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Multicultural Insertions in a Small Economy: Portugal's Immigrant Communities

DAVID CORKILL and MARTIN EATON

Since the 1980s, important changes have occurred in the part played by southern Europe in the international migration system. As the Portuguese case illustrates, the changes have been far from uniform and are still incomplete. Indeed, it can be argued that Portugal represents an interesting case within contemporary international migratory movements. Traditionally ignored as a destination point by immigrants, Portugal has now developed a 'niche' role in the immigration flows into the EU, particularly from Africa and South America. In turn, this influx is strongly influenced by common language ties and existing family networks (Fonseca 1997:15). Moreover, Portugal now recruits the majority of its immigrant workers from the Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOPs) and Brazil (Machado 1997:38). Despite variations in the relative weight of individual countries of origin, this pattern has not altered since Portugal became relatively more attractive as an entry point to the EU, and one of the 'new immigration centres' during the 1980s.

Portugal is an example of a former colonial power that has undergone a societal transformation (Rocha-Trindade 1995). Traditionally a labour exporter, it has now become a net importer of migrant labour. In turn, it has altered from a country with a relatively liberal immigration regime to the adoption of much stricter policy instruments that are more in line with its EU partners. Such a move might appear unsurprising given the strong pressure for a common immigration policy in an EU that has moved towards free circulation of labour as migratory pressures have mounted. However, it should be remembered that the immigrant numbers are very small as a percentage of the total population. Portugal, for example, has one of the lowest proportions of non-nationals (1.2 per cent) – compared to Belgium (9.1 per cent) or Germany (8.6 per cent) – in the whole of the EU (Eurostat 1997). In addition, the relatively low

unemployment levels (standing at an annual average rate of 7.2 per cent in 1995 [Eurostat 1996a]) mean there is less competition between domestic and foreign workers for scarce jobs. Consequently the Portuguese government has felt little internal pressure to control immigration by introducing restrictionist policies.

IMMIGRATION INTO PORTUGAL

For much of the twentieth century Portugal experienced a net outward movement of people. Indeed, the export of labour became a 'structural and symbolic' feature of Portuguese society (Serrão 1977, Brettell 1993), reaching a peak in the early part of the 1970s under the Salazar-Caetano dictatorship. Between 1970–74, for instance, some 630,000 Portuguese nationals left the country as either legal or clandestine emigrants (Amaral 1993). The profound economic and social consequences stemming from this phenomenon were checked only when the authoritarian regime was overthrown in April 1974. Since then there has been a considerable slowdown in Portugal's out-migration rate from a figure of 4.3 in 1980 to 1.0 per thousand head of the population in 1996 (Eurostat 1998). Indeed, during the 1980s, Portugal underwent a transformation as those entering the country began to outnumber those leaving. Several factors caused this turnaround. First, thousands of Portuguese working abroad returned to their homeland (Cavaco 1995a, Machado 1997). Estimates suggest that around 300,000 have returned from their host countries in north-western Europe (Fonseca and Cavaco 1997). Second, there was a notable increase in the numbers of foreign residents settling in Portugal. Between 1975–95 the resident foreign community¹ in Portugal more than quadrupled in size. It reached almost 170,000, which represented just under 2 per cent of the national population (INE 1996). Third, during 1975, up to three-quarters of a million *retornados* [returnees] were estimated to have been repatriated from the former colonies (Lewis and Williams 1985). Fourth, at a conservative estimate there were some 60–70,000 illegal immigrants living in Portugal at the start of the 1990s (Eaton 1993). Finally, there is a much smaller, but no less important, group of asylum seekers trying to settle in the country.

According to figures provided by the *Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras* [SEF – Foreigners and Frontiers Service] the foreign population resident in Portugal between 1986–96 nearly doubled from just under 87,000 to almost 171,000. The largest growth occurred among Luso-Africans, who comprise around half the total number of

immigrants, followed by, in smaller proportions, South Americans and Asians, chiefly Chinese, Indians and Pakistanis (Machado 1997). Moreover, the Chinese component is likely to continue its growth given the handover of Macau to Chinese control in 1999.

Superficially at least, Portugal's migration patterns appear to have undergone a fundamental modification from ones dominated by out-migration into those of a receiving society (Esteves 1991; Guibentif 1996). Recent figures from government agencies² point to this re-orientation: between 1992–95 permanent emigration³ from Portugal fell by approximately 14,000 persons or 64 per cent. In contrast, the resident foreign population expanded by almost 47,000 over the same period (see Table 1) – a net inflow of approximately 33,000 immigrants. Moreover, the growth rate of the foreign community (currently standing at an annual rate of around 9.5 per cent) has been accelerating. Indeed, it had more than doubled by the mid-1990s and shows few signs of slowing as we move towards the new millennium.

