effort to find new sources of energy. Most think that future oil prices will be much higher.

Only 22 percent on average believe that “enough new oil will be found so that it can remain a primary source of energy for the foreseeable future.” Only in Nigeria does a majority (53%) endorse the view that governments can rely on oil in the long term.

Instead, an average of 70 percent takes the position that governments should assume that “oil is running out and it is necessary to make a major effort to replace oil as a primary source of energy.” The largest majorities endorsing this view are found in South Korea (97%), France (91%), Mexico (83%) and China (80%). The smallest are in Russia (53%) and India (54%), while in Nigeria only a minority (45%) holds this view.

“The widespread consensus that oil needs to be replaced as an energy source may be prompted by concerns about the effect of oil on climate change as well as the belief that oil will run out,” said Steven Kull, director of WorldPublicOpinion.org.



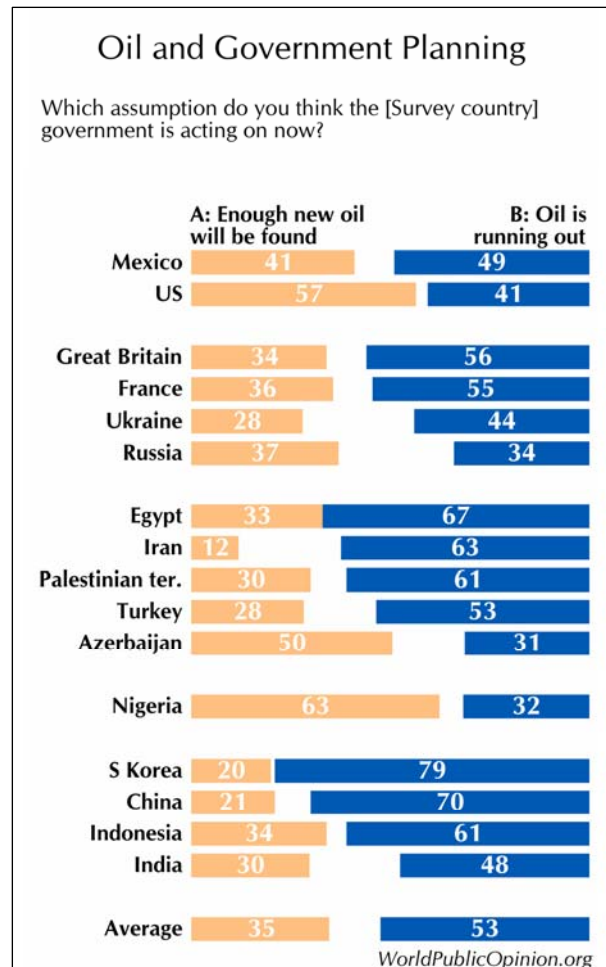
The poll of 14,896 respondents was conducted by WorldPublicOpinion.org, a collaborative research project involving research centers from around the world and managed by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. Interviews were conducted in 16 nations including most of the largest nations --China, India, the United States, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Russia--as well as Mexico, Britain, France, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Egypt, Turkey, the Palestinian Territories and South Korea. The nations included represent 58 percent of the world population.

A majority in the United States (57%), the world's biggest consumer of oil, believes their government is acting on the assumption that oil can remain a primary source of energy. This is also true in Nigeria (63%). However, while most Americans believe their government's assumptions are incorrect, most Nigerians think it is correct.

In 12 of the 16 nations, the dominant view among those polled is that their governments assume oil is running out and needs to be replaced. This is especially true in South Korea (79%), China (70%), and Egypt (67%). In Iran, which is developing a controversial nuclear energy program, 63 percent say that oil must be replaced while only 12 percent—the lowest percentage among the countries polled—say their government assumes enough oil can be found.

Publics in two other countries express doubts that their governments are making plans to develop alternative sources of energy. Azerbaijanis say their government assumes enough oil will be found by a margin of 50 percent to 31 percent. Russians are divided: 37 percent think their government assumes there will be enough oil and 34 percent do not. In both countries, modest majorities among those who think their government is counting on oil also believe that this is a mistake.

Interestingly in four of the five countries that are net oil exporters the perception that their government is planning for oil running out is below the average of 53 percent. These include Azerbaijan (31%), Nigeria (32%), Russia (34%), and Mexico (49%). The exception is Iran which is well above the average, with 63 percent believing that that their government is planning for oil running out.

