

INTERREG GROW RUP Project

REGIÃO AUTÓNOMA DOS AÇORES – Action Plan





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Part I – General information

Project: GROW RUP Direção Regional do Emprego e Qualificação Profissional

Country: Portugal

NUTS2 region: Azores

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Part II – Policy context

I - Introduction

The purpose of this Action Plan is to clarify the next steps that will be taken to meet the objectives of the INTERREG GROW RUP project. Thus, in its first part, we briefly summarize the European external environment in the area of the Green and Blue Economy, and then we present some indicators that help to characterize the regional context and that somehow validate our options in terms of the actions to be implemented.

Before describing the actions to be implemented, a SWOT analysis on the Green and Blue Economy is also presented in an outermost region such as the Azores. Both the listed actions and the SWOT analysis are the results of a workshop, held on May 21, 2019, which was attended by representatives of the following entities:

- Câmara do Comércio e Indústria de Ponta Delgada
- Direção Regional das Pescas
- Direção Regional do Emprego e Qualificação Profissional
- Empresa Green Azores
- Escola de Formação Turística e Hoteleira
- Escola de Novas Tecnologias dos Açores
- Escola Profissional da Povoação
- Escola Profissional da Praia da Vitória
- Escola Profissional da Ribeira Grande
- Escola Profissional da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Angra do Heroísmo
- Escola Profissional da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Ponta Delgada
- Escola Profissional de Capelas
- Escola Profissional de Nordeste
- Escola Profissional de Vila Franca do Campo
- Escola Profissional EPROSEC
- Escola Profissional INETESE
- Fundo Regional para a Ciência e Tecnologia
- Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera
- Observatório do Emprego e Qualificação Profissional
- Sociedade para o Desenvolvimento Económico dos Açores
- Universidade dos Açores



The central objective of this Action Plan is to support the assessment and diagnosis of the current situation and the reflection on the possibilities of developing a new economic-environmental-social paradigm in the Autonomous Region of the Azores (RAA), which will increase the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises based on a green and blue matrix economy.

2 – General framework

2.1 - External Enclosure

In the field of Green and Blue Economy, the European Union has defined its concepts, objectives and policies. The European Environment Agency defines the Green Economy as one where environmental, economic and social policies and innovation allow society to use resources efficiently, increase human well-being in an inclusive way, and conserve natural systems that sustain us.¹

The document EUROPA 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth² has the following objectives:

Intelligent growth - Developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;

Sustainable growth - Promoting a greener economy, more efficient use of resources and more competitive;

Inclusive growth - Fostering an economy with high levels of employment, which promotes social and territorial cohesion.

Finally, the 7th Environmental Action Program³ elects the following priority objectives:

a) Protect, conserve and strengthen the Union's natural capital;

b) to make the Union a resource-efficient, low-carbon, competitive green economy;

¹ file:///C:/Users/AM196704.GRA/Downloads/towards_a_green_economy_in_europe.pdf

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52010DC2020>

³ http://www2.icnf.pt/portal/pn/biodiversidade/ei/resource/doc/estrategia-uniao-europeia/3-7-PAA_Decisao-1386_2013.pdf



- c) to protect citizens of the Union against environmental pressures and risks to health and well-being;
- d) maximizing the benefits of Union environmental legislation by improving its application;
- e) to improve the knowledge and data base of the Union's environment policy;
- f) ensuring investment in environment and climate policy and addressing environmental externalities;
- g) improving the integration and coherence of environmental policies;
- h) enhancing the sustainability of Union cities;
- i) to improve the Union's effectiveness in responding to international environmental and climate challenges.

The 7th Environmental Action Program therefore builds on a set of strategic environmental initiatives and aims to increase the contribution of environmental policy to the transition to a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy. The program provides a comprehensive framework for environmental policy by 2020, identifying nine priority objectives to be achieved by the EU and the Member States, and is based on the polluter pays principle, precaution and preventive action and on the correction principle of pollution at source.

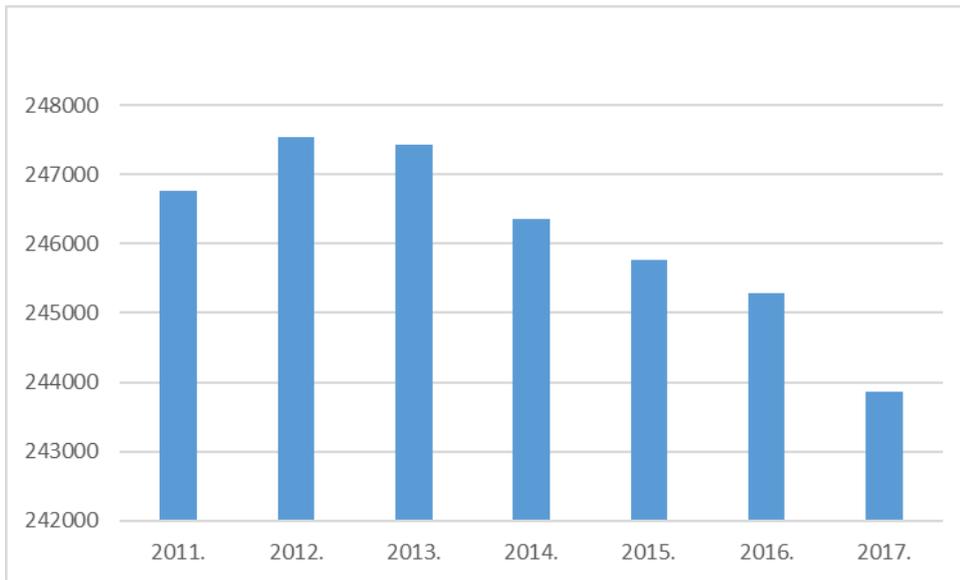
At the level of Training and Qualification, the European strategy is based on a European Reference Framework of Essential Competences for Lifelong Learning. Its first version is from 2006 and revised by the European Commission in 2016 through the New Skills Agenda for Europe - Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness where it states that investing in abilities and skills is a first step towards the promotion of education, training and non-formal learning at European level.



2.2 – Population

In 2018, the RAA had a total population of 242,599 people, a decrease of 1.4% over the value of 2011, a reality that intensified mainly since 2014.

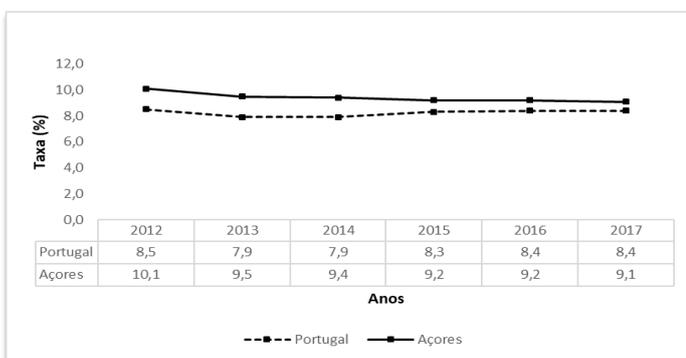
Evolution of the resident population



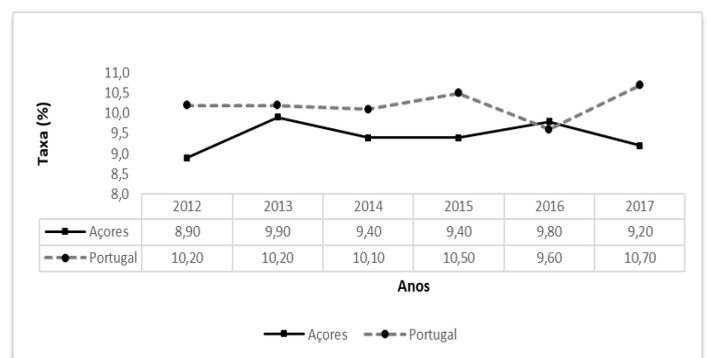
Estatísticas Demográficas 2017, INE (Instituto Nacional de estatística)

The birth rate is higher than the national average, although it shows a decreasing trend, standing at 9.1% in 2017, while the national rate is 8.4%. In turn, the mortality rate has shown some fluctuations, being, however, lower than the rate verified in the entire country.

Evolution of birth rate



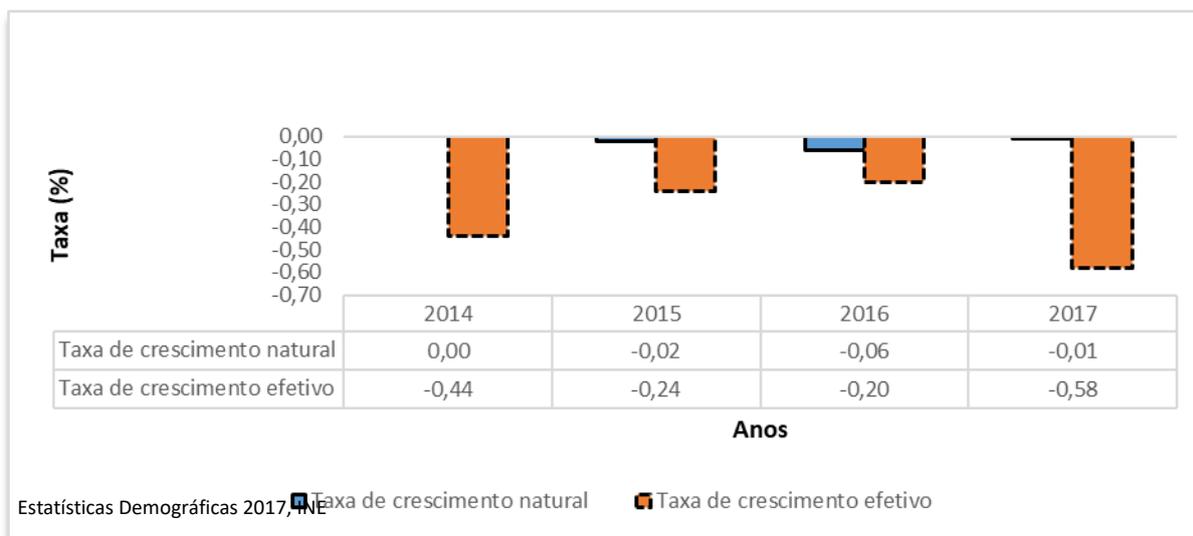
Evolution of death rate



Estatísticas Demográficas 2017, INE (Instituto Nacional de estatística)

