



European Commission



## THE OUTERMOST REGIONS EUROPEAN LANDS IN THE WORLD



### AZORES



250 000 inhabitants



2 322 km<sup>2</sup>

- Situated in the Atlantic North, 1450 km from the Portuguese mainland, the Azores is an archipelago of 9 islands with 250 000 inhabitants.
- The **geostrategic position** of the Azores, its large **maritime exclusive economic zone** and **rich biodiversity** are strong assets. It is a privileged location for the development of **spatial technologies**, a **solid blue growth sector** and tourism.
- **Agriculture** is essential for the region's economy (e.g. production of beef and milk). The local production of pineapple, wine and canned fish can become a real **competitive asset**.
- But the region faces many challenges. The **unemployment rate of young people** is more than double the EU average. **Low level of qualification and early school leaving** remain issues.

## WHAT WILL THE NEW STRATEGY BRING TO THE AZORES?

By encouraging the outermost regions to **capitalise on their unique assets**, the strategy will help them create new **opportunities** for their inhabitants, boost **innovation** in sectors like agriculture, fisheries or tourism, while deepening the **cooperation** with neighbour countries. For the Azores, the strategy could help support in particular:

- ✓ A solid **blue economy** sector, by encouraging the development of marine renewable energy and blue biotechnologies and local fisheries
- ✓ A more competitive **agri-food sector**, with modernised production processes
- ✓ Enhanced **mobility, employability and new skills** for young people by financially helping students and volunteers travelling under Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps
- ✓ A hand to **researchers and their activities**, by facilitating their participation in the EU research programme Horizon 2020
- ✓ Further support to **transport connections**
- ✓ The **region's interests taken into account** upstream when negotiating trade agreements involving specific local productions (such as dairy products, beef and pineapple)



## WHAT DOES THE EUROPEAN UNION DO FOR THE AZORES?

### EU funding 2014-2020



Among the **expected results** of this EU support:

- ▶ Support to 1 045 businesses
- ▶ 3000 jobs directly created
- ▶ An increase of 15% in maritime traffic in the archipelago
- ▶ 170 000 citizens benefiting from improved health care services
- ▶ Support to 187 young farmers and 930 farms benefiting from modernisation aid
- ▶ 2200 persons benefiting from programmes tackling early school leaving

### IN ADDITION

**€127 million**  
under the **European cooperation programme** for Azores, Madeira and Canary Islands

**€102 million**  
under the **European Maritime Fisheries Fund** for the Portuguese outermost regions

**POSEI**, the specific agriculture programme for the outermost regions, can support the two Portuguese outermost regions with **up to €106 million per year**

### Specificities of other EU policies

The outermost regions benefit from specific or derogating measures, in areas such as agriculture, state aid and taxation, in order to mitigate the impact of their specific constraints and boost economic growth. The Azores in particular, benefit from a specific taxation regime for locally produced and consumed eau-de-vie and liqueurs.

## EXAMPLES OF PROJECT SUPPORTED BY THE EU IN THE AZORES



### Construction of new installations for the Regional veterinary laboratory

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

**EU funding:** €16 million

The construction of the Regional Veterinary Laboratory is essential to the improvement of animal health and to the quality of the meat and milk produced in the Azores. These are crucial sectors to the regional economy.

The project also contributes to further improving food security and public health as well as to minimizing or eradicating diseases.



### 'Rede Valorizar' Project

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

**EU funding:** €10.6 million

This project helps unemployed people with low qualifications get the skills they need.

'Rede Valorizar' gives an opportunity for basic, secondary and/or professional level qualification through the validation and certification of acquired competencies and professional skills acquired throughout life or through referral to education or training.