

CEER PRESS RELEASE**REGULATORS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION CREATE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD IN GAS STORAGE**

- **European gas storage operators agree to Guidelines proposed by European Regulators aimed at creating a level playing field in gas storage**
- **Guidelines will promote competition in the European gas market and benefit European gas customers**
- **Guidelines reflect extensive public consultation and close cooperation between national energy regulators and the European Commission**

CEER welcomes the agreement of Guidelines for Good Practice for gas Storage System Operators (Guidelines) which will help ensure that Storage System Operators (SSOs) provide necessary gas storage services on a fair and non-discriminatory basis.

Access to gas storage is necessary for effective competition and the Guidelines* are addressed to all SSOs, falling under the scope of the European Directive 2003/55/EC (the Gas Directive). They are also applicable to all users of these systems.

The Guidelines were developed by European Regulators through extensive open and transparent public consultation. They have been discussed by all parties including Member State governments, the European Commission, traders, consumers and gas industry representatives.

The regulators presented the final Guidelines to the European Commission and to all interested parties at a meeting on 18 March, in order for Guidelines to be implemented by 1 April 2005.

The industry association representing Storage Operators, GIE, (formerly known as GTE), confirmed that they will actively support their practical implementation.

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Ends

* Available on ERGEG website: <http://www.ergreg.org>

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Notes to editors:

- 1) The Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) brings together energy regulators from the Member States of the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA). The CEER acts as a focal point for contacts between regulators and the European Commission.
- 2) The Guidelines are intended to give a minimum set of rules on Third Party Access to storage. The purpose of the Guidelines is to ensure that Storage System Operators (SSOs) provide the services needed by storage users on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. Systems and processes shall facilitate the sustainable development of competition in gas supply. These tasks are pursued taking into account technical constraints and the efficient use of the storage infrastructure.