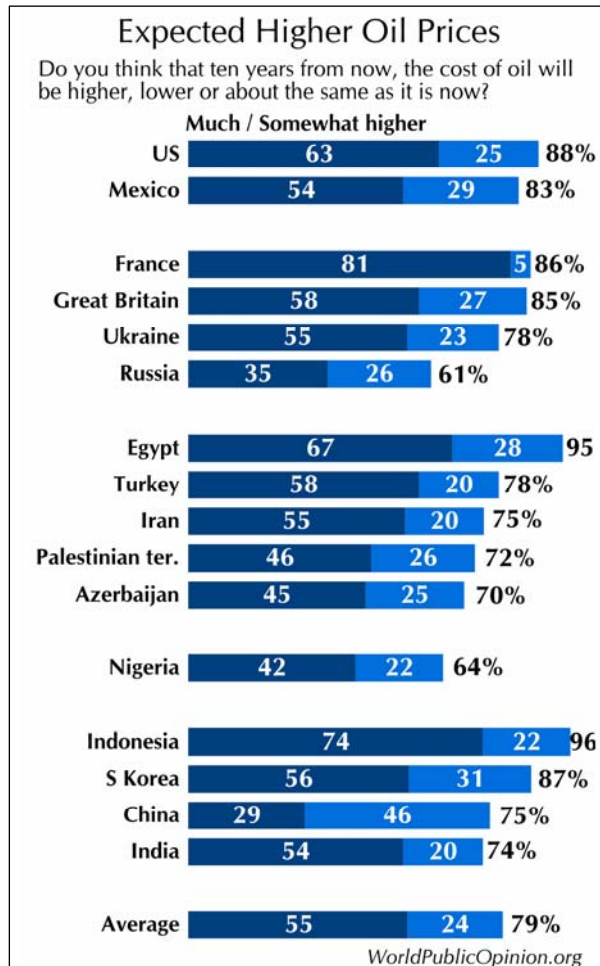


There is a strong consensus around the world that the cost of oil will be higher in ten years. On average four out of five (79%) say that oil prices will be higher, including 55 percent who say they will be much higher.

Although oil prices recently retreated somewhat from their latest spike, this has not reassured world publics, according to Kull.

“People around the world seem to assume that these higher prices are not only here to stay but will even go higher,” the director of WorldPublicOpinion.org said.

Publics differ only about whether oil prices will be much higher or only somewhat higher. The most pessimistic are Indonesia (74%) France (81%) and Egypt (67%). The lowest percentages saying oil prices will be much higher are found in China (29%), Russia (35%), and Nigeria (42%).



See below for detailed country summaries. For more information, visit: www.WorldPublicOpinion.org.

COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS:

AMERICAS:

MEXICO

[Reforma](#)

Of all the countries polled that are prominent oil exporters, including Russia, Iran, and Nigeria, Mexico has the biggest majority—83 percent—saying that government should make its long-term plans on the assumption that oil is running out. Only 13% take the opposite view that enough new oil will be found.

- However less than half (49%) believe their government is making plans for energy resources based on the assumption that oil will run out, while 41% feel it is acting based on the belief that new resources will be found.
- 83% say that the cost of oil will be much (54%) or somewhat higher (29%) than it is now, while very few say it will be about the same (7%) or lower (6%).

UNITED STATES

[Program on International Policy Attitudes](#) / [Knowledge Networks](#)

Of all countries polled, Americans are the most negative about their government's performance in making efforts to replace oil as a primary energy source.

- More than three in four (76%) believe that their government should make long term plans to replace oil as a primary source of energy, while just 23% feel that enough new oil will be found.
- A majority (57%) says that the US government is acting based on the assumption that enough new oil will be found, while just 41% believe it is making plans on the assumption that oil will need to be replaced as a primary energy source.
- Nearly nine in 10 (88%) feel that in 10 years, the cost of oil will be much (63%) or somewhat higher (25%) than it is now.

EUROPE:

FRANCE

[Efficiency 3](#)

Of all countries polled, France had the biggest majority saying that in ten years the cost of oil will be “much higher” than it is now.

- More than nine in 10 (91%) feel that the French government should be making plans to replace oil as a primary source of energy, while a mere 8% believe that enough new oil will be found.
- 55% say their government is already acting on the assumption that oil is running out, while 36% feel that it is still making plans based on the understanding that enough new oil will be found to remain a primary energy source.
- 86% in France believe that the cost of oil will be higher ten years from now, including an overwhelming 81% that feel it will be much higher, the most out of all countries polled. Just 9% say it will be about the same while 4% say it will be lower.

GREAT BRITAIN

[Chatham House \(Royal Institute of International Affairs\)](#) / [GlobeScan](#)

The British were the third highest worldwide in thinking that governments should make its energy plans on the expectation that oil is running out. Eighty-five percent of Britons thought this—exceeded only by South Koreans and the French.

