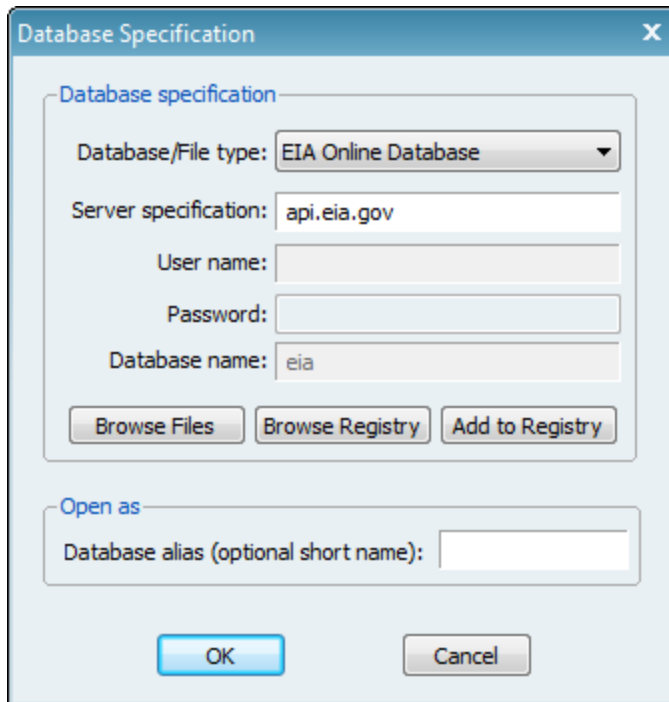# EIA Database

Overview

The EIA database is a large collection of energy and related economic data made available by the U.S. Energy Information Administration as a free public service.

EViews supports online access to EIA data via the EIA web server as well as offline access to data downloaded in the EIA Bulk File format.

Getting Started

To open the EIA online database, simply select File…Open Database… from the EViews menus and then select 'EIA Online Database' from the Database/File type dropdown.


The server specification will be automatically filled in with the EIA server address api.eia.gov which you should not need to change. The database will always be opened with the name 'eia'. Click on OK to proceed.

Use of the EIA online service is free but requires registration. The first time you attempt to open the EIA online database you will be asked to enter an API Key obtained from the EIA.
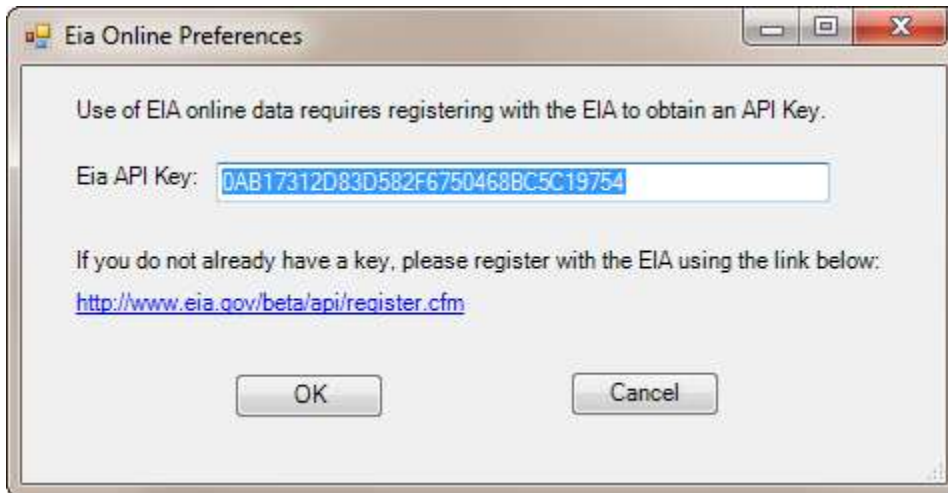
Please enter your API key then click on OK. The key will be saved as a user specific setting in your EViews ini file. If you need to change the key at a later time, use View…Preferences… from the EViews database menus to bring up the dialog again so you can modify your settings.

