SOCIAL ECONOMY SATELLITE ACCOUNT (CSES) HOW TO BUILD A SATELLITE ACCOUNT

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Link to original article: http://www.revista-es.info/ramos_6.html

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"In 2016, the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the Social Economy represented 3.0% of the economy's GVA, having increased by 14.6% in nominal terms, compared to 2013. This growth was higher than that observed in the economy as a whole (8.3%), in the same period.

Social Economy accounted for 5.3% of total compensation of employees and employment and 6.1% of employees of the economy. Compared to 2013, the compensation of employees and employment in the Social Economy increased, respectively, by 8.8% and 8.5%, being more dynamic than the total economy (7.3% and 5.8%, respectively).

By groups of Social Economy entities, Associations with altruistic goals were more relevant in terms of number of entities (92.9%), GVA (60.1%), compensation of employees (61.9%) and employees (64.6%). ".

Last July, INE published the third edition of the Social Economy Satellite Account (SESA) for 2016. This article appears as a complement, with the aim of explaining, in general terms, how this satellite account is built, in order to make users aware of the "backstage" of this project, illustrating the complexity and potential of this statistical product.

1. Satellite accounts and National Accounts

The production of National Accounts consists, in simplistic terms, of integrating, reconciling and balancing different official data sources, which have already gone through rigorous processes of validation and quality analysis. However, despite the wealth and quality of the information, National Accounts do not always meet the information needs of increasingly demanding users. National Accounts information often needs to be reorganised or expanded in order to better respond to very specific information needs.

To a certain extent, satellite accounts have responded to this growing demand, constituting more detailed extensions of the National Accounts, with the aim of increasing the capacity to observe particular phenomena. Satellite accounts can be considered a product with high added value, since, using information sources and know-how resident in statistical institutes, they allow the creation of new statistical products and improve the quality of National Accounts (by searching for new sources, detecting errors, testing alternative methodologies).

The fact that the results of satellite accounts are comparable with established statistical systems makes this statistical product even more appealing. Indeed, in recent years, National Accounts have become a kind of 'lingua franca' when it comes to economics. The impact of communicating the relevance of a given phenomenon is undeniable when it is stated that it represents X% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross Value Added (GVA) of the national economy. This is the type of quantification that

satellite accounts allow, contrary to other studies, by following methods and sources identical to the National Accounts. The satellite accounts have also demonstrated the usefulness of the National Accounts for unusual users of this information.

Numerous manuals have, therefore, been developed by international organisations for different satellite accounts, so that the results are internationally comparable.

2. The Social Economy Satellite Account (CSES)

The Social Economy Satellite Account (SESA) emerged as a result of a challenge, launched by the António Sérgio Cooperative for the Social Economy (CASES) to Statistics Portugal (INE), to obtain detailed information on the Social Economy, comparable with the Portuguese National Accounts, accurately quantifying its relevance in the national economy. The SESA is thus integrated into the conceptual framework of the System of Portuguese National Accounts and its main objective is to provide economic information on the Social Economy. The choice of National Accounts as reference reflects their importance as a reliable, systematised and internationally comparable representation of the functioning of the economy.

2.1 The methodological basis

All Portuguese satellite accounts have as first reference the concepts and methods of National Accounts, defined in the European System of National and Regional Accounts.

Since 2013, the SESA has also had as a methodological reference the Social Economy Framework Law (Law no. 30/2013, 8th of May), which, among other matters, establishes the type of entities that should integrate the Social Economy, as well as the guiding principles that should steer the activities developed by these entities.

According to the Social Economy Framework Law, Social Economy is understood as the set of economic and social activities, freely carried out by Cooperatives, Mutualist Associations, Holy Houses of Mercy, Foundations, Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS), Associations with Altruistic Goals, acting within the cultural, recreational, sports and local development scope, entities covered by the Community and Self-Management Subsectors, integrated under the Constitution in the cooperative and social sector, as well as by other entities with legal personality that respect the guiding principles of Social Economy.

In the preparation of the SESA, the concepts, methods, classifications and accounting rules of specific international manuals are also considered. These manuals, in addition to being references, enhance the comparison of the SESA with other international experiences, although, sometimes, it is necessary to make compatible the different understandings and methods envisaged in the various documents.