These developments should not, however, be taken to mean that Portugal has developed characteristics similar to those pertaining to northern Europe. The transformation into a 'new immigration centre' is incomplete. As far as migration flows are concerned, Portugal retains characteristics that are common to both the centre and the periphery. It continues to receive highly qualified professionals and to export unskilled workers to the European Union, while at the same time exporting professionals to the Portuguese-speaking African countries who, in turn, provide unskilled labourers for the Portuguese labour market (Machado 1997). Another point worth noting is that the profile of the typical Portuguese emigrant is changing from unskilled to semi-skilled. This is due to the higher levels of schooling attained by the Portuguese labour force and the demands for flexible and specialized workers in the northern European labour market, although evidence to support this is hard to come by. It should not be forgotten that there are still large numbers of poorly qualified Portuguese who choose to cross the border to find work in neighbouring Spain and who travel further afield to France.

Indeed, Portugal provides an example of 'substitution immigration' with African workers replacing Portuguese workers who have left for the more developed European countries or North America. This process began in the 1960s when Cape Verdeans in particular were attracted to Portugal by the job opportunities opening up because of major changes in the country's political economy. First, the economic expansion created

new jobs. Secondly, intensive emigration to northern Europe led to acute labour shortages. Thirdly, military manpower requirements stemming from the colonial wars had drained the pool of young, working age males. Labour shortages were experienced once again in the late 1980s when unskilled labour became relatively scarce as numerous physical infrastructure projects got under way in Portugal. Simultaneously, new opportunities were arising in the service industries where women, in particular, were required for domestic and other types of work (Fonseca 1997).

PORTUGAL AND SCHENGEN

Portugal is an increasingly important destination for many of the European Union's newer immigrants who, in the main, settle permanently, and in a minority of cases use the country as a 'staging post'. This is significant because Portugal is one of the signatories to the Schengen Agreement,⁴ which legislates at the EU level for the free movement of persons. Immigrants who can obtain official residence documentation can, in theory, move around the Schengen area unhampered by formal passport controls. The perception is that Portugal and Spain⁵ represent the relatively unprotected 'soft underbelly'. Iberia is, consequently, being used as a 'back door' for labour migrants to gain entry to the more prosperous economies in the EU. It is also being used for drug trafficking. In both cases it is a trail facilitated by Portugal's long Atlantic coastline which makes policing and detection extremely difficult. Indeed, it is a situation made worse by overlapping authorities (e.g. the Maritime Police, Customs Directorate and Tax Inspectorate), inadequate resources and a relatively lax approach to detection.

It is noteworthy that Portugal has the highest proportion in the EU of African immigrants and is close behind Spain in terms of South American immigrants. Table 1 shows that there were more than 168,000 legally resident foreigners in Portugal at the end of December 1995. By far the largest group (more than 38,000, comprising 23 per cent of the total) came from the Cape Verde Islands, followed by Brazilians (19,000 or 12 per cent), Angolans (15,800 or 9 per cent), and those from Guinea-Bissau (12,300 or 7 per cent). The inflows reflect the importance of links with Portugal's former colonies and the close linguistic and cultural ties that exist. Table 1 also shows that the foreign resident community grew by 38 per cent between 1992-95 with the highest increases recorded among immigrants from Angola and Guinea-Bissau. As a result, immigrants from

Africa constitute around 0.8 per cent of the total Portuguese population, of whom almost half (48 per cent) originated in the Cape Verde Islands.

