



GRTgaz network sees changing pattern of natural gas consumption in 2012

GRTgaz saw a +3.2% rise in natural gas consumption (461 TWh in 2012) on its network compared with 2011 (447 TWh). This overall change in gross consumption does, however, vary according to the profile of consumer connected to the distribution network.

Consumption of gas distribution to the general public (300 TWh) grew by 11.6% compared with 2011, a particularly mild year. 2012 was a more normal year from a climate point of view, except for February, one of the coldest months in more than 50 years. For twelve days in a row, the average temperature in the areas served by GRTgaz remained very low at around -5°C. On February 8th, a daily consumption peak of 3,405 GWh was reached, corresponding to an instantaneous power demand of 158,000 MW, of which almost 6% was from gas-fired power stations. After climate correction, consumption of gas distribution to the general public (estimated at 301 TWh) remained stable compared with 2011.

The consumption of industrial customers connected to the GRTgaz network (161 TWh), however, saw a drop of -9.5% compared with 2011. The sharp fall in demand for natural gas for the centralised production of electricity (-38%) largely accounts for this change. The level of consumption by industry seen in 2012, similar to 2009, reflects the substantial slowdown in economic activity over recent months in France. Excluding centralised electricity production, the consumption of industrial customers connected to the GRTgaz network saw a drop of -3.8% compared with 2011. All sectors of activity were affected, with the exception of the glass sector which was still growing and the agri-food sector which was relatively stable.

Furthermore, the quantities of gas transported by the GRTgaz network were virtually identical to those of 2011: 637 TWh, but with different supply scenarios than those of previous years. Over the course of the past year, GRTgaz's transmission system demonstrated its capabilities by offering significant final offer arbitration possibilities to the shippers, even under unusual operating conditions (period of intense cold, sharp fall in LNG receipts). The wholesale market thus continued its healthy growth with a rise of 15% in trade on the GRTgaz network (514 TWh). The number of shippers using the transmission network also grew, reaching a customer base of 98 companies compared with 89 a year earlier.

GRTgaz is in charge of building, operating and expanding France's high-pressure natural gas transmission network which covers most of the country. GRTgaz delivers the natural gas supplied to it by its customers, to consumption points directly connected to the transmission network: the public distribution networks that supply homes, housing associations and businesses, the major industrial users and the power stations which use natural gas to produce electricity. With more than 32,000 km of gas pipelines and 26 compressor stations, GRTgaz invests every day to transport natural gas in the safest and most efficient conditions and to reinforce security of supply by providing access to an increasingly broad range of sources.

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