

Chapter 2

Portuguese Emigration Today



Rui Pena Pires

2.1 A European Question

Ever since the mid-nineteenth century, Portugal has been a country of emigration. In Portuguese emigration's long history, we may identify various different phases and periods of interruption – as well as various relations with the more recent, and less enduring, dynamics of immigration.

Until the mid-1960s, emigration was above all intercontinental, with the Americas and the then colonies in Africa the main destinations. With two significant periods of interruption brought about by the world wars, Portuguese transatlantic emigration sought out Brazil as its leading destination for over a century. The United States, Canada and Venezuela were also significant destinations in successive periods over this time. In the case of Africa, over 300,000 Portuguese citizens emigrated in the 1950s and 1960s, heading to Angola and Mozambique in particular.¹

In the period after World War II, and more emphatically from the 1960s onwards, Portuguese emigration became essentially European. Flows to other more developed European countries have remained predominant ever since – though they were interrupted in the decade following the 1974 revolution and advent of democracy, when there was only residual emigration – and have intensified throughout the first decades of the twenty-first century.

In the 1960s and early 1970s France was Portuguese emigrants' main destination, although there were also significant flows to Germany and, on a lesser scale, to

¹ On the history of Portuguese emigration, see Peixoto (2000); on immigration to Portugal, including those repatriated from the former colonies, see Pires (2003); for a combined examination of emigration from and immigration to Portugal, see Pires et al. (2011).

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Luxembourg. The resumption of European outflows following their cessation in the 1970s and 1980s was initially slow and focused on new destinations: Switzerland, right after 1979 (Marques 2016); Germany, in the years of reconstruction that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall – emigration to which peaked in 1996 (Candeias 2017); and, in this century, initially Spain and then the United Kingdom and France.

While it remains more concentrated in these destinations, Portuguese emigration today has spread to practically every country in Europe. Meanwhile intercontinental outflows have fallen to very low levels. The only exceptions worth noting are the recent increases in the number of departures for Angola and Mozambique, currently the only non-European countries in the top ten destinations for Portuguese emigrants.

The European shift of Portuguese emigration in the wake of World War II accompanied the continent's general transformation into a pole of attraction for labour migration, in particular for those from the Mediterranean's peripheries (Castles et al. 2014, ch. 5). These movements were first interrupted after the 1973 oil shock and the consequent adoption of more restrictive immigration policies. In Portugal this coincided with the 1974 revolution, which gave rise to widespread expectations of socioeconomic improvements. The result of these changes, both domestically and across Europe, was the abrupt and almost complete suspension of Portuguese emigration.

The same period also saw the beginning of the contemporary history of immigration to Portugal, hitherto only a residual population movement. This began with the arrival, in a little over a year, of half a million Portuguese repatriates from the former colonies, referred to as the “*retornados*” (returnees), the overwhelming majority of whom came from Angola (61%) and Mozambique (34%). After this there was, successively, post-colonial immigration from Africa – above all from Angola, Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau; immigration from Europe from the mid-1980s; immigration from Brazil, which has continued until the present day, though with major changes in composition; and immigration from Eastern Europe concentrated primarily around the turn of the century. Over the four decades since the 1974 revolution, these successive movements have been the source of around 400,000 immigrants to Portugal, fewer than were repatriated in just a single year from the former colonies.

The coincidence of sharp reductions in emigration and increases in immigration helped render the former invisible for more than two decades (Peixoto et al. 2016b). Towards the end of the twentieth century, the public perception of Portugal as a country of immigration was superimposed onto the historical image of the country as a nation of emigrants. Emigration nevertheless began to grow again continuously from the 1980s, particularly after Portugal joined the then European Economic Community in 1986. This growth was, however, far more concentrated on European destinations than in the earlier phase.

At the beginning of the 1990s, emigration and immigration grew in tandem and became structurally interdependent (Pires 2003, 147–151). On the one hand, highly-skilled nationals from developed European countries were migrating to Portugal, in many cases only temporarily. The counterpart to this was an outflow of low-skilled Portuguese workers heading to the same European countries that, as mentioned earlier, had resumed in the mid-1980s. On the other hand, low-skilled workers from

Portuguese -speaking African countries settled in Portugal (labour migrations), while a number – difficult to determine – of highly-skilled Portuguese migrants headed in the opposite direction, notably under the auspices of cooperation agreements.

The process of European integration was crucial to establishing this dominant pattern of international migration to and from Portugal. Firstly, this integration facilitated European labour mobility that, due to wage differentials, drove the resumption of low-skilled Portuguese emigration to more developed European countries in the mid-1980s. Secondly, the availability of European funds for the construction of infrastructure underpinned growing demand for low-skilled workers, which was increasingly met by immigration from Africa. Thirdly, this integration accelerated the Portuguese economy's internationalisation and boosted foreign direct investment in the country, which was a decisive factor in encouraging the migration of professionals from Western Europe.

European integration also produced a short but intense flow of immigration in the first years of the twenty-first century from Eastern Europe (Ukraine and, on a lesser scale, Romania and Moldova), as well as the inland regions of Brazil. From 2002, however, the history of immigration in Portugal has been one of sharp and sustained decline in tandem with an acceleration and diversification of Portuguese emigration. Portugal ceased being a country of immigration and returned to its historical position as a nation of emigrants in terms of both statistics and public perception.

By 2010/2011, this new emigration reality had already taken shape. In particular, Portuguese emigration had already completed its transformation into a European phenomenon. Not only were European countries now home to over two-thirds of Portuguese emigrants; Europe was also the destination for over 85% of emigrants who left Portugal in 2010. Of the remaining Portuguese emigrants, 30% lived in North and South America and only 3% in the rest of the world. The total proportion of emigrants born in Portugal and living in Europe rose from 16% in 1960 to 67% in 2010 (see Figs. 2.1 and 2.2). In the same period, the total number of emigrants born in Portugal living abroad multiplied by 2.3, while the numbers resident in Europe multiplied by nine, surging from 165,000 in 1960 to over 1.5 million in 2010.

According to estimates by the United Nations, the number of Portuguese-born emigrants stood at 2.3 million in 2015.² This population is highly diverse, reflecting the history of its constitution summarised above. The rounded data from the 2000/2001 and 2010/2011 censuses allow us to distinguish three groups of destination countries (see Table 2.1).³

First, there are countries with large Portuguese emigrant populations that are ageing and in decline due to the substantial reduction in outflows from Portugal: this is the case with countries in the Americas, such as Brazil, Canada, the United States

²United Nations, DESA, Population Division: International Migrant Stock (the 2015 revision). [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml]

³For a more detailed exploration of the census data on Portuguese emigrants in OECD countries in 2000/01 and 2010/11, see the Emigration Observatory (2015, 77–106).

