

INTRODUCTION

The *Energy Balances 2012* presents energy data for countries and areas in a format which shows the overall picture of the production, trade, transformation and consumption of energy products utilized in the region, published by the United Nations Statistics Division. Such a format is useful in assessing and analysing supply and consumption patterns across both products and countries in detail on an internationally comparable basis.

It is the first issue of *Energy Balances* as a stand-alone publication, while in addition is the twenty-first issue of a series previously titled *Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles*. The series is now split in two and in addition to the *Energy Balances* a sister publication, the *Electricity Profiles*, is now created.

This is the first issue where the standards brought about by the *International Recommendations for Energy Statistics*¹ (IRES) have been incorporated. IRES, in its draft form, was endorsed in 2011 by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

The old and the new energy balance formats have a number of similarities, for example the matrix presentation which shows energy sources in the columns and energy flows in the rows, taking into account the need for disaggregation of certain energy industries and final consumption. At the same time, to take a few examples of differences in the new publication, Natural gas is now shown on a net calorific basis (90% of the gross value), a less detailed oil product breakdown is displayed, and a different accounting of primary energy from Nuclear, Solar thermal and Geothermal sources is employed.

The level of detail of this matrix structure is presented, for the first time in this series, in two formats: a detailed one for most countries; and a simplified one for countries of small size and/or with few types of energy flows to display.

It should be noted that unlike national energy balances designed for individual countries' various specific needs, the energy balance formats of the Statistics Division have to accommodate the whole spectrum of national energy data which are received from national statistical offices and through official national publications.

Basic world energy data are also published in their natural units in the *Energy Statistics Yearbook*, which contains annual data on production, trade, stock changes, bunkers and apparent consumption for individual commodities for approximately 224 countries and areas of the world. In contrast with the *Energy Balances*, where tables refer to countries and show all products at once (in groups), in the *Energy Statistics Yearbook* the tables in most cases refer to products, showing all countries side by side. As such, in that publication, data for individual products can be identified, whereas here in this publication the products of the same type are grouped to allow easy visualisation of the overall energy flows.

The information contained in this publication is also available in electronic format.² Requests for information should be directed to United Nations Publications at: order@un.org.

Acknowledgement is due to the following specialized and intergovernmental agencies whose publications have been utilized in supplementing our statistics: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (IEA/OECD), International Sugar Organization (ISO), Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Organización Latinoamericana de Energía (OLADE), Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), World Energy Council (WEC). Acknowledgement is also made to governmental, energy and statistical authorities of the Member States which have been cooperative in providing data.

The annual energy data are being collected and processed by the Industrial and Energy Statistics Section of UNSD, headed by Mr. Ralf Becker. The processing of the energy data and preparation for publication were carried out by Mr. Leonardo Souza, Mr. Alexander Blackburn, Mr. Man Soni, Ms. Costanza Giovannelli, Ms. Peng Guo and Mr. Graham Osborn. The changes in the design of the energy balances were carried out also with the assistance of Mr. Harpal Shergill.

Enquiries, comments and suggestions for improving this publication are welcome and should be addressed to: energy_stat@un.org.

¹ Available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy/ires/default.htm>

² For details, see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy/balance>