

**NetConnect
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simply gas

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Press Release

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Wider market area cooperation results in stronger market position

After extension of the market area cooperation of NetConnect Germany (NCG) in October 2009 to include a total of five parties (bayernets GmbH, Eni Gas Transport Deutschland S.p.A., E.ON Gastransport GmbH, GRTgaz Deutschland GmbH and GVS Netz GmbH), there was a further substantial increase in turnover at the virtual trading point (VTP). The monthly trading volume rose by about 16 % in November to approx. 75,000 GWh, having increased by 36 % in the first month after market area extension. The purchase of control energy via the Leipzig energy exchange (EEX) also became established in a brief space of time: NCG procures about 30 % of its control energy on the energy exchange. In November the number of traders at the hub went up again, having already risen significantly in October. The figure has almost doubled since September 2008. Also constantly rising is the churn rate, which is an indicator of trading activity and hence liquidity within the market area. On certain days this figure is over three, i.e. the owner of the gas traded at the VTP changes three times.

Most traders use the VTP, as confirmed by the recently published Pricewaterhouse Coopers study entitled "Impediments to Gas Trading in South East Europe 2009". According to the study, 70 % of the traders surveyed stated that they expect the NCG hub to become the most important one in the region examined. A year earlier only 29 % were convinced of such a development. The respondents gave very good marks for customer satisfaction and transparency: 100 % of the customers declared that they receive all the necessary information to be able to trade at the NCG hub via the energy exchange. In addition, the respondents confirmed that the hub has high liquidity and the best product mix.

The NCG partners regard this development as a sign of high market acceptance of the trading point: "The statements by market players reaffirm our view that what we offer satisfies market needs and expectations. We will follow this up and pursue further our goal of sustainably strengthening competition," said NCG Managing Directors Torsten Frank and Klaus Parringer.

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This cooperation represents by far the largest gas market area in Germany. The transmission networks of the partners have a combined total length of approx. 14,800 km, reaching from the North Sea coast to the Alps. Over 50 % of H-gas transported in Germany passes through the partners' network. NCG's business areas include balancing group management, the provision and operation of the virtual trading point including a market area information platform, and control energy procurement on behalf of the cooperation partners.

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