



WP5 – Cultural Practices of Resilient Households

Portuguese National Report

Authors

Luís Capucha (coordinator)

Alexandre Calado

Pedro Estêvão

October 2015

Table of contents

Introduction.....	1
1. Symbolic Capital.....	2
1.1. Concepts of life/social change: incorporation of social status in definition of self	2
1.2. Visions of social order and power: Impotency facing external conditionalities	4
1.3. Family values, work ethic and social values of resilience: transformations in the meaning of work	5
1.4. Life aspirations and expectations: valorization of formal education and children as emotional lynchpins of family life.....	7
1.5. Synthesis.....	9
2. (Socio-)Economic capital	11
2.1. Consumer patterns: parsimonious ways of life	11
2.2. Actions and routine of everyday housing: house sharing and reorganization of the household unit.....	13
2.3. Alternative and traditional ways of meeting consumer needs: household production and support from safety networks	15
2.4. Synthesis.....	18
3. Cultural Capital	20
3.1. Leisure time, hobbies and participation in culture	20
3.2. Faith and Organized Religion	23
3.3. Interpretations on the crisis.....	26
3.4. Synthesis.....	27
4. Social Capital.....	28
4.1. Class background.....	28
4.2. Gender: overburdening of women.....	31
4.3. Family and neighbourly support networks	32
4.4. Civic participation: atomization and alienation	35
4.5. Emotions	36
4.6. Synthesis.....	38

Introduction

The current report presents the results of the analysis of the interviews that were made by the Portuguese team within the RESCuE project. The objective of this report was to explore the data collected during fieldwork having as selective how interviewees mobilization four different types of capital - symbolic, socioeconomic, cultural and social - while also looking into how the impact crisis of the crisis over such capitals. The report is thought of as feeding the WP5 international report. As such, it aimed at presenting data in a way that facilitated comparison with data from other RESCuE countries. In doing so, we opted by emphasizes the excerpts that were either were representative of data for a large part of the sample, illustrated contrasting views of interviewees and different dimensions of relevant phenomena or representing unexpected findings to be further developed in international comparison. Therefore, analytical considerations and conclusions, while necessarily present in order to both offer a perspective and confer coherence to the selection of these excerpts, were kept to a minimum.

Aside from this introduction, this report comprises four chapters. Chapter 1 is dedicated to symbolic capital as a response to the crisis. Attention is dedicated to five main topics: the incorporation of social status in the definition of the self; the perceptions of interviewees regarding external conditionalities; the transformation of the meaning of work; valorization of formal education; and the role of children as emotional lynchpins of family life. Chapter 2 is dedicated to socioeconomic capital, with the presentation of data on consumer patterns, everyday household routines, the practices of self-production and support from different safety networks. Chapter 3 deals with cultural capital, focussing particularly on the changes on leisure practices, on the role of religion in making sense of hardship and on competing interpretations of the causes of the crisis. Finally, Chapter 4 works on the bearing of wider social processes such as social class, gender and migrations over resilience practices as well as the role of family, friend and neighbourhood networks on said practices. The chapter ends a quick overview of civic engagement and on emotional accounts of hardship and the crisis.

1. Symbolic Capital

1.1. Concepts of life/social change: incorporation of social status in definition of self

The economic and financial crisis has had a strong impact on political rhetoric in Portugal. The crisis, its causes and consequences, are constantly invoked in various forms of political debate, such as the sectoral debate, the intellectual debate and even everyday life. An observable consequence of the current economic and political situation in Portugal is the colonization of the social and symbolic space by the rhetoric of crisis, whose dominant trend is to hold accountable individuals and families for past sins [living above the means of possibility] that led to the debt crisis.

Interview analysis shows precisely the incorporation of social status in the definition of self. The overall increase in poverty rates, as well as the personal stories of hardship that interviewees face, tends to be seen as part of a collective punishment that the Portuguese face, as a result of a long period of living above the means of possibilities. There is an evident disconnect between their personal stories of poverty – where they point to external stresses as the source of their current situation – and the economic and social crisis faced in the country – for which they hold accountable, at a macro level, the politician by not being responsible, and at a micro level, individually critique certain lifestyles and excesses in spending.

“I think that is right... there were people who became too much in debt because... one thing that, for example, I don't do is credit cards. Money was made much easier to people... It was easiness that later, when people had to pay it, they weren't able to do it. There were people who got themselves in certain debts thinking they had one value. For example, I know people who had the insurances to pay with the 13th month... with the holidays benefit... and later that was cut off [of their salaries] and they got in a very bad situation...” (FA/G/R1)

“The tax escape, the... I don't know. All, all. I'm Portuguese and you also are Portuguese, but the Portuguese...I don't know, the only thing to see is swindlers. There isn't a country so tiny just filled with swindlers. Swindle after swindle. It's the government, it's the minister, is Manel, is Chico... (...) For example, now, the Prime-Minister with all the shit he has been doing. I don't know. And all this, maybe, with the money badly managed that the market sent over here. Instead of using it like they said, they didn't. They put it all in large houses, in large pools... I think that were all those things. Now we pay the check.” (LU/G/R1)

“No. If I have a job, even with a small wage, I can do it. There are people, maybe, who can't, maybe they spend on things that they couldn't. I know people who don't work and smoke. If I don't have money to other things, why would I spend money on a cigars package? I'm lucky in that. Neither I nor my son smoke. But I see from my neighbors of the tip, no one has a job, they live by the expenses of social security, but they all smoke. Boys with 14 or 15 years old. The

cigarettes money could be for bread or one milk package. We must live with the things that we have.” (NO/G/R1)

“We feel at home, the crisis. Worldwide or here, national, we see it every day. Companies are closing every day. There isn’t consumer purchasing power. The wages compared to... Portugal it’s the lowest country in Europe with wages. We are vain: we all have top mobile phones, the others couldn’t care less, the gas oils we have are the most expensive [laughs]. We see those comparisons around and the country doesn’t advance.” (TJ/G/R1)



A pair of shoes worn as a symbol of hardship (photo taken by RN/G/R1).

As we will see in the analysis of social capital, these discourses should be framed in a visible general tendency from individuals to move away from active political participation at a local or a national level. We also found countertrend situations, as is the case of this respondent, heavily involved in local community life and political participation.

“Poor governance. When they said that we were spending more than what we had... I can’t spend what I have and if I’m going to ask [for money], the one who gave me, it’s the one who failed, because I couldn’t pay. If I hit rock bottom it’s because they spent what shouldn’t be spent, but we didn’t spend it, it was an issue of guidance. No one has fault if a factory isn’t build or of the closing of Duarte Ferreira. The fault of olive oils [factory] from Simão Silva Pereira being closed is of those who bought it to, afterwards, sell it to Brazil. The culprits are those who manage the country.” (NS/G/R1)

1.2. Visions of social order and power: Impotency facing external conditionalities

The visions of social order and the capacity for action of individuals found in the narratives of respondents are closely related to the economic and social capital held by households. Data analysis points to a situation of impotency by families to address (more) external constraints, which is related to the lack of material and immaterial resources, which would allow them to control their choices and give them room for action. As we will see in the development in the next chapters, families on the one hand, are depleting their resources to cope with everyday hardship they live in, and on the other hand, have no ability to access social networks that enable them to negotiate these constraints.

A particularly interesting evidence of hardship narratives collected from the interviewees is that external constraints tend to assume two shapes. First, on a systemic level, they assume a systemic shape, of political governance, before which families assume a position of submission and marginalization, internalizing the *status quo* and the social hierarchy. Secondly, on a micro level, these external constraints are presented as a daily challenge, related to unexpected obligations (car problems, health problems, unexpected cuts in revenue, etc.) that demand exceptional mobilization of resources. Living in a limit situation of exploration of accessible resources, interviewees say they are powerless to cope with external stresses that build up to the hardship they currently live in.

"I began to go into a tailspin. I worked by day and had College at night. I had my children, my house and my things. I had a balanced life. My husband was working. I was working. Things were even. Suddenly, he lost his job, and I lose my ability to walk. I couldn't go to the college. I couldn't do my life, my everyday life." (CL/L/R1)

"What can I do? I think the only thing I can do is to pray and ask God to make things better. [laughs]" (EL/L/R1)

The effects of the crisis here don't have an explanation. For any little issue... For example, if I want to build a window there to get more clarity I must submit a project to the City Hall. That project costs me 700 euros and the window costs me 200. Those are the things that mess all this. The high taxes and the very low wages. It's not with a wage of 500 euros or 600 euros that a person could feed two sons, pay a rent, pay electricity... saves with what? Nothing. I don't know when this is going to stop, because there aren't betterments. I'm not delusional with betterments, I'm expecting the worst, even more. But it's bearable. Let's see where this goes." (LU/G/R1)

"Progressively we have less and less. Nothing is already ours, they sell everything. And one day we don't have anything. One day the Taliban from Syria comes and take everything from us. We don't have nothing, it's all private. It's all of the Germans, of the English, of the French, of the Americans and, one day, we won't have anything. One day neither we are Portuguese because they switch our nationality." (LU/G/R1)

"Right, but if he wasn't able to paid me the wage, how could he pay me the compensation [for firing her]? There were colleagues that didn't signed the paper because they wanted the compensation, but they also had to leave because he didn't pay and for them he kept owing even

more money, because he also didn't pay their salaries. But they had husbands, I was alone, so I left because I needed to feed my son. At that time he didn't work. I had to sign the paper." (NO/G/R1)

"If they take from the poor, the poor doesn't have any other options to go to. If they take from the rich, the rich knows how to move and has money to get away with it. They don't take from the rich, they take from the poor because they don't have..." (PA/G/R1)

1.3. Family values, work ethic and social values of resilience: transformations in the meaning of work

Tendencies listed above find a concrete expression on the relationship of individuals and families with paid work. In the narratives of households, paid work over the years, besides being a way of obtaining income, was established as the main vehicle of self-worth and climbing socially. Indeed, it is through the positioning of household members in the field of work that families established strategies for climbing socially and develop their individual and collective life projects. In short, many families derive as much monetary gains as symbolic ones through their participation in paid work.

