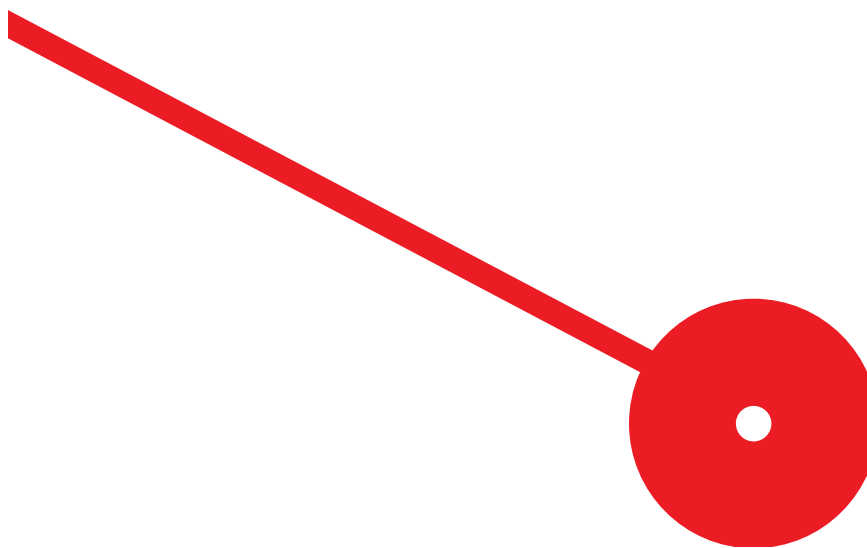


Commerce fairs and Portuguese- Italian relations: Internship in Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo

Márcio Filipe Cavadas Castro

2020/2021



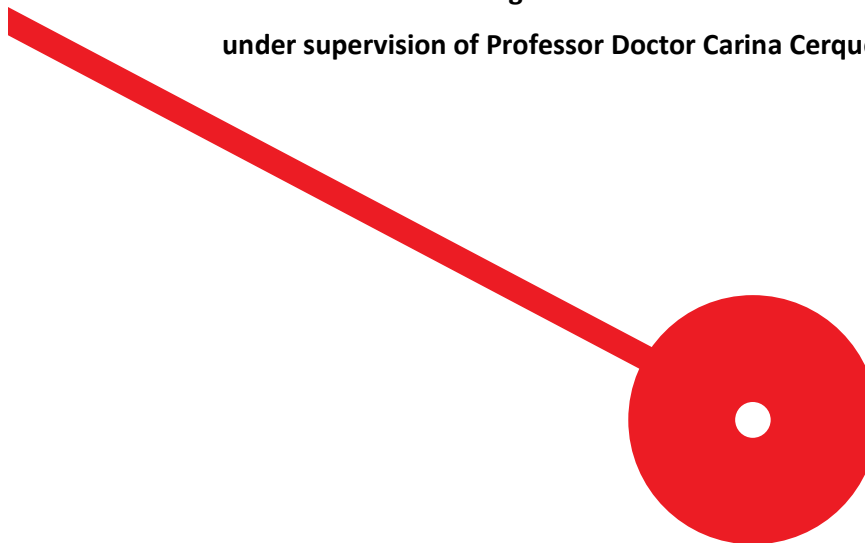


Commerce fairs and Portuguese-Italian relations: Internship in Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo

Márcio Filipe Cavadas Castro

Internship Report

submitted to the Porto Accounting and Business School to
obtain the Master's Degree in Intercultural Studies for Business
under supervision of Professor Doctor Carina Cerqueira



Abstract:

This report is part of the curricular internship of the Master's Degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, from Porto Accounting and Business School. The internship was carried in the northern delegation of the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”.

International trade fairs, often organized with the support of Chambers of Commerce, represent a preponderant strategy regarding the internationalization of companies and intercultural interaction between workers in the same industry and sectors. The socio-cultural symbiosis between Portugal and Italy fosters commercial cooperation between the two countries in various industries, including textiles, which is reflected in trade fairs held in Italy.

The focus of this report will be to portray my roles during the internship, as well as analyze the impact that trade fairs have, globally and specifically in the Italian and Portuguese case.

Key words: Chamber of Commerce, Interculturality, Italy/Portugal, Trade Fair

Resumo:

Este relatório insere-se no âmbito do estágio curricular do mestrado de Estudos Interculturais para Negócios, do Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto. O estágio foi realizado na delegação norte da “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”.

As feiras de comércio internacionais, frequentemente organizadas com o apoio de Câmaras de Comércio, representam uma estratégia preponderante no que toca à internacionalização das empresas e da interação intercultural entre trabalhadores da mesma indústria e setores. A simbiose socio-cultural entre Portugal e Itália fomenta a cooperação comercial entre os dois países em várias indústrias, nomeadamente a têxtil, e que se reflete nas feiras de comércio realizadas em Itália.

O foco deste relatório será retratar as minhas funções durante o estágio, assim como analisar o impacto que as feiras de comércio, globalmente e especificamente no caso italiano e português.

Palavras chave: Câmara de Comércio, Interculturalidade, Itália/Portugal, Feira de Comércio

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

The present report describes my internship at “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”, carried out from 1st February of 2021 and ended the 1st June of 2021, as part of the completion of my master’s degree in Intercultural Studies for Business at ISCAP (Porto Accounting and Business School).

The decision to carry out an internship was due to the ambition of acquiring some work experience before finishing my degree, while improving and implementing skills acquired in the masters, with a special focus on intercultural communication in a business setting. I chose to proceed with my internship in the “Cammera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” because they handle international commerce, especially between Portugal and Italy, a country that I have always been interested in. The master’s degree in Intercultural Studies for Business concerns topics such as business-oriented interculturality, international economic relations, and language in a business environment, all topics that were present in the work chambers of commerce.

This report is divided into two parts and this distribution is due to the need of separation, the studies and analysis done prior to this report, that were essential to analyze the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” work and the internship carried out there. The first part consists of chapter II, and the second part consists of chapters III, IV, and V. This report is a critical review of research and studies gathered about interculturality, chambers of commerce, and commerce fairs. The methodology used to produce this report was carried out in a three-step approach. The first step was to define the objectives of the report, trying to understand what topics were relevant to the theme of the research, such as interculturality and the definition of a chamber of commerce. Secondly, throughout the report, I made notes about my activities in the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” and collected information about the specificities of this chamber of commerce, as well as some practical insight. Lastly, I assembled the articles and scientific thesis and my perspective after the internship was done to describe it, as well as to describe the impact of the commerce fairs on Portuguese and Italian relations.

Chapter II focuses on the theoretical framework, divided into four sections: Contextual information, The Chamber role in international and national business, An intercultural approach: the luso-italian relations, Case-study: commerce fairs. The decision to include a theoretical framework was due to the necessity to identify the key concepts relevant to the report: a notion can have multiple definitions and therefore, it is

necessary to make clear what is meant whenever each term is mentioned. A theoretical framework is also needed to assess the different points of view in already established theories and conceptions, which can be done through a literature review that connects and compares the view of each author and their theories. The first section aims to understand the history and development of chambers of commerce throughout the world since its beginning, as well as how the intrinsic characters related to chambers of commerce. The second section addresses the role of chambers of commerce and what they do to facilitate international business, approaching industries with different intercultural backgrounds and making them connect in their similar economic and business goals. The third section describes how the social, cultural, and economic relationship between Portugal and Italy evolved throughout history, helping to shape their cooperation throughout the times that still stands today. The fourth section intends to analyze how commerce fairs are used as a tool to enhance international business, most times with the assistance of chambers of commerce and, specifically, in the case of companies of the textile sector in Italy and in Portugal.

Chapter III is focused on the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”, how it works and what are their main services for companies, divided into two sections: Introduction: contextual information and Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo: host company. The first section approaches the details of my internship, as the duration and where it occurred, providing details on the logistical specifics of the intership experience. The second section describes the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”, their history, hierarchical structure, main goals, services, and how they present themselves as a chamber of commerce.

Chapter IV approaches the main activities carried out during the internship, as well as the challenges that came with them, and is divided into four sections: General overview: recognizing the chamber dynamics, Chambers of commerce: an external and internal perspective, Files management, and Translation. The first section describes the organization of this chamber of commerce when it comes to the commerce fairs, as well as the intercultural notions and business-oriented intelligence required to deal with them. The second section focuses on all the interactions that happened due to the chamber of commerce, such as webinars and contact with members. The third section addresses the strategies applied and knowledge acquired while organizing the chamber’s files, creating a restructuration of the organization of the “Camera di Commercio

Italiana per il Portogallo”. The fourth section describes all the translations tasks that were carried out during the internship, as well as the intercultural notions needed to produce an accurate translation that would convey the intended meaning.

