

Meeting of the Parties
Third session
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Assessing progress in achieving equitable
access to water and sanitation – pilot
project in Portugal

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Framework

Equitable access to water and sanitation in Portugal

- Actions taken
 - S1 – Steering governance frameworks
 - S2 – Reducing geographical disparities
 - S3 – Ensuring access for vulnerable and marginalized groups
 - S4 – Keeping water and sanitation affordable for all



S1 – Steering governance frameworks

- National strategic plan (PEAASAR)
- Targets for accessibility
 - 95% - water supply service (2009)
 - 90% - wastewater service with adequate treatment
 - 81% wastewater collection (2011)
 - 78% wastewater with adequate treatment (2011)
- Definition of important principles on equitable access like affordability of the services, efficiency and quality of service
- Annual monitoring of these targets (RASARP)
- Sector financial policies
- Rights and duties of users and other right holders
- Incentive framework for water and sanitation service providers



S2 – Reducing geographical disparities

Public policies to reduce access disparities between geographical areas

- Targets for access to services
- ERSAR collects information related to prices of water supply and sanitation services annually
- ERSAR compares those prices with each other, publicising this information on ERSAR's website so that every stakeholder can have access to this information
- Geographical allocation of external support for the sector

Results

S3 - Ensuring access for vulnerable and marginalized groups

Public policies to address the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups

- There are no specific mechanisms in place to identify and address water and sanitation needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Public budgets do not address water and sanitation needs of vulnerable or marginalized groups per se. However, there are specific programs at national level for social housing (including a specific national strategy aimed at Roma communities) or to support the access to products and adaptation of sanitation equipment to the needs of persons with special physical needs.



S4 – Keeping water and sanitation affordable for all

Public policies to ensure affordability

- The preliminary data for 2011 shows that charges to consumers with water and sanitation services represent on average less than 0,7% of the annual disposable income (consumption of 120 m³/year). This means that, on average, affordability is not a problem in Portugal.
- Nearly one half of the operators (municipalities) had some kind of social support to certain groups of consumers
- Several studies on how to structure social support to address affordability issues, either through social tariffs, cross subsidisation between users (e.g. domestic and non-domestic users), cross subsidisation between richer and poorer regions, among others.
- Social protection measures

Opportunities

- A broader understanding of the issues related to the access to water and sanitation in Portugal
- Have a clear notion of the available and lacking information about this topic, of the efforts needed to develop new tools for the collection of data and assessment of the reality (e.g. financial resources allocated to the sector, standards of service in specific facilities, levels of access for vulnerable and marginalized groups) and of the possible improvements in existing laws and regulations
- Find the right partners to develop new initiatives in the area of equitable access to water and sanitation





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