In the present context the outlook on employment suffered a dramatic symbolic change, which stems from the fact that almost all households interviewed faces situations of unemployment and/or change of employment status to lesser paid and socially valued jobs. Thus, nowadays paid work essentially assumes a role of material form of revenue. Although households activate other forms for satisfying their consumer needs, paid work remains the main form of obtaining income and resources, being an indispensable modality for families to live and withstand hardship.

"I worked in the canteen. I worked as a canteen employee. I was there two years. Before that I worked as a real estate consultant, as a cleaning woman, as a restaurant employee, also at a coffee shop. All that I could find I did it [laughs]. What worried me was to have money to pay at the end of the month. I was a delivery person, I was endless things. What is important it's not what we do. I have expenses and responsibilities. The important thing is to take those responsibilities." (CL/L/R1)

"The most important thing is work and the future. If I have a job but if we don't have health we can't work. Moreover it is one day at the time. Both you and I have a contract and from today to tomorrow we can lose it. Formerly we had permanent contracts, not now. We are always afraid. I could have a job today and not tomorrow. I can't make big plans without knowing it. If I had a job the plan would be to have my own house." (NO/G/R1)

"I've been doing community service here in the parish council of Mina. And so it was when I met this employee of the parish council. And he told me: "Look, you're almost finishing the time that you came here to pay by court decision. If anything happens, do you accept to work here with a contract? Hey, you don't need to do nothing [to get the job]." But I never thought I could be exploited in the way I'm being, right? But well. And it is a thing made by the parish council, which

is a local authority, and the center of employment, isn't it? They put us there, we do not have equipment. We don't have anything! (...) Neither boots! [He works full time as a street sweeper for less than minimum wage] I had to be the one who bought the boots and they don't want to give me back the money. I have no right to holidays, I have no rights to holiday pay, and I have no rights to unemployment benefits, now I'm going to be unemployed." (PE/L/R1)



DI_L_R1 Working in a construction site (photo taken by RI/L/R1).

1.4. Life aspirations and expectations: valorization of formal education and children as emotional lynchpins of family life

Against a backdrop of symbolic degradation of work, households invest in formal education as a means of personal and professional development for social mobility. The valorization of formal education is done on two levels: on the one hand, referring to the reintegration processes in the education system of the adult members of households, either through modalities to complete interrupted school trajectories, either through vocational training programs; on the other hand, focusing on discourses and family strategies the frequency and success at school of the children in the household, mobilizing a large share resources to this area.

However, this discursive and practical valorization is accompanied by little confidence in their instrumental efficacy, at least, on short and medium term. There's not a direct expectation that formal education will help obtaining, in the short term, better employment opportunities, due to the systematic external contingencies that frame the space and opportunities for action. In particular, if the frequency of training programs is valued in terms of learned contents, is also accompanied by a frustrated rhetoric, due to the lack of consequence in terms on employment. With regard to a higher long-term future, there is recognition that formal education is the main tool that will allow their children to climb socially and provide them with better living conditions and life aspirations.

"I left school at the age of the eldest. When I got pregnant of her I was more or less 13 years old. (...) I studied very little and I see that is much needed. If I had continued, who knows if I could be more ahead on my studies and of course I could have a better job. And today I think, if I return to school, could I do it again? Can I? I think this due to the worries of everyday life or I think if I still would have the mind to do it. But I had and have desire to take courses." (EL/L/R1)

"Eh...Bruno has a degree in International Relations, a master in International Relations and... now he'll do, probably, a PhD in History. He always has been an exemplar son. He never gave me a single problem. He did a fantastic path. In everything until today. Besides, he finished this right year. In this civil year he moved away with his girlfriend... and that's it. The sons have to gain wings and..." (FA/G/R1)

"I only had the fourth grade, I knew that I couldn't go anywhere. I thought in going to study. I did the 6th, the 9th and the 12th grades in a row. "Since I started this, I will finish it." I finished the 12th grade and I have about five or six courses but no job. Life financially is bad. In the same situation as before, always with debts and more debts. Now, at the personal aspect, I think that I was able to evolve in the middle of this. The studies were a very good thing. I got knowledge of more things. And I think it's very important." (PA/G/R1)

"Everyone at school and everyone still underage. But at that time... then, there, I began to seek for a job. I went to search, I got a job at a private school. (...) Kitchen. I mean, I wanted the best for my children. I mean, they studied there. And I paid with the meals. I cooked at my house and provided. I paid their education and I still received something more. When I came [to Portugal] in 2004, they lost immediately the [school] year. They repeated the year. They began from there

to here. Then they entered in school, they began to stay behind. They hadn't the will to study, they hadn't... I rented a house there in Benfeitas [near the] private school. It was just to deliver the food. Just cross the road. [From then] Their path until today was excellent. I have no reason to complain." (LO/L/R1)

"I liked [doing the New Opportunities Program], I liked it so much that I put on an effort and I was always there on time. And even if I was tired of my job, I left running from one side to the other to take the course." (LO/L/R1)

"I asked for a professional training course and I had it there. And I went there, for the interview, and that, after some time, they asked me for the documents. I handed the documents and I began attending the course. [Industrial maintenance] It lasted two years. (...) I love it! And today I have my diploma, and that's it – it's unfortunate. The employment market is in the state that it is. But, at least, what I have, no one can take it from me, right?" (PE/L/R1)



PA/G. dropping their kids at school (photo taken by PA/G/R1).

Similarly, the majority of respondents say that they don't have set any concrete future projects or are even able to prepare the future through savings or strategic investment. Resources are mobilized for daily survival strategies. Another factor cited in the interviews is the inability to see a turning point in terms of structural constraints, thus living an indeterminate period of suspension of family projects. Future projects when they are invoked take the form of basic life aspirations - having home, having a job, etc. In most cases they are characterized by their transfer in time to children. In fact, children are emotional lynchpins in the lives of families,

giving direction and objectives for coping strategies. They are presented in the interviews as focal points in the organization and embodiment of resistance and the hopes of a better life.

"I often say that my place of shelter, the reason why I didn't fall, is my little son. My son was able to cheer me up. He, the poor thing, came home, pick up his toys and came to play with me. He stayed all night making me company. At time he was two and half years old. I think it was a little more because of him that I didn't sink to the bottom. It was a very complicated situation for everyone at home." (CL/L/R1)

"My goal was to give a better life to my children. So I thought "I'm going to, I'm going to work, I'm going to try to see if I give a better life for my children," but there are certain things I saw that I couldn't do it. It was not the way I imagined, the way I thought, but well. (...) Of course I suffer due to the issue of not being able to achieve that goal of mine of leaving and having a home to live with my children. But in another case I think that if I'm going to suffer, be there and not be able to help my children, then I'd rather be here alone, knowing that if I'm working, I could send them something and help them. Of course it's not easy, it's hard." (EL/L/R1)

"But I have much need, I have a great need to live with my daughter. And now I can't. I have much need to have a space for me and for her. I have much need to say: today I will take my daughter and we will make a different day, just the two of us. And I know she also has this need. At the present I can't [cries]." (CA/G/R1)

"[My project for the] future ... is to have a job. And be able to face this 12th grade to open doors to get an institute or something like that where I could do a more [advanced] training. And in the future, even yesterday I was thinking; I intend to translate my diploma in English. If things don't go right, well. And if I have the nationality on my hand, look. Let's see if we follow the Prime-minister's advice!" (PE/L/R1)

"I don't know if I'm going to be here [laughs] , but if I am, I wish I could achieve a dream, have my own house. I don't know if it will be possible. I already tried. But because I hadn't guarantor, I couldn't make it. But I've tried. I'm going to fight. I lose a battle but I won't lose the war [laughs], I keep going. A house, I was at the bank, I said "this is good; I'm going to get information." I go where I can go. And I would pay the same as this house. But well, it didn't work. So I, by 2020 ... So in 2020 I hope I have achieved my house."(TE/G/R1)

1.5. Synthesis

The resilience practices in which interviewees engage are strongly shaped by major social structuring processes, such as class, gender or migration. This affects both the space of possibilities for practices that interviewees can envisage and the access to the resources and skills necessary for them to be developed. It is worth to consider how class background reflects itself in the visions of self and social order, as well as in the aspirations for the future, shaping prospects and limiting the ambition for life projects. We highlighted how the interviewees projects for the future – on the cases where they could articulate them - clustered around the notions of being the owner of one's home, getting a steady job and emigration.

A second important evidence is the growing in isolation as a reaction to increasing levels of hardship. This isolation is often explained on actuarial as well as moral grounds and has as a consequence a growing withdrawal from the spheres of community life, social and political participation and empowerment.

In terms of living standards, families are also experiencing the devaluation of their social status, and are exhausting most of their resources trying to find solutions to daily needs and problems. This tendency is in the basis of an increase in the vulnerability of families, limiting their ability to bounce back from hardship.