After clicking on OK, a standard EViews database window will open.
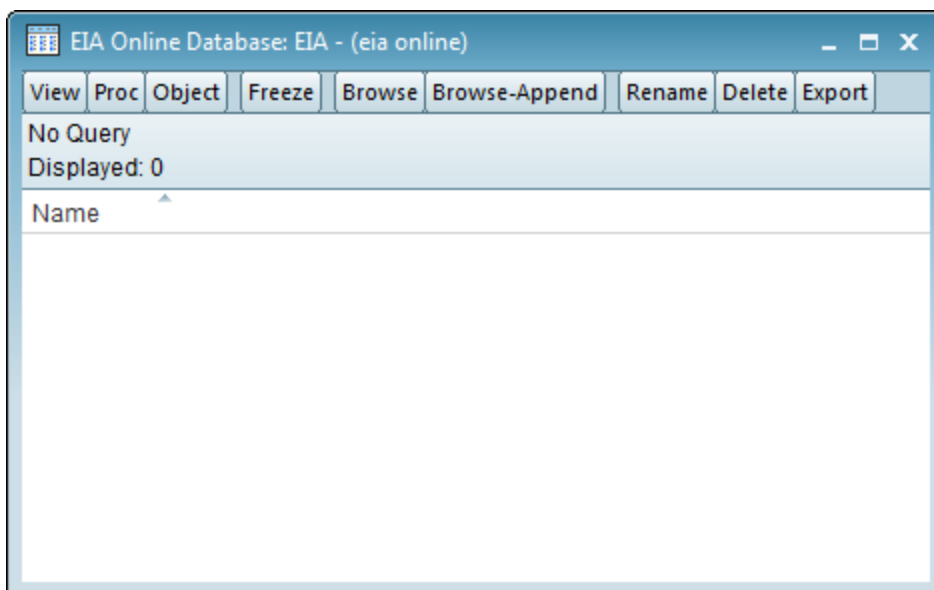
The EIA database supports a custom browser window for navigating through the EIA data. You should use this interface to find series within the database. Click on 'Browse' to open the custom browser window. The standard database window will be minimized and the EIA browser window will open.
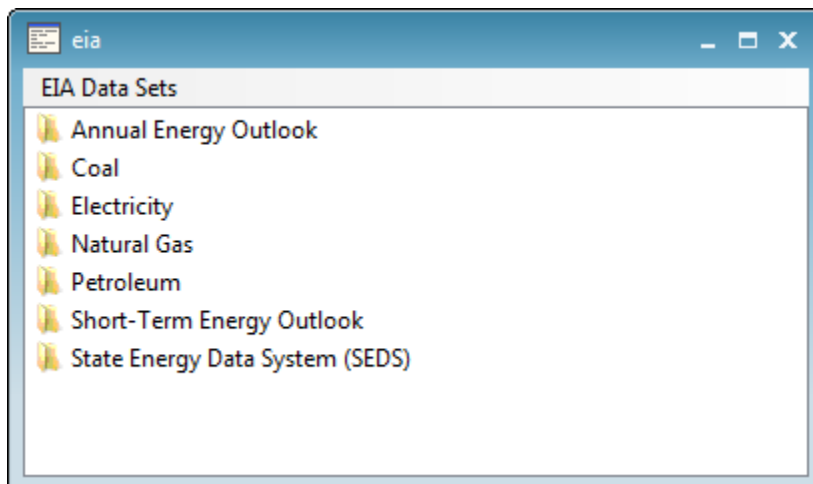
The browser window displays the data available within the database as a set of folders, where each folder may contain additional folders or a list of series available for downloading. Clicking on a folder moves you into that folder and adds the folder to the path displayed at the top of the window.
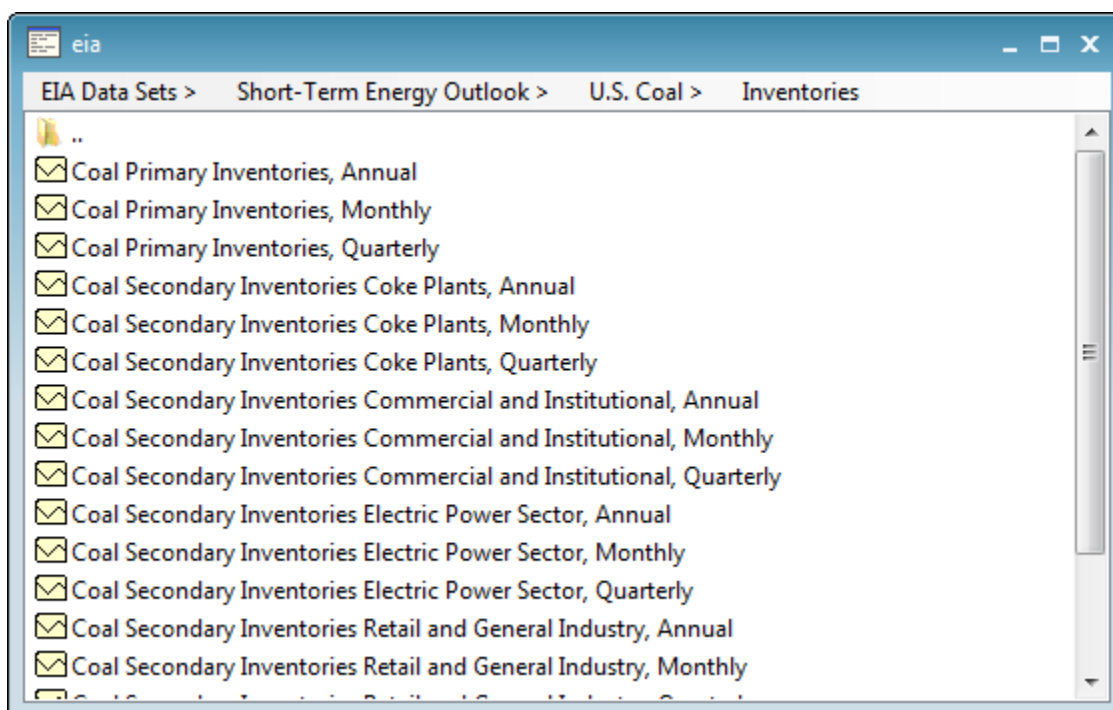
You can return to the previous folder by clicking on the ".." folder icon at the top of the list. You can also move directly to any folder within the current path by clicking on the path component at the top of the window.

