



Autonomous Region of Madeira, Portugal

North Coast,
Madeira Island, Portugal

General overview

The Archipelago of Madeira is located in the Atlantic Ocean between latitudes 30 °W and 33 °N (approximately the same latitude as Casablanca), 978 km south west of Lisbon, about 700 km west of the African coast, and 450 km north of the Canary Islands. The Archipelago comprises the Island of Madeira with an area of 740.7 km², the Porto Santo Island with 42.5 km², the Desertas Islands, three uninhabited islands with a total of 14.2 km², and the Selvagens Islands whose three islands and sixteen uninhabited islets make up an area of 3.6 km². Of the eight islands, only the two largest (Madeira and Porto Santo) are inhabited (1).

Thanks to their excellent geographical location and mountainous relief, these islands enjoy surprisingly balmy weather, with moderate humidity and pleasant average temperatures of 25 °C in summer and 17 °C in winter (1).

In 1976, the Archipelago of Madeira became an autonomous region. It has about 270 000 inhabitants and a population density of 267 inhabitants/km². Although its population density is higher than the national average, 75% of the population of Madeira Island dwells in only 35% of the territory, mainly on the south coast. Funchal, the capital of Madeira Island (and the Archipelago), with a population density of 1500

inhabitants/km² is home to 45% of the population of the Archipelago (130 000 inhabitants) (2).

Governance of the Autonomous Region of Madeira is provided by the Legislative Assembly of Madeira and the Regional Government. The Region is an integral part of the European Union (EU) with the status of one of the outermost regions of the EU.

Currently, tourism is the main driver and largest source of revenue in Madeira.

In the scope of their devolved powers, the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira created their own regional health services (Serviços Regionais de Saúde (SRS)), managed by the respective regional governments (3).

Madeira is responsible for the provision of health-care services, which are managed by the Regional Government of Madeira. The Health Service of the Autonomous Region of Madeira (Serviço de Saúde da Região Autónoma da Madeira – SESARAM) comprises three public hospitals located in Funchal and 48 health-care centres, which cover the whole Region (3). In addition, the Regional Health System has agreements with private entities for the provision of complementary health-care services to its users (4).



Strengths

The strengths of the Autonomous Region of Madeira are the following.

- ✓ The Regional Health Service provides differentiated and quality hospital and primary care to the population and visitors.
- ✓ Great improvements have been made to the health indicators in recent decades.
- ✓ Clinical records for primary and secondary care and integrated.
- ✓ An excellent disaster-response training network provides prompt response to major incidents.
- ✓ Clinical and nonclinical training programmes are offered at the Madeira Clinical Simulation Centre.



Aspirations

The Autonomous Region of Madeira is aiming to:

- ✓ identify examples of good practice with a view to establishing new projects in health and civil protection;
- ✓ introduce new projects related to health promotion and disease prevention;
- ✓ increase networking with other RHN regions and keep abreast of the latest developments in the WHO European Region.



Challenges

These are:

- ✓ an ageing population;
- ✓ lack of certain categories of health professionals, primarily doctors, therapists and diagnostic technicians;
- ✓ the needs to strengthen capacity to ensure universal access to health care, based on equity;
- ✓ lack of data for use in assessing and organizing services;
- ✓ budgetary constraints;
- ✓ the need to ensure the sustainability of the regional health system.



Potential areas of collaboration

The Autonomous Region of Madeira is interested in collaborating with other regions on:

- ✓ the provision of continuous care;
- ✓ disease-screening programmes;
- ✓ medical-emergency programmes;
- ✓ public health-care programmes.



Working groups

The Autonomous Region of Madeira is interested in participating in working groups on:

- ✓ the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (5)/ equity;
- ✓ health systems/primary health care;
- ✓ the all-of-government approach/intersectoral action.



People active in the Regions for Health Network (RHN)

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