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## The policies and dynamics of the regionalization of graduate education in Santa Catarina: a study on the West region

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### ABSTRACT

Brazilian postgraduate programs (PG) have grown exponentially in recent decades. The expansion, however, has not occurred uniformly in all regions of the country. Regional and intraregional inequalities and asymmetries persist. The reduction of asymmetries has been slow. This study aimed to investigate the process of internalization of PG in Brazil from a specific unit of the federation: Santa Catarina (SC). Based on general data from PG in Brazil and SC, it was decided to focus the investigation on a specific region of such state: the Western. The study was developed through documentary research and the systematization and analysis of the main PG indicators available on the Sucupira Platform and on the GeoCapes databases. The data shows that the expansion of PG in the Western region of Santa Catarina was led by non-profit Higher Education Institutions (HEI). In 2019, non-profit HEIs offered 72.4% of PG courses, against 27.6% by public HEIs and 0% of the for-profit private sector. The first PG course in the Western region was recommended by CAPES in 2005. In 2019, the region offered 29 courses (24 masters and 05 doctorates), corresponding to 9.9% of the total PG programs in SC. UFFS, UNOESC and UNOCHAPECÓ account for 82.7% of the offering of courses. The city of Chapecó concentrates 71.4% of the PG courses in the region.

### KEYWORDS

Higher education polices. Graduate education. Regionalization. Santa Catarina

## As políticas e as dinâmicas da interiorização da pós-graduação em Santa Catarina: um estudo sobre a região Oeste

### RESUMO

A pós-graduação brasileira (PG) tem crescido exponencialmente nas últimas décadas. A expansão, no entanto, não tem ocorrido de forma uniforme em todas as regiões do país. As desigualdades e as assimetrias regionais e intrarregionais persistem. A redução das assimetrias tem ocorrido de forma lenta. O presente estudo teve como propósito investigar o processo de interiorização da PG no Brasil a partir de uma unidade específica da federação: Santa Catarina (SC). A partir dos dados gerais da PG no Brasil e em SC, optou-se por concentrar a investigação em uma região específica deste estado: a Oeste. O estudo foi desenvolvido por meio da pesquisa documental e da sistematização e análise dos principais indicadores da PG disponíveis na Plataforma Sucupira e nas bases do GeoCapes. Os dados apontam que a expansão da PG na região Oeste foi capitaneada pelas instituições de ensino superior (IES) sem fins lucrativos. Em 2019, as IES sem fins lucrativos ofertavam 72,4% dos cursos de PG, contra 27,6% das IES públicas e 0% do setor privado com fins lucrativos. O primeiro curso de PG na região Oeste foi recomendado pela CAPES em 2005. Em 2019, a região ofertava 29 cursos (24 mestrados e 05 doutorados), correspondendo a 9,9% do total dos cursos em SC. A UFFS, UNOESC e UNOCHAPECÓ respondem por 82,7% da oferta de cursos. A cidade de Chapecó concentra 71,4% dos cursos de PG da região.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Políticas de educação superior. Pós-graduação. Interiorização. Santa Catarina.

## Las políticas y dinámicas de interiorización de estudios de posgrado en Santa Catarina: un estudio sobre la región Oeste

### RESUMEN

Los programas de posgrado (PG) brasileños han aumentado exponencialmente en las últimas décadas. Sin embargo, la expansión no se ha producido de manera uniforme en todas las regiones del país. Persisten las desigualdades y asimetrías regionales e intrarregionales. La reducción de asimetrías ha sido lenta. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo investigar el proceso de internalización de PG en Brasil desde una unidad específica de la federación: Santa Catarina (SC). Con base en datos generales de PG en Brasil y SC, se decidió enfocar la investigación en una región específica de dicho estado: la Oeste. El estudio se desarrolló a través de la investigación documental y de la sistematización y análisis de los principales indicadores de PG disponibles en la Plataforma Sucupira y en las bases de datos de GeoCapes. Los datos demuestran que la expansión de PG en la región Oeste fue liderada por Instituciones de Educación Superior sin fines de lucro (IES). En 2019, las IES sin fines de lucro ofrecieron el 72,4% de los cursos de PG, frente al 27,6% de las IES públicas y el 0% del sector privado con fines de lucro. El primer curso de PG en la región Oeste fue recomendado por CAPES en 2005. En 2019, la región ofreció 29 cursos (24 maestrías y 05 doctorados), lo que corresponde al 9,9% del total de cursos en SC. UFFS, UNOESC y UNOCHAPECÓ concentran el 82,7% de la oferta de cursos. La ciudad de Chapecó concentra el 71,4% de los cursos de PG de la región.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Políticas de educación superior. Posgrado. Interiorización. Santa Catarina.

## Introduction

The Brazilian post-graduation (PG<sup>1</sup>) has grown exponentially since the approval of the Sucupira Opinion in 1965 (Opinion No. 977/CFE/1965). In that year, Brazil offered 38 courses, 27 master's degrees and 11 doctorates (BALBACHEVSKY, 2005). In August 2021, the National Post-Graduation System (SNPG) offered 7,054 courses (4,553 master's degrees and 2,501 doctorates), distributed among 4,632 post-graduation programs (PPG). In 1973, by way of illustration, the country had about 13,500 PG students. In 2019, there were 292,766 students (BALBACHEVSKY, 2005; CAPES, 2021).

The expansion becomes more evident when we take the last 20 years as a reference. The number of courses jumped from 2,119 in 1999, to 6,924 in 2019 (3,663 academic master's degrees, 2,410 academic doctorates, 826 professional master's degrees, and 25 professional doctorates), a growth rate in the period corresponding to 226.7%. The enrollments went from 85,276 in 1999, to 292,766, in 2019 (growth of 243.3%) and the degrees, from 19,812 to 94,503 (increase of 377.0%) (CAPES, 2021). The number of scholarships for PG students has also grown. In 1999, CAPES awarded 21,083 master's and doctoral scholarships; in 2019 there were 87,565.

The growth, however, has not occurred uniformly in all regions of the country. Regional and intra-regional inequalities and asymmetries persist (SANTOS; AZEVEDO, 2009). The data from the Sucupira Platform show that the reduction of asymmetries has occurred, but in a timid way. In 2019, the North region accounted for 5.3% of enrollments and the Southeast region for 47.9% (CAPES, 2020). According to data extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2021), 53.5% of PPGs (1,329) were, in 2019, based in state capitals and the Federal District. Of the total number of municipalities in the country (5,570 in all), 306 of them offered, in 2019, PPGs (BRASIL, 2020).

The reduction of asymmetries and the internalization of PG are long-standing challenges. In 1974, the I National Post-Graduation Plan (BRASIL, 1974) already drew attention to the problem of the concentration of PG courses in capital cities, particularly to the trend of migration and fixation of talents in big cities. Over the decades, several documents, and National Postgraduation Plans (PNPG) have emphasized the need for incentive policies, induction, and expansion in strategic areas of development. PG in Brazil has been concentrated in the metropolitan regions of the country, particularly in the coastal belt (ETGES et al, 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> In this article, the term post-graduation will be used only in the stricto sensu sense, i.e., it refers to the modality organized into independent post-graduation programs (masters and doctorates), recommended by CAPES and recognized by the National Council for Higher Education (CES/CNE).

This background problem motivated the present study, whose main purpose was to investigate the process of PG internalization from a specific unit of the federation (Santa Catarina). Based on the general data on PG in SC, we chose to focus our investigation on a specific region of the state. This is the West region, considered the largest among the six geographic mesoregions of SC, equivalent to a quarter of the state territory. It is made up of 118 municipalities, with an estimated population of 1,120,712 inhabitants (IBGE, 2017).

The study combined the bibliographic and documental research with the systematization of the main national and state post-graduation indicators, being therefore primarily a quantitative study with contributions of data analysis in a qualitative way, having as objectives (i) to verify the data of evolution of the number of courses, enrollments, degrees and master's and doctoral scholarships offered in the mesoregion; (ii) to identify the areas of knowledge with higher offer of courses and their possible relationship with regional needs and interests; (iii) to evaluate the asymmetries in Santa Catarina from the data of post-graduation development in the six mesoregions and, (iv) to analyze the profile and specificities of the PG that has been implemented in the region under study.

