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Geographic Distribution of U.S. Fuel and Oil Imports

2026

Introduction

Global energy trade has remained a key feature of international commerce, with crude oil and refined petroleum products continuing to support economic activity and industrial production across major economies. The United States, as one of the world's largest energy consumers, imports fuel products from a diverse group of trading partners to meet domestic demand and supplement local production. These trade flows are shaped by a range of factors, including resource availability, production capacity, transportation infrastructure, and long-standing commercial relationships between countries.

The composition of U.S. oil imports has evolved over time in response to changing geopolitical and economic conditions. Countries that were once important suppliers to the U.S. market, such as Russia, no longer play the same role. U.S. imports of Russian crude oil effectively ended following the introduction of sanctions and thus caused imports from Russia to decline sharply after the Russia–Ukraine war. These developments have prompted the United States to source oil from alternative suppliers, reshaping global trade patterns and strengthening the role of other exporting countries.

Global energy markets have experienced significant disruptions in recent years due to geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts. The Russia–Ukraine war altered traditional energy supply chains and prompted many countries to reassess their energy security strategies, leading to shifts in trade routes and sourcing patterns. More recently, instability in parts of the Middle East, including disruptions to key maritime trade routes, has added further uncertainty to global oil markets, influencing both prices and trade volumes.

Trade policy has also become an increasingly important factor affecting international commerce. The growing use of tariffs, sanctions, and other trade measures has influenced market access and competitiveness for a range of products, including energy commodities. At the same time, bilateral and multilateral trade agreements continue to shape trade relationships by facilitating market access, reducing barriers to trade, and promoting economic cooperation. Against this backdrop, an examination of U.S. fuel and oil imports provides insight into the changing composition of the country's energy supply, the importance of individual trading partners, and the extent to which geopolitical events and trade policies continue to reshape global energy trade.

Analysis

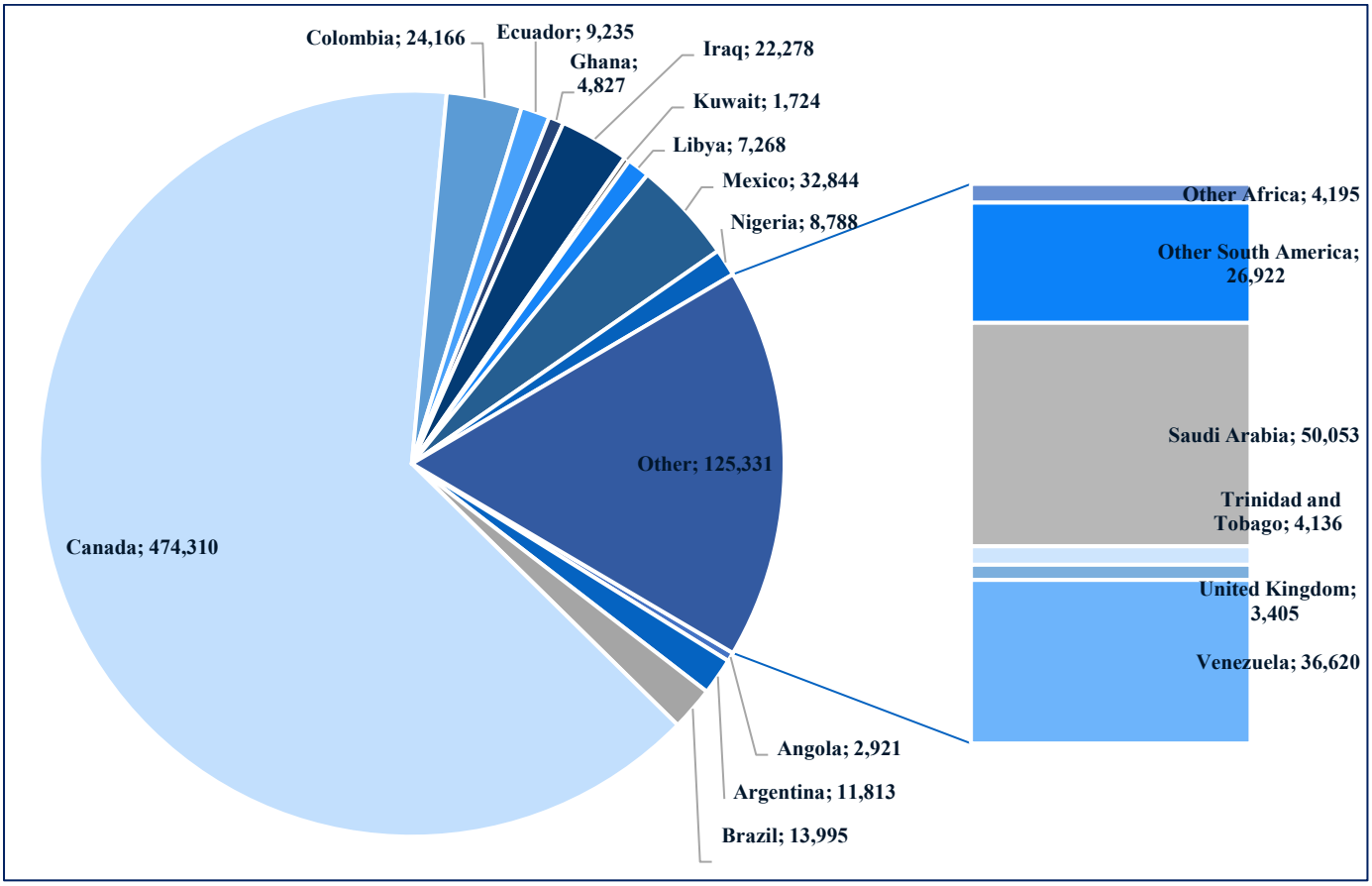
U.S. CRUDE OIL IMPORTS BY SOURCE COUNTRY

