

World's longest steel suspension pedestrian bridge

Meet 516 Arouca, described on its website as “the world’s longest suspension pedestrian bridge”. It is located at a height of 175 metres in northern Portugal’s Arouca UNESCO Global Geopark. The length of this steel bridge, which spans the gorges of the Paiva River, is 516 metres. It took more than two years and EUR2.3 million to build.



The origin of the bridge is associated with the UNESCO recognition of Arouca’s geological heritage. While this brought an influx of tourists to the park from all over the world, the pandemic forced its own unpleasant adjustments to be made. However, local authorities are pinning high hopes on the steel suspension pedestrian bridge opened in late April 2021, which has already gained popularity with newcomers to Portugal this summer.



The companies Itecons and Conduril collaborated with the Portuguese National Civil Engineering Laboratory to construct the bridge. The structure of the steel suspension bridge consists of two concrete supports with cables stretched between them and 127 suspended steel sections. During the design and testing of the structure, particular attention was paid to the effect of weather and wind on the bridge. The research included wind tunnel testing and took several months.

“This is an amazing piece of national engineering that will surely become one of the most iconic structures in the municipality of Arouca and in the country, and it will undoubtedly become a striking architectural object of our time,” said Mayor of Arouca Margarida Belem.

A ten-minute walk at this height on a suspension bridge that sways slightly underfoot is truly breath-taking, which is to say nothing about the amazing views.