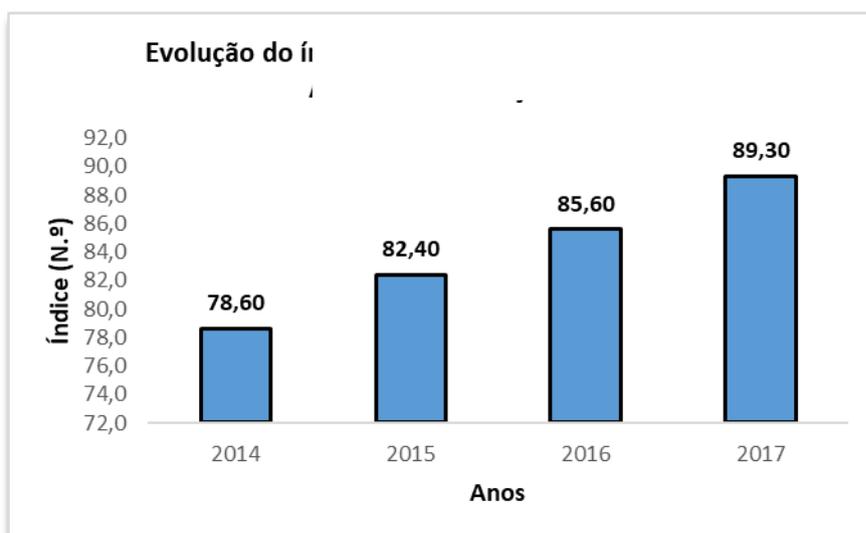
Birth and death rates that result in a natural growth rate with a declining trend, coupled with a negative growth balance, result in a negative effective growth rate, with a special focus on the years 2014 and 2017.

Evolution of natural and effective growth rates



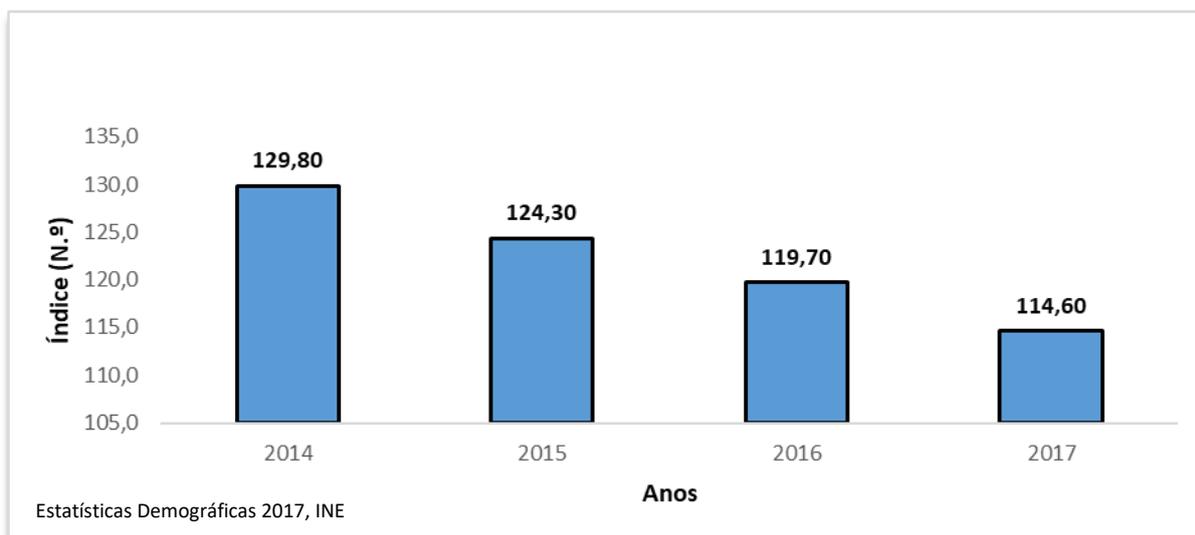
Regarding the age structure, although the trend of the last decade is aging, the population of the Azores is still very young, representing in 2018, in the age groups below 35 years, 43% of the total population.

Evolution of the aging index.



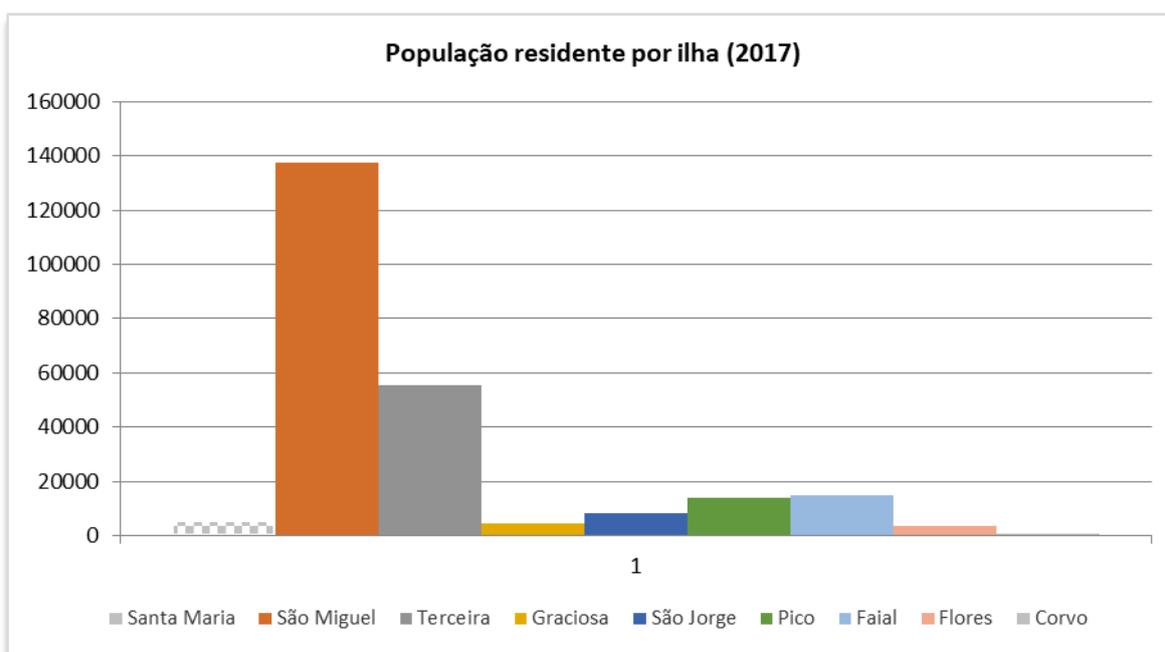
Estatísticas Demográficas 2017, INE

Evolution of the labor force renewal index.



In terms of geographic distribution, 79% of the Azorean population resides in the São Miguel and Terceira Islands.

Resident population by island.



Estimativas Anuais da População Residente, INE

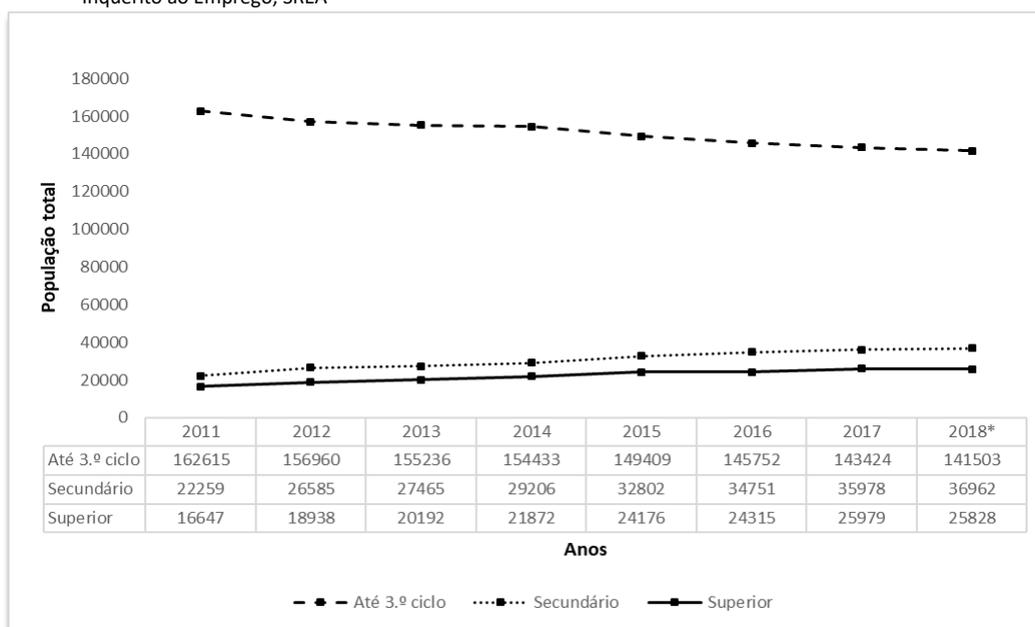
2.3 – Qualificação

The RAA has a good coverage of schools in all the islands, with 17 professional schools and a university.

In terms of schooling, the population is characterized by the high weight of individuals with qualification lower than the secondary school, although the tendency is of inversion.

Total population by level of education (annual average)

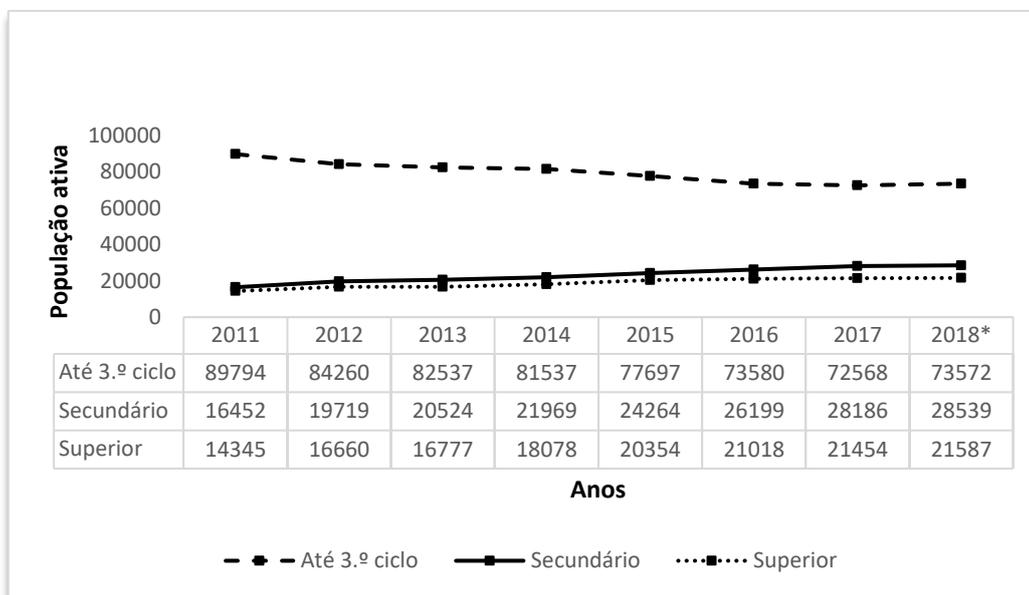
Inquérito ao Emprego, SREA



* Referência: 3.º trimestre
Inquérito ao Emprego, SREA

As in the total population, also in the active population predominate people that have levels of habilitation until the 3rd cycle of schooling.