The choice of the West region, besides the reasons pointed out above, is due to the fact that it is located more than 500 km from the capital Florianópolis and integrates what the Art. 20, § 2 of the Federal Constitution calls the "Borderland Strip" (BRASIL, 1988). The West Coast of Brazil has historically been relegated to the background. The vast majority of the time, issues related to higher education, science and technology received little attention, since public policies "prioritized the border only when national security and sovereignty interests were under threat" (TREVISOL, 2015, p. 518).

## The internalization of graduate studies

In countries with continental dimensions such as Brazil, internalization is of particular importance. The State and society are permanently challenged to conceive, expand, and implement the most varied rights and policies of socioeconomic, technological, and socio-environmental sustainability development. Internalization is a challenge of great proportions in all areas, particularly in those that require qualified human resources, infrastructure, and medium and long-term investments. Although not the only ones, graduate studies, science, technology, and innovation are illustrative. In these cases, internalization policies aim to reduce the asymmetries and inequalities that exist between states, regions, and mesoregions in the different areas of knowledge.

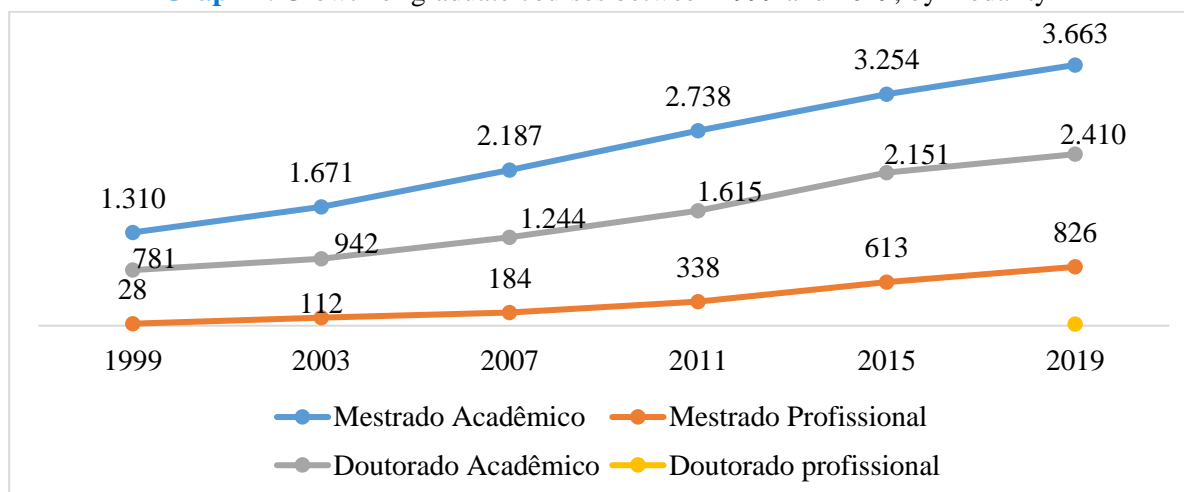
The internalization of PG is linked to the dynamics of the expansion of higher education. These variables are particularly important considering that most of the PPG in Brazil are offered

by Universities, a type of HEI that accounted, in 2019, for about 86.4% of the PPG offered in the country (CAPES, 2021). About 80% of PPGs are concentrated in only 20% of HEIs, most of them public. To exemplify, in 2019, 81.9% of PPG were offered by public HEIs (58.2% belonging to the federal sphere and 23.9% to the state sphere) and 18.1% by private ones (CAPES, 2020).

Despite the constant growth over the decades, the number of HEIs and enrollments has had a huge expansion in the last twenty years. In 1990, Brazil had 893 accredited HEIs. This number jumped to 2,608 in 2019 (MEC/INEP, 2006; MEC/INEP, 2019). The expansion is also clearly observable in terms of enrollment. In 1970, the country had 425,478 thousand students enrolled in undergraduate courses. This number jumped to 1,377,286 in 1980. In the last twenty years (1999-2019) there has been an average annual increase of about 311,694 undergraduate enrollments (MEC/INEP, 1999; MEC/INEP, 2019). Enrollments increased from 2,694,245 in 2000, to 8,603,824 in 2019.

The expansion also occurred in graduate studies. In 1965, the country had 38 graduate courses (27 master's degrees and 11 doctorates). Ten years later, in 1975, there were 578 (429 master's and 149 doctoral courses) and, in 2019, 6,924 (4,489 master's and 2,435 doctoral degrees) (BALBACHEVSKI, 2005; CAPES, 2020). As the graph below shows, the growth in the number of courses over the last 20 years has been about 289%, an average of 14.5% per year.

**Graph 1.** Growth of graduate courses between 1999 and 2019, by modality

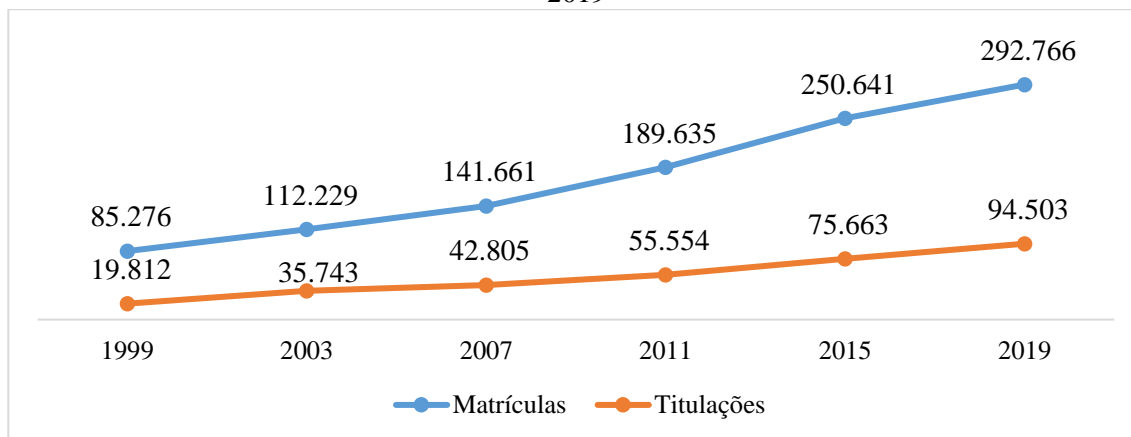


Source: prepared by BALSANELLO (2021), based on data from the VI PNPG (CAPES, 2011) and on information extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2020).

The number of enrollments and degrees also grew significantly. It is estimated that in 1973, the country had about 13,500 students enrolled in PG courses, having graduated until that year approximately 3,500 masters and 500 PhDs (BRASIL, 1974). A few years later, in 1985, the country graduated around 4,600 post-graduate students (4,000 masters and 600 PhDs)

(CAPES, 1986). As evidenced by the graph below, the number of enrollments went from 85,276 in 1999 to 292,766 in 2019 (243.3% increase); the number of degrees went from 19,812 to 94,503 (376.9% growth).

**Graph 2.** Evolution of postgraduation enrollments and degrees in Santa Catarina, from 1999 to 2019



Source: prepared by BALSANELLO (2021), based on data from the VI PNPG (CAPES, 2011) and on information extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2020).

The expansion of PG courses has been led by public institutions. In 1985, the public sector offered 90% of PG courses in the country (SCHWARTZMAN, 2001). Despite a slight reduction over the years, in 2019 public institutions continued to account for 81.9% of courses, 58.2% offered by federal institutions and 23.9% by state and municipal HEIs (CAPES, 2020). Private institutions (confessional, community and private), therefore, accounted for 18.1% of the courses offered. The participation of private HEIs in undergraduate education is inversely proportional. In 2019, private HEIs accounted for 75.8% of the country's undergraduate enrollments and for 88.4% of total accredited HEIs (MEC/INEP, 2019).

