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Energy Agency

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[ABOUT](#)

[NEWSROOM](#)

[PUBLICATIONS](#)

[TOPICS](#)

[COUNTRIES](#)

[STATISTICS](#)

[Publications](#) > [World Energy Outlook](#) > [Resources](#) > [Energy Access](#) > [Energy access database](#)

World Energy Outlook

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[Home](#)

[About WEO](#)

[Publications](#)

[Factsheets](#)

[Resources](#)

[Energy Subsidies](#)

[Energy Access](#)

[Modern energy for all: why it matters](#)

[Defining and modelling energy access](#)

[Energy access database](#)

[Energy access projections](#)

[Africa focus](#)

[Energy for all: financing access for the poor](#)

[Publications library](#)

[Related links](#)

[Energy and Climate Change](#)

[Water-Energy Nexus](#)

[Unconventional Gas](#)

[WEO Model](#)

[Press & Media](#)

[Energy Business Council](#)

[Webinars](#)

Energy access database

The *World Energy Outlook (WEO)* has published databases on electricity access and reliance on traditional biomass for cooking since 2002.

[WEO 2016 Electricity access database](#)

[WEO 2016 Biomass database](#)

Here, we report where the world stands on access to modern energy, based on a comprehensive update of our electricity and traditional use of biomass databases. We used the latest data available.

Hundreds of millions of people have attained modern energy access over the last two decades, especially in China and India. Rapid economic development in several developing countries, increasing urbanisation and ongoing energy access programmes have been important factors in this achievement.

Access to electricity

An estimated 1.2 billion people – 16% of the global population – did not have access to electricity according to *WEO-2016*, 15 million fewer than reported in the previous year. Many more suffer from supply that is of poor quality. More than 95% of those living without electricity are in countries in sub-Saharan Africa and developing Asia, and they are predominantly in rural areas (around 80% of the world total). While still far from complete, progress in providing electrification in urban areas has outpaced that in rural areas two to one since 2000.

Traditional use of solid biomass for cooking

In *WEO-2016*, more than 2.7 billion people – 38% of the world's population – are estimated to have relied on the traditional use of solid biomass for cooking, typically using inefficient stoves or open fires in poorly ventilated spaces. Developing Asia and sub-Saharan Africa once again dominate the global totals. While the number of people relying on biomass is larger in developing Asia than in sub-Saharan Africa, their share of the population is lower: 50% in developing Asia, compared with more than 80% in sub-Saharan Africa. Overall, nearly three-quarters of the global population living without clean cooking facilities (around 2 billion people) live in just ten countries.

[ABOUT](#)

[Delegates](#)
[Our Mission](#)

[TOPICS](#)

[Carbon capture](#)
[Climate change](#)

[COUNTRIES](#)

[Engagement worldwide](#)

[Member countries](#)
[Non-member](#)

[NEWSROOM](#)

[Events](#)
[News](#)

[PUBLICATIONS](#)

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[World Energy](#)

[STATISTICS](#)

[Key World Energy Statistics](#)

[Leadership](#)
[Jobs](#)
[Technology Platform](#)
[Training](#)

[Coal](#)
[Electricity](#)
[Energy efficiency](#)
[Energy poverty](#)
[Energy security](#)

[Energy technology](#)
[Natural gas](#)
[Nuclear](#)
[Oil](#)
[Renewables](#)
[Transport](#)

[countries](#)

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[Speeches](#)
[Workshops](#)

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