TABLE 1
CHANGES IN THE NUMBERS OF LEGALLY RESIDENT FOREIGNERS IN PORTUGAL
1989–1995

Country of Origin	Total		Change (Number and %)	
	1989	1992	1995	1992–1995
Cape Verde Islands	7,972	31,127	38,746	7,619 +24%
Angola	4,842	6,601	15,829	9,288 +140%
Guinea-Bissau	3,447	5,808	12,291	6,483 +112%
Mozambique	2,980	3,574	4,368	794 +22%
São Tomé and Príncipe	1,873	2,519	4,082	1,563 +62%
Other African Countries	1,675	2,408	3,915	1,507 +63%
United Kingdom	7,761	9,284	11,486	2,202 +24%
Spain	7,294	7,734	8,887	1,153 +15%
Germany	4,482	5,404	7,426	2,022 +37%
France	3,019	3,674	4,743	1,069 +29%
The Netherlands	1,670	2,010	2,736	726 +36%
Other European Countries	5,021	5,390	9,589	4,199 +78%
Brazil	10,520	14,048	19,901	5,853 +42%
Venezuela	4,886	4,910	4,554	-356 -7%
Other Central/South American	532	1,002	1,412	410 +41%
United States of America	6,438	7,321	8,484	1,163 +16%
Canada	2,092	2,109	2,369	260 +12%
Asian Countries	3,741	4,769	6,730	1,961 +41%
Oceanic Countries	347	391	490	99 +25%
Total for Portugal	101,011	121,513	168,316	46,803 +38%

Sources: INE 1990; INE 1996

The European Union has remained an important migrant source with 25 per cent of the total number registered. In turn, there were some 11,500 British immigrants resident in 1995, along with growing numbers from Germany, the Netherlands, and France. The northern Europeans who settle in Portugal fall into two categories. First, there are professional and semi-skilled workers reflecting the growing internationalization of the industrial and service economies in Portugal (Williams 1992, Corkill 1997). Secondly, there are those emigrating after retirement, whose target destination is primarily the Algarve (Williams *et al.* 1997). Along with Europeans, there has also been an expansion in the number of South Americans entering the country. Strong two-way migration trails have traditionally existed between Brazil and Portugal. In

the second half of the 1980s, and in the 1990s in particular, increasing numbers of Brazilians have retraced their ancestors' steps. Table 1 shows, for example, that by 1995 the Brazilian community was almost 20,000 strong. Indeed, their numbers had grown by 42 per cent since 1992 – a faster rate than for any of the European Union immigrant nationalities.

IMMIGRANT INSERTIONS INTO THE SPATIAL ECONOMY

By the mid-1980s the Cape Verdeans were the largest foreign community in Portugal (Fonseca 1997). When they first arrived in the 1960s they filled the gap left by high outflows of young Portuguese workers. The dominance of Cape Verdeans among foreigners from the PALOPs was very marked in 1986 (more than 70 per cent), but had fallen to a little over 50 per cent a decade later (Machado 1997). These tendencies were confirmed in the residency authorization requests made by immigrants during the 1996 extraordinary legalization process. The number of immigrants from Guinea-Bissau quadrupled between 1986–91, while those from Angola tripled in the same period. In terms of a spatial breakdown for the location of the immigrant community, Table 2 shows that, in late 1995, the majority (55 per cent) had settled in and around the capital. Of the remainder, 12 per cent resided in Faro (Algarve), 9 per cent in Setúbal (south of Lisbon), and 6 per cent lived in the north-west around Oporto. The capital was home to the largest foreign group – some 25,800 Cape Verdeans. The figures reveal a very high degree of spatial concentration along the western coastal margin and towards the south – areas containing the main urban cores of (perceived) economic opportunity (Peixoto 1996). Foreign residents choose to congregate in these areas because the chances of securing employment and enjoying better living conditions are relatively much greater. The evidence supports this; between 1975–95 for example the largest increases in the overall size of the foreign resident communities were in Setúbal, Faro and Aveiro. These were precisely the *distritos* [counties] with higher than average standards of living (Cavaco 1995b). As a result, each county showed higher than average increases in the size of their foreign communities. In Setúbal, for instance, the foreign community grew twelvefold over the two decades prior to 1995 (INE 1996). In part, this was due to its position in Portugal's growing industrialization process which was foreign investment-driven (Ferrão and Vale 1995). It also reflects Setúbal's role in the suburban expansion of Lisbon towards the southern bank of the River Tagus.

TABLE 2
 SPATIAL BREAKDOWN OF LEGALLY RESIDENT FOREIGNERS IN PORTUGAL.
 DECEMBER 1995

County	Total	European	African	North Amer.	Cen/S. Amer.	Asian	Ocean.
Aveiro	6,904	888	970	823	4,098	111	12
Beja	564	404	95	16	46	3	-
Braga	2,588	824	530	156	1,002	69	5
Braganza	241	74	89	11	56	8	-
Cast. Branco	570	209	140	56	134	28	3
Coimbra	4,076	1,233	1,292	309	1,067	147	27
Evora	742	413	207	24	76	17	5
Faro	20,946	11,414	6,349	843	1,386	745	169
Guarda	672	166	115	218	165	7	-
Leiria	2,215	668	585	440	478	34	2
Lisbon	92,441	20,016	53,175	4,643	9,585	4,663	188
Portalegre	466	264	144	14	37	6	1
Oporto	10,355	3,513	2,184	381	3,817	433	16
Santarem	1,158	397	448	132	139	34	8
Setubal	15,531	2,040	11,980	223	884	347	31
Viana do Cast.	1,221	506	122	263	307	19	3
Vila Real	736	126	138	112	356	3	-
Viseu	1,268	199	174	178	689	24	3
Azores	2,834	451	322	1,907	129	16	5
Madeira	2,662	936	172	104	1,416	16	12
Portugal	168,316	44,867	79,231	10,853	25,867	6,730	490