The centrality exerted by the public sector in the PG supply system forces us to take a closer look at the expansion and internalization policies of public institutions, especially those implemented in the last two decades, the period in which the highest percentages of growth of PG courses and enrollments occurred. Among these policies, it is worth mentioning the National Education Plans (PNE 2001-2010 and PNE 2014-2024), the National Postgraduation Plans (IV PNPG 1990-2004, V PNPG 2005-2020 and VI PNPG 2011-2020) and the Support Program for Restructuring and Expansion Plans of Federal Universities (REUNI). In the early 2000s, the PNE 2001-2010 incorporated promising goals regarding the expansion of undergraduate enrollments: expansion from 12% to 30% of the percentage of higher education enrollments for young people between 18 and 24 years of age and offer of at least 40% of the enrollments by the public sector (BRASIL, 2001).

Based on these goals, the federal government implemented a series of policies aimed at the expansion and interiorization of higher education, among them the Program to Support



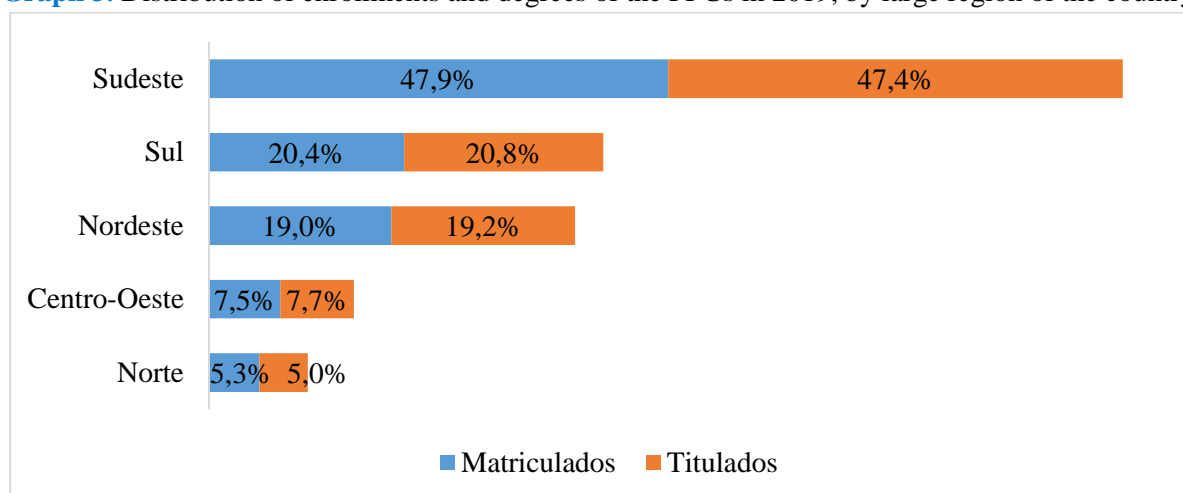
Restructuring and Expansion Plans of Federal Universities (REUNI), the University for All Program (PROUNI), the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, and the program to create new federal universities. The REUNI, in particular, introduced a vigorous program of creation of new federal public universities, opening and interiorization of new campuses, expansion of vacancies in existing courses, creation of new undergraduate courses and PPG, hiring of teachers and technical-administrative servers, etc. (MEC, 2010, BRASIL, 2007).

Between 2007 and 2017, the first decade of REUNI's existence, 14 new federal universities and more than 100 new campuses were created. The number of municipalities served by federal universities went from 114 to more than 237. In 2003, for illustration purposes, 15 federal universities were based in inland municipalities (out of a total of 44, totaling 34% of the total); in 2011 this number jumped to 28 (out of a total of 59, totaling 47.4%) (MEC/INEP, 2003; MEC/INEP, 2011). In 2019, of the 63 existing federal universities, 32 of them were based in inland municipalities (50.7%) (MEC/INEP, 2011; MEC/INEP, 2019). In the period there was also a growth of state and municipal public universities. In 2003, of the 163 universities existing in the country, 79 were public and 84 private; in 2011, of the 190 universities, 102 were public and 88 private (MEC/INEP, 2003; MEC/INEP, 2011). As Vicente, Dias, and Sano (2018, p. 19) highlight, REUNI moved the "[...] IFES from the economic and social axis of higher purchasing power to those regions and localities with high population density and low coverage of the public higher education network."

Despite the undeniable importance of public HEIs, it should be noted that the process of interiorization of higher education was also leveraged by private HEIs. Starting in the 2000s, there was a significant growth of private HEIs, especially university centers and colleges, part of which were located in the interior of the country. Between 2003 and 2011, for example, the number of private HEIs increased from 1,652 to 2,081, a growth of 25.9% (MEC/INEP, 2003; MEC/INEP, 2011).

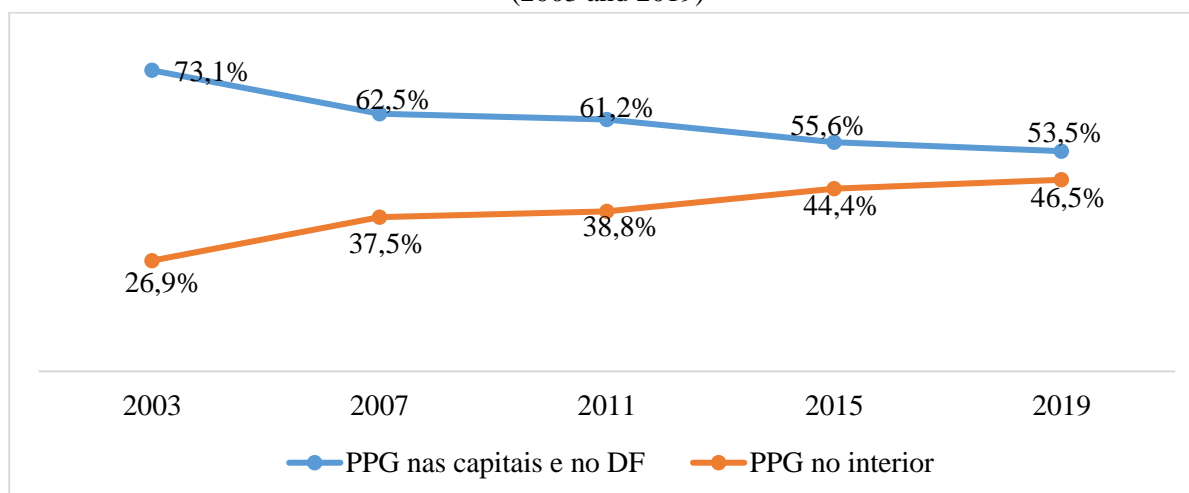
This set of policies and dynamics produced several developments. The PG was, albeit slowly, heading towards the interior of the country. In 1975, more than half of the Brazilian states did not offer PPG. São Paulo State accounted for 177 of the 456 existing PPGs. In the entire Northern region there was, in 1975, only one PPG, based in the state of Amazonas. Despite the asymmetries that still exist, by 2020 all states offered PPGs (BRASIL, 2020, p. 240).

The percentages of enrollment also reflect interiorization. According to Geocapes data (CAPES, 2020), in 2004 about 64.3% of enrollments were in the Southeast region and 2% in the North region. In 2019, the North region accounted for 5.3% of enrollments and the Southeast for 47.9%. The following graph shows the percentage distribution of PG enrollments and degrees according to the country's regions.

**Graph 3.** Distribution of enrollments and degrees of the PPGs in 2019, by large region of the country

Source: prepared by Balsanello (2021), based on data extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2020).

According to data extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2021), 73.1% of PPGs (1,329) were, in 2004, based in state capitals and the Federal District. In 2019, this percentage fell to 53.5%. Of the total number of municipalities in the country (5,570), 306 of them offered graduate programs in 2019 (CAPES, 2021).

