

desk RESEARCH

Yes, that's our cover, because we have to use all to use less.

greenACT

PREFACE

GreenACT is a 20 months' project designed to enhance the ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION and AWARENESS of YOUNG PEOPLE through the organisation of SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMME to familiarize young people with the idea of environmental citizenship, based on the fact that the future depends on each and one of us by acting responsibly and positively towards our environment and developing sustainable solutions for addressing environmental challenges. In a period where Earth faces the consequences of climate change and global warming crisis and the need for mitigation of climate change is emerging, Green-ACT aims to support further these YOUTH INITIATIVES and raise more awareness in the 6 countries, by educating young people on environmental issues, inspire them in developing a firm ecological mind-set, and invite them to have a positive impact in their communities as active agents.

The partnership is composed of 6 partners from 6 countries: Romania, Lithuania, Cyprus, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Portugal

Furthermore, it aims:

- To promote the idea of establishing SUMMER SCHOOLS for raising young people's environmental awareness;
- To set up the GreenACT MOVEMENT (a network of young activists) for coordinating their actions and engaging citizens;

- To build/increase the capacity of partner organizations to take action regarding the reduction of waste in the partner countries by encouraging local communities to recycle and reuse.
- To equip youth workers with new sustainable environmental skills in order to empower more young people;
- To facilitate brainstorming on challenges and possible solutions of topics such as alternative forms of socio-economy, biodiversity and food production, sustainable production and consumption, transport, etc.

The Desk Research template will be developed in each partner country with the purpose of recording gaps in policies related to environmental protection and awareness in partner countries and whether there are any good practices or not. As was well known from before, there is a lack of reports based on young people's opinion on the climate crisis, eco-lifestyle, basic environmental issues, environmental awareness and reports to show their level of environmental education and awareness. Furthermore, this desk research will show the policies or good practices applied in the 6 partner countries for tackling the climate crisis and environmental degradation at the local level. The Desk Research along with the survey that will be later on realised, there will be provided evidence-based data in the participating countries on young people's attitudes towards climate crisis and eco-lifestyle and the EU policies in the 6 countries related to the protection of the environment.

The Desk Research template follows the below-given structure, proposed by the Intellectual Output leader partner, D.G.T. Association, in order to allow easier comparability of reported information and outcomes across GreenACT partner countries and includes the following chapters (that each will have 2 subchapters):

- Chapter 1: Recording gaps in policies related to environmental protection and awareness Portugal
- Chapter 2: Best practices in policies related to environmental protection and awareness Portugal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY IN PORTUGUESE	5
INTRODUCTION	6
1. RECORDING GAPS IN POLICIES RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AWARENESS IN PORTUGAL	7
1.1. Already existing gaps in Portugal	9
2. BEST PRACTICES IN POLICIES RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AWARENESS IN PORTUGAL	12
2.1. Already existing best practices in Portugal	14
3. CONCLUDING REMARKS	17
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES	18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Portugal occupies one-sixth of the Iberian Peninsula at Europe's south-western perimeter. Its mainland and archipelagos host rich biodiversity and its marine environment is of particular importance. The implementation of EU environmental law and policy has contributed to preserving and improving the environment in Portugal, thanks also to the significant assistance from EU funding.

Nevertheless, and despite the progress in the transition to the circular economy, this Member State still faces considerable challenges in the fields of water and waste management, air quality and nature conservation. In concrete, Portugal's main challenges are: i) improving waste management, ii) enhancing the effective protection of the Natura 2000 network, and iii) implementing marine strategies to meet the good environmental status of marine waters.

However, apart from these main subjects, Portugal also has various gaps in other fields. The country still has room for improvement in concern to eco-innovation performance and material resources efficiency. Several industries still fail the requirements of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) and so, the country is still far away from the carbon neutrality goal for 2050. Another Directive the country is lacking better action is the Environmental Noise Directive. In addition to these and other gaps, and despite some good steps in the right direction, Portugal has shown several incomplete or fragmented processes in different environmental fields. Noise mapping, ecosystem services mapping (MAES), the Natura 2000 Network, and the Invasive Species Regulation are some examples.

