



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

THE BEIS ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE PUBLIC ATTITUDES TRACKER REVIEW

Consultation



February 2018

THE BEIS ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE PUBLIC ATTITUDES TRACKER REVIEW

Consultation

The consultation is on the BEIS section of GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/beis-public-attitudes-tracker-review>

the beis energy and climate change public attitudes tracker review

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General information

Purpose of this consultation

BEIS is seeking views from key stakeholders and users on the proposed changes to the BEIS Energy and Climate Change Tracker statistics. The department is also interested in learning more about those who use the statistics. This consultation is open to all.

Issued: 16th February 2018

Respond by: Responses to the survey are requested by **18th March 2018**

Enquiries to:

Customer Insight Team, Central Analysis
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy,
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1 Victoria Street,
London, SW1H 0ET
Email: BEISPAT@beis.gov.uk

Consultation reference: The BEIS Energy and Climate Change Public Attitudes Tracker Review

Territorial extent:

This consultation relates to the BEIS Energy and Climate Change Public Attitudes Tracker Survey that is conducted in the UK.

How to respond

We encourage respondents to make use of the online e-consultation platform wherever possible as this is the Government's preferred method of receiving responses:

<https://beisgovuk.citizenspace.com/energy-development/beis-public-attitudes-tracker>

However, if you are unable to respond in this way, please email or post your responses to the address above. When sending your comments please use the response template (attached) and include contact details (your name and either e mail address, postal address or telephone number) so that we can follow up if clarification is needed.

Additional copies:

You may make copies of this document without seeking permission.

Confidentiality and data protection

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information legislation (primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. It would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded by us as a confidentiality request.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on the [GOV.UK website](#). This summary will include a list of names or organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

Quality assurance

This consultation has been carried out in accordance with the [Government's Consultation Principles](#).

If you have any complaints about the consultation process (as opposed to comments about the issues which are the subject of the consultation) please address them to:

Email: beis.bru@beis.gov.uk

Introduction

Background

The department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) publishes the BEIS Energy and Climate Change Public Attitudes Tracker (PAT), on a quarterly basis. The survey originated in the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in March 2012 to understand and monitor public attitudes to the Department's main business priorities. On 14 July 2016, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) merged with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), to form the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Following this, the tracker was renamed the BEIS Energy and Climate Change Public Attitudes Tracker.

The survey is currently focussed on attitudes towards energy and climate change. There is an annual survey every March and three shorter surveys, usually in June, September and December, which repeat a subset of questions where attitudes might shift with greater regularity or be influenced by seasonal factors. A list of the questions can be found here on the annual wave: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-and-climate-change-public-attitude-tracking-survey-wave-21>, this contains almost all the PAT questions. The only questions that are not included on this wave are the 'heat' questions which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-and-climate-change-public-attitudes-tracker-wave-20>.

The data is collected via an omnibus survey using face-to-face in-home interviews with households in the UK. The sample is currently approximately 2000 people per wave. Previous publications and a technical note describing the methodology in more detail can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-attitudes-tracking-survey>.

Reason for the Consultation

The tracker is a valued source of evidence to the department for energy policy, however the creation of BEIS means that the department's priorities are now broader and include other policy areas where data on public attitudes would benefit policy formation. Therefore the department is considering whether the survey should be expanded to cover public attitudes relating to a wider range of these priorities. The overarching aims of the department are to:

- a. Deliver an ambitious Industrial Strategy
- b. Maximise investment opportunities and bolster UK interests
- c. Promote competitive markets and responsible business practices
- d. Ensure the UK has a reliable low cost and clean energy system

Expanding the content of the survey could improve the evidence base to assist the department in achieving these aims and monitor progress.

As well as reviewing the survey content (topic areas and questions), BEIS will take this opportunity to consider the frequency of the survey, and the outputs produced to ensure that they provide good quality evidence, are insightful and engaging for users, and deliver value for money. The changes under consideration are outlined in more detail below.

To inform this review we would like to understand how the statistics are currently used and their value to users, as well as the impact of any proposed changes. Therefore, respondents are asked to complete the consultation questions at the end of this document. This is in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics (<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/code-of-practice/>).

All responses will be considered in the context of the aims and objectives of the department; the financial budget; resource implications and methodological constraints.