**Graph 4.** Concentration of PPGs in state capitals, the Federal District and in inland municipalities (2003 and 2019)

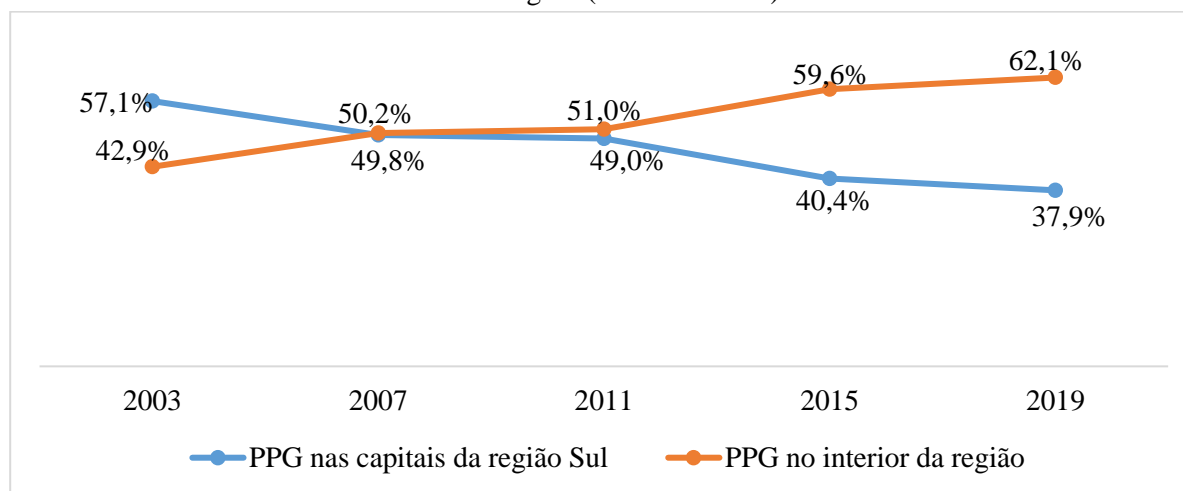
Source: prepared by the authors based on data extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2021).

Internalization becomes more evident when we take a specific region of the country as a reference. The graph below, referring to the Southern region, shows the continuous process of internalization over the years. In 2003, 57.1% (202) of PPGs were concentrated in the capital cities of the three states (RS, SC, and PR). By 2019, this percentage had reduced to 37.9%,



indicating that, in this region, most of the programs (62.1%) are based in municipalities located in the interior of the states.

**Graph 5.** Concentration of PPG in the capitals of the Southern states and in the inland municipalities of the region (2003 and 2019)



Source: prepared by the authors based on data extracted from Geocapes (CAPES, 2021).

In the South region, public HEIs also account for most of the PPGs offered. In 2019 it corresponded to 73.4%, a percentage slightly below the national average (81.9%) (CAPES, 2020). In the South region, the community HEIs have played an important role in the internalization of post-graduation (TREVISOL, 2015).

### *The internalization of post-graduate courses in Santa Catarina*

The PG in Santa Catarina completed, in 2019, 50 years of existence. The first PPG in SC was implemented by the Federal University of Santa Catarina in 1969 (PPG in Mechanical Engineering). In 1981, this same PPG (Mechanical Engineering) gave rise to the first doctorate in the state. Until 1995, the UFSC was the only HEI to offer PPG, totaling, in this year, 33 programs (TREVISOL; DE BASTIANI; BRASIL, 2020).

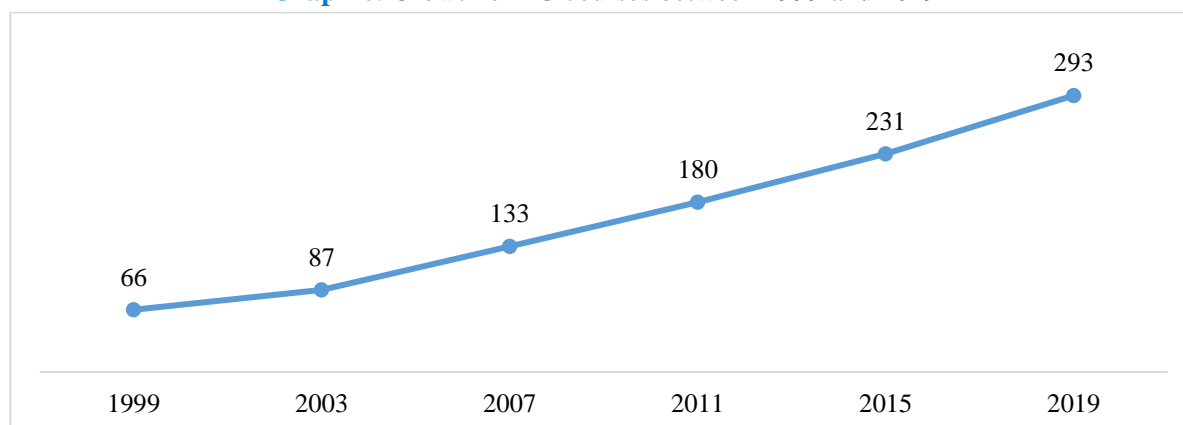
The first PPG was created 52 years after the creation of the first higher education institution (HEI) in SC. The first HEI in Santa Catarina was installed in 1917 in the city of Florianópolis (the Polytechnic Institute). The first universities were created years later, in the 1960s (the Federal University of Santa Catarina, in 1960, and the University of Santa Catarina State, in 1965). During the following two decades, corresponding to the period of the civil-military dictatorship, no university was established in the state. Only a few higher education courses were created in the main cities of the interior, organized around the so-called educational foundations of private law (community institutions<sup>2</sup>). In the period between 1964

<sup>2</sup> This is a specific type of educational foundations, created by the municipal public power, but under private law, defined as philanthropic and non-profit HEIs (FRANTZ, 2004; PEGORARO, 2006; MUNIZ, 2006; TREVISOL,

and 1986, 21 foundations were created, 20 of them instituted by the municipal government and one (the FESC) by the state legislature. The resumption of the process of creation of new universities began in the second half of the 1980s, led by private educational foundations (community HEIs). Between 1986 and 2009, thirteen community universities (private non-profit) were created in the main regions of the state (MUNIZ, 2006; PEGORARO, 2013; TREVISOL, 2015a; 2015b). Private institutions (both for-profit and non-profit) accounted for 94% of the total HEIs in 2016. Of the 94 HEIs, 88 were private (54 non-profit and 34 for-profit institutions) and 6 public (UFSC, UFFS, IFSC and IFC, UDESC and Faculdade Municipal de São José). Regarding the academic organization, most HEIs in Santa Catarina are defined as "colleges" (73%). University centers account for 11%; universities, 14%, and federal institutes, 2% (MEC/INEP, 2016). Of the total number of students enrolled in undergraduate courses in 2016 (331,350), private non-profit (community) HEIs, account for 58% of total enrollment. For-profit institutions account for 21% and public institutions, 21% (state (4.8%), federal (15.8%) and municipal around 0.4%) (DE BASTIANI, 2017).

The following graph shows the growth in the number of PG courses in the state of SC over the last two decades. The growth rate of the number of courses in Santa Catarina in this period (1999-2019) was 343.9% (CAPES, 2020).

**Graph 6.** Growth of PG courses between 1999 and 2019



Source: prepared by the authors based on data available at GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020).