Regarding good practices, Portugal is making great effort and progress in fields like sustainability and urban development, ecosystems maintenance, eco-innovation, and environmental governance. In the first, the significant extra resources assigned towards urban development deserve to be highlighted. The results came with the EU Green Leaf Award-winning in 2015 and the European Green Capital in 2020. On the other hand, environmental governance is another field that deserves emphasis. Here, Portugal has some of its best practices, including successful digital environmental portals such as INSPIRE and "Participa", innovative digital platforms monitoring various sectors like Agriculture, Sea, Environmental (iFAMA) and Waste Shipments (E-GAR), and lastly, the achievements made with the Environmental Funding Programme (Fundo Ambiental) and the "Escola Azul" (Blue School) have been vital tools in the fields of climate change, circular economy, habitat valorisation and environmental education.

But, perhaps, the most surprising accomplishment in Portugal is the citizens' awareness and willingness in supporting more investment in environmental protection. Hopefully, this is going to be important for changing the paradigm and making pressure on the Government for better policies. Portuguese people are also very active towards environmental actions and volunteering movements, reinforced by environmental and community organisations. Several examples of that are mentioned later in this Desk Research.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY IN PORTUGUESE

Portugal ocupa um sexto do perímetro da Península Ibérica no sudoeste da Europa. O seu território continental e arquipélagos ostentam uma biodiversidade rica, sendo o ambiente marinho de particular importância. A implementação de leis e políticas ambientais da UE tem contribuído para preservar e melhorar o ambiente em Portugal, graças também ao significativo apoio de fundos de financiamento da UE.

Ainda assim, e apesar do progresso na transição para uma economia circular, este Estado Membro ainda enfrenta desafios consideráveis nos ramos da gestão de água, gestão de resíduos, qualidade do ar e conservação da natureza. Mais concretamente, os principais desafios de Portugal são: i) melhorar a gestão de água, ii) aumentar a proteção efetiva da rede Natura 2000, e iii) implementar estratégias marinhas para alcançar um bom estado ambiental de águas marinhas.

No entanto, para além destes temas principais, Portugal apresenta ainda várias lacunas noutros domínios. O país ainda tem espaço para melhorias no que se refere ao desempenho em eco-inovação e à eficiência dos recursos materiais. Diversas indústrias ainda falham nos requisitos da Diretiva de Emissões Industriais (DEI) e, portanto, o país ainda está longe da meta de neutralidade de carbono para 2050. Outra diretiva em que o país falha é a Diretiva de Ruído Ambiental. Para além destas e de outras lacunas, e apesar de alguns bons passos na direção certa, Portugal tem apresentado vários processos incompletos ou fragmentados em diferentes domínios ambientais. O mapeamento de ruído, o mapeamento de serviços dos ecossistemas (MAES), a Rede Natura 2000 e o Regulamento de Espécies Invasivas são alguns exemplos.

No que diz respeito às boas práticas, Portugal está a fazer um grande esforço e progresso em áreas como a sustentabilidade e o desenvolvimento urbano, a manutenção dos ecossistemas, a eco-inovação e a governação ambiental. No primeiro, merecem destaque os significativos recursos extras destinados ao desenvolvimento urbano que mostraram resultados com o prémio ‘EU Green Leaf Award’ em 2015 e a ‘Capital Verde Europeia’ em 2020. Por outro lado, a governança ambiental é outro campo que merece destaque. Aqui, Portugal tem algumas das suas melhores práticas, incluindo portais ambientais digitais de sucesso como INSPIRE e “Participa”, plataformas digitais inovadoras que monitorizam vários sectores como Agricultura, Mar, Ambiente (iFAMA) e expedições de resíduos (E-GAR), e por último, as conquistas do Programa de Financiamento Ambiental (Fundo Ambiental) e da Escola Azul têm sido ferramentas vitais nas áreas de mudanças climáticas, economia circular, valorização de habitats e educação ambiental.

Mas, talvez, a conquista mais surpreendente em Portugal seja a consciência e vontade dos cidadãos em apoiar mais investimentos na proteção do ambiente. Esperançosamente, isso será importante para mudar o paradigma e criar pressão sobre o governo por melhores políticas. Os portugueses também são muito ativos em ações ambientais e movimentos de voluntariado, reforçados por organizações ambientais e comunitárias. Vários exemplos disso são mencionados posteriormente neste documento de pesquisa.

