

From emigration, to immigration, and back: dynamics of the Lusophone migration system

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Abstract

In the last twenty years the social and political production of a discourse on the absence of Portuguese emigration, and in particular, of ongoing emigration flows, contrasted with the size and social significance that this migratory movements registered during these years. Considered to be one characteristic of the past and associated with a reality marked by low levels of development, emigration could hardly fit into the dominant narrative of economic and social development during this period. Imagined as a country of the center, Portugal excluded itself from the group of countries of emigration.

However, as frequently happens, facts insisted in contradicting the dominant definition of reality. Through the analysis of recent migration flows Portuguese this article seeks to present the evolution of Lusophone migration system in an integrated reading of its belonging to different migration systems. It will be argued that the European nodule of the Lusophone migratory system is currently in a undefined phase marked by the simultaneity of moments of contraction and expansion, the African and South American nodules are in a period of expansion (albeit of varying intensity) and that the configuration and the relative importance of each of these three nodules are undergoing profound and important changes.

Introduction

In the last twenty years the social and political production of a discourse on the absence of Portuguese emigration, and in particular, of ongoing emigration flows, contrasted with the size and social significance that this migratory movements registered during these years. Considered to be one characteristic of the past and associated with a reality marked by low levels of development, emigration could hardly fit into the dominant narrative of economic and social development during this

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period. Imagined as a country of the center, Portugal excluded itself from the group of countries of emigration.

However, as frequently happens, facts insisted in contradicting the dominant definition of reality. After the mid-1980s it is possible to testify a revival in the outflow of Portuguese nationals, which was characterized by three main elements: a transformation of the institutional context in which it occurs, the emergence of new forms of migration and the development of new countries of destination. At the institutional level, when Portugal became a member of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986 new conditions were created for the circulation of Portuguese workers (and, incidentally, to a certain invisibility of the emigration movements because official statistics on exits to other European countries ceased in 1988). In 1992 Portuguese nationals gained access to a European space in which the free movement of people was possible. This seemed to create adequate conditions for a recovery of the outflow of Portuguese citizens mainly directed towards the countries that, until the abrupt halt of the early 70s, were the main destinations of Portuguese emigrants. The data on the entrance of Portuguese in some countries of destination provided by Baganha (1993), Peixoto (1993) and Baganha and Peixoto (1997), show that between 1985 and 1990, Portugal registered an increased frequency of exits (on average 33,000 individuals per year left the country during this period) which, nevertheless, were substantially lower than those recorded during preceding decades.

Another indicator of the increase in the external mobility of Portuguese could be revealed through the analysis of the evolution of the stock of Portuguese nationals residing in other European countries. The following table shows a continuous increase of Portuguese citizens living in seven selected European countries, mainly after 1985. This increase is explicable not only by the natural increase of the emigrants already living there but also by new migratory movements.

Table 7 - Portuguese nationals living in selected European countries, 1981-2006

	1981	1985	1990/1	1995	2000/1	2005	2010 ⁷
Andorra ³	1.304	1.731	3.951	6.885	6.748	11.294	13.100
Germany ^{1 and 5}	109.417	77.000	92.991	125.100	133.700	115.606	113.208
Belgium ¹	10.482	9.500	16.538	23.900	25.600	27.373	29.802
Spain ^{1 and 4}	24.094	23.300	33.268	37.000	42.000	66.236	142.520

Luxembourg ²	28.069	-	39.100	51.500	58.450	67.800	79.800
United Kingdom ¹	-	-	-	30.000	58.000	73.000	102.000
Switzerland ⁶	16.587	30.851	85.649	134.827	134.675	180.765	221.641
Total	189.953	142.382	271.497	409.212	459.199	542.074	702.071

Sources: ¹ SOPEMI, several years; ² Service central de la statistique et des études économiques (STATEC); ³ Ministeri de Justicia i Interior (Andorra) [<http://estudis-estadistica.finances.ad/indexdee.htm> (accessed em 18/01/2008)]; ⁴ Instituto Nacional de Estadística. Series anuales Padrón Municipal de habitantes (several years); ⁵ Statistische Bundesamt Deutschland, Statistische Jahrbuch, several years; ⁶ Bundesamt für Migration, Ausländer- und Asylstatistik, 2009/2; ⁷ Observatório da Emigração (<http://www.observatorioemigracao.secomunidades.pt>)

It is particularly significant that in the majority of countries under consideration, the number of Portuguese citizens more than doubled between 1985 and 2010, thus clearly showing that the notion of an end to Portuguese migratory movements is an illusion.