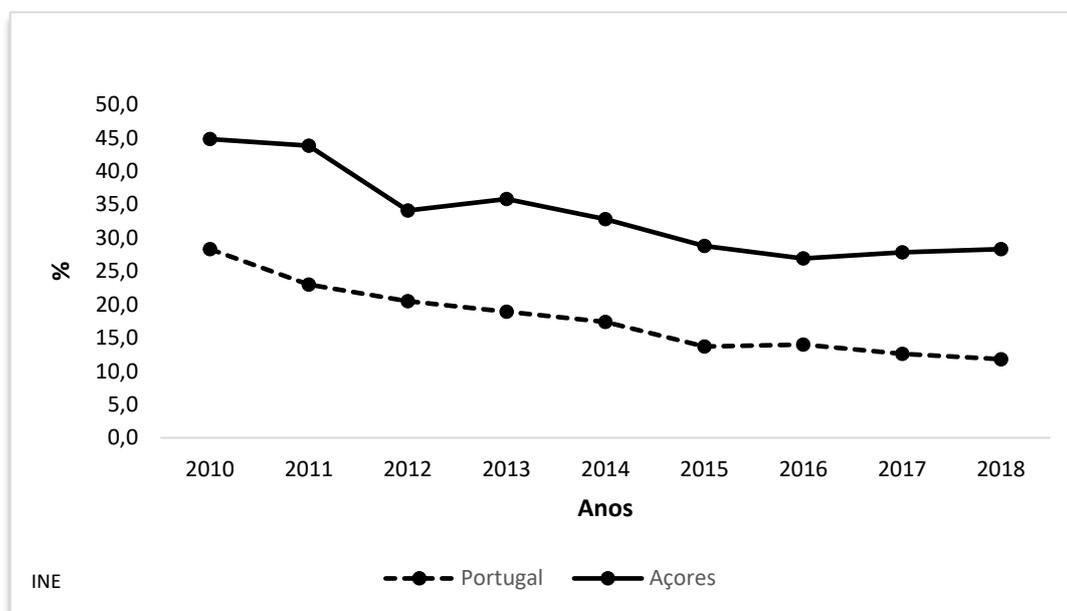
Active population by level of education (annual average)



* Referência: 3.º trimestre
Inquérito ao Emprego, SREA

On the other hand, school dropout rate fell from 44.8% to 28.3% between 2010 and 2018.

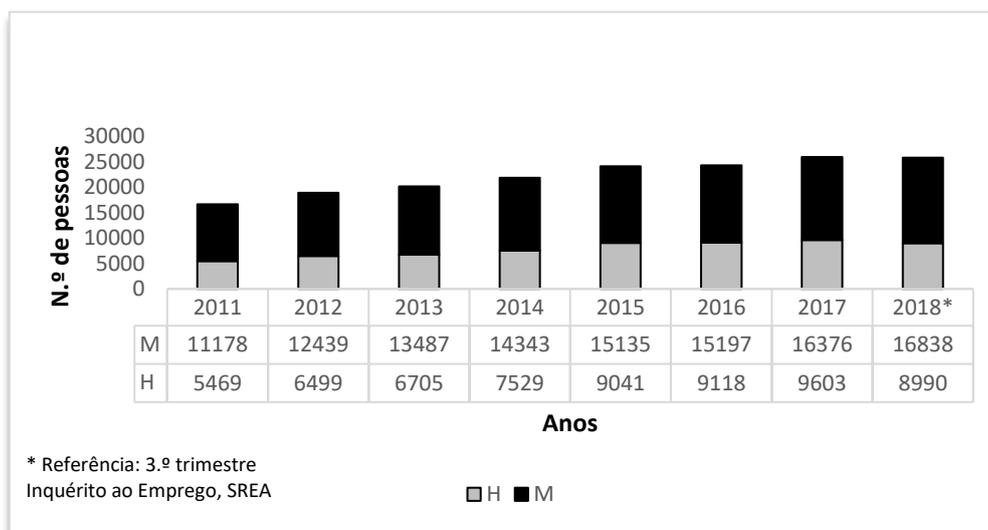
Early dropout rate of education and training.



INE

In higher education, the trend has been to increase the percentage of Azoreans with this level of education, with the female population corresponding to approximately twice that of males.

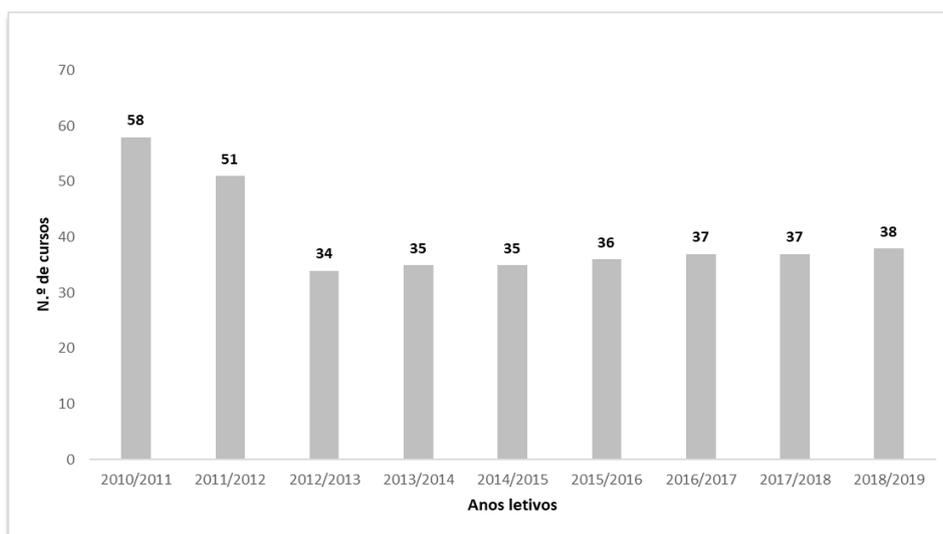
Total population structure with completed higher education.



Of the 19 municipalities of the RAA, 11 are served by professional schools, which provide courses for young people and adults. In addition to vocational schools, the Region also has the Rede Valorizar, which ensures that citizens residing in the Azores, over 18 years of age, regardless of their employment status, level recognition, validation and certification of skills (RVCC) basic, secondary and / or professional.

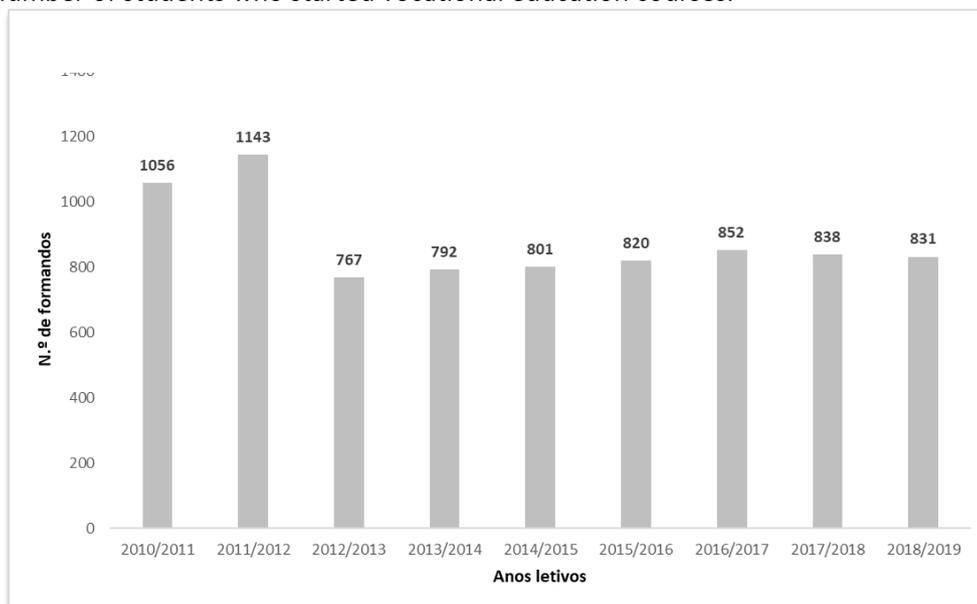
Since 2013, the number of vocational education courses for young people and trainees has remained stable.

Number of vocational education courses started annually.



DREOP, Direção de Serviços do Fundo Social Europeu e da Qualidade
 DREQP, Direção de Serviços do Fundo Social Europeu e da Qualidade

Number of students who started vocational education courses.