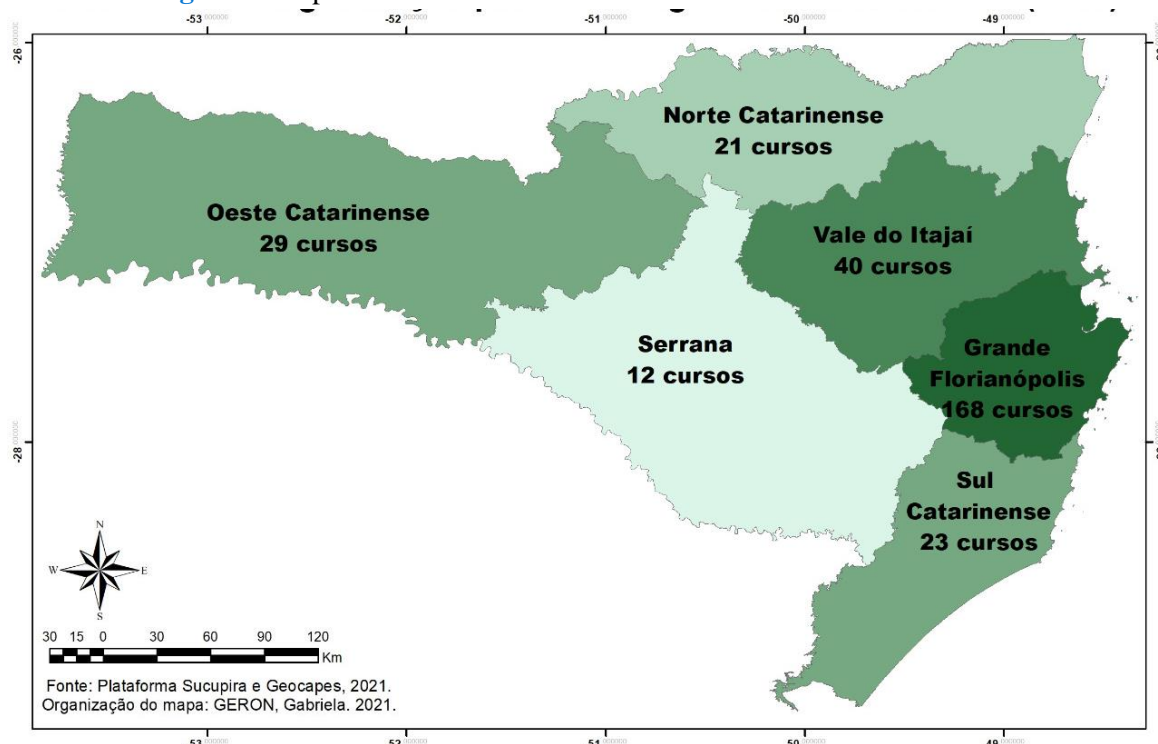
The internalization of the PG in Santa Catarina began in 1995, by offering the first course outside the state capital (PPG in Legal Science, in the city of Itajaí). The first doctoral course outside the capital was implemented in 2007, also in the city of Itajaí (Doctorate in Administration) (TREVISOL; DE BASTIANI; BRASIL, 2020).

2015a; 2015b). They are inserted in the arc of the "third sector" entities to the extent that they are non-state public, whose main purpose is to promote non-profit activities of public interest.

The internalization of PG in SC is, therefore, a fairly recent dynamic. Of the total number of municipalities in Santa Catarina in 2019 (295 in all), nineteen<sup>3</sup> of them offered master's and nine<sup>4</sup> doctoral courses. In Greater Florianópolis, PPGs are concentrated in the cities of Florianópolis and Palhoça. In the Vale do Itajaí, in the cities of Blumenau, Itajaí and Balneário Camboriú. In the Northern region, in the cities of Joinville, Canoinhas, Mafra and Araquari. In the South region, there are courses in Criciúma, Tubarão and Araranguá. In the Serrana region, the courses are in Lages and Curitibanos. And, finally, in the Western region, in the cities of Caçador, Chapecó, Concórdia, Joaçaba, Pinhalzinho, Videira, and Xanxerê.

The state of Santa Catarina, in 2019, offered 293 PG courses, distributed in 186 PPG. The following map shows the distribution of PG courses in the different regions of the state.

**Figure 1.** Map of the distribution of PG courses in Santa Catarina in 2019



Source: prepared by Geron (2021) based on data available at Plataforma Sucupira and Geocapes.

<sup>3</sup> In 2019 there were master's courses implemented in the municipalities of Florianópolis, Joinville, Chapecó, Blumenau, Itajaí, Criciúma, Lages, Tubarão, Araranguá, Caçador, Joaçaba, Araquari, Canoinhas, Concórdia, Curitibanos, Palhoça, Pinhalzinho, Videira, and Xanxerê (descending order of number of courses).

<sup>4</sup> The following cities in Santa Catarina had doctoral courses in 2019: Florianópolis, Itajaí, Blumenau, Lages, Chapecó, Criciúma, Joinville, Tubarão, and Joaçaba (descending order of number of courses).

As can be seen in the figure above, the Greater Florianópolis region accounted for (57.3%) of PPGs in 2019, followed by the Vale do Itajaí (13.7), Oeste (9.9%), Sul (7.9%), Norte (7.1%), and Serrana (4.1%) regions.

## The post-graduate courses in the western region of Santa Catarina

Similar to what occurred in the other regions of SC, the interiorization of higher education in the West region was also led by educational foundations/community HEIs. The first HEI in the region was created on November 22, 1968, based in the city of Joaçaba (the Fundação Universitária do Oeste Catarinense - FUOC). Based on Law No. 4.024/61 (LBD of 1961) and Law No. 5. 540/68 (Law of the University Reform) several educational foundations were created in the region in the following years: Fundação de Ensino do Desenvolvimento do Oeste (FUNDESTE, 1971, in Chapecó); Fundação Educacional e Empresarial do Alto Vale do Rio do Peixe (FEMARP, 1971, in Videira); Fundação Educacional do Alto Vale do Rio do Peixe (FEARPE, 1971, in Caçador); Fundação Educacional do Alto Uruguai Catarinense (FEAUC, 1971, in Concórdia); Fundação Educacional do Extremo Oeste de Santa Catarina (FENESC, 1978, in São Miguel do Oeste); and Fundação Educacional dos Municípios do Alto Irani (FEMAI, 1986, in Xanxerê) (TREVISOL, DE BASTIANI, 2019). The first undergraduate course in the region (Administration course at FUOC - Joaçaba) was authorized by the State Education Council of SC in 1971. The teaching activities of the referred course started the following year, in 1972.

The first PG course in the western region of SC was installed in 2002. It is the Master's in Education at Universidade do Oeste de Santa. The master's degree was implemented with the authorization of the State Education Council of Santa Catarina. In July 2006, after four years of operation, the course was recommended by CAPES (UNOESC, 2020). Due to these reasons, Plataforma Sucupira and Geocapes inform that the first PPG in the Western region was the master's in environmental sciences of Unochapecó, recommended by CAPES in 2005. The first doctoral courses were implemented in 2017 (12 years later), both in the city of Chapecó (PhD in Health Sciences/UNOCHAPECÓ and PhD in Administration/UNOESC).

In 2019, 17 HEIs<sup>5</sup> were active in the Western region. Of these only 06 offered PG courses. Despite the internalization, UNOCHAPECÓ, UNOESC and UFFS were responsible, in 2019, for 79.2% of the master's courses and 100% of the doctoral courses offered in the region. The following table shows the HEIs that offer PG in the region and their respective courses.

<sup>5</sup> The 17 HEIs operating in the Western region of Santa Catarina in 2019 were: UDESC, UNOESC, UNIARP, UNC, UNOCHAPECÓ, SENAI Chapecó, SENAC Chapecó, UCEFF/FAEM, FACC, HORUS Pinhalzinho, HORUS/FSJ, FAP, FACOC, FACEC, UFFS, IFC, IFSC. These data were extracted from the Microdados/Censo da Educação Superior -2019, at <https://www.gov.br/inep/pt-br/areas-de-atuacao/pesquisas-estatisticas-e-indicadores/censo-da-educacao-superior>.

