

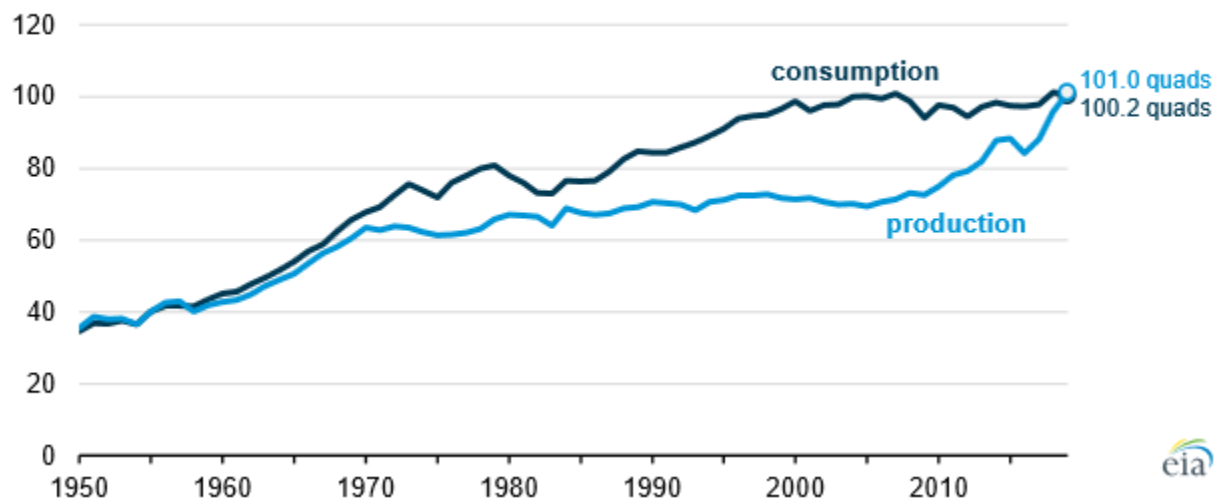
The United States Was Energy Independent in 2019 for the First Time Since 1957

By [IER](#)

May 11, 2020

U.S. energy production in 2019 was higher than U.S. energy consumption for the first time in 62 years. Thus, the U.S. attained the long-held goal of “energy independence”—which is not to say that we did not import or export energy, but that we produced more energy than we used. One can thank the oil and gas industry and its use of hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling for that milestone as production in those industries increased a combined [11 percent in 2019](#). Total U.S. energy production increased by 5.7 percent in 2019 while U.S. energy demand decreased by [0.9 percent](#). The United States produced 101.0 quadrillion British thermal units (quads) of energy and consumed 100.2 quads last year. Fossil fuels accounted for 80 percent of both energy consumption and production in 2019.

U.S. total energy production and consumption (1950-2019)
quadrillion British thermal units (quads)



Source: [Energy Information Administration](#)