It is also important to highlight the tendency of general devaluation of the employment status. We can assist to a general trend of depreciation of the employment status from the previous professional career or the last employment, assuming nowadays a mere role for survival.

In terms of work-life balance the evidence point to a tendency of extreme vulnerability in the working conditions. Individuals have little space to manoeuvre or even negotiate working conditions, subjecting themselves to long working hours and unstable schedules. The high rates of unemployment and the worsening of working conditions (increase in taxes, lower wages, increase in working hours and more vulnerability to dismissal) constitute a strong constraint in the ability of households to balance the relation between income needs, family and life projects.

Finally, due to the structural constraints that limit the scope for social agency, families concentrate its symbolic investment in their younger members, protecting them from material limitations arising from the difficulties encountered and focusing particularly on their school trajectories. The future aspirations are projected for the medium and long term through children. For its part, the children also have a role to give meaning to the struggle against the difficulties of families and define a direction and focus for the family strategies.

2. (Socio-)Economic capital

2.1. Consumer patterns: parsimonious ways of life

In a general framework of decreasing incomes and increasing cost of living, along with fewer employment opportunities, families are developing coping practices mostly focused on lifestyles, aiming to reduce the cost of living to standards that they're able to meet. Changes in consumption patterns play a dominant role in this type of coping strategies, with social class being a major structuring trait both in shaping and establishing the field of possibilities for action. Most of our interviewees were already engaged in parsimonious ways of life long before the crisis and it is within the boundaries of such consolidated patterns that adjustments in consumption are made and justified. To promote such strategies families have made changes in their habits and routines. This option is related to the lack of resources and ability to generate new income.

Since most of the generated income is applied in housing and related bills (electricity, water, gas, eating, communications, etc.), a strategic approach to grocery supply is the main area where most families can "negotiate" their needs and expenditure, both on quantity and quality of goods. We have identified various households referring the careful study of advertising leaflets, concentrating shopping around promotion events or discount days, and shifting to low cost or white brand products.

"I receive the social income, right? Twenty, twenty two and that. It drops immediately to the home loan and to the insurances. The rest is left. Let's do the math (...) It is the water, the electricity and the gas. (...) And the condominium fee. (...) Groceries, I buy them as I receive. As I have twenty or thirty [euros], I buy. [I look at the brochures] of Pingo Doce. Usually is Pingo Doce due to the points, also for the gasoline to my son. It is also to help him. All that, that's it. And I seize the promotions when it's their time. I'm living on the basis of promotions. It's logical, there aren't steaks. But there is cheap pork meat, belly slices. Those good veal ribs that he liked, he already told me: "Ai, I miss them so much!" Let it be, son, one of these days we think about that. Look, it's better lose the saddle than the horse." (AR/L/R1)

"We buy the cheapest. The kids eat some things and don't eat others. My mother gives us some things. The yogurts are the cheapest. Instead of drinking milk, they drink tea, they like it and it's not bad. But it's complicated. (...) We always try the promotions. For example, Continente has those coupons, when it's 50% off I seize the half of price. When is Pingo Doce it's the same thing. I never buy brand things out of promotions. It is the generic brands. Few meats. (...) We arrive at this time of the month [laughs] and it's not easy. Then it's the electricity, the water. At this moment we're not paying the house. At any moment we can lose it." (TJ/G/R1)

"Yes, he prescribed an antidepressant. I don't take it always, I only take it when I feel that I'm really falling, because I don't even have money to the medicines. I had to give up of my medicines to put food on the table. I have to make choices every month. Either I buy my medicines or I put food at the table [cries] for me and to my sons. I don't have many options, I have to make choices. There isn't much possibility." (CL/G/R1)

This strategic approach is often followed by reducing consumption, particularly by reducing the consumption of food, clothing and medicines among the adult members of the household. This practice burdens specially women, a topic that will be developed in the analysis of social capital.

"At the time I began to stop eating meat and fish, I only ate when I was at my parent's house and all that, that's it. And I started to have problems, epileptic fits, due to nervous system and to the pressure. (...) Wanting to put a steak in my son's plate and don't have it. Putting only pasta." (AS/L/R1)

"I always bought. Now, if I buy a piece [of clothing] in a month it's too much. But in terms of eating I prefer not to dress myself and buy food." (MR/L/R1)

"They never stayed without eating, but we did. (...) Waking up and sleeping with hunger. But just seeing them eating, that already filled us [laughs]. It happened several times. They never went to sleep with empty stomachs. We did. Several times. I even lost the count. But they never, thank God." (PA/G/R1)

"Sometimes, even the basic things, I can't buy. And only... when I say basic, I could give you an example very... my son used to go with me to the supermarket and he had the habit of asking "mother, could I take a biscuit package?" I said "yes" and he always picked the cheapest. Or he started to do the calculation of the basket and said "look mom, you already have certain value" and sometimes we had to take goods out from the basket that weren't so important. It was important but we don't... instead of bringing two little packages of biscuits, maybe we drop one or any other good or chocolate milk. Then, at the level of clothing and everything else. Those things are... When it really is, there isn't, it's not enough for that. So I seize Christmas and I say "Diogo ask your father a pair of trainees because you need them." There, I also felt, because sometimes one person likes to buy a new piece, a new shirt, shoes, and it can't be." (TE/G/R1)



A. cuts the hair of her grandson at home (photo taken by A_L_R1).

2.2. Actions and routine of everyday housing: house sharing and reorganization of the household unit

Practices relating to shared resources are activated by families in very specific contexts, in most cases involving young urban immigrants looking for cheaper housing arrangements thus allowing reducing the cost of life. Thus, the most common form is house sharing. In most cases housemates are found through informal contacts made in the neighborhood or through fellow immigrants. There are also cases where families welcome other family members, mostly direct family. These situations are usually associated with families moving back with parents, in order to reduce spending with housing, or through taking care of elder family members, assimilating their pensions to the general household budget.

"I live at home here, in a room here. [With] a cousin that rented the house. (...) He's also single. (...) I pay the rent to him and then he pays [to the land lord]. He sublet me the room." (DI/L/R2)

"I share the house with a man that is a friend of my landlord [that] is already sixty four years old. It really was that necessity; but well, we share it there. Sometimes he is a little annoying, he, but well. He has his room and I have mine." (PE/L/R1)

"Before, I was living in a house almost for one year. Dr. Vera has been accompanied me here in Lugarão. I left that house because my landlady wanted to raise the rent. I left it and I met this friend of mine trough a Brazilian woman and I explained and she told me that if I wanted, I could

stay at her house and as I was unemployed, she would help in what way she could and I accepted.” (EL/L/R1)

However, the reorganization of the household unit has some expression and significant weight in household's strategies. We distinguish two types of household's reorganization: (1) marriage or living together and (2) the reorganization of family roles.

In the first type we include situations where the timing of the decision to constitute family was associated by the interviewees with situations of severe financial pressure, by loss of employment or inability to cope with the cost of living, or the sudden increase in consumption needs, especially via pregnancy.

“So, in 2009, 2009. I was back again at the house of that friend of mine who gave me shelter. By chance she is my spouse now, that's it. I back, I had my mouth trembling [from a heart attack], I didn't have there any wage. I didn't even have money – I had some money but I didn't have any safety.” (LO/L/R1)

“I don't pay the rent. I don't pay, I don't pay. Who paying is my father in law. Because I live in his house.” (MR/L/R1)

“When I finished my degree in 2012 I had been there wandering, looking for a job. I had seven, eight, hard months there, in the trenches. I ended without home and at the time I had a girlfriend here in the neighborhood, here at Olivença Street. She took me. After a short time I found a little work on the construction. And how much time did I work? Six or seven months. It gave me balance.” (PE/L/R1)

In the second type, these processes are dictated by the need arising from degradation in families living conditions. In most cases consists of the distribution of tasks and family responsibilities to a wider network of members. The most common situations are the grandparents taking on roles in custody and education of grandchildren, either through the integration in the household or by being responsible for daily chores (taking and picking up from school and other activities, making meals, etc.). On the opposite, adult family members take on more responsibilities in taking care and monitoring elder family members, in exchange for support in their spending. Another visible tendency is the increasing assimilation of the income of the younger members from paid work paid on household budgets. If it is true that there isn't evidence of pressure for early integration of children in paid work (which relates to the increasing importance of education for families, but also should also be associated with few job opportunities), in almost all cases the income earned by younger household members is consumed in the overall costs of family.

“We are in a little complicated situation, but had been more. Now my daughter has a job, it balanced more or less. My husband, sadly, does internships here, internships there. He gains experience but he can't stay at any place.” (CL/L/R1)

“André [son] helps to pay the rent. Since André started to work, the rent was immediately raised. I said “the rent was raised because you are working; now you must help.” (...) Yes, as he receives he gives the money.” (NO/G/R1)



Grandfather playing with his granddaughter after school (photo taken by CA_G_R1).

2.3. Alternative and traditional ways of meeting consumer needs: household production and support from safety networks

A major characteristic of coping practices that stands out in the Portuguese interviews is the importance of paid work to support the household budget. Paid work represents the main source of income for families. Although we find in all households unemployed members, in most of them there is at least one member working full time, providing the revenue base for the household. In most cases, is full time and with a fixed-term contract. There are not many situations of multiple jobs from one household member. Instead we found many situations in which various members of the household contribute to the overall income. The existence of unpaid labour is also residual, usually taking the form of volunteering for future remuneration and the respective formal integration in that specific job.