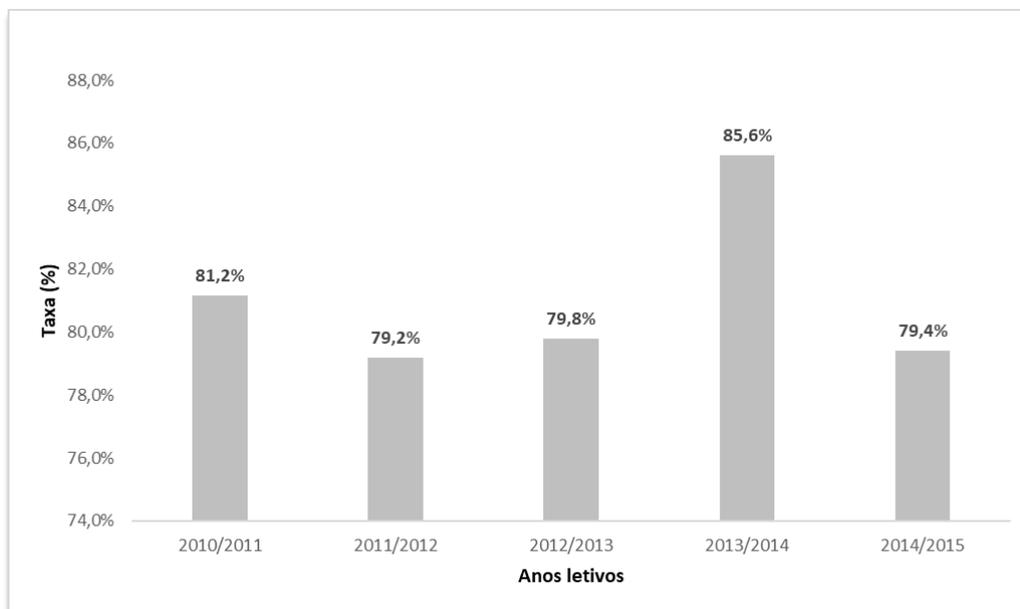


Between 2011 and 2018, the 361 professional education courses developed covered 35 education and training areas, with special emphasis on hospitality and catering (65 courses), tourism and leisure (29 courses), electronics and automation (27 courses) and computer science (26 courses).

The training of young people in a professional context is one of the types of training that has the highest success rate, surpassing 79% of conclusion.



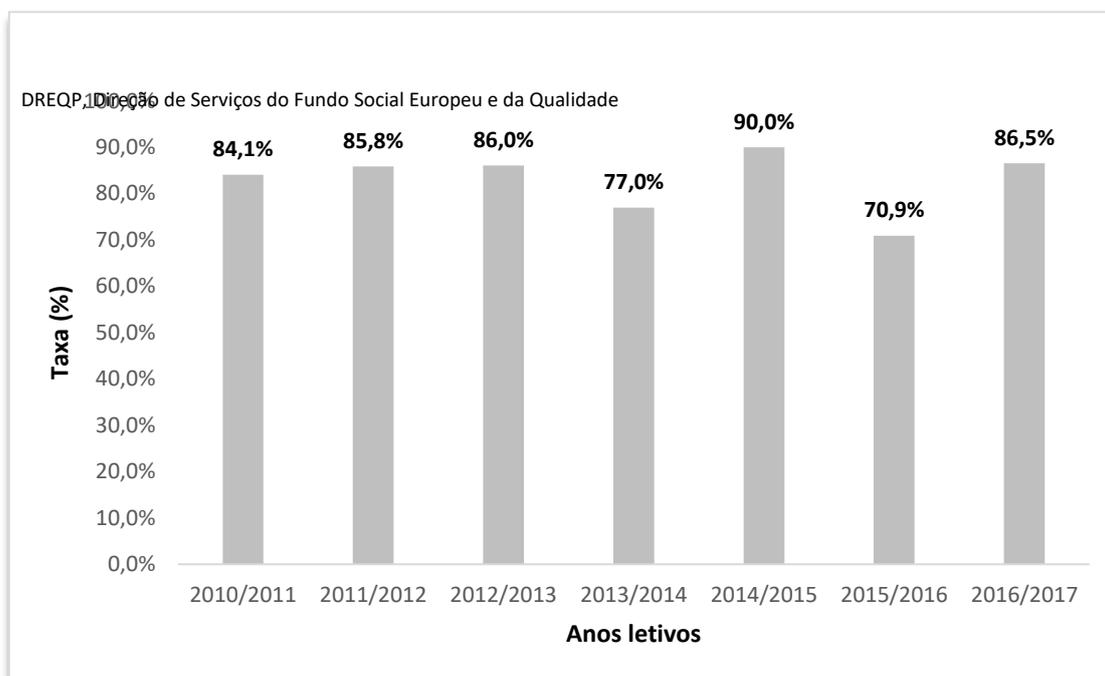
Completion rate in vocational education courses.



DREQP, Direção de Serviços do Fundo Social Europeu e da Qualidade

Adult education is another policy tool aimed at enhancing the employability of the active population. Considering the specific case of Reativar courses, as a rule they have a very high success rate, reaching 90% of conclusions in 2015.

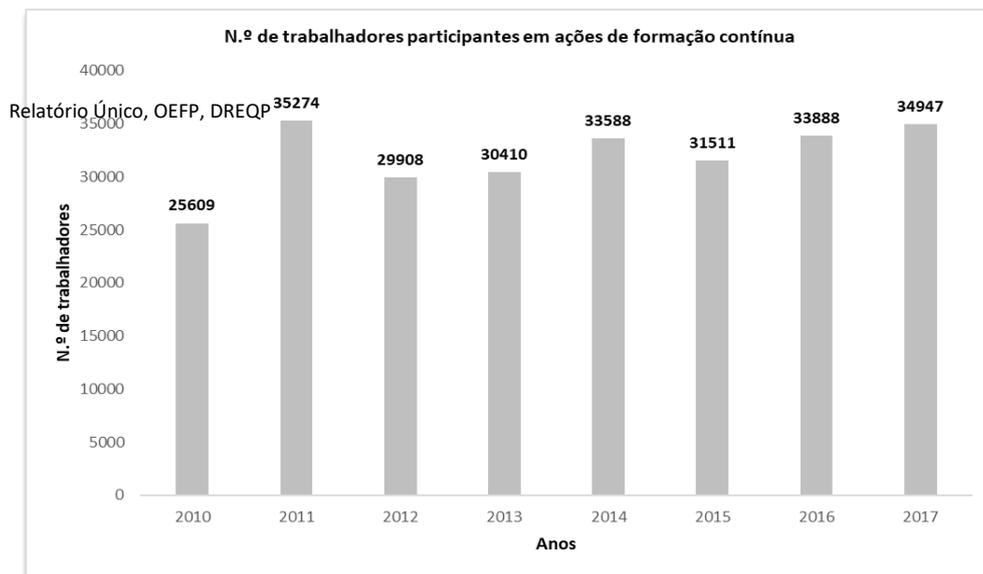
Completion rate in Reativar courses.





The certification of school skills, both through the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Skills processes and the Basic Skills Acquisition (ABC) courses, has covered, since 2009, approximately 11,500 adults. Lastly, and still within the scope of industrial relations, business policies for the valorisation of their human capital through continuous training have been stable. Regarding continuing vocational training, between 2010 and 2017, the number of workers participating in training activities reached, on average, almost 31,900 workers.

Number of workers participating in continuing education actions.

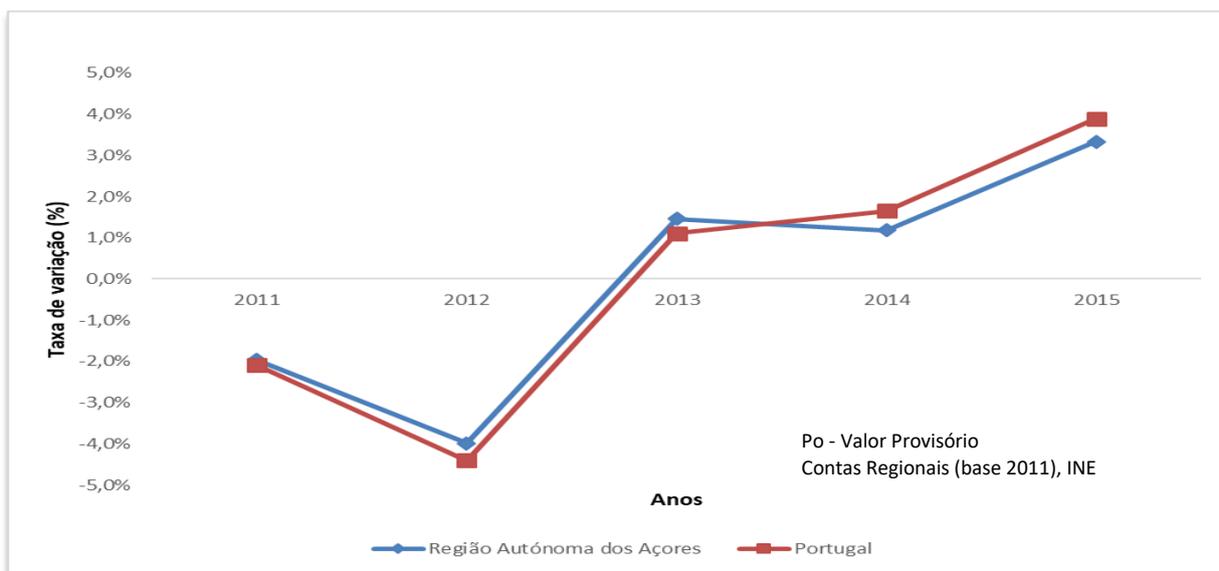


Relatório Único, OEFP, DREQP

2.4 – Economy

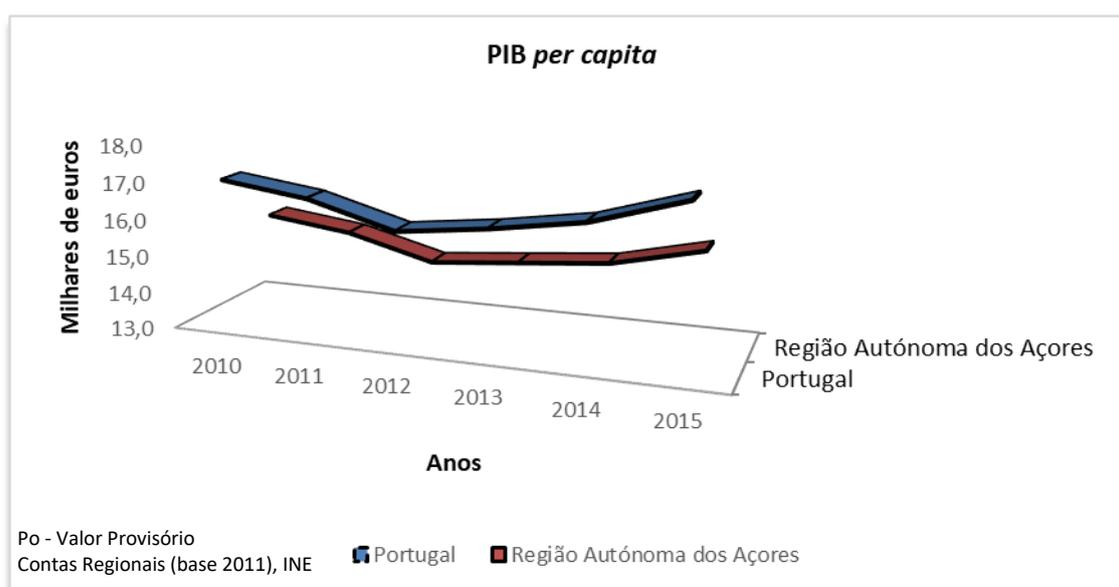
Since 2013, the RAA has been experiencing a trend of economic recovery, in line with the national trajectory, translated into a positive and consistent variation of the regional Gross Domestic Product.

