

# Newsletter

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## An introduction to Crete

The population of the region of Crete is 601,131 residents (2001), which is around 5.5% of the total population of the country. The urban population amounts to 41% of the total population; the rural population amounts to 42%; while the semi-urban population remains constant and amounts to 17% of the total.



Crete is known as a "sun and sea" destination. It is the largest and most populous of the Greek islands and the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. Its main competitive advantages are the island's climatic conditions, its archaeological sites (Knossos, Phaistos etc), monasteries, museums, places of historical interest, diverse natural resources from high mountains to long beaches and crystal blue waters, combined with a wide range of activities (cultural events, winter and sea sports, etc), as well as high-quality accommodation establishments ranging from all categories of hotels to self-catering units.

In December 1993, the region of Crete founded a Regional Energy Agency within the framework of implementing a regional energy policy and with the aim of establishing Crete as a preferential area for extensive applications of renewable energy sources in Europe.

In 2001, the European Commission awarded the region of Crete and its Regional Energy Agency with the first award for the Best Regional Renewable Energy Partnership (as part of the 2001 Campaign for Take-off Awards) for the existing RES plants in Crete, as well as their successful integrated programme: "Large Scale Deployment of Renewable Energy Sources in Crete".