

ged to cover their costs. Others have been placed in difficulty or even disappeared. The market competition between the major oil companies at the pump puts significant pressure on efficiency which, as a consequence, puts pressure on suppliers to have competitive products.

#### **B. Natural Gas**

- The transmission of natural gas throughout the Community is done through the European gas network. This network (see graph #7) is mainly present in Germany which is the "central point" of the network. The transmission systems have been developed and extended on an economic and commercial basis in accordance with supply and demand factors. Through the transmission network, the European Community is importing natural gas from Norway and USSR.
  
- The physical infrastructure of the gas industry consists of pipeline and of other equipment needed to regulate the passage of the gas through the pipeline as well as for storage and gas treatment. The total investments in the EC for the transmission activities have fallen by about 16% since 1982, while they have increased by 48% in the distribution activities.
  
- It is easy to see that, with the increase of natural gas consumption in the next years, the investments should also increase in order to permit for more and more consumers to use natural gas in all countries but mainly in countries where the environment concern is significant and in countries where there is major transmission deficiency such as Spain, Portugal, Greece and Denmark.