

PRESS RELEASE

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION INCREASED FURTHER IN 2004

According to preliminary figures and estimates from Eurogas, total natural gas consumption in Europe^I increased by 3,3% in 2004 in comparison with 2003.

Natural gas consumption in 2004 amounted to 17.874,5 PJ (peta joule), i.e. 458,3 bcm (billion cubic meters^{II}), i.e. 384,3 mtoe (million tons of oil equivalent); in 2003 it had reached 17.310,8 PJ / 443,9 bcm / 372,2 mtoe^{III}. A breakdown is provided in annex.

Even in times of limited economic growth and warm weather conditions, the growing trend is reflecting the environmental and economic benefits of using natural gas, which remains the preferred fuel in the energy market. The main reasons for the growth in 2004 are:

- ▶ Continuous increase in the number of customers in all sectors
- ▶ Stable weather conditions as compared to 2003
- ▶ Growing gas demand in the global industry sector

At the end of year 2004 more than 95 million customers were connected to the European natural gas grid, which represents more than 240 million people using natural gas.

Natural gas consumption is increasing across Europe, but the rate of change has varied between countries. Well above average developments were recorded in Greece, Luxembourg Spain and Portugal with growth rates between 10% and 23%. Some gas consuming countries showed a slight decrease (Denmark, Finland, Hungary and Slovakia).

Eurogas expects a steady increase of gas consumption of around 2% per year and looks forward to a positive development in the demand of natural gas in the coming half-decade.

Last but not least the increased dependency of the EU vis-à-vis imports is confirmed (9098,2 PJ for 2004 compared to 8617,4 PJ in 2003). This underlines the global dimension of the natural gas business.

Eurogas is the European Union of the Natural Gas Industry representing European natural gas companies and associations of 21 countries towards the EU, all other relevant international institutions and stakeholders.

For more information, please contact Eurogas at: Avenue Palmerston 4, B-1000 Brussels
Tel: +32.(02).237.11.11, E-mail: eurogas@eurogas.org , Web site: www.eurogas.org

^I "EU 25" has to be understood as all current EU25 countries + Turkey and Switzerland

^{II} Applied calorific value: 39MJ/cubic metre GCV

^{III} Applied calorific value: 41.86 PJ/mtoe NCV

Developments in European Natural Gas Consumption 2003-2004

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION IN 2003																										
	Austria	Belgium	Switzerland	Czech Republik	Germany	Denmark	Spain	ESTONIA	France	Finland	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Ireland	Luxembourg	Lithuania	Latvia	The Netherlands	Portugal	Poland	Sweden	Slovenia	Slovakia	Turkey	United Kingdom	EUROPE
PJ (peta joule)	356.0	665.6	122.2	369.7	3460.0	189.7	991.8	30.0	1807.0	190.2	92.9	548.5	2947.1	171.1	49.5	109.4	64.0	1674.1	123.3	511.9	40.0	41.3	257.0	818.0	3715.0	17310.8
BCM** (billion cubic meter)	9.1	17.1	3.1	9.5	88.7	4.9	25.4	0.8	46.3	4.9	2.4	14.1	75.6	4.4	1.3	2.8	1.6	42.9	3.2	13.1	1.0	1.1	6.6	21.0	95.3	443.9
MTOE** (million tons of oil equivalent)	7.7	14.3	2.6	7.9	74.4	4.1	21.3	0.6	38.9	4.1	2.0	11.8	63.4	3.7	1.1	2.4	1.4	36.0	2.7	11.0	0.9	0.9	5.5	17.6	79.9	372.2
billion kWh**	98.9	184.9	34.0	102.7	961.1	52.7	275.5	8.3	501.9	52.8	25.8	152.4	818.6	47.5	13.8	30.4	17.8	465.0	34.3	142.2	11.1	11.5	71.4	227.2	1031.9	4808.6

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION IN 2004 (PRELIMINARY)																										
	A	B	CH	CZ	D	DK	E	EE	F	FIN	GR	H	I	IRE	L	LT	LV	NL	P	PI	S	SI	SK	T	UK	EUROPE
PJ (peta joule)	357.0	677.2	125.1	368.2	3500.0	183.3	1150.8	30.0	1877.0	184.0	102.3	522.5	3058.7	169.7	55.8	108.6	64.0	1695.3	152.8	510.6	40.3	41.2	244.1	818.0	3832.0	17874.5
BCM** (billion cubic meter)	9.2	17.4	3.2	9.4	89.7	4.7	29.5	0.8	48.1	4.7	2.6	13.4	78.4	4.4	1.4	2.8	1.6	43.5	3.9	13.1	1.0	1.1	6.3	21.0	98.3	458.3
MTOE** (million tons of oil equivalent)	7.7	14.6	2.7	7.9	75.3	3.9	24.7	0.6	40.4	4.0	2.2	11.2	65.8	3.6	1.2	2.3	1.4	36.4	3.3	11.0	0.9	0.9	5.2	17.6	82.4	384.3
billion kWh**	99.2	188.1	34.8	102.3	972.2	50.9	319.7	8.3	521.4	51.1	28.4	145.1	849.6	47.1	15.5	30.2	17.8	470.9	42.4	141.8	11.2	11.4	67.8	227.2	1064.4	4965.2

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION CHANGE 2003/2004 (PRELIMINARY)																										
	A	B	CH	CZ	D	DK	E	EE	F	FIN	GR	H	I	IRE	L	LT	LV	NL	P	PI	S	SI	SK	T	UK	EUROPE
	0.3%	1.7%	2.4%	-0.4%	1.2%	-3.4%	16.0%	0.0%	3.9%	-3.3%	10.1%	-4.7%	3.8%	-0.8%	12.7%	-0.7%	0.0%	1.3%	23.9%	-0.3%	0.9%	-0.2%	-5.0%	0.0%	3.1%	3.3%

* Norway, though a major gas producer, has insignificant inland consumption

** The results are based on petajoule, the applied calorific values (39 MJ / cubic meter GCV, 41.86 PJ / MTOE NCV, NCV = 0.9 GCV) are representing an European average. Results in other units than petajoule shall give an indication and can vary for countries using a different conversion factor than the European average.