Any series contained in the folder may be manipulated following the usual EViews interface conventions:

   1) Double click on a series to bring up detailed information on the series

2) Drag and drop series or copy and paste them into an EViews workfile or database to fetch the current data from the server (drag with the right mouse button or use Paste Special to create links)

When you have finished working with the browser, simply close the browser window to restore the regular EViews database window.

Working with offline databases

EViews also allows you to work offline with data downloaded from the EIA using the EIA bulk download facility. The bulk download feature allows you to fetch all series and category information from an entire EIA data set into a single local file. Downloading an entire bulk file is generally much more efficient than fetching a large number of series one at a time. Once the file has been downloaded, you can navigate within the dataset and bring data into EViews without reconnecting to the EIA servers.

To download a bulk file, open the browser window of the EIA online database, right click on a data set, then select 'Download Bulk File…'
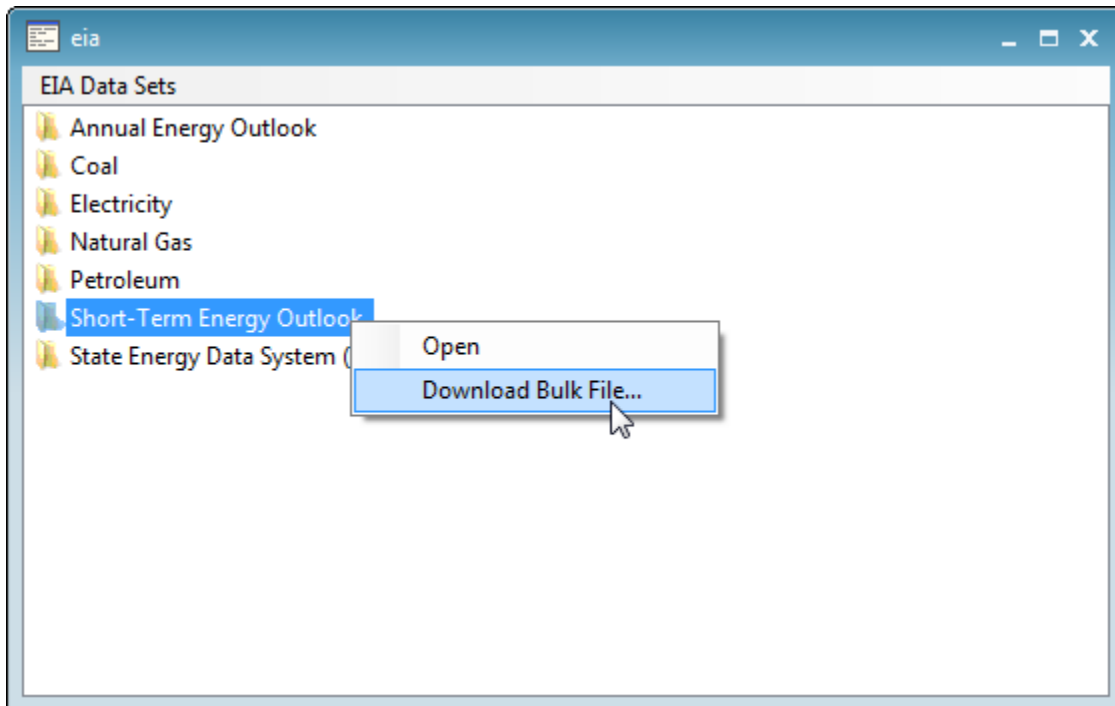