Production by Fuel Source

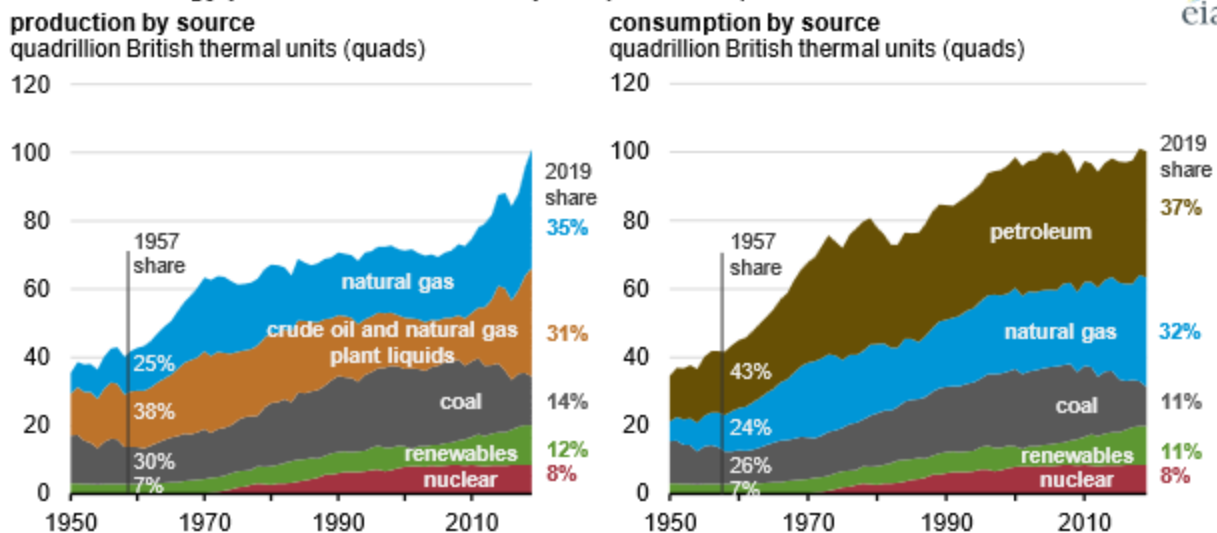
In 2019, U.S. crude oil and natural gas plant liquids production reached 31.8 quads, and natural gas production reached 34.9 quads—record highs for both industries in the United States,

surpassing their previous highs reached in 2018. U.S. renewable energy production remained fairly constant between 2018 and 2019, growing by [just 0.1 quad](#), as 2019 was a low water year from hydroelectric power. In contrast, U.S. coal production declined by 1.1 quads in 2019 to 14.3 quads—its lowest value since 1974. U.S. nuclear electric power production remained steady at about 8 quads for the past two decades.

Consumption by Fuel Source

U.S. energy consumption has ranged between 96 quads and 102 quads annually for the past 20 years. In 2019, petroleum accounted for the largest share of energy consumption since 1950, although it dropped [almost 9 percent](#) from its 2005 peak. Natural gas consumption increased by [about 35 percent](#) since 2000, reaching its highest level in 2019. U.S. coal consumption decreased nearly 50 percent since 2008, with only 11.3 quads consumed in 2019, as lower cost natural gas and subsidized renewables replaced it for electricity generation. Total consumption of renewable energy, including renewables used for electricity generation, biofuels, and biomass, increased by [88 percent](#) since 2000. The share of consumption from renewables was almost the same as coal in 2019.

U.S. total energy production and consumption (1950-2019)



Source: [Energy Information Administration](#)

Contrast in 1957 and 2019 Production and Consumption

In 1957—the last year in which energy production exceeded consumption—fossil fuels represented 93 percent of both U.S. production and U.S. consumption. That changed with the advent of the nuclear power industry in 1957 and the push for subsidized renewable energy, reducing the fossil fuel share to 80 percent—but still providing the majority of both production and consumption. One of the major changes in fossil fuels has been in coal’s share, which dropped from [30 percent](#) of production in 1957 to 14 percent in 2019 due to a similar drop in consumption share. Coal’s decline over those 62 years was replaced by the advent of nuclear power and an increase in natural gas and renewable energy.

Conclusion

Despite the major push for renewable energy by environmentalists, fossil fuels still produce the majority of the energy that we consume today. Renewable energy's share of the 2019 U.S. energy consumption market has only grown by 4 percentage points in 62 years, despite costing the taxpayer [billions of dollars](#) in subsidies. One only needs to watch the Michael Moore film, [Planet of the Humans](#), to understand the folly in using taxpayer money to promote renewable energy, after we have finally achieved domestic energy independence.

<https://www.instituteeforenergyresearch.org/fossil-fuels/gas-and-oil/the-united-states-was-energy-independent-in-2019-for-the-first-time-since-1957/>