



# What Fuels Are UAE Residents Searching For?

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Digital marketing suite SEMrush have published a study which demonstrates that UAE residents are showing a growing interest in environmentally-friendly sources of energy. According to an analysis of 11 fuel-related search terms over the last three years, Emiratis are most commonly searching for electricity online, pointing to the rising uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) in the country.

Diesel was the second most common search term, followed by petrol, natural gas and solar power. Meanwhile, biodiesel and methanol were the fastest growing search terms from the 11 identified in the research, indicating the national transition to cleaner sources of fuel is continuing apace.

## A greener tomorrow?

The fact that electricity is top of the pile is encouraging news, although the analysis does not differentiate between electricity produced via traditional means in fossil fuel plants or that gleaned from more sustainable sources. But given that most homeowners will focus their online searches to subjects which relate directly to them – such as household and transportation – it's reasonable to assume that the popularity of electricity is encouraging for the EV market.

Meanwhile, the versatility of methanol and its suitability for both petrochemical and energy applications explain the rise in popularity of that fuel source. With particular regard to the energy sector, methanol is an important ingredient in cleaner sources of road transport fuel such as biodiesel, which was the other fastest-growing search term from the study.

## Big ambitions

The results will be welcomed by the UAE government, who launched their Energy Strategy 2050 in 2017 to widespread acclaim. The Strategy lays out a number of specific goals based upon supply and demand in the country, including expanding the contribution of renewables to the overall energy picture from 25% to 50% and curbing the power sector's carbon emissions by 70%. Both of these goals have been earmarked for 2050, which the country hopes will save it a cumulative AED 700 billion.



A more detailed breakdown of the country's energy picture envisages that just under half (44%) of the national supply will come from clean sources, while natural gas will account for 38%, clean coal for 12% and nuclear for 6%. AED 600 billion has been set aside to achieve those aims and continue the country's economy continues to diversify and grow over the next three decades.

## International comparisons

Electricity enjoyed similar popularity in other Middle Eastern countries Saudi Arabia and Egypt, where it pipped both petrol and diesel into second place, respectively. Diesel and petrol were still the two most common search terms in Morocco.

Further afield, electricity was in amongst the top two in a number of economic powerhouse countries, including the USA, the UK, India, Australia and South Africa. The UK in particular has enjoyed a recent boom in the popularity of EVs, with the number of charging stations for the new cars [surpassing traditional fossil fuel stations](#) for the first time. There are now 8,471 EV charging stations providing over 13,000 plug-in points across the country, compared to just 8,400 petrol and diesel stations.