The Portuguese SESA is an unprecedented project in international terms, due to its scope and versatility. When the SESA was initially conceived, there was no single international reference framework, so it was necessary to coordinate and adapt the existing manuals ("Manual for drawing up the satellite accounts of companies in the social economy: co-operatives and mutual societies" of the Centre International de

Recherches et d'Information sur l'Economie Publique, Sociale et Coopérative - CIRIEC and Handbook on Non-Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts" - United Nations). The existing nomenclatures or classifications were, on the one hand, more related to the non-market side of the Social Economy, or identical to those of the National Accounts (therefore have less detail and added value). In this context, Statistics Portugal, in a partnership with CASES, conceived a new nomenclature which better illustrated the reality of the Social Economy: the "Classification of Activities of Social Economy Entities (CAEES)", which was an adaptation of the "International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations (ICNPO)".

In 2018, the United Nations made available a new manual: "Satellite Account on Non-profit and Related Institutions and Volunteer Work", with a broader scope than its predecessor (including cooperatives and mutualist associations). This manual is the result of several years of discussions with international experts and statistical institutes (including Statistics Portugal). Following the international developments, Statistics Portugal, with the agreement of CASES, decided in the SESA 2016 (released in 2019) to use this manual as a methodological reference. It was not an easy decision, as it required more work to reclassify units of economic activity and conditioned the comparability of data in more detail than in previous years. However, we believe that this was a necessary decision, at a time when several countries in the EU are preparing to start up their satellite accounts in light of this new manual. International comparability is a key factor in the relevance of any statistical product.

2.2 The SESA compilation

2.2.1 The Universe

One of the main objectives of satellite accounts (as well as National Accounts) is exhaustiveness. Therefore, in the specific case of the SESA, an exhaustive inventory of the eligible institutional units under the definition of Social Economy is carried out in each financial year. This process is usually referred to as "universe definition", which is nothing more than the definition of the "perimeter" of analysis, the identification of the economic activity units that will be monitored and studied by the satellite account.

In addition to the identification, at this stage of the work the entities are also classified according to the typologies intended for the calculation of results. In this identification and classification work, it is necessary to establish contacts with various entities, although Statistics Portugal and CASES undoubtedly have the main data sources on the different entities / organisations considered: Statistics Portugal, as an institution aggregating quantitative information, available in an organised manner and CASES, as a source of privileged information on the cooperative sector and, also, in the relationship that establishes with other relevant social economy entities, in order to validate some of the analysed information.

The SESA "universe" (as well as National Accounts) does not include economic activity units which, in Statistics Portugal database, are extinct or inactive.

The building up of SESA universe starts with the National Accounts universe, establishing a first classification of units in accordance with the Social Economy Framework Law:

- Cooperatives;
- Mutualist Associations;
- Holy Houses of Mercy;
- Foundations;
- Community and Self-Management Subsectors ;
- Associations with Altruistic Goals (ACFA).

It should also be mentioned that the respective savings banks were included in the groups of Holy Houses of Mercy and Mutual Associations, since their legal regime (Law no. 190/2015, of 10 September) states that they should respect, with the necessary adaptations, the guiding principles of the Social Economy, as well as the mutuality principles provided by the Code of Mutual Societies, and may only be constituted for the exclusive pursuit of the purposes of Mutual Associations, Holy Houses of Mercy or other charitable institutions, having also some restrictions in the allocation of surpluses. These last two characteristics were already included in the previous legal system of savings banks, regulated by the Law no. 136/79 of 18 May.

It should be noted that this classification of Social Economy organisations is not provided for in any manual of satellite accounts, despite the fact that most of the groups considered are represented in the European Economic and Social Committee by the Permanent European Conference - Cooperatives, Mutualities, Associations and Foundations (CEP-CMAF). The Holy Houses of Mercy, being specific entities of Portugal, originated a specific group due to their importance in social terms in our country. The division adopted corresponds, roughly, to the groupings that bring together the Social Economy entities according to the Social Economy Framework Law, and follows the legal form of the organisations, according to the table in the Statistics Unit File (FUE) of Statistics Portugal.

Entities with the status of IPSS or equivalent are also classified, since they may take on different legal forms and natures and are dispersed across all groups of Social Economy entities. In the 2016 edition of the CSES, an additional classification was created of the entities with some special statuts: non-governmental environmental organisations (ONGA), non-governmental organisations for development (ONGD), non-governmental organisations for people with disabilities (ONGPD), non-governmental associations of women (ONGM) and associations representing immigrants and their descendants (ARID).

In addition, the units are classified according to the institutional sector (National Accounts nomenclature): financial corporations, non-financial corporations, general government, households (known as sole proprietors) and non-profit institutions serving households (where most of the economic activity units of the Social Economy are classified). In general government, *regie*-cooperativas (a national specificity) are classified and are also included in the Portuguese SESA.

