

Press Release

Eurogas predicts stable EU gas demand for 2013

Gas demand across the European Union is expected to remain relatively stable in 2013 compared with 2012, according to the latest forecast from Eurogas. An increase in demand of 2.6% was recorded in the first half of 2013 compared with the same period in 2012.

These latest estimates are the result of an annual survey covering 90% of the EU gas market and carried out by Eurogas, the association representing the European gas wholesale, retail and distribution sector, among its members. According to Eurogas, the slight increase in EU gas demand recorded for the first six months of 2013 can be attributed to the long winter and low temperatures. Across the EU such colder than usual weather conditions, particularly in March and May 2013, led to an increase in gas consumption for heating. However, even if the exceptionally long winter raised gas demand, other factors have continued to negatively affect demand.

While industrial production showed signs of recovery in some member states, important cross-country differences persist and gas demand from the industrial sector only registered limited increase in the EU as a whole.

Gas use in power generation has continued to slide as a result of unfavourable market fundamentals. The low coal price and a weak carbon price continued to favour coal generation. The effects of the economic crisis and poor growth continued to result in weak final power demand. In addition, the growing share of electricity produced from renewables and a relatively high hydroelectricity production also reduced the demand for gas in power generation. Such factors are still expected to influence demand in the second half of the year.

Outlook for the rest of 2013

Early indications from the Eurogas data suggest that gas demand in Europe is likely to remain stable throughout 2013, registering a slight increase of 1% compared with 2012.

Despite the small increase, demand in the second half of 2013 will remain under pressure as gas use in the power sector is expected to remain weak. This issue, coupled with the still sluggish economic recovery across the EU will have a detrimental impact on gas demand in the rest of 2013. With regard to heating demand, forecasts for the second part of the year in normal weather conditions do not point to any significant increase.

On this basis, taking 2013 as a whole, gas demand would correspond to an EU-27 & Switzerland annual consumption of about 5 130 terawatt-hours or 475 billion cubic metres¹.

Note to Editors: Eurogas is an association representing about 50 companies and associations engaged in the wholesale, retail and distribution of gas in Europe. Eurogas provides data and information relevant to EU decision makers and opinion formers in making the right policy choices.

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¹ Based on terawatt-hours gross calorific value, the applied calorific value of one cubic metre equals 10.8 kilowatt hours is representing a European average.