INTRODUCTION

The Portuguese Desk Research aimed to introduce the main gaps and best practices in terms of environmental protection and awareness in the country. In the development of this document, the main sources of information used were the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) 2019 for Portugal, the Environmental Liability Directive May 2020 for Portugal, and the platform Enterprise European Network - Environmental Politics in Portugal.

Concerning the main gaps, Portugal seems to rely on its natural resources and on European funding and lacks some management and administrative capability regarding the implementation of some policies at the national level. On the other hand, Portugal has some best practices that should be proud of. Therefore, the effort from the Government and the commitment and willingness of the citizens deserve to be recognised.

Regarding the main problems encountered during the development of this desk research were the limited online resources on environmental reports and the lack of information respecting recent years.

1. RECORDING GAPS IN POLICIES RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AWARENESS IN PORTUGAL

Key findings of Chapter 1:

- Developing the potential of the circular economy
- Improving waste management
- Effective protection of the Natura 2000 Network
- Marine ecosystems protection strategies
- Air quality and traffic congestion
- Water Framework Directive
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive

Despite some progress in the transition to the circular economy, concerning the efficiency of the economy using material resources to produce wealth, Portugal's resource productivity was EUR 1.14/kg (EU-28 average: EUR 2.04 /kg) in 2017.

Regarding the environmental performance of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), according to the latest Eurobarometer of 2017, only 5 % of Portuguese companies have taken no resource efficiency measures at all (the second-lowest rate in the EU-28). And, only 12% of Portuguese companies (against 22% in the EU-28) relied on external support in their efforts to be more resource-efficient. Portuguese companies seem to have limited ambition concerning further action to boost resource efficiency.

Concerning eco-innovation performance, Portugal still has room for improvement, particularly in sectors such as waste management, water services, resource and development. In this matter, the main barriers are:

- Lack of private-sector leadership or investment;
- High dependency on public institutions, mostly large corporations;
- Lack of resource efficiency maximization due to the abundance of mineral resources;
- Inexistence of a specific policy programme to promote eco-innovation.

One of the biggest challenges in Portugal has to do with waste management. The country was at risk of missing the EU target of recycling 50% of municipal waste by 2020, according to the Commission's 'Early Warning Report' (2018). And based on 2017 data, the overall recycling rate is 28%. There are also big differences across regions, so further efforts are needed to improve waste management.

Portugal does not have a specific regime to remediate contaminated land. The Portuguese Environment Agency (Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente; APA) proposed a regime in September 2015 but this had not been enacted in May 2020.

In May 2018, the Portuguese government adopted the National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity. Yet, the Natura 2000 network isn't complete, particularly the marine network. Plus, management measures for the sites already designated are still in need. Further efforts are needed to

complete the adoption of suitable measures to protect and manage the Natura 2000 sites in the Atlantic and Mediterranean biogeographical regions. Moreover, complementary measures are still required to ensure the proper implementation of the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation.

The Portuguese Government has granted several prospecting licences for hydraulic fracturing (fracking). In 2016, however, no exploration or production licences involving unconventional oil and gas had been granted or predicted. This situation had not changed in May 2020.

Moreover, when the Improving Financial Security in the context of the Environmental Liability Directive report was published, Portugal did not have any carbon storage facilities pursuant to the Directive on the geological storage of carbon dioxide (2009/31/EC).

In terms of air quality, the levels of nitrogen dioxide and ozone concentration are above EU standards in three zones (Lisboa, Braga and Porto). Even though the emission of several air pollutants has decreased remarkably, air quality in Portugal still concerns.

Furthermore, Portugal registered about 625 industrial facilities without the required permit based on the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED). According to the numbers in 2015, the main sectors failing on this matter were: intensive rearing of poultry and pigs; slaughterhouses; waste management; surface treatment; and mineral production.