Finally, the units that make up the SESA universe are also classified in terms of activity according to the "International Classification of Non-Profit Organisations and the Third Sector".

The following table generically describes examples of activities included in each section of this classification:

Table 1
International Classification of Non-Profit and Third Sector Organizations – Activity Examples

Section	Activity Examples
A - Culture, communication and recreation activities	Performing and visual arts, museums, zoos, parks, historical sites, sports activities, information and communication, among others.
B – Education services	Pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education, higher education, colleges and universities, education support services, among others.
C – Human health services	Ambulatory health services, emergency medical response, medical and diagnostic laboratories, hospitals, nursing and residential care activities, among others.
D – Social services	Child and youth services, services for the elderly and for people with disabilities, temporary shelters, emergency and relief services, refugees assistance, job counselling or training activities, among others.
E – Environmental protection and animal welfare activities	Land or water management activities, pollution abatement and control activities, eco-tourism, eco-farming and forestry, natural resource management, animal sanctuaries and shelters, veterinary services, animal health and welfare activities, among others.
F – Community and economic development, and housing activities	Construction of housing and infrastructure, community and economic development activities, housing management and maintenance, utilities and waste management, indigenous people self-governance, among others.
G – Civic, advocacy, political and international activities	Social advocacy, environmental conservation and animal welfare advocacy, social clubs and other member serving activities, social organizations for the elderly, political activities, political action, lobbying and similar activities, among others.
H – Philantropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion	Grant-making foundations and other philantropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion organizations.
I – Religious congregations and associations	Religious congregations and other religious associations.
J – Business, professional and labour organizations	Business and employers' associations, professional associations, labour unions, among others.
K – Professional, scientific, accounting and administrative services	Scientific research and testing services, legal and mediation services, accounting, bookkeeping and related services, public relations and related services, management and administrative services, among others.
L – Other activities	Agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, accommodation, catering and food services, trade activities, transport and storage activities, financial and insurance activities, real estate activities, among others.

Whenever possible, the information relating to Section L - Other activities is disaggregated, given its relevance, namely in Cooperatives and Mutualist Associations (financial and insurance activities, more specifically).

The following are the main changes with an impact on SESA2016:

- Transfer of social clubs (examples: numismatics, philately, maximaphilia, automobile fan clubs, cinophile clubs, etc.) from culture, communication and recreational activities to civic, legal, political and international intervention activities;
- Transfer of scientific research from the field of education to professional, scientific and administrative services;
- Transfer of activities classified under ISIC Rev. 4 code 87 (corresponding to NACE Rev. 2 division 87 and NACE Rev. 3 section 87) from the scope of social services to health.

The classification criterion is the main activity of the institutional unit.

It is important to note that the construction of the universe is a particularly time-consuming, detailed and complex phase of work, but it is nevertheless crucial for the final quality of the statistical product. This is a work that is usually "invisible" to the user.

The slowness and complexity mentioned above are generally related to some recurrent problems, related to difficulties in the nominal and fiscal identification of the entities or inconsistencies regarding their situation in relation to the activity or activity developed. However, in the different editions of SESA, it has always been possible to overcome the problems encountered, through joint analyses carried out between Statistics Portugal and CASES, by establishing contacts with the entities, providing the collection of administrative data, etc.

It is important to mention that this process would strongly benefit from the creation of the database of social economy entities, provided for in the Social Economy Framework Law, introducing high gains in efficiency and agility in the preparation of the SESA. We hope that in a future edition of the SESA Statistics Portugal will already be able to count on this information.

2.2.2 Processing and analysis of information

After the universe delineation, economic variables are compiled as part of a sequence of accounts described below. Each of these accounts is described in summary form in the following paragraphs.

The Production Account comprises the operations associated with the production process of the entities involved. It presents Output as a resource and Intermediate Consumption as a use. The difference between the two operations corresponds to the Gross Value Added - GVA, which constitutes the balance of the account.

Output includes:

- Market output;
- Output produced for own final use - goods and services that are retained for final consumption or capital formation by the same unit;
- Other non-market output - output provided to other entities free of charge or sold at economically insignificant prices.

The Social Economy is made of very diverse institutional units operating in the non-market and market sectors of the national economy, although most of them have essentially non-market output. Output produced for own final use is practically residual in the Social Economy.