The United States continued to source crude oil from a diverse range of suppliers from January 2026 to April 2026, with imports spread across North America, South America, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Canada remained the largest supplier by a considerable margin, with year-to-date imports reaching 474.3 million barrels. This was significantly higher than imports from any other trading partner and reflects Canada's longstanding role in supporting U.S. energy supply. Saudi Arabia ranked as the second-largest supplier, contributing 50.1 million barrels, followed by Venezuela (36.6 million barrels) and Mexico (32.8 million barrels).

South America also played an important role in meeting U.S. oil demand. Venezuela accounted for the largest volume among South American suppliers at 36.6 million barrels, followed by Colombia with 24.2 million barrels, Brazil with 14.0 million barrels, Argentina with 11.8 million barrels, and Ecuador with 9.2 million barrels. Together with imports from other South American countries, the region contributed a substantial share of total U.S. crude oil imports, reflecting the geographic proximity and established trade links between the United States and the region.

While the United States maintains a broad network of oil suppliers, imports remain concentrated among a relatively small number of key partners. Canada alone supplied more crude oil than all other listed countries individually, while Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, and Iraq formed a second tier of major suppliers. This mix of suppliers provides the United States with access to multiple sources of crude oil across different regions, reducing reliance on any single overseas market. See figure 1

Figure 1: U.S. Total Number of Barrels Imported **[January 2026-April 2026]**

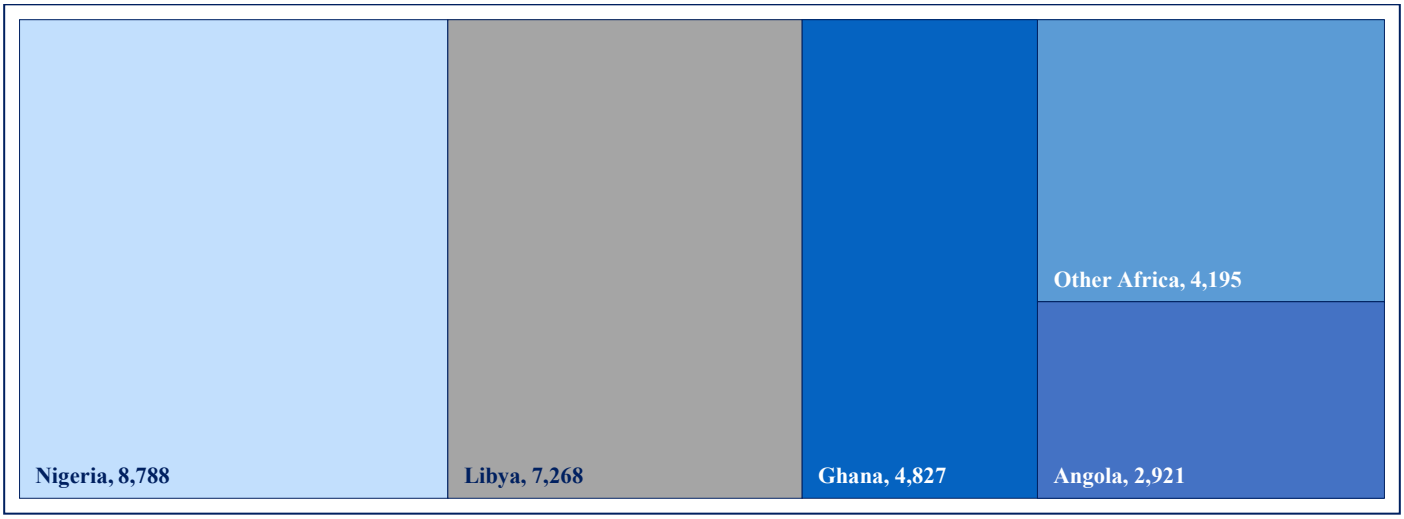


Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis and HEI Research

Among African exporters, Nigeria remained the largest supplier of crude oil to the United States, with year-to-date exports totaling 8.8 million barrels, followed by Libya at 7.3 million barrels, Ghana at 4.8 million barrels, Angola at 2.9 million barrels, while other African producers collectively supplied 4.2 million barrels. These figures demonstrate