Chapter V analyzes the impact of the commerce fairs in companies that attempt an international approach. This chapter is divided into two sectors: Commerce fairs and business opportunities and Commerce fairs and business opportunities: The case of the Portuguese textile sector in Italy. The first sector focuses on different opportunities provided by commerce fairs to small and medium companies, as well as the advantages, disadvantages and potential risks of participating in a commerce fair. The second sector focuses on the specific case of the textile sector in Italy and Portugal and how commerce fairs are a reflection and a stimulus of the symbiosis of the two countries in this sector, showing how the cooperation and growth in the textile industry can be related to the participation in commerce fair of companies of this same sector.

**CHAPTER II – CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: THEORETICAL
FRAMEWORK**

2.1 Contextual information

According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2021), a chamber of commerce is “an organization consisting of people in business, who work together to improve business in their town or local area”. The first chamber of commerce to ever exist was in Marseille, France, in 1599, being its purpose to gather, discuss and advocate for the rights of the local business owners (Bridgeman, 2020), meaning that their main mission remains the same. Before the one in France, it is believed that they existed in a more disorganized form, only in big business hubs. (Pilgrim & Meier, 1995). The oldest chamber of commerce, located in Marseille, was created under the name “Bureau de Commerce”; it became autonomous in 1630 and since the starting point it was a feverous defender of the area. After the French revolution in 1789, it passed through a difficult period, having become illegal until 1802, in which it reappeared. (Fournier, 1921).

D’Andrea (2017) emphasizes that a chamber of commerce is a functional and autonomous entity that promotes and stimulates the local economy: a chamber of commerce alerts local businesses about newer regulation, bureaucratic requirements, commercial information, as well as events and initiatives (such as fairs or conferences) that could help to promote the companies of the region. Chambers of commerce also keep contact with local companies, as often they are formed by local companies owners (MBA, 2021). Different chambers of commerce may have different ways of functioning, meaning some may require membership with some benefits (business connections or visibility in the community). Some examples of chambers of commerce requiring membership are the “Camera di Commercio di Roma” and “CCI Berlin” (Camera di Commercio di Roma, 2021) (CCI Berlin, 2021). Others may not require membership, providing services for companies that request them, regardless of them being members or not, such as the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” and the “Chamber of Commerce of Bern” (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021) (Bern Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2021).

For companies, being part of a chamber of commerce is seen as a business strategy, making them more likely to be chosen by consumers or perceived as more reputable (The Shapiro Group, 2012). Chamber of commerce usually mentions their members in their websites and articles, meaning the companies name may sound more familiar to consumers, influencing them to become clients. Being associated with a

chamber of commerce also means that the company name will, more likely, be more searched on the internet and that their ranks in search engines such as Google will go up, meaning they will reach more people and become more recognizable (Mertes, 2021). Chambers of commerce are the outstanding and predominant partners in the business private sector internationally. This partnership is due to the factor that they work as intermediaries between different companies of the same sector that operate in different countries, meaning they are the ones that own and share the information of the different companies, they organized and provide the opportunities for the companies to work together, such as conferences and commerce fairs. (B. Bennett, 2011). Just as the "Camera di Commercio di Parma" (2009) states, chambers of commerce are public bodies that generate activities that care for the general interest of the business development and the local economies, while being equipped with practicable autonomy, having their statute and their agency of action. They must have translucent governance, being a separated group that has to put the interests of the business community first (B. Bennett, 2011). It should be noted that the key function of a chamber of commerce is to bring businesses together, as a third party that represents their needs and mediates communication, to make economic growth possible (Bridgeman, 2020). To Pilgrim & Meier (1995), the goal of a chamber of commerce should be to sway the government to provide a more auspicious environment to the creation and sustenance of business, while being non-profit, having their budget and, being representative of a certain area or territory (country or town). The cooperation between thee lawmakers and business entities is considered to be essential, as the latter are undoubtedly affected by regulation and policies (Reay, 2018). Internationally, many chambers of commerce may be a government organ, such as in countries like Germany and France or not, being independent bodies like most chambers of commerce in England and the United States (B. Bennett, 2011). Nationally, chambers of commerce are independent but recognized by the Portuguese government as an official entity, like the "Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo" (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021).

There are two predominant models within the chambers of commerce, under two different configurations: public and private law. When a chamber is under public law, that means that it is legislated by the national government, yet they are not a part of it: they can be consulted but do not have a final say. Most of the time, it is obligatory for the businesses to be a member to enjoy the benefits. The chambers of commerce of this

model are usually established in the European Union, in countries such as France, Portugal, and Italy. (International Chamber of Commerce, 2020). Chambers of commerce that are under the jurisdiction of the private law are open to all, and membership is optional. They are more typical in Anglo-Saxonian countries and are seen as more self-reliant, meaning they are not as tied to the government, have their own rules and limitations (B. Bennett, 2011). Private law chambers of commerce tend to have the structure of a company, composed of a board of administrators and directors with different responsibilities, unlike the public law chambers, that resemble more a government structure (Mersin Ozsungur & Karadal, 2020).

Presented in a more structured form, we can find here the advantages of being a member of the chamber of commerce (Mertes, 2021) (Bank, 2020) (Dewitt, 2016):

<p><u>Networking</u></p> <p>The possibility to get to know other businesses in the community or internationally, know of more business opportunities, and understand the new tendencies of each sector.</p>
<p><u>Credibility</u></p> <p>Increase the positive perception and desirability the customers, making the business more reputable and trustworthy.</p>
<p><u>Publicity</u></p> <p>Chambers of commerce often mentions their members and therefore, publicizes them and make them more recognizable to the consumers.</p>
<p><u>Legal Support</u></p> <p>Chambers of commerce will help businesses in their legal and specialized juridical consulting.</p>
<p><u>Business-oriented events</u></p> <p>Members have access to conferences, webinars, fairs, and similar events that give them a deeper entrepreneurial insight.</p>

Above all, a chamber of commerce is greatly beneficial due to all the factors previously mentioned, but especially because it is a hub for promoting relationships between companies and their clients, supporting each other by providing their experiences, ideas, and potential opportunities. All of the previously mentioned benefits

complement the communication and interaction that takes place between companies, the industry, and their clients, in the form of commerce fairs, webinars, or advertisements (Bridgeman, 2020). A chamber of commerce is a unique way of connecting with other companies of the same sector from all over the world and those who are not part of one, may risk losing valuable opportunities (Mertes, 2021).

On the other hand, a chamber of commerce may not be a safe investment for every company, as it most of the times means an financial expenditure that may not be fruitful, if the chamber of commerce does not have the company's best interest at heart or if they are not qualified for the specific sector of the company (Dewitt, 2016).

2.2 The chamber role in international and national business

To understand the role of a chamber of commerce in international and national business, it is relevant to also understand the notion of interculturality. Interculturality refers to different agents from different cultures interacting with each other (Sarmento, 2015), resulting in unpredictable combinations and a plurality of backgrounds and how this translates into a heterogeneous synergy. This concept must not be confused with multiculturalism, which refers to the respectful coexistence of different cultures without interaction and cooperation (Nasar Meer & Modood, 2021). On the other hand, according to Zapata-Barrero (2017), interculturalism is a “post-multiculturalism era”, in the way that interculturalism, the contact between different cultures, only exists if those same cultures already coexist.

A chamber of commerce, whether big or small, may have very diverse ways of acting in their community, nationally, developing the local economy, or internationally, assisting businesses from their area to be recognized outside their country. Those who wish to interact with other cultures must put on a dynamic effort, questioning the rules and concepts of cultural interaction (Sarmento, 2014), making an effort to achieve high levels of openness and flexibility: chambers of commerce may show support and service in that. Misunderstandings are common when communicating across cultures and companies must be aware of intercultural challenges, so they do not show inflexibility or lack of empathy. In different cultures, there are different ways of understanding hierarchy and its importance, diverse approaches to decision making, or social norms, such as punctuality and formality (Ayres, 2019) (Dzenowagis, 2008). Chambers of commerce can formulate e-mails or campaigns for companies that want to

reach different countries, provide opportunities such as conferences and commerce fairs so that cross-cultural networking can happen and be there to mediate it, making sure that the right message is being passed between cultures (Intercultural Chamber of Commerce, 2021).