However, it is also important to highlight the tendency of general devaluation of the employment status and incomes. We can assist to a general trend of depreciation of the employment status from the previous professional career or the last employment, associated with direct (via smaller wages) and indirect (via increases in taxes) cuts on the revenue provided from work, which should be put in context with the increase of unemployment in this decade.

This framework provides the context for the families develop alternative consumption practices. Even though these practices don't represent the main source in terms of consumption, they represent in many situations a decisive share, guaranteeing the satisfaction of the minimum consumption needs. The two main types of alternative sources to meet consumers needs are

(1) household production for own consumption and (2) the support provided from safety networks.

Household production/work for own consumption has little expression in the selected cases. In the cases identified, where we found home production, it plays a key role in the patterns of consumption, particularly in what relates to food consumption. Using private or public land, legally or illegally, households invest much in working the land to produce vegetables, fruit and, in some cases, for livestock in small quantities. In these cases the home production becomes the basis and main source of food consumption. Despite the high investment in home production by each household, in no case allows turn this practice into a form of revenue, by selling goods to the public or to a cooperative. Other sources of home production are residual.



Illegal vegetable gardens on the outskirts of Lisbon (photo taken by GE_L/R1).

"Now I'm receiving the minimal income, I mean, the Social Integration Income [it's the same welfare benefit]. They pay me one hundred and eighty eight euros and fifteen cents. As I have a kitchen garden, I take some potatoes (...) I'm here, I can work. [I grow up] Potatoes, cabbages and onions, garlic. And (...) I grow up little beans, like this, those catarino beans. [What I grow] It's only for me. I could give some cabbages. Or I could have a little more of potatoes. But to sell, they don't buy, they don't even buy. (GE/L/R1)

"I have a little vegetable garden. It's only things for the house. It's to him entertains himself, is some cabbages, some lettuces. I have there orange trees (...) If wasn't this, then the things would really be bad." (RO/G/R1)

"I have a vegetable garden that is potatoes, is green beans. Still today I wake up by 5:30/6 am because I know that you're going to come. I stayed there watering and doing something else. My everyday life is that. (...) I don't sell anything because that is small. Sometimes I give to my neighbors. For example, now it's the season of zucchinis. There is those... grapes, for example, they don't come in quantity enough to sell." (NS/G/R1)

Regarding the support from safety networks, we can identify three main sources: (1) "intrafamily redistribution network"; (2) "local institutional network" and (c) gift exchange network. The type "intrafamily redistribution network" has three variations, ranging from gifts of money, retribution for caring or payment of services and goods (such as shopping bills and kindergarten). What is key here is that such redistribution networks heavily rely on elder parents' pensions. In the case of "local institutional network", a good portion of households uses food banks or other forms of food aid, provided by third sector's local institution. It has a significant weight in urban settings, which is indicative of the levels of poverty, but also of the presence and intervention of the institutional network. Public resources are also present, mainly job centres and health centres. Finally, "gift exchange networks" occur among emigrants, which develop informal network of gifts of small amounts of money, which are distributed in emergency situations by those who have some disposable income. Those who give and receive change over time, according to their status of income and their immediate needs, involving at some point all members of this informal community.

"My mother has her pension and the pension of my father. So, if wasn't her pension, that's the thing I say many times to my husband. If wasn't my mother's money, we... because it's like this. We... besides our income is low – the house is paid but we have water, electricity, gas, always regular, right? Yes, there is no way around. And the illnesses? (...) Because of the lens. They cost seven hundred euros. I'm still paying the glasses, right? (...) I've been doing acupuncture. I can manage the payment. We arrive at the end of the month without money. But I still pay because I have her money here. The day she leaves, it's done. The car's repair, the glasses, those things I manage. I didn't pay everything. I continue to pay. At the end of the month, when we receive, by day 10, when we receive, we give something to the car, we give something to the glasses. The water and electricity is paid. (RO/G/R1)

"My luck was my parents in law, who live in Castelo Branco, every month they bring us potatoes, vegetables, fruit, onions. The things that they grow on their kitchen garden – pumpkins and I don't know what – they send to us. Every month they come to Lisbon." (CL/L/R1)

"My husband had unemployment benefit until January. Now it's ended. He didn't received anything special. He received 377€ by month. My luck was my mother in law, my mother who helped me in what she could. My mother in law paid the kindergarten, still pays it today." (CL/L/R1)

"It's this way, they gave pasta, sugar, toilet paper [the food bank]. They also didn't have large quantities or varieties to give. Sometimes they gave 2 or 3 packages of pasta and I thought there was no need. Maybe could have more need of other things than 2 or 3 packages of pasta. Maybe existed one variety of... but I understand, it's the City Hall, maybe It doesn't have so much support like others associations." (TE/G/R1)

"Yes, neighbors and friends whom I have good ties [money gifts]. Acquaintances from Africa and from here. When they are a little better and I have more difficulties... they can help. It can't be all, but some help, yes." (ML/L/R1)

2.4. Synthesis

What the analysis shows is that the shape resilience processes take is not so directly related to the degree of hardship experienced, but is more aligned with the resources that families can mobilize and opportunities available, particularly on employment. Only by analyzing the (socio)economic capital of households (in an articulated perspective with the social, symbolic and cultural capitals) we can identify and characterize clusters according to their resilience strategies. The degree of hardship is more a predictor of the outcome of resilience processes, in that they tend to reproduce the condition of social class of families.

Thus, the analysis of resilience processes reflects the tendency of families to mobilize all their assets and resources available to find solutions to current situations of hardship. Resilience processes, at least in the analysed cases, proved to be strongly conditioned by external structural constraints.

Reducing the level of consumption is a cross-practice among most of households interviewed, mostly in food supply, having been signalled several situations of sub and malnutrition. Similarly, coping strategies and practices associated with housing have proved to be strongly conditioned by financial pressure, being activated to allow achieve basic levels of consumption needs of satisfaction. The near absence of sharing means of production and the construction of any type of collective institution to organize production activities (such as formal or informal cooperatives) is also worthy of underlining. Although there is a tendency to protect children, they are involved in household coping strategies. Young adults as soon as they find a job and start to work, their income becomes a contribution to the overall family's budget, while among younger children, they have responsibilities in household chores, mainly watching and caring for younger siblings.

Relatively to the alternative sources for consumption – whose main types are household production for own consumption and the support provided from safety networks – the main shared characteristic is that while they are sources of consumption recently activated in the context of the crisis, mainly due to the escalation of the worsening living conditions, they basically recover traditional practices and ways of life. Thus, resilience practices, in this case, have less to do with developing innovation and more to do with exploring accessible resources, networks and knowledge. Another shared characteristic is that families are not using these types of strategies and practices to increase their consumer ability, but to allow them to meet minimum standards of consumption.

Regarding this topic, the most transversal alternative source of consumption comes from the support provided by safety networks. Intrafamily redistribution network and gift exchange network are informal based sources, strongly associated to nationality and access to resources. Most cases which refer to intrafamily support are of Portuguese nationality, while gift exchange network has prevalence amongst emigrants. This tendency is associated with the type of accessible safety net. In the case of Portuguese interviewees their informal safety net is provided by their larger family, while in the case of emigrants they often are the providers for their respective larger family, having to reach out to fellow emigrants for help. Local institutional networks have a formal basis and are promoted by local institutions of social intervention, both from the public and private sphere, thus having a wider range of intervention, reaching a larger

number of households. In fact, the larger majority of households interviewed are accompanied in some form by a local institution.

3. Cultural Capital

3.1. Leisure time, hobbies and participation in culture

Engagement in leisure practices and participation in culture were two areas where changes as a response to the crisis were more emphatic in our sample. This was more evident among the interviewees in our sample who had experienced sudden drops of available income of unemployment or pay cuts – as opposed to those who had a longer and more continuous experience of hardship. Among the former interviewees, comparisons with the past often flowed spontaneously from the conversation, something that points to a full appreciation of the crisis as a turning point in their lives. When describing how they currently spent their free time, TJ/G/R1 switched midway to the following reminiscence:

“I used to earn a lot at [a multinational corporation]. I will never again earn as much as I did back then. My husband also had a stable situation. We never stood at home on weekends. We travelled a lot. And we had the motorbike. We would make trips with it. Expensive trips. Fun trips.” (TJ/G/R1)

Likewise, CL/L/R1 would tell us how before she and her husband lost their jobs:

“We used to go out on weekends. We would go for a coffee and hang around. We either went by ourselves or with the children. We would go out for dinner and the like. Sometimes we would go to the cinema. This was back when I had a balanced life. Now, I don’t even know what a cinema looks like anymore. I don’t know what dining out is anymore [laughs]. I don’t even know what going out for a coffee is like anymore.” (CL/L/R1)

PE/L/R1 also recalled the time (before the crisis) when he sojourned in a small town in the North of the country while working at a construction project and how:

“At night, we would run the place from top to down. We would go play pool billiards and then dance at a disco there... Man, it was completely different! When you have a job, everything is different!” (PE/L/R1)

The main feature of these changes is a movement of retreat from public spaces and of re-centering leisure activities on the private space – and, particularly, home. This leads to three types of effects. The first is the reinforcement of the status of television as the paramount form of entertainment and – in a context of extremely low civic and political engagement as that displayed by the vast majority of individuals in our sample – of provider of information for making sense of the crisis at large. This will also bear on the predominant interpretation of the crisis as we will see below.

NO/G/R1 and TE/G/R1, both single mothers living with their teenage sons, refer their respective homes as the main leisure spaces and of watching TV as their main leisure activity.