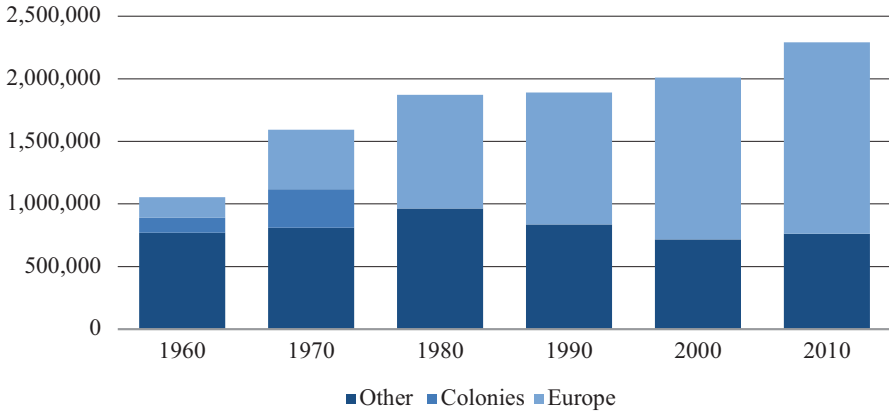


Fig. 2.1 Evolution of the Portuguese emigrant population, 1960–2010.
 Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2012), Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2012); The World Bank, Global Bilateral Migration Database; INE, General Population Censuses of Angola and Mozambique

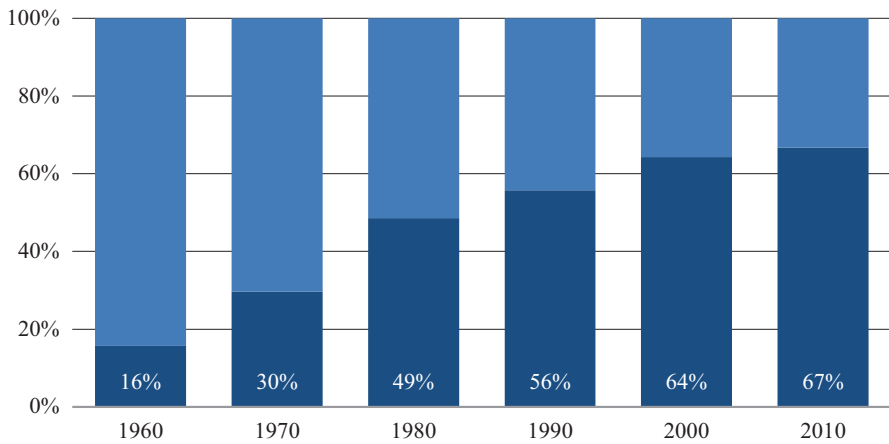


Fig. 2.2 Evolution of the Portuguese emigrant population in Europe as a percentage of the total Portuguese emigrant population, 1960–2010.
 Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2012), Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2012); The World Bank, Global Bilateral Migration Database; INE, General Population Censuses of Angola and Mozambique

and, on a lesser scale, Venezuela, as well as Australia. In all of these countries, too few Portuguese immigrants are arriving nowadays to compensate for deaths and for the eventual movements of return and re-emigration.

Second, there are countries with large ageing but growing Portuguese emigrant populations. These are countries that have experienced a resumption of Portuguese

Table 2.1 Stock of Portuguese-born emigrants in some destination countries: sociodemographic indicators, 2000/2001 and 2010/2011

Country	Total Portuguese-born			Percentage aged 65 and over		Percentage with completed higher education aged 15 and over	
	2000/2001	2010/2011	Change (%)	2000/2001	2010/2011	2000/2001	2010/2011
Brazil	213,203	137,972	-35.3	46	60	..	..
Canada	153,985	139,275	-9.6	17	28	10	17
USA	206,340	198,846	-8.6	16	23	11	14
France	581,062	617,235	6.2	8	16	4	7
Germany	..	75,110	..	..	..	..	..
Spain	56,359	98,975	75.6	13	12	8	13
Switzerland	100,975	169,458	67.8	..	..	3	6
United Kingdom	36,556	92,065	151.8	6	7	19	38

Source: Eurostat, Census Hub; United Nations, CEPAL, banco de datos en línea sobre investigación de la migración internacional en América Latina y el Caribe (IMILA); the Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração), data by OECD, Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries, DIOC 2000/2001 (File A2) and DIOC 2010/2011 (Rev 3)

emigration that in recent years has been sufficient to invert trends towards the stabilisation or reduction of the population, but which has been insufficient to compensate for ageing caused by the sharp fall in new immigrants in the post-1974 period. Countries such as France, Germany and Luxemburg fall into this group.

Finally, there is a set of new emigration countries with young and growing Portuguese populations that are already experiencing variable patterns: Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Spain. Of the three, Switzerland is the country with the longest experience of high levels of Portuguese emigration. The United Kingdom has now become the main destination of Portuguese emigration following a period of major growth between 2011 and 2013. Spain, which was the main destination for Portuguese emigrants in this century prior to 2008, experienced a decline in Portuguese immigration due to the effects of the economic crisis on the construction sector, which had attracted low-skilled manual labour in the preceding period. But Portuguese immigration to Spain has been picking up since 2014, the first of three successive years in which it grew by over 10%.

In summary, the characterisation of contemporary Portuguese emigration as a “European phenomenon” has a dual significance. On the one hand, it refers to the fact that Portuguese emigration today is almost entirely (over 85%) directed towards other European countries. On the other hand, it signifies that the number of emigrants born in Portugal and living in the American countries that were the destinations for large pre-1960 intercontinental emigration movements are now ageing at a rapid rate and in decline in terms of their absolute numbers.



Fig. 2.3 Permanent outflows of Portuguese emigrants, 2001–2016.