Source: INE 1996

Apart from these general patterns, there are also several very close spatial relationships between certain areas and nationalities. These types of immigrant enclaves are usually found on a small regional scale and are related to some historical and/or traditional migration trail. A primary example involves Venezuelan immigrants in Madeira who number 1,156 or 43 per cent of all foreign residents on the island. Their presence is a legacy of the oil industry boom in the 1960s when upwards of 190,000 Madeirans emigrated to Venezuela (Farrow and Farrow 1987). Since then, classic two way migration channels have been established and hundreds of Venezuelans with Portuguese ancestry have 'returned' to the region (Lewis and Williams 1994). Similarly, there are upwards of 1,190 residents of US origin (comprising 42 per cent of the foreign community on the archipelago) now settled in the Azores. Many are employed at the island's US air base where they work as military or support personnel. Finally, there is a small but growing Asian community in Lisbon. The

4,600 strong group is largely of Indian, Macanese or Chinese extraction and many are engaged in entrepreneurial ventures, including small-scale commercial, service and manufacturing activities (Malheiros 1996).

IMMIGRANTS AND THE LABOUR MARKET

Undoubtedly Portugal has become an increasingly attractive destination for migrants. From the mid-1960s when the economy began to open up and hundreds of thousands of Portuguese emigrated, employment opportunities were created for African workers. This process of 'substitution immigration' led to the establishment of important migration channels. The inflows were augmented by 'refugee migration' during the 1970s when around 600–750,000 *retornados* entered the country following the outbreak of civil wars in the former African colonies. The more typical 'economic migration' patterns become predominant only from the late 1980s when the economy – stimulated by European integration, political stability, a favourable external environment and inflows of structural funds and direct foreign investment – began to show strong growth. It is also worth noting that as unemployment levels were low, Portugal might have seemed preferable to other European destinations with higher levels of joblessness. However, there is little evidence that immigrants were deliberately targeting Portugal because jobs were relatively easier to come by.

There are a number of reasons why employment opportunities for immigrants broadened during the late 1980s and early 1990s. First, civil construction and public works programmes expanded significantly from the mid-1980s to such an extent that the sector became structurally dependent on immigrant labour. This dependency was reinforced by the substantial investment during the 1990s in such projects as Expo-98, the new Vasco da Gama bridge, Lisbon's metropolitan underground extensions etc. Secondly, the lack of effective controls and relative ease of entry encouraged immigration. As frontier controls were tightened elsewhere in Europe the countries of southern Europe became preferred destinations for would-be immigrants. Thirdly, the number of illegal immigrants increased substantially. Finally, the continued opening of the Portuguese economy and the inflow of foreign investment in particular, generated opportunities for qualified professionals to work in Portugal on fixed term contracts. This type of immigration began in the 1960s, dipped in the 1970s, but accelerated once again from the 1980s (Machado 1997).

The picture is further complicated when evidence provided by Machado (1997) is taken into account. It had been assumed, based on the Cape Verdean case, that immigrants from the former African colonies were predominantly unqualified and unskilled. Machado's study of immigrants from Guinea-Bissau demonstrates that in many cases their education levels are quite high (they included teachers as well as scientific and technical staff). It is, therefore, wrong to assume that those working in the construction industry are almost all poorly educated. However, it is not known whether a similar picture applies to the Angolans or to the most recent immigrants from the Cape Verde islands.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

It is estimated that between 150–300,000 illegal immigrants enter the EU each year and the cumulative total is thought to be in the region of five million. Illegals arrive with the help of organized networks, often carry false documentation or simply enter as tourists and stay on when their visa expires (Champion 1998; King 1996, 1998). As part of southern Europe, Portugal is on the immigration 'front line'. This is because of its proximity to the Mediterranean basin and North Africa where demographic pressures are acute and migratory potentials are at their strongest. It is estimated, for example, that in the Maghreb and other parts of Africa demographic density will double in the next 25 years. Indeed, unless measures are taken by the four 'southern flank' countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece) as many as three million clandestines could enter the EU through the 'back door' (Doomerink 1997).

