OPEC is a cartel of oil-producing countries. It is the most powerful economic body in the world.

**OPEC's Mission**

- To maintain the stability and prosperity of oil-producing countries.
- To ensure the economic stability of oil-consuming countries.
- To protect the interests of oil-producing countries.
- To promote the economic development of oil-consuming countries.

**Founders**

- Saudi Arabia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Kuwait
- Venezuela

*Until the 1970s, world oil production was dominated by seven major American and European oil producers. They were collectively called the Seven Sisters.*

As OPEC became increasingly influential on the world stage, the power to price oil shifted away from the Seven Sisters toward OPEC.

**OPEC now owns over 80% of the world's oil reserves.**

**OPEC's Share of World Oil (2018)**

- OPEC produces 33% of the world's oil.
- OPEC's share of world oil production has declined since the 1970s.

**OPEC Has 13 Member Countries**

**MAP OF OPEC NATIONS (DECEMBER 2016)**

- Algeria
- Angola
- Ecuador
- Qatar
- Iraq
- Kuwait
- Libya
- Nigeria
- Oman
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates
- Venezuela

**OPEC's Output Control**

- OPEC's output has its own economic power, equivalent to the economies of many developed countries.
- OPEC's oil production was highly profitable for some years.

**In the U.S., large companies assume it's a cartel or a virtual monopoly.**

- In the 19th century, the automotive industry was gradually shifting away from dependence on oil.