

PRESS RELEASE

Natural Gas Consumption in EU25 in 2005

According to preliminary figures and estimates from Eurogas, total natural gas consumption in EU25 has increased by 1,9% in 2005 in comparison to 2004.

In 2005, natural gas consumption in EU25 amounted to 19 208,2 PJ (peta joule), i.e. 492,5 billion cubic metres (BCM)¹, i.e. 413 million tons of oil equivalent (MTOE)², when in 2004 it had reached 18 856,3 PJ / 483,5 BCM / 405,4 MTOE.

In the last few years the EU25 natural gas consumption seems to be rising at a steady pace representing an increase of 1,9% between 2004 and 2005. Despite the economic slowdown in some countries, with the increasing oil prices reflected in natural gas prices and notwithstanding the milder weather condition in North-West-Europe, natural gas consumption has increased. The environmental benefits of natural gas have largely contributed for this rise, although the main factor explaining the growing trend in the use of natural gas is the strong increase in power plant demand registered in some countries.

At the end of 2005, the total number of gas customers connected to the EU 25 natural gas grid rose by 1,5% in comparison to 2004, to reach 103,456 million customers.

The rate of change in natural gas consumption has varied between countries and regions. The Southern countries register well above average developments in their consumption levels. Spain remains in EU25, the market registering the largest growth, with 17,7% increase between 2004 and 2005, followed by Portugal (12,6%), Italy (6,9%) and Greece (6%). Although Finland registers the most important decrease of 8,9%, it is mainly due to exceptional circumstances (notably the forest industry lockout). The generally milder weather conditions explain the decrease in consumption recorded in some of the Northern countries (Finland, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands), although a trend can not be observed as the Baltic countries saw their consumption increase (with an average increase of 4,5% between 2004 and 2005). Some countries showed stagnation or slight decrease in their consumption, including Germany, Belgium, Slovakia, the UK and the Czech Republic; whereas others like Poland and France experience "cruising" growth rates of consumption.

Outside the EU25, and amongst Eurogas members, Turkey has registered the most important change, with a 21% increase in consumption between 2004 and 2005, equally distributed amongst the different sectors and resulting from new gas distribution lines becoming operational.

Total supplies to EU25 (indigenous production and imports) amounted to 19235,3 PJ / 493,2 BCM / 413,6 MTOE, and were higher than consumption. The difference was injected into the storage facilities.

The gas supplied in the EU25 comes mainly from indigenous production, covering 42% of the total net supplies in 2005. The main external source of supply is Russia with 24%, followed by Norway with 14%, Algeria 11% and 9% for "other sources" (including amongst others Egypt, Gulf countries, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar and Trinidad Tobago)

Eurogas is the European Union of the Natural Gas Industry representing the European natural gas industries of 19 countries towards the EU, all other relevant international institutions and stakeholders.

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¹ Applied calorific value : 39MJ/cubic metre GCV

² Applied calorific value : 41.86 PJ/MTOE NCV

Developments in European Natural Gas Consumption 2004-2005

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION IN 2004																										
	Austria	Belgium	Czech Republik	Germany	Denmark	Spain	Estonia	France	Finland	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Ireland	Luxembourg	Lithuania	Latvia	The Netherlands	Portugal	Poland	Sweden	Slovenia	Slovakia	United Kingdom	EU25	Switzerland	Turkey
PJ (peta joule)	343,0	674,8	364,6	3460,0	185,9	1150,5	31,6	1865,0	183,9	102,2	567,3	3071,1	166,9	55,8	108,0	63,3	1709,3	152,8	530,1	40,3	41,9	244,1	3743,8	18856,3	126,1	882,4
BCM** (billion cubic meter)	8,8	17,3	9,3	88,7	4,8	29,5	0,8	47,8	4,7	2,6	14,5	78,7	4,3	1,4	2,8	1,6	43,8	3,9	13,6	1,0	1,1	6,3	96,0	483,5	3,2	22,6
MTOE** (million tons of oil equivalent)	7,4	14,5	7,8	74,4	4,0	24,7	0,7	40,1	4,0	2,2	12,2	66,0	3,6	1,2	2,3	1,4	36,8	3,3	11,4	0,9	0,9	5,2	80,5	405,4	2,7	19,0
billion kWh**	95,3	187,4	101,3	961,1	51,6	319,6	8,8	518,1	51,1	28,4	157,6	853,1	46,4	15,5	30,0	17,6	474,8	42,5	147,3	11,2	11,6	67,8	1039,9	5237,9	35,0	245,1

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION IN 2005 (PRELIMINARY)																										
	A	B	CZ	D	DK	E	EE	F	FIN	GR	H	I	IRE	L	LT	LV	NL	P	PI	S	SI	SK	UK	EU25	CH	T
PJ (peta joule)	363,0	683,4	358,4	3460,0	177,3	1354,1	32,4	1927,0	167,5	108,3	553,8	3283,1	157,6	53,1	115,0	64,6	1593,2	172,2	547,9	38,6	43,2	246,6	3707,9	19208,2	129,5	1067,5
BCM** (billion cubic meter)	9,3	17,5	9,2	88,7	4,5	34,7	0,8	49,4	4,3	2,8	14,2	84,2	4,0	1,4	2,9	1,7	40,9	4,4	14,0	1,0	1,1	6,3	95,1	492,5	3,3	27,4
MTOE** (million tons of oil equivalent)	7,8	14,7	7,7	74,4	3,8	29,1	0,7	41,4	3,6	2,3	11,9	70,6	3,4	1,1	2,5	1,4	34,3	3,7	11,8	0,8	0,9	5,3	79,7	413,0	2,8	23,0
billion kWh**	100,8	189,8	99,6	961,1	49,3	376,1	9,0	535,3	46,5	30,1	153,8	912,0	43,8	14,8	31,9	17,9	442,6	47,8	152,2	10,7	12,0	68,5	1030,0	5335,6	36,0	296,5

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION CHANGE 2004/2005 (PRELIMINARY)																										
	A	B	CZ	D	DK	E	EE	F	FIN	GR	H	I	IRE	L	LT	LV	NL	P	PI	S	SI	SK	UK	EU25	CH	T
	5,8%	1,3%	-1,7%	0,0%	-4,6%	17,7%	2,5%	3,3%	-8,9%	6,0%	-2,4%	6,9%	-5,5%	-4,8%	6,5%	2,1%	-6,8%	12,6%	3,4%	-4,2%	3,0%	1,0%	-1,0%	1,9%	2,7%	21,0%

* 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.