Source: Estimates by the Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração) based on destination countries permanent inflows data

2.2 Recession and Migration

The return to high levels of emigration over the course of this century has so far been interrupted only between 2008 and 2010, the years of the global financial crisis and economic recession. The period between 2010 and 2013 saw the highest rates of growth in Portuguese emigration since the 1960s. From 2014, emigration experienced a slight downturn even while remaining at a high level: over 100,000 departures annually, equivalent to 1% of the country's population (see Fig. 2.3).⁴

The stagnation of economic growth in Portugal after it joined the Euro – and the consequent downwards pressure on public investment (Lourtie 2011) and its effects on the job market – explain the first phase in the growth of emigration through to 2008. There is clearly a strong connection between job market dynamics and Portuguese emigration. Throughout the twenty-first century, emigration trends have been correlated negatively with the employment rate and positively with the unemployment rate (see Figs. 2.4 and 2.5). The same job market dynamics that favoured emigration hindered immigration. The symmetry is almost perfect, with immigration decreasing as the unemployment rate rises and correspondingly increasing whenever the employment rate picks up (see Figs. 2.6 and 2.7).

Between 2008 and 2010, emigration decreased despite the shrinkage of the job market. This short and temporary break in the link between migratory dynamics and the job market reflects the differences between the financial crisis of 2008–2010 and the deeper sovereign debt crisis that extended through to 2014. The financial crisis, which was global in scope, reduced the role of international migration as an

⁴On Portuguese emigration in the 21st century, see the the Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração) data as well as the studies and reports available at [<http://observatorioemigracao.pt/np4/>]; see also Justino (2016).

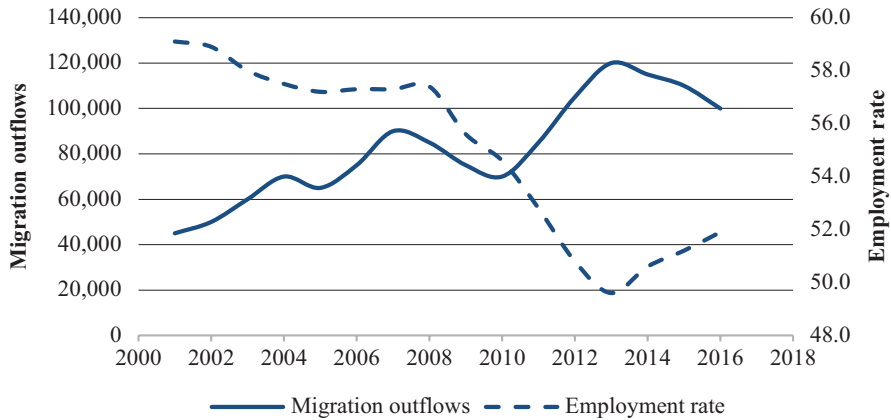


Fig. 2.4 Employment rate and migration outflows, Portugal, 2001–2016.
 Source: Pordata, data from Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics] (employment rate) and the Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração) (outflows)

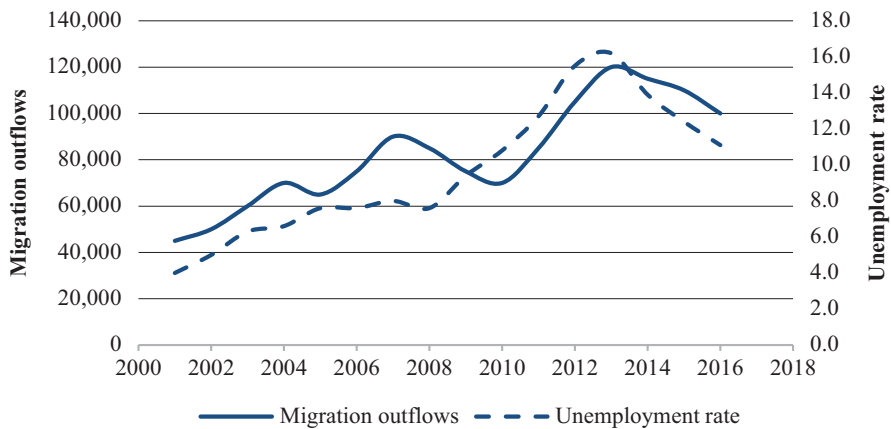


Fig. 2.5 Unemployment rate and migration outflows, Portugal, 2001–2016.
 Source: Pordata, data from Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics] (unemployment rate) and the Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração) (outflows)

alternative to diminishing domestic employment opportunities and rises in unemployment: in sum, potential Portuguese emigration had fewer viable destinations.

This temporary reduction in international migration in the wake of the 2008–2010 financial crisis was not specific to Portugal but rather a generalised phenomenon that was particularly acute in the European Union as detailed by the OECD report: “The economic downturn marked a decline in permanent regulated labour migration flows of about 7%, but it was free-circulation movements (within the European Union) and temporary labour migration which saw the biggest changes with falls of 36% and 17%, respectively, for 2009 compared to 2007 (OECD 2011, 30)”.

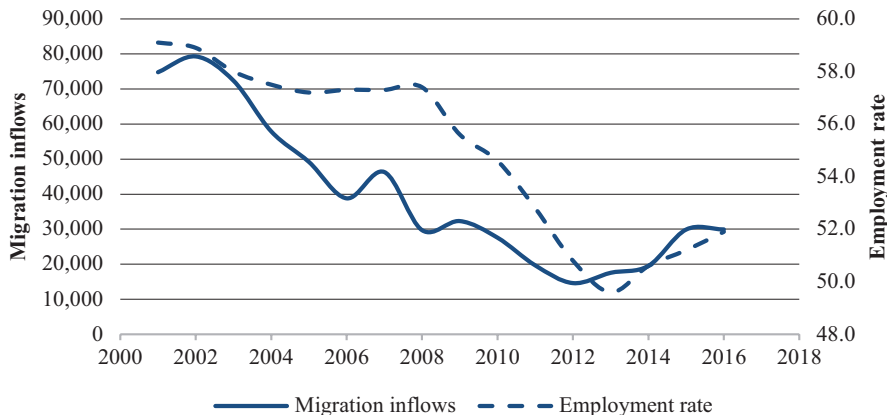


Fig. 2.6 Employment rate and migration inflows, Portugal, 2001–2016.
 Source: Pordata, data from Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics]

