Renewable primary energy sources

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The Energy Institute Statistical Review of World Energy analyses data on world energy markets from the prior year.

All data and visualizations on Our World in Data rely on data sourced from one or several original data providers. Preparing this original data involves several processing steps. Depending on the data, this can include standardizing country names and world region definitions, converting units, calculating derived indicators such as per capita measures, as well as adding or adapting metadata such as the name or the description given to an indicator.

At the link below you can find a detailed description of the structure of our data pipeline, including links to all the code used to prepare data across Our World in Data.

Our World in Data is free and accessible for everyone.

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IEA (2021), Renewables Information: Overview, IEA, Paris https://, Licence: CC BY 4.0

Due to its widespread use in developing countries for heating and cooking, solid biofuels/?charcoal is by far the largest renewable energy source (58.1%), followed by hydro (18.2%). Wind (6.2%), liquid biofuels (5.1%), and geothermal (5.0%) follow and, with shares lower than 3%, biogases, renewable municipal waste, solar PV, solar thermal and tidal.

Growth has been especially high for solar PV and wind power, which grew at average annual rates of 36.0% and 22.6%, respectively. Biogases had the third highest growth rate at 11.3%, followed by solar thermal

(10.5%) and liquid biofuels (9.6%). Hydro, which is one of the largest sources, had one of the lowest growth rates, just 2.4%. On the other hand, solid biofuel, the world"s most commonly used renewable energy source, grew just 1.1% a year.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the total energy supply of OECD1 countries decreased by 6.4% in 2020 from 2019. All non-renewable sources, especially coal and oil, showed reduced supply while total renewable energy grew 1.9%, led by solar PV (21.3%) and wind power (12.3%). The growth for renewables was not uniform across OECD regions, falling 0.5% in OECD Americas, and rising 3.4% in OECD Europe and 6.1% in OECD Asia/Oceania.

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