Changes under Consideration

Content

Following an internal review BEIS is proposing to make changes to the content of the survey. These include the addition, removal and amendment of questions. The department is considering changing the name from the BEIS Energy and Climate Change Public Attitudes Tracker to the BEIS Public Attitudes Tracker. This reflects the proposal for the survey to cover a wider range of topics.

a) Topics under consideration to be added:

BEIS is considering adding questions on public awareness, perceptions and attitudes towards the following:

- Industrial Strategy
- Corporate transparency, ownership and diversity
- Workers' rights e.g. national minimum wage
- Consumer issues e.g. trust in consumer law
- Science e.g. robotics

The department is also considering adding additional questions to the existing questions on climate change, nuclear and energy performance certificates.

The content of the publication is still under review. Adding additional questions would improve the evidence base for the department and enable BEIS to monitor public attitudes and awareness on topics which relate to a wider range of BEIS policy areas. It would, however, increase the duration of the survey and consequently the cost. A very long survey may also reduce response rates, affecting the quality of the survey. This means that some of the existing survey questions may need to be removed, and not all of the topics identified may be added.

We are starting to trial the expansion of the content of the tracker by including some test questions on consumer issues in wave 24 of the survey (this was published on 1 February 2018).

b) Questions to be removed or amended:

Removing questions that are no longer being used by many staff and other users will help make sure that public resources are used in a more effective way, minimise respondent burden and enable the the department to expand the content of the publication. The following is a list of questions which BEIS is considering either amending or removing.

For further details on these questions including the complete question and response options, their frequency and more detail on the rationale for removal or amendment, please refer to Annex A.

Please go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-attitudes-tracking-survey> for a full list of the current questions in the PAT.

- The department is considering removing **questions 1a – c** which asks respondents to choose what they think is the biggest, 2nd biggest, and 3rd biggest challenge for Britain today. Of the response options provided, the ones which are relevant to the department are energy supply and climate change. It does not provide a reliable measure of attitude towards climate change or energy supply. There are other questions on the survey which are likely to give more reliable insight into these.
- The department is considering adding additional response options to **question 7_7a-b**: ‘Which of the following would you trust/trust the most to provide advice about which heating system to install in your home?’ in order to get more granular data on trusted advice sources.
- The department is proposing to amend **questions 15c-e** (which currently ask respondents about their reasons for support/opposition to fracking) about Shale gas in order to provide more useful information for policy development. The detail of the potential new questions has not yet been developed.

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- The department is proposing to amend the response option for **question 16e** (on worry about energy bills) from having set response options to an open question.
 - **Questions 17a & 17b** ask about whether respondents have switched energy suppliers and whether they are likely to switch. The department is planning to replace these questions with questions which cover other markets (e.g. telecoms) to obtain comparable data on switching across different markets. This will give the department a broader overview of switching rates across markets to inform consumer policy.
 - The department plans to alter **question 18** (trusting your energy supplier) to ask consumers who they trust to provide impartial information. Knowing the trusted sources of information would help to inform communications channels and consumer information.
 - The department is proposing to remove **questions 20a-b** (appliance using most energy) for methodological reasons. This is a complex question to answer and may not produce reliable results.
 - The department is proposing to amend **questions 43-46** (likelihood to install renewable technologies) by adding a response option so that respondents can indicate that they already have the technology installed. This means that **question 42**: 'Which, if any, of these do you currently have installed in your home?' can be deleted without losing this information, but making the survey more streamlined.
 - **Questions 47-50** are validation questions for respondents who are renting a property/live in a property rent free and have said that they are likely to install an air source heat pump/ground source heat pump/biomass boiler/solar thermal panels in the next few years to make sure that they are not responding in error and that they are planning to install the technologies. The validation questions suggest that many are responding to the question in error so the department is proposing to replace these questions with routing questions so that this group of respondents are not asked this question unnecessarily.
 - The department is proposing to remove **question 53** (likelihood to install condensing boiler) because there is another question on condensing boiler ownership in the survey (Q52 'Do you have a condensing gas boiler?') which gives a more reliable indication of the prevalence of condensing boilers and is the more useful of these questions for policy development.