Nominal annual variation of Gross Domestic Product.



GDP growth is reflected in an increase in regional wealth distribution per inhabitant, following the national trend.

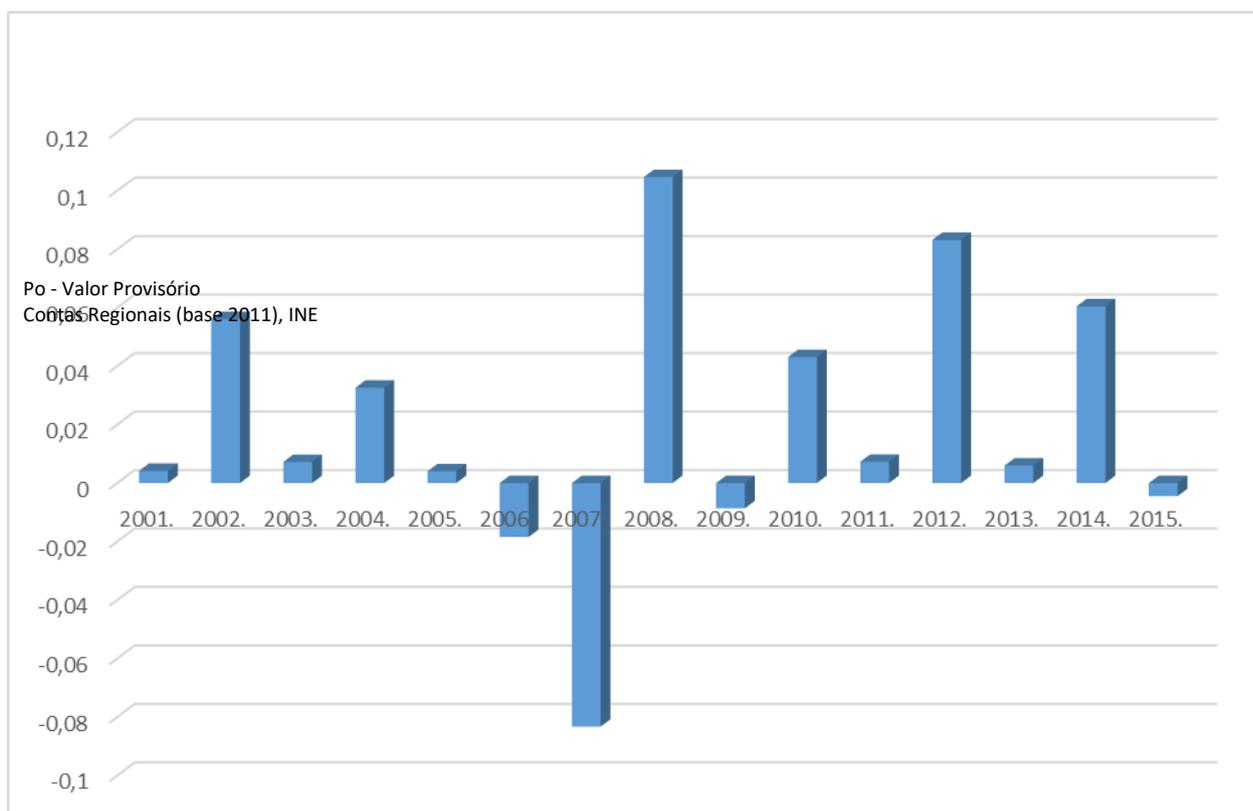
Gross Domestic Product *per capita*.





The economic activities that contributed most to the GVA are Trade, Transport, Accommodation and Restoration, as well as Real Estate Activities. With a similar weight, the following are Agriculture and Fisheries and Industry, Water and Sanitation.

Gross value added - Agriculture and fisheries



Po - Valor Provisório
Contas Regionais (base 2011), INE



Another positive factor is that, as regards the introduction of innovation in production, companies in the Azores are at the same level and sometimes exceed what is happening in average terms in the Country.

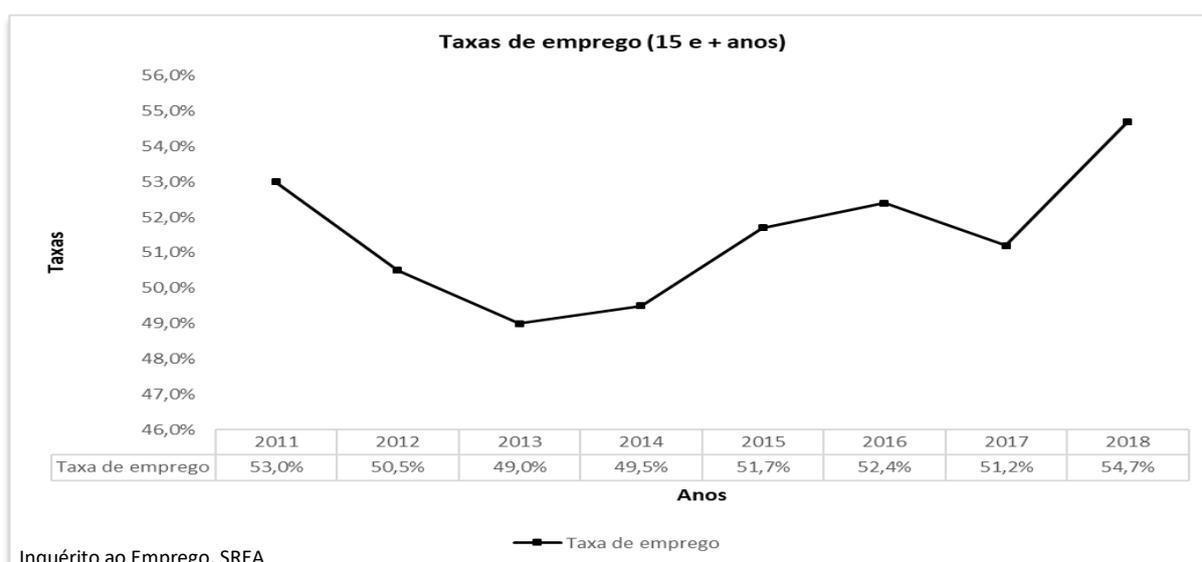
Business Innovation Indicators em 2012-2014 (%)

Indicadores	Companies with innovation activity	Companies with public funding for innovation	Companies with cooperation for innovation	Intensity of innovation	Turnover resulting from new products
Região Autónoma dos Açores	49,4	31,1	6,6	2	14,5
Portugal	53,8	22,7	16,1	1,3	12,1

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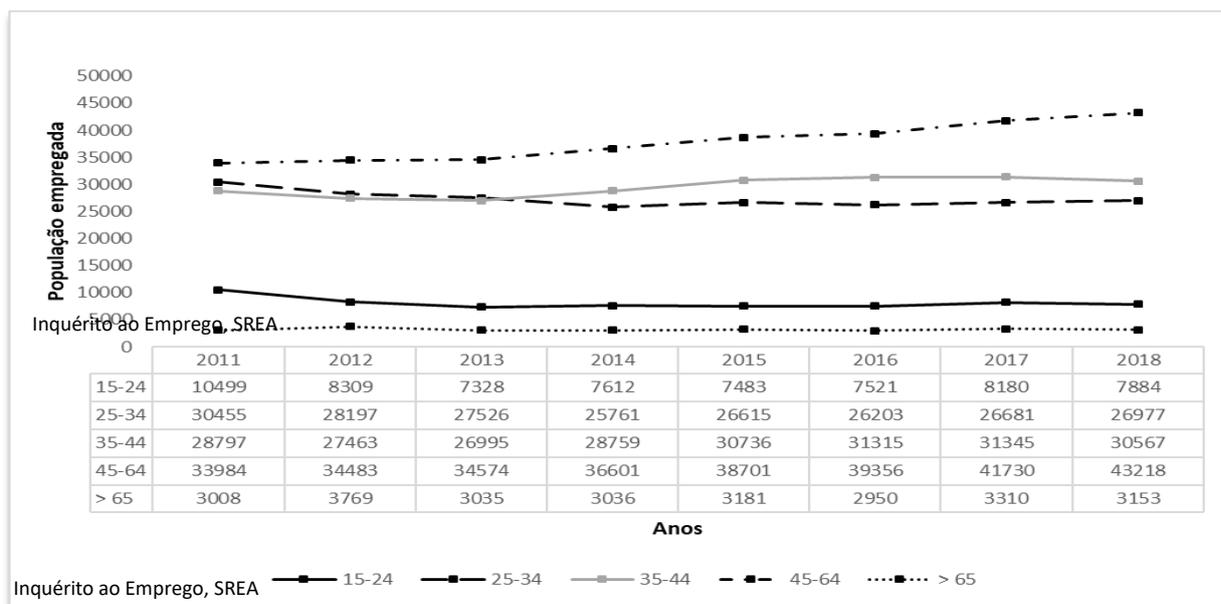
2.5 – Employment

In the period between 2011 and 2018, the evolution of employment numbers is correlated with the economic situation in the country. In fact, in the years 2012 and 2013, there is a decrease in the proportion of the employed population. As of this date, the **employment rate** has increased, reaching, in 2018, values higher than those of 2011.