**Table 1.** HEIs and PG courses offered in the Western Santa Catarina region in 2019<sup>6</sup>

Adm. Category	HEI Name	Academic Master's Degree	Academic Doctorate	Professional Master's	Total
Private	Universidade Alto Vale do Rio do Peixe – UNIARP	1	0	1	2
	Universidade Comunitária da Região de Chapecó – UNOCHAPECÓ	6	2	1	9
	Universidade do Contestado – UnC	0	0	1	1
	Universidade do Oeste de Santa Catarina – UNOESC	5	3	1	9
State Public	Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina – UDESC	1	0	1	2
Federal Public	Universidade Federal da Fronteira Sul – UFFS	5	0	1	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>

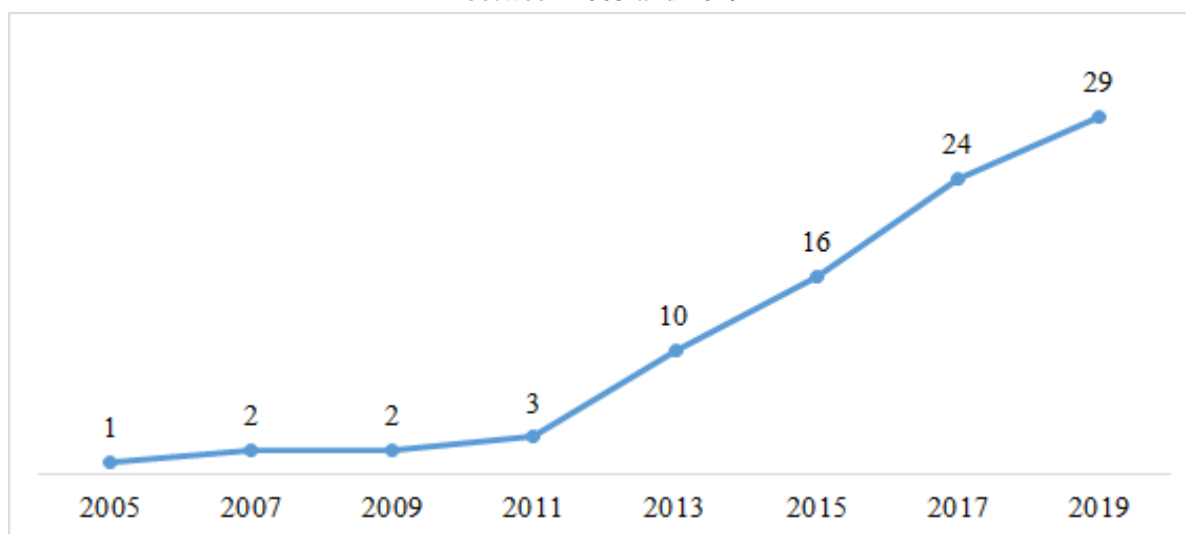
Source: table organized by the authors based on data available at Plataforma Sucupira (CAPES, 2021a) and GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020).

In 2019 there were 29 PG courses offered in the Western SC region. About 72.4% belonged to private non-profit universities. The participation of public universities corresponded to 27.6%. The private for-profit sector does not offer master's and doctoral degrees in the region.

It is important to note that between 2005 and 2009, the expansion of PG programs in the region was timid. In the period only 2 PPG were offered (PPG in Environmental Sciences/UNOCHAPECÓ - from 2005, and the PPG in Education/UNOESC - from 2007). As can be seen in the graph below, the expansion was accentuated as of 2011, going from 03 to 29 courses in 2019.

<sup>6</sup> This table is considering the Master's course in Biotechnology, at UNOESC, Videira campus, created in 2013, but deactivating as of 2019.

**Graph 7.** Evolution in the number of PG courses created in the western region of Santa Catarina between 2005 and 2019



Source: organized by the authors based on data available at Plataforma Sucupira (CAPES, 2021a) and GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020).

Between 2009 and 2019, 26 new PPG were implemented. The growth is due, among other reasons, to the implementation of the first public federal university in the region since 2010 (the UFFS). In 2012, the Federal University of the Southern Border implemented its first PG course on the Chapecó campus<sup>7</sup>, the master's degree course in Linguistic Studies. In 2019, the UFFS had 15 courses, 06 of which on the Chapecó (SC) campus.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the UFFS is a multicampi and interstate HEI. It has campuses in the states of Rio Grande do Sul (Cerro Largo, Erechim, and Passo Fundo campuses), Santa Catarina (Chapecó), and Paraná (Laranjeiras do Sul and Realeza).



**Table 2.** PG courses offered in the Western region according to year of implementation (2005-2019)

IES	Course	Grid	Starting Year
UNOCHAPECÓ	Environmental Sciences	Master's Degree	2005
UNOESC	Education	Master's Degree	2007
UNOCHAPECÓ	Social Policies and Regional Dynamics	Master's Degree	2010
UFFS	Linguistic Studies	Master's Degree	2012
UNOCHAPECÓ	Health Sciences	Masters	2012
UNOCHAPECÓ	Education	Master's Degree	2012
UFFS	Education	Master	2013
UNOESC	Administration	Professional Master's Degree	2013
UNOESC	Law	Master's Degree	2013
UNOESC	Science and Biotechnology	Master's Degree	2013 <sup>8</sup>
UNOCHAPECÓ	Technology and Innovation Management	Professional Master's Degree	2014
UNOESC	Life Sciences and Health	Master's Degree	2014
UNIARP	Development and Society	Master's Degree	2015
UFFS	National Network Mathematics - PROFMAT	Professional Master's Degree	2015
UNOCHAPECÓ	Law	Master's Degree	2015
UNOCHAPECÓ	Accounting and Administration	Master's Degree	2015
UNIARP	Basic Education	Professional Master's Degree	2016
UDESC	Food Science and Technology	Master's Degree	2016
UFFS	History	Master's Degree	2016
UDESC	Primary Health Care Nursing	Professional Master's Degree	2017
UNOCHAPECÓ	Health Sciences	Doctorate	2017
UNOESC	Administration	Doctorate	2017
UNOESC	Animal Health and Production	Master's Degree	2017
UnC	Civil, Sanitary, and Environmental Engineering	Professional Master's Degree	2017
UFFS	Philosophy	Master's Degree	2018
UNOESC	Education	Doctorate	2018
UFFS	Geography	Master's Degree	2019
UNOCHAPECÓ	Environmental Sciences	Doctorate	2019
UNOESC	Law	Doctorate	2019

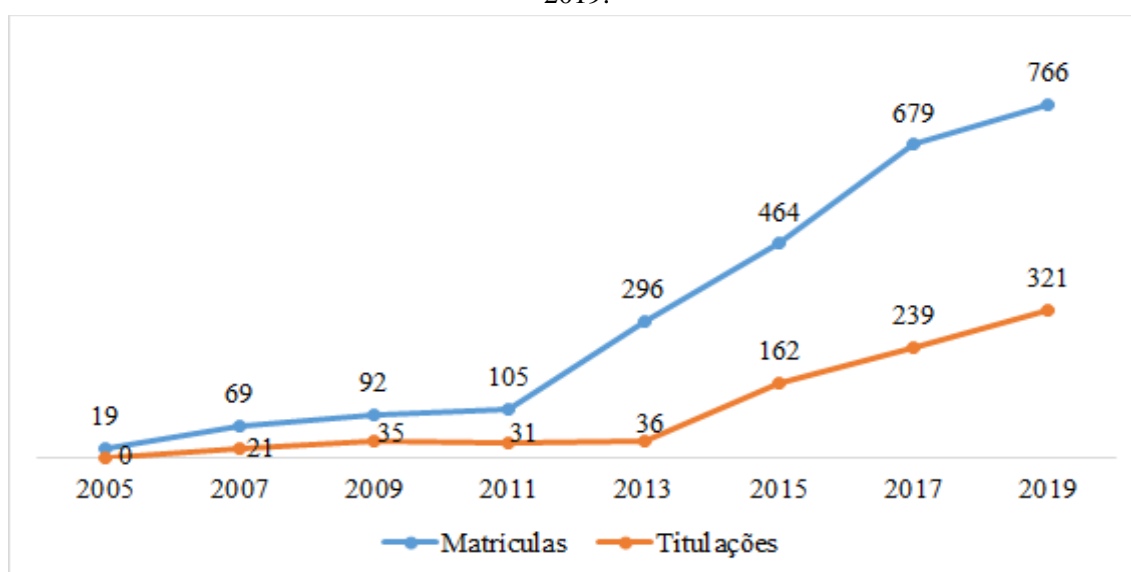
Source: organized by the authors based on data available at Plataforma Sucupira (CAPES, 2021a) and GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> That Master's course went into deactivation as of 2019.

As can be seen, the professional modality is recent and restricted, corresponding to 06 master's courses in 2019. Until 2019, there were no professional doctorates in the region.

