

Nuclear power opponents increase in seven countries

Saturday 28 May 2011, by [Asahi Shimbun](#) (Date first published: 27 May 2011).

More people are opposed to nuclear power since the accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, according to an Asahi Shimbun poll survey of seven nations.

The poll was conducted in May to gauge public perception of the accident and awareness of the use of nuclear energy to produce electric power.

Those who favored the use of nuclear power outnumbered those against in the United States and France, whereas pros and cons were about even in South Korea and China. Opponents outnumbered proponents in Japan, Germany and Russia.

The polls were conducted in countries that rely heavily on nuclear power, as well as China, which is currently constructing a large number of nuclear plants.

In the United States, 55 percent of respondents said they favored the use of nuclear energy, while 31 percent were opposed.

Proponents also outnumbered opponents in France, with 51 percent in favor and 44 percent opposed. In contrast, 36 percent favored and 52 percent opposed nuclear energy in Russia. In Japan, 34 percent were in favor and 42 percent were opposed. In Germany, which is preparing for a phase-out of nuclear power, 81 percent were opposed and 19 were in favor.

The poll was the third consecutive survey on nuclear power conducted since mid-April in Japan.

In the first survey conducted April 16-17, 50 percent favored and 32 percent opposed the use of nuclear energy in Japan, but in the second survey, conducted May 14-15, the difference shrank with 43 percent for and 36 percent against.

The questionnaire also asked if respondents had favored or opposed the use of nuclear energy before the Fukushima accident.

There was a marked increase in opposition from before the accident in four countries: from 56 percent to 81 percent in Germany, from 18 percent to 42 percent in Japan, from 27 percent to 45 percent in South Korea and from 36 percent to 48 percent in China. Opposition in Germany, which was already off the charts before the accident, grew.

When asked to choose from four options on what their country should do about nuclear power in the future, the largest numbers chose: "it should be maintained around the current level" in all countries except for Germany. In the United States and China, as many as 32 percent said that nuclear power should be increased.

In Japan, 52 percent, up from 41 percent in the April survey, said that it should either be reduced or be stopped.

Amid criticism that the Japanese government is concealing information on the nuclear plant accident, a larger number of respondents in all countries surveyed said they thought the Japanese government was not supplying accurate and sufficient information on the accident than those who said otherwise. In South Korea, 89 percent of respondents said the Japanese government was withholding information.

The respondents in six countries other than Japan were asked how concerned they were that a major accident might occur at a nuclear power plant in their country. Out of the four options presented, “very concerned” and “somewhat concerned” accounted for a total of 82 percent in South Korea, 80 percent in Russia, and more than 70 percent in France, Germany and China.

The latest survey was conducted May 21-22 in Japan. The polls overseas were conducted in early May and mid-May by the U.S.-based Harris Interactive Inc. and other companies. The surveys were done by phone in Japan, the United States, France, South Korea and Germany, and by interview in Russia and China. The number of valid respondents were 2,059 in Japan, 1,575 in Russia and about 1,000 in the other countries.

Asahi Shimbun

P.S.

* Asahi Shimbun, 2011/05/27

<http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201105260164.html>