Notwithstanding fears about uncontrolled immigration, it has to be recognized that illegal immigrants are actually an important and flexible addition to Portugal's labour market. Many lusophone African immigrants have left their homelands because of ethnic conflict, civil war and poverty (Brookshaw 1992). Most are unskilled, manual workers who enter Portugal's burgeoning informal sector (Miguelez-Lobo 1990, Mingione 1995, Williams and Windebank 1995, Baganha 1998). They find employment in the construction, tourism and service sectors (Campani 1993). Many live in illegally constructed shanty towns in and around Lisbon, enduring substandard living conditions (Newbery 1994, Eaton 1996).

In spite of the general amnesties granted in 1992/93, and again in 1996, not all illegals registered with the Portuguese authorities. The principal reason for their reluctance was that official recognition would

quickly prejudice the comparative advantage that their cheap labour brings to employers. A residence permit makes them liable for tax and their employer for social security payments, which immediately renders them less attractive as employees. There is evidence that illegals are exploited in terms of their access to, and use of, social benefits such as housing and education (Eaton 1998). There is also a suggestion that the judicial system does, on occasion, discriminate against foreigners (Baganha 1996). However, we should not lose sight of the fact that many clandestine immigrants tacitly accept their precarious situation because their earnings, which may be low in EU and Portuguese terms, are much higher than they might expect in their country of origin.

REFUGEES AND THE ASYLUM LAW

In 1993 the President, Mário Soares (himself a political exile during the dictatorship), used his presidential prerogative to veto new asylum legislation on humanitarian grounds. The liberal *Regime Legal do Direito de Asilo e Estatuto de Refugiado* – Legal Regime on Asylum Rights and the Refugee Statute – was to be replaced by a much tighter scheme. The new scheme would provide only temporary protection for refugees from war and similar situations. An altered version of the initial legislation later entered legal circles as the *Lei de Asilo* – Asylum Law (Corkill 1996). The Social Democrat (PSD) government justified the changes on the grounds, first, that Portuguese immigration law needed to be brought more into line with EU practice. Secondly, they argued that the security of Portugal's citizens was at stake. Finally, they claimed that those most affected would be limited to the marginal cases rejected by other European countries but hoping to take advantage of Portugal's benevolent legislation on asylum.

Significantly, the attempt to introduce the 1993 Asylum Law was an example of how European pressures are influencing and shaping Portuguese legislation. Concern at the escalation of asylum requests in the early 1990s had prompted demands for tighter controls, particularly with regard to *refugiados em órbita*. These were refugees rejected by one country after another. They are also migrants who frequently change their names, obtain false documentation and, aided by bureaucratic and procedural delays, have managed to remain within the EU for extended periods. A further aim was to deny or limit immigrants' access to social welfare benefits. The new regulations provoked an angry response from organizations representing immigrants from the PALOPs. They objected

to being categorized as 'foreigners' particularly when many could more appropriately be termed Luso-Africans (Machado 1994). Immigrant organizations also predicted that the measure would not alleviate but actually increase social tensions within the country (Kobayashi 1998).

The new legislation did, however, have an immediate impact. Requests to the Portuguese authorities by asylum-seekers fell dramatically in 1994 to a little more than a third of the 1993 total – only 614 compared to 1,659. In relative terms, this was a mere fraction of the 12,600 requests made in Spain or 325,000 in Germany (Eurostat 1994). In 1995, 457 foreigners requested asylum in Portugal of whom 49 were given permission to stay. In the following year, asylum applications dipped still lower to 269 (Eurostat 1998). Further controversy arose in 1997 when the authorities established detention centres for foreigners awaiting expulsion from the country. Designated as 'temporary installations' and operated under the auspices of the SEF, they were set up in several locations. These included Lisbon international airport, near the Spanish border at Vila Formosa and in a number of Lisbon suburbs. Again, the establishment of these types of detention centre followed similar developments in other EU countries such as Italy and Belgium (Endean 1998).

RACISM AND THE IMMIGRANT'S 'SOCIAL IMAGE'

As we have seen, immigration issues have raised awkward questions about Portuguese attitudes to race and challenged many of their national self-perceptions. The idea of racial tolerance is deeply rooted in Portugal's imperial past. The Salazar regime, for instance, latched onto Gilberto Freyre's propounding of luso-tropicalism to justify the retention of the colonial territories. Through a combination of the 'civilizing' mission and the designation of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and the West African islands as 'overseas provinces' in the 1960s, the dictatorial regime attempted to maintain its empire. Its relative success meant that control was retained well into the post-colonial era, and long after other European powers had granted independence to their imperial possessions.

