

Center Region



ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Center Region of Portugal is rich in renewable energy resources, offering very interesting opportunities for their development. At present, three main types of renewable energies (biomass, hydropower and wind power) are being used for electricity and thermal power generation. Although these resources cover about 40% of the present consumption there is a large untapped potential, around 50% - not just for these resources but also of other very promising energy alternatives.

The region features an average solar radiation of about of 1.600kWh/m², which provides a huge potential for large scale electricity conversion and thermal power applications.

The west coast of the region is over 200 km long, with a wave power density of 35 kW/m, where several pilot installations are being established.

Innovative work is being carried out in the region in the development of second generation biofuels (cellulosic ethanol and diesel from micro algae). In addition, there are large geothermal resources (hot, dry rock in a large granite basin) and a pilot project is underway to assess the feasibility of large scale electricity generation.

In the Region a new cluster of energy equipment industries has been gaining momentum, leading to the installation of plants for solar photovoltaic and thermal panel production, wind generators, biomass processing equipment and boilers and biofuel refineries.

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Portugal

Population: **1.792.987 (in 2004)**
Area: **23.672,4 km²**
Population Density (inh/km²): **76**
GDP per capita: **64,3%** (of EU27)

The Central Region of Portugal covers roughly 25% of the national territory and is composed of ten sub-regions. Three of these are flat, fertile coastal areas (Baixo Mondego, Baixo Vouga and Pinhal Litoral) and seven are inland with rugged terrain (Beira Interior Norte, Beira Interior Sul, Cova da Beira, Dão Lafões, Pinhal Interior Norte, Pinhal Interior Sul, e Serra da Estrela home to Portugal's the highest mountain).

The region is a very diverse territory in terms of natural resources, economic structure and distribution of the population. This brings significant challenges and opportunities in the areas of competitiveness, territorial cohesion and sustainable development.

The main economic activities include a diversified industrial sector (paper and pulp, chemical, ceramic and glass, wood, food and drink, metal and automotive), service sector (health, education and tourism) and agriculture (forestry, wine, cereals and fruit).