More topic areas have been identified to be added than removed, therefore BEIS will continue to look at the remaining questions on the survey to assess their validity, and the requirement for the information (both by the department and by other users) including whether or not the

information can be found from alternative sources. **It is likely that more questions will need to be removed than those identified in this list.**

Sample Size

BEIS is considering whether to increase the sample size for the tracker so that it is possible to report regional data. Currently, BEIS does not report regional breakdowns because the sample size is too small for this data to be reliable. Presenting the regional data with the current sample size presents two risks. Firstly the results could be misleading. Secondly, a small risk that the identity of some the respondents could be disclosed. If possible, regional breakdowns would include the following regions: East Midlands, East of England, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, West Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber regions.

Increasing the sample size would give the department better evidence on how public attitudes to the topics covered vary by region which would help to develop better evidence for policy and communications, however a larger sample size would result in higher costs for the survey so this will need to be taken into consideration when making this decision.

Frequency

BEIS is reviewing the frequency of the publication to determine whether it might be a better use of public resources to move from a quarterly to a bi-annual or annual publication. Many of the statistics reported do not change a great deal from quarter to quarter. Therefore, it may prove more valuable to report the data less frequently to track significant changes. Please indicate your views on the frequency of the statistics in your responses to the questions below.

Outputs

1.3.4 Outputs

BEIS currently publishes the following outputs from the survey:

- Summary report
- Summary tables
- Data set
- The questionnaire
- Technical note

These can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-attitudes-tracking-survey>

BEIS would welcome suggestions on how to make the information more insightful, engaging and useful for current and potential users. This includes any views on the presentation of the data, and on the supporting technical information about how the statistics are produced.

After the Consultation

We will review all of the consultation responses and use these to inform our final recommendations on any changes to the BEIS Energy and Climate Change Public Attitudes Tracker. We will publish a summary of responses to the consultation, and our plans for the next steps in 2018.

Catalogue of consultation questions

Respondents should note that the deadline for responding to the questions below is **18th March 18.**

Consultation Questions

1.	How does the tracker add value to you, your research or work? a. Please comment here
2.	What do you use the tracker for? Please tick all that apply. a. Academic research b. General interest c. Informing business decisions d. Policy making e. Other (please state)
3.	Which of the publications do you most value? Please tick all those that apply. a. Executive Summary b. Excel Data Tables c. Raw Data Set d. Questionnaire
4.	If the frequency of the tracker decreased to either an annual or a biannual (i.e. every 6 months) publication, would this impact you/your work? If Yes, please explain. a. Yes b. No
5.	What, if any, improvements would you like to see in the way the information is presented?

	a. Please comment here
6.	<p>What, if any, improvements would you like to see in the methodological information provided in the survey outputs, including the technical note? For example level of detail, clarity of explanation.</p> <p>a. Please comment here</p>
7.	<p>Please let us know your thoughts on the proposed additions to the Tracker? (See 1.3.1).</p> <p>a. Please comment here</p>
8.	<p>Please let us know your thoughts on the proposed questions to be removed? (See Annex A).</p> <p>a. Please comment here</p>
9.	<p>Please let us know your thoughts on the proposed questions to be amended? (See Annex A).</p> <p>a. Please comment here</p>
10.	<p>Of the remaining questions in the Tracker, which, if any, are particularly important to you/your work?</p> <p>a. Please comment here</p>
11.	<p>Which of the following demographic breakdowns do you use? Please tick all that apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Connected to mains gas b. Use mains gas c. Pensioners living in the home d. Household income e. Household income is less than £16,000 before tax f. How accommodation is occupied g. Illness/disability h. Gender i. Age j. Urban/Rural k. Presence of children under 16

	I. Household size and Composition
12.	Please let us know if you have any other comments regarding the Tracker. a. Please comment here.

Thank you for taking part in this survey. We will consider all the responses, and will consider user needs and creating a strong evidence base for the department along with minimising respondent burden and value for money when making the final recommendations.

