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Title:

The revolution in local government: mayors in Portugal before and after 1974.

Article:

Introduction:

On 28 May 1926 a coup d'état ended the Portuguese First Republic, which had been established on 5 October 1910. A military dictatorship was enforced until a new Constitution was approved in 1933. Since then a new regime was institutionalized, the New State, with António de Oliveira Salazar at its head as President of the Council of Ministers, until he literally fell off a chair in 1968. Salazar was then replaced by Marcelo Caetano, who ruled the country for the final years of the regime, until it ended in 1974 with the Carnation Revolution. The New State was a corporatist authoritarian regime, highly centralized and dictatorial, which lasted for four decades mainly because of Salazar's capacity to integrate the country's elites into the new corporative institutions, together with the support of the Catholic Church, social repression and a strong secret service. **(1)** Also, as in most authoritarian regimes, "coercion remains the core feature of dictatorships, and fear, violence, intimidation and surveillance is at the core of political domination and the maintenance of authoritarianism". **(2)** Not only the military, but also industrialists, landowners and bankers benefited from state

protectionism. And they were all put in charge of each sector's main corporative institutions.

These policies were reflected in local government. Since medieval ages, Portuguese local councils had a tradition of autonomy and self-government. **(3)** Local elites were an important group who in fact maintained power in areas where central government could not reach. Everything changed with the New State. A huge centralized government tried to control every aspect of daily life, using corporative institutions for every section of the economy and society. How did this affect power relations at the local level? Were the local elites replaced? Or did the New State use the same old families who controlled local affairs? And then everything changed again with the democratic regime, established after the 1974 revolution, which was led by the MFA, the Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas), the military movement which assumed responsibility for the revolution and the initial phase of the revolutionary period (PREC – Período Revolucionário em Curso). Not only did the institutional and legal framework change, particularly with the introduction of democratic elections, but there was a new constitutional right to local autonomy. Have these new factors, introduced by regime transitions, modified local elites' selection and recruitment?

This succession of regimes raises the following research questions regarding local government: Who exercised local power in Portugal? Who determined policy and headed the institutions? Which socio-professional groups controlled town councils during the New State, the 1974-76 transition and then following the first local elections on 12 December 1976? How has the group of council mayors evolved and what different criteria for recruitment and access to power were introduced with regime change? In short, what impact did the 1974 revolution have on local power?

To answer these questions, I undertook an intensive programme of research and data collection from institutional sources, such as official government journals, municipal and district archives, the national election committee **(4)** and, for mayors elected after 2009, the press and municipal and government websites. This research resulted in the creation of a database with more than 6,000 entries for 3,102 mayors (and deputy mayors and chairmen and members of administrative committees who were nominated between 1974 and 1976) and 402 civil governors (and their replacements) between 1936 and 2013 in the 18 districts of mainland Portugal and the four island districts that make up the current regional governments of Madeira and the Azores. There were 304 municipalities in 1974 and there are 308 since 2001. This database, which is constructed on a prosopographic basis **(5)**, holds a detailed list of names, including information on the individual's age, the dates on which they were appointed and dismissed, the duration of their mandates, their level of education, their profession and social and family background, as well as their prior and subsequent political careers. **(6)**

By analysing this information I seek to characterise this group during three periods: the New State, the 1974-76 transition and the democratic period established with the Democratic Constitution of 1976 and the beginning of regular elections. My aim is to detect continuities and change in the methods of and criteria for elite recruitment: regional (north/south, coastal/inland, urban/rural, etc.) differences and similarities; and any political and territorial mobility.

With this I seek to demonstrate the impact the transition to democracy had on the careers and lives of these local elites, who for most people are the most accessible representatives of the state. With the presentation of these results, I will show that the local government elites were replaced, even though in some cases there was continuity

in the groups, recruitment criteria and in the elements that determined access to the highest local government positions.

Assuming that post-materialist values among the youngest generation in post-industrial societies has led to the gradual erosion of class-based politics, **(7)** I will show that class and ideology are no longer the main factors in local government in Portugal. Those traditional criteria seem to have been superseded by such factors as the candidate's personality and direct contact with the electorate.

There is a tradition in Portuguese historiography, in which the study of local elites normally takes place in local monographs of a distant past, which are used as a way to extol the more or less permanent presence of figures of recognised social or political importance to that location. Over recent decades the academic world has developed a new approach to local studies. The construction of portraits of local societies created by historians and other social scientists in the academic field, with theoretical and methodological support, has contributed enormously to elevate these studies to another level of understanding not previously possible. **(8)** This type of research is of an interdisciplinary nature, involving history and social science, as well as recourse to the tools and methodologies of other social sciences, such as sociology and anthropology, in the collection of oral sources for example.

With the aim of expanding the geographic range of the study of these local political elites to the entire country, and in an attempt to understand the impact of the transition to democracy on this group, what we seek here is a more rigorous and accurate awareness of this Portuguese elite group that both represented and mediated between local populations and central power: between the state and society. **(9)** As this role evolved, its nature changed with the transition to democracy and the actors were

subjected to a historical evolution that ought to be analysed and systematised. The sociological characteristics of this group will be compared with those of other political elites, including ministers and New State and democratic period deputies and presidents.

A significant way in which the political landscape has changed in Portugal as elsewhere in twentieth-century Europe is the participation of women. In Portugal, Carolina Beatriz Ângelo, a medical doctor, widow and mother, was the first woman to vote, doing so in the election to the 1911 National Assembly who produced the first Republican Constitution. Invoking her status as head of her family, she secured a court order granting her the right to vote. As a result, the law was quickly changed and Portuguese women were denied the franchise. In 1931, women were given the vote for the first time, although the franchise was limited to heads of families or to women with a secondary school certificate or a degree, while men only had to be able to read, write and count. Between 1934 and 1973 only 14 women were elected to the National Assembly and to the Corporate Chamber (upper and lower chambers of government), many of them with leadership roles in the New State corporative institutions, such as the Mocidade Portuguesa (MP – Portuguese Youth), the Obra das Mães pela Educação Nacional (OMEN – Mothers for National Education) and the Instituto Maternal (IM – Maternal Institute), **(10)** with one serving as under-secretary of state for social assistance in 1971.