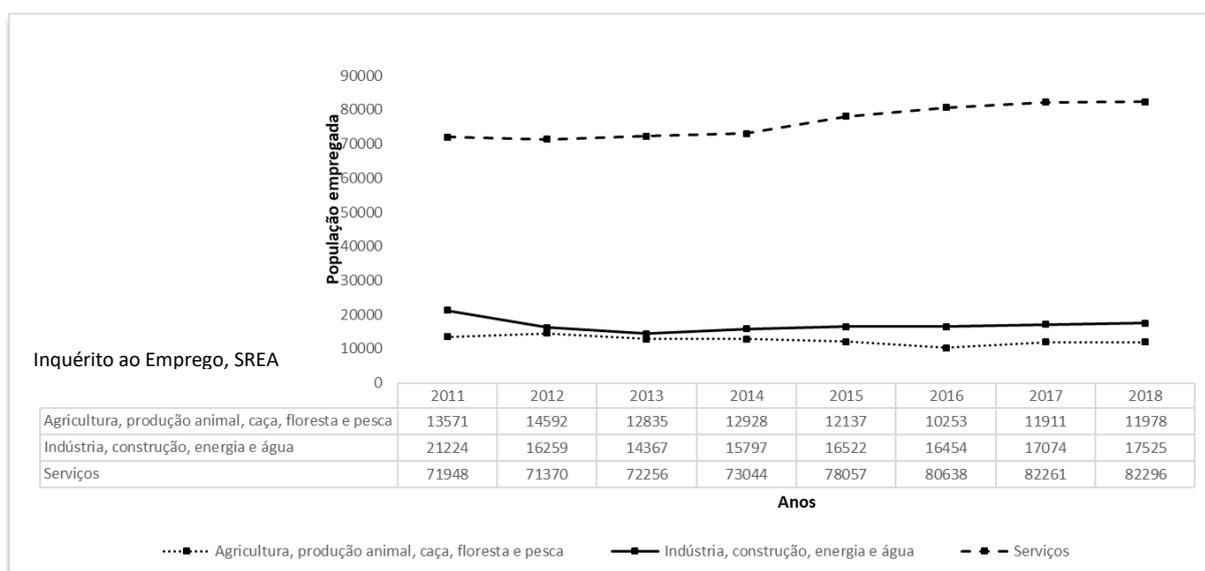




Looking at the structure of the **employed population by age group**, the highest representation is in the range of 45-64 years. This level, added to adults between the ages of 35 and 44, corresponds to more than half of the total employed population. In 2018, the young employed population, aged 15-24, represented 7% of the total employed population.

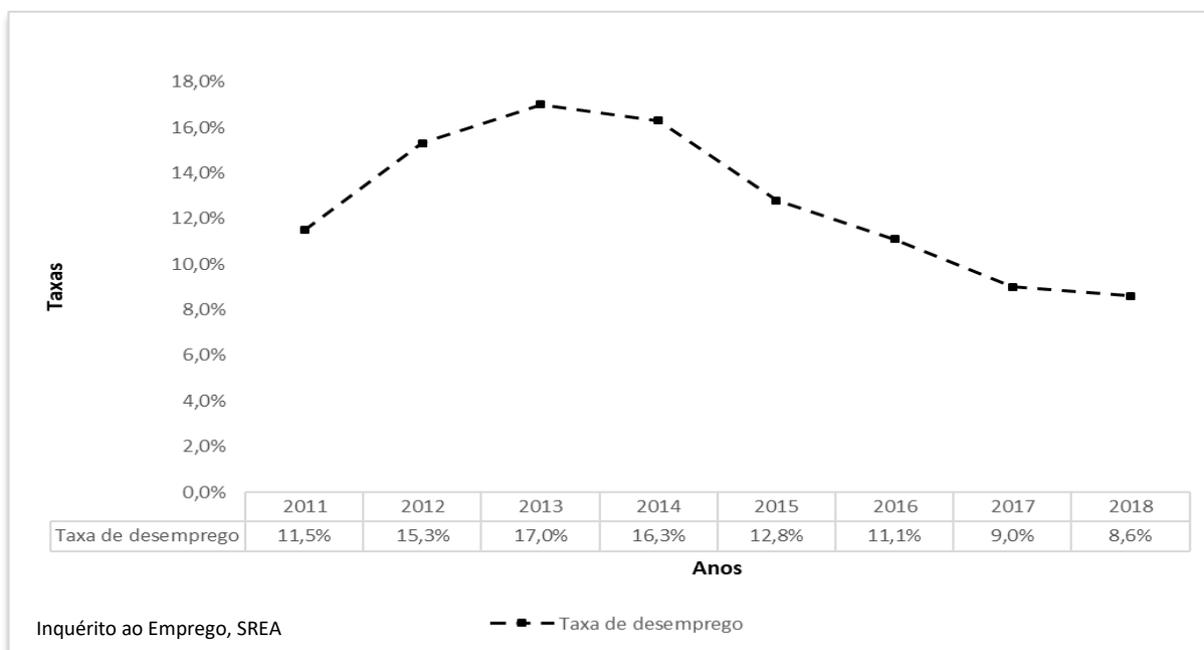


The employed population mainly belongs to the **service activities**, which absorbs 74% of the employees, followed by industry, construction, energy and water, with 16% of the employed population, and the agriculture and fishing sector, with the remaining 10%.

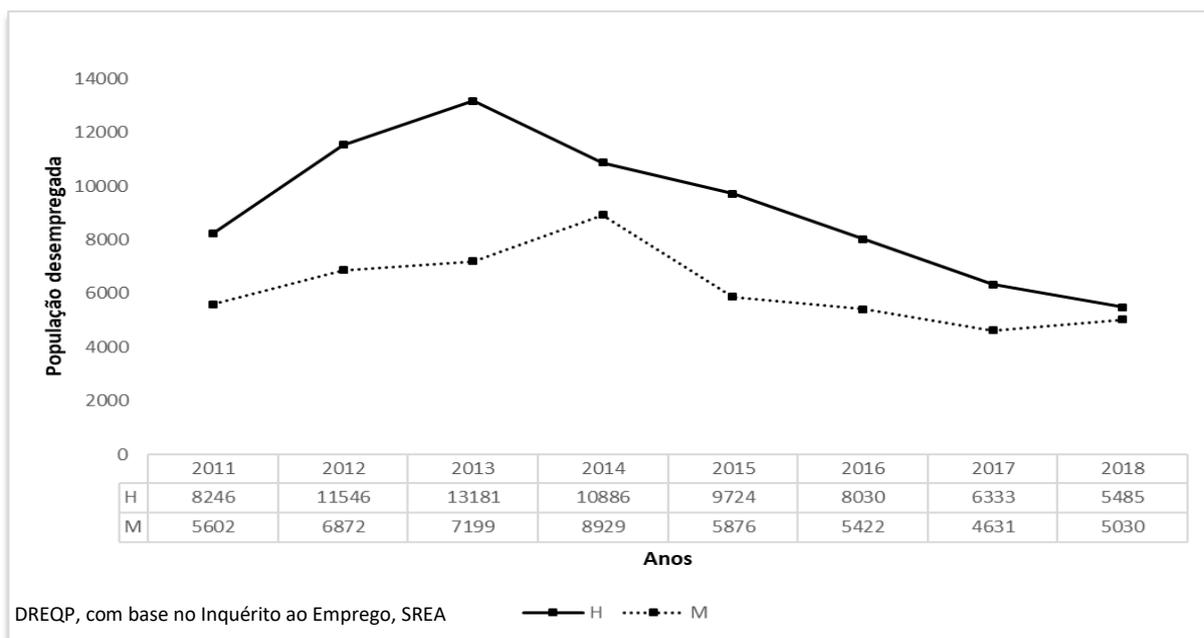




In the period between 2012 and 2014, the **unemployment rate** reached high levels, reaching 17% in 2013, but since then it has been decreasing, registering in 2018 the lowest rate of the decade.



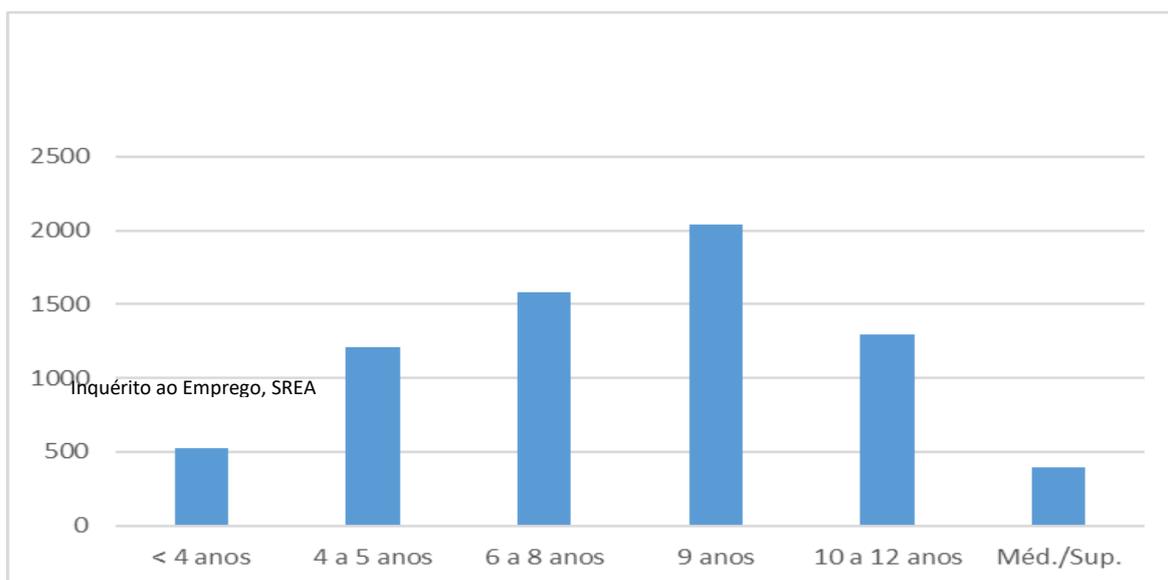
Unemployment has mainly affected the male population, which increased by almost 60% between 2011 and 2013. Since 2013, **the unemployed population** has consistently declined, in both genders.





The structure of registered **unemployment** is also characterized by the predominance of unemployed with low levels of **qualification**, varying the relative weight of those who hold until the 3rd cycle between 71.3% and 83.6% over the study period.

Unemployment by education - December 2018



Mercado de Emprego – Estatísticas Mensais, IEFP



2.6 – Síntese/Synthesis

The total population is characterized by being young and concentrated essentially in two islands. There has been a gradual decrease in the birth rate and an increase in emigration, which has resulted, since 2013, into the reduction of the effective population of the Region. On the other hand, there is also an increase in the population's aging rate and a reduction in the rate of renewal of the active population, that is, they continue to enter the labor market more than older people, but with a lower intensity. Despite the decrease in the resident population, the active population grew from 119,838 people in 2013 to 122,314 in 2018.