- 85% in Britain feel that their government needs to assume oil is running out and make plans to replace it as a major source of energy, with just 13% taking the opposite view that enough new oil will be found so that it can remain a primary source of energy for the foreseeable future.
- A majority (56%) believe the government is already making plans based on the assumption that oil is running out, while one-third (34%) say that the government is acting on the belief that enough new oil will be found.
- A large majority (85%) feels that the cost of oil will be much (58%) or somewhat higher (27%) in the next 10 years.

RUSSIA

[Levada Center](#)

Russians—unlike any of the other 16 publics polled worldwide—are divided on what their government’s energy policy really is: whether the government assumes that oil is running out, or assumes that enough new oil will be found for the foreseeable future.

- Only a modest majority (53%) feels that oil is running out and the Russian government should make plans to replace it as a primary source of energy. 27% take the opposite view that government should act based on the understanding that enough new oil will be found.
- Russians are divided on what assumption their government is currently acting on: 37% say that it is making plans assuming that enough new oil will be found, while 34% feel it is acting based on the assumption that oil is running out and should be replaced as a primary energy source.
- 61% say that they believe the cost of oil will be much (35%) or somewhat higher (26%) in the next 10 years, while 12% feel it will remain about the same or be lower (7%).

UKRAINE

[Kiev International Institute of Sociology](#)

In the Ukraine, by more than two to one the public thinks the government should make its energy plans on the expectation that oil is running out.

- 63% say that their government should act on the assumption that oil is running out and make efforts to replace it as a primary source of energy. Only 18% feel that enough new oil will be found.
- 44% believe the government is already acting on the assumption that oil is running out, while 28% say that it is making plans based on the idea that oil can remain a primary source of energy for the foreseeable future.
- Nearly four in five (78%) say that the cost of oil will become much (55%) or somewhat higher (23%) in 10 years, while very few say it will stay about the same (6%) or become lower (2%).

MIDDLE EAST/EURASIA:

AZERBAIJAN

International Center for Social Research

Of 16 countries polled worldwide, Azerbaijan is the only one besides the United States where more people than not think their government's energy policy goes against the public's preferences.

- Nearly three in five (58%) say the Azerbaijani government should act based on the assumption that oil is running out and make efforts to replace it as a primary source of energy. 29% feel that enough oil will be found so that it can remain a primary source of energy for the foreseeable future.
- 50% say that their government is making plans assuming that enough oil will be found, while only 31% feel their government is acting based on the assumption that oil will be running out and need to be replaced as a primary energy source.
- Seven in 10 (70%) believe that the cost of oil will become much (45%) or somewhat higher (25%) over the next 10 years, while just 12% believe it will stay about the same and 7% feel that it will be lower.

EGYPT

Attitude Market Research

Egyptians are almost unanimous (95%) in thinking that ten years from now the cost of oil will be higher than it is today—the greatest number among all countries polled, except for Indonesia.

- Nearly four in five (79%) say that their government should be acting on the assumption that oil is running out and will need to be replaced as a primary source of energy. Only 21% believe that enough oil will be found so that it can remain a primary energy source.
- Two-thirds (67%) agree that their government is already acting on this assumption that oil will be running out, while 33% say that their government is making plans assuming that enough new oil will be found.]
- An overwhelming majority (95%) believe that the price of oil will be higher 10 years from now, including 67% who believe it will be much higher.

IRAN

WorldPublicOpinion.org

Two out of three Iranians think governments should plan on the assumption that oil is running out, and 63 percent think Iran's government is in fact planning on this assumption. Of all countries polled, Iran had the fewest people (12%) who thought their government was planning on the assumption that "enough new oil will be found."

- More than two-thirds (68%) say that the Iranian government should be making plans based on the assumption that oil is running out and will need to be replaced as a primary source of energy. Only 9% feel that the government should act assuming that enough new oil will be found.
- 63% agree that their government is already acting based on the assumption that oil is running out, while just 12% take the opposite view that it is making plans based on the assumption that enough new oil will be found for it to remain a primary energy source.
- 75% believe that the cost of oil will be higher after the next 10 years, including 55% who say it will be much higher and 20% who say it will be somewhat higher.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

[Palestinian Center for Public Opinion](http://PalestinianCenterforPublicOpinion.org)

While seven in ten Palestinians expect the cost of oil to rise over ten years, less than half think the cost will go "much higher." In most of the countries polled across the world, majorities think the cost of oil will go much higher; Palestinians' view is shared only by publics in three oil producers, Russia, Nigeria and Azerbaijan.

