

Returning to Portugal

Country Profile

Portugal has been a democratic republic since 1976. It has been described as one of the world's most peaceful nations.

President: Anibal Cavaco Silva. Anibal Cava-co Silva won the January 2006 presidential poll, becoming the first centre-right president since the coup of 1974.

Tourism is an increasingly important part of the country's economy.

Portugal has suffered due to the debt crisis and has experienced extreme austerity measures over the last few years.

It has a population of 10.6 million people

81% of the Portuguese population are Roman Catholic

Capital city: Lisbon

Language: Portuguese Currency: Euro

Dial code: +351



Recent History

In 1910, there was a revolution which overthrew the monarchy.

Amid corruption, repression of the church, and the near bankruptcy of the state, a military coup in 1926 installed a dictatorship that remained until another coup in 1974. The new government instituted democratic reforms and granted independence to all of Portugal's African colonies in 1975.

Portugal is a founding member of NATO and entered the European Union in 1986. In 2011, the European Union and International Monetary Fund agree a 78 billion Euro bailout for Portugal, on condition of sweeping spending cuts. Hundreds of thousands of workers go on strike a week before parliament is due to vote on the government's programme of spending cuts and tax rises. It is only the third general strike since Portugal became a democracy in the 1970s.

National Documentation Citizen's Identity Card (Cartão de Cidadão)

All Portuguese citizens are required to obtain an Identity Card when they turn six years of age. You are not required to carry it with you always but are obligated to present it to lawful authorities if requested. The new Citizen's Card is technologically more advanced than the former Identity Card and will replace the existing Identity Card, taxpayer card, Social Security card, voter's card and National Health Service user's card. The Citizen's Card can be requested at the local identification services (conservatórias do registo civil, Lojas do Cidadão etc) or at consular services abroad.

Driving License

Required for driving in Portugal, this is issued by the Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes Terrestres (IMTT). See the Driving in Portugal section for more information.

A driving license and passport can be still used as a form of identification. However, the "identity card" or "citizen card" is a requirement by the Portuguese authorities.

Travelling to Portugal International Organization for Migration in Portugal

Before you travel, you should make contact with the International Organization for Migration in Portugal who will be able to offer assistance in organising airport pick-up, assistance in finding accommodation and other services in assisting your reintegration.

Upon Arrival

If you arrive in Portugal without a place to stay, the following places may be able to support you in finding alternative temporary accommodation.

Temporary Accommodation

CITY	ORGANISATION	CONTACT
Lisbon	Caritas Portugal acts for the benefit of the community through different projects. Some of the current projects aim to help returnees and may be able to assist in finding temporary accommodation.	Praça Pasteur, no 11 - 2.o, Esq. 1000-238 LISBOA Tel: (00) 351 218 454 220

Housing

Housing in Portugal is generally similar to that found in the rest of Europe. However Portugal has the highest number of people living in rural areas; around a third of Portuguese families live on farms or properties outside urban areas. Also, most of the urban population live in the suburbs, therefore major cities Lisbon and Porto are relatively low populations compared to other major cities.

Social Housing

CECODHAS is the national platform representing social housing providers in the country. It has recently presented to the new government a package of proposals to reform the Social Housing market in Portugal. Requests include strengthening social housing services improving demand side support (i.e. housing allowance to families) and introducing innovative management and financial instruments (i.e. investments fund or housing management funds). Proposals also include the modernisation of legislation in order to take into account the new challenges motivated by demographic and social changes.

Who can access social housing?

There are various programmes in Portugal which contain different kinds of criteria for eligibility and priority to access to social housing: PER Relhousing Programme gives priority to people living in shanty towns in the major metropolitan urban areas PROHABITA - the priority is given to people whose income is lower than three annual minimum salaries, that do not own any dwelling in national territory and that are not beneficiary of any kind of public financial support for housing purposes. "Porta 65 Jovem" - support to young people to access rented housing.

NRAU – the New Urban Renting Regime establishes a housing rent allowance benefiting low-income households with rental contracts prior to 1990, in order to counteract the updating of frozen housing rents.

Transport

Portugal has a good infrastructure of road, rail and air transport, although it remains relatively isolated compared with other western European countries with few rail or bus routes going outside of the country.

There are a number of international airports in Portugal as well as smaller airports and airfields. The three main airports connecting the UK to Portugal are described below.

Airports

Lisbon Portela Airport (or Aeroporto de Lisboa) is the main international airport in Portugal and is one of the largest airports in Southern Europe. It is possible to fly to destinations throughout Europe as well as Africa and North and South America. Faro Airport in the Algarve is the second largest airport in Portugal and is located just outside Faro. There are a number of buses which connect the airport with the city centre. There is also a taxi rank outside the arrivals hall.

Porto Airport is the other major international airport in Portugal and the third busiest in the country. It is possible to fly to North and South America and Africa as well as throughout Europe from Porto. The airport connects with the city via a number of bus services and the violet line of the Porto metro system. Taxis are also available.

Healthcare

The official services for providing healthcare is the National Health Service. In addition to this public service, there are private health institutions and professionals. The hospital network is made up of modern and well-equipped units, distributed throughout the country, which have long-standing relationships with the major international insurance companies. The NHS is predominantly funded through general taxation.

English is commonly spoken in hospitals.

Portugal also has an Integrated Medical Emergency System, which guarantees the fast and accurate provision of healthcare to accident victims or anyone suffering a sudden illness, and rapid response times by the emergency services.

If you need to use the National Health Service, remember that you can get medical assistance at the local Health Centre nearest to you. In emergency situations, you can

use the Hospital Casualty Services.

Health insurance

CITY	HOSPITAL
Lisbon	Centro Hospitalar Lisboa Central Rua Jacinta Marto 1169-045 Lisbon Tel: 351 21 312 6600
	Hospital of Santa Maria, Avenida Professor Egas Moniz, 1649-035 Lisbon, Portugal Tel: 00351 21 780 5000
Porto	Hospital of S. João 4200 – 319 Porto Tel: 225 512 100
	Hospital of Santo António Largo Prof. Abel Salazar 4099-001 Porto Telephone: 222 077 500
	Emergency Numbers: Ambulance: 112 Child abuse: 213 433 333 Crisis Line: 800 202 669 / 213 544 545 Drug abuse: 1414 Fire: 112 Spousal abuse: 800 202 148 Police (national): 112

Education for children

The Ministry of Education (primary and secondary education) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education (higher education) are jointly responsible for the entire Portuguese education system, and are supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity in providing pre-school education.

Education structure:

Pre-School Education

Pre-school education for children between the ages of three and five is still optional. It is provided by kindergartens, which are run by a variety of State organisations, charitable institutions, private schools and cooperatives, unions and other organisations.

Compulsory Schooling: Basic Education

Basic education is compulsory and free and lasts for nine years, covering children and young people between six and 15 years of age. It comprises three consecutive cycles: the 1st cycle (four years) provides a general education, with a single teacher

(sometimes supported in specialised areas); the 2nd cycle (two years) and the 3rd cycle (three years) are taught by a single teacher per subject or multidisciplinary educational field.

Post-compulsory Schooling: Secondary Education

This comprises three years of education (10th, 11th and 12th years of schooling). It is geared towards anyone who intends to continue studying or to join the labour market. It includes science and humanities and specialised artistic, technological or vocational training courses, and is provided by secondary schools and vocational schools.

Employment

Today, Portugal has a highly diversified job market with a strong emphasis on services. Although more traditional sectors such as agriculture, forestry, and fishing are still important in terms of employment, the significance of industry and services has now overtaken them. In recent years, the economy of the country has opened up employment opportunities for locals and expats that go well beyond the “classic” options of working in Portugal’s automotive, textile, oil refining, or tourist sectors. Many companies specialising in research and modern technologies are now based in Portugal’s industry areas, which can be found in many of the large cities around the country. Not only Lisbon and Porto, but also cities such as Braga, Évora and in the case of the textile industry, the northern part of the country in general.

The country has had to face a number of challenges in recent years including the financial bailout of 2011 and the resulting austerity measures. Government spending, which has long been an important pillar for working in Portugal, has decreased substantially.

Finding work in Portugal

Portugal has a number of state run institutions dealing with employment (emprego) and unemployment (desemprego) principally aimed at helping Portuguese speaking job seekers. These include government sponsored labour exchanges (Centros de Emprego) and a number of Internet sites offering handy tips on looking for work.

Ministry of Labour (Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social) <http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt.aspx>

Social Security (Segurança Social) <http://www4.seg-social.pt/>

Portuguese Public Employment Service (PES) (Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional) <http://www.iefp.pt/Paginas/home.aspx>

Unemployment benefit

In order to get ordinary unemployment benefit (Subsídio de Desemprego) a person must have worked for at least a year or made voluntary contributions for two years. This benefit is calculated at 30 percent of average net earnings over the previous three months.

Unemployed benefit for full time employees made redundant is calculated at around 65 percent of average net earnings over the previous three months prior to unemployment.

Apart from unemployment benefit (Subsídio de Desemprego) there is also Social Subsidy Benefit (Subsídio Social de Desemprego) and Partial Unemployment Benefit (Subsídio de Desemprego Parcial). The second two are to compensate the employee for lack of remuneration or reduction by agreement from a full time to a part time job. Those not eligible for unemployment benefit may be able to apply for Social Insertion Income (Rendimento Social de Inserção) which is mainly available to families suffering hardship in areas of high unemployment.

Who can claim Unemployment Benefit?

- Portuguese citizens and legal residents in Portugal
- Employees signed up to Social Security (Segurança Social) and working for an employer on contract (Por Conta do Outrem)
- Self-employed workers who have ceased their activities for reasons that are not their fault (such as sickness, accident, incapacity or invalidity). Those service suppliers on Green Receipts are recommended to take out private unemployment insurance.

Income Support

There is no Income Support system in Portugal, although there is incapacity and invalidity benefit for the sick, infirm and disabled.

Driving in Portugal

Basic driving practice can begin at 16 years of age in Portugal. The Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes Terrestres is responsible for issuing licenses. To apply for a license, the driving school requires the following documents:

- Passport (Passaporte) or Identity Card (Bilhete de Identidade)
- Residency Permit (Cartão de Residência)
- A completed application form available to download on the IMTT website (<http://www.imtt.pt/sites/IMTT/Portugues/Formularios/Documents/Mod1-IMTT.pdf>)

Complete the document supplied and stamped by the school and signed by its director. The school supplies all necessary handbooks (Guias), highway codes (Código de Estrada) and other information. If you have acquired a driving license in

the UK this will also be valid in Portugal.

Vehicle documents

You should either have both the Registration Document (a blue paper named Título de Registo de Propriedade in Portuguese) and the Vehicle Registration Certificate, known as the log book (a green one called Livrete in Portuguese), or just the all-in-one document (Documento Único Automóvel), which comprises all the necessary information about the owner and the vehicle.

Insurance

It is mandatory to have third party personal insurance, while full coverage is only optional.

Banking and Finance

Portugal is a member of the euro-zone and all transactions are in Euros, although prices are still sometimes given in escudos in shops, restaurants and on bills. When you are ready to open up an account you will need to do so in person. Banks generally open at 8.30 am and close at 3 pm, from Monday to Friday. You can open either a current account (conta corrente) or a deposit account (deposito a prazo).

Opening an account

The first step is to fill in a couple of forms. While every bank might have its own requirements, in general you can expect to fill in an application form, client details and acceptance of the bank's rules and conditions. You will also need your passport or identity card, tax number and card, residency card and proof of residence.

Law, Customs and Celebrations

Law

- Abortion is still illegal in Portugal
- In 2001, possession of marijuana, cocaine, heroin and LSH was decriminalised, making Portugal one of the most liberal countries in the West concerning illicit drugs. However trafficking and possession of more than 10 days worth of personal use are still punishable by imprisonment and fines. People caught with small amounts of any drug are given the choice of rehab and may refuse treatment without consequences.

Culture

Portugal maintains a remarkable number of folk customs, and there are many local festivals (festas) and traditional pilgrimages (romarias). Some of these have developed into wild celebrations lasting days or even weeks.

Charities and Support Services in Portugal

ORGANISATION	SERVICES
Santa Casa da Misericórdia da Amadora Estrada da Portela, Quinta das Torres - Buraca . 2720 Amadora Tel: 214 722 200 santa.casa@misericordia-amadora.pt	A catholic charitable organisation that does social work.
Emmaus Caminho e Vida Porto R. Almada, 138 P-4050-031 PORTO Tel: Tel: +351 91 982 94 96 emauscaminhoevidaporto@gmail.com	Works redistributing donations of clothes, furniture and other materials They also offer support vulnerable people, accompanying to hospitals etc or organising events such as Christmas celebrations for excluded people.
Emaus Fraternidade Lisboa Quinta Das Lages Canecas- P-1675-502 ODIVELAS Tel: +351 21 980 00 38	Runs social projects to support those going through a difficult time. One of the main projects different kinds of materials, pieces of clothing, furniture etc to be sold and generate funds.
Portuguese Red Cross / Cruz Vermelha Portuguesa Jardim 9 de Abril , 1-5 1249-083 Lisboa Tel: +351 2139 3900	Develops different activities and projects such as healthcare assistance, public campaigns, training
Doctors of the World / Medicos do Mundo Av. De Ceuta (SUI) Lote 4, Loja 1 1300-125 Lisboa Tel: +351 213 619 520	Provides health assistance and develops community projects aiming to benefit vulnerable populations.
Caritas Portugal Praça Pasteur, no 11 - 2.o, Esq. 1000-238 LISBOA Tel: +351 218 454 220	Provides support to returnees.

Sources:

<http://www.cartaodecidadao.pt/index.php.html>

<http://lisbon.angloinfo.com/information/working/unemployment/>

<http://www.internations.org/portugal-expats/guide/working-in-portugal-15751>

http://www.expatica.com/pt/health_fitness/healthcare/The-Portuguese-healthcaresystem_17767.html

<http://livinginportugal.com/en/living-in-portugal/healthcare/#sthash.318dcE1Z.dpuf>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17758217>

<http://www.portugaldailyview.com/whats-new/traffic-what-you-should-know-if-you-plan-to-drive-in-portugal>

<http://portugal.angloinfo.com/transport/driving-licences/portuguese-licences/>