With the transition to democracy in Portugal, the 1974 electoral law established complete equality of the sexes for the first time, while other laws led the way to equality of civic, social and political rights. In 1974, the administrative committees that ran the town councils were the first political bodies to be headed by women, while on 16 May 1974 Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo was the first woman in government: she was

appointed to the position of Secretary of State for Social Security in the first Provisional Government, then she was Minister of Social Affairs in the Second and Third Provisional Governments, from July 1974 to March 1975, and in 1979 she became the only woman so far to serve as Prime Minister. From the first elections in 1976, a growing number of women were elected both to parliament and to the town councils, and then later to the European Parliament. A number have also been appointed to government office. However, while there is no formal discrimination between the sexes, it remains the case in Portugal, as in the most countries, that there continues to be an 'under-representation of women in positions of political authority'. **(11)**

1.   Legal and Political Framework of the Portuguese Local Government on the Twentieth Century

The organisation of local power in Portugal is a legacy of liberalism. The 1835 administrative reform created the position of the civil governor, who was responsible for organising the election of parliamentary deputies and for handing down laws, regulations and orders from superior bodies to their subordinate authorities. Following a number of reforms during the 19th century, the republic discovered that the 18 districts were well embedded into the organic structure of the state and that the civil governoros were important delegates of central power.

The coup d'état of 28 May 1926 led to the suspension of then existing administrative arrangements. In July 1926 the mainland and the islands administrative corps was abolished, leaving the civil governors responsible for sending the Interior Ministry the names of those citizens who should become members of any future town council administrative committee. From that moment on the civil governor assumed an

important role as the representative of central power. The administrative committees operated between 1926 and December 1937, when they were dissolved and the effective council mayors appointed, assimilating the old elites into the New State's local cadres, just as the Republic had assimilated the local elites of the monarchy.

The New State administrative reform is largely contained within the administrative code prepared by Marcello Caetano, approved in 1936 and reviewed in 1940, in which the principle of local authority is enshrined. The civil governor was the government's representative and had an important role in local administration within his district, where he controlled the activities of the mayors who had been appointed by the Interior Ministry on his recommendation. The councils were almost entirely politically and financially dependent on the government.

According to the administrative code, town councils consisted of a mayor and a variable number of councillors. The mayors served a term of six years and could be appointed for more than one term. The 1940 administrative code extended the mandate to eight years, largely as a result of the difficulty finding people willing to fill the position, especially in the interior of the country. This difficulty was a consequence of the need to find qualified people to accept a somewhat demanding and, in most cases non-remunerated, position. For instance, Vila do Bispo, a small village in rural Algarve, the southernmost region, had no mayor at all for a large period in 1964. Faro's civil governor did not like the local priest, the main candidate, and wanted to appoint an Army's lieutenant who used to go there for summer vacations. But the lieutenant argued that it would be too expensive for him to move there and visit his family in Lisbon. With a promise of a subsidy he finally accepted and remained on the job until 1973.

(12)

Mayors were chosen from among local notables, representatives of the most prestigious groups, who possessed symbolic social capital such as academic qualifications or personal or family positions within the social milieu **(13)** and economic capital.

The position was incompatible with the exercise of any other government-paid public duties, which meant mayors had to both have their own means of subsistence and be able to continue their professional activities at the same time. Their job requirements consisted of administrative duties and police work. There was no autonomy involved, neither financial nor regarding political decision. Most matters had to be approved by the civil governor and the Minister of the Interior.

The process for selecting local political elites has evolved during the 20th century: during the Monarchy and the First Republic councils and their mayors were elected; during the New State mayors were appointed; and from 1976 they were once again elected, this time through universal suffrage. During the transition periods, from 1926-1937 and 1974-1976, town councils were run by administrative committees appointed directly by the Interior or the Internal Administration ministries.

On 25 April 1974, the day of the revolution, those in the most senior state positions – the president of the republic, the Council of State (that was the name of the Portuguese government, presided by Marcelo Caetano, and all the minister and secretaries of state) and the members of the National Assembly (the upper Parliament) – were dismissed by Law No 1/74, while the civil governors were dismissed by Decree-Law No 170/74, both laws published on the same day of the revolution. On 2 May the *Diário do Governo* (the official government bulletin) started publishing ministerial orders (*portarias*) dismissing individual mayors who remained in office until the publication of the specific ministerial order giving the Minister for Internal Administration the competence to

dismiss the administrative corps and replace it with administrative committees 'made up of independents or people belonging to groups and political currents that accept the MFA Programme', and which remained in place until the first local elections on 12 December 1976 (Decree-Law No 236/74, 3 June 1974). Until these were appointed, the councils were to continue to be administered by the 'most senior' councillors. Naturally, where the mayors and deputy mayors did not 'identify' with the MFA Programme, or where they felt local political pressure, they presented their resignations before the government was able to automatically dismiss them on 18 June 1974, which was the date established in law for the end of their mandates. For the next two years the local authorities were managed by administrative committees, meaning almost all of the local elites had been replaced.

The civil governors' powers and range of actions were reduced by the democratic regime, until the job was abolished in 2011. Since 1974 there was a process of administrative decentralisation and strengthening of local power. This followed the general trend in Western countries during the 1960s and 1970s, in which 'traditional' reforms were carried out to strengthen the political and administrative institutions of the social state. **(14)** The political direction was towards decentralisation, as explicitly defined on the 1976 Constitution, and the enlargement of the rights and opportunities of citizens and their ability to influence and participate in the local decision-making process. The Constitution laid out the general terms for the roles and responsibilities of the municipalities, parishes and future administrative regions: local government was meant to have political, legislative and financial autonomy. In fact, it is still dependent on central government for most of its financing: for some authors, decentralization is incomplete and Portugal is still a centralized and bureaucratic state. **(15)** Local elected

representatives in Portuguese municipalities consist of a mayor and a group of councillors with executive powers, who administer their own revenues and are submitted to control by a municipal assembly. But local autonomy has become a reality, particularly concerning budgetary, management and construction issues. In fact, so much so that many financial problems have occurred regarding municipal debts and cases of corruption.

There have been regular local elections since 1976. Up until 1985 these elections were held every three years, since when they have been held every four. The legislators who wrote the first constitution for the new Portuguese democracy thought it necessary that the political parties – after an absence of half a century, dating from the military dictatorship throughout duration of the authoritarian regime – be presented to society as its political representatives. In order to create a network of local organisations, the parties needed to find supporters in the local communities. The closed list system and electing councillors in proportion to the electoral results was considered the best way to ensure every political party was represented, regardless of the size of the majority. The aim was to introduce the habits of political representation, which until then had not existed, into the lives of citizens. In short, the political parties were schools for local democracy.