Chambers of commerce are organizations specially focused on their members, promoting activities or services as a way to enhance their members' businesses opportunities is, in a practical sense, justifying their existence. They may have a service catalog, in which they present clear and transparent criteria of what they could offer a business, nationally or internationally (Pilgrim & Meier, 1995). In national and international business, one of the roles of a chamber of commerce is to do market research, which means, gather information for companies so they can make informed business decisions (Malholtra Naresh et al., 2017). Market research is essential when a new product needs to be introduced into the market or a big change that needs to be implemented in a company (such as rebranding or resources allocation), knowing if they need improvements or adjustments, reducing the financial risk or cost and, overall, helping the company to grow. This research may be presented by statistics from a specific country, sector, product typology, along with real possibilities and options for the potential product and other details, such as distribution. Market research usually aims to answer questions like: “Does the market needs this product/change?”, “Can the product/change be more cost/benefit efficient?” or “Who is the target audience and how to reach them?” (Johnson, 2018). A chamber of commerce helps its members, a certain business or company, to better understand and reach their clients.

A chamber of commerce may also do legal, juridical, and fiscal consulting for companies, something essential in assisting the quality, longevity, and overall good conditions of a business. Priyadarshini (2020) holds the view that this kind of consulting is very important for the structure and organization of any business, helping them prevent legal risk (in all sectors of action), such as complications in commercial exchanges, and improving their chances for growth. Benson (2021) comments that financial consulting is focused on helping clients understand their capital and how to better use it in favor of their needs: this may mean suggesting a certain type of investment or portfolio management.

Since 1814, the date in which occurred the first business conference in Vienna as the “Congress of Viena”, business conferences are essential for corporations and

enterprises and chambers of commerce have been playing an important role in it, nationally and internationally (Väänänen, 2020). These kinds of events are important to make new products known to the public or the industry, receive and give information and get knowledge on the sector of business, project new company strategies or revise present ones and renew the enthusiasm of the team (Footner & Manager, 2017). Exchange of ideas and perceptions are very important in business, especially in similar sectors in different countries and chambers of commerce have been instrumental in bringing those companies (many times from different countries or different parts of the same countries) together, by organizing these business conferences, finding the right relevant themes, preparing the budget and ensuring that contribute everything runs smoothly. Lately, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, chambers of commerce also organize webinars that contribute greatly to companies that want to reach a vast number of people, engaging both clients and entrepreneurs (Cristea, 2021). One of the main functions of most chambers of commerce is the promotion and coordination of commerce fairs, essential for international business (Popescu, 2016), a topic that later, in this text, it is going to be approached in more detail.

Based on the argument that one of the main missions of a chamber of commerce is to support economic growth, it is only logical that they operate to facilitate business contact (Jugănar, 2020). In this field of action, chambers of commerce organize delegations of companies to go on trade missions which are trips organized to explore business opportunities and also network between the two regions or countries (Campbell, 2019). Chambers of commerce also assist companies in marketing, they can either promote a company through a newsletter, publicizing on their website, or through mailing (Sanders, 2017). Facilitating business contacts may also mean translating a text/announcement or interpreting meetings in real-time, so the companies can reach a bigger audience, regardless of their cultural background or different mother tongue, instigating international business (John Blenkinsopp & Pajouh, 2010).

One of the associations that best compiles the values of chambers of commerce and is the acme of the international role that chambers of commerce have is the Eurochambre, as a product of the European Economic Community. The goal of this association is to epitomize and to speak on behalf of the European Chambers of Commerce; while assisting the European economic environment to thrive and to develop. They aim to defend the medium and small business interests through policy

progress, projects to advance European chambers of commerce (events like workshops or debates), and to give voice to the business community (Eurochambres, 2021). They also work to coordinate and unify the very different fiscal systems that currently exist in the European Union, facilitating economic integration and communication (Popescu, 2016).

The Eurochambre has different programs that take action from the European Union within it and the rest of the world, bringing businesses from different countries together: The “Consumer Law Ready” is a training program designed to make the small and mid-size enterprises from the European Union more cohesive, especially when it comes to the EU consumer laws, improving assurance and trust in international business; the “Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs” is a program that is based on the international exchange between a “new entrepreneur”, that will train in a company and give a foreign perspective and a “host entrepreneur”, that can benefit from new ideas, solutions and knowledge in areas that have not yet been explored in the company; the “AI-Invest 5.0” is a collaboration program to encourage investment, productivity and internationalization in Latin America, working with local chambers of commerce to boost the efficiency of micro-small and medium-sized companies (Eurochambres, 2021).

2.3 An intercultural approach: the Luso-Italian relations

Italy and Portugal have been influencing each other culturally, politically, and socially through generations, in a continuous exchange (Nascimento, 2008). It is believed, for instance, that the creation of the Portuguese “Estado Novo” was influenced by the extreme right politics of Italy, having Italian fascist documents on its basis and Italian catholic influences (Accornero et al., 2017). At this time, Italy was mostly represented in Portugal by the “Fascio di Lisbona (Fulcieri Paolucci de Calboli).”, doing fascist propaganda, and by “Casa D’Italia”, in which were later reunited all of Italian representation (“Consolato, Fascio, Doposcuola, Camera di Commercio, Istituto Luso Italiano, Ufficio dell’Addetto Commerciale”) (Rocchi, 2007).

After the second world war, the diplomatic and cultural relations between Portugal and Italy have become closer, as both countries were part of the projects made to unify the world in peace and cooperation, such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Matos, 2014). After the disintegration of the Portuguese

fascist regime, the approximation of values and social goals between Italy and Portugal became even stronger, as they started to share democratic political principles (Dei Schirò, 1997). There are many ways in which the Italian culture is celebrated in Portugal, and according to d'Archirafi (2018), there is an enthusiasm about Italian culture in Portugal (for example, the “Week of Italian Gastronomy”, that happened simultaneously in Porto and Lisbon between 19th and 25th of November 2018) that reflects the cultural, diplomatic, commercial and social relation shared by the two nations. The President of the Portuguese Republic Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, in his first mandate agrees, that the cultural background shared between Italy and Portugal is strong and that the scientific and economic Portuguese community in Italy is very significant for both countries (Sousa, 2016). Both countries share the Mediterranean diet, linking their habits, culture, and people in an even stronger way (Noone, 2018).

Artistically, Italy has always been at the forefront and therefore influenced several European countries, including Portugal. Italian art is highly represented in Italian collections, but Portuguese artists also create in Italian lands, with the painter Álvaro Pires being registered as one of the first to paint in Italy, more specifically in Pisa, such as the paintings in the “Tini Palace” and the “Anunciação” (Nascimento, 2008) (Salema, 2019). Nowadays, artistically and culturally, Italy has a great representation in associations like “Associazione Socio Culturale Italiana Del Portogallo Dante Alighieri”, which focuses on the dissemination of the Italian culture and language, while creating events to promote Italian regions or teaching Italian for all ages (ASCIP Dante Alighieri, 2021). In Italy, Portuguese culture is being represented, for example, by the “Embasciata di Portogallo in Italia” and the “Istituto Portoghese di Sant’Antonio in Roma” that emphasize the importance of the Portuguese heritage (Ambasciata del Portogallo in Italia, 2021) (IPSAR, 2021). According to Lanciani (2014), Italian translator and professor of Portuguese and Brazilian literature, culture in Portugal and Italy have very similar roles, in which they do not receive support or investment like other sectors. Since the XV century, due to the merchants from Florence and Venice that started to do business in Portugal, there is a strong and significant Italian presence in the country, mainly in Lisbon, meaning that there is a community with their Italian heritage that still influences Portuguese culture. One example, among many possible others, is of this influence was the tradition of the construction of triumphal arches, by the Italian consulate Lorenzo Ginori (Cassino, 2015).

The Italian population residing in Portugal has increased exponentially in recent years, with a growth of 50% of Italian citizens between 2015 and 2016 (d'Archirafi, 2018). In 2018, there was a record of 14400 Italians living in Portugal, while in 2016 they were only 6000 (Ferreira, 2019). In comparison, according to studies conducted in 2019 by (ISTAT - Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2019), 6275 Portuguese are living in Italy (2778 men and 3497 women), making up 0, 13% of the foreigners living in Italy. According to the statistics, around 7000 Portuguese people are living in Italy, many of them being students (Lusa, 2019). There is a growing number of Italian academics that come to Portugal or include Portugal in the execution of investigations or studies, which means that the academic and cultural collaboration between the two countries is growing stronger and reflects a bond between the nations. This is positive for both countries, as it encourages collaboration and work opportunities for the Italian and Portuguese people (Accornero et al., 2017). In the words of Morabito (2016): "European Union, economy and migrants are not enough to explain the harmony between Italy and Portugal. There is something deeper that unites the two countries, a subtle thread made of culture, openness to dialogue, and a common history".