Attitudes inherited from the Salazar era find an echo in the popular contention that racism either does not exist or (at worst) is less pervasive among southern Europeans. Some comfort is taken from the notion that it is among northern Europeans that racism flourishes. In Portugal's case, the self-perception began to be undermined following the start of racist

incidents in 1989. Clashes between immigrants and local youths also took place in Setúbal in 1993. The myth of multiculturalism was undermined still further in June 1995 with a serious racial attack in Lisbon's *bairro alto* district. A skirmish led to the murder of a young Cape Verdean (in possession of Portuguese citizenship and with two years' military service) who was beaten to death by a gang of 'skinheads'. The local police (said to be 'awaiting re-inforcements') were accused of arriving at the scene two hours after the murder had occurred. The incident was followed by reprisal attacks as violence erupted onto streets of the capital. Subsequent arrests (up to 20 individuals were charged with attempted murder and affray) did, however, serve to keep the situation under a measure of control. Moreover, a well-attended anti-racism march reflected the general public's response to the events, which President Soares encapsulated when he referred to Portugal's 'tradition' and 'respect' for Africans.

The prominence of immigration issues prompted the Socialist (PS) government elected in 1995 to close some of the legal loopholes relating especially to Cape Verdeans working in Portugal. On his first African visit upon becoming Prime Minister, António Guterres resolved the question of illegal workers from Cape Verde who were covered by temporary visas. In talks with his opposite number, Carlos Veiga, it was agreed that the worker must return to his/her country of origin once the visa had expired. In spite of this agreement, it is interesting to note that whenever race and immigration emerge as issues then the political consequences have been very limited. For example, parties that might be expected to make political capital by 'playing the race card' have figured only marginally in the country's politics since the 1974 revolution. A general rejection of the far Right means that the political vehicles for the articulation of xenophobic, anti-immigrant propaganda have not emerged in Portugal.

This general benevolence was also reflected in a survey of public attitudes conducted by the *Universidade Católica* for newspaper *Público* and *TVI* in August 1995. The inquiry found that more than 80 per cent of those interviewed did not consider themselves to be racist (Anon.1995). The survey also revealed antipathy towards gypsies and some resentment over housing problems. While more than 40 per cent believed that immigrants brought economic benefits, most of the respondents did not wish to live in neighbourhoods containing large numbers of foreigners because of fears about their behaviour. However, subsequent surveys (published in the press (e.g. *Público*, *Expresso* and

Diário de Notícias) exposed only weak links between immigrants and criminality. Moreover, there was little stereotyping of people of African origin as delinquents. Interestingly, it was gypsies (again) and immigrants from neighbouring Spain who were predominantly associated with drugs and other related criminal activities.

The 'social image' most closely associated with immigrants from the PALOPs was one of illegal employment (Baganha 1996). Among the Portuguese people, black youth are perceived not as 'job stealers' but as reminders of 1975. As we have said, this was a time when Portugal surrendered its empire and up to three-quarters of a million refugees, including many black Luso-Africans, arrived back in the country. It was significant that attempts by the state secret service (SIS) and some politicians to construct a negative image of immigrant youth failed. Once again, their efforts to brand 'black gangs' as enemies of social peace and stability did not find an echo in the wider Portuguese society.

In recent years, Portugal has therefore appeared to be out of step with countries like France and Germany in its public attitudes to immigrants. However, the danger still exists that immigrants could become the scapegoats for a range of social and political ills. Indeed, as we have seen, the link is beginning to be made with drugs and crime. What little evidence there is, appears to confirm that racism does exist not far below the surface of Portugal's public consciousness. However, it is certainly not as overt as elsewhere in the EU and has yet to find major political expression.

