Interreg Sudoe

Co-funded by the European Union

TARGET

TerritoriAl stRateGy for watEr scarciTy

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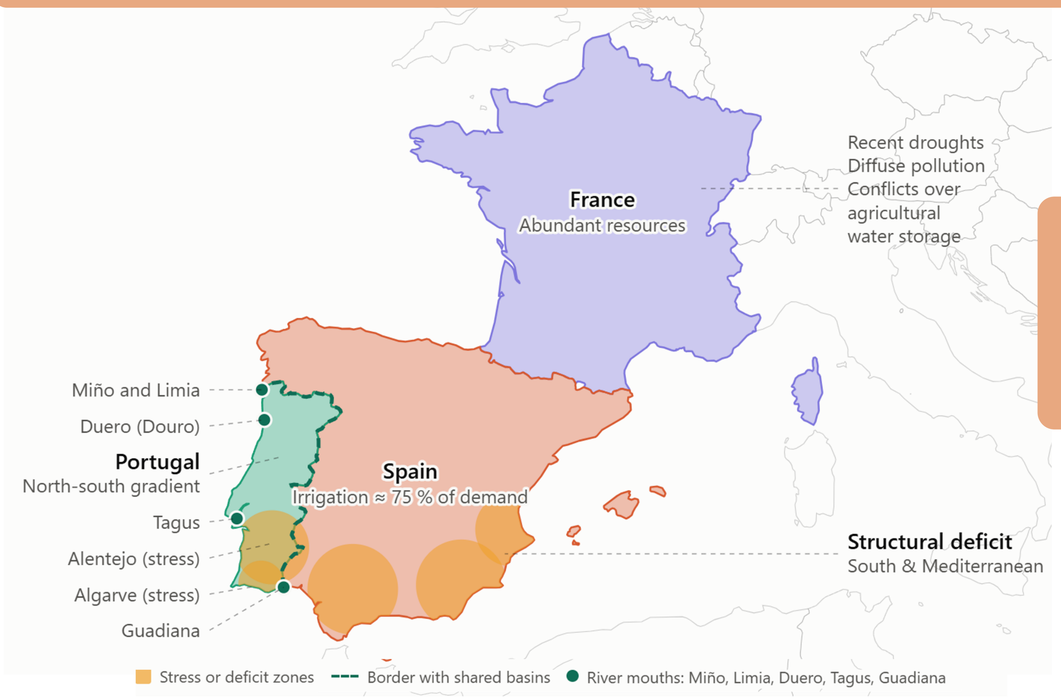
Bordeaux, 3 Novembre 2026

Water governance and water scarcity in south-western Europe: France, Spain and Portugal

A shared context and diverse strategies

COMMON CHALLENGES

Pressure on demand · Environmental deterioration · Hydrological uncertainty



A COMMON FRAMEWORK

Water Framework Directive **2000/60/EC** · Regulation (EU) **2020/741** · Directive (EU) **2024/3019**

Same risk-based approach and fitness for use; different timing and maturity

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES

SPAIN

River Basin Confederations

- Reuse, desalination, recharge
- Irrigation modernisation
- Remote control, digital networks
- Early drought alert

Challenge: Cost recovery and aquifer status

FRANCE

6 Water Agencies: "water pays for water"

- Basin committees, all actors
- Territorial sharing deals (PTGE)
- Nature-based solutions
- Fees and investment

Challenge: Long decisions, reservoir conflicts

PORTUGAL

APA and regional ARH administrations

- Water saving and efficiency
- Fewer losses in urban networks
- Regional adaptation plans
- Reuse, desalination, recharge

Challenge: Speed up investment in reuse

WATER REUSE

The gap lies in implementation: match quality to real use and ensure economic sustainability

SPAIN *Consolidated, being renewed*

9–14 % Murcia Region: 96–98 %

FRANCE *Initial acceleration*

< 1 % Target: 10 % by 2030, 1,000 projects to 2027

PORTUGAL *Incipient*

~1.2 % Algarve: 3.3 % · Target: 20 % by 2030

TRENDS TOWARDS A COMMON MODEL

Resource diversification

- Reclaimed water
- Desalination
- Rainwater
- Aquifer recharge

Demand management

- Efficiency
- Digitalisation
- Fewer losses

Collaborative governance

- User participation
- Co-creation
- Territorial agreements

Climate adaptation

- Risk-based planning
- Resilient infrastructure
- Ecosystem protection

REFERENCES

Regulation (EU) 2020/741 of 25 May 2020 on minimum requirements for water reuse; OECD (2011). Water Governance in OECD Countries: A Multi-level Approach; OECD (2015). OECD Principles on Water Governance; OECD (2016). Recommendation of the Council on Water.

