

PORTUGAL - MARCH 100% RENEWABLE

First month of XXI Century fully supplied by renewable electricity sources

APREN - Portuguese Renewable Energy Association and ZERO – Sustainable Earth System Association report that the production of renewable electricity in March of 2018 exceeded the consumption of Mainland Portugal.

According to data from REN (the Portuguese TSO), the renewable electricity produced in March (4,812 GWh) exceeded the consumption of Mainland Portugal (4,647 GWh).

The renewable electricity production accounted for 103.6 % of the electricity consumption, a value unmatched in the last 40 years. However, there were some hours when thermal fossil power plants and/or imports were required to complement the electricity supply of Portugal, these periods were nevertheless fully compensated by others of greater renewable production.

In the period under analysis, the daily share of renewable electricity in the consumption had a minimum of 86 %, on March 7, and a maximum of 143 %, on March 11. It should also be highlighted a 70-hour period, beginning on day 9, when the consumption was fully assured by renewable sources and another period of 69 hours, beginning at day 12.

These data, besides indicating a historical milestone in the Portuguese electricity sector, demonstrate the technical viability, security and reliability of the operation of the Electrical System, with a large share of renewable electricity. The previous maximum occurred in February of 2014 with 99.2%.

In terms of resources, the main highlight goes to hydro and wind that accounted, respectively, for 55 % and 42 % of the monthly consumption. The total March production of renewables also avoided the emission of 1.8 million tons of CO₂, which translated in savings of 21 million euros in the acquisition of emission allowances. In this analysis it is also worth noting the high monthly export balance of 19 % of the electricity consumption of Mainland Portugal (878 GWh).

This renewable share had a positive influence on lowering of the average daily wholesale market price, which was 39.75 €/MWh, price much lower than the same period of last year (43.94 €/MWh) when the weight of renewables in the electricity consumption was only 62 %.

Last month's achievement is an example of what will happen more frequently in a near future. In fact, it is expected that by 2040 the production of renewable electricity will be able to guarantee, in a cost-effective way, the total annual electricity consumption of Mainland Portugal. However, it will eventually be necessary, here and then, the use of natural gas power plants, aggregated to interconnections and storage.



APREN and ZERO considers it is vital that national public policies and the European framework called "Clean Energy for All Europeans", which is currently in the final phase of decision, should enable Portugal to meet its carbon neutrality objectives by 2050, ensuring a strong expansion of solar energy and allowing decarbonisation through the increase of electricity demand in the transport and in the heating and cooling sectors.

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