A dialog will appear giving instructions for downloading the file and preparing it for use by EViews.
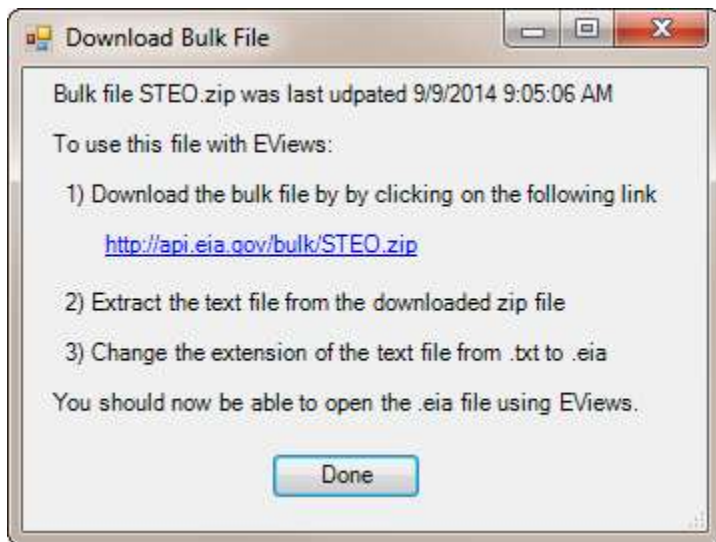
Clicking on the download link will open your default web browser and start a download of the file. The bulk file is compressed in .zip format. You will need to use an unzipping utility to extract the single .txt file contained within the zip file. Finally, rename the .txt file to .eia so EViews can tell that the file contains data in EIA bulk file format rather than a generic text file.

Once the bulk file has been prepared, use File…Open Database… and browse to the file or simply drag and drop the file onto EViews to open it. The caption on the window indicates that you are working with a local file. Otherwise, the interface behaves the same as when working with online data.
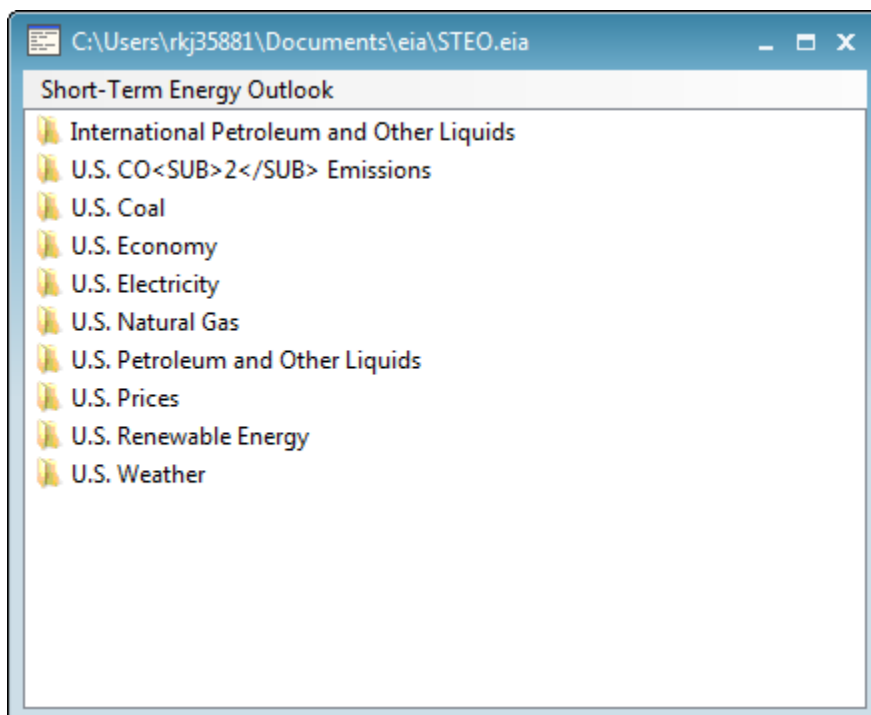
Note that some EIA data sets are large (hundreds of megabytes of uncompressed data). When working with large files you may see a delay as the file is opened since EViews must completely scan the entire bulk file to find all series and category information stored in the file. Subsequent operations should be fast since all data is stored locally on the machine.