

INTRODUCTION

The *Energy Balances 2015* 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 (UNSD). 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 fourth edition of *Energy Balances* as a stand-alone publication, whereas until the 2011 edition it was part of the series *Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles*. The series was split in two and in addition to the *Energy Balances* a sister publication, the *Electricity Profiles*, is released.

This is the fourth 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 in two formats: a detailed one for most countries; and a simplified one for countries of smaller 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 UNSD 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 supply (apparent consumption) for individual commodities for over 220 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.

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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>

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