It continued like this until the constitutional revision of 1997 allowed groups of citizens to stand as candidates in the local elections. Independent candidates, both for parliament and for the local authorities, had been permitted in the 1976 constitution, but only when they were included in party lists, where they included a statement expressing they were independents. Independent citizen groups had also been able to contest parish council elections since 1976. However, the 2001 elections were the first to accept independent

citizen candidates for town councils, where they could either stand at municipal elections in their own name or as part of a group with no connection to any registered political parties. These groups had some similarities with the local parties in the countries of northern Europe, particularly in Germany, where the federal regime is strongly committed to parties at the central and regional level, but where there is no similar commitment at the lower municipal level. As a result, local political organisation there is much more free and uncommitted than it is at the intermediate and higher levels. This is the case in Germany as well as in Belgium and Scandinavia. **(16)** From the evidence available to us it appears this trend is not being followed in Portugal, because political parties still dominate local government and win elections in a high percentage of cases. **(17)**

In 1997, article 239 of the constitution in relation to local authorities was amended without any major discussions, since it was believed to be the natural next step within a stable democracy. The same was not true of the proposal to allow independent candidates onto the parliamentary election lists: this proposal was rejected.

In practice, the presence of political parties at every level of Portuguese politics remains the norm. **(18)** Despite the fact that in 2013 Portugal elected 13 independent mayors, representing 4.2 per cent of all councils in the country, the parties continue to control the entire electoral process in Portugal. **(19)**

2.   **Mayors in the New State, 1936-1974**

The Portuguese New State had a strong central government and a weak civil society. Social and administrative elites were scarce and very well educated. Members of

Parliament and Ministers were particularly specialized in each of their fields: most of them were university professors, starting with Salazar himself, a PhD and full professor of Political Economy and Finance at the age of 29, which prompted the classification of the 'Empire of the Professor'. **(20)**

In local government, especially in remote rural areas, it was hard to find enough people to fill administrative and political jobs. Only a few residents meet the necessary requirements and the central government selected civil governors, which then selected mayors, among local elites in order to assimilate them and to implement the New State, **(21)** and control the population, **(22)** just as the Republic had done with the local elites of the Monarchy in 1910. **(23)** Corporative institutions were created to control industry, agriculture, and social services which the central government deliberately did not provide. **(24)** Local elites simply took control of all the new institutions, because there was nobody else with the skills and social capital to do so, **(25)** just as they already controlled local economy and society, because mostly they were the main providers of jobs and services to their region.

At least 58.5 per cent of the mayors appointed at the end of 1937 were the same people who had led the administrative committees appointed during the transition period. A total of 1,829 mayors were appointed between December 1937 and 1974. The majority were appointed only once; however, 95 were appointed several times, either to the same or to different councils. There was also some geographic mobility among mayors, generally – but not always – within the same district, and associated with the individual's professional mobility. The average mandate lasted 5.3 years, with the longest term in office being 21.3 years.

The main professional group for mayors in the New State were 'Specialists' (intellectuals and scientists, from the official National Professional Classification) with almost 35 per cent. 'Armed Forces Officers' accounted for 22 per cent of the professional categories (table 2). In a total of 392 officers who were appointed or elected mayors from 1937 to 2013, 91 per cent of them were nominated before 1974, but 48 per cent of these were retired. Mostly in rural municipalities there are many cases of officers who went back home after a career in duty and occupied these jobs after retiring. Officers in active service were mostly found in municipalities with strategic defence positions, particularly where army and navy schools or barracks were located. Such was the case of the mayor of Oeiras, near Lisbon: Don João António de Saldanha Oliveira e Sousa was an Earl (although nobility no longer had legal meaning in the Republic) and a high ranking army officer, who served in the Artillery Regiment of Oeiras. Because of his family's tradition of public service and political support to the new regime, he was appointed president of Oeiras' administrative committee in 1933 and mayor in 1937. He was one of the longest serving mayors, lasting until 1957 on the job. He promoted important construction works such as the school, sewer and water supply infrastructures. **(26)**

Lisbon had a long tradition of high ranking officers as mayors, but from 1937 to 1943 the job was given to Duarte Pacheco, an engineer and university professor, who combined this role with Minister of Public Works, precisely during the time of major construction works in the Portuguese capital city. And Porto, the second Portuguese city, only had one retired Infantry Colonel as mayor from 1949 to 1953. **(27)**

Anyway, there was no clear intention of deliberately placing the military in local government at the municipal level. The position of mayor was not of a great political

importance, it was mostly an administrative job: armed forces officers, as well as doctors and engineers, were nominated because they were usually the most qualified persons for the job in each municipality. Civil governors were a different matter: they had real power, delegated by central government, and armed forces officers were placed in strategic districts throughout the entire regime. Thirty per cent of all the appointed governors belonged in this group.

Mayors were mostly university educated: from the known information on qualifications, which was more than we could find out about professions, during the New State only 7.1 per cent did not have university qualifications (the term Dr. – doctor – implies a university degree, whether it was a bachelor or a graduate; that is why table 3 has more mayors than table 2). From 1968 to 1974 all the ministers and 86.7 per cent of the members of parliament had university degrees. **(28)** This confirms their status as an elite group, within a mostly illiterate population: in 1960, 40.3 per cent of the Portuguese people could neither read nor write and only 0.6 per cent had a university degree. In 1994 this percentage had risen to 4.9 and in 2011 university graduates were 22.9 per cent of the population. **(29)**

Just like the regime itself, the political staff aged and grew old. Salazar was Finance Minister and then President of the Council when he was in his early thirties. And his first cabinets' ministers were mostly young professors and professionals, such as the above mentioned Duarte Pacheco, appointed Minister of Public Education when he was 28 years old and Minister of Public Works when he was 32. When Salazar's successor Marcelo Caetano was appointed in 1968 he was already 62 years old. In the final period of 1969-1974, ministers averaged 50 years old (Carvalho & Fernandes 2003, 68) and members of the Portuguese Parliament averaged 49. **(30)**

From 1936 to 1974 the average age of newly appointed mayors was 45.2 years. There was not such large gap in this group. During the New State's early years, mayors were appointed with 44.2 years and in the final period with 46.8 (table 1).

Table 1: Average age of mayors in the New State, 1937-1974

Table 2: Mayors' Professions, 1937-1974

Table 3: Mayors' Qualifications, 1937-1974

3.   Popular Power and Local Power: The Town Council Administrative Committees during the Revolutionary Period, 1974-1976

In 1974 the people organised themselves and formed administrative committees that assumed control of the political transition at the local level, managing the councils until the first local elections were held on 12 December 1976. The transition period that followed 25 April 1974 led to the replacement of the local elites and the effective social recomposition of a large number of councils, although in some cases there was continuity both of the leadership group and recruitment criteria, albeit with considerable differences at the regional level: north/south, coastal/interior, among others. There was clearly a greater professional diversity within this group (table 4).

This period was marked by widespread instability at all levels. 'The power fell on the street' (*O Poder Caiu na Rua*) and popular action sometimes took a violent turn. **(31)**

The municipal authorities did not escape this, and in some cases the situation proved dangerous for former representatives of local power. For the most part, however, the transition of power within councils was peaceful. The role of the MFA – Armed Forces Movement – in these processes should be noted, primarily its Cultural Dynamisation Campaign and the clarification sessions that took place mainly in rural areas. **(32)** These campaigns sought to help the people with their recent political apprenticeship, favouring direct contact between representatives of the MFA and the people, encouraging them and creating the conditions for political organisation at the village level. The MFA published a journal: *Movement 25th April. Bulletin of the Armed Forces*, since October 1974. It was distributed for free to the military, with a language of encouragement towards people's engagement with the revolution, self government and Agrarian Reform in the south of Portugal. **(33)** The campaigns were also a way to settle scores with the past and denounce the 'fascist' and 'dictatorial' legacy, and contributed to making some military units very influential at the local level and raised the spirits of the people. **(34)**

The MFA was particularly active in enforcing the laws for nationalizations of banks and land expropriations. This was all contained within the framework of revolutionary legality, with its origin in the legislation produced by the provisional government which was in turn based on the fear of economic sabotage (Decree-Law No 660/74 of 25 November 1974) that allowed the government to intervene in the management of companies and to follow a policy of nationalisation that gave rise to the workers' occupation movement and which culminated in the nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies, transport and other sectors crucial to the national economy, and in the agrarian reform movement.

In the north of Portugal there is mainly small property and a majority of conservative and very catholic population. This was not a propitious environment for social revolution. On the other hand, the southern region of Alentejo, which occupies forty-one per cent of Portugal's area, but in 1981 was home to only eight per cent of its population, was defined by latifundia landownership or tenancy. Alentejo had a polarized society described as 'rich and poor', **(35)** although in the late sixties there had already been social changes due to workers' emigration to Lisbon's industrial belt and to the Colonial War (1961-1974 in the former Portuguese colonies in Africa: Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique), to agriculture's mechanization process and the introduction of social security, which increased agricultural salaries and living conditions. **(36)** This was the perfect set for an agrarian reform which seized all large estates. Radical legislation was the perfect excuse for the first land occupations in the end of 1974 and farm workers acted immediately. When the revolution came and communist propaganda told them they could own their bosses' land, they believed it. **(37)** The agrarian reform movement awakened profound echoes of rural labourers' ancient struggles, hopes and resentments. **(38)** Over one million hectares of land were expropriated by the state and occupied by workers, and UCP – Collective Production Units on the Soviet model were created to manage them. Avis, in the Portalegre district, in the North of the Alentejo region, was one of the municipalities where this process was most significant, with 40,666 hectares occupied, which represents sixty-seven per cent of its total area and seventy-one per cent of its farming area. **(39)**

The agrarian reform did not work. The concentration of land was too much for these workers to manage. There were too many salaries to pay and not enough money. Production and productivity did not go up during those euphoric years, as claimed by

the Portuguese Communist Party reports. On the contrary, according to official statistics, corn production did not reach the high levels of the 1960s, even though corn fields were enlarged. Cattle numbers were reduced, olive oil and wine production fell to practically zero, and cork, the region's biggest source of wealth, was stolen by corrupt industrialists. Local interviews and a research on life stories confirmed that salaries remained the same as before and the only advantages to the workers were job stability and the end of unemployment. All the sharecroppers who had previously improved their lifestyles, now had to enter cooperatives in order to survive, and this was a step back for them. They did not like being paid the same as all the other workers and were the first to leave when conditions were created for them to rent land again. **(40)**

Meanwhile, landowners, tenants and traditional farmers were expelled. Old economic elites were completely and irreversibly replaced. **(41)** The lords of the land were no longer the lords of the village that they have been for centuries. **(42)** After all, agrarian reform was reversed and gradually, from 1978 to the 1990's, lands were returned to previous owners, with indemnities. Nationalizations were not reversed and many bankers bought their banks back from the state.

As noted above, on 2 May 1974 the ministerial orders dismissing the mayors was published. A total of 11 mayors were removed between 26 April and 27 May 1974. The first to go was the mayor of Barreiro, an industrial town near Lisbon, in the South bank on the river Tagus. The council was dissolved immediately after by a ministerial order dated 15 May, with the administrative committee replacing it being formed by a chairman and 18 councillors: a number more than three times the average of 4.9 councillors in the administrative committees across the rest of the country. This absurd number is particularly evident when comparing the size and significance of the

municipality of Barreiro, with a tenth of the population of Lisbon, with the number of councillors in the capital city of Lisbon and the second most important city of Porto, for example, each of which had 12 councillors (although Lisbon had a further two vice-chairmen), or with Braga and Coimbra, which had six. The Barreiro case is an example of the political activism evident in some parts of the country, and revealed the enormous desire of ordinary citizens to participate in the local administration, with the response of the Interior Ministry ready to formalise the appointment of people who had been nominated by local committees.

By the end of May, a total of 81 mayors had been removed. From 3-15 June a further 101 mayors were dismissed, with 109 being removed automatically from their positions when the established legal deadline of 18 June 1974 was reached. There was a third way, although one that was only used in the case of 10 mayors who had been reconfirmed in their positions prior to the date mentioned in the decree. Of these, only three were appointed chairmen of their respective administrative committees in 1974 and were then elected mayors in 1976, representing around one per cent of all mayors. The limited use of this process allows us to establish that the discontinuity of local elites was the rule.

The ministerial orders appointing administrative committees referred to the profession of each chairman and councillor, enabling an analysis of these new bodies established during the revolutionary period and allowing us to reflect on the local interest in change or permanence.

The first appointment was immediately an exception: in Lisbon on 2 May 1974 an administrative order appointed a delegate of the National Salvation Junta (JSN – Junta da Salvação Nacional, the military force created by the revolution to support the

provisional governments until the first elections in 1975), João António Lopes da Conceição, a Lieutenant Colonel of Engineers, to assume the duties of the former mayor, who had not yet been officially dismissed. The administrative committee for Lisbon city council was not named until 28 August. The group of 12 councillors included senior technicians, specialists in several areas of interest to the local authority. It included António Sarmento Lobato Faria, an engineer who studied for his master's in public health in London, and the professor of art history José Augusto França, who was chairman of a new consultative committee charged with the preservation of Lisbon's artistic and urban heritage. While this administrative committee demonstrated a willingness to renovate, with clear goals in the areas of service dynamisation and restructuring, sanitation operations and the improvement of working conditions, the people who made up the committee had professional backgrounds that were very similar to those of the previous elites, especially the high-ranking military officers and engineers.

By 8 July 176 administrative committees had been appointed, representing 58 per cent of the 304 councils at that time. This number reveals both the willingness of citizens to get involved in politics, either by proposing themselves spontaneously, or by being invited by local representatives of the only existing party at the time, the Portuguese Communist Party, and the new ones in formation. It also demonstrates the rapid and efficient response of the central authorities in replacing the local elites in compliance with JSN instructions.

A total of 464 individuals were appointed president of administrative committees from 1974 until the first local elections of 12 December 1976. It was also from among these committees that women emerged to take charge of the highest body of local

government: nine women were appointed to head administrative committees, representing 1.9 per cent of the total. Of the 277 vice-chairmen appointed to administrative committees, six, or 2.6 per cent, were women. A total of 92 women served as councillors on the administrative committees, representing 3.6 per cent of all councillors. As an aside, only two administrative committees were named in August 1974 (Portalegre and Lisbon), meaning that even at the height of the revolution, staff at the Interior Ministry continued to take their normal summer holidays.

Cascais was a special case: it had five different committees. However, the numbers above suggest there was a degree of stability during this period. In 117 councils (38.5 per cent) the committees remained in operation without being replaced throughout the transitional period, while 169 (55.6 per cent) councils only had one committee chairman.

The majority of the administrative committees had been chosen from groups that had locally formed part of the 'clandestine and semi-legal opposition to the old regime – in particular to the Portuguese Democratic Movement (MDP – Movimento Democrático Português), a front organisation linked to the Communist Party (PCP – Partido Comunista Português)' that Francisco Sá Carneiro, the Social Democrat Portuguese Prime Minister assassinated in 1980, called an 'assault on local authority', which, with the assaults on the unions and the press by the PCP and MDP, characterised the revolutionary period (PREC). **(43)** In fact, during this period the PCP's penetration was visible in a 'considerable number of intermediate associations that facilitate the mobilisation and control of social interests: workers' commissions and factory committees, local unions and national workers' confederations, specialist professional associations, intellectual study groups, residents' committees, tenants' associations,

local government, student groups and faculty councils, soldiers' organisations and non-communist organisations'. **(44)**

It was in the districts in the north where the people tended to contest the choices of left-wing administrative committees, and which resulted in the fall of many of them. In the south the administrative committees lasted longer, particularly in those districts where previous support for parties of the left has been greatest.

These new revolutionary local elites were sociologically different from those they had replaced. For one, they had a greater variety of professional groups, and while mayors during the New State tended to be university graduates (93 per cent), the administrative committees brought different groups to local power: only 229 of their chairmen had university degrees (49.4 per cent), and only 5.2 per cent had a technical qualification.

Table 4: Professions of Administrative Council Chairmen, 1974-1976

Table 4 shows that intellectuals and scientists continued in the majority. A total of 32.1 per cent of chairmen came from this group, of which 43.5 per cent were lawyers, notaries, registrars and trainees, 25.9 per cent were medical doctors, 14.3 per cent were engineers, 4.8 per cent vets and 4.1 per cent economists, with the remaining eight per cent made up of four architects, four pharmacists, one sculptor, one geologist, one journalist, a mathematician and a music maestro. The gender difference is also significant: the proportion of women teachers is substantially higher than that of men. In total, of the 62 chairmen who were teachers, primary school teachers accounted for 40.3 per cent, while 33.9 per cent were secondary school teachers.

The groups in which men made up the largest proportion were merchants, administrators and technicians, where there were no women. Civil servants, a category that came to have a substantial weight, accounted for 8.1 per cent of all chairmen, but was 22.2 per cent of all chairwomen. Officers of the armed forces accounted for 2.6 per cent and four other military were added: two militia officers, a merchant marine officer and a Republican National Guards officer.

What comes out is the diversification of professional categories and a smaller difference between each of them. Integrated into PREC there was a clear and intentional enlargement of the sociological group of local elites. New and previously unthinkable categories appear, groups and social classes that claimed new spaces in which to get involved politically, **(45)** such as a fruit seller, workers from several industries and rural workers, which serves to confirm the interventionism of the revolutionary phase, the popular mobilisation and the 'awakening to political participation'. **(46)**

There is also evidence of some promiscuity between the professional categories: administrative committees could involve groups that used to be considered opposed and irreconcilable on the former socio-professional spectrum. For example, the chairman of the Almada administrative committee was a budget planner for a construction company, while the six councillors were an office employee, a cork worker, an electrician, an employee of the arsenal at Alfeite, a lawyer and a bank employee. In Famalicão the chairman was an engineer while the councillors included a medical doctor, a primary school teacher, a merchant, a lawyer, a mechanic and an industrialist. This phenomenon rendered obsolete the classical sociological theories about the 'almost absolute separation of the political elite and the masses'. Undoubtedly what have become more

applicable are the plural elite theories that 'already present perspectives capable of being reconciled with democracy'. **(47)**

Among the chairmen of the administrative committees we found 14 retired and a further two officers on the armed forces reserves. There were no retired women.

It was also possible to determine the age of 91 administrative committee chairmen on the day of their appointment: they had an average age of 44, which was younger than the average age of New State mayors.

4.   Mayors during the Democratic Regime, 1976-2013

The continuity between the transition from the military dictatorship of 1926-1933 and the stability of the New State regime was not repeated with the emergence of the democratic regime: rather, after 1976 there was an almost complete break with the administrative committees. In 304 councils and of the 464 administrative committee chairmen, only 16.6 per cent (in 25.3 per cent of the councils) were elected after 1976. To determine if the elite from the transitional periods remained in office when the transition came to an end and the new regimes stabilised, we sought to ascertain whether these local elites were transitory or whether they were the same ones who had always held power and continued to do so. During the transition to democracy there was clearly less continuity than there had been during the transition to the New State. In 1937 this was explained by the fact that those who appointed the administrative committees were the same people who later appointed the mayors – the Interior Ministry – which also used the same criteria. With the transition to democracy there was greater discontinuity caused by the start of an electoral process that changed definitively

the rules of the game. The popular plebiscite of 1976 did not validate the choices made during the revolutionary period. Such was the case both in local and central government in Portugal. In the 1976 elections for Parliament the Socialist Party won with 35 per cent of the vote, whereas the Communist Party only achieved 14.4 per cent. And in the local elections, the Socialist Party also won most of the municipalities with 33 per cent of the votes, and the Communist Party (in coalition) had 17.2 per cent of the votes, after having controlled most of the administrative committees during the transition period.

From 1976 to 2013, a total of 1,273 people have been elected to serve as mayor, and have held office for an average of 8.4 years, or for 2.3 mandates (tables 5 and 6). From an average 5.3 years in the earlier regime, this increase in length shows the office became a lot more attractive. So much so that longevity of office was thought of as a problem. There was a negative association between consecutive mandates and the use of participation mechanisms, such as public consultations or suggestions for public service improvements. **(48)** Longevity was associated with democratic deficit and corruption. Mayors with the longest mandates were called dinosaurs: there were two of them with ten mandates, in Braga and Vila Nova de Poiares.

The problem was resolved with the introduction of a law in 2005 limiting each candidate to three mandates. The successive renewal of mandates ended with the 2013 elections, in which 63.3 per cent of all mayors were replaced. **(49)**

Table 5: Length of Mayoral Mandate, 1976-2013

Table 6: Number of Mayoral Mandates, 1976-2013

After more than half a century of appointing locally-nominated people, in the first local elections 'the parties became the almost exclusive channel for political mediation, and were consequently largely responsible for the mobilisation and participation of new social groups'. **(50)**

In many cases long mandates were complemented with careers at other levels, in national or even European politics, which resulted in the professionalisation of positions, something that had not existed during the previous regime. With the introduction of pay, particularly in hierarchically inferior councils – the more rural – because of the possibility of occupying the position on a professional basis, there was a significant growth in the professionalisation and exclusive dedication to the role, which contributed to two changes taking place within local administration: the enlargement of the social groups with access to local power, and increased specialisation in the position and of the administrative abilities of local politicians.

We can see on table 7 that between 1976 and 2013, elected mayors had a number of professions, with 'Specialists' dominating, although with a smaller proportion than was the case in the previous regime.

Table 7: Mayors' Professions, 1976-2013

There was an increase in the proportion of teachers and civil servants and of intermediate-level technicians and bankers. Elite recruitment criteria were almost exclusively determined by political affiliation, although personal support and social

services offered to the community had acquired a new importance. These new mayors were mainly service providers, in contrast with job providers as they were before.

During the democratic period, the number of mayors who had not attended university increased to 27 per cent, compared to 7.1 per cent in the previous regime (table 8).

Table 8: Mayors' Qualifications, 1976-2013

The average age of mayors was 43.3, lower than that of mayors appointed between 1937 and 1974, which was 45.2. The first mayors elected in 1976 averaged 42.1. In 2013, when the above mentioned 63.3 per cent of them were replaced, their average age was 63.5 years. With this election there was a clear renewal and rejuvenation of mayors, even if they are not sociologically or politically different from the previous group.

Among the mayors and councillors there were many retired people who had exercised a great many professions. Such is the case of armed forces officers: out of 14 who were elected (1.16 per cent), 12 were retired.

While in the district capitals or other major towns any political career could lead to promotion to other political office, such as civil governor, deputy or even a position in central government (Lisbon's municipality has produced a President of the Republic, Jorge Sampaio and several prime ministers), in the smaller councils it was not uncommon for people who exercised their profession there or in another council area to retire to their home town and enter the local administration. However, the opposite is true of ministers and deputies who stood for mayor.

In short, the social and demographic profile of Portuguese local politician fits in with the international trend of the 'three Ms': male, middle-aged and middle-class. 'At the local level political decision-makers are predominantly male, middle-aged, high in professional status and well-educated'. **(51)**

Theirs is not so much different from the profile of deputies. Compared with Presidents of the Republic and ministers, there are less specialists among mayors. **(52)**

5.   Regime Transition and Mobility

The political mobility of mayors, civil governor and other levels of government was very low during the New State. Mobility between the regimes was almost zero: in total only 1.1 per cent of mayors elected since 1976 had served as a mayor before 1974. More than 98 per cent of mayors before 1974 were excluded completely from political life under the new regime. No civil governor appointed before 1974 was reappointed after the revolution: only one was elected mayor, in 1985, while two were elected to parliament at the same time and two were elected president of municipal assemblies. There were also five civil governors appointed after 1974 who had held office during the New State: two had been members of the Corporate Chamber (the lower chamber of government), one had been a mayor then also elected mayor, and two had been deputy mayors before 1974.

Very few of those who had been mayors before 1974 made the transition and only 13 appointed mayors before 1974 were elected mayors after 1976, representing 1.1 per cent of the total number of mayors, or 4.3 per cent of the 304 existing councils.

A total of 12.3 per cent of mayors between 1976 and 2005 had been parliamentary deputies, with a further 1.1 per cent having been Members of the European Parliament, both before and during their time in local government. The direction was not only from local government to parliament: a number of deputies had been elected mayor and vice-versa. Previous political experience undoubtedly counted in the local elections and each individual followed the most convenient political path at the time, especially when there were changes in the government and when ministers, secretaries of state and deputies lost their positions. When this happened, their parties would put them near the top of the local electoral lists. There was also mobility between these political positions and leadership positions in public companies. In many cases, political careers also included the chairmanship of football clubs, which is also part of an international trend, as is the case of the South of France.

6.   Women's Participation in Local Politics

Women are still underrepresented in Portuguese politics. Nevertheless, the revolution introduced women into politics, particularly in local government, where they had never occupied the top positions before. While three councils had women councillors, not one woman served as mayor during the New State.

The administrative committees appointed in 1974 included the first nine council leaders. Between 1976 and 2005 a total of 37 women were elected mayor, representing 2.8 per cent of the total number of mayors elected in this period. On table 9 the sum of 78 women elected amounts to the total of times these 37 women won an election.

Table 9: Council Mayors by Gender, 1976-2005

Within this small universe, the characterisation of women mayors is necessarily limited and almost personal. In any event, it is true this group of women were better educated than their male peers, which is consistent with the wider demographic reality in Portugal: in 1961, for every hundred students who obtained a university degree, only 24.5 were women; in 1995 this percentage had risen to 62.9. **(53)** In 2011, 22.9 per cent of the Portuguese population between 25 and 64 years of age had a university degree, with a gender difference of 18.4 per cent for men and 26.9 per cent for women. **(54)**

The women who headed administrative committees had university qualifications in 55.5 per cent of cases, compared to 49.2 per cent for men. Between 1976 and 2005, 58 per cent of women mayors had university qualifications, while the figure for men was only 43 per cent. In terms of professions, 55.5 per cent of administrative committee chairwomen were teachers, scientists and intellectuals: three secondary school teachers and two who had law degrees (one a public registrar, the other a notary), while only 45.3 per cent of men were in this group. During the democratic period, the percentage of women in this group increased to 59 per cent, while the proportion of men fell to 44 per cent. Geographic distribution of women mayors: coastal districts accounted for 71 per cent, with the greatest number in the districts of Lisbon, Setúbal and Aveiro, which coincides with the female activity rate by region.

The average age of this group on the day they took office was 44.3, older than the average for all mayors, which was 43.4. The average duration of their mandates was 7.3 years (slightly less than the 8.4 year average) and they were mostly incomers to the council area: 50 per cent were from other districts, 22.7 per cent were from other

council areas within the district while 27.3 per cent represented their own local council (against the average of 64.4 per cent). A total of 90 per cent also lived in their own council area, with a further seven per cent living in the same district. With respect to political parties, 38.7 per cent of women mayors represented the Social Democratic Party (PSD – Partido Social Democrata), 29 per cent the Socialist Party (PS – Partido Socialista) and 29 per cent the PCP and its coalition partners. While the PSD had most of the elected women mayors, the parties on the left of the political spectrum combined accounted for 58 per cent of all women mayors. **(55)**

Conclusions

Table 10: Summary of Portuguese mayors, 1937-2013

On table 10 there is a resume of the characteristics of the local elites and their evolution as a result of the events of the revolutionary transition that took place in Portugal between 1974 and 1976, which inaugurated the third wave of democratizations who took place in southern Europe. **(56)** Most studies on political elites in these southern countries tend to be on ministers and members of parliament. **(57)** There are not many on local governments, therefore it is still difficult to engage on comparatives studies, unless we compare with Northern and Eastern Europe, where local elites have contributed to the success of the democratization process. **(58)** Anyway, different transition paths have produced different self-organizing capabilities of popular groups. In Portugal, the revolutionary period has produced a much more participative group of

people, who in fact assumed local government functions, than for example in Spain. **(59)**

In Portugal, almost the entire New State elite was replaced by new people, bringing with them a diversification of professions and the introduction of new skills. However, the domination of intellectuals and scientists with high education levels continued to predominate, just as in the rest of Europe, where 'despite differences over time and between political systems the disproportional recruitment of certain social groups with distinctive characteristics into the (local) political elite is one of the most replicated and perpetual findings'. **(60)**

According to F. Ruivo, democracy was a motor of change. The occupations of elected local officials reveal the predominance of middle-class professionals, who 'tend to be people with a different way of relating to both politics and with the community'. **(61)** Was this a consequence of the transition to democracy? Or has the local political elite undergone a slow evolution during the last four decades as a result of several other factors, such as European integration, new methods of local government finance or even the demographic, economic and social changes that have redrawn the map? The social recomposition of councils was a fact, particularly when the people took the power into their own hands, introducing significant changes to the social groups that had traditionally exercised local power. With the 1976 elections, voters chose not to validate revolutionary actions and elites. What followed was a stabilisation that matches Schmitter's description of the Portuguese transition to democracy: 'from the fiery rapture of a revolutionary transition to the satisfactory (although prosaic) routine of a consolidated democracy'. **(62)**

As demonstrated in a research on the Alentejo region, for over two hundred years and through three regime-changing revolutions, local elites remained the same until the 1974 revolution in 1974 totally replaced them. **(63)** In the south, landowners, the traditional political elites, don't even run for local elections. And economic power is no longer a way of conquering local political leadership. New professions emerged in the group that controls political jobs. Economic elites based on landownership are completely and deliberately absent from local politics. Agrarian reform seized lands; landowners moved away and pursued other professional interests. When they returned, they were not interested in political power. Political jobs are no longer of interest to these groups, whose professional activities either in agriculture or elsewhere are increasingly time consuming and provide them with incomes that are far more appealing than a mayor's salary. Elections are now held and the communist party continues to win in some municipalities of the southern region, as a consequence of a consolidation of communist tendencies in a proletarian society which has developed over two centuries.

In the rest of the country other factors have emerged as political recruitment criteria, particularly related to party affiliation and the management of regional interests, attraction strategies based on competitive skills and social capital at the local level. Investments in industry, services and job creation are now political tools used to attract voters, particularly programs to attract new families, promote jobs and fight depopulation.

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Table 1: Average age of mayors in the New State, 1937-1974

Dates	Average age of mayors
1937-1950	44,2
1951-1960	46,6
1961-1974	46,8

Table 2: Mayors' Professions, 1937-1974

Mayors' Professions, 1937-1974	Number	%
Farmers	12	1.36
Bankers	1	0.11
Merchants	13	1.47
Entrepreneurs/Industrialists	28	3.16
Intellectuals and Scientists	307	34.69
Civil Servants	52	5.88
Nobility	11	1.24
Armed Forces Officers	195	22.03
Priests	45	5.08
Administrative and Similar Personnel, Services and Salesmen	1	0.11
Teachers	124	14.01
Landowners	61	6.89
Senior Managers and Directors in Public Administration and Business	24	2.71
Technicians and Intermediate-level Professionals	11	1.24
Total Professions	885	100.00

Table 3: Mayors' Qualifications, 1937-1974

Mayors' Qualifications, 1937-1974	Number	%
Primary school	2	0.14
Fifth year of secondary school (present ninth year)	3	0.22
Baccalaureate	26	1.87
Technical course	17	1.22
Doctorate	15	1.08
Secondary school	8	0.57
Higher studies	569	40.85
Undergraduate degree	676	48.53
Primary teacher	68	4.88