- 68% believe that oil is running out and their government should be making plans to replace it as a primary energy source. Just 29% feel that it should be acting based on the assumption that enough new oil will be found.
- 61% say that their government is already acting on the assumption that oil is running out, while 30% take the opposite view that their government is making plans assuming enough new oil reserves will be found.
- More than seven in 10 (72%) feel that the cost of oil will be much (46%) or somewhat higher (26%) after the next 10 years, while just 14% say it will be about the same and 9% say it will be lower.

TURKEY

[ARI Foundation](#) / [Infakto Research Workshop](#)

Majorities of Turks want the government to plan on the assumption that oil is running out, and expect the cost of oil to be much higher in ten years.

- A majority (57%) says the Turkish government should make plans based on the assumption that oil is running out and needs to be replaced as a primary source of energy. Only 28% feel that enough new oil will be found to remain a primary source of energy.
- A modest majority (53%) feels that their government is already acting on this assumption that oil is running out, while 28% say that their government is making plans assuming that enough new oil will be found.
- Nearly eight in 10 (78%) say that the price of oil will be much (58%) or somewhat higher (20%) in the next 10 years.

AFRICA:

NIGERIA

Market Trends Research International

Nigeria is the only country polled where a majority thinks the government should plan its energy policy on the assumption that enough new oil will be found so that it can remain a primary energy source. Further, a majority sees this as the Nigerian government's policy.

- A majority of Nigerians (53%) say that their government should make plans based on the assumption that enough new oil will be found so that it can remain a primary source of energy for the foreseeable future, while 45% feel that oil is running out and the government should make a major effort to replace oil.
- A larger majority (63%) feels that the government is acting on the assumption that enough new oil will be found, while roughly one-third (32%) say the government is making plans based on oil running out.
- 64% believe that the cost of oil will be much higher (42%) or somewhat higher (22%) in the next 10 years, although 12% feel it will be about the same and 21% say it will be lower, the most out of any country polled.

ASIA/PACIFIC:

CHINA

[WorldPublicOpinion.org](#)

While three in four Chinese think that the cost of oil will rise, only 29 percent think it will be “much higher” in ten years—the lowest percentage in all countries polled.

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- 80% say that the Chinese government should be acting based on the assumption that oil is running out and making efforts to replace oil as a primary source of energy. Just 16% feel that enough new oil will be found so that it can remain a primary energy source.
- 70% believe that their government is already acting on the assumption that oil is running out, but 21% feel that it is making plans based on the belief that enough new oil will be found.
- Three in four (75%) believe that the cost of oil will be much (29%) or somewhat higher (46%) in the next 10 years, although 11% say it will be about the same and 7% feel it will be lower.

INDIA

[Team CVoter](#)

A majority of Indians think the government should plan energy policy on the assumption that oil is running out, and a plurality believes the government is following this assumption.

- A majority (54%) believe the Indian government should be planning based on the assumption that oil is running out, while 28% say enough new oil will be found so that it can remain a primary source of energy for the foreseeable future.
- 48% in India agree that their government is already acting based on the belief that oil is running out and will need to be replaced as a primary energy source, while 30% take the opposite view that the government is planning under the assumption that enough new oil will be found.
- Nearly three-quarters (74%) believe that the cost of oil will be much (54%) or somewhat higher (20%) than it is now, although small numbers say it will stay about the same (10%) or be lower (11%).

INDONESIA

[Synovate](#)

Indonesians are almost unanimous (96%) in thinking that ten years from now the cost of oil will be higher than it is today—the greatest number among all countries polled worldwide.

- Three in five (59%) believe that the Indonesian government should make plans based on the assumption that oil is running out and it will be necessary to replace it as a primary source of energy. 37% take the opposite view that it should act based on the assumption that enough new oil will be found.
- A majority (61%) say that their government is already acting on the assumption that oil is running out, while one-third (34%) feel that the government is making plans assuming that enough new oil will be found.
- On overwhelming 96% say they believe the cost of oil will be higher 10 years from now, including 74% that feel it will be much higher and 22% saying it will be somewhat higher.

SOUTH KOREA

[East Asia Institute](#)

Almost all South Koreans think their government should plan its energy policy assuming that oil is running out—and four out of five believe their government is doing this. On both measures, South Koreans ranked highest worldwide among all countries polled.

- A near-unanimous 97% say that the South Korean government should be making plans based on the assumption that oil is running out, the largest majority out of all countries polled. A mere 4% believe that the government should make plans assuming that enough new oil will be found for it to remain a primary energy source.
- Nearly four in five (79%) believe their government is already acting on the assumption that oil is running out, although 20% feel that the government making plans based on the assumption that enough new oil will be found.
- A very large majority (87%) say that the cost of oil will be much higher (56%) or somewhat higher (31%) in the next 10 years, and very few say it will be about the same (7%) or lower (7%).

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