that U.S. oil imports are sourced from multiple regions across the continent rather than from a single supplier, reflecting Africa's broad and geographically diverse energy base. Combined with imports from Ghana and other African producers, the figures underscore Africa's continued presence in the U.S. energy market, although volumes remain considerably lower than those supplied by Canada and some Middle Eastern exporters. See figure 2

Figure 2: U.S. Total Number of Barrels Imported from Africa **[January 2026-April 2026]**

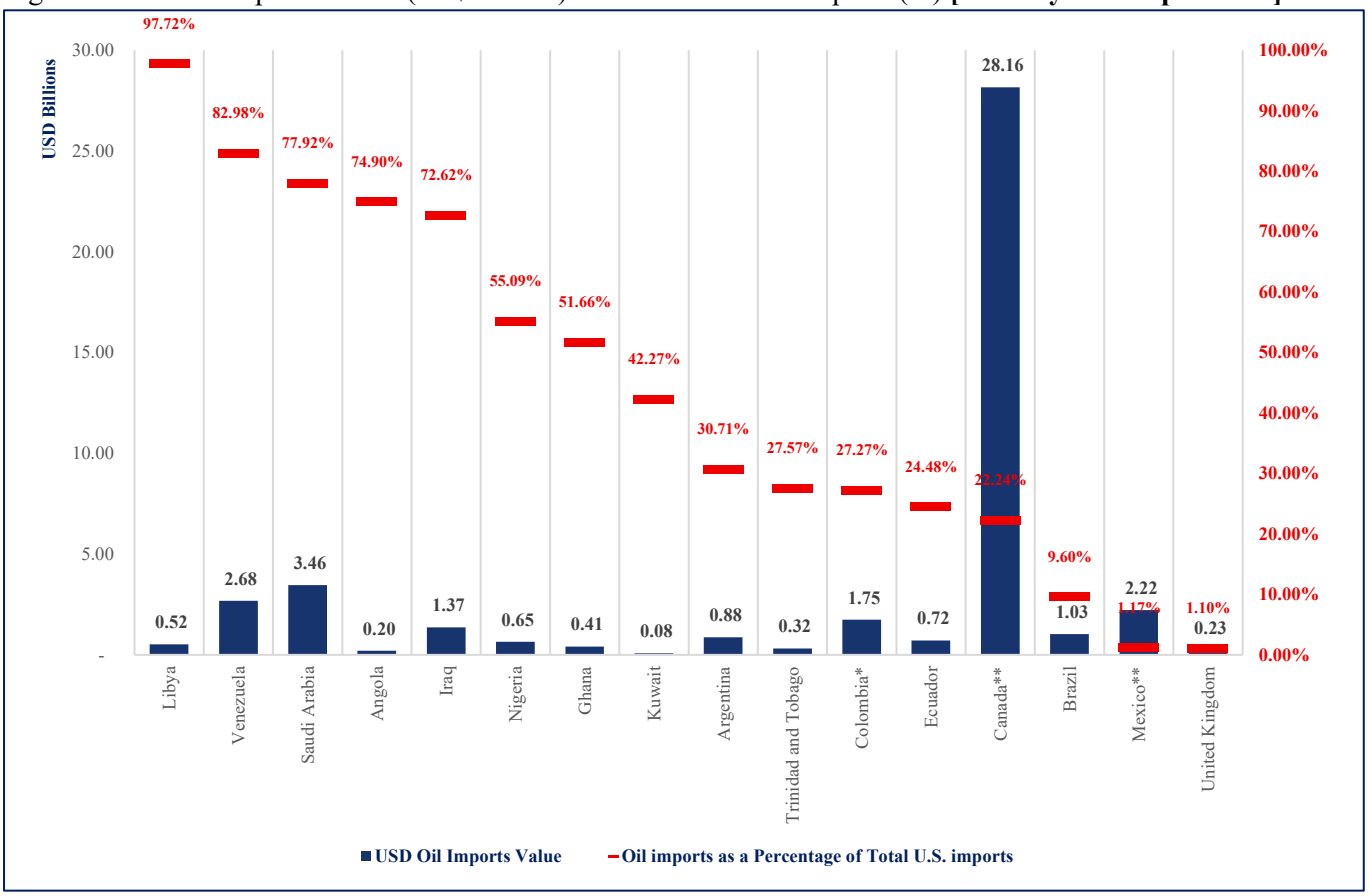


Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis and HEI Research

U.S. PETROLEUM IMPORTS AND IMPORTANCE OF TRADE AGREEMENTS

The composition of U.S. imports reflects the different roles that countries play in its trade network. For some countries, trade with the United States is largely centered on fuel and oil exports, with petroleum products accounting for most of the goods shipped to the U.S. In several cases, oil makes up the overwhelming majority of total imports from a country, meaning that the value imported by the United States comes primarily from the energy sector rather than from a broader range of products.

