

According to data from the '2019 Spanish Electricity System Preliminary Report'

The Basque Region increases electricity generation by 60%, reducing its energy dependence

- Demand for electricity fell 1.9% in 2019, changing the positive trend registered in 2018 and 2017.
- Combined cycle, cogeneration and non-renewable waste were the leading technologies in the Region's generation mix.
- Slight increase in its overall installed power capacity, highlighting the increase of more than 89% in solar photovoltaic.

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The Basque Region closed 2019 with an electricity production of 8,225 GWh, representing an increase of 60% compared to 2018 (5,142 GWh). In this regard, compared to the previous year, the Basque Region has reduced its energy dependence by about 20 percentage points. Despite this, it remains one of the regions with the highest energy dependence, as it generates 50% of the electricity it demands (16,321 GWh). This is some of the data included in the '2019 Spanish Electricity System Preliminary Report' published by Red Eléctrica de España.

Primarily, the technologies that have headed up the Region's generation mix were combined cycle (54.4%), cogeneration (25.2%) and non-renewable waste (6.8%). On the other hand, the complete set of generating facilities in the Basque Region has slightly increased its overall power capacity by 0.8%, mainly due to the commissioning of 4 megawatts (MW) of hydro capacity and 24 MW of solar. The latter represents an increase of 89.4% in solar photovoltaic power capacity, an all-time high in the Region.

With regard to electricity demand, 2019 registered a negative variation of 1.9%. Although the recorded data remains in line with the decrease registered nationwide (1.6% less), it contrasts with the upward trend experienced in the Region over the previous two years.

In the case of the Basque Region, this trend has not occurred as 83.5% of its overall installed power capacity is non-renewable and the remaining 16.5% corresponds to renewable technologies. In 2019, combined cycle has multiplied its share in the generation mix by a factor of more than 3 times and generation from solar photovoltaic has set an annual record with an increase of 8.1%. The total share of renewables in the generation mix reached 13.6%, decreasing by more than 9 percentage points compared to 2018.

The electricity system in the Basque Region

During 2019, combined cycle was the technology that produced the most electricity in the Basque Region, representing 54.4% of total generation; followed by cogeneration (25.2%), non-renewable waste (6.8%), hydro (4.7%), wind (4%), renewable waste (3.8%), other renewable (0.6%) and solar photovoltaic (0.4%).

Throughout the past year, the complete set of generating facilities in the Basque Region experienced an overall growth of 0.8% in its installed power capacity, reaching all-time highs for renewable capacity. Specifically, solar



photovoltaic capacity has increased 89.4% by adding 24 MW; Hydro has grown 2.5%, adding an extra 4 MW to the system; and installed cogeneration capacity has been reduced by 1.3% (5 MW less).

The rest of the technologies have not experienced any variation in their installed power capacity, so the complete set of generating facilities closed 2019 with 83.5% of non-renewable sources (combined cycle 1,968 MW, 67.2%; cogeneration 399 MW, 13.6%; non-renewable waste 77 MW, 2.6%); and with 16.5% of renewable technologies (hydro 174 MW, 6%; wind 153 MW, 5.2%; other renewables 56 MW, 1.9%; solar photovoltaic 51 MW, 1.7%; renewable waste 50 MW, 1.7%).

With regard to Spain as a whole, the installed power capacity in the Basque Region represented 2.7% of the national total. Wind 0.6% and solar 0.5%.

The national electricity system, increasingly 'greener'

According to data published by Red Eléctrica, in 2019 the increase in installed renewable power capacity nationwide meant that for the first time ever these technologies already account for 50% of the country's total generation capacity (110 GW in total). As a whole, the complete set of generating facilities in Spain has grown by 5.9%. Combined cycle continues to be the leader in installed power capacity (23.8% of the total) but it is closely followed by two renewable sources: wind (23.3%) and hydro (15.5%).

Specifically, this past year 6,539 'green' MWs were commissioned, which has meant an increase of 13.4% in renewable generation capacity compared to 2018. The set of renewable generating facilities closed 2019 with an overall installed power capacity of 55,195 MW, of which 47% correspond to wind, 16% photovoltaic and 37% belong to other 'green' technologies.

This firm backing for clean energy sources has meant that, of the 260,713 GWh of electricity generated nationwide in Spain in 2019, 37.5% was produced using these technologies. Wind power generation was 9.3% higher than in 2018, occupying third place in the mix with a share of 20.8% after nuclear power (21.4%) and combined cycle (21.2%). Also noteworthy is the decline in the share of coal whose production fell by 66% in 2019 - the lowest level since records began.

Consequently, the CO₂ emissions associated with electricity generation have experienced a notable reduction compared to 2018 (23% less), totalling 49.6 million tonnes, the lowest figure in the history of the Spanish electricity system.

For its part, electricity demand nationwide closed 2019 at 264,550 GWh, slightly lower than in 2018 (1.6% less). After factoring in the influence of seasonal patterns and working days, the decrease stands at 2.5% compared to the previous year.