Asuncion electricity policy

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Paraguay is one of the few countries in Latin America that has maintained an integrated electrical system.[1]

Because of the dominance of hydroelectricity, tariffs (mostly residential) are remarkably below the averages for the region. However, despite the abundance of resources, the Paraguayan electricity system faces difficulty due to the lack of investment in transmission and distribution networks. In addition, distribution losses are among the highest in the region.

Paraguay is the only country in Latin America with almost 100 percent hydroelectric generation capacity (8,116 MW) in 2005.[2]

Paraguay operates two binational hydroelectric dams. Itaipu dam, by far the largest power station in the country, is operated with Brazil and has an installed capacity of 7000 MW (86 percent of Paraguay"s generation capacity). Yacyret?, the second largest hydroelectric facility, has an installed capacity of 900 MW (11 percent), and is operated with Argentina. A third plant, Acaray has an installed capacity of 210 MW (3 percent). Thermal plants contribute less than 0.1 percent.[3]

All of Paraguay"s electricity for domestic consumption comes from a single facility, the binational 14 GW Itaipu hydroelectric dam.[1]

While total generation amounted to 51.17 TWh in 2005, consumption was only 5.01 TWh, with exports as high as 43.8 TWh.[4]

In 2005, total electricity consumed in Paraguay was 5.01 TWh, which corresponds to 849 kWh per capita.[4] Electricity generated by Itaipu and Acaray, located in the East of the country, is transported to the West (to the Asunci?n area), where over 60% of the total national consumption is located.[3]

In 2004, the country consumed only 16% of its 50% share of Itaipu"s production, exporting the rest to Brazil. As for Yacyreta, Paraguay consumes less than 1% of its share, exporting the rest to Argentina.[1]

In 2005, almost 90% of the population in Paraguay had access to electricity, which is just slightly below than the 94.6% average for LAC[5]

The 2002 Census revealed that 87% of the households without electricity were located in rural areas, where access was about 77%. Rural coverage varies considerably among the different regions of the country. It is lowest in the remote and sparsely populated Chaco, or Western region.[6] The table below shows

rural coverage by Department for 2002:

Since 2004, the National Electricity Administration (ANDE) has been carrying out a Program to Recover Distribution Works under the Self-Help System (Sistema de Autoayuda), which aims at the regularization of all the low and medium voltage distribution networks. This program, with a 10-year time-horizon, is implemented according to priorities defined by the conservation status of the networks involved. Under this program, installations that do not comply with current ANDE"s rules are replaced.[3]

In 2005, the average number of interruptions per subscriber was 16.4, while duration of interruptions per subscriber was 7.58 hours. While the number of interruptions is just slightly above than the weighted average for LAC, 13 interruptions, the duration is well below the weighted average of 14 hours.[5]

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