Though Portugal seems to do well by meeting carbon neutrality by 2050, on the other hand, the country is one of the eight EU member states exceeding the cap of 3,5% from the base year for greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreover, Portugal created vehicle taxation based on engine capacity and emissions and encouraged the purchase of cars with lower CO₂ emissions. However, not only the number of those cars is barely reaching 1% of the overall circulation, but there aren't yet any incentives to use public infrastructures and transports in preference to private transport.

Another Directive where Portugal is failing is the Environmental Noise Directive. According to the last available data, it is estimated that environmental noise is the cause of around 100 premature deaths and 300 hospital annual admissions. Yet, the implementation of this Directive faces constant delays. Plus, Portugal still lacks in completing mapping the noise of agglomerations, roads and railways. However, the country showed some progress in 2018 with the elaboration of the first National Environmental Noise Strategy 2030.

In recent years, Portugal has achieved progress in water management, however, some challenges remain. For example, the water governance and the need to close gaps in water investments, particularly for wastewater. At the municipal level, the sector is still highly fragmented and the water and waste-water services are yet to show some reorganisation. We will explore this subject in further detail in the next point.

Following, we will go into more detail on the matters that are the main challenges in Portugal.

1.1. Already existing gaps in Portugal

Waste Management

Portugal has made slow but steady progress over the past decade on stepping up its recycling rate and diverting municipal waste from landfilling. Municipal waste generation in Portugal has started to increase in recent years. It came to 487 kg/year/inhabitant in 2017, although it remains similar to the EU average. Nonetheless, despite the slight increase in recycling and composting and a small shift away from incineration and landfilling, Portugal scores a recycling rate way below the EU-28 average (28% against 46%).

Therefore, these numbers put Portugal at risk of failing the EU2020 target of recycling 50% of municipal waste. The situation is particularly worrisome on the Azores islands. Some of the causes for these weak performances are insufficient incentives for managing waste, lack of coordination in public administration, insufficient door-to-door separate collection, and limited implementation of systems for collecting source-segregated biowaste from households.

In order to fight the situation, the country approved the National Waste Management Plan 2014-2020 and the Strategic Plan for Municipal Solid Waste for the Mainland (PERSU). The key priority actions to be made in Portugal are:

1. Reinforce and extend the separate collection of waste (including bio-waste, “pay-as-you-throw”, door-to-door collection systems);
2. Introduce economic instruments (like landfill fees and household waste charges);
3. Make reuse and recycling more economically attractive and shift reusable and recyclable waste away from incineration;
4. Improve the operation of extended producer responsibility systems and take into consideration what the packaging scheme adds to the cost of the operating system;
5. Review treatment infrastructure requirements and move away from mixed waste treatment;
6. Provide technical support to municipalities for organising and managing collection services.

Nature Protection

Despite the approval of the National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (NSNCB) in 2018 by the Portuguese Government, the most recent assessment of the Sites of Community Importance (SCI) integrated into the Natura 2000 network shows insufficiencies in the designation. Particularly, no special conservation areas have yet been designated for the Sites of Community Importance in the Atlantic and Mediterranean biogeographical regions, in the opposite of what most of the EU Member States have done.

In the ESMERALDA project, Portugal was categorised as advanced in terms of its status in the mapping of ecosystem services (MAES), together with eight other European countries. However, the assessment was only at the local level and this has yet to be upscaled to the national level. Moreover, at the MAES Working Group in September 2018, Portugal showed no updated information meaning that no progress had been recorded since January 2016.

Portugal also faces some challenges concerning forests, especially the high risk of forest fires. More effort and better policy and management options for reducing forest fires are needed and must be addressed to minimise the conditions and spread of wildfires. The National Forest Strategy was recently updated but there are some examples of changes in land and forest management, like the abandonment of pastoralism and agriculture and neglect of traditional forest management, that still deserves attention.

Moreover, regarding invasive alien species, Portugal has neither notified about provisions on penalties applicable to infringements nor reported the list of invasive alien species for Madeira and Azores. Both notifications were required by the Invasive Alien Species Regulation.

Finally, another big concern related to nature protection is marine protection. The measures reported by the Portuguese Marine Strategy Framework Directive's programme, address the relevant pressures only partially. They are rather focused on human activities and their general impacts on wild animals, but fail, for example, to cover by-catch issues. The country relies on measures to protect marine areas in general, failing on clarifying the specificity of pressures for certain areas. The measures tend to be unclear on whether or how they will help obtain good environmental status.

