

Large Majorities in U.S. and Five largest European Countries Favor More Wind Farms and Subsidies for Bio-fuels, but Opinion is Split on Nuclear Power

However paying more for renewable energy is generally unpopular

New York, N.Y. — October 13, 2010 — A new Financial Times/Harris poll in the U.S. and the five largest European countries finds strong public support for increasing some renewable energy sources, particularly wind farms, provided that they are not asked to pay much more for it. However there is strong resistance to using more renewable energy if it leads to a substantial increase in costs. The public is much more evenly split on whether to build more nuclear power plants, except in Germany and Spain where substantial majorities oppose any expansion of nuclear power.

These are some of the findings of a **Financial Times/Harris Poll** conducted online by [Harris Interactive](#)® among 6,255 adults aged 16-64 within France (1,102), Germany (1,029), Great Britain (1,056), Spain (1,006), U.S. (1,002) and adults aged 18-64 in Italy (1,060) between September 15 and 21, 2010.

The main findings of this new poll include:

- Big majorities of the public in all six countries favor the building of more wind farms in their countries, varying from 90% in Spain and 87% in the U.S. to 77% in France. And large numbers of them favor it “strongly”;
- Majorities in all six countries, from 77% in Italy and 76% in Spain to 60% in the U.S. favor governments giving financial subsidies for the use of bio-fuels. However, only between 13% in Britain and 34% in Spain favor this “strongly”;
- Opinions on building more nuclear power plants are more mixed and vary by country. The public is more or less equally divided in the U.S., Britain and France but clear majorities are opposed in Italy (60%), Spain (63%) and even more strongly in Germany (77%);
- When those who pay energy bills were asked how much more they would be willing to pay for renewable energy, most people in all countries said either no more or only 5% more. Those willing to pay more than 5% varied from 32% in the U.S. and 31% in Italy to only 17% in Spain and 20% in France;
- When asked if they would be willing to pay \$220 more each month—the amount estimated by the European Union as needed to cut greenhouse emissions and use more renewable energy—large majorities in all the countries except Italy said they would not pay—from 77% in France and 76% in Britain to 65% in Germany who said so.

These answers are broadly similar to the results of an earlier FT/Harris poll conducted in 2008 using the same questions. However support for nuclear power plants has decreased somewhat in both Italy and Germany, over the last 2 years.

So What?

This new poll confirms the conclusions from other Harris surveys: there is strong support for using more “clean” sources of renewable energy, such as wind farms, but little appetite for paying significantly more for it, and that the public is still very divided in most of these countries on whether or not to rely more on nuclear power.

**TABLE 1
HOUSEHOLD ENERGY BILLS**

“Who in your household is responsible for paying your household energy bills?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
I have complete responsibility	44	50	49	42	37	51
Another member of my household and I share responsibility	26	36	33	34	39	37
Another member of my household has complete responsibility	31	14	18	24	24	12

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 2
WILLINGNESS TO PAY EXTRA FOR ENERGY FROM RENEWABLE RESOURCES**

“How much of an increase would you be willing to pay at the most, for energy if it were from renewable resources?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults who are responsible or jointly responsible for paying household energy bills (2010)

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Nothing more	34	44	52	36	43	43
5% more	17	23	17	23	20	20
10% more	13	13	14	20	11	18
15% more	8	5	3	5	2	4
20% more	5	3	2	4	2	3
30% more	3	*	*	1	1	1
40% more	3	1	1	1	1	1
Not sure	17	12	11	11	21	10

This question was also polled between January 30th and February 8th 2008 by Harris Interactive:

Base: All EU and U.S. adults who are responsible or jointly responsible for paying household energy bills. (2008)

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Nothing more	40	54	42	44	35	50
5% more	17	18	25	25	25	22
10% more	17	12	16	15	14	14
15% more	7	2	4	7	4	4
20% more	4	2	2	4	3	2
30% more	2	1	*	*	1	1
40% more	1	1	*	*	1	1
Not sure	11	10	10	5	17	5

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 3
WILLINGNESS TO PAY EXTRA ON RENEWABLE ENERGY

“The European Commission estimates it would cost each household an extra €150/£110/ \$220 on a monthly basis on gas and electricity bills to cut green house emissions and get more renewable energy. Given the choice, how likely would you be to pay this extra €150/£110/ \$220 per month?”