The impressive increases (in absolute terms and in percentage) recorded in countries in which the presence of Portuguese nationals was, until the 1980s, nearly insignificant indicate that from that time Portuguese emigration found alternative destinations to the traditional receiving countries of national labour forces. The cases of Switzerland and Andorra are particularly illustrative of the creation and consolidation of new migratory destinations; in both, the Portuguese became the most significant foreign community in a relatively short period of time.¹

To the outflows of more permanent character mentioned above, we have to add an important flow of temporary exits (that is, exits in which the intention is to stay outside Portugal for less than one year). Exact numbers are difficult to calculate, however. For example, to Switzerland there were around 33,000 annual temporary exits during the 1980s and 1990s (reaching a maximum of 50,000 in 1990). Since these exits were temporary, it would be inaccurate to state that the number of migrants corresponded to the overall number of temporary exits during this period. In fact, many of the exits were made by the same migrant in successive years. In the Swiss case, for example, these temporary stays outside the country of origin were repeated, generally, until the fulfilment of the necessary conditions to earn a more permanent residence permit (Marques 2008).

The relevance of temporary migrations is equally visible in the movement directed towards France, a traditional destination of permanent Portuguese migrants within Europe, rising from approximately 3,000 in 1976, to 14,719 in 1989, and to 16,568 in 1991 (data from IOM quoted in Ruivo 2001: 160). A substantial number of these

short-term migrants were later included in the 15,368 permanent workers registered by the service of the ONI and the INED³ (Ruivo 2001: 161).

As in the 1960s and early 1970s, in the 1980s and 1990s the Portuguese continued to migrate mainly to European countries though other countries were also chosen (e.g. Canada, Australia, USA or South Africa). There has been, however, a change in the importance of different host countries in Europe. Switzerland replaced France as the main region of attraction. Since the end of the 1970s the Portuguese migratory flow to Switzerland was only interrupted in 1983 and after the economic crisis of 1991. As a result, the stock of Portuguese nationals⁴ increased until 1996, followed by a phase of stagnation. In 2008 the stock of Portuguese citizens in Switzerland was constituted by 196,168 individuals holding a residence permit or an annual permanence permit (Marques 2008).

To these transformations in the Portuguese emigratory landscape it is necessary to add the development of new migration types that resulted directly from Portugal's membership in the European Union (Ramos and Diogo 2003).

The movement of posted workers assumed a particular relevance in this context. Since the freedom of rendering services in the countries of the then-European Community did not require the same period of transition that applied to the free movement of Portuguese workers (1 January 1992), thousands of detached workers moved initially towards construction sites in southern France and the surroundings of Paris (Eichhorst 1998: 157). In a second phase this type of movement increased and was directed above all to construction sites in Germany and especially Berlin. This type of migratory outflow was substantially different from traditional forms of Portuguese emigration due to the fact that Portuguese companies acted as subcontractors of big German construction companies and used free movement within the European space to their advantage by promoting the mobility of Portuguese workers. This allowed Portuguese construction companies working in Germany to take advantage of the differential in labour costs between Portuguese and German workers (Baganha and Cavalheiro, 2001).

The exact number of Portuguese involved in the movement towards building sites in Germany is difficult to establish given their absence from any register system based either on their participation in the labour market or in the German social security.

³ ONI = Office des Migrations Internationales; INED = Institut Nationale D'Études Démographiques

⁴ Portuguese with annual or settlement permits

According to data presented by Worthmann (2003), the number of Portuguese workers posted in Germany in 1997 was 21,919, representing 12.1% of all posted workers and 40.1% of posted workers coming from a European Union country (Figure 4). Therefore, the Portuguese were the largest group of posted workers from an EU member country. According to some sources, these figures only refer to posted workers in a regular situation and did not include around 35,000 Portuguese working as irregular posted workers (Gago and Vicente 2002: 212).

More recent data show that in 2007 and 2009, Portuguese posted workers were, respectively, 66,000 and 65,000, and that in 2009, the main destination countries were Spain (37.4% of posted workers), France (33.8%) and Germany (11.8%) (European Commission, 2011).

The current situation

During the 2000s and mainly since 2005, it is possible to observe a new upsurge in the outflow of Portuguese citizens. Though data on this increase does not capture it entirely, the available evidence suggests that in addition to the destination countries mentioned above, the emigration flow is heading toward destinations until now only marginally regarded as possible host countries for Portuguese migrants. The most visible case is Angola. The number of registered Portuguese emigrants increased from 156 in 2006 to 23,787, in 2009. There are around 90,000 Portuguese citizens living in Angola⁵ This development is particularly significant since Angolans are one of the main immigrant communities in Portugal, thus confirming the existence of a multi-centered Lusophone migration system that we have elaborated elsewhere (Góis and Marques 2009). This Lusophone migration system is made of diverse migration flows that bind Portuguese-speaking countries and is able to combine different levels of centers that link other migration systems. It is in this Lusophone migration system that Portugal's semi-peripheral role becomes evident, as it can be simultaneously or successively a core and/or a peripheral country, thus attracting immigrants and/or sending emigrants from/to the countries participating in this and adjacent migration systems (Góis and Marques 2009: 43-44).