REGULARIZATION AND INTEGRATION INTO PORTUGUESE SOCIETY

It is uncertain how many undocumented migrants there are in Portugal. As we have mentioned, efforts were made from the early 1990s to regularize their position through the granting of amnesties. Illegal immigrants were given two chances to obtain the necessary documents allowing them officially to live and work in the country. Under the first extraordinary legalization programme in 1992–93 (Decree Law 212/92) some 38,365 had their status legalized (Kobayashi 1998). However, it became clear that, for reasons stated earlier, many thousands more failed to respond. This made it difficult for the government to monitor foreigners and to enforce their border controls. On a second occasion, therefore, immigrants from the former African colonies together with Brazilian nationals were offered an opportunity to qualify if they were residents in the country before 30 November 1995. This second

legalization process took place in 1996 and identified some 40,000 irregular migrants, of whom all but 5,000 were accepted. SEF figures revealed that the majority were Africans with over one quarter from Angola, almost 20 per cent from Cape Verde and 15 per cent from Guinea-Bissau. Other important source regions included South East Asia, the Indian subcontinent and Brazil (Malheiros 1998). Regularization was, therefore, a very important factor in the 52 per cent recorded growth in foreign residents from 1991–97 (Barreto 1997, Pinto 1997).

Many of the immigrants who successfully gained official recognition in the 1990s were already partially integrated into Portuguese society. They were, for example, employed in the informal sector of the Portuguese labour market. However, and while there is a suggestion that the public condones their existence, such a clandestine situation is no longer acceptable to the European Commission. One of the ways in which the employment of illegal immigrants can be tackled is by the authorities taking strong legal action against employers who, in the past, have been merely subject to fines. Progress in this direction was not, however, helped when national labour shortages were exacerbated by the massive public works projects underway in Lisbon during 1998. In addition, the widespread use of contractors and subcontractors meant that detecting irregular workers was extremely difficult. Moreover, the organizations charged with detecting illegal immigrants in the Portuguese labour market have themselves been the subject of irregularities. The *Inspecção-Geral do Trabalho* [Inspectorate General for Employment or IGT] has on occasion been accused of corruption and a lack of investigative rigour (Eaton and Silva 1998). It is not surprising, therefore, that their indirect ignorance of the process has failed to eradicate the issue of clandestine workers.

The Catholic church has taken a keen interest in the precarious living conditions endured by many undocumented African immigrants. Indeed, they have urged the relevant authorities to administer civilized treatment and adopt humane solutions. Portugal's Bishops' Conference [*Conferência Episcopal Portuguesa* or CEP] has been particularly vocal. They called for the legalization of clandestine immigrants, allowing them to be re-united with their families, and urged that they be given more time to complete the necessary formalities. One of the documents put before the bishops by the *Comissão Episcopal das Migrações e Turismo* [Bishops' Commission for Migration and Tourism] criticized the 'inadequate structures' available to receive immigrants. They also commented that 'recent laws on immigration and refugees (were) very

restrictive and very much in line with the most severe positions held by some EU countries'. The Commission pressed for a new legalization process to put an end to the immigrants' marginal status. They focused upon the immigrant living in a shanty town who may not be able to obtain a residence permit. On occasions, this was because the local *junta da freguesia* [parish council] would be unwilling to provide the necessary papers to facilitate the residence process. Councils were sometimes reluctant because they did not want to draw attention to their *bairros de lata* [shanty towns], and, as a result, many immigrants were left in limbo. They could not show prospective employers any legal identification and many were subsequently marginalized in the twilight zone afforded by the informal economy.

One proposal put forward by the Council for Immigrant Communities and Ethnic Minorities was for all immigrants to be informed of their rights to vote in political elections and then be encouraged to do so (Eaton 1994). Immersion in the democratic process was thought to be an initial means of helping immigrants to feel involved in their community. It was also felt that, given time, they would assist in the political and practical solutions to local developmental problems. The limited available evidence suggests, however, that there are only low levels of involvement in Portuguese politics by foreign residents (Fonseca 1997). At present, only EU citizens and citizens of the countries with which Portugal has reciprocal treaties can vote in local (but not national elections). Reciprocity exists only with Brazil, Israel, Norway and the Cape Verde islands. It was reported that in the most recent local elections (December 1997) less than 10 per cent of foreigners who were entitled to vote actually registered to do so (Martins 1997). Reasons given by the media for their general reluctance ranged from apathy and unfamiliarity with the system to speculation that their residence documentation might not be in order (Port 1997).

Among the mainstream parties and a minority of independent fringe candidates, just three foreign residents stood for the elections. These included a British person, a Swede and a German. The British candidate stood in Carvoeiro (in the Algarve) on a Socialist ticket with the intention of gathering the large local expatriate vote. However, after losing by just 42 votes, the candidate subsequently blamed his defeat on a lack of support from the PS. He also described foreign participation in the voting as 'pathetic' (Anon. 1997). On this relatively informal basis, it does appear, therefore, that the immigrant's role in Portuguese politics is not being taken seriously. In the local areas where immigrants have a

significant presence, one would expect them to become more politicized. On a more encouraging note, however, the existence of immigrant associations helped to politicize questions of immigration. It is no longer possible to ignore the growth of immigrant communities and their geographical concentration is helping to raise their profile. Indeed, the government acknowledged the need to encourage social integration by appointing a High Commission for immigration and ethnic minorities in 1996. Its role was to develop programmes to rehouse immigrant families and improve their access to services (Fonseca 1997).