The following graph shows the expansion from the number of enrollments and degrees in the period between 2005 and 2019. In the decade from 2009 to 2019, the growth in the number of enrollments was 732.6% and that of degrees was 817.1%<sup>9</sup>.

**Graph 8.** Evolution of PG enrollments and degrees in the western region of SC between 2005 and 2019.



Source: organized by the authors based on data available at GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020).

The academic master's degrees have the largest contingent of enrollments and degrees in the Western mesoregion. The following table details the evolution of enrollments and degrees between 2005 and 2019, according to the PG course modality.

<sup>9</sup> The number of enrollments and degrees of the Master's degree course in Biotechnology of the Unoesc - Videira campus was also considered. This course is currently being deactivated.

**Table 3.** Enrollments and degrees in master's and doctoral courses in the western region of SC between 2005 and 2019

Year	Academic Master's		Professional Master's		PhD	
	Enrollment	Qualifications	Enrollment	Qualifications	Enrollment	Qualifications
2005	19	0	–	–	–	–
2007	69	21	–	–	–	–
2009	92	35	–	–	–	–
2011	105	31	–	–	–	–
2013	272	36	24	0	–	–
2015	388	142	76	20	–	–
2017	523	199	143	40	13	0
2019	515	253	174	68	77	0

Source: organized by the authors based on data available at GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020)

The academic masters account for 67.2% of the total number of enrollments, followed by professional masters (about 22.8%) and doctoral courses (10%). It is worth noting, however, that professional master's degrees are the ones that show the highest percentage of growth in the period. In the last four years (2015 to 2019), the growth in enrollment of academic master's degrees was 32.7%, while that of professional master's degrees was 128.9%.

The table below details the distribution of enrollments and degrees among the offering HEIs and the cities where the courses are implemented. In 2019, UNOCHAPECÓ accounted for 33% of enrollments, followed by UNOESC (26.9%).

**Table 4.** Distribution of PG course enrollments and degrees by city and HEI in 2019.

City	Institution	2009		2019	
		Enrolled	Qualified	Enrolled	Qualified
Chapecó	UNOCHAPECÓ	30	14	253	106
	UFFS	-	-	155	59
	UNOESC	-	-	121	39
	UDESC	-	-	20	10
Joaçaba	UNOESC	62	21	71	37
Caçador	UNC	31	16	-	-
Caçador	UNIARP	-	-	87	32
Pinhalzinho	UDESC	-	-	39	17
Xanxerê	UNOESC	-	-	14	10
Concórdia	UnC	-	-	6	0
Videira	UNOESC	-	-	0	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>123</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>321</b>

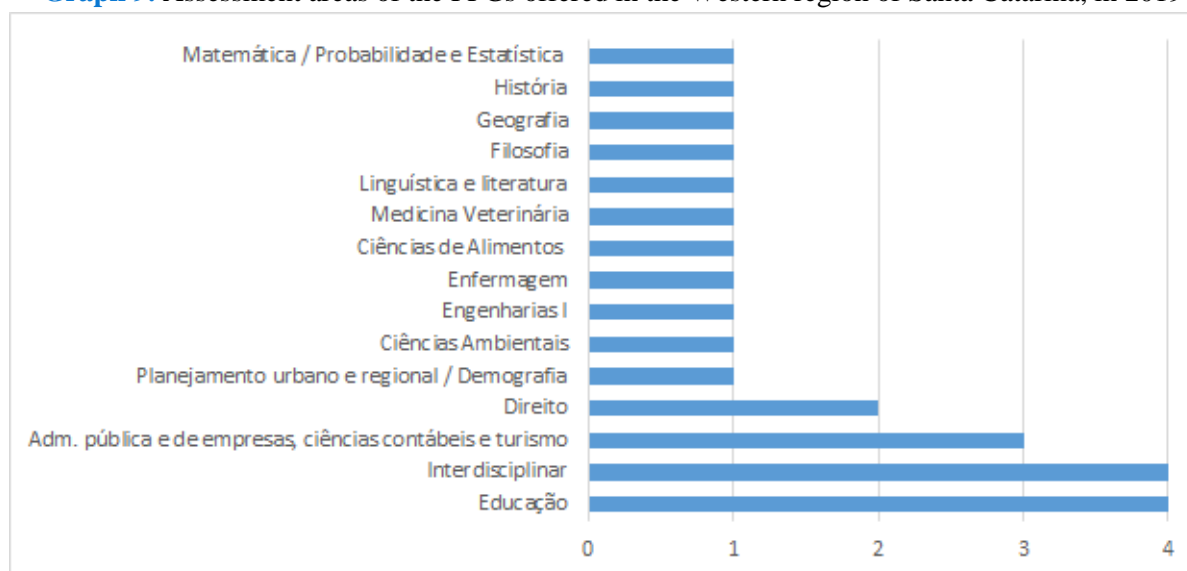
Source: organized by the authors based on data available at GeoCapes (CAPES, 2020).

The city of Chapecó concentrated, in 2019, 69% of PG courses in the region, 71.7% of enrollments and 66.7% of degrees. Public HEIs offered courses only in the cities of Chapecó and Pinhalzinho. The city of Caçador was responsible for 11.3% of the enrollments and 10% of the degrees; Joaçaba had 9.3% of the enrollments and 11.5% of the degrees; Pinhalzinho had 5% of the enrollments and 5.2% of the degrees; Xanxerê had 1.8% of the enrollments and 3.1% of the degrees; Concórdia offered 0.78% of the enrollments (without degrees); and Videira, 3.4% of the degrees (without active enrollments).

When compared to the other regions of the state, the West region had the second highest enrollment growth in the last 10 years (2009 to 2019), about 732.6%, second only to the Serrana region (approximate growth of 1,950%). Between 2014 and 2019 it stood out with the highest enrollment growth of about 111.6%, outpacing the state's expansion (which was 25%) by more than 4 times. Despite this, in 2019 the region represented only 6.4% of total PG enrollments in SC. The largest amount of enrollment in the state (about 68.1%) is in the Greater Florianópolis region.

Regarding degrees, the results are even more significant. Between 2009 and 2019 the West region showed a growth rate of 529.4%, and between 2014 and 2019 of 167.5%, well above the State's growth, which was 40.5% in this period. However, with a similar situation to enrollments, the mesoregion West presented only about 8.3% of the total number of degrees in the State, and the largest number of degrees is also concentrated in the region of Greater Florianópolis (about 63.3%).

In the Western region there are PPGs in 15 different areas of the current CAPES evaluation system. The areas of Education and Interdisciplinary are those that present the largest number of PPG in the Western region.

**Graph 9.** Assessment areas of the PPGs offered in the Western region of Santa Catarina, in 2019

Source: organized by the authors based on data available on the Sucupira Platform (CAPES,2021a).

The predominance of the Education and Interdisciplinary areas is due, among other reasons, to the need for continued education of teachers. Over the decades, the HEIs have built up experience in offering undergraduate courses in the region. The area of Education accounts for 21% of the enrollments of courses in the region and the Interdisciplinary area for 21.6%. PG courses in Education are offered by 4 HEIs: UNOESC, UNIARP, UFFS and UNOCHAPECÓ. Those in the Interdisciplinary area are offered by UNIARP, UNOESC and UNOCHAPECÓ.

Another important aspect to be analyzed concerns the concepts assigned by CAPES to the PPGs in the region. In 2019 there were 24 PPGs offered in the region. The best rated PPG, with grade 5 (4.2% of the total), is the master's in mathematics in National Network, offered by the UFFS, on the Chapecó campus. Another 10 PPG have grade "4" (41.7% of the total); 11 PPG have grade "3" (45.8%) and 2 PPG have grade A (8.3%). The "A" concept<sup>10</sup> is equivalent to "Approved" in the analysis of proposals for new courses (entrance evaluation), that is, it is the concept assigned to young programs that have not yet undergone the periodic evaluation (quadrennial) conducted by Capes (these are the cases of the PPG in Philosophy and Geography of the UFFS - Chapecó campus). The table below summarizes the distribution of the grades of the PPG in the Western region, in SC and in Brazil, according to the evaluation conducted by CAPES.