2.3.1 Mapping the Luso-Italian: business interaction

After the economic crisis was resolved in the mid of 2010's decade, both Italy and Portugal were in the same situation, regarding the EU, in which, to reduce their debt, they must stimulate the economy, create job opportunities, and promote investment (Morabito, 2016). In 2017, Italian exports to Portugal had an increase of more than 14%, and additionally, the rise in Portuguese exports to Italy followed the rise and increased by 12.7% (d'Archirafi, 2018). The Italian market was the one that grew the most in 2019, when it comes to exportation, making it a threat to big economies like the United States (Ferreira, 2019). Also, between the years 2017 and 2018, the Italian investment in Portugal was 814 million euros (Ferreira, 2019). Exportation from Portugal to Italy, the fourth-biggest European economy, grew 10% in the decade of the 2010s. This means that Italy became, in 2018, the sixth client of Portuguese exportations (Lusa, 2019b). The value of exportation from Portugal to Italy in 2016 was 1712815€, in 2017 was 1939960€, and in 2018 of 2450574€ (Vaz & Sousa, 2019). Most of the exportation to Italy is in the sectors of machinery and equipment, chemicals, vehicles and other transport equipment, common metals, and food products (AICEP - Portugal Global, 2021). Concurrently, the most exported products in Portugal

are vehicles and other transport equipment, machines and apparatus, and common metals (Vaz & Sousa, 2019). Portuguese and Italian companies benefit a lot from the facilitation of transport between the two countries, making the exportations and importations less expensive, even when in small quantities, making it even more beneficial to small and medium businesses. (Costa, 2017).

Santi Cianci, president of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Portugal, stated at "D'Italia", a conference to promote business between Italy and Portugal held at the Lisbon Congress Center by "Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo" in 2019, that between the years of 2016 and 2018, the commercial relationship between Portugal and Italy was reinforced, as the automotive sector boosted both economies. The president also mentioned how the Portuguese brands are becoming more and more recognized in Italy, making them a reference especially in the textile, construction, and footwear sector (Ferreira, 2019). According to Costa (2017), there is still a lot that can be done when it comes to instigating the trade and commercial relationship of the two countries, especially for companies of both countries that can start to import or export in new sectors, such as technology. Eduardo Souto de Moura, the director of AICEP Milan, believes that, while Italy is well integrated with-the Portuguese market, Portugal is less relevant in the Italian economy. The director states that the technology sector should be more explored, especially by Portuguese companies, since there are opportunities created by the necessities of the Italian government to introduce new Portuguese products in the Italian market, such as protection of digital payments (Costa, 2017).

2.4 Case-study: commerce fairs

The roots of the “fair” concept can be traced back to its original word “feria”, in Latin, which means “fairness of the market” or “vacation” (UFI, 2011). In the Roman and Egyptian empires, there were already fairs, both religious and pagan, which grew in importance with the increase in the value of the currency (Alemán et al., 1993). Even in the Bible, in the new and old testament, there are already references to fairs that would happen periodically (UFI, 2011). That commercial tradition went on from the middle age, increasing in the 12th century as the marketers and vendors grew in number, until today, some consider to be the best time to participate and produce commerce fairs (Hacker, 2017).

Following the history and present of commerce fairs, it is inevitable to address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in the industry of commerce fair and how the future will look like after the world's recovery (Conerly, 2021). During the pandemic, most exhibitions either stopped, postponed, or were held virtually, having their participation being lower when compared to previous years (Center for Exhibition Industry Research, 2020). Most commercial fairs held virtually were developed as regular video calls, with different video call rooms, representing areas of a physical commerce fair. There were noted some advantages to this online format, such as the possibility of users to control the conversation, ending up obtaining the most relevant information to them (Hyken, 2020). Even though the commercial results of companies were not affected by their not attendance during the pandemic, the commercial fairs must come back with increased importance, as the companies that do not take part in them will miss an opportunity to showcase their new products or grow the value of their older products. The financial efforts made by companies on a paid advertisement during the pandemic will now be relocated to paying the trips, fees, and costs associated with participating in commerce fairs (Conerly, 2021) (Jacobs, 2021).

Commerce fairs also referred to as trade fairs, shows, or exhibitions, are events that focus on the marketing and dissemination of products or companies, most times of the same sector, for a public of clients, possible buyers, decision-makers, or other companies that could be interested in making business (Domingos, 2018). UFI (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry) states that exhibitions play a very important role in international business, as they create unique opportunities to showcase products or ideas from all over the world while creating bonds between different companies from different countries (UFI, 2019a). Kirchgeorg (2010) classifies commerce fairs as services, since they promote opportunities for companies to present themselves positively, while demonstrating that they are important to the economy of the specific sector they are representing. The main purposes of commerce fairs are to exchange experiences between companies, such as know-how but also to publicize themselves, generating secondary effects on the local economy (hotels, restaurants, transports) and the promotion of international trade (United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2019).

Also according to UFI, there is a difference between a commerce fair and a trade show, even though, nowadays, they are used interchangeably most of the time. A

commerce fair aims to present companies so they can sell products or services, usually focused on a specific sector or market. A trade show can, as most times does, mean the same thing as a commerce fair, but it can also refer exclusively to a perspective of showcasing and marketing, not selling (UFI, 2011). In the words of the President & CEO of Messe Düsseldorf GmbH, one of the biggest fair organizers in the world:

“The exhibition business has developed into a global-player industry. It substantially contributes to building global networks, plays a crucial role in the development of economic regions, and opens up new markets for export and trade especially for medium-sized business.” (W. M. Dornscheidt, comunicação pessoal, 2017).

Although the commerce fair industry was negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, having most of the events postponed or even canceled, it is expected that commerce fairs are still going to be a prominent factor in international business and should regain or even increase their importance over time (Conerly, 2021).

2.4.1 Recognizing: commerce fairs and sectors

There are all sorts of fairs, framed in numerous different types of sectors. This great variety includes fairs from all over the world, providing services to companies, people, organizers, exhibitors, and associations from different 6 continents (Kötter, 2020). According to NTrade Shows (2021), the most operating and alive sectors are agriculture, food, drinks, technology and equipment, automobile, health, and medicine. Business, energy, industrial fairs, services, art construction, leisure, sports, furnishings, beauty, education, furniture, home, decoration, natural, environment, and tourism are also evolving sectors.

In the sectors of food, drink, and agriculture, one of the most relevant fairs is the Anuga, Cologne, the leading global commerce fair in the sector, representing the food industry in 10 different subsectors (Anuga, 2021). It is also significant to mention fairs like the International Food & Drink Event - IFE London, Food Expo Greece, and Sial Paris (Milanov, 2015). In the sector of technology, Viva Technology stands out. This commerce fair brings the European “tech scene” together in Paris yearly (Viva Technology, 2021). When it comes to automobiles, the Automechanika is the leading commerce fair in the sector, having 15 exhibitions worldwide in cities like Shanghai, Moscow, Frankfurt am Main, Birmingham, and Buenos Aires (Automechanika, 2021). In the field of health and medicine, MEDICA in Germany is a commerce fair that

gathers all the health-related innovations worldwide and is an important event for the medical community (MEDICA, 2021)

<u>Biggest venues for trade shows and commerce fairs worldwide</u>			
Venue's name	Location	Dimension	Complementary Information
The National Exhibition and Convention Center Shanghai	Shanghai, China	1,470,000 m ²	Hosts the largest commercial fairs and conventions of China yearly
Canton Fair Complex China Import and Export Fair	Guangzhou, China	1,131,000 m ²	Focused on promoting the Chinese trade
Fiera Milano	Milan, Italy	753,000 m ²	Hosts international exhibitions since 1920
Hannover Fairground	Hannover, Germany	554,000 m ²	Hosts Hannover Messe, one of the biggest trade fairs in the world
Koelnmesse	Cologne, Germany	284,000 m ²	Having organized more than 5,000 events in the last 7 decades
McCormick Place Convention Center	Chicago, USA	248,000 m ²	Has been awarded by the Trade Show Exhibitors Association, American Council of Engineering Companies, American Institute of Architects, and others
Paris Nord Villepinte Exhibition Center	Paris, France	246,000 m ²	Hosts forerunner events like Paris Motor Show and the Foire de Paris and the International Agriculture

			Show
Kunming Dianchi Convention & Exhibition Center	Yunan, China	233,100 m ²	Has 23 different exhibition halls that support facilities around them such as hotels and transportation companies
Orange County Convention Center	Florida, USA	200,000 m ²	Focused on economic development at regional, national and international level
NEC Birmingham	Birmingham, England	190,000 m ²	Hosts over 2.3 million guests yearly
Neue Messe München	Munich, Germany	180,000 m ²	Has over 70 international representatives in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America
BolognaFiere	Bologna, Italy	140,000 m ²	Hosts 75 events in Italy and organizing 25 events abroad
Feria Valencia	Valencia, Spain	98,500 m ²	The largest exhibition center in Spain
Messe Frankfurt	Frankfurt am Main, Germany	96,000 m ²	Part of a global company employing almost 2500 people
Gran Via Barcelona Venue	Barcelona, Spain	60,000 m ²	Founded in 1932, combining public ownership and autonomous management

Large venues and strategically located in economically developed cities like these allow commerce fairs, globally, to gather around 4.5 million companies and 303

million visitors, that expend together around 116 billion euros, making them part of an economically and socially significant industry (UFI, 2019b).