Therefore, the country needs to clarify the existing measures and establish more with a direct impact on the pressures on marine nature. Better cooperation with the other EU Member States might help tackle predominant pressures.

Water Management

According to the Water Framework Directive, in Portugal, the most significant pressures on surface water are diffuse pollution from agriculture (39% of water bodies) and other diffuse pollution (30%). The same is true for groundwater bodies, where agriculture pollution is equally the main pressure (13%), followed by alteration of water level (2,6%).

On the other hand, the biggest impact on surface water bodies (41%) and groundwater bodies (13%) is organic pollution. Though, nutrient pollution plays a big role too.

Concerning the status of the water bodies in Portugal, in 2017, the data from the second River Basin Management Plan showed that the proportion of surface water bodies at good chemical status decreased from 40% to 25% compared to the first report. Also, the percentage of surface water bodies with unknown status increased from 58% to 74%.

Yet, one main concern goes to the Urban Waste Water Treatment, where Portugal has repeatedly had difficulties in meeting its obligations under this Directive (UWWTD). As stated by the last available data from 2018, though nearly 100% of the wastewater was collected, only 66% went under more stringent treatment. Therefore, the country urges to build up the necessary infrastructures in order to meet the environmental objectives under the UWWT Directive.

Another preoccupation is related to water management. Firstly, in Portugal, about 8% of all water consumption goes to agriculture alone. Secondly, water governance and management is rather

fragmented at national and municipal levels. Plus, at the municipal level, water and wastewater services are not yet at their full potential.

Finally, despite the adoption of its first Flood Risk Management Plans, Portugal does not have a strong connection between its goals and the measures and fails to identify specific sources of funding. Additionally, even more, cost-effective and cheaper than flood recovery costs, the natural water retention measures for flood prevention are often disregarded.

2. BEST PRACTICES IN POLICIES RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AWARENESS IN PORTUGAL

Key findings of Chapter 2:

- National Action Plan for the Circular Economy
- Eco-Innovation performance progress
- Environmental funding and investment
- Maintaining and restoring ecosystems
- Sustainable and greener cities
- Civic participation and Environmental Organisations

Portugal continues making some progress in terms of a circular economy in recent years. Firstly, in 2015, the Portuguese Government adopted the Green Growth Commitment (GGC), encompassing 16 sectors, with over 100 initiatives and 14 targets for 2020 and 2030. Then, in December 2017, the government approved the National Action Plan for the Circular Economy (2017-2020). This plan aimed to act at three main levels: national, sectoral and regional. Before that, in 2016 was created the ECO.NOMIA web portal, which raised national awareness of the subject, shows that there has been a conscious effort to include circular economy principles.

Portugal performs above the EU-28 average as regards the number of people employed in the circular economy (1.82% of total employment in 2016; the EU-28 average is 1.73%). Additionally, according to the Special Eurobarometer 468 in 2017, Portuguese society showed very strong support for a circular economy. 91% of Portuguese people were very concerned about the impact of plastic products (EU-28 average: 87%), and 94% were worried about the impact of chemicals (EU-28 average: 90%).

Portugal has a thematic agenda for Research and Innovation in the Circular Economy in transitional progress towards sustainability, resilience and inclusion. For that, the Fundo Ambiental (Environmental Fund) has been playing an important role.

Even though Portuguese companies seem to have limited ambition concerning further action to boost resource efficiency, Portugal is for the first time ever above the EU-28 average score regarding the Eco-innovation Index, being ranked in the 14th scoreboard of 2018. The results show a progressive improvement since 2010.

As regards gas emissions, Portugal aims to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. For this, the country has some long-term energy and climate plans and roadmaps, including the Low Carbon Roadmap for 2050, the Portugal Green Growth Commitment and the National Programme for Climate Change 2020/30, set up in 2015.

The environmental insurance market in Portugal is well-developed and has grown continuously since 2016. Since the introduction of mandatory financial security in 2010, stand-alone environmental insurance policies for Environmental Liability Directive administrative liabilities, civil liabilities from environmental damage and other types of cover became generally available.

