



European Regional  
Development Fund



# Azores Operational Programme

The Azores Operational Programme for Convergence (PROCONVERGENCIA), which applies to the Autonomous Region of the Azores, Portugal, falls into the 2007-2013 programming period of the European Union's regional policy and is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

PROCONVERGENCIA was prepared by the Government of the Azores and is a synthesis of its main proposals in development policy, in the observance of the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion and also with regard to the framing of the National Strategic Reference Framework.

The strategy set out is based on major priorities that structure the programming, with interventions in the areas of the economy, human resources and territorial enhancement, respectively. It also includes a priority axis that encompasses the programming of the specific financing allocated in the context of compensatory support for the higher costs borne by the outermost regions.

For the 2007-2013 period, an expenditure of 1.3 billion euros is estimated, of which 966.3 million euros will be co-financed by the EC.

The institutional governance framework for PROCONVERGENCIA comprises the interlinking of diverse functions related to the management, monitoring, dissemination, control and assessment of the programme. The Region's main social and economic partners were involved in

the preparation period and are a central factor in the programme's implementation.

With a little over 1/3 of the 2007-2013 programming period already completed, the implementation of the approved interventions has already brought important results. Thus, in the field of support for the business sector, the maintenance/creation of nearly 8,500 jobs in small and medium enterprises is of note. In the science and technology field, various projects are being implemented, with a focus on the study of exploiting endogenous resources. In the area of administrative efficiency, 14 branches of the Integrated Citizen Support Network are being created/upgraded. Projects relating to 14 state educational establishments, covering around 3,500 pupils, are underway. At the tertiary level, the University of the Azores is constructing buildings at its centres on the islands of Terceira and Faial.

In terms of infrastructure, some 200 kms of road are being built/improved, 7 ports (2 commercial and 5 fishing) upgraded, and 3 inter-island air link projects have been approved.

In the environmental sphere, besides a significant number of projects relating to the water cycle and solid waste treatment and disposal, support is being provided to environmental interpretive centres, while the Lagoas das Furnas and Sete Cidades hydrographic basins are being requalified.



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