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Solar Employs More People In U.S. Electricity Generation Than Oil, Coal And Gas Combined



Niall McCarthy Contributor

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2017/01/25/u-s-solar-energy-employs-more-people-than-oil-coal-and-gas-combined-infographic/#49e591e62800>

Business

Data journalist covering technological, societal and media topics

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In the United States, more people were employed in solar power last year than in generating electricity through coal, gas and oil energy combined. According to [a new report](#) from the U.S. Department of Energy, solar power employed 43 percent of the Electric Power Generation sector's workforce in 2016, while fossil fuels combined accounted for just 22 percent. It's a welcome statistic for those seeking to refute Donald Trump's assertion that green energy projects are bad news for the American economy.

Just under 374,000 people were employed in solar energy, according to the report, while coal, gas and oil power generation combined had a workforce of slightly more than 187,000. The boom in the country's solar workforce can be attributed to construction work associated with expanding generation capacity. The gulf in employment is growing with net generation from coal falling 53 percent over the last decade. During the same period, electricity generation from natural gas increased 33 percent while solar expanded 5,000 percent.

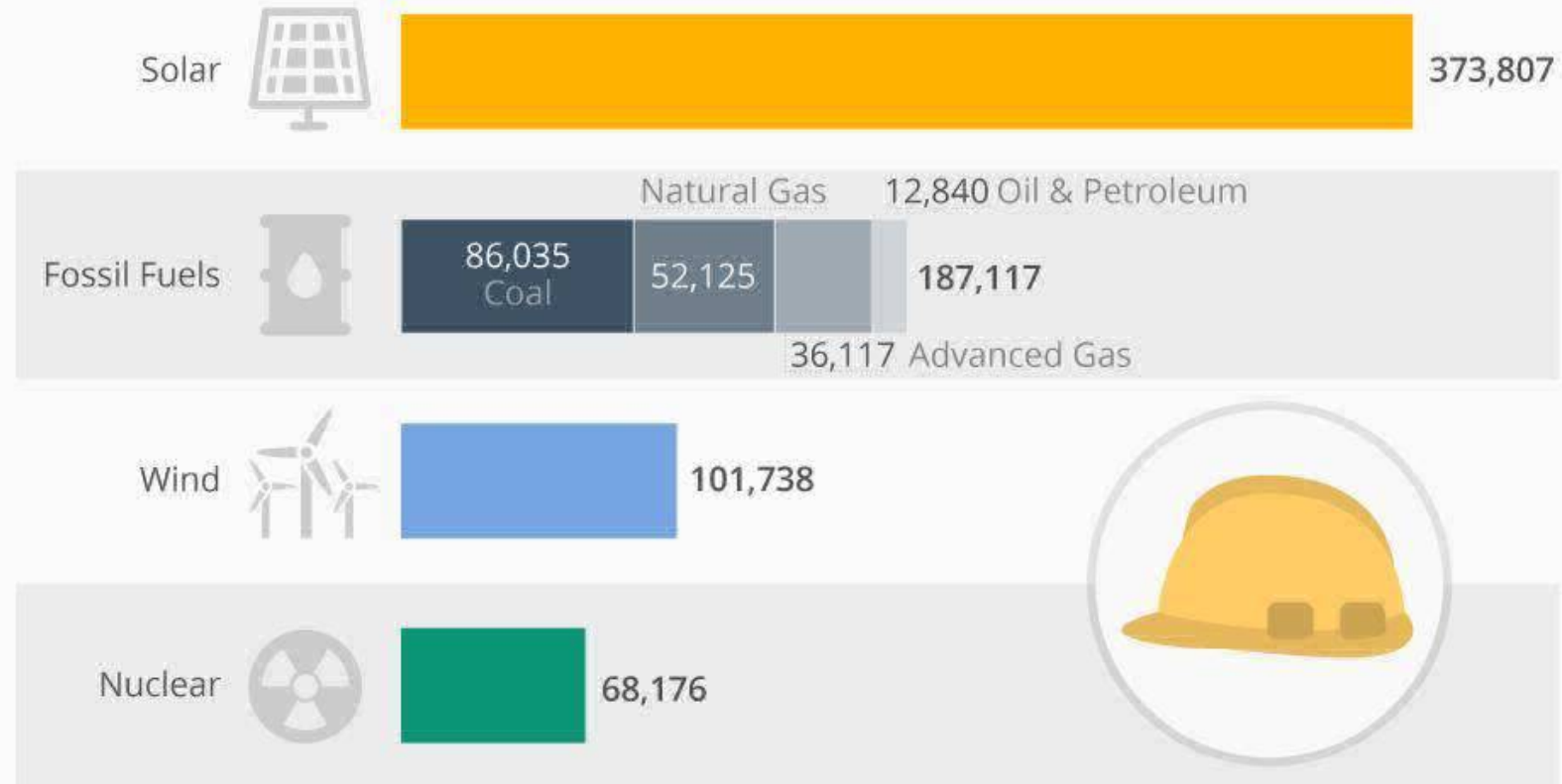
Fuel production and electricity generation together directly employed 1.9 million workers last year, according to the report, with 55%, or 1.1 million, working with fossil fuels. The DoE identifies another 2.3 million jobs associated with energy transmission, distribution and storage.

Solar energy added 73,615 new jobs to the U.S. economy over the past year while wind added a further 24,650.

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More Workers In Solar Than Fossil Fuel Power Generation

Employment in energy generation by source in the U.S. in 2016



@StatistaCharts Source: U.S. Department of Energy

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I am a Statista data journalist, covering technological, societal and media topics through visual representation. In fact, I love to write about all trending topics, illustrating patterns and trends in a quick, clear and meaningful way. Our work at Statista has been featured in publications including Mashable, the Wall Street Journal and Business Insider.

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