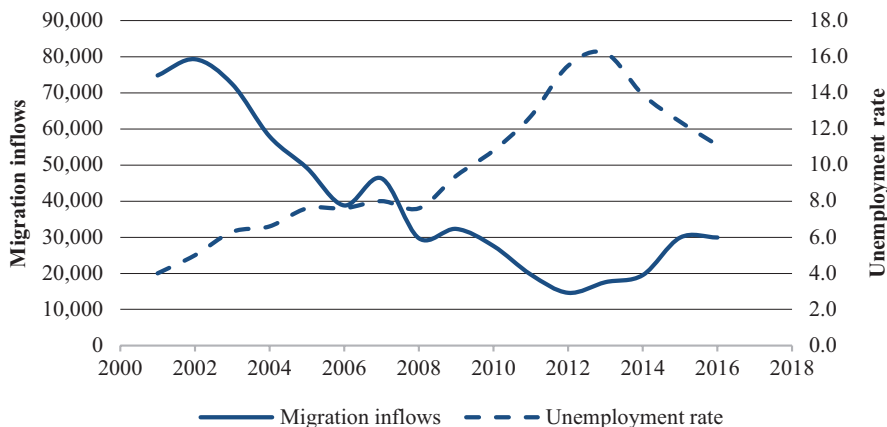


Fig. 2.7 Unemployment rate and migration inflows, Portugal, 2001–2016.
 Source: Pordata, data from Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics]

In the Portuguese case, one factor that contributed to this decline was the depth of the early 2008 recession in Spain, the leading destination for Portuguese emigration in the years leading up to the financial crisis. The plunge in the numbers migrating to Spain resulted above all from the collapse in construction, the sector most affected by the financial crisis and the source of most employment for Portuguese emigrants in the pre-crisis years. This collapse was so profound that it not only reduced emigration from Portugal to Spain but also prompted a decline in the number of Portuguese emigrants living in Spain, affecting those working in the construction sector in particular. Repatriations to Portugal, as well as the re-emigration

to other European countries of less qualified and more precariously-employed workers, explain this shrinkage in the Portuguese population resident in Spain (Pinho and Pires 2013).

The effects of the sovereign debt crisis, which were felt more deeply in Portugal from 2010 onwards, were asymmetric, enabling the growth of Portuguese emigration to less affected countries. The adoption of austerity policies under the auspices of the adjustment program – which had recessionary effects on the labour market in particular – worsened a prolonged fall in employment and rise in unemployment. Nevertheless, at that time emigration could serve as an alternative to unemployment. Indeed, between 2010 and 2013, emigration grew at a faster rate than during the period prior to the recession, at around 16% per year.

In this period, the employment rate fell by five percentage points, from 54.6% to 49.6%, and unemployment rose by over five points, from 10.8% to 16.2%. At the beginning of the century, in 2001, the employment rate had stood at 59% and unemployment at 4%, figures that worsened gradually but systematically until the eruption of the financial crisis in 2008, from which point their deterioration accelerated until 2013.

By contrast, emigration to the main destination countries rose to levels unprecedented in post-1974 Portuguese democratic history (see Fig. 2.8): emigration to France doubled, soaring from 9000 in 2010 to 18,000 in 2013; emigration to Switzerland leapt from 12,000 to 20,000; emigration to Germany almost tripled, rising from 4000 to 11,000; and emigration to the United Kingdom more than doubled, advancing from 12,000 to 30,000 and transforming this country into the leading destination for Portuguese emigration. The only exception to this pattern of growth was emigration to Spain, which continued the decline that first began in 2008, dropping from 7000 in 2010 to around 5000 in 2013. This was a consequence

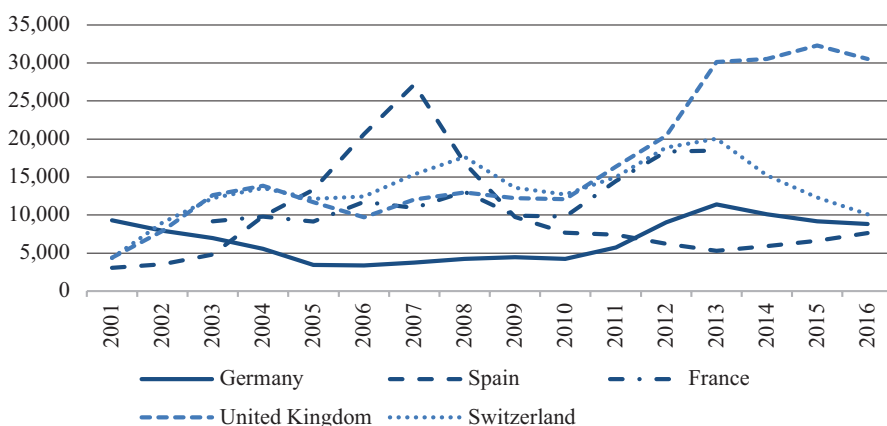


Fig. 2.8 Permanent outflows of Portuguese emigrants to main destination countries, 2001–2015. Source: The Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração) based on destination countries permanent inflows data

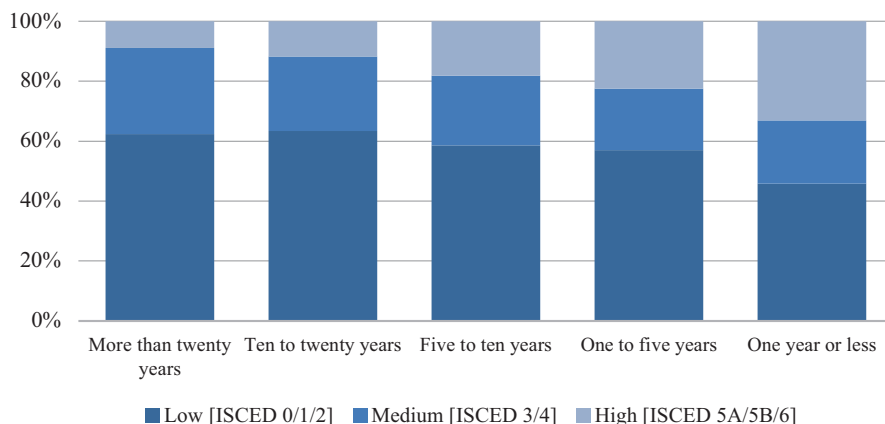


Fig. 2.9 Stock of Portuguese-born emigrants aged 15 and over in OECD countries by duration of stay and educational attainment, 2010/2011. (Note: N = 1,135,949. Missing values = 299,641) Source: The Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração), data from OECD, Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries, DIOC 2010/2011 (Rev 3 File B)

of the intensity of the 2008 crisis in Spain's construction sector as well as the effects of the sovereign debt crisis in this country.⁵

The growth in emigration to the United Kingdom – which does not take advantage of historical networks built up and reproduced since the 1960s – represents not only a reconfiguration of destinations but also of the emigrant population's social composition. Portuguese emigration today is more highly qualified than in the 1960s. The census data from 2000/2001 and 2010/2011 reveal, however, that this greater level of qualification simply reflects the higher education levels among the Portuguese population in general. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the growth of the emigrant population with a higher education degree advanced at the same pace as the rise in the Portuguese graduate population (Pires et al. 2014, 72). However, the data also reveal that, in the years immediately preceding 2010/2011, the growth in the number of graduate emigrants accelerated, above all due to the emergence or increasing significance of new migratory destinations in Northern Europe, in particular the United Kingdom (see Table 2.1 and Fig. 2.9).⁶

Hence, with financial crisis and recession, Portuguese emigration not only grew but also began changing in social composition and spatial configuration.⁷ In particular, the recession heightened Portuguese emigration's European character. Only emigration to Angola, and to a lesser extent to Mozambique (but not to Brazil), constitutes an exception to this pattern.