**CHAPTER III – THE INTERNSHIP AT “CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
ITALIANA PER IL PORTOGALLO”**

3.1 Introduction: contextual information

To conclude my master's degree in "*Intercultural Studies for Business*" in ISCAP, I chose to effectuate a curricular internship. The internship was done in "Camera di Commercio Italiana Per Il Portogallo", in the Porto delegation, in Rua da Restauração 409, 1º andar. This company operates as a chamber of commerce, building a commercial bridge between Portugal and Italy, organizing webinars, facilitating participation in commerce fairs, doing translations, and other commercial assistance.

The internship had a duration of 4 months or 600 hours, meaning I started the internship experience on the 1st February of 2021 and ended it on the 1st June of 2021. I did my work from 9h00, stopping at 13h00 for an hour for lunch and then, start again at 14h00 until 17h30, making up a total of 37 hours and 30 minutes of weekly workload. Even though it was meant to be in presence, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown ruling the first months of the year, the internship started remotely, for a month and two weeks. It only initiated partially in person on the 16th March of 2021, in which I only worked physically in the "Camera di Commercio Italiana Per Il Portogallo" during the mornings, from 9h00 to 13h00, and then resume at 14h00 already at home.

This internship resulted from my interest in Italy, its culture, and language, as well as from my enthusiasm to understand better the commercial role of Italy in our country and to be introduced and gain experience in the business environment. I was able to contact the "Camera di Commercio Italiana Per Il Portogallo" by e-mail, requesting an internship opportunity and sending my "curriculum vitae", to which they opportunely answered, accepting me as an intern. The content of my work plan will be better described further ahead in this report.

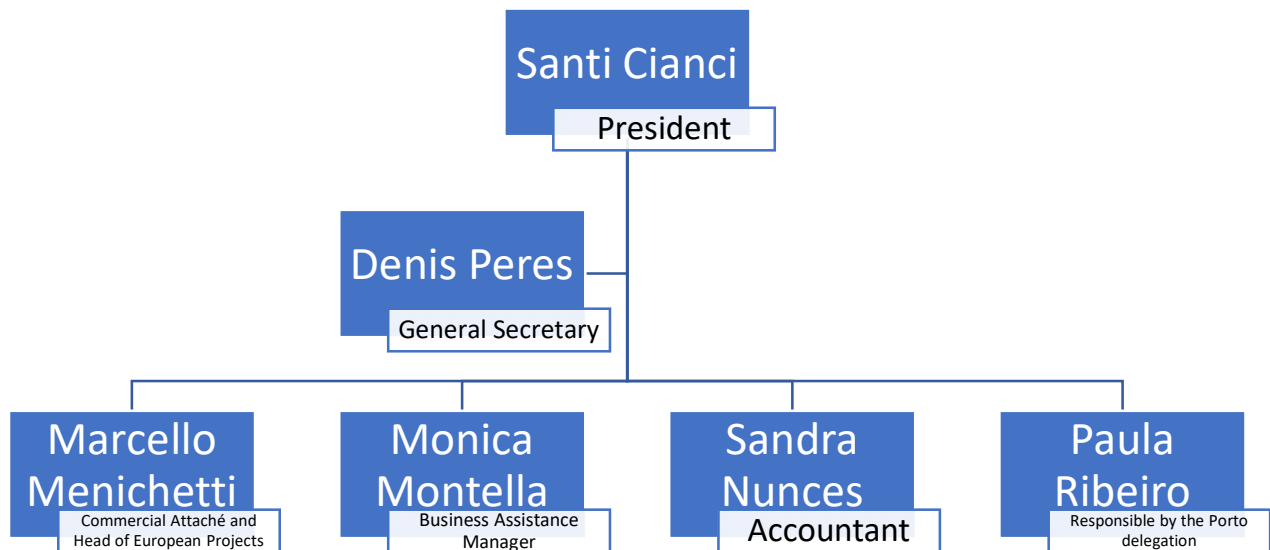
3.2 Camera di Commercio Italiana Per Il Italiano: host company

The "Camera di Commercio Italiana Per Il Portogallo" is a chamber of commerce that serves the luso-italian business interests (Assocamerestero, 2021). It was founded at the beginning of the year of 1916 by a group of 10 Portuguese and 12 Italian entrepreneurs. It was recognized by the Italian government in 1918. In 1928, the Porto delegation was inaugurated, to represent the north region of the country and their

commercial interests. Even though most of the early archive was lost, it is still possible to determine that in the year 1937 it had a total of 170 members (64 Portuguese and 100 Italians) and that between the years 1939-1945 the chamber interrupted its functions due to war conflicts. In the following years, there was an expansion of the “Camera di Commercio Italiana Per Il Portogallo” structure, counting 318 members in 1966, improvement of facilities and services and prestige in Portugal (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021).

Nowadays, this chamber of commerce has about 250 members and a strong presence in the market. Its structure has headquarters in Lisbon and a delegation in Porto, in Rua da Restauração 409, 1º floor, sharing the building with the Italian Consulate in Porto and ASCIP Dante Alighieri, an Italian cultural association. The structure of the delegation in Porto is constituted only by Paula Ribeiro, responsible for the Porto delegation, meaning she is the only employee working there, alongside eventual interns (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021) (Cianci, 2021).

“Camera di Commercio per il Portogallo” Structure



3.2.2 Description of the main activity:

A chamber of commerce's main purpose is to support and cooperate with companies, so it is only logical that one of their main activities is the assistance given to companies. The “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” offers information services such as market research and legal and tax information, while also organizing conferences and webinars about topics that may interest the companies, including their associates. They also organize missions and delegations, in which they organized the meeting agenda, mailing, marketing, and the mailing involved in the delegation or mission. They also offer specialized consulting services such as contractual assistance, business incubation services, and credit recovery. They make commercial information available to companies, being those balance sheets of Portuguese companies or financial and banking statements (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2015) (Montera, 2002).

The company assistance offered by the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” can be especially useful in the process of an Italian citizen starting a company in Portugal. This chamber of commerce may facilitate the access to financial benefits and support, logistical, and bureaucratic support, as well as gather information on the Portuguese market, giving the Italian company a privileged perception on how to position itself of the commercial dynamics of the country (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021).

To benefit commerce and companies, this chamber of commerce provides publicity concerning commerce fairs (via mailing or phone calls, mainly), explaining to companies of different sectors why a certain commerce fair is of their interest and how they would benefit from participating in it. This also means the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” must elaborate and constantly update databases of contacts of companies of different sectors, likewise their history in commerce fairs participation and interests. They also must differentiate between companies that could be exhibitors (small or medium companies with a product to sell or promote) from those who could be buyers (bigger companies, usually wholesalers that can be interested in purchasing from the exhibitors). Examples of exhibitions that the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” looks for exhibitors are MadeExpo and Host, both in Milan, both happening in “Fiera Milano”. On the other hand, this chamber of commerce also looks

for buyers, for example for “TuttoFood”, another commerce fair organized by “Fiera Milano” (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2015, 2021)

<u>Practical action regarding commerce fairs</u>	
Study and analysis	Reception of information about the trade fairs by the organizing entities (e.g. "Fiera Milano") and study on the concepts, specificities, strengths of the trade fair in question;
Databases	Construction or update of databases of companies that could be interested in the trade fair in question, due to the sector or international market for which it is intended. The database contains information such as official company name, sector, various contacts, participation in previous trade fairs, and other relevant details;
Contact	Writing and sending to companies an email presenting the trade fair in question, attaching brochures with detailed information and prices. Updating the database with responses to the email, interested or not. After contact by e-mail, telephone contact in which the fair is presented and the benefits it would have for the company. Updating the database with the answers obtained;
Follow-up	Monitoring companies that are interested in participating in the fair, helping them to fill in registration forms, organize all the bureaucracy, find accommodation in the city where the trade fair in question will take place, and transport to it, as well

	as any other details.
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Furthermore, the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” also offers translation services, as the search for internationalization by small and medium-sized companies has increased the demand for translation services, facilitating communication between two different cultures with different ways of expressing themselves. According to statistics, only 30% of people who access the internet understand English, which means that translation into each person's mother tongue is essential for a broader reach and the demand for translation services by companies has been increasing by 15% to 20% over the last 5 years (Dutton, 2021) (EBR, 2019) (Consuelo, 2018).