The living room of ML/L's shared apartment (photo taken by ML/L)

"I'm not very much into walking around. It's just going to work and going home... I really like to read and watching TV. I practically never leave home. There are people out there who like to walk around, but I don't. I prefer to stay at home, minding my own." (NO/G/R1)

"That was one of the things I felt more [about the crisis]. Because we used to go away every weekend. But that is over now. And we spend a lot of weekends at home. Either because it's Winter and we don't feel like going anywhere, or there is a good film [on TV], we just stay here, napping while watching it." (TE/G/R1)

Gathering with friends or family, when still happening, also increasingly takes place at home – either one's own or a friends' - thus eschewing more common public places such as restaurants or bars. DI/L/R2 is a good example of this trend:

"On weekends, I usually go to a friend's place. We just stay there, because there is no longer money to go to a restaurant. One must make savings. Either that or I stay at home and my friends come to visit me." (DI/L/R2)

One episode narrated CL/L is very illustrative in this regard. While participating in one of the Job Centre's training programmes, CL/L husband made friends with a Nepalese immigrant. The latter invited both CL/L and her husband to dinner with him and his wife. Both CL/L's expectations for the dinner and retribution for their friend's gift took the form of a home-cooked meal. Hence the surprise:



Friends gather at home on a Sunday (photo taken by PE/L/R2)

"We went to Lisbon to meet him. We thought we were going to his home. But, no! When we arrived, he led us to the restaurant of another couple, friends of his, who made Thai, Indian and Nepalese food. So we tried it. And, truth be told, it was good! One looks at that food and asks oneself "Oh, my God! What I have I got into now?", right? But no! The food was delicious. Really good. I loved it! It was some experience – I had never eaten any Nepalese food before... No point in asking what's in there, because I don't have a clue. But, you can't deny how good it is! So we wanted to give him [back] something different. Of course he eats Portuguese food but we wanted to give him something different. So what did we do? We prepared for him codfish with bread crumbs and spice herbs – my husband did it. We also did a typical Portuguese dessert for him. He was delighted with everything... We just wanted to show him Portuguese food other than what he eats at the canteen [of the institution where they were making the training internship]... But this [receiving friends at home] is very rare. It was because my husband was leaving and they had a great friendship... It was more a retribution for what he had done for us in that day... Because we rarely have someone visiting us, as we can't have guests in the house all the time, can we? There is not enough money and we tend to stretch ourselves [in these occasions], right?"
(CL/A/R2)

A third aspect worth pointing out is how public-owned leisure spaces – particularly parks but also swimming pools - become even more important as the sole place outside home that remain accessible for a considerable number of our interviewees.

“We sometimes go to the [local park] and drink a cup of coffee... These last few years have been like this: no vacations [laughs]... Last year, we might have gone twice to the swimming pools from the [municipal] aquatic complex of Gótica.” (TE/G/R2)

While showing one of his photographs, DI/A mentioned how he liked to visit the city’s park in his spare time.

“That Sunday there, I first went to work and then I went to the park. Just sat down, rested a bit, watching people walk by, you see? I like the park. And you can also watch football on TV there. When there is a League [match], I like to watch. I like football.” (DI/A/R2)

3.2. Faith and Organized Religion

The fact that our fieldwork took place in an urban area with a high proportion of immigrant residents made for a diverse sample regarding religious beliefs. Aside from atheists and majority of self-professed Catholics, our sample included interviewees identifying themselves as Muslims, Evangelical Protestants, Hindi and Orthodox Christians.

Faith turned out to play an important role in how the interviewees ascribe meaning to their lives and. One aspect where it surfaced more often was when explaining how they account for their capacity to cope with hardship. The case of JU/L, a Romanian immigrant, is a good illustration in this regard:

“[Religion is important] in everything. When I am here thinking [makes an expression of sadness], then I begin thinking in God and it always helps. He always gives me strength, so that I don’t fall into a depression or something like that. With this crisis, I have to think about everything, worrying about how things will be tomorrow. And then God helps to make worries go, to leave everything behind.” (JU/L/R1)

FA/G, who gave an account where this entangled with memories of her deceased father, which remained an affective reference to her after relations with her mother soured.

“Faith is very important in my life. I think we all have to have something or someone to turn to. When I feel worse, I take refuge in my Faith. Well, not really my Faith but my father’s. My father was an extremely religious man. He prayed every day. I have a photo of him by the bedside and I speak to him. I speak to him and I speak to God. [And] I like to go to Fátima¹, it makes me feel well. It helps a little, and I think we must have something in which to believe. The day we stop

¹ Fátima is the biggest Catholic sanctuary in Portugal.

believing, it is going to be very difficult – not having something to turn to, not even symbolically...” (FA/G/R1)

But the importance given by interviewees to religion does not remain at a general level. It also came into play in the narration of specific moments of despair in their life, whose favourable outcome is interpreted in the terms of divine intervention, as in the case of TE/L.

“I was offered a package with codfish, milk, sugar and what not. And this on Christmas Eve... Yes, these were people I knew but who had no idea what I was going through. No idea! That moment for me... You have to understand that, sometimes, it is not easy to speak about this things. What can I say? I have Faith in miracles. In that day, I asked God for help. I was in my bedroom, alone, with nobody else there. I was crying. I asked God to help me because I didn't have any food left. And I did not want to go to my father or my mother for help, because they were already doing so much. And, in the very same day, I receive this gift. So it's like this: there are those who believe in miracles and those who don't.” (TE/G/R1)

Likewise, EL/L, a Brazilian immigrant, described how she lived and tackled with the illness of one of the daughters she had left in Brazil:

“My elder daughter had a medical problem. She went to the doctor in Brazil and the doctor told her she had a brain tumour. I was unemployed back here when I got the news. I went crazy and nearly got into a depression. I thought: “Dear God!” My mother tried to reach me on Facebook, begging for me to talk to her... It was 2 A.M. here and my mother stayed online... I lost my sleep that day, just thinking what I was going to do and how fast could I get back [to Brazil]. My mother told me: “Come home! Your daughter needs you!” – and I went berserk. I wasn't able to do anything but cry. Through a Brazilian friend from [nearby town] I went to the [Evangelical] church. I thought I could do nothing but go to the church and pray to God. Only God could comfort me and remove that thing [the tumour] from my daughter, so that it wasn't anything serious. I began going to the church, asking the pastors and my church brothers for prayers – and crying... I was really down, I could only think about it and cry. But when I went to the church, I felt like I was seeking peace. I heard the words spoken there and they comforted and strengthened me. I began to read the Bible more often, I would pray more and the pastor told me: “You must have faith in God, because I have gone through the same and God cured me”. And I told here “Yes, pastor, I must have faith in God because only God can bless and cure my daughter”. Later, my mother told me my daughter was going to [a city in Brazil] for treatment and that the doctor had asked for some more tests. She began to make the treatments – and the doctor told she had nothing!” (EL/L/R2)

(pôr aqui a foto do nicho com a Santa)

Yet, one should be careful not to confuse the strong role that many interviewees ascribe to spirituality and faith in their lives with a strict adherence to a particular religious creed. On the contrary, personal views on religion presented by the participants during interviews assumed strong syncretic overtones and religious practices were piecemeal and selectively constructed. NV/L is perhaps the more emphatic case in this regard:

“I am religious man. Hindi community... [But] we embrace all traditions: Carnival, Easter, Christmas. I like the Christian Christmas. For me, it is all the same: God is one... Let's not split

between races and communities: Indian, Portuguese... I am Hindi. But you'll go to my house and you'll see [an image of] Our Lady of Fátima. Almost every year I go to Fátima to pray for help."
(NV/L/R1)



Home shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Fátima (photo taken at home by RO/G/R2)

More generally, relation with organized religions often takes a loose form. AR/L and MA/L/R1 are a good example of this.

"My religion is Catholicism, but I am not a practicing Catholic. I only remember to say "Oh, my god" when I am in trouble. And that's it [laughs]. I don't even know how to pray, really!" (AR/L/R1)

"I am Catholic but not a practicing one. When it's OK, I go to the church. But only if I'm on the right mood." (MA/L/R1)

Indeed, even if the overwhelming majority of the individuals in our sample declared to be religious affiliated, regular attendance to religious services was less than common and participation in activities of religious organizations almost non-existent. What stands out from the data is that the religious experience is conceived by most participants as an eminently direct and individual relation with the spiritual realm, where mediation and collective experience seem to play a marginal role. Thus, it is possible to affirm a strong individual faith with antipathy with some aspects of organized religion, as LO/L does:

"I tried to get [my children] to go to Sunday school, so that they would make First Communion and Confirmation and enter the Boy Scouts, which I think is a solid base for them. But then the priest goes asks me for an exorbitant amount of money! I just said to him: "forget it!". And to my kids: "Look, don't go to the church. Go just when you feel like it." (LO/L/R1)

A similar, and perhaps more telling example of this dissociation between individual and mediate is given by CA/G, whose dislike for attending masses is entirely compatible with the importance she ascribes to her visits to empty religious spaces:

"I am a non-practicing Catholic. My daughter was baptized but I even say that she wasn't. Yet, there are times when I stop the car [gets emotional and cries] and go and sit inside the church... I struggle and struggle and can't afford to give up. But sometimes I just need, I don't know, to get some strength. And maybe that's why I sit down at the church. It must be there that I get that [strength]. Where I recharge my batteries.... I am not a person to attend masses, definitely! I prefer to enter the church when it's empty, when I can feel at ease... My [5-year-old] daughter loves it. And we have this church in Gótica, a very small church where music is usually being played in the background. And she loves it! She just sits there, very quiet. Last Summer, I went there with her and she told me: "Oh, mama, Jesus isn't singing today". Because the music was turned off, "Jesus isn't singing." [laughs]" (CA/G/R1)

3.3. Interpretations on the crisis

As we shall see in the next chapter, our sample had very few participants with an active participation in instances of collective action, be they political or cultural associations. Thus, interpretations on the crisis relied very much on mass media – and particularly TV. Thus, it is not surprising to see how the trope of the crisis being a result of a country "living above our means" is very much disseminated among the participants. MM/L and MA/L

"I don't understand nothing about these things. But I think people didn't knew what they were doing. They spent too much, without thinking about tomorrow." (MM/L/R1)

"I think them [the Government] are trying to do what's best for Portugal, to achieve the goals so that we don't end up like Greece. But... I haven't got time to watch the news. I work in night shift, so I don't know how to answer these questions" (MA/L/R1)

In a more sophisticated narrative, GE/L integrates perceptions on the construction crisis and on the role of the State simultaneous before drawing a similar conclusion.