The generation of income account examines the extent to which GVA covers compensation of employees and other taxes on production net of other subsidies on production. It measures the Gross Operating Surplus, which is the surplus (or deficit) resulting from productive activities, before taking into account the interest, rents or charges that the productive unit must pay for the financial assets or natural resources it has borrowed or leased and that it must receive for the financial assets or natural resources it owns.

Unlike the generation of income account, the primary income allocation account refers to resident institutional units and sectors as beneficiaries of primary income and not as producers. Primary income

means income available to resident units as a result of their direct participation in the production process and income received by the owner of a financial asset or a tangible non-produced asset in return for making it available to another institutional unit.

The Secondary Distribution of Income Account shows how the primary income balance of an institutional sector is affected by redistribution: current taxes on income, wealth, etc., social contributions and benefits (with the exception of social transfers in kind) and other current transfers. The account balance is the Gross Disposable Income, for final consumption or savings. Within this account, Social Contributions are recorded as uses of the institutional sector of households and as resources of the institutional sectors responsible for social security management. In the case of Social Contributions that employers must pay for the benefit of their employees, these contributions must first be included in the Compensation of employees on the side of the employers' generation of income account, as they are part of wage costs; they are also recorded as Compensation of employees on the resources side of the Household Primary Income Allocation account, as they correspond to the benefits attributed to households.

The Redistribution of income in kind account gives a broader picture of household income by integrating flows corresponding to the use of individual goods and services from which these households benefit free of charge from general government and non-profit institutions serving households, i.e. social transfers in kind. Social transfers in kind are recorded on the resources side of the Redistribution of income in kind account, in the case of households, and on the uses side, in the case of general government and non-profit institutions serving households. The balance of the Redistribution of income in kind account is the Gross adjusted disposable income.

The Use of disposable income account includes the notion of final consumption expenditure financed by the various sectors involved: households, general government and non-profit institutions serving households. The balance of the disposable income account is Gross saving.

The Use of adjusted disposable income account includes the notion of actual final consumption, which corresponds to the value of goods and services actually available to households for final consumption, even if their purchase is financed by general government or non-profit institutions serving households. As a consequence, the actual final consumption of general government and non-profit institutions serving households corresponds to collective final consumption. At the level of total economy, final consumption expenditure and actual final consumption are equivalent notions; only the breakdowns between institutional sectors are different. The same applies to disposable income and adjusted disposable income.

Gross saving is the accounting balance of the two versions of the Use of Income account. Its value is identical for all Sectors, regardless of whether it is obtained by deducting final consumption expenditure from disposable income or by deducting actual final consumption from adjusted disposable income. Gross saving is the amount (positive or negative) resulting from current operations that establishes the link with accumulation. If saving is positive, unspent income is intended for the acquisition of assets or the reduction of liabilities. If Gross saving is negative, certain assets are liquidated or certain liabilities increase.

Finally, the Capital Account makes it possible to determine the extent to which Acquisitions net of disposals of non-financial assets were financed by Savings and Capital Transfers. It shows a financing

capacity (net lending) corresponding to the amount a unit or sector has to finance, directly or indirectly, other units or sectors, or a financing requirement (net borrowing) corresponding to the amount a unit or sector has to borrow from other units or sectors.