In this Lusophone migration system, Brazil has also recently emerged as a renewed emigration country for Portuguese citizens. Data on this movement are not sufficient

⁵ Data from <http://www.observatorioemigracao.secomunidades.pt/np4/paises.html?id=9>

to describe the current state of the flow as since 2000 Portuguese citizens no longer need a visa to enter Brazil due to the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Consultation between Portugal and Brazil. Some anecdotal information could however be used to illustrate the development of the Portuguese community in Brazil. Data from the Brazilian Ministry of Justice indicate that more than 52,000 Portuguese citizens regularized their situation during the first semester of 2011 (data cited in *Jornal de Negócios*, 5 December 2011). The same source reveals that in June 2011 328,856 Portuguese were living legally in Brazil. The data from Portuguese consulates in Brazil show a slightly higher number of Portuguese residents in Brazil. According to these data the stock of Portuguese citizens registered in one of the Portuguese consulates increased from 493,227 in 2008, to 524,847 in 2009 and to 552,264 in 2010. Albeit incomplete, these numbers suggest a clear rise in Portuguese emigration to Brazil that, like the flow to Angola, reversed the migratory movements that took place during the 1990s and early years of the 21st century. More traditional migration destinations like Switzerland, France, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom continue to receive significant numbers of Portuguese citizens adding to already significant Portuguese communities in these countries.

To sum up this description of Portuguese outflows it is possible to state that the migratory movements that took place after the mid-1980s demonstrated a new pattern. If analysed together, this contemporary pattern is characterized by the coexistence of new migratory forms and, more classic migratory movements (Baganha 1993; Baganha and Peixoto 1997; Peixoto 1993). The development of different forms of short-term migratory outflows, as well as the frequent lack of distinction between permanent and temporary movements (Peixoto 1993: 68), appears in this context as the most distinctive feature of the transformation in Portuguese external migratory movements. These are often hybrid movements where a permanent stay is obtained through the reiteration of temporary movements and through longer stays than those allowed by the migrants permanence permit

It is possible to note that the Portuguese emigration movements participate in different rhythms in the western European migratory system. As noted elsewhere (Marques, 2008 and 2010), the participation of Portuguese emigration in this migration system presents as one of its central features the multipolarity of migration

destinations that are being driven in accordance with the set of opportunities that emerge and develop in different destination countries. Its continuation in time is conditioned by the evolution of this same set of opportunities and/or the emergence of alternative migratory structures. In recent years this ability to add new destinations overstep the borders of the European migration system and headed for other migration systems (the African and South American), contributing to enhance the 'structural link' between migration systems often considered and analysed in isolation. As we will see below, the analysis of the immigration movements of migrants coming from Portuguese-speaking countries contributes to complexify the observation of contemporary migration flows, increasingly, requiring the adoption of a more integrated approach.