Post-graduation	8	0.57
No education	1	0.07
Total	1393	100.00

Table 4: Profession of Administrative Council Chairmen, 1974-1976

Professional of Administrative Council Chairmen	M	% M	W	% W	M+W	% M+W
Intellectuals and Scientists	147	32.3	2	22.2	149	32.1
Teachers	59	13.0	3	33.3	62	13.4
Merchants	51	11.2	0	0.0	51	11.0
Civil Servants	37	8.1	2	22.2	39	8.4
Administrative and Similar Personnel, Services and Salesmen	33	7.3	0	0.0	33	7.1
Technicians and Intermediate-level Professionals	30	6.6	0	0.0	30	6.5
Entrepreneurs/Industrialists	23	5.1	0	0.0	23	5.0
Landowners	21	4.6	0	0.0	21	4.5
Bankers	17	3.7	0	0.0	17	3.7
Armed Forces Officers	12	2.6	0	0.0	12	2.6
Farmers	9	2.0	0	0.0	9	1.9
Workers, Craftsmen and Machine Operators	4	0.9	0	0.0	4	0.9
Other Military	4	0.9	0	0.0	4	0.9
Priests	4	0.9	0	0.0	4	0.9
Rural Workers	2	0.4	0	0.0	2	0.4
Housewives	0	0.0	1	11.1	1	0.2
Unemployed	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2
Others	0	0.0	1	11.1	1	0.2
Not stated	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2
Total	455	100.0	9	100.0	464	100.0

Table 5: Length of Mayoral Mandate, 1976-2013

Length of Mayoral Mandate (years), 1976-2013	Number	%
0-1 year	28	2.08
1-2 years	37	2.74
2-4 years	499	37.02
4-8 years	302	22.40
More than 8 years	482	35.76
Total mandates	1348	100.00
Mayors with 37 years in office (Braga and Vila Nova de Poiares)	2	0.15
Total	1273	
Longest term of office	37	
Average term of office	8.4	

Table 6: Number of Mayoral Mandates, 1976-2013

Number of Mandates, 1976-2013	Number	%
Incomplete	60	4.48
1	494	36.92
From more than 1 to 3	510	38.12
From more than 3 to 5	211	15.77
More than 5	63	4.71
Total	1338	100.00
Greatest number of mandates (2 cases)	10	
Average number of mandates	2.3	

Table 7: Mayors' Professions, 1976-2013

Mayors' Professions, 1976-2013	Number	%
Farmers	19	1.57
Bankers	87	7.19
Merchants	33	2.73
Entrepreneurs/Industrialists	81	6.69
Intellectuals and Scientists	311	25.70
Civil Servants	150	12.40
Armed Forces Officers	14	1.16
Workers, Craftsmen and Machine Operators	24	1.98
Other Military	2	0.17
Priests	5	0.41
Administrative and Similar Personnel, Services and Salesmen	74	6.12
Teachers	248	20.50
Landowners	13	1.07
Senior Managers and Directors in Public Administration and Business	47	3.88
Technicians and Intermediate-level Professionals	98	8.10
Rural Workers	4	0.33
Total Professions	1210	100.00

Table 8: Mayors' Qualifications, 1976-2013

Mayors' Qualifications, 1976-2013	Number	%
Ninth year of schooling	17	1.94
Baccalaureate	10	1.14
Preparatory cycle	7	0.80
Technical course	109	12.43
Doctorate	3	0.34
Primary school	17	1.94

Secondary school	39	4.45			
Higher studies	69	7.87			
Undergraduate degree	499	56.90			
Primary teacher	48	5.47			
Master's	23	2.62			
Post-graduation	36	4.10			
Total	877	100.00			

Table 9: Council Mayors by Gender, 1976-2005

Elections:	Women elected:	%	Men elected:	%	Total elected:
1976	5	1.6	299	98.4	304
1979	4	1.3	301	98.7	305
1982	6	2	299	98	305
1985	4	1.3	301	98.7	305
1989	7	2.3	298	97.7	305
1993	5	1.6	300	98.4	305
1997	12	3.9	293	96.1	305
2001	16	5.2	292	94.8	308
2005	19	6.2	289	93.8	308
Totals	78		2672		
Mean	8.7	2.8	296.9	97.2	100

Table 10: Summary of Portuguese mayors, 1937-2013

	New State, 1937-1974	Administrative Committees, 1974-1976	Democratic regime, 1976-2013
Average age at appointment or election	45,2	44	43,3
Qualifications: university degrees	92,9%	49,4%	73,0%
Professions: specialists, intelectuals and scientists	34,7%	32,1%	25,7%
Professions: armed forces officers	22,0%	2,6%	1,2%
Professions: teachers	14,0%	13,4%	20,5%
Professions: landowners	6,9%	4,5%	1,1%
Length of mandates	5,3	1,5	8,4
Women	0	1,9%	2,8%

Map:
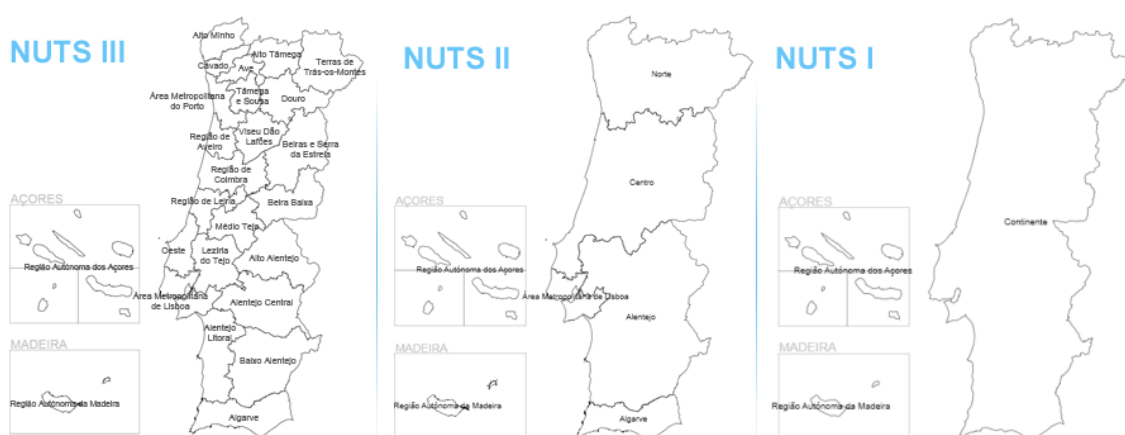
Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/345175/7451602/nuts-map-PT.pdf. The NUTS classification (Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics) is a hierarchical system for dividing up the economic territory of the EU. NUTS 1: major socio-economic regions; NUTS 2: basic regions for the application of regional policies; NUTS 3: small regions for specific diagnoses.