This chamber of commerce offers specialized translation and interpreting services from Italian to Portuguese and from Portuguese to Italian, mainly of websites of companies that want to reach a bigger and more international audience. The chamber of commerce has a team of highly experienced professional staff and collaborators that must research about the sector and specificities of the product or company to whom they are translating, to be certain to translate all the concepts correctly (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021).

By providing all these services, the “Cammera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” attempts to actively impact in a positive way the mutual service between Portugal and Italy and their development in trade and economic improvement. This chamber of commerce also assists companies in the process of becoming more international, not only in Portuguese and Italian territories but also in the rest of the world (Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo, 2021).

**CHAPTER IV – PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE: REPORT ON THE
ACTIVITIES**

4.1 General overview: recognizing the chamber dynamics

As mentioned previously, the internship was carried out from 1st February of 2021 and ended the 1st June of 2021. In the first month and two weeks, I was doing the internship remotely, meaning I would stay at home and complete the tasks that were assigned to me. My supervisor, Paula Ribeiro, would contact me through the “Microsoft Teams” platform, in which we could share files, written messages, and video conferences.

During my first day, I had a video conference with Paula Ribeiro and Denise Peres, the general secretary that explained to me that the main activities of the north delegation of the chamber were the assistance to commerce fairs and translations. Therefore, throughout my internship, I was given information on the commerce fairs I would be working on, their sectors and contacts of companies, as well as isolated tasks that could be needed.

On 16th March, my internship started to be partially done in presence (only during mornings) and I would go to the building of the north delegation of the “Camera di Commercio per il Portogallo”. I would spend the day in the office room assisting Paula in all the tasks, as well as contacting companies that were members of the chamber or that could be interested in participating in the commerce fairs.

To accomplish the goal of organizing the commerce fairs, the chamber of commerce had various excel sheets on every specific commerce fair. During my internship, the commerce fairs that were being prepared were “Made Expo”, a fair on architecture and construction, “TuttoFood”, a fair about the agro-food industry, “Host”, a fair regarding hotels and tourism, and “ExpoMecanica”, a fair in Leça da Palmeira about the automobile industry. For instance, the excel sheet regarding “TuttoFood” has the names, contacts, and relevant information (such as past attendance to similar events) of Portuguese companies of the agro-food industry that could be interested in promoting their products/services in this commerce fair. After all, information is gathered and updated; the companies are informed via e-mail about all the characteristics of the fair, advantages, dates, and costs. In case there is no response, the companies are contacted by phone call, in which we would present and explain the fair, trying to understand if it is of any interest to the company. My experience during this stage of the internship is that it was difficult to obtain responses from companies and most of the ones that would

answer, declined the participation in the commerce fairs due to problems caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, such as financial difficulties, health precautions, postponing of commerce fairs and uncertainty regarding the future. When the companies were interested in participating in the commerce fair, we would fill in all their information on a specific platform. In the case of “TuttoFood” and “Host”, commerce fairs organized by Fiera Milano, the platform is called MyMatching. This platform was created to put buyers and exhibitors of fairs in contact, allowing them to know more about the companies before the execution of the fair, using companies' “personal” profiles, advanced search, and request appointments between companies (Fiera Milano, 2021). The next step in the organization of the commerce fairs would be to assist the booking of flights and accommodation in the cities in which the commerce fairs take place, but I did not execute those tasks. Finally, the chamber of commerce assists the companies during the commerce fair, another step of the process I was not able to witness.

During these stages of my internship, I was able to apply much knowledge acquired during my master degree, such as in “Intercultural Communication Technologies”, in which I was able to understand how context can be very relevant when communicating with companies regarding intercultural backgrounds, such as the high and low context concepts, in which you either need a bigger or smaller understanding of the context to get the broader message, respectively (J. M. Bennett, 2015). For instance, I could comprehend the interests or barriers of a company when it came to participate in the commerce fairs and if they were related to interculturality. I was also capable to put into use the notions acquired in “Culture and Development”, including the crescent trust about making business between countries of the European Union (such as Italy and Portugal), and the influence of ideas like the “global village”, meaning the world is becoming more unified and nationalities mean less, on making companies want to exhibit their products internationally (Chrystall, 2016).

4.2 Chambers of commerce: an internal and external perspective

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there were not many events promoted by the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”, and therefore, I did not have any contact with other chambers of commerce. The only two events that I took part in were the “Italian technologies to fight the pandemic” and “Automotive - Risks and Forces of

supply chains”. The “Italian technologies to fight the pandemic” took place in a Zoom conference, 10th of March 2021, had the endorsement of the Italian Trade Agency, Italian Embassy in Lisbon, and Association of Italian Researchers in Portugal, and had the goal to promote the technologies of five companies (associates of the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”) that were created to fight the pandemic (AEP - Associação Empresarial de Portugal, 2021). This webinar presented Italian companies such as “Jonix”, “Seco” and “Biovitae” which presented technologies such as air sanitation solutions and infrared lights that clean surfaces, as the importance of health and hygiene grows for companies, resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Regarding the “Automotive – Risks and Forces of supply chains”, it took place in a Zoom meeting on 28th April and its main goal was to discuss solutions for the automotive sector that was greatly affected by the pandemic. The main speaker of this webinar was José Couto, the president of AFIA (Manufacturers Association for the Automobile Industry), as he reflected on the impact of the pandemic on the automotive industry in the world, in Europe and Portugal, like the decrease in production, the weight of industry in the national economy and employment in the automotive sector. José Couto also assured that the future behavior of the automotive industry will be to remain competitive and contribute to the domestic product, overcoming political and economic issues in the European context.

Alternatively, the north delegation of the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” has a major contact with other Italian representatives in Portugal, such as the Italian Consulate in Porto and the “Associazione Socio-Culturale Italiana del Portogallo Dante Alighieri”, as they are in the same building. For instance, all three joined to prepare for the arrival of the Italian delegation for the occasion of the Porto Social Summit 2021, preparing a room and some food so they could work and reflect on the matters discussed at the Summit.

During my internship, I was assigned to contact all the companies that were members of the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo”, inviting them to represent themselves in a periodical online reunion, happening on the 14th of May of 2021, to discuss matters that were not made known to me. If the top representative of the company could not be present, they could designate another person to represent their company. During these contacts, I would also inform the companies to regulate their quotas, so they could continue to be a member of the chamber of commerce.

4.3 Files management

From 1997 until 2010, the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” provided professional courses in various fields, such as painting, public relations, conservation of sculptures, administration, and others. These courses were financed by the European public fund and, therefore, all the files and documents regarding these courses had to be kept for an eventual inspection. The files concerning the courses were all kept together and unorganized over the years and it was my job to organize the courses and all the paperwork concerning the courses such as enrollment files, class lists, evaluations, and certificates, as well as identify the works made (essays, paintings, sculptures, and media) and assign them to the respective students so that they could later pick them up.

All of these files and works were stored, unorganized, for more than a decade in a warehouse in Maia and since the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” was no longer legally obliged to keep them, they intended to organize them and discard all the files, such as classes reports, attendance registers, and theory content support, that were not needed and keep only the records necessary, such as enrollment files, class lists, evaluations, and diplomas. To do that, the files had to be picked up from the warehouse, and therefore, I searched and contacted various moving companies, considering the quality of the services they offered, their availability, and their cost. After presenting different possibilities to Paula Ribeiro, she decided on MOOVAX. I contacted them, explaining the number of folders that needed to be picked up (around 2000) and discussed the best way to do that, whether it could be transported to the 1st floor (where the files management would happen) manually or if it would be needed to install an elevator. Later that week, one representant of MOOVAX came in the Porto delegation of the “Cammera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” for a visit in which I guided him through the space, and he studied the area, concluding that the files should be transported manually, as the installation of an exterior elevator would require a license from the town hall, which would increase the cost of the procedure. The day after that, 1st April, a team of five men came and for three hours, transported all the files from their trucks to our designated room on the 1st floor.