⁵For a comprehensive account of the chronology of Portuguese emigration in the 21st century, especially in terms of flows, see Pires et al. 2016, 65–248.

⁶For examples of highly-qualified Portuguese emigration to the United Kingdom, see Pereira (2015) and Pereira et al. (2015).

⁷On the recompositions of Portuguese emigration in the post 2008 crisis years, see especially Peixoto et al. (2016a), Gomes et al. (2015).

From 2014, a process of economic recovery began in Portugal, resulting in the revitalisation of the job market. The employment rate grew from 49.6% in 2013 to 51.9% in 2016 and unemployment decreased from 16.2% to 11.1% over the same period. The migratory flows to and from Portugal reflected the new labour market trends, with emigration decreasing and immigration rising.

Deeper analysis of the data reveals that the impact of this turnaround in the job market was greater for immigration, which grew more rapidly, than emigration, which reduced more slowly. The sharp surge in the number of departures in the early phase resulted in the revitalisation and creation of new networks between Portugal and the destination countries that today make the choice of emigration both easier and more likely as a mobility trajectory. As Alejandro Portes explains, once “established, these networks enable the migration process to become self-sustaining and impermeable to short-term alterations in economic incentives” (Portes 1999, 27).

Given persisting inequalities in incomes and general living standards between Portugal and the main destination countries, any reduction in emigration to levels seen before the financial crisis remains unlikely despite the Portuguese economy having returned to growth. Thus, in all likelihood, emigration has resumed its structural role in Portuguese society.

Globally, however, Portuguese emigration has begun to dip from its peak of 120,000 departures in 2013. But it has done so only at a slow pace, around 5% per year, a third of the rate at which it grew between 2010 and 2013. Sitting above 100,000 departures per year since 2012, emigration has remained at a level previously seen only in the 1960s and early 1970s.

While emigration to the majority of destination countries has followed this general trend – with outflows to Germany, the United Kingdom and Switzerland declining in the last 3 years – emigration to Spain has again run in the opposite direction, with annual rises of over 14% since 2014. We can understand the specificity of Portuguese migration to Spain when we take into account the similarity of the two Iberian countries’ economic dynamics.

2.3 International Comparisons

According to the United Nations estimates mentioned earlier, in 2015 there were over 243 million international migrants globally, a number that corresponded to 3.3% of the world population that year. The same organisation estimates that of this total, some 2.3 million are Portuguese. Thus, in 2015, in terms of stock, Portuguese emigrants made up 0.9% of the total number of emigrants, a percentage seven times higher than the proportion of the global population that is Portuguese (0.14%).

Unlike Mexico or India, which each have over 11 million emigrants, Portugal is not one of the countries with the highest number of emigrants; in 2015 it ranked 27th in the world on this measure. In Europe, only seven countries had larger emigrant populations. These were, in descending order, Russia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Poland, Germany, Romania and Italy. However, when we weigh the num-

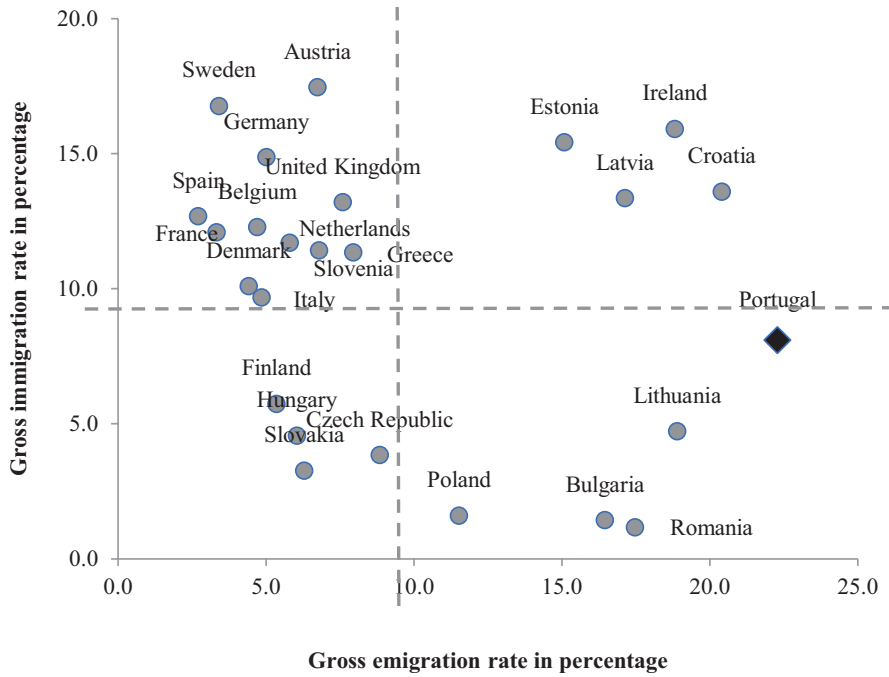


Fig. 2.10 Gross emigration and immigration rates in EU countries, 2015. (Note: Only countries with more than one million inhabitants)
 Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015), Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2015)

ber of emigrants against the country of origin’s population, Portugal rises up the rankings. With a gross emigration rate of 22.3%,⁸ Portugal was, in this ranking, the 12th country in the world.

Within the European Union Portugal was the country with the second-highest number of emigrants as a percentage of its population (23%) in 2015, and the first among countries with over one million inhabitants. In contrast, Portugal was among those countries with a percentage of immigrants in the resident population below the European Union average: 8% when those born in but repatriated from the former colonies are included, and under 6% without this group. The combination of high levels of emigration and low immigration in terms of stock places Portugal in the “push” group of European countries that also includes Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria and Poland (see Fig. 2.10).