"The building firm owners have all those buildings they built, lots of apartments that they can't sell. If they could sell, they could build more. And, as they can't sell, they stop. And people without jobs can't buy them... The State could get jobs for people to live by, but can't do that. If it does, it's just for a few people and can't help more because the money comes from the people, the taxpayers give money to the State. The State must pay all those expenses with hospitals and all that, public servants and all that. It's forest fires, everything! So we come to a point where the State can't be the only solution." (GE/L/R2)

Despite this, a second trope could also be found – that of employment as the basis of economic recovery. The case of PE/L is very interesting in this regard as he intertwines what he presents as the general problem with his own life trajectory:

"So the question is to start an employment programme. Because, as soon as there's employment in Portugal [makes a tongue sound, indicating the problem would be over]. When the approval of the Airports and the TGV2 was given, I had already invitations [to work]. And then... It was like a block of ice when they cancelled [these works]... Some people say that it was necessary, that we did not have the money for it. But I say: if there is no employment, how are we going to get out of the situation we're in?!" (PE/L/R1)

Finally, it is worth pointing out how NA/L one of the few participants with an active engagement in associations and the only one in the sample who is a member of a political party, began an exercise of deconstructing the narrative on the recovery of the Portuguese economy during the interview:

"I'd like to know what the future of this country is going to be. Because I don't see a way out. [Draws a small graph in a piece of paper]. The country was there [before the crisis], the floor is here. The country fell and hit the bottom. Now, it's rising to here. But I say: where is the factory being created? Where are the services? I don't see them! There was that solar farm being built [here], but even that stopped! When they tell me we are growing, this and that... Growth how? Is there any recovery? From what? Things are bad. Bad, bad, bad." (NA/L/R1)

3.4. Synthesis

Engagement in leisure practices and participation in culture were two areas where changes as a response to the crisis were more emphatic in our sample. This was particularly the case of the interviewees in our sample who had experienced sudden drops of available income of

² The TGV refers to the high-speed train connections linking Lisbon and Oporto to the Spanish border. The airport refers to the new Lisbon airport, in the Southern bank of the Tagus River. These were public works projects that were shelved when the right-wing government took office in 2011, as part of a general trend of public investment cuts.

unemployment or pay cuts – as opposed to those who had a longer and more continuous experience of hardship. Among the former interviewees, comparisons with the past often flowed spontaneously from the conversation, something that points to a full appreciation of the crisis as a turning point in their lives.

The main feature of these changes is a movement of retreat from the public space and of re-centering leisure activities on private spaces – and, particularly, home. This leads to three types of effects. The first is the reinforcement of the status of television as the paramount form of entertainment and – in a context of extremely low civic and political engagement as that displayed by the vast majority of individuals in our sample – of provider of information for making sense of the crisis at large. This will also bear on the predominant interpretation of the crisis as we will see below.

A third aspect worth pointing out is how public-owned leisure spaces – particularly parks but also swimming pools - become even more important as the sole place outside home that remain accessible for a considerable number of our interviewees.

Regarding religion, faith turned out to play an important role in how many of the interviewees ascribe meaning to their lives, both as an explanation of how they account for their capacity to cope with hardship and also in specific moments whose features or outcomes are portrayed as stemming from divine intervention. Yet, the strong role that many interviewees ascribe to spirituality and faith in their lives should not be confused with a strict adherence to a particular religious creed. On the contrary, personal views on religion presented by the participants during interviews assumed strong syncretic overtones and religious practices were piecemeal and selectively constructed.

Indeed, even if the overwhelming majority of the individuals in our sample declared to be religious affiliated, regular attendance to religious services was less than common and participation in activities of religious organizations almost non-existent. What stands out from the data is that the religious experience is conceived by most participants as an eminently direct and individual relation with the spiritual realm, where mediation and collective experience seem to play a marginal role.

Interpretations on the crisis relied very much on mass media and particularly TV – something that should not be taken without considering the very low level of political participation in the sample. Thus, it is not surprising to see how the tropes of the crisis being a result of a country “living above our means” and of “bloated state” are very much disseminated among the participants. Despite this, it should also be noted that an alternative trope could also be found – that of employment as the basis of economic recovery.

4. Social Capital

4.1. Class background

Practices such as farming for self-consumption are dependent on access to land – whether owned, leased, communal or occupied – but also on the possession of farming skills and tools. Thus NA/G main coping strategies – self-production of food in his gardens, rearing of hens and rabbits, and selling family property - depended on the fact the he disposed of land and houses inherited from his parents and relatives, who were small landowners.

“I have this house where I live. I lived here already when I left for Lisbon [in early adulthood]... The house of my father-in-law is over there – but it is not being used. I have a house that a cousin of mine left me. I get around 100€ form renting it. I have a patch of vineyard that gives 1000 litres of wine a year, which is almost meaningless. If add it all up, with all the treatments, all the things that are needed, all the work you need to do on the grapevines - because either vineyards have a certain dimension or they are not worth bothering. And it's increasingly hard to sell the wine... I have a garden, which is for potatoes and string beans... And on the other day, I sold a patch of land for 5000€ just to meet pressing needs.”

Likewise, GE/L relied heavily on his farming skills acquired back in his youth for the tending of his gardens but also on his cooking skills for odd jobs as a cook, which he acquired during his time as a construction worker:

“We learn. We learn from what others do too. Like, since the time we were children, we know that there are plants that flourish in the Winter and others that don't” (G/L/R2)

“When I lived at the barracks [at the construction site], I made friends with the cook and learnt from him to make food. Bean stews... I sat there and was like a deputy, right? And I got a little more money from it... Each of us [workers] had a box with a lock and we put things [food] there. He would then go there – he had a key for each box too – would take the food and cook it. We would go to work and, by lunch time, there was the lunch ready. We lunched. Then back to work. We arrived in the evening and there was the dinner... I learnt from him. What I knew how to cook was «papa» and «cachupa»³ and potatoes, I knew how to cook back in Cape Verde. But your [Portuguese] dishes? I learnt how to prepare and how to cook them. With this cook I learnt it. And since then, when I need it, I can handle it.” (GE/L/R1)

Here, JU/L provides an interesting contrast. Himself a farmer in Romania before emigrating to Portugal, the lack of access to land in a densely urbanized makes that he was even surprised when asked if he had resorted to any type of farming for self-consumption.

“A garden? Here? No, because it looks like there is no land here [laughs]. In Romania, it's different. There you have land – land everywhere!” (JU/L/R1)

This access to land may be indirect and mediated by the nuclear family, under the form of gifts of food produced by parents or in-laws. Again, this is made possible because these relatives are themselves farmers, as is the case with CL/R:

³ “Papa” is a maize porridge and “cachupa” is a stew made of chickpeas, maize and meat. Both dishes are typical of Cape Verdean cuisine.

“My luck was that, every month, my in-laws, who live in [town in a rural area] bring us potatoes, vegetables, fruit, onions. Whatever they grow in their gardens – pumpkins and the like – they send to us. They come to Lugarão once a month” (CL/R/R1)

Likewise, TJ/G showed her appreciation for her parents gifts, while showing us photographs of their gardens. Teresa’s parents possess skills – being former farm managers in a large property in Gótica - and land – part owned and bought with savings after retirement and part leased against the delivery a portion of their harvest to the owners.

“They grow cabbage, they grow onions, lettuce... Back there, my father keeps sheep. They have ducks, they have hens and rabbits. A lot of things... If we had to buy that food ... Our budget is so small, that if we were to buy everything... My father also has a pig. In comes chorizo, in comes sausages, in comes the meat. And hens too. Only the fish doesn’t come from there. And pasta, rice and milk. The basic daily stuff we have to buy, but what my parents give me is already an enormous help... It was always like this, even when we were better off. I can’t even remember the last time I had to buy eggs or a chicken. I know that the food that comes from my mother is better, so why should I go buy it? As you know, vegetables rot after some time. [My parents] can’t eat them all. We must help them [laughs]. They grow a little more just to give us.” (TJ/G/R2)



Ducks at TJ/G parents’ house (photo taken by TJ/G/R2)

Class background also comes into play regarding consumption patterns. Several of our interviewees were already engaged in parsimonious ways of life long before the crisis and it is within the boundaries of such consolidated patterns that adjustments in consumptions are made and justified. Thus EL/L claims to have found it easy to adjust to co-dwelling:

"I think of myself and thank God that these people are helping me. And I think that, at least, I have a small place to stay and sleep. What they eat, I eat; and in whatever I can help, I will. And I think about the people – lots and lots of them - that have nothing... I now live with a friend of mine and she knows about my situation. She knows I am unemployed and that I get help from the Social Security. So, from what I receive, I pay «x» to help with the rent. There is three of them [living in the house] – four with me. And I help a little with the expenses... From what I get, I do my sums and make a little more if some cleaning [odd job] comes by. As I don't have any addictions – neither drink nor cigarettes- and I am not a person to go out or have a drink, it is enough for me. I see many people who, despite having a job, then [spend money] drinking, smoking and with their cars... I don't need to spend on those things. That's how I do. I keep my expenses tight, help a little [my co-dwellers] and have their help because they understand that I am unemployed." (EL/L/R1)

FA/G even goes of claiming that she's better prepared to deal with the crisis than others because of her past hardships:

"I fell I am in a better position to deal with the crisis because I always lived in hardship. And those who have always lived in hardship, in my opinion, are more able to tackle the crisis than that were suddenly caught by the crisis. I always had to count with a hard struggle, that all I did was achieved with a lot of work. So, what did I do when the crisis hit? Well, one of the things I did was give up smoking. Because when we are in crisis, we must think were we are going to save... My experience was always running on very little money. I can tell you that I earn [value very close to the minimum wage]. And I managed to get my son through college without him ever having to work." (FA/G/R1)

This contrasts heavily with cases such as NA/G/R1 who had been a business owner at a certain point in his lives and whose descent into hardship which requires a much stronger adjustment effort and consequent stress.

"I use to have an independent life. I could go to the beach, I could go and visit my friends. I don't have that possibility anymore. I am stuck here. My life changed.... My wife manages our money at home, the shopping and what's need for daily life. And it was she who began to warn me: "Have you bought this? Was it really necessary". When we didn't have such problems before.... We led a normal life, she is still used to that – women like to go shopping and the like. But now is diferente: «we have to eat only this and that» because the of the money from our pensions." (NA/G/R1)

4.2. Gender: overburdening of women

Gender roles and inequalities also came to feature heavily in our interviewees' resilience practices. As we have seen, getting extra jobs is one of the strategies put in place to compensate for low or dwindling wages. Now, women in our sample not only engaged more frequently in informal paid work beyond their regular job but tended do so in a particular set of activities that such as cleaning private houses, cooking or child care. Thus, we find FA/G cooking by

appointment in private parties, TE/G and NO/G cleaning houses on weekends and after work and MD/L takes care of children in off days.

Gender roles also come into play to justify women reducing their food intake in favour of other family members. When CL/L talks about her 4-year-old son, she claims that:

"If I and my [older] daughters don't have butter, we'll eat a simple toast, dripped in coffee and that's it. But I can't tell my son: "look, I made some toasts with coffee – eat them!". Not that he won't like them – he does! He once saw it and told me: "Mum, I want that!"... He tasted them, and now it's like there's nothing else [laughs]... [But] I must always think about having food for him. Because he is the younger and the most fragile and we all have to protect him. I can't let him become aware [of our difficulties]. We can't afford a nice steak with chips and an egg on top for us – but, for him, we cannot fail. It is important that he has an adequate feeding. The food bank helped me with cereals and cookies for him. They sent milk and instant cereal. I managed to balance it out. If I don't have milk, I'll drink coffee – but for him, there must be plenty. He drinks milk in the afternoon, drinks before going to bed, drinks with instant cereal. It's milk all the time [laughs]." (CL/L/R1)

In the same vein, AS/L told us how she skipped some meals:

"It's like a miracle, sometimes. We end up getting by with very little. In fact, my husband is one of those men who enters the kitchen and can make something out of nothing. Whatever is there, he'll work with it. Sometimes, I don't even eat [laughs]. Yes, I don't eat. As he is picky and my son goes along with him, they manage it. I don't join, sometimes because it won't fall well [on my stomach] or simply because I don't feel like eating. But they manage to do it. He just enters the kitchen [and says]: "What are we going to cook today?" And there isn't anything there..." (AS/L/R1)

Another element that we found to be strongly gender-biased was the rearing children in the event separations and divorces, with women often having to deal with reluctant fathers in this regard - as was the case with FA/G and LO/L

"The father of my daughter? The first thing he did when I made the child maintenance request was resign from his job. He resigned and then went to live with another woman. And then he left for France... And there is nothing for his daughter, not even on her birthday or for Christmas..." (FA/G/R1)

"[On child maintenance]. Nothing until today! Can you imagine how many years I have been running around with this? [laughs]... If we were in another country, he would have to [pay]: else he would get to jail or something like that... When he got job in some firm, the court would caught up with him and send a letter to his boss – and he would resign.... I would like to at least get something for my two underage daughters – one is fourteen and the other still eleven. But, as I already have a business open, I doubt I will ever get anything" (LO/L/R1)

4.3. Family and neighbourly support networks

If we set aside welfare provisions – which are key feature in resilience practices displayed in most interviews – we find that family redistribution and gift networks play an important role in resilience practices. However, it should be noted that it was not extended family that played

such a role – with the possible exception case of immigrants - but instead to the nuclear family and its direct ascendancy – that is, grand-fathers and grand-mothers. We already saw with the cases of TJ/L and CL/A how this network played out in regard to self-production food supply. The case of CA/G shows other types of support, while also hinting at the awkwardness brought by a situation of dependence.

“I depend a lot on my parents’ help. I have to work for many hours, as the [taxi] business is not that good... Me and my daughter eat at my parent’s house everyday. They don’t let that anything lacks, either to me or to her. She practices swimming and they pay for it. If she needs a pair of shoes, if she needs clothes, they buy them. It’s an enormous help I have. [But] my parents are 72. It is very stressful for them to see me in this situation. At that age, they begin to think that they won’t last much longer. And they begin to worry about what will happen to me and their grand-daughter.” (CA/G/R1)

The case of NO/G shows more clearly how this support is entangled in a more complex gift network – while also offering a picture of tension and suspicion regarding care provider institutions.

“My father gives us [she and her sister] some money from their pensions so that we can take care for our mother. (...) Because she suffered a stroke that caught her legs and hands. At first, we thought about putting her into a nursing home. But my mother is still young. She’s just turned 70. So I started to think: “I know what a nursing home is like”. There are lucid people but also others who are senile. And lucid people have to watch their sorry state – it’s not easy. So I said: “If you are willing, we can come over here so that you don’t have to go [to the nursing home] right away”. So far, we have managed it. One of us goes in the morning and the other in the afternoon. This is how we have been doing and she is better now.”

Friend and acquaintance networks seem to play a more peripheral role in this regard, with the exception of immigrants. Indeed the only extended networks of gift outside the nuclear family that we came across in our sample was those of immigrants. This is very much the case of PE/L’s maintenance work on the shack where he lives:

“I have taken the dirt away, I have added the gravel. Now it’s just adding the sand. I make cement. I add a layer. Then a friend comes: a fellow countryman! He joins me, mixes the screed and clears some things up. Because there is little money and it almost isn’t worth to spend a lot, as the neighborhood is going to be demolished soon.” (G/L/R2)

So too PE/L mentions how he feels obliged to help friends with small sums of money, even if he has very little to spare for himself:

“Well, it’s that thing that we Angolans have, right? Man, I don’t have much but hey! Take 10. Look, take 20 something. Sometimes there are friends like this over here. For instance, I, with the little money I have... Last month, when I received, I remembered there was a friend up in [nearby neighborhood] who was going through a bad patch. So I said to him: “Look, I don’t have much; but, here, have 2 euros. At least it’s something”” (PE/L/R1)

The preponderance of the nuclear family as a supporting net coupled with the phenomenon of retreat to the private space as (as discussed in the previous chapter) seems to strongly shape family views. Thus, the nuclear family appears as some sort of ultimate moral horizon. Hence AR/L presenting the lack of self-sufficiency of her own nuclear family as a sort of moral flaw.

"I had support from an ex-boyfriend of mine – him and his mother – at a time when I was really in the doldrums. They payed me two months rent and also the water, electricity and gas bills. Then I managed to get my act together again. And [my son] told me: "No, mother. You are not going to them again. You are not going, because we will get things going. On our own. Just the three of us." (AR/L/R1)



GE/L's neighborhood being demolished (photo by GE/L/R2)

In this context, children end up taking a crucial role as emotional lynchpins in adults lives (as discussed in chapter 1) whose well-being becomes a major reference line in the definition of coping practices – both in the setting of goals and on the drawing of acceptable limits.

"I didn't look [for work] in shopping because – I'll be honest. Working on Sundays and holydays and maintaining my dedication to my son... He was at that phase, 15, 16 [years old], when he needed some control... So I abdicated. Because my son is my son. And I get a normal Monday to Saturday schedule, with one time-off during the week and another on Sunday" (AR/L/R1)

"I try to safeguard me but above all my daughter.... I had a life insurance and now I have made another so that if something happens to me, [my daughter] will not be left forsaken. I want to straighten up all these things I carry with me and then think things over in another way. I wanted to establish myself on my own... Because the years are passing by. I am not old, but I was not a very young mother. And my priority is [my daughter]. And I want that in a few years [my daughter] goes to college and I can say: I have enough so she can go without her father's help. Because if her father doesn't help her now, it sure won't help her later." (CA/L/R1)

Finally, one of the aspects to which our fieldwork brought light on were the psychological exertion felt by those that participate in this family gift networks. This happens at the receiving level, as already hinted in some of the above excerpts and as NV/L more plainly testifies:

"I have help from the family, otherwise I wouldn't make it... Family help – cousins, uncles, nephews... Sometimes twenty, sometimes thirty euros, they send... Yes, they help with money, and some send food – from England, France and Portugal... But only little, because we are embarrassed to ask. I am embarrassed to ask, because it is I who should be helping them" (NV/L/R1)

But for the providers of support themselves, the burden of their situation is often acutely felt. NA/G and his wife expressed the tension about of having to provide for both their sons and grandsons, which conflicts with the plans they had envisioned for their retirement years – a fact complicated by the fact that NA/G and his wife's pensions are rather small, given their as business owner and housekeeper respectively.

"The money just drains away. Some six months ago, [my younger son] wanted 1000€ and appeared on my doorstep crying, with a debt to pay. And there I went again... Maybe it's my fault. If I just threw them on the street... But I can't. I am a father and a grand-father and I would never do such a thing [laughs]. I'm keeping afloat by selling what I have, but it is getting very hard. If my grandchildren had a job or if they were just living with their parents, as it should be, I would say I might not be well-off but I would have enough – because, from a certain age onwards, we don't have that many demands. You don't go to the cinema, you don't go here and there. Life is different, more peaceful, more quiet... [But] we don't have that security now. After all those years of hard work, one sees his children and grand-children in trouble... Some people just close the door. But I haven't got the courage to do it." (NA/G/R1)

ML/L also describes the anguish of being responsible for providing his family back in his home country of Guinea-Bissau, despite his own precarious situation:

"Being in Europe, the family puts all the trust over you. If things don't go well, one gets disoriented... In disease or any other difficulty, they ask for help... Prescriptions and medication, sometimes food. They ask me and I have to find a way to get things there. Every month I have to send something.... In Africa, I am the first son of my father. My father and my mother have died, so my brothers shifted all the trust to me. They work there as peasants and the like. But when something is lacking, it to me that they turn." (ML/L/R1)

4.4. Civic participation: atomization and alienation

Participation in political associations is very low across our sample, something that can only be aggravated by the aforementioned tendency for retreat from the public space. Two excerpts illustrate a common sense of detachment from the political sphere:

"I'll be honest with you. There are some associations [in the neighborhood] but I don't go there... I don't. If I sometimes go is because someone invites me to have a cup of coffee on the café right below my apartment. And it is just "good morning", "good afternoon", "hi!" "how are you"? Let's say I not much of an affable person" (AR/L/R1)

"The only thing I was a member of was the football club where my son played [laughs]. Because these people [politicians] today they say one thing and tomorrow other. I don't even vote anymore. And maybe I'm to blame. We fought so hard to be able to vote.... Sure, I can sympathize

with one [candidate] more than with another. But, as I said some time ago, "But vote on whom? For what?". Because I did not believe in anyone." (TE/G/R1)

The single exception to this is NA/G, who is a member of a political party and served a term in a civil parish back when he lived in Lisbon. But even he paints a gloomy picture regarding civic participation

"I was part of the Board [of the Casa do Povo of the parish⁴]. And they still wait for me to come by and help. They are now reviving the Folk Dance group. It's an anniversary [of the «Casa do Povo»] and there is going to be a festival... Those who love the village and like it to have something, they care. But even there we have difficulties. Having people contribute, working and helping... It isn't easy. The «Casa do Povo» has a Folk Dance group and other activities. Trekking, Mountain cycling. It keeps people occupied. It has a bar, it has TV. But convincing people to work or doing something, that's difficult... The «Casa do Povo» only fills when Benfica plays. But then the match is over, everybody disappears [laughs] and the bar remains empty." (NA/G/R1)

4.5. Emotions

There was a wide range of emotional framing of hardship experiences reported in our interviews. Some of them emerge from several, such as embarrassment – as in the case of NV/L – revolt – as in the case of NA/G – or defiance – as in the case of FA/G. Accounts of moments of despair and descriptions of feeling strongly resembling depression at one point or another were rather common. We will which were less covered above, such as the feeling of despair. For instance, AS/L reported:

"Back then, I stopped eating meat or fish. I ate only when I went to my parents'. And I started having problems, epileptic attacks due to the nervous system and to the pressure... It was wanting and not being able to. Being useless. Wanting to surpass the crisis and not being able to... It was about not being able to find work. Of always bumping into a "no". To feel useless. I felt like killing myself... Wanting to give a steak to my son and not being able to. Having only pasta to put in his dish..." (AS/L/R1)

Closely related to this, one can find expressions of anguish such as those from AR/L:

"One stays here thinking all day, without sleeping. One lays down, puts her hands on her head and can't even sleep. And if tomorrow I am out of work, what will I do?... My concerns are huge. That if one doesn't have a home, then she has nothing at all. [She's out] on the street. It's horrible." (AR/L/R1)

But one can find also interviewees describing themselves through perseverance, like TE:

⁴ The Casas do Povo [literally Houses of the People] were institutions created during the Fascist period with the aim of integrating rural labour within the corporatist framework of the regime. They were supposed to serve a representative role of these workers also provide as a minimum safety net for rural workers, as well as providing cultural . After the democratic revolution of 1974 they lost the former functions but remained responsible an important cultural and sporting equipment in many rural parishes.

“My professional life is like that. With my effort, with my work, I give everything I have and even what I don’t have. That’s why I have been able to progress professionally. That is for me an extraordinary achievement.”



TE/G depicts her life as an uphill struggle and herself as an example of perseverance (photo taken by a TE/G friend)

And also present in the sample are examples of empathy. CA/L is probably the more elaborated example in the corpus in this regard. It is a particularly rich excerpt, where feelings of righteousness and outrage as well as notions of collective duty, proper assistance in times of need and even archetypes of “propor need” come to the surface:

“I know the reality of things. I see people going through needs. I may not have much, but I can still help anyone! Not with money. But when people are in need, they take food and clothing. And I have helped. This one gives this, the other gives that – and I can get something to give, particularly regarding child clothing... This happened to me last December. I was driving for a service in [nearby village] when I saw a young woman with two small children – a 5-year-old boy

and 2- and-a-half-year-old girl. Walking by the road, out in the morning cold. And I look at them and said to myself: "Damn it! Isn't there anyone who can give this woman a lift?" That really upset me! I stopped by her and asked "Where are you going to?". "I'm going to Gótica.". "Come with me. I'll take you". The little boy cried [voice trembles]. I brought them. Then I talked a bit with her. She lived with just 400€[a month]. Her son had health problems, severe problems. After a few days, I went to see where they live [voice trembles]. For the second time – because I had already done it once – I went to Facebook and asked for help. Nobody helps. People became so selfish! They just look to themselves with nobody helping who's worse off than us. I started bringing her some of my daughters clothes, mainly for the little girl. I asked and both my mother and my sister gave something for the boy. Meanwhile, I managed to get her rice – some four or five bags of it – and it was all I could get her. Usually, what I can get, I will." (CA/G/R1)

4.6. Synthesis

The resilience practices in which interviewees can engage are strongly shaped by major social structuring processes, such as class, gender or migrations. This affects both the space of possibilities for practices that interviewees can envisage and the access to the resources and skills necessary for them to be developed.

Thus, practices such as farming for self-consumption are dependent on direct or indirect access to land – whether owned, leased, communal or occupied – but also on the possession of farming skills, acquired during primary or secondary socialization.

Class background also comes into play regarding consumption patterns. Several of our interviewees were already engaged in parsimonious ways of life long before the crisis and it is within the boundaries of such consolidated patterns that adjustments in consumptions are made and justified. This contrasts with some cases of downward trajectories, where descent into hardship requires a much stronger adjustment in lifestyles, incurring in a consequent stress.

Gender roles and inequalities also came to feature heavily in our interviewees' resilience practices. As we have seen, getting extra jobs is one of the strategies put in place to compensate for low or dwindling wages. Now, women in our sample not only engaged more frequently in informal paid work beyond their regular job but tended to do so in a particular set of activities that such as cleaning private houses, cooking or child care. Gender roles also come into play to justify women reducing their food intake in favour of other family members. Another element that we found to be strongly gender-biased was the rearing children in the event separations and divorces, with women often having to deal with reluctant fathers in this regard.

Setting aside welfare provisions – which are key feature in resilience practices displayed in most interviews – we find that family redistribution and gift networks play a central role in resilience practices. However, it should be noted that it was not extended family that played such a role – with the possible exception case of immigrants - but instead to the nuclear family and its direct ascendancy – that is, grand-fathers and grand-mothers. Friend and neighbour networks play a

more peripheral role in this regard, with the exception of immigrants. Indeed the only extended networks of gift outside the nuclear family that we came across in our sample were those of immigrants.

The preponderance of the nuclear family as a supporting net coupled with the phenomenon of retreat to the private space as (as discussed in the previous chapter) seems to strongly shape family views. Thus, the nuclear family appears as some sort of ultimate moral horizon. In this context, children end up taking a crucial role as emotional lynchpins in adults lives (as discussed in the chapter dedicated to symbolic capital) whose well-being becomes a major reference line in the definition of coping practices – both in the setting of goals and on the drawing of their acceptable limits.

One of the aspects to which our fieldwork brought light on were the psychological exertion felt by those that were heavily involved in this type family gift networks – either as dependent receivers or as dutiful providers.

Finally, it is worth mentioning participation in political associations is very low across our sample, something that can only be aggravated by the aforementioned tendency for retreat from the public space as a personal response to the crisis.