Although there is a decrease in assets with a level of education lower than secondary and a gradual increase in the number of assets with a level of qualification equal to or higher than secondary education, about 59% of the active population still has less than the 12th grade of schooling.

Early school dropout has been declining but it is still above the national average. A significant part of the working population lacks basic skills as a result of their low level of education. Therefore it is necessary to make an effort to successfully complete compulsory education, to promote vocational training and to raise the basic skills of the population through lifelong education.

Since 2013, unemployment has consistently declined, with the lowest unemployment rate in the current decade at 2018: 8.6%. Young and long-term unemployment are those that stand out in the overall structure of unemployment in the Region, and there is still a gap between demand and supply in terms of skills.

The employment rate has shown a significant increase, highlighting the increase of female employment, in the order of 13.6%, from 2013 to 2018. The employed population has increased in a sustained way. By 2018, the active population accounted for about 60% of the population over 15 years of age.

The regional economy presents a sustainable economic growth, characterized by the change in the weight of the sectors of economic activity and the introduction of factors of innovation.

The Azores 2020 Operational Plan has a commitment rate close to 80%.



III – SWOT Analysis of the Green and Blue Economy in the Azores

The SWOT analysis is a tool that makes it possible to diagnose the strategy to be defined for the Green and Blue Economy in the Azores, signaling strengths and weaknesses in the definition of the strategy and relating them to the external constraints in terms of opportunities and threats that present themselves

		FORCES	WEAKNESSES
INTERNAL ENVELOPE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy in the definition of regional economic policy; • Age structure of the young population; • Increase in the Active Population, the Activity Rate and Employment; • Natural wealth, heritage and culture; • Tourism potential not yet reached; • Resistance to the crisis by the agro-food sector; • Broadband internet access; • Agri-food sector with research and innovation initiatives; • Exclusive Economic Zone of great size. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misalignment, in the labor market, between supply and demand for skills; • Low qualification of the active population; • Population concentration in two islands; • Water storage capacity; • Difficulty of interconnection between research and economics; • Excessive use of some spaces by tourism, with a risk to natural resources; • Few statistical data; • Transportation.
		OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
EXTERNAL ENVELOPE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Stability; • Economic growth; • Growth of the Tourism Sector; • Growth of the Digital Economy; • Tax benefits on foreign investment; • Comprehensiveness of the education and training network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend of aging of the population; • Early school leaving; • Decrease in the resident population; • Desertification of smaller islands; • Geographical dispersion and diversity of inter-island economic and social contexts; • Vulnerability to climate change.



IV – Financing source: FEDER and FSE

The European Regional Development Fund (FEDER) and the European Social Fund (FSE) present a commitment rate of 78% in the Azores 2020 Operational Plan as at 31 December 2018.

In the Azores 2020 Operational Plan (PO Açores 2020), the main axes related to the Green and Blue Economy are the 3, 4 and the 6.

AXIS 3 - COMPETITIVENESS OF REGIONAL COMPANIES

Specific Objective 3.1.1

PROMOTING QUALIFIED AND CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION AND REGENERATION OF SECTORAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC TISSUES

Specific Objective 3.2.1

STRENGTHEN BUSINESS CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE OPENING OF REGIONAL COMPANIES TO FOREIGN MARKETS

Specific Objective 3.3.1

STRENGTHENING BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT CAPACITY BUILDING FOR COMPETITIVENESS

Specific Objective 3.4.1

AFFIRMING REGIONAL COMPANIES AND THEIR PRODUCTS IN THE REGIONAL MARKET

AXIS 4 - LOW CARBON ECONOMY

Specific Objective 4.1.1

INCREASING PENETRATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION

Specific Objective 4.2.1

INCREASING ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN COMPANIES BY SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES AND CONSUMER RATIONALIZATION

Specific Objective 4.3.1

Increasing energy efficiency in public infrastructure and housing by supporting the implementation of energy efficiency measures



AXIS 6 - ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Specific Objective 6.1.1

RECOVERING WASTE BY REDUCING LAND PRODUCTION AND TANKING, INCREASING SELECTIVE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING

Specific Objective 6.2.1

EFFICIENTLY OPTIMIZING AND MANAGING WATER RESOURCES WITH A VIEW OF THE USE, PROTECTION AND VALUATION TO ENSURE THE IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES AND THE INFRASTRUCTURES GIVEN TO THE PROPERTIES OF THE WATER UNDER THE URBAN WATER CYCLE

Specific Objective 6.3.1

PROMOTE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE, WITH SPECIAL INTERESTS IN CONSOLIDATING THE IMAGE OF THE REGION

Specific Objective 6.4.1

PROMOTE KNOWLEDGE AND VALUATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS

The initial and continuous training is present on axes 8 and 10.

AXIS 8 - EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR MOBILITY

Specific Objective 8.5.1

INCREASING ASSET EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH LIFELONG TRAINING AND PROMOTING ACTIONS THAT MAKE BUSINESS MORE INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT

TYPOLOGIES OF ACTION

- Modular Training: is based on the short-term training units (UFCD), listed in the National Qualifications Catalog. Aims to improve the knowledge and skills acquired or to be used in retraining and retraining processes, thus providing the acquisition knowledge to integrate into an increasingly demanding and competitive labor market.



AXIS 10 - LIFELONG EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Specific Objective 10.3.2

IMPROVING ACCESS TO LIFELONG LEARNING THROUGH PROMOTION AND QUALITY OF TRAINING SYSTEM, RECOGNITION OF ACQUIRED SKILLS AND / OR TRAINING FREQUENCY THAT MAKES INCREASING AND IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY AS WELL AS HUMAN RIGHTS. QUALIFIED

TYPOLOGIES OF ACTION

- Modular training courses of double certification, basic or secondary level, school or professional certification, inserted in the National Qualifications Catalog;
- Recurrent education - Second level secondary education, divided between the presential and the mediated modality, which is available exclusively at ES Vitorino Nemésio Polo School, through distance learning platforms;
- Development of Skills Recognition, Validation and Certification processes - aimed at the certification of school and / or professional skills acquired throughout life through formal, informal and non-formal training pathways. Such a process raises the level of qualification of the adult and provides him with an official certification of his competences in relation to socially established standards, particularly those set out in the study programs. Depending on the objectives pursued by the adult, this procedure allows him / her to ascertain the skills acquired and to identify, if possible, the missing training;
- Basic Skills Acquisition Courses - not only aim to provide adults with minimum skills, basic levels of education, which allow them to overcome a set of barriers that for many of their lives have blocked them many opportunities. Its main objective is to improve the skills and qualifications of trainees, providing them with knowledge that makes them active and competitive in the labor market and in their daily lives.

Specific Objective 10.4.1

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DIPLOMATES IN QUALITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING MODES, DIVERSIFIED AND ORIENTED FOR THE LABOR MARKET

- Professional Courses: courses with secondary education courses with a strong connection to the professional world;
- Apprenticeship Courses: courses with dual certification training modalities which provide both Level IV vocational training and a secondary level educational qualification;
- Technological Specialization Courses: Post-secondary but not university courses, level 5 vocational training.



Part V – Green and Blue Economy indicators, a GROW RUP innovation

At the beginning of the project we were asked to characterize the region, based on a set of parameters. Among them were, of course, some directly related to the green and blue economy. We have verified that the Azores do not have statistical data exclusively on the green and blue economy. In the visits made we found that the other regions not only had this type of data but used it as a fundamental element in the elaboration of their policies for this economic sector.

Although the Azores have a Regional Statistics Service (<https://srea.azores.gov.pt/>) and an Employment and Vocational Training Observatory (<http://www.azores.gov.pt/Portal/pt/entities/vp-dreqp-oefp/>), these two institutions do not produce information directly related to the green and blue economy, which, in turn, translates into a lack of information that hinders any kind of planning.

The creation of a green and blue economy indicators would allow better identification of green and blue economy enterprises and jobs in a context of reorientation of the regional economic model, aiming to provide a shared diagnosis of jobs and companies.

This good practice is not part of the action plan as it is fully funded by the regional budget. But it is important to note **that it was introduced thanks to the Grow Rup project**. It will be implemented by the Employment and Vocational Training Observatory and will provide data and information for the measures provided for in the action plan.



Part VI – Details of the action(s) envisaged

ACTION 1 - Increased educational qualifications of workers in the agriculture and fisheries sector.

1. The background

The marine surface area of the Azores islands are 954 496 square km's, which makes it one of the largest exclusive economic zones in the entire Eurozone (EEZ's). It is thanks to the natural landscapes, ecosystems and unique biodiversity that tourism has been progressively gaining weight in the region since 2014. Dairy farming in the region has always been a key economic indicator of the overall health of the Azorean economy with a wide variety of services and products making up a large percent of the overall average income for farmers and small businesses in the region. The majority of the products produced by Azorean dairy farmers in terms of cheeses, milk and yogurt are recognized throughout Europe as some of the highest quality.

The agriculture and fisheries sectors include 487 companies, mostly small.

AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING, FOREST AND FISHING, NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES IN THE AZORES, BY BUSINESS SIZE.⁴

	Less than 10	10 a 19	20 a 49	100 a 199
Agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry	413	14	4	0
Fishing and aquaculture	36	15	4	1

In both sectors, most workers are equally concentrated in **small businesses**.

AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING, FOREST AND FISHING, % OF PEOPLE IN BUSINESSES IN THE AZORES, BY BUSINESS SIZE⁵

	Less than 10	10 a 19	20 a 49	100 a 199
Agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry	76,00	14,6	9,4	0
Fishing and aquaculture	20,0	34,0	16,0	30,0

⁴ RELATÓRIO ÚNICO 2017 - SINGLE REPORT 2017 – p. 28

<http://www.azores.gov.pt/NR/rdonlyres/A72F5145-9EFA-4ABF-90F9-32A9C3A5A52A/0/Relat%C3%B3rio%C3%9Anico2017.PDF>

⁵ RELATÓRIO ÚNICO 2017 - SINGLE REPORT 2017 – p. 33



Overall, these workers have very **low levels of education**.

AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING, FOREST AND FISHING, % OF EMPLOYEES WORKERS BY SCHOOL LEVEL⁶

	less than 4 years of schooling	4 or 6 years of schooling	9 years of schooling	High school	Higher than secondary education
Agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry	4,1	58,5	24,7	9,1	3,6
Fishing and aquaculture	8,2	53,0	28,0	7,3	3,5

In the visits carried out under the GROW RUP project, it was possible to verify whereas low qualifications undermine the development capacity of the primary sector. We observe this reality mainly in Madeira and Martinique. The Azorean reality is no different. The low education level puts in question attempts to modernize the sector, prevents access to Community funds, **including the FEDER**, and even limits the comprehension of written instructions: for example, safety or hygiene rules.

In view of this reality, Action 1 aims to raise the qualification of schools employed in the agriculture and fisheries sectors.

To realize this Action is a key partner of Rede Valorizar (Valorize Network). It is intended to ensure that all azores citizens aged 18 and over receive recognition, validation and certification of basic, secondary and / or vocational skills and referral for academic and / or vocational training.

Rede Valorizar aims to:

Ensure to all citizens residing in the Azores, over 18 years of age, an opportunity for qualification and certification, of basic, secondary and / or professional level, reducing the qualification deficit of the active population and raising the certification levels of the adult population;

Refer adults after diagnostic operations for formative responses appropriate to their needs and profiles, allowing access to a qualification;

Socially value the processes of recognition, validation and certification of competences, school or professional;

⁶ RELATÓRIO ÚNICO 2017 - SINGLE REPORT 2017 – p. 33



Implement the integrated device for recognition, validation and certification of competences acquired in different life contexts, namely in professional context;

Develop skills that favor the integration / reintegration of adults in the labor market;

Increase the level of employability and career advancement of adults;

Promote the sharing of information and experience and dissemination of successful practices.

Promotion of increased schooling will be obtained through the Specific Objective 10.3.2 of the PO Açores 2020, more specifically the development of skills Recognition, Validation and Certification processes and the Basic Skills Acquisition Courses.

The identification of educational qualifications of workers employed in agriculture and fisheries will be carried out by the Employment and Vocational Training Observatory.

2. Action

2.1 - Development of skills Recognition, Validation and Certification processes - aimed at the certification of school and / or professional skills acquired throughout life through formal, informal and non-formal training pathways. Such a process raises the level of qualification of the adult and provides him with an official certification of his competences in relation to socially established standards, particularly those set out in the study programs. Depending on the objectives pursued by the adult, this procedure allows him / her to ascertain the skills acquired and to identify, if possible, the missing training;

2.2 - Development of Basic Skills Acquisition Courses - not only aim to provide adults with minimum skills, basic levels of education, which allow them to overcome a set of barriers that for many of their lives have blocked them many opportunities. Its main objective is to improve the skills and qualifications of trainees, providing them with knowledge that makes them active and competitive in the labor market and in their daily lives.



2.1 Indicators - Recognition, Validation and Certification processes			
Purpose	Recognition, Validation and Certification processes for school skills for employees in fishing and agriculture		
	Target Audience Employees in fishing and agriculture.		
Calculation Method	Total number of employees in enterprises fishing and agriculture with 9 years of schooling but without complete secondary education.	Reference value	494
	indicator Percentage of employees certificates per year	Goal	10% of the total
Estimated costs	23.000,00€		

2.1 Indicators - Basic Skills Acquisition Courses			
Purpose	Basic Skills Acquisition Courses for school skills for employees in fishing and agriculture		
	Target Audience Employees in fishing and agriculture.		
Calculation Method	Total number of employees in enterprises fishing and agriculture without 9 years of schooling.	Reference value	1181
	indicator Percentage of employees covered by the training per year	Goal	10% of the total
Estimated costs	112.000,00€		



3. Players involved

- Regional Directorate for Employment and Professional Qualification
- Regional Directorate of Fisheries
- Regional Directorate of Agriculture
- Employment and Vocational Training Observatory
- Rede Valorizar

4. Timeframe

Increased educational qualifications of workers in the agriculture and fisheries sector					
Activities	Semester				
	5	6	7	8	9
Work program	X				
Development of the strategy	X	X	X	X	
Evaluation of Results			X		X

5. Funding sources

PO Açores 14-20 (FSE) and regional budget.



ACTION 2 - Increase professional qualification in the context of the Green and Blue Economy

1. The background

In the Azores, activities associated with the Green and Blue Economy are considered fundamental for the development of the Region, especially in the Tourism sector.⁷ The geographical position of the islands and their volcanic origin have allowed these islands to gain international recognition for some of the unique UNESCO biospheres and endemic species that exists here on these islands.

As this economy is mainly supported by small and medium enterprises, its sustainability and competitiveness are permanent challenges. **In the Azores, 51% of workers are in companies with up to 19 employees.**⁸

To overcome them, it is essential to train their human resources, allowing both the maintenance of jobs and the creation of new. **This is a reality that was observed in all visits of the GROW RUP project, through contact with the different local stakeholders.** The need for skilled labor, we conclude, is critical to realizing the full potential of the green and blue economy.

Action 2 aims to contribute to increasing the competitiveness of SMEs linked to the green and blue economy by improving the professional skills of the active, employed and unemployed population. The defined strategy includes the implementation or increase of professional certification, in accordance with national and international quality standards, the needs identified in the market and national and regional legislation.

Low qualifications have a negative impact on some FEDER supported programs. This is the case, for example, with the Corporate Competitiveness Incentive System - Competing + (Competir +).⁹

⁷ Sustainability in Insular Destinations – The Azores Green Islands Tourism Project
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277105739_SUSTAINABILITY_IN_INSULAR_DESTINATIONS_THE_AZORES_GREEN_ISLANDS_TOURISM_PROJECT

⁸ RELATÓRIO ÚNICO 2017 - SINGLE REPORT 2017 – p. 45

⁹ http://www.azores.gov.pt/Portal/pt/entidades/vp-draic/textoTabela/Legislacao_-_Sistema_de_Incentivos_para_a_Competitividade_empresarial.htm



Promotion of increased schooling will be obtained through the Specific Objective 10.3.2 and 10.4.1 of the PO Açores 2020.

The identification of qualification needs will be carried out by the Employment and Vocational Training Observatory, with the collaboration of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Region.

For the implementation of this Action, the certified partners, the vocational schools of the Region and the Rede Valorizar are key partners.

2. Action

2.1 - Development of modular training courses of double certification, basic or secondary level, school or professional certification, inserted in the National Qualifications Catalog;

2.2 - Development of professional Courses: courses with dual certification training modalities which provide both Level IV vocational training and a secondary level educational qualification;

2.3 - Development of Technological Specialization Courses: Post-secondary but not university courses, level 5 vocational training;

2.4 – Short-Term Training: Based on National Training Catalog Short Term Training Units or approved courses;

2.5 – Employability Skills Training: Based on National Training Catalog Short Term Training Units, includes a 150 hour internship.



2.1 Indicators - Modular training courses of double certification, with emphasis on Green and Blue Economy.			
Purpose	a) Raise the level of educational qualifications; b) increase the percentage of workers holding a vocational qualification; c) Promote the offer of qualification courses that meet the technological, organizational, economic and legal transformations; d) Guarantee access to educational pathways for individuals who are socially most disadvantaged or vulnerable.		
	Target Audience: Active population, employed and unemployed		
Calculation Method	Estimated annual number of participants in training	Reference value	320
indicator	Percentage of employees in training, per year, related to Green and Blue Economy	Goal	10% of the total
Estimated costs	400.000,00€		

2.2 Indicators - Professional Courses, with emphasis on Green and Blue Economy.			
Purpose	a) Raise the level of educational qualifications; b) increase the percentage of workers holding a vocational qualification; c) Promote the offer of qualification courses that meet the technological, organizational, economic and legal transformations.		
	Target Audience: Young people up to 25 years old		
Calculation Method	Estimated annual number of participants in training	Reference value	800
indicator	Percentage of Young people in training, per year, related to Green and Blue Economy	Goal	5% of the total
Estimated costs	1.000.000€		

2.3 Indicators - Technological Specialization Courses, with emphasis on Green and Blue Economy.			
Purpose	a) increase the percentage of workers holding a vocational qualification; b) Promote the offer of qualification courses that meet the technological, organizational, economic and legal transformations.		
Target Audience	Secondary school holders		
Calculation Method	Estimated annual number of participants in training	Reference value	100
indicator	Percentage of Young people in training, per year, related to Green and Blue Economy	Goal	10% of the total
Estimated costs	375.000,00€		

2.4 Indicators - Short-Term Training, with emphasis on Green and Blue Economy.			
Purpose	a) qualify the working population by developing basic or specific skills to promote their insertion in the labor market and increase quality and productivity; b) Provide an offer of qualification courses that meet the technological, organizational, economic and legal transformations.		
Target Audience	Active population, employed and unemployed		
Calculation Method	Estimated annual number of participants in training	Reference value	4.000
indicator	Percentage of people in training, per year, related to Green and Blue Economy	Goal	5% of the total
Estimated costs	70.000,00€		

2.5 Indicators - Employability Skills Training.			
Purpose	Qualify the unemployed working population by developing basic skills to increase their employability profile.		
	Target Audience Active population, unemployed		
Calculation Method	Estimated annual number of participants in training	Reference value	200
	indicator Percentage of people in training, per year, with internships in companies related to the blue and green economy related	Goal	10% of the total
Estimated costs	30.000,00€		

3. Players involved

- Regional Directorate for Employment and Professional Qualification
- Regional Directorate of Fisheries
- Regional Directorate of Agriculture
- Regional Directorate for Investment and Competitiveness
- Regional Directorate for the Environment
- Regional Directorate of Science and Technology
- Regional Directorate of Energy
- Regional Fund for Science and Technology (RIS3 Azores)
- Society for the Business Development of the Azores
- Employment and Vocational Training Observatory
- Ponta Delgada Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Angra do Heroísmo Chamber of Commerce
- Horta Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Professional Schools



- Rede Valorizar

4. Timeframe

Increased educational qualifications of workers in the agriculture and fisheries sector					
Activities	Semester				
	5	6	7	8	9
Work program	X				
Development of the strategy	X	X	X	X	
Evaluation of Results			X		X

5. Funding sources

PO Açores 14-20 (FSE) and regional budget.