Table 2
Economic account for the total of Social Economy - 2016

ESA transaction				Total da Economia Social / Total of Social Economy	
				Total / Total	
				Empregos / Uses	Recursos / Resources
I. Production account	1	P.1	*Output*	//	8.878,0
	2	P.2	*Intermediate consumption*	4.058,8	//
	3 = 1-2	**B.1g**	***Gross value added***	**4.819,2**	//
II.1.1. Generation of income account	3	B.1g	***Gross value added***	//	**4.819,2**
	4	D.1	*Compensation of employees*	4.321,6	//
	5	D.29	*Other taxes on production*	26,6	//
	6	D.39	*Other subsidies on production*	//	479,7
	7 = 3-4-5+6	**B.2g**	***Gross operating surplus***	**950,7**	//
II.1.2. Allocation of primary income account	7	B.2g	***Gross operating surplus***	//	**950,7**
	8	D.4	*Property income*	534,6	694,6
	9 = 7+8R-8E	**B.5g**	***Gross balance of primary incomes***	**1.110,7**	//
II.2. Secondary distribution of income account	9	B.5g	***Gross balance of primary incomes***	//	**1.110,7**
	10	D.5	*Current taxes on income, wealth, etc.*	46,6	//
	11	D.6	*Social contributions and benefits*	353,7	418,6
	12	D.7	*Other current transfers*	148,8	3.032,7
	13 = 9-10+11R+12R-11E-12E	**B.6g**	***Gross disposable income***	**4.013,0**	//
II.3. Redistribution of income in kind account	13	B.6g	***Gross disposable income***	//	**4.013,0**
	14	D.63	*Social transfers in kind*	3.766,3	//
	15 = 13-14	**B.7g**	***Gross adjusted disposable income***	**246,7**	//
II.4.1. Use of disposable income account	13	B.6g	***Gross disposable income***	//	**4.013,0**
	16	P.3	*Final consumption expenditure*	3.766,3	//
	17 = 13-16	**B.8g**	***Gross saving***	**246,7**	//
II.4.2. Use of adjusted disposable income account	15	B.7g	***Gross adjusted disposable income***	//	**4.013,0**
	18	P.4	*Actual final consumption*	0,0	//
	17 = 15-18	**B.8g**	***Gross saving***	**246,7**	//
III.1. Capital account	17	B.8g	***Gross saving***	//	**246,7**
	19	P.5	*Gross capital formation*	1.107,8	//
	20	NP	*Acquisitions less disposals of non-produced non-financial assets*	62,0	//
	21	D.9	*Capital transfers, receivable*	//	327,0
	22	D.9	*Capital transfers, payable*	2,2	//
	23 = 17+21-22	**B.10.1g**	***Changes in gross worth due to gross saving and capital transfers***	//	**571,5**
	24 = 17-19-20+21-22	**B.9**	***Net lending (+) / Net borrowing (–)***	**-598,4**	//

In the Portuguese SESA the complete sequence of accounts (up to the net lending/ net borrowing) is elaborated for the total of Social Economy, as well as for the groups of entities whose information is more complete: Cooperatives and Mutualist Associations. In fact, Cooperatives and Mutualist Associations have shown an almost exhaustive coverage in terms of accounting information sources, with greater difficulties in obtaining information for the remaining Social Economy groups, in particular for Foundations, for the Community and Self-Management Subsectors and for the Associations with Altruistic Goals. These difficulties in terms of the availability of basic information and the respective consistency do not guarantee the rigour required to calculate the set of variables from the complete sequence of accounts to the net lending/net borrowing balance for all groups of entities.

The SESA employment estimate consists, in a first step, in determining the number of jobs associated with each entity in the reference universe. The data source for jobs is, whenever possible, the same data source used for estimating the compensation of employees and output, so that the general information on each unit is as consistent as possible. Once the work is completed, the jobs are converted into full-time equivalent (FTE) which is defined as the total hours worked divided by the average annual number of hours worked in full-time jobs on the economic territory, which is obtained by applying National Accounts converters.

2.2.3 Main data sources

The SESA is compiled from existing data sources and there are no additional surveys specifically created for this project (this is one of the strengths of the satellite accounts in general and of the SESA in particular). The main sources of information estimating monetary and non-monetary variables are:

Statistics Portugal (INE):

- National Accounts - we highlight the use of several work files, which include estimates for some operations of the European System of Accounts (Output, Intermediate Consumption, Compensation of employees, GVA, subsidies and taxes, among others);
- General Register of Statistical Units (FUE) - the register of statistical units is an instrument for coordinating and harmonising information on enterprises, establishments, enterprise groups and vehicles. Enterprises are classified by different typologies, such as corporations, sole proprietors, non-profit institutions and public administration. The FUE receives information on various statistical operations of Statistics Portugal and also integrates the administrative records from external entities (namely from public registers and from the national Tax Authority); The integrated file system is supported by a computer application, which allows online management and updates for all units and variables of the FUE;
- Survey on employers' associations, unions, federations and confederations (IAP) - a specific survey applied to a particular fraction of the group of associations and other social economy entities, which gathers information on physical indicators (number of organisations, persons employed, etc.) and expenditure and income accounts of the Accounting Standards System (SNC), by type of employer organisation;
- Survey of Mutual Associations (IASM) - statistical operation that allows obtaining disaggregated information on financial and physical indicators relating to the activity of Mutual Assistance Associations;
- Labour Force Survey (LFS) - quarterly sample survey providing quarterly and annual results. It aims to characterise the labour market, namely the behaviour of employment and unemployment. This survey is used to produce official statistics on labour status and other characteristics of the Portuguese population related to the labour market, such as the sector of economic activity and the profession, education and vocational training, job search and career path;
- Survey on Fire Brigade entities (IEDCB) - its main objective is to obtain physical and financial data on fire prevention and fighting activities. In this survey, the fire brigades are surveyed with the

entities that own and maintain them, namely the professional, mixed fire brigades (only for fire brigades that are dependent on a municipal council) and private fire brigades in mainland Portugal and the entities that own professional, mixed, voluntary and private fire brigades in the Autonomous Regions of Azores and Madeira. As far as financial data are concerned, the information relates to the expenditure, income and investments of the fire brigades;

