



## Press Release

# New DE-CIX Study reveals: Iberian Peninsula to become new gateway for transatlantic dataflows and regional mega hub

- **Number of Internet Exchanges has almost doubled with 1200% growth in aggregated connected networks within a decade**
  - **1000 megawatts (MW) of installed power capacity in data centers**
  - **Massive growth in international sea cable systems landing in the region**

**Frankfurt (Germany)/Lisbon (Portugal), 8 October 2024** – The Iberian Peninsula is set to become a regional mega hub and an alternate gateway to Europe for future international data flows, according to a new study published by [DE-CIX](#), the world’s leading Internet Exchange (IX) operator. Published in parallel to the first edition of the Atlantic Convergence event in Lisbon, the study, “The Iberian Peninsula: A next-generation regional mega hub\*,” quantifies the enormous growth in digital infrastructure and investment in the region over the last decade. It shows more than a doubling in the number of IXs from five to 13 in the region since 2014 and 1200% growth in aggregated networks connecting to these IXs, rising to well over 700 in 2024. With over 100 data centers and around 1000 megawatts (MW) of installed power capacity, plus a strong industry of renewable power generation, the digital economy in the region is forecast to have a rosy future.

The study shows that international submarine cable systems landing in Spain have grown by 83% since 2016, and in Portugal by 14%. In mid-2024, international submarine cable systems connecting to the Iberian Peninsula totaled 35, with a further five under construction and to be operational within the next 2 years. Also in the last decade, IXs have grown in number, with important hubs developing in Madrid, Barcelona, and Lisbon. Of these, the largest IX in the region is DE-CIX Madrid, today with around 230 networks connected. The increasingly diverse Iberian ecosystem has attracted new regional and international networks to enter the region. Over the last ten years, international networks connected to IXs in Spain alone have grown by more than 800%, in parallel to domestic Spanish networks, reaching around 160 in 2024. In Portugal, international networks have moved from being on par with domestic networks to making up around 75% of the interconnection ecosystem.

“The outstanding growth in the digital ecosystem of the Iberian Peninsula in just eight years shows the growing importance of the region and the economic value of interconnection for the digital economies



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of today and tomorrow,” comments Theresa Bobis, Regional Director Southern Europe at DE-CIX. “Iberia is a strategically important location for international business and is poised to play a greater role in the valuable transatlantic data flows. I’m delighted that our three Iberian interconnection platforms – DE-CIX Madrid, DE-CIX Lisbon, and DE-CIX Barcelona – can play such an important role in optimizing global data flows and enabling growth in the region, establishing the importance of diversity and a complementary offering on the market. The new study highlights the interplay of networks, data centers, and IXs to further economic growth and encourage local and foreign investment in the region.”

### **Growth of data center investments demonstrates importance of the Iberian Peninsula**

On top, data center investments are growing strongly. Tens of billions of dollars’ worth of investment is being pumped into the region over the next two to three years. Madrid stands as the sixth largest data center market in Europe as of 2024, with over 160 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity. Further investments will lead to an increase of 356% in data center power capacity in the coming years. Significant large-scale data center projects are in planning or construction in other cities across the Iberian Peninsula, such as Barcelona, Lisbon, and Sines. Spain has seen increasing investment from the major cloud players, with recent announcements of multi-billion-dollar investments in Madrid by Microsoft, Google, IBM, and Oracle, and in the Aragon region by AWS and Microsoft. Also, opportunities to power data centers with 100% renewable energy, largely from hydro, photovoltaic, and wind power production, have drawn investments from major players in recent years. The Sines Start Campus mega data center, planned to be the largest renewable energy data center site in Europe, for example, is currently under construction.

The need for alternative routes, independent of heavily congested paths from the United States to European cities like Frankfurt, London, Amsterdam, and Paris (collectively known as the FLAP markets) has amplified Iberia’s importance in the European digital landscape, the study explains. The transatlantic data route is the busiest and most competitive worldwide. Transatlantic data flows are vital to the US \$8.3 trillion economic relationship between the EU and the United States, representing over half of Europe’s and about half of the US’s global data flows. More than 90% of EU-based companies transfer data to and from the US.

“The Iberian Peninsula is uniquely positioned to act as a digital gateway between Europe and the world,” explains Serge Radovic from Dstream Group, co-author of the study. “With its strategic



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location on the shores of both the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, the peninsula offers the shortest routes to North and South America, Africa, across to the Middle East, and beyond. Together, the Iberian markets form a robust network that positions Iberia as a formidable player in the global digital landscape, capable of attracting investment and driving technological advancement. Here, each key market's willingness to expand, complement, and collaborate with neighboring hubs is crucial for the region to thrive on a larger scale."

The full study can be downloaded [here](#).

\*The study was commissioned by DE-CIX and conducted by the Dstream Group. It refers to Spain and Portugal as the Iberian Peninsula.

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### About DE-CIX

DE-CIX is the world's leading operator of Internet Exchanges (IXs). DE-CIX offers its interconnection services in close to 60 locations in Europe, Africa, North and South America, the Middle East, and Asia. Accessible from data centers in over 600 cities world-wide, DE-CIX interconnects thousands of network operators (carriers), Internet service providers (ISPs), content providers and enterprise networks from more than 100 countries, and offers peering, cloud, and other interconnection services. DE-CIX in Frankfurt, Germany, is one of the largest Internet Exchanges in the world, with a data volume of almost 40 Exabytes per year (as of 2023) and close to 1100 connected networks. Close to 250 colleagues from over 35 different nations form the foundation of the DE-CIX success story in Germany and around the world. Since the beginning of the commercial Internet, DE-CIX has had a decisive influence – in a range of leading global bodies, such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) – on co-defining guiding principles for the Internet of the present and the future. As the operator of critical IT infrastructure, DE-CIX bears a great responsibility for the seamless, fast, and secure data exchange between people, enterprises, and organizations at its locations around the globe.

Further information at [www.de-cix.net](http://www.de-cix.net)

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