CONCLUSION

Immigration is now a fundamental process affecting the socio-economic development of Portugal. A foreign community in excess of 168,000 individuals may represent less than 2 per cent of the national population; however, their significance at the local level often transcends their minority status. Many immigrants gather in shanty towns around Lisbon and both their image and presence is a vivid reminder of Portugal's troubled colonial heritage. In these situations, the general feeling of ethnic tolerance among Portuguese nationals may (on an admittedly small number of occasions) change to racist abuse and discrimination. The potential for conflict does, therefore, exist and is most likely to be found at the interfaces with areas of social deprivation. To control the situation, the Portuguese authorities initially took a soft line. Deportations, for example, were low with just 166 in 1993 (Baldwin-Edwards 1997), and regularization of existing illegals became the desired norm. General amnesties offered to illegals in 1992/93, and again in 1996, resulted in a measure of success. However, the cosmetic effects of these exercises were such that they satisfied the authorities and the public at large. Again, the impression was that immigration was under control and that the twin processes of assimilation and multiculturalism were continuing apace.

It appears likely that Portugal will impose more restrictive immigration policies in future. In part, this will help satisfy EC demands for tougher control. In so doing it will maintain the high level of development funds channelled into the country. Immigration (both legal and clandestine) will, however, continue to be a significant feature of the national labour market. Indeed, it will probably remain the backbone of Portugal's informal economy. In addition, as the general workforce undergoes skills upgrading and training, so the immigrant will face possible exclusion on the grounds of qualifications. On the other hand,

changing working practices, including flexible contracts, will suit the minimally qualified worker. Much will depend on whether the state is prepared to turn a blind eye or, encouraged by the European Commission, try to crack down on the informal sector. The structure of the labour market and the comparative advantage (over other EU members) derived from the immigrants points to the former.

Whatever the outcome, it is clear that the foreign resident and the illegal immigrant will play an increasingly important role in Portuguese society. In the past two decades, Luso-Africans, South Americans and Europeans have all contributed to the growing internationalization process within the country. They are prevalent in both the formal and informal economies and are engaged in important professional and manual working sections of the labour market. Their contributions may only scrape the surface of general consciousness in Portugal, but their involvement is a key factor shaping the country's socio-economic development. The immigrant's role cannot, therefore, be underestimated or ignored. Immigration is an intractable issue for Portugal. The country has a lot to gain from the physical contributions of its foreign workers; equally it has a lot to lose were they to be denied full integration into society. Moreover, if current rates of growth are maintained (or even accelerate with an expected influx of Macanese in 1999) then the foreign minority population in Portugal will double in size by around the year 2002. Consequently, the next few years will be defining points in Portugal's attempts to become a successful, modern, cosmopolitan and multicultural society.

NOTES

1. A legalized foreign resident (LFR) is 'an individual of non-Portuguese nationality to whom has been granted a residence permit by the official government authority' (INE 1996). To obtain a permit, one has to satisfy three criteria: to have been resident in Portugal for six years; be in employment and be judged 'socially acceptable' by the SEF. The numbers recorded as LFR's includes first destination immigrants, their spouses and dependents.
2. There are some errors and problems with the comparability of figures derived by different government agencies. In the case of migration there are two sources – the Portuguese National Statistics Institute (INE) for the emigration statistics and the Foreigners and Frontiers Service (SEF) for immigration data – see Machado (1997) for details of these problems.
3. Permanent emigration is defined as for a period greater than one year. However, large numbers of Portuguese emigrants classify themselves as temporary migrants, but remain illegally (and 'permanently') in their host destinations (Baganha 1993).
4. The Schengen Agreement is an EU accord allowing for free movement of people among

the signatory countries-Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Portugal (see Convey and Kupiszewski 1995; Baldwin-Edwards 1997 for details).

5. Spain is a major 'gateway' into the EU for illegal immigrants arriving principally from North Africa and Morocco in particular (Pumares 1998). While the numbers are considerably larger – by about 7:1 (Eurostat 1996b) than for Portugal, the general trend is remarkably similar. Spain too, has been transformed from a labour exporter into a country of net in-migration (Driessen 1996).

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