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

Table 1: Questions for Removal

Topic	Question Number	Question Description (<i>refer to the published questionnaire for further detail</i>)	Frequency	Reason for removal
Challenges	Q1a-c	<p>Which of the areas on this screen do you feel represents the biggest/second biggest/third biggest challenge that Britain is facing today?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inflation/rising prices 2. Unemployment 3. National Health Service 4. Education 5. National security/defence 6. Level of taxation 7. Crime/law and order 8. Climate change 9. Energy supply 10. Don't know 	Annual	Of the response options provided, the ones which are relevant to the department are energy supply and climate change. These questions do not provide a reliable measure of attitude towards climate change or energy supply. As respondents are asked to make a relative judgment their responses are likely to be influenced by fluctuations in perceptions about the other possible responses, and the set of response options that they are given to choose from. There are other questions on the survey which are likely to give more reliable insight into public attitudes towards energy supply and climate change.
Energy bills and suppliers	Q17b	And which of the following describes what you plan to do in relation to your gas and electricity supplier in the next	Quarterly	The department proposes to remove this question as asking the public about future intentions or actions may not yield accurate

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

		<p>year?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I plan to switch supplier in the next year 2. I may or may not switch supplier in the next year 3. I will not switch supplier in the next year 4. Don't know 		<p>results, and therefore is not a reliable measure. This is because it is difficult to reliably predict ones' future action relating to switching. Also, the department currently reports statistics on the numbers of individuals who are switching. These statistics can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/quarterly-domestic-energy-switching-statistics</p>
Energy bills and suppliers	Q20A	Over the course of the year, which of these do you think uses the most energy in your home?	Bi-annual	The department is proposing to remove these questions as the data is no longer being used by the department. Asking individuals a question about which appliance uses most energy is unlikely to produce reliable results. This is because it may prove quite difficult to gauge which appliance uses the most energy especially over the course of a year, given there is likely to be considerable fluctuation over the year.
Energy bills and suppliers	Q20B	Over the course of the year, which of these do you think uses the second most energy in your home?	Bi-annual	
Heat	Q42	Which, if any, of these do you currently have installed in your home? When answering, please think about whether or not this has been done to your home, even if the decision was not made by you personally.	Annual	The department is proposing to remove this question and add a response option to Q43-Q46 to cover those who may already have one of these technologies installed in the home. This will allow the department to gain the same information, more efficiently.

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An air source heat pump 2. A ground source heat pump 3. A biomass boiler 4. Solar thermal panels 5. None of these 		
Heat	Q47	You said that you [rent your property/live here rent-free] and would be likely to install an air source heat pump. Could I just check that either you or your landlord are likely to install this in the next few years?	Annual	<p>These questions will be removed for methodological reasons. They are validation questions for respondents who are renting a property/live in a property rent free and have said that they are likely to install these technologies in the next few years. This is very rare so these questions are asked of a very small number of respondents. The majority of respondents asked the validation question say that they do not intend to install these technologies suggesting that they responded to the installation question in error.</p> <p>Of those who responded positively to the validation question it could be either them or their landlord planning to install the technology so it is not an accurate measure of homeowners planning to install these technologies. It is not likely to be a good measure of whether landlords are likely to install these technologies as this would be dependent on the tenants being aware of this.</p>
Heat	Q48	You said that you [rent your property/live here rent-free] and would be likely to install an ground source heat pump. Could I just check that either you or your landlord are likely to install this in the next few years?	Annual	
Heat	Q49	You said that you [rent your property/live here rent-free] and would be likely to install an biomass boiler. Could I just check that either you or your landlord are likely to install this in the next few years?	Annual	
Heat	Q50	You said that you [rent your property/live here rent-free] and would be likely to install solar thermal panels. Could I just check that either you or	Annual	

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

		your landlord are likely to install this in the next few years?		<p>To address, this BEIS plan to use routing so that this group of respondents are not asked this question.</p> <p>This will improve the experience for the respondent as they will be asked less questions which are not relevant to them. Additionally it will give us a more reliable indicator of the plans of home owners to install these technologies.</p>
Condensing Boilers	Q53	How likely do you think you are to install a condensing boiler in your home over the next few years?	Annual	<p>The department is proposing to remove this question because there is another question on condensing boiler ownership (Q52 'Do you have a condensing gas boiler?') which gives a more reliable indication of the prevalence of condensing boilers and is the more useful of these questions for policy development.</p>

Table 2: Questions for Amendment

Topic	Question Number	Previous Question Description (<i>refer to the published questionnaire for further detail</i>)	New Question	Reason
Heat	Q7_7a	<p>Which of the following would you trust to provide advice about which heating system to install in your home?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A tradesperson (e.g. builder, plumber, gas fitter) 2. Heating system manufacturer 3. Friends/Family 4. Your energy supplier/another energy supplier 5. Green Deal assessor / adviser 6. The Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS) or Home Energy Scotland 7. Your housing association 8. Your landlord 9. A company that installs renewable heating systems 10. Other (specify) 11. None of these 12. Don't know 	Amend the response option by splitting tradesperson into gas safe engineer and any other tradesperson.	This will provide more useful data for policy development as currently the response option 'tradesperson' covers a vast range of traders.

