

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Natural Gas Consumption in Western Europe increased further in 2000**

Brussels, February 2001

**According to preliminary figures and estimates from Eurogas Member Countries, total natural gas consumption in Western Europe<sup>1</sup> increased by 2.8% in 2000 in comparison to 1999.**

It amounted to almost 15462 Petajoule (PJ) i.e. 397 billion cubic metres (BCM)<sup>2</sup>, i.e. 332 million tons of oil equivalent (MTOE)<sup>3</sup>, when in 1999 gas consumption in Western Europe reached almost 15045 PJ / 386 BCM / 323 MTOE.

This increase confirms the competitiveness of natural gas in a context of high energy prices and the general steady growth trend of gas consumption, despite mild weather conditions all around Europe. The main reasons for the growth recorded in 2000 are:

- the strong increase of gas consumption in the industrial sector, due to the good economic growth and higher penetration in the sector;
- the firm increase in gas consumption for power generation in many countries, both by power companies and by industrial customers for auto-production of electricity
- steady increase in the numbers of customers in all sectors.

The increases in customer numbers confirm that, owing to its environmental and economic benefits, natural gas remains the preferred fuel in the energy market. Over the last 5 years' period, natural gas consumption in Western Europe has increased by 20%, and the number of customers by 15%, reaching the level of more than 80 million homes and businesses.

Natural Gas Consumption is increasing across Western Europe, although the rate of change varies between countries. Demand rose strongly again in Spain (+12.7%), due to increased consumption in the industrial and power generation sectors. Power Generation was the principal contributor to the gains seen in Ireland (+16.9%), France (+4%), United Kingdom (+3.7%), Italy (+3.6%) and the Netherlands (+3.2%). Large percentage increases over last year were seen in Greece and Portugal, where the gas market is developing quickly. Mild weather again affected consumption in the residential sector all over Europe, and in particular the overall results in those countries with a high share of gas consumption in the residential/commercial sector.

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<sup>1</sup> See attached tables

<sup>2</sup> Applied calorific value : 39MJ/cubic metre GCV

<sup>3</sup> Applied calorific value : 41.86 PJ/MTOE NCV

Total supplies to Western Europe (own production and imports) amounted to 16058 PJ / 412 BCM / 345 MTOE, and were higher than consumption. A large part of the surplus went into old and new storage, confirming the policy of European gas companies to reinforce supply security of gas and energy when the gas share in Primary Energy Consumption is increasing.

Indigenous production (Norway included) remained the main source of supplies, with 65% of total; imports from Russia accounted for 19%, Algeria for 13.7%, and other sources for 2.5%, doubling their share in comparison to last year. These sources (Liquefied Natural Gas from Nigeria, the Atlantic Basin and Middle East), have the potential to increase in future years and to represent an important means of diversification and flexibility for European supplies.

The UK was confirmed as the largest gas producing country in Western Europe in 2000 with 4356 PJ / 112 BCM / 94 MTOE, followed by the Netherlands (2350 PJ / 60 BCM / 51 MTOE).



Eurogas is the European Union of the Natural Gas Industry. In 2000, the Member Companies of Eurogas employed about 150.000 persons, and served over 200 million individual consumers.

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**DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPEAN\* NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION  
1999 – 2000**

PETAJOULE (PJ)	1999 CONSUMPTION	2000 CONSUMPTION (PRELIMINARY)	% CHANGE 2000/1999 (PRELIMINARY)
AUSTRIA	298,0	282,0	-5,4
BELGIUM	618,0	622,9	0,8
DENMARK	182,9	177,9	-2,7
FINLAND	155,5	158,7	2,0
FRANCE	1598,6	1662,5	4,0
GERMANY	3275,0	3235,0	-1,2
GREECE	56,6	77,6	37,0
IRELAND	136,9	160	16,9
ITALY	2585,1	2677,3	3,6
LUXEMBOURG	30,4	31,2	2,8
NETHERLANDS	1572,2	1622,0	3,2
PORTUGAL	90,2	94,6	4,9
SPAIN	628,7	708,4	12,7
SWEDEN	37,3	36,8	-1,3
SWITZERLAND	113,8	112,9	-0,8
UNITED KINGDOM	3666,0	3802,0	3,7
<b>TOTAL (PJ)</b>	<b>15045,2</b>	<b>15461,7</b>	<b>2,8</b>

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

**DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPEAN\* NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION 1999 – 2000**

BCM (39 MJ)	1999 CONSUMPTION	2000 CONSUMPTION (PRELIMINARY)	% CHANGE 2000/1999 (PRELIMINARY)
AUSTRIA	7,6	7,2	-5,4
BELGIUM	15,8	16,0	0,8
DENMARK	4,7	4,6	-2,7
FINLAND	4,0	4,1	2,0
FRANCE	41,0	42,6	4,0
GERMANY	84,0	82,9	-1,2
GREECE	1,5	2,0	37,0
IRELAND	3,5	4,1	16,9
ITALY	66,3	68,6	3,6
LUXEMBOURG	0,8	0,8	2,8
NETHERLANDS	40,3	41,6	3,2
PORTUGAL	2,3	2,4	4,9
SPAIN	16,1	18,2	12,7
SWEDEN	1,0	0,9	-1,3
SWITZERLAND	2,9	2,9	-0,8
UNITED KINGDOM	94,0	97,5	3,7
<b>TOTAL (BCM)</b>	<b>385,8</b>	<b>396,5</b>	<b>2,8</b>

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

**DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPEAN\* NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION 1999 – 2000**

MTOE	1999 CONSUMPTION	2000 CONSUMPTION (PRELIMINARY)	% CHANGE 2000/1999 (PRELIMINARY)
AUSTRIA	6,4	6,1	-5,4
BELGIUM	13,3	13,4	0,8
DENMARK	3,9	3,8	-2,7
FINLAND	3,3	3,4	2,0
FRANCE	34,4	35,7	4,0
GERMANY	70,4	69,6	-1,2
GREECE	1,2	1,7	37,0
IRELAND	2,9	3,4	16,9
ITALY	55,6	57,6	3,6
LUXEMBOURG	0,7	0,7	2,8
NETHERLANDS	33,8	34,9	3,2
PORTUGAL	1,9	2,0	4,9
SPAIN	13,5	15,2	12,7
SWEDEN	0,8	0,8	-1,3
SWITZERLAND	2,4	2,4	-0,8
UNITED KINGDOM	78,8	81,7	3,7
TOTAL (mtoe)	323,5	332,4	2,8

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

**DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPEAN\* NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION 1999 – 2000**

Billion kWh	1999 CONSUMPTION	2000 CONSUMPTION (PRELIMINARY)	% CHANGE 2000/1999 (PRELIMINARY)
AUSTRIA	82,8	78,3	-5,4
BELGIUM	171,7	173,0	0,8
DENMARK	50,8	49,4	-2,7
FINLAND	43,2	44,1	2,0
FRANCE	444,1	461,8	4,0
GERMANY	909,7	898,6	-1,2
GREECE	15,7	21,5	37,0
IRELAND	38,0	44,4	16,9
ITALY	718,1	743,7	3,6
LUXEMBOURG	8,4	8,7	2,8
NETHERLANDS	436,7	450,6	3,2
PORTUGAL	25,1	26,3	4,9
SPAIN	174,6	196,8	12,7
SWEDEN	10,4	10,2	-1,3
SWITZERLAND	31,6	31,4	-0,8
UNITED KINGDOM	1018,3	1056,1	3,7
<b>TOTAL (billion kWh)</b>	<b>4179,2</b>	<b>4294,9</b>	<b>2,8</b>

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