Base: Base: All EU and U.S. adults who are responsible or jointly responsible for paying household energy bills (2010)

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least somewhat likely (Net)	32	24	23	64	32	35
Very/Completely likely (Sub-Net)	12	4	3	9	7	8
Completely likely	7	1	2	2	4	4
Very likely	5	2	1	7	3	4
Fairly likely	6	9	8	21	9	10
Somewhat likely	14	11	12	34	16	17
Not at all likely	68	76	77	36	68	65

This question was also polled between January 30th and February 8th 2008 by Harris Interactive.

Base: Base: All EU and U.S. adults who are responsible or jointly responsible for paying household energy bills (2008)

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least somewhat likely (Net)	29	28	31	43	38	35
Very/Completely likely (Sub-Net)	6	4	4	9	7	6
Completely likely	2	2	1	3	3	3
Very likely	4	2	3	6	4	3
Fairly likely	8	11	10	14	10	9
Somewhat likely	16	13	17	20	21	21
Not at all likely	71	72	69	57	62	65

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 4
BUILD-IN OF NEW NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

“How much do you favour or oppose building new nuclear power plants in [INSERT COUNTRY]?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2010

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	16	14	18	37	24	43
Oppose more than favour	34	37	35	23	39	34
Favour more than oppose	31	34	35	25	23	16
Strongly favour	20	16	13	14	14	7

This question was also polled between January 30th and February 8th 2008 by Harris Interactive.

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2008

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	17	20	20	21	40	35
Oppose more than favour	31	35	31	21	28	29
Favour more than oppose	32	32	34	30	20	25
Strongly favour	20	13	15	29	12	12

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 5
OPINION ON INCREASE IN NUMBER OF WIND FARMS

“How much do you favour or oppose a large increase in the number of wind farms in [INSERT COUNTRY]?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2010

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	3	6	6	2	2	4
Oppose more than favour	9	12	16	11	9	14
Favour more than oppose	37	44	44	38	37	42
Strongly favour	50	38	33	49	53	40

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2008

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	1	4	3	2	3	7
Oppose more than favour	7	9	8	8	7	14
Favour more than oppose	31	39	40	27	35	45
Strongly favour	61	48	49	64	55	34

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 6
OPINION ON FINANCIAL SUBSIDY FOR BIO-FUELS

“How much do you favour or oppose a financial subsidy by the government of [INSERT COUNTRY] for bio-fuels?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2010

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	12	10	12	4	8	9
Oppose more than favour	28	22	21	18	16	23
Favour more than oppose	46	55	46	44	42	47
Strongly favour	14	13	22	33	34	21

Base: All EU and U.S. adults – 2008

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	8	7	6	2	5	14
Oppose more than favour	21	16	10	8	10	21
Favour more than oppose	49	55	45	36	47	42
Strongly favour	22	23	39	54	38	23

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 7
OPINION ON FINANCIAL SUBSIDY FOR NUCLEAR POWER

“How much do you favour or oppose a financial subsidy by the government of [INSERT COUNTRY] for the development of nuclear power?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2010

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	17	17	18	38	27	47
Oppose more than favour	41	34	38	25	38	35
Favour more than oppose	31	36	33	25	23	13
Strongly favour	10	13	11	11	13	5

Base: All EU and U.S. adults - 2008

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly oppose	17	20	19	17	30	34
Oppose more than favour	37	38	33	20	35	32
Favour more than oppose	35	33	37	32	23	27
Strongly favour	12	10	11	30	13	7

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 8
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – GLOBAL STABILITY

“On a different note, which one, if any, of the following countries do you think is the greatest threat to global stability?”

Base: All EU and U.S. adults

	U.S.	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%	%
U.S.	10	18	9	7	22	16
Iran	22	17	37	33	21	20
China	21	15	24	28	16	21
Russia	3	3	2	3	1	4
North Korea	23	16	8	5	9	12
Iraq	6	11	10	11	17	13
Pakistan	*	1	*	-	*	*
Israel	*	1	3	1	1	1
Afghanistan	*	*	*	*	*	*
No one country (all are a threat)	*	-	1	*	*	-
No country (terrorist organisations)	*	-	-	-	-	-
Palestine	-	*	*	*	*	*
UK	-	1	-	-	-	-
Other	*	-	-	-	-	-

None	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Methodology

This **FT/Harris Poll** was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,255 adults aged 16-64 within France (1,102), Germany (1,029), Great Britain (1,056), Spain (1,006), U.S. (1,002) and adults aged 18-64 in Italy (1,060) between September 15 and 21, 2010. Figures for age, sex, education, region and Internet usage were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult populations of the respective countries. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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