<sup>10</sup> From the publication of Ordinance No. 182, August 14, 2018, the proposals of new courses analyzed by Capes will be evaluated as: approved or not approved (art.7). Thus, in case of approval of a new program, no grade is issued. In cases of approval of a course already linked to an existing program, it will receive the same grade as the program (CAPES, 2018).

**Table 5.** Evaluation of PPG by CAPES in Brazil, Santa Catarina, and the Western Mesoregion in 2019

Grades	Brazil	Santa Catarina	Oeste de SC
<b>Concept A</b>	257 (5,6%)	10 (5,4%)	2 (8,3%)
<b>Grade 1</b>	3 (0,1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>Grade 2</b>	38 (0,8%)	3 (1,6%)	0 (0%)
<b>Grade 3</b>	1.488 (32,6%)	62 (33,3%)	11 (45,8%)
<b>Grade 4</b>	1.523 (33,3%)	49 (26,3%)	10 (41,7%)
<b>Grade 5</b>	769 (16,8%)	40 (21,5%)	1 (4,2%)
<b>Grade 6</b>	307 (6,7%)	19 (10,2%)	0 (0%)
<b>Grade 7</b>	185 (4,0%)	3(1,6%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.570 (100%)</b>	<b>186 (100%)</b>	<b>24 (100%)</b>

Source: organized by the authors based on data available at GeoCapes (CAPES, 2021).

As can be seen in the table above, there are no programs considered to be of excellence in the region (with grades 6 and 7). The time the courses have been in operation influences the evaluation. The vast majority of courses in the Western region were created in the last decade. The courses of excellence (grades 6 and 7) have, in general, about a decade and a half of existence (TREVISOL, DE BASTIANI, BRASIL, 2020).

When it comes to fostering, the West region received, in 2019, about 4.5% of the total scholarships<sup>11</sup> allocated to SC. The said scholarships were allocated to the PPGs of UNOCHAPECÓ (43.7%), UNOESC (21%) and UFFS (35.2%).

**Table 6.** Scholarships made available to the PPGs in Brazil, Santa Catarina, and the Western region in the years 2009 and 2019

Year	Scholarship modality	Brazil	Santa Catarina	Oeste de SC	Percentage of the West in relation to the State of SC (%)
2009	PhD (academic)	17.873	542	0	-
	Master's (academic)	27.192	1.135	7	0,6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45.065</b>	<b>1.677</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0,4%</b>
2019	PhD (academic)	43.327	1.925	38	2,0%
	Master's (academic and professional)	44.238	1.969	138	7,0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>87.565</b>	<b>3.894</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>4,5%</b>

Source: organized by the authors based on data available at GeoCapes (CAPES, 2021)

Note: in 2009 no fellowships were available for professional programs and in 2019 no fellowships were available for Professional Doctorate courses.

<sup>11</sup> The scholarships cited in this article refer to those available for consultation in GEOCAPES. In the west of Santa Catarina, for example, the following sponsoring programs are included: Social Demand (DS), Program to Support Graduate Studies of Community Institutions for Higher Education (PROSUC), Inter-institutional Doctorate (DINTER), Foundation for the Support of Research and Innovation of the State of Santa Catarina (FAPESC) and the ARAUCARIA Foundation.

It can be seen from table 6 above that the number of scholarships has increased in the decade 2009-2019. This growth, however, has not followed the evolution of enrollment in graduate courses. In the western region of SC, while in 2009 about 11.5% of enrolled students benefited from research scholarships, in 2019 this percentage was 4.9% (CAPES, 2021).

In 2019, about 4.4% of the scholarships offered were distributed to the state of SC. Of the scholarships implemented in SC, 79.2% were in the Greater Florianópolis region. Of those, 85% were at UFSC and about 14% at UDESC. The Vale do Itajaí region accounts for the second largest quantity of scholarships (about 8%). The Western mesoregion held, in 2019, only 4.5% of the total number of CAPES scholarships in the state.

The development programs Social Demand (SD) and Academic Excellence Program (PROEX) accounted for 76.9% of scholarships in the state of SC in 2019. In the Western region, the Program of Support to Post-Graduation of Higher Education Community Institutions (PROSUC) and the Foundation for the Support of Research and Innovation in the State of Santa Catarina (FAPESC) were responsible for 68.7% of the scholarships offered in the region (CAPES, 2021).

## Final considerations

The internalization process has many specificities, related to several factors. Besides the undeniable role of national PG policies, regional variables have also had a direct impact. The development of PG is closely linked to the institutional design of higher education in regional terms. The network of existing HEI is a decisive factor that contributes directly to the organization of PG in the region. Some aspects deserve to be highlighted.

First, the expansion of PG in the region was led by non-profit (community) HEIs. Until 2011, all the existing PPG in the region (03 in total) were offered by the two main community universities (UNOCHAPECÓ and UNOESC). In 2012 the first PPG was implemented at the Federal University of the South Border (UFFS). The establishment of the first federal university in the region in 2010 (the UFFS) also contributed to the expansion of PG. The growth in the number of PPG has been accentuated since 2012, increasing from 06 to 31 in 2020.

PG in the Western region is, secondarily, mostly private. In 2019, private non-profit HEIs accounted for 72.4% of the courses and 72.1% of PG enrollments. The current profile of PG in the Western region is, in this regard, inversely proportional to that seen in the country and in SC. According to the Geocapes data for 2019 (CAPES, 2020), 81.9% of the country's PPG were offered by public HEIs (58.2% belonging to the federal sphere and 23.9% to the state sphere) and 18.1% by private ones. In Santa Catarina, public HEIs account for 69.4% of the total number of master's and doctoral courses (TREVISOL, DE BASTIANI, BRASIL, 2020). The predominance of community HEIs in the region is due to several factors, starting with the



fact that the first community HEI was implemented in 1968 (the FUOC). According to research developed by Trevisol and De Bastiani (2019), the private segment accounts for about 80.9% of the total HEIs (47.6% are non-profit and 33.3% for-profit HEIs). The public segment accounts for 19.1% of the total (14.3% are federal public HEIs and 4.8%, public).

PG in the region is, thirdly, offered exclusively by six universities operating in the region. UFFS, UNOESC and UNOCHAPECÓ account for 82.7% of the PG courses. The city of Chapecó concentrates 71.4% of the PG courses offered in the region.

In fourth place, the HEIs offer PPGs in 15 of CAPES's assessment areas. The areas with the highest offer are two: Interdisciplinary and Education. In each of these areas four courses are offered, which represent, respectively, 21.6% and 21% of the total PG enrollment in the region (766) in 2019. Still, most of the courses offered in the region are master's degrees. In 2019, the region offered only 05 doctoral courses. According to the evaluation conducted by CAPES, the vast majority of the PPG offered in the Western mesoregion (87.5%) have grades 3 and 4.

Finally, it is worth noting that expansion is a fairly recent dynamic in the West region. Unlike the region of Greater Florianópolis - which created its first master's course in 1969 - the West region had its first Master's course recommended by CAPES in 2005. The doctoral courses are, therefore, later. Only in 2017 were the first two doctoral courses recommended in the region, both based in the city of Chapecó (PPG in Health Sciences/UNOCHAPECÓ and PPG in Administration/UNOESC). In the last 10 years (2009 to 2019) the West region, when compared to the other regions of the state, had the second highest growth percentage in the number of enrollments (732.6%) and the highest growth in the number of degrees (817.1%). Despite this, the West region accounted, in 2019, for 9.9% of courses, 6.4% of enrollments, and 8.3% of PG degrees in SC. There are 29 PG courses offered for an estimated population of 1,120,712 (IBGE, 2017). In 2019, there were 29 courses, including 18 academic master's degrees, 6 professional master's degrees, and 5 doctoral degrees). The greatest growth occurred from 2011, going from 3 to 29. When it comes to the number of scholarships, the West region held, in 2019, only 4.5% the total CAPES scholarships implemented in SC.

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