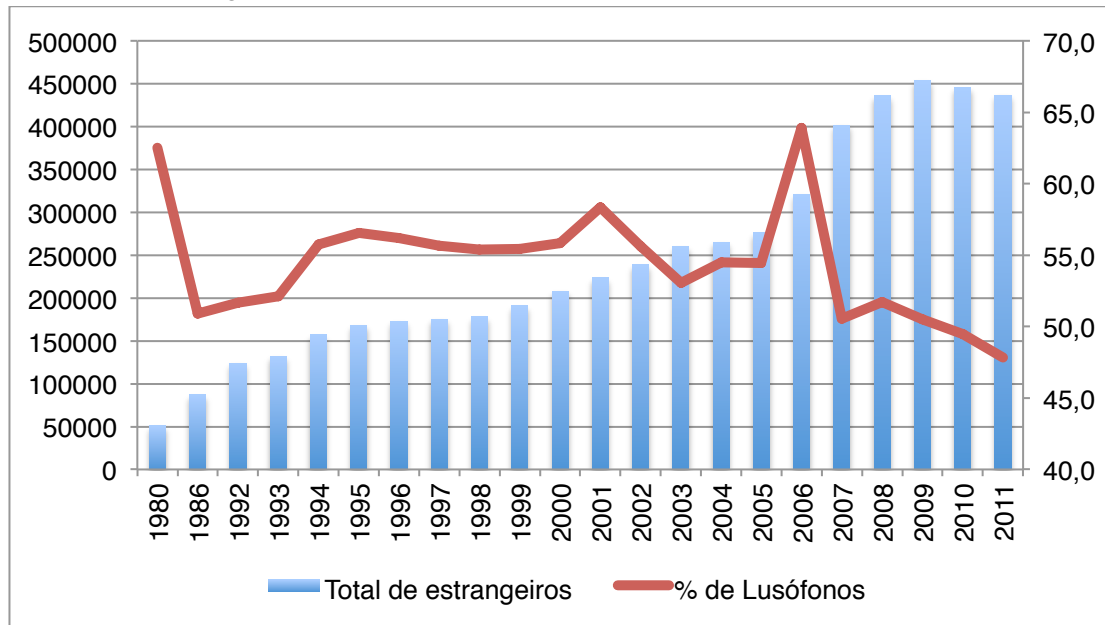
Immigration dynamics in Portugal

From the 80s of last century, Portugal, apart from participating in the European migration dynamics described above, developed its involvement within an emerging Lusophone immigration system composed of countries whose official language is Portuguese and that, during more than two decades, will develop around one of their centers (Portugal). Today it is clear that this migratory flow coming from the Portuguese speaking countries (Africa and Brazil) is a structural migration (with different migration waves) that, despite not having been at all times the dominant flow, marked decisively the national migration reality as the main constituent of the immigrant population in Portugal.

Also in the case of this Lusophone immigration system it is possible to witness different periods of expansion and contraction, whose temporal boundaries are, however, more fluid and not always symmetrical in the two major flows which 'feed' the center of this Lusophone migration system (African and Brazilian immigration flows) (see Figure 1)⁶. This sometimes asymmetric evolution of these two flows is a result of a differential heading (at certain times in the history of Portuguese immigration) to various segments of the labour market, seeking thus to take up opportunities of inclusion in different functional systems of the host society.

⁶ We use in this point the statistics on the stock of foreign population resident in Portugal, since the statistics on the inflows and outflows measure insufficiently the migration dynamics that exist in the country.

Figure 1: Development of the foreign population in Portugal and percentage of Lusophone immigrants, 1980-2010



The first retraction, even slight, takes place during the second half of the 80th of the XX century in which the intensity of the Lusophone migration flow is, in comparison, smaller than that recorded in the first half of the decade and, in particular, than the increase in the intensity of the flow from the intraeuropean migration system in which the country participated as a receiving country mainly after joining the EEC in 1986⁷.

During the first six years of the 90's a strong expansion of the role of Portugal as one of the centers of the Lusophone migration system is visible, marked by an increase in the number of immigrants from Portuguese-speaking countries, especially from Africa. During this period the growth of foreign population reached an average annual growth rate of 7%, representing, in 1999, 1.9% of the total population, or, in absolute terms, 190,896 foreigners. This evolution was particularly felt among the population from a Portuguese speaking country that, in 1996, represented 56.2% of the foreign population legally residing in Portugal, which is an important indicator of the

⁷ The average annual growth rate of the stock of residents support this statement. In the case of immigrants from Africa the growth rate goes from 3.9% per year between 1980 and 1985, to 3.6% between 1986 and 1990. The annual growth of the Brazilian population residing in Portugal goes from 10.4% in the first half of the decade to 6.6% during the second half. The stock of Europeans, register a positive evolution between both periods, from 3.7% to 5.5%.

significance of the Portuguese colonial past and of the maintenance of social and cultural contacts between these countries and Portugal in the formation and consolidation of this migration. From that year on, the numbers show a decrease in the percentage of the Portuguese-speaking immigrants in the total immigrants, due to the arrival of immigrants from other geographical origins.

In the early years of the new millennium (except 2001) the relative decline in immigration movements from a country belonging to the Portuguese-speaking migration system continues, given the greater intensity of the immigration flows from the European migration system (now extended to the east). Indeed, since 2000 immigrants present in the country are coming, overwhelmingly, from Eastern Europe, especially Ukraine. It is a migration that became statistically visible after the concession (in accordance with article 55 of Decree-Law 4/2001 of 10 January) of 126,901 residence permits to immigrants who were irregularly in the country. Most of these residence permits were granted to citizens of Eastern Europe (56%) and, more specifically, the citizens of Ukraine (36%). As a result of this 'regularization' process the number of immigrants residing legally in Portugal rose from 208,198 in 2000 to 350,503 in 2001, which means that the volume of foreign population legally resident increased by about 68% (Baganha *et al.*, 2004: 26).

Following the momentum of the flow of immigrants from Eastern Europe, there is, after 2005, a new, albeit sporadic, intensification of immigration flows coming from the Lusophone migration system, predominantly from Brazil, and thus a new expansion of this migratory system (visible in particular between 2005 and 2006). In absolute terms the Brazilian population in Portugal passes from 28,956 in 2004 to 119,363 in 2010, becoming thus the most numerous group of foreign citizens. Rigorously, the solidification process of the Brazilian community in Portugal starts at the beginning of the century, but by that time the increase of this population group was covered by the numerically more significant increase of immigrants from Eastern Europe⁸.

This latest expansion of the Portuguese-speaking immigration system is illustrative of the openness and mutability of migration systems. It is characterized by the confