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## Gas disconnect



The big news out of Brussels yesterday was that EU member states agreed on a 15% voluntary reduction in their natural-gas consumption. Most countries, it seems, will qualify for some kind of exemption, so the exercise was more a way to show unity than to accomplish anything of substance. Czech Industry Min. Jozef Síkela, as the lead on the issue, set the tone by [declaring in English](#) that the energy ministers "made a huge step toward securing gas supplies for our citizens and our economies for the upcoming winter." Translated into non-EU English, this means that they secured no new gas but might save a little. Meanwhile back in the jungle of everyday life, many companies are wondering whether they will survive long enough to need to worry about conserving any gas. This is EU disconnect at its most tragic. The top priority of EU ministers should be to make sure a collapse of heavy industry in the EU doesn't cause gas consumption to fall organically by much more than 15%.

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