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

Heat	Q7_7b	<p>And which one would you trust the most to provide advice about which heating system to install in your home?</p> <p>[LIST FILTERED TO ONLY INCLUDE THOSE SELECTED AT Q7_7a + DK]</p>		
Shale Gas	Q15c	<p>You said that you support hydraulic fracturing for shale gas, otherwise known as fracking. Why is this?</p>	<p>The department is proposing to amend these questions.</p>	<p>This is to provide more useful information for policy development. The detail of the potential new questions has not yet been developed.</p>

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

Shale Gas	Q15d	You said that you oppose hydraulic fracturing for shale gas , otherwise known as fracking. Why is this?		
Shale Gas	Q15e	You said that you [IF Q15b=6 - don't know whether you support or oppose] [IF Q15b=3 - neither support nor oppose] hydraulic fracturing for shale gas , otherwise known as fracking. Why is this?		
Energy Bills and Suppliers	Q16e	You said you were more worried about paying for your energy bills compared with some other outgoings I mentioned at the last question. Why is this?	This will be an open question.	This department is proposing to amend this question by making it an open question to provide the department with richer data on the reasons why consumers are

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Energy bills are more expensive than other items 2. Energy prices have increased more than shopping/transport prices 3. Have less control over energy bills (i.e. energy used by others in household) 4. Cannot easily 'go without' energy like I can for other items 5. Don't know how much energy bill will cost in advance so harder to budget 6. Other (specify) 7. Don't know 		worried about energy bills.
Energy Bills and Suppliers	Q17a	<p>Thinking about your gas and electricity supplier, which of the following best describes your current situation?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have switched supplier in the last year 2. I have switched supplier but more than a year ago 3. I have never switched supplier 4. Don't know 	The department would like to amend this question to ask about switching across the market sectors. BEIS will also aim to include questions on awareness of the switching process and questions on how people switch and why they don't switch.	Currently this question is about switching energy providers. After an internal review, the department proposes to amend this question to ask respondents about switching across other sectors i.e. telecoms. This is because it will provide valuable information for the department if the question is expanded beyond energy.
Energy Bills and	Q18	How much, if at all, do you trust your	Amend this question to ask who consumers trust to give	Knowing who the most trusted sources of information will help

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

Suppliers		<p>energy supplier to do the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Give customers a fair deal b) Provide you with a bill which accurately reflects the energy you have used c) Provide a breakdown of the components of your bill d) Inform you about the best tariff for you e) Improve your home to make it more energy efficient, if you paid them to do this – for example through installing different technologies to reduce heat loss, or generate electricity f) Provide impartial and accurate advice on energy efficiency measures 	<p>them impartial information (e.g. responses could include: Ofgem, suppliers, price comparison websites, consumer groups etc).</p>	<p>to inform communication channels for consumer information.</p>
Heat	Q43	<p>How likely do you think you would be to install an air source heat pump in your home over the next few years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very likely 2. Fairly likely 3. Not very likely 4. Not at all likely 	<p>Q42 (Which, if any, of these do you currently have installed in your home? When answering, please think about whether or not this has been done to your home, even if the decision</p>	<p>The department is proposing to amend this question and add a response option to cover those who may already have one of these technologies installed in the home. This will allow the department to gain the same</p>

Annex A: Proposed Questions for Removal or Amendment

Heat	Q44	How likely do you think you would be to install a ground source heat pump in your home over the next few years?	<p>was not made by you personally) to be removed, with a response option added to this question such as 'already installed technology'. The wording for this response option is yet to be finalised (see Table 1).</p>	<p>information more efficiently.</p>
Heat	Q45	How likely do you think you would be to install a biomass boiler in your home over the next few years?		
Heat	Q46	How likely do you think you would be to install solar thermal panels in your home over the next few years?		