According to the Special Eurobarometer 468 of 2017 on attitudes of EU citizens towards the Environment, 92% of Portuguese citizens support more EU investment in environmental protection (EU-28 average: 85%). Here, the EU has played a major role, namely through funding sources such as Deployment of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), Horizon 2020, LIFE Programme, the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), and the Environmental Funding Programme.

In this context, Portugal has been a major beneficiary of the EU Cohesion Policy for several Operational Programmes dedicated to the environment and regional development. Another fund that Portugal has been favouring is the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), a key operational programme for the Portuguese maritime, fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

Other findings with significant importance to Portugal are the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), supporting environmental studies for the development of energy connections and improvement of railway connections, the Horizon 2020 mostly channelled to climate action and biodiversity-related actions, and the LIFE Programme, promoting various environmental projects.

On water management, the quantity and quality of the information included in the second River Basin Management Plans pursuant to the Water Framework Directive have significantly improved. Also, the number of sites monitored increased by 36%. On the bright side, considering water quality, 97% of groundwater bodies were in good quantitative status, and 87.7% of bathing water bodies in Portugal were of excellent quality.

Finally, Portugal has made some progress in respect of international agreements to reinforce the commitment to strengthening global environmental law implementation. Firstly, the country has signed agreements under the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution: the Persistent Organic Pollutions Protocol, the Heavy Metals Protocol, and the Nagoya Protocol. Secondly, Portugal has reported collaboration with Spain and other EU competent authorities and has been actively involved in the launching of the European Union Timber Regulation Mediterranean network. Lastly, Portugal has met the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (SITES) obligations, by establishing relevant national authorities and regularly requesting trade documents.

Next, we will deeper explore some of the best practices already existing in Portugal.

2.1. Already existing best practices in Portugal

Eco-innovation

Small but important steps have been made, and some sectors deserve to be highlighted in the eco-innovation progress. They are construction, food and agriculture and textiles. And, the following are good examples of succeeded projects in those sectors:

- Installation of a low-temperature belt dryer in the Intercement Cimpor cement plant;
- Indoor farming options by CoolFarm;
- Jindo Burel sneakers by BERG, using only recycle and locally-sourced natural products;
- Online supermarket GoodAfter, preventing large-scale food waste.

Maintaining and restoring ecosystems

The EU has provided guidance on the further deployment of green and blue infrastructure in Portugal, and the Lisbon Strategy for 2010-2024 includes green infrastructure activities, such as creating a network of green spaces and corridors for recreational activities and for protecting and promoting biodiversity and natural and cultural landscapes.

The Quinta da Granja Urban Park, in Lisbon, and the Quinta do Pisão, in Cascais, are two successful examples of green infrastructures.

The Portuguese Government has launched several initiatives that take into account the importance of ecosystem services and natural capital for growth and jobs. Some examples are the green economy initiative, green tax reforms, approaches based on the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity (TEEB), and ecosystem services assessments.

Sustainable greener cities

Portugal has assigned significant resources (more than the mandatory 5%) from the 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to sustainable urban development. Moreover, Torres Vedras city was one of the two winners of the inaugural EU Green Leaf Award in 2015, and Lisbon was selected as European Green Capital in 2020. Portuguese cities are actively involved in sustainable initiatives such as Eurocities and the EU Covenant of Mayors, where, by 2018, 140 cities and towns were signed up.

In 2015, Portugal approved the Sustainable Cities 2020 Strategy, aiming to guide municipalities, inter-municipal and other urban bodies with a roadmap for urban sustainability. This strategy was designed to reinforce the roles of cities in areas like urban regeneration and restoration, the urban environment, low carbon, and climate change.

Another step towards sustainable greener cities is the efforts in urban mobility. Even though metropolitan cities such as Lisbon and Porto need more and stronger measures to tackle the issues of traffic congestion and public health, some actions have already been made. For instance, the Lisbon-Tagus Valley region is taking part in the “Dorothy Project”, which was designed to improve the distribution of

urban goods by cutting vehicle use. In the same context, the “Lisbon Green Corridor” initiative, aiming to improve the planning and management of public transportation promoting green connectivity and active transport (walking and cycling) is another good example of green initiatives in a metropolitan area.