Figure 3: U.S. Oil Imports: Value (US$ Billion) and Share of Total Imports (%) **[January 2026-April 2026]** [1]



Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis and HEI Research

Based on the year-to-date U.S. import data, fuel and oil products remain a significant component of imports from several major energy-exporting countries. Libya recorded the highest concentration, with fuel and oil imports accounting for 97.7% of total U.S. imports from the country, equivalent to US$524.7 million of the US$537.0 million imported year-to-date. Venezuela and Saudi Arabia also exhibited high levels of dependence on fuel exports to the U.S. market, with oil products representing 83.0% and 77.9% of their respective export baskets. Angola and Iraq aswell mostly sell oil to the United States. Out of every 100 dollars' worth of goods the U.S. buys from these countries, about 75 dollars from Angola and 73 dollars from Iraq are spent on fuel and oil.

Among African exporters, Nigeria and Ghana displayed a more diversified export composition relative to Libya and Angola, although fuel products continued to account for more than half of U.S. imports from both countries. Fuel and oil imports represented 55.1% of total imports from Nigeria and 51.7% from Ghana, amounting to US$646.8 million and US$412.6 million, respectively. These figures indicate that while petroleum products remain a major export category, a substantial share of exports to the U.S. is derived from non-oil commodities.

In absolute terms, Canada remained the largest supplier of fuel and oil products to the United States among the countries listed, with year-to-date fuel imports totalling US$28.2 billion. However, fuel products accounted for only 22.2% of

[1] * Countries denoted by asterisks represent countries with Free Trade Agreements with the United States.
** Countries denoted by double asterisks represent countries included within Free Trade Agreements with the United States.

total U.S. imports from Canada, an indication of the broad and diversified nature of bilateral trade with the US[1]. By contrast, Mexico, the United States' largest import partner overall with imports valued at US$188.7 billion, supplied US$2.2 billion in fuel and oil products, representing just 1.2% of total imports from the country.

Several Latin American exporters occupied a middle position in terms of fuel dependency. Oil and fuel products accounted for 30.7% of imports from Argentina, 27.6% from Trinidad and Tobago, 27.3% from Colombia, and 24.5% from Ecuador. Brazil exhibited a lower concentration, with fuel products contributing 9.6% of total U.S. imports despite fuel imports exceeding US$1.0 billion. The United Kingdom recorded the lowest fuel dependency among the countries listed, with oil imports of US$233.3 million accounting for only 1.1% of total imports valued at US$21.2 billion.

Outlook

The composition of U.S. fuel and oil imports is likely to remain influenced by a combination of trade policy, geopolitical developments, and energy security considerations. Countries with established trade agreements, such as Canada, Mexico, and Colombia, are well positioned to maintain their role in supplying the U.S. market, supported by predictable market access and longstanding commercial relationships. Similarly, eligible African countries, including Angola, Ghana, and Nigeria, continue to benefit from preferential access under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which supports broader trade ties between the United States and the continent.

For countries without free trade agreements or preferential trade arrangements, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Kingdom (trade deal in discussion), future trade flows are more likely to be shaped by commercial demand, production levels, global oil prices, and broader geopolitical developments. Changes in sanctions, tariffs, or other trade measures could also influence sourcing decisions and alter the relative importance of individual suppliers over time.

The history of U.S. oil imports demonstrates that supplier relationships can change in response to geopolitical events. Iran, for example, was once a supplier of crude oil to the United States before sanctions and changes in diplomatic relations effectively brought those imports to an end. This illustrates how political and economic developments can reshape global energy trade. As the United States continues to diversify its energy supply, the balance between countries with formal trade arrangements and those supplying oil based primarily on market conditions is likely to remain an important feature of its import strategy.

Whether current import patterns persist or shift over the coming years will depend on the evolving global energy landscape. Continued geopolitical tensions, changes in trade policy, new bilateral agreements, energy security priorities, and the global transition towards cleaner energy sources all have the potential to influence where the United States sources its oil. As these factors continue to evolve, the mix of suppliers serving the U.S. market may also change, reflecting both economic and strategic considerations.