



NAVARRRE: RENEWABLE ENERGIES



**Gobierno
de Navarra**





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Navarre is a small region of Spain with a population of 620,000 in an area the tenth of the state of Pennsylvania. It is well-known throughout the world for its development in renewable energies. The prestigious magazine, Nature, published an article about Navarre in June of 2007 entitled: “Energy-Go-Round: *How did a little Spanish province become one of the world’s wind-energy giants?*”

After 20 years of development, 65% of the electrical energy we consume in Navarre originates from renewable energies. At this moment there are 993 MW of wind and almost 100 MW of photovoltaic power, among others, installed in Navarre.

An article was published recently which has placed a doubt in renewable energy’s ability to create employment; it states that it destroys employment, and therefore, is a factor in the social impoverishment of a country. As I will demonstrate, this statement is completely untrue. In Navarre, the development of renewable energies, and above all wind energy, has created wealth, employment and technological development, and I can assert that this can be achieved in any other region or country.

Our region’s GDP is among the three highest in Spain, participation by the industrial sector is 12 points higher than the entire country’s, and for many years Navarre has had unemployment rates inferior to Spain’s. Before the beginning of the current world crisis our region enjoyed full employment. Now, after the strong economic and employment crisis that affects Spain in particular, Navarre maintains itself as the Spanish region with the least unemployment.



The decision to encourage renewable energies in Navarre began in the 80s, an era of economic crisis in which oil prices levied the competitiveness of the Industry. EHN was founded then, a company with 48% public investment and which conducted studies and evaluations and made the project viable. Once again, in 1993, we found ourselves wracked by a deep economic crisis with significant unemployment which verged on 13% in Navarre. The Government of Navarre, worried about the situation, reached an agreement with business owners and trade unions to promote industrial development and employment. Competitiveness, worker training and the promotion of active industrial policies were promoted specifically. Among them, the most important were renewable energies.

Below I will draw a parallel over time between the progress in the installation of renewable energy and employment growth. Navarre's first wind farm was erected at the end of 1994 when the unemployment rate was 12.8%. Four years later, in 1998, we reached the first 100 installed megawatts and employment dropped to 10%. In 2001, when the two centres dedicated to technological research and development and the training of workers was started up, CENER and CENIFER respectively, unemployment dropped to 6.8%. In 2007, before the start of the current financial, economic and worldwide employment crisis, 100 companies dedicated to renewable energies had been created in Navarre; they were 5% of the total GDP, 1.7% of Navarre's employment, with over 6,000 jobs created, with a total unemployment of 4.76% in the region. By then, 953 MW of wind power and 60 MW of photovoltaic had been installed.



In view of these conclusive numbers, can it be stated that the development of green energies creates unemployment? The conclusion is the opposite. Between 2002 and 2006, employment in renewable had increased 183% in Navarre, with an impressive reduction in total unemployment. Employment for young and qualified individuals (only 18% of the five thousand jobs created are low skilled).

Of course we have not only dedicated ourselves to simply installing wind farms or photovoltaic panels. We have promoted a very powerful renewable industry which began in 1994 with the creation (with the participation of the Government of Navarre) of the Gamesa Eólica Company, a global power in the wind sector. We have also taken special care in technological research and development by developing the National Renewable Energy Centre (CENER) since 2000, a true world reference with an unequalled experimental rotor and turbine laboratory.

It has also been important to take care of the training of workers. Which is why CENIFER was developed, also a national centre, dedicated to renewable energy training, where many managers, technicians and operators have passed through.

One last thought: productivity. All the above has favoured that wind and photovoltaic electricity production in Navarre be very efficient. With 6.5% of the installed wind power in Spain, we produce 9% of the Spanish energy from this source, and with 10% of the photovoltaic, the electricity production is almost 17%.

All these factors, along with the decisive support of the Government of Navarre in the development of renewable energy, have promoted the creation of wealth, employment and territorial stability in Navarre, taking the region to minimum levels of unemployment. We are very satisfied with the results and do not regret anything.



Under President Obama's leadership, the United States' decisive support of renewable energies (specifically from wind) will aid in rapidly overcoming the current economic crisis which is seriously affecting employment, and that the US will continue on its path of prosperity and progress, which has always defined that great country.

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