In the following two months, Paula Ribeiro and I organized all the files regarding all the courses that took place there between 1997 and 2010. For instance, the

files of the course of “Conservação e Restauro de Cerâmica Arqueológica” that happened in 2006, had to be separated from the files of the same course that happened in different years. Therefore, we would have to check the dates of the different files and organize them accordingly, considering that there were courses that had different classes in the same year, creating class 1, class 2, or class 3. Each class of each course of each year would then have different folders with different kinds of content. For instance, the second class of the course of “Gestão da Fiscalidade Empresarial” that happened in 1998 would have a folder “A”, containing the curriculums, enrollment certificates, interview notes, and observations, as well as the same type of documents of the teachers of the course and the program of the content of the course. On the other hand, folder “B” contained the reports and summaries of each class, the observations that the teachers made of each student, and the attendance registers. The folder “C” contained every evaluation of every student and their course completion certificates and folder “D” all the programmatic content given to the students, such as textbooks copies, scientific articles, and practice exercises. The big majority of the files assigned to each folder (A, B, C, or D) would not fit on one single folder, creating the necessity to make folders A.1/A.2/A.3/A.4, B.1/B.2/B.3/B.4, and so on. As almost none of these folders were identified externally, our job would be to inspect every folder and access what course they were, considering the year and class they referred to and if its content was of an A, B, C, or D folder and, then determine if it was a .1, .2, .3 or .4.

Given the complexity of the task and the immensity of the folders that needed to be organized, our strategy was to focus on one specific course at a time, regardless of the year, class, or the typology of the folder, and gather all its folders in one corner of our room. Then, we would start to organize the folders by year, then class, and then by the typology of the folder. Finally, we would open each folder and discard all content that the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” was not legally obliged to keep, meaning we discarded all curriculums, interview notes and observations, summaries, and all the programmatic content and we kept the enrollment certificates, class lists, evaluations, and course completion certificates. All these files and the respective folders that were disposed of created a huge amount of paper clutter that had to be removed, and therefore I contacted LIPOR, a waste collection, and treatment company. They came in once a week to collect all the files and folders that needed to be removed and took them away.

While we would organize all the files regarding the courses, we would also look for the name of each participant of each course, one class at a time, and assign each of their works (essays, media in cd's and disks, paintings, and sculptures) to the respective student. This task also proved to be challenging because there was no numeric system to identify the students and most of the works were not identified by the student's full name, making it harder to distinguish between the students of the same courses of different years or different classes. We would investigate each work, trying to identify surnames, signatures that resembled or identify people's names by group works of the same class. Once we had all the works we could gather and identify from one class, we would take the students' enrollment certificate to obtain their contacts, so they could be informed that they had to pick up their works, otherwise they would be destroyed. I would first contact the students by e-mail and, if they did not respond, I would contact them by phone call. Finally, if the phone call would not be answered, I would send a text message as the last warning to pick up the works. To facilitate the process, an Excel sheet with the following information was created to centralize and organize the relevant data.

Full name of the student
E-mail
Phone number
Course
The number of works to be collected
Send date of the e-mail
Collection date

Due to the long period, since most of the courses occurred, it was sometimes difficult to contact the students, since most of them did not keep the same e-mail or phone number for 10, 15, or 20 years. When we did not obtain an answer for more than 15 days, the works would be deleted.

Although troublesome and demanding, this whole process was very gratifying since I was given a lot of autonomy on how to handle the organization and method of file management, as well as how to organize and contact the students for the collection of their works. This experience enriched my knowledge about files management and its

importance, to be able to consult a specific file in an organized way later or how alphabetical or numerical systems make a difference in advancing the management in a more efficient direction. It was especially rewarding to provide an opportunity for those students that hadn't seen their works in more than a decade and understand how much a course arranged by the "Cammaera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo", in some cases, changed the professional course of their lives.

4.4 Translation

During my internship, I was also asked to execute some translations, either from Italian to Portuguese, vice-versa, or from English to Portuguese. The first translation I was requested to do was of the "Manuale d'Usò Marchio", which is a manual created to promote the correct usage of the logo of the "Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo", directed to the associate companies or partners. The guide includes some guides on how to use their logo on social media or advertisement on their websites, with examples of what they should do or not do. The original document was in Italian, and I had to translate it to Portuguese, as well as all the text included in the explanatory images of the logos. The following translation that I was requested to do was of a guide to all the future interns about all the chamber's procedures and particularities. This guide included orientation on how to access and publish on the chamber's Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, website, the trustworthy websites in which the interns should search for information and models with specific rules to write in name of the "Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo". Lastly, I translated an internal informative document meant to be presented to the team of "Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo" about the "IPER – ICT to Promote Cultural Heritage" project, a European initiative meant to advertise European monuments to other Europeans to increase tourism within the European Union. This document was in English, and I had to translate it into Portuguese.

Never have I done something like that, I had to learn auto didactically some essential skills to execute a successful translation. I learned about how important the role of a translator is when it comes to keeping a translation truthful to the original text, making it a very challenging chore to look for the specific word needed that will not change the intended meaning. For instance, a pejorative term in Italian may have its

literal parallel in Portuguese, which does not mean that just because it means the same thing, has the same pejorative meaning. Therefore, I also apprehended how relevant cultural contexts are to understand different vernacular and how subjective topics can be harder to translate than concrete ones. For example, it is easier to translate an objective term such as “preventivo”, which in Italian means “budget” than to translate “abbiocco”, which in Italian refers to a specific sensation someone gets after eating. Consequently, I was able to make use of all the knowledge and intercultural input that I acquired during my classes in my master’s degree, such as in “Culture and Development II”, when we learned how to interpret “Cultural Metaphors”. This concept grapples with how some nations may look at a symbol, like a flower, and see a sign of masculinity and others a sign of femininity, meaning that a translator must be aware of those differences to provide a rightful translation of the same concepts.

**CHAPTER V – AN INTRODUCTION: THE IMPACT OF COMMERCE
FAIRS IN BUSINESS: THE CASE OF PORTUGUESE TEXTILE SECTOR IN
ITALY**

Commerce fairs are events with unique characteristics that can provide exhibitors, buyers, and visitors unique business opportunities. There are numerous advantages to attending a commerce fair, as the potential of meeting people in person which makes it easier to build trust that is essential for business, the opportunity to promote a company, their qualities, and their products to the worldwide yet specifically interested sector and the possibility to network for future business opportunities (Northern Ireland Business Info, 2021). Furthermore, commerce fairs are part of a more refined and highly developed evolution of global business, presenting their participants a centralized source of information about the international market, as well as business potential, estimate competition, and getting to know partners and possible opportunities that may arise with them (Sandeep, 2009). The biggest kinds of impact that trade shows may have on business are to bolster the sales to preexisting customers, by reassuring the confidence they can have on the company's products and overall quality, acquiring new customers that are unhappy with the service that they are receiving now somewhere else and that can find in their company a better response to their needs and, finally, attract buyers that are entering the market and look for a resolution to a new necessity (Conerly, 2021). On the other hand, commerce fairs are open to the general public and not only agents of a specific industry or sector, meaning they can reach a far bigger audience of consumers. A presence in a commerce fair not only means creating a cognizance of a brand to their equal brands in the field but also to the consumers, who may visit these events independently and enhance their image and recognition of a certain brand. Unlike regular advertisements, such as posters, commercials on TV or radio, the marketing done in commerce fairs gives the possibility to the visitors to see, touch, and, in some cases, test a company's product physically and first hand, not having to rely on a third-person perspective and experience (Queensland Government, 2020). Moreover, there is big press coverage in these events, with many reporters that will allow the company to reach a more conventional way of marketing, with news reports and press releases (Pilmer, 2017). According to Conerly (2021), the not-attendance to these commerce fairs can be very detrimental to a company's future survival in the market, as the "pick-up" of new customers are essential to the subsistence of a brand, as well as it is to understand the new tendencies of the specific sector they are a part of. One company that does not appear in these events may not even apprehend how disadvantageous it can be because they are not aware of the business opportunities they are missing or the new inclinations of the market as it

evolves through time. For a company, staying up to date regarding the new trends of the industry is essential for more effective decision making when it comes to resources application and new products releases, that can be vital for long term success (Council, 2019), and commerce fairs play a great role in that. Understanding what the competition has to offer and a way to counterpart that is a big perk of attending one of these events, since they are all focused on the same general public and therefore, it will be perceptible what other companies strategies are (Pilmer, 2017). Studies conducted in South Tangerang found that participating in commerce fairs is especially profitable and beneficial to small and medium companies, that have a unique and rare opportunity to promote their products at a bigger scale, at the same time as they amplify their business literacy, as commerce fairs tend to be a large hub of information exchange about the industry, sectors and overall business “know-how” (Fitriani et al., 2021). According to the Exhibition & Event Association of Australasia (2015), during the years of 2013 and 2014, more than 37 million people visited more than 412.000 business events in Australia and, as a result of that, generated 28 billion dollars in direct expenditure, 13.5 billion in direct value-added, 179,357 direct jobs and 23.1 billion total economic contributions.