- Survey on environmental non-governmental organizations (IONGA) - this statistical operation is part of the current production of Environmental Statistics and aims to obtain physical data (nature of members, activities carried out and staff employed) and financial data (investments, expenditure and income).

Other data sources:

- Detailed analytical balance sheets of central government entities;
- Archeevo database of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Internal Administration;
- General State Account (CGE);
- Monthly Statement of Remuneration received from Social Security - summarises the values of the compensation of employees, the average number of people in service in the year and the number of working days per entity registered with the Social Security. This database is provided to Statistics Portugal by *Instituto de Informática da Segurança Social, I.P.* (Social Security Information Institute);
- Financial statements of the cooperatives accredited by CASES;
- Simplified Business Information (IES) - an instrument that must be filled in by all organisations, including, among others, four important Annexes with different uses:
  - o Annex A: applied to resident entities that exercise, as their main activity, commercial, industrial or agricultural activity and non-resident entities with a permanent establishment;
  - o Annex B: enterprises in the financial sector;
  - o Annex C: insurance companies;
  - o Annex D: resident entities not principally engaged in commercial, industrial or agricultural activities.
- Survey on I&D (IPCTN) - is the official instrument (part of the National Statistical System) for accounting for human resources and expenditure on research and development (R&D), following criteria agreed at European level by Eurostat and in coordination with the OECD;
- Social Security lists (IPSS, Mutual Associations, etc.);
- IPSS Budget and Accounts (OCIP) - represents a set of accounting obligations that IPSS and similar institutions have to comply with, from the moment they register as IPSS in Social Security;
- Reports and Accounts;
- Single Report of the Strategy and Planning Office of the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security;
- Websites of the economic activity units;
- Website of the Ministry of Justice (https://publicacoes.mj.pt/Pesquisa.aspx).

The approach for compiling the satellite account is based on a close relationship with the System of National Accounts. For any institutional sector, whenever possible, the same data sources are used, the same methods are applied and the final results are compared.

3. Final considerations

In conclusion of this article, which closes the work cycle in the preparation and dissemination of the third edition of Portuguese SESA, the following considerations should be noted:

- With the presentation of the results of the SESA 2016, the National Statistical System and its users now have robust, up-to-date and consistent sectoral information on the main variables which characterise the Social Economy at national level; the information is available on the Statistics Portugal website (highlights, tables and infographics), in fully bilingual versions (Portuguese/English);
- Although already in its third edition, the SESA should still be considered a project under development, due to the emergence of new realities, with consequent updating and permanent renewal of the concepts and methodologies adopted for the compilation of information, always in line with the evolution advocated by reference international institutions, such as the UN, Eurostat and CIRIEC;
- The SESA development work is sometimes more complex than expected, revealing not only the need for methodological rigour, but, above all, the fragility and, more often than desired, the lack of credible and updated data sources for this sector. The availability and quality of basic information is fundamental to the quality of any statistical product. It is essential that Social Economy entities raise awareness of the relevance of information for the recognition and development of their activity and their role as information providers;
- Notwithstanding its relevance as a "portrait" of the SE economic dimension, SESA is only a partial view of it. In fact, the analysis of the SE relevance should not only focus on the economic component, but also the number of members / associates and beneficiaries of the services provided by these entities, the analysis of externalities, multiplier effects and impacts of their performance, namely in the reduction of poverty and social inequalities in the national territory, among other possible analysis views, that go beyond the scope of this Satellite Account.
- In order to deepen the knowledge about the SE units, Statistics Portugal recently launched the "Survey on the Social Economy Sector", which intends to characterize this sector, answering questions such as: What are the activities developed by these entities? What is the internal composition of these entities? What relation these entities have with public and private sector entities? What is the labour relationship model adopted by these entities? What role does volunteering play in management and development of the activity of these entities? What is the qualification and average wage level of employees, and managers of these entities? The results of this innovative statistical operation will be disclosed later this year and will certainly be a very important milestone in the knowledge of the sector.