⁸Gross emigration rate: stock of permanent emigrants in any given year as a percentage or a ratio of the resident population of the country of origin in this same year. Gross immigration rate: stock of permanent immigrants in any given year as a percentage or as a ratio of the resident population of the destination country in this same year. In both cases, the year of reference is commonly the census year.

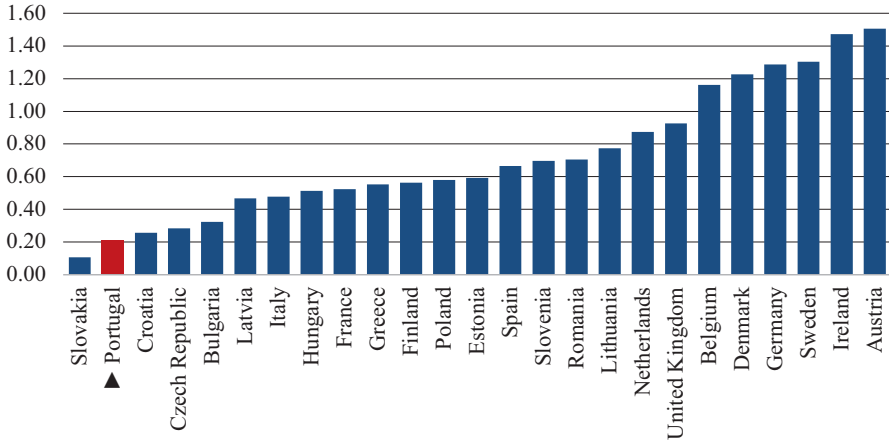


Fig. 2.11 Immigration inflows as a percentage of the population of the destination country, 2013–2015 (3 year average). (Note: Only countries with more than one million inhabitants)
 Source: Eurostat, Database on Population and Social Conditions, Demography and Migration (pop)

While Portugal was a push country in 2015 in terms of stock, the same was also true in terms of migrant flows (Pires and Espírito-Santo 2016). Thus the recent trend reproduces the negative balance that existed during most of the twentieth century.

What stands out most from this international comparison is Portugal’s position as one of the European Union countries with the lowest inflows of immigration. Taking an average of the number of arrivals in the period between 2013 and 2015, only Slovakia returned a gross rate of inflows lower than that of Portugal.⁹ With roughly similar, even slightly higher, values are three other Eastern European countries: Croatia, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria (see Fig. 2.11).

Portugal has a low level of immigration in terms not only of stock but also of flows. In the years 2013–2015, over half of arrivals were returning emigrants (56%). In the European Union, there were only three countries with a higher proportion of emigrant returns among arrivals: Romania, Lithuania and Estonia. And within the region, with values only slightly lower, there were another five countries where the return of migrants predominated among arrivals: Latvia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Croatia. Thus, when it comes to immigration, Portugal’s profile differs not only from that of other countries in Western Europe but also, even if to a lesser extent, the Mediterranean basin, most closely resembling countries in the former Eastern bloc which remain characterised by high migratory inertia (see Fig. 2.12).

Essentially the same profile emerges when the composition of migrant outflows (emigration) is compared: in 2013–2015 Portugal was the EU country with the third-largest percentage of nationals among those emigrating (96%), a level only

⁹Gross rate of outflows (emigration) = departures in any given year as a percentage of the resident population in the country of origin in this same year. Gross rate of inflows (immigration) = arrivals in any given year as a percentage of the resident population in the destination country in that same year.

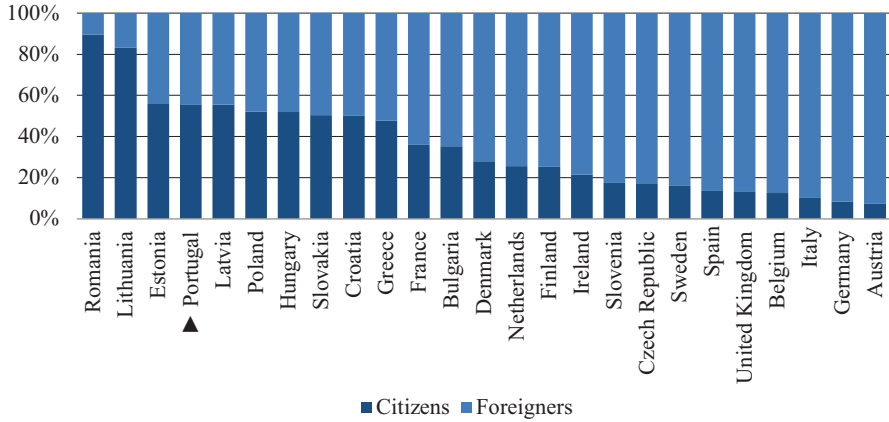


Fig. 2.12 Permanent inflows of immigration by citizenship, European Union countries, 2013–2015 (3 year average). (Note: Only countries with more than one million inhabitants)
 Source: Eurostat, Database on Population and Social Conditions, Demography and Migration (pop)

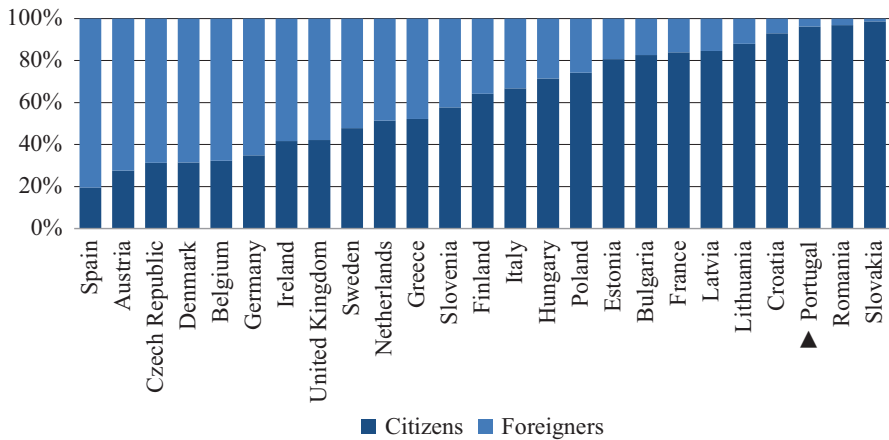


Fig. 2.13 Permanent outflows of emigration by citizenship, European Union countries, 2013–2015 (3 year average). (Note: Only countries with more than one million inhabitants)
 Source: Eurostat, Database on Population and Social Conditions, Demography and Migration (pop)

exceeded by Romania and Slovakia, and within the same range as the levels of emigration observed in Latvia, Lithuania and Croatia. While – like these Eastern European countries – Portugal did not experience high levels of immigration, it did not have any major international circulation of emigration either (see Fig. 2.13).

The data summarised in the paragraphs above allow us to characterise the relationship between austerity and migration in Portugal, enacted via labour market dynamics. The most severe phase in the fiscal adjustment process, and the consequent contraction of the labour market, drove the emigration of nationals and not the re-emigration or return of immigrants living in Portugal. This contrasts sharply with

Spain, whose emigration rate, in terms of outflows, was double that of Portugal for the period under analysis (0.91% against 0.46% respectively). In the case of Spain, however, the percentage of nationals among those emigrating stood at only 20%, the lowest level among all European Union countries. In part, this reflects the difference between the relative dimensions of the immigrant populations in the two Iberian countries. But it also reveals the role played in Spain by re-emigration and the return of immigrants during the processes of adaptation to the 2008–2010 crisis and the fiscal adjustments of the following years. In this period re-emigration and return accounted for 80% of the outflows from Spain, among which – as stated in the section above – were many Portuguese emigrants who had already settled there in the pre-crisis years.

Portugal and Spain's negative migration balances in 2013–2015 are therefore very different (see Fig. 2.14). If we remove return and re-emigration movements from our analysis – from both the outflows and the inflows – Spain turns out to have a positive migratory balance (see Fig. 2.15). Meanwhile Portugal remains among the former Eastern bloc of countries, this time joined by Greece, with a negative migration balance standing at -0.35% of the population. In relative terms, the European Union contained only four countries with deeper negative balances of migration: Croatia, Latvia, Romania and Lithuania.

2.4 Migrations, Demography and Public Policies

In actual fact, the Portuguese migratory balance is far more negative than indicated by the value mentioned above. The problems with its measurement stem from the methodological choices of the European statistical system defined by the regulations approved by the European Parliament and by the European Council on 11 July

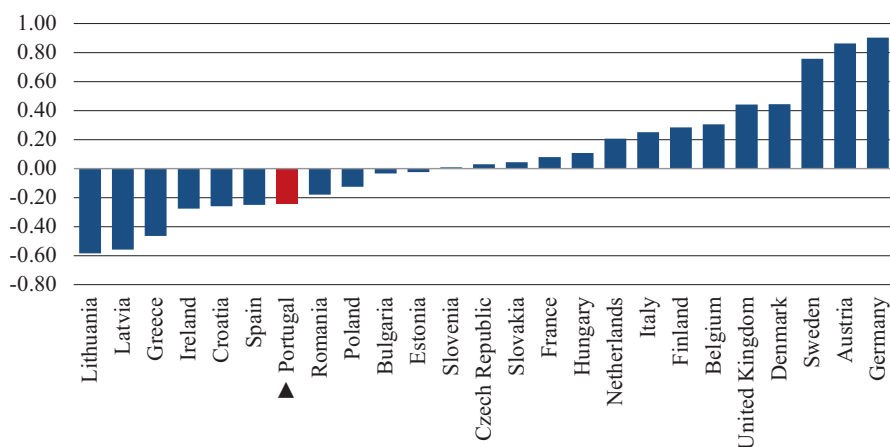


Fig. 2.14 Net migration as a percentage of total population, European Union countries, 2013–2015 (3 year average). (Note: Only countries with more than one million inhabitants)

Source: Eurostat, Database on Population and Social Conditions, Demography and Migration (pop)

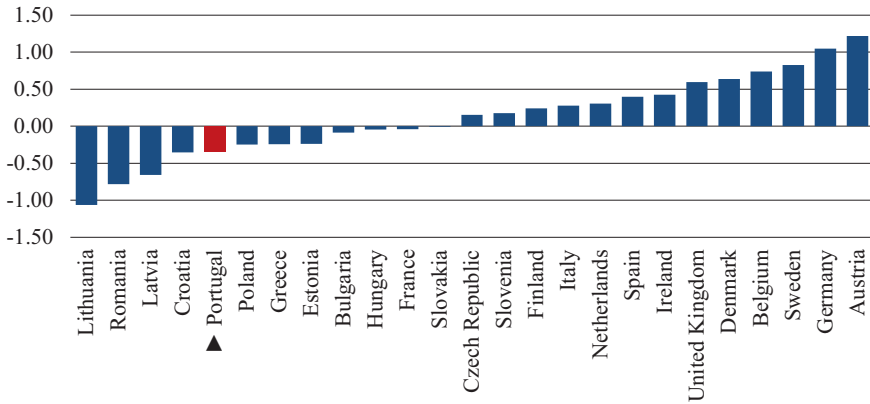


Fig. 2.15 Net migration as a percentage of total population, excluding return flows, European Union countries, 2013–2015 (3 year average). (Note: Only countries with more than one million inhabitants)

Source: Eurostat, Database on Population and Social Conditions, Demography and Migration (pop)

2007, which established common rules for the gathering of EU statistics on emigration and immigration to the territories of member states.¹⁰

As is known, there is a fundamental asymmetry to international migrations. The right to leave the country where one lives is now established as a fundamental individual liberty. On the contrary, entering a country of which one is not a citizen continues to depend on the sovereign will of nation-states. Consequently, as a rule, there are no records of departures (emigration) but only of arrivals (immigration) – at least in democratic states.

In this context, the best way of estimating and characterising the emigration of any country involves the compilation of data about the entrance and permanence of emigrants in destination countries, the so-called “mirror statistics”.¹¹ This was not the option chosen, however, by the European authorities. The figures compiled and published by Eurostat about the emigration of member states and associate states are produced by the statistics institutes of these countries themselves. The main source of information used, in almost every country, is a section included in the Employment Survey, conducted among only a sample. The results thereby obtained about immigration are subsequently optimised through recourse to the administra-

¹⁰See Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers [www.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32007R0862].

¹¹“International experts recommend that the countries of origin should make wider use of the statistics of the destination countries. Popular destinations of migration are well known, as these are countries with an accurately measured in-flow of migrants” (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 2011, 75). In terms of the flows, the mirror effect on the destination country statistics is not rigorous as the arrivals of nationals from another country do not totally correspond to the departures from this same country, also including those who re-emigrate from other countries that are neither their country of birth nor of their citizenship.

tive records of arrivals (in Portugal, the data from the Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras border authority). In the case of emigration, that optimisation is impossible as there are no national administrative records on departures for the reasons detailed above. Furthermore, this survey process is indirect as those who have left cannot, by definition, be surveyed. It is residents who are questioned about those they know who have left, including about the planned duration of their stay abroad (which ends up being an opinion about an intention).