On the other hand, participation in a commerce fair may come with some risks that can affect negatively the company’s business. The participation at a commerce fair is most times fairly high-priced, as it includes the trips (most times abroad), the accommodation, the entrance cost as a visitor, and/or the cost of participation, such as the square meters occupied by each company and various daily fees regarding space maintenance (Northern Ireland Business Info, 2021). Furthermore, the benefits from a fair are not guaranteed, as there is much competition focused in the same place (Pilmer, 2017), making it tougher for companies to stand out by themselves. If companies are not able to present themselves as innovative, approachable, and vivacious, it could potentially affect them negatively instead (Dugan, 2017). Therefore, commerce fairs require extensive preparation of weeks before the actual event, in an effort to understand what the focus of the business presentation should be, what kind of products should be brought to the exposition, what employees should attend the event, and the overall strategy. This preparation is all without the guarantee that there are going to be results in sales, as the promoters of the event do not secure any outcomes and yet, time and

resources from the company are being consumed on this unguaranteed (Queensland Government, 2020).

Commerce fairs can have a great impact on business, on specific companies (as they can boost their public image), and on a specific sector. The Portuguese textile industry is extremely important to the national economy, being the creator of almost 152 thousand workstations (AICEP - Portugal Global, 2018). This sector was able to recover in Portugal from the global economic crisis of 2008 by relying on international business, having a vast variety of quality products, and having a smaller production cost when compared to other main competitors (Febratex Group, 2019). This sector in Portugal is also mainly constituted by small and medium companies, preserving the know-how and tradition and valuing the product in authenticity and most of them are up to date when it comes to the newer production technology. This situation is also integrated into a national policy of internationalization of the sector and in an international panorama of great globalization, in which "fast fashion" is dominating the world and adapts well to the flexibility and low prices offered by Portugal (ATP - Associação Têxtil e Vestuário Portuguesa, 2018). Just before the Covid-19 pandemic, Porto hosted the world's biggest textile congress, the "ITMF - International Textile Manufacturers Federation", a sign of the importance of Portugal in the textile market. The sector represents 10% of Portuguese total exports, is worth 9% of the national manufacturing company with its trade balance conventionally positive, as we export more than we import (Cardoso & Esteves, 2019). The Portuguese textile sector is also one that demonstrates higher levels of sustainability when compared to other countries, particularly concerned with the consumption of sustainable energy and the integration of reused raw materials. many consumers are concerned about the environmental resources used in the clothing they wear (Moreira, 2020).

For instance, the Portuguese exportation of the textile sector to Italy had grown immensely at the end of the last decade (Larguesa, 2018), while the commerce fairs of the sector in Italy were greatly influenced by massive Portuguese participation, which tends to be repeated in this post-covid era (Larguesa, 2020). To illustrate, Portugal was the second largest foreign delegation participating in the 2019 edition of MICAM, the biggest commerce fair in the world dedicated to shoes, happening every year in Milan. Portugal was represented there with more than 90 companies, in a year in which there were more than 500 million euros of Portuguese exports in the sector. Participation in

this fair is a crucial part of the investment strategy of this sector in the international market, accompanied by 8 million euros invested in publicity and 16 million euros in the participation of other fairs of this kind (Lusa, 2019). Also in 2019, Portugal was a guest of Pitti Uomo, an international commerce fair of male fashion, meaning it was one of the protagonists of the event that gathers around 30000 visitors, bringing attention to this industry in Portugal. According to the ATP (“Associação Têxtil e Vestuário de Portugal”), these commerce fairs make the networking between industries, sectors, and companies easier and more efficient, resulting in more positive outcomes, having both Portuguese and Italian export rates raised significantly (17% and 19%, respectively) at the end of the last decade (Cardoso, 2019).

While it can be unclear how much of an exact impact the commerce fairs may have in the development of business due to the lack of specific studies, when presented with this evidence, it is possible to assume that the strong presence of Portugal in these commerce fairs and the big development of the national textile industry can be related, having the commerce fairs a strong and positive impact on the latter.

The internship carried out in the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo” was a valuable opportunity to put into action skills acquired or developed in the Master of “Intercultural Studies for Business”, such as intercultural communication by interacting with Italian commerce fairs organization. Even though I was not taught Italian culture in this master’s degree, I have acquired tools that helped my approach to the Italian culture, applying concepts that made me understand the relevance of intercultural knowledge and competence. I was also able to improve my Italian language skills, as I had to read many informative documents in Italian and interacted with the Italian consulate or with the “ASCIP- Dante Alighieri”, as well as with Italian and Portuguese companies. The environment in the building, that was shared between the Italian consulate, the “ASCIP – Dante Alighieri” and the “Camera di Commercio Italiana per Il Portogallo”, has helped me improve my Italian language knowledge and cultural skills, as most of my coworkers were Italian and the language often use to communicate officially and unofficially.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, EXPOMECANICA, a commerce fair in Porto, was postponed and therefore, I was not able to attend it and be part of its organization. This lack of practical context and the fact that mostly a third of my internship was done remotely, brings me to the conclusion that the pandemic situation greatly jeopardized my internship experience. While being home, I was not able to have such a quick response when I had any doubts, making it harder for me to learn and evolve more efficiently, as the chamber of commerce did not have a previously established structure prepared to welcome an intern that only worked remotely. The pandemic was hitting highs of infections right during my internship, which also affected directly the commerce fairs that were still to happen, such as “TuttoFood” and “Host”. The contacts made during those times regarding those events were difficult, due to the uncertainty that was being experienced by the companies, which affected negatively my experience as an intern, making my tasks less motivating. Due to the low interest of companies to participate in the commerce fairs that were still to happen at the end of the year, I could not assist the finalization of the process of enrollment of companies in the commerce fairs. Additionally, my tasks were considerably repetitive, as I spent most of my days organizing hundreds of file cases, creating databases of hundreds of companies, or making phone calls to those same companies, depending on their sector. After a few calls or files, I often felt like there was little left to learn and evolve, as the process

would mostly repeat itself. On the other hand, I am still very grateful as I acquired organization skills and business communication skills that I did not foresee, and the fact that the tasks were so repetitive gave me the chance not to constantly acquire new knowledge, but to improve and refine the already acquired skills. The execution of translations was something that I found truly rewarding, as I had never done it and I was able to understand more about the chamber's functioning and put into practice my new Italian language skills. As translation is often overlooked nowadays due to the predominance of computerized translations services, this gave me the opportunity to understand its relevance in our interconnected world. A good and reliable translation service is a necessity for a company that aims to reach a broader and international audience. Yet, I felt as I was not given the right preparation to proceed in translation procedures, having I never been studied translation. Therefore, in my opinion, it was a task that could had been better incorporated in my internship as something that could have benefited me more.

This internship could have had a more diverse field of action, especially if I had been able to attend a commerce fair but it was still very fruitful as I was able to improve myself as an intercultural communicator and my team-working skills. During my internship, I not only had to interact with my coordinator but also with other employees from the headquarters of Lisbon, giving me a broader perspective of the chamber of commerce. I was also able to acquire knowledge and cultural tools such as being more aware of the cultural background of each company and how it can affect their perspective and long-term goals. Since the "Camera di Commercio Italiana per il Portogallo" worked mainly with Portuguese and Italian companies, I also acquired many culture specific knowledge that distinguished the way Portuguese and Italian companies operate: Italian companies are often very proud of their Italian provenience, as it is a feature they frequently mention, and have different characteristics depending on the specific region they are from.

In conclusion, the internship experience and the execution of this report made me an overall culturally richer and more prepared professional, as the main skill and lesson I could take away was that interculturality can go far beyond words, particular skills or language knowledge. Intercultural communication relies on language barriers to be broken, but also on the flexibility of the various parties involved to be able to adapt themselves and gather information from body language, that can say much more

than words, and reading the context in which the conversation is taking place. When communicating with other cultures, it can be important to adjust the information that is being passed, as something may not be so important to one culture as it is to another. During my internship, I learned to observe much more before I acted, because much information is available in the subtext of any situation, making it easier to make the right choice after understanding every point of view and their cultural background. From the experience I could gather, interculturality can be about theoretical knowledge but it could also be about understanding and being understood, the empathy, resilience and patience that is necessary in the process.

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