Environmental governance

Here are some examples of good programmes and actions that the Portuguese Government has been made on environmental protection:

- Relevant environmental data portals, such as INSPIRE portal (though Portuguese is the only language used, and some navigation improvements are required);
- The “Participa” portal, created in July 2015 to host public consultations held by the Ministry for the Environment;
- Single Platform for Inspection and Monitoring in the areas of Agriculture, Sea and Environment (iFAMA), operating since 2018 and aiming to simplify administrative procedures and improve public services efficiency;
- The platform for Information Accompanying Waste Shipments (E-GAR), introduced in 2017, replaces the use of paper documents with a simple digital alternative;
- Single Environmental Permitting Platform, to operationalise the Single Environmental Permitting Regime;
- The Environmental Funding Programme (Fundo Ambiental) is an important investment tool in the fields of climate change, the circular economy and habitat valorisation;
- Green public procurement and more sustainable use of resources in public administration, including reducing the use of paper and single-use plastics and limiting the acquisition of fossil fuels;
- Escola Azul (Blue School) actively engages the school community in the understanding of the ocean’s influence on us and our influence on the ocean.

Civic participation and Environmental Organisations

Portuguese citizens are active people towards environmental actions and volunteering movements. This effort is empowered by some Environmental Organisations. Here are some examples of projects and initiatives that Portugal should be proud of:

- Fruta Feia Cooperative - aiming to fight market inefficiency by changing consumption patterns and creating an alternative market to “ugly” fruits and vegetables;
- REFOOD - fighting food waste originated from supermarkets and restaurants;

- Waste App - an application that informs people about the recycling process and where several different kinds of products should be disposed of;
- Oceano Azul Foundation - a non-profit organisation working on ocean literacy, contributing to the conservation of the oceans and raising awareness for their importance;
- Volunteering initiatives and movements working on trash clean-up campaigns and environmental awareness:
Brigada do Mar União, Mare Limpa, Guardiã do Oceano, The Trash Traveller, Straw Patrol, Sailors for the Sea Portugal, Mar à Deriva, Lixo Marinho, LinDoMar, Biatakí, SOS Menos Plástico, Desplastifica, Projeto gea, among many others.
- Environmental Conservation Organisations:
Zero Waste Lab Portugal, Bio Living, Quercus ANCN, Associação Zero, Associação Bandeira Azul (ABA), Portuguese Confederation of Environmental Defense Associations.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Portugal hosts rich biodiversity particularly in the marine environment and the EU funding for the implementation of laws and policies has been crucial. Yet, the country shows several incomplete or fragmented processes and insufficiencies in designation and implementation in regard to Nature Protection and Conservation.

Portugal faces critical challenges in waste management and water management. In the former, the country needs to reduce the generation of Municipal waste and increase the rate of recycling, which is way below the EU-28 average (28% against 46%). As for the latter, Portugal stands up to a serious problem of pressure and pollution on surface water.

Apart from these three main gaps, Portugal has several other incoherent and insufficient implementations in many other sectors, such as eco-innovation performance, and air quality, among others.

Nevertheless, Portugal has been making great use of EU funding towards sustainability, resilience and inclusion. And, despite some governmental inconsistencies, the country has some good examples of programmes and actions in restoring ecosystems, sustainability, environmental governance and eco-innovation.

Moreover, the most surprising achievement in Portugal is the citizens' awareness and willingness in supporting investment in environmental protection and their activeness through individual and/or organisational volunteering commitment. This may be the way for changing the paradigm in the country and making pressure on the Government for better policies.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Environmental Factsheet 2019:

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/factsheet_pt_en.pdf

The Environmental Implementation Review 2019:

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_pt_en.pdf

Environmental Liability Directive May 2020 - Improving Financial Security:

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/liability/pdf/Annex-I_Portugal.pdf

Enterprise Europe Network - Environmental Politics in Portugal:

<https://www.een-portugal.pt/info/polserv/pol%C3%ADticas/Paginas/politicaambiental.aspx>