At least in the case of Portugal, the result of this asymmetry in the statistics on outflows and inflows, and the weaknesses of the survey process as regards emigration flows, but not those of immigration, has resulted in a systematic underestimation of the numbers of permanent emigrants. According to the data compiled by the Portuguese Emigration Observatory (Observatório da Emigração) – which is based on statistics about the arrival of Portuguese citizens in destination countries that meet the approval of Eurostat – the level of undervaluation is around 50%. Nevertheless, this does not remain the case for the immigration data, which is far more reliable for the reasons already given (a direct survey whose results can be verified against figures from administrative sources). The result is clear: if we consider the data obtained by the the Portuguese Emigration Observatory, in which the figures for Portuguese emigration are practically double those published by the National Institute of Statistics and by Eurostat, the migratory balance will be far more negative than that resulting from the data released by Eurostat.

In the absence of other reliable data on the outflows from member states, the international comparison ends up having to be made based on the data cited in the section above. But the analysis of the evolution of Portuguese migration benefits from the combined use of data from the Portuguese Emigration Observatory, for emigration, and from the National Institute of Statistics, for immigration. Using this data, we can conclude that the Portuguese migratory balance has been negative since 2004, having fallen from a positive total of around 35,000 in 2001 to a negative peak of 102,000 in 2013 (see Fig. 2.16). With the economic recovery beginning

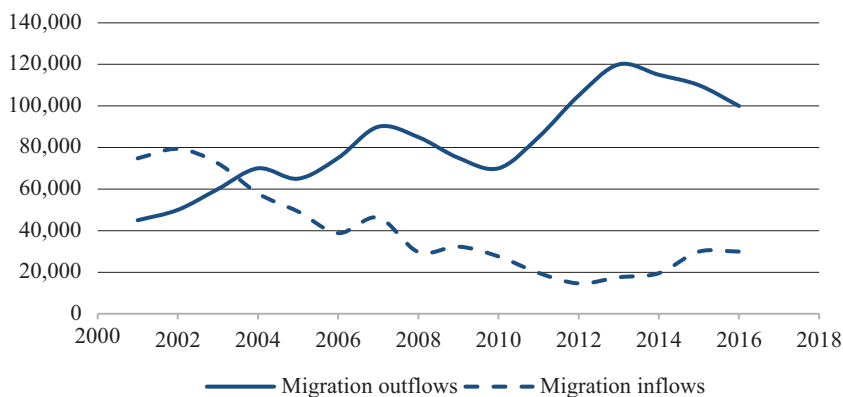


Fig. 2.16 Emigration outflows and immigration inflows, Portugal, 2001–2015.

Source: Emigration Observatory (outflows); Pordata, data by Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics] (inflows)

in the following year, the balance improved due to the combined effect of a fall in the number of departures (of emigrants) and an increase in the number of arrivals (of immigrants). In 2015, the migratory balance registered a negative total of 80,000. Despite the improved economy, total immigration – that is the inflows of nationals returning plus international arrivals – still did not offset the departures.

In Portugal, this negative migratory balance compounds a natural population balance that has also been negative since 2007 and stood at around 23,000 in 2015. This balance results from a sharp decline in the birth and fertility rates in recent decades. Between 1960 and 2015, the number of children per thousand inhabitants slumped from 24.1 to 8.3. Over the same period, the number of children born on average to each woman of a fertile age dropped from 3.2 to 1.3 (see Table 2.2). In 2015, Portugal reported the lowest fertility rate of all European Union and EFTA member states. The increase in emigration – including that of women of a fertile age – has further deepened the structural trend towards falling birth and fertility rates.

The consequence of all these processes has been a decline in the resident population since 2010. Between then and 2015, Portugal lost over 200,000 inhabitants, a fall similar to that which occurred during another period of high emigration in recent history, between 1965 and 1972. At that time the decline was not only halted but also temporarily reversed with the arrival of the population repatriated from the colonies following their independence after the 1974 revolution. These repatriates were on average younger than the resident population in Portugal (Pires 2003, 199–218). But the immediate impact of this mass return was due to its sheer size rather than its composition: between 1974 and 1976, around half a million returnees arrived in Portugal, a figure equivalent to the total number of immigrants arriving in the following four decades.

The contemporary population decline is unlikely to be mitigated by a conjunctural mass movement on the same scale. Furthermore, the ageing of the Portuguese population is far more advanced today than it was in the late 1960s: in 1970, the ageing index stood at 32.9, a value that had already surged to 143.9 in 2015.

In sum, in contemporary Portugal, as in the 1960s, international migrations are amplifying rather than countering the recessive demographic trends. Between the 1980s and the start of the twenty-first century, international migrations conversely

Table 2.2 Portugal, demographic indicators, 1960–2015

Year	Resident population [thousands]	Annual population growth: Natural increase [thousands]	Crude birth rate	Total fertility rate	Ageing index
1960	8865.0	118.9	24.1	3.20	27.5
1970	8680.6	87.6	20.8	3.00	32.9
1980	9766.3	63.5	16.2	2.25	43.8
1990	9983.2	13.6	11.7	1.57	65.7
2000	10,289.9	14.6	11.7	1.55	98.8
2010	10,573.1	-4.6	9.6	1.39	121.6
2015	10,358.1	-23	8.3	1.30	143.9

Source: Pordata, data by Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics]

helped offset these trends' effects. This came about via a rapid reduction in emigration and a similarly swift growth in immigration. Today, as already mentioned, the reduction in emigration is likely to be more gradual. A very large rise in immigration would therefore be necessary for international migration to again have a countercyclical effect on the demographic trend.¹²

In Portugal, the transformation of immigration has depended more on the transformation of employment than on immigration policies, which have thus far been focused on the control – rather than the regulated promotion – of new arrivals. As the regulation of departures is not possible, only promotion of this kind might change the effects of migratory processes on the demographic dynamics of Portugal. With low levels in terms of both stock and flows, Portugal has a huge margin for growth in immigration. This could result from the combined effects of economic growth and its impact on the labour market, on the one hand, and the launching of new immigration policies, on the other.

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¹²On the relationship between migration and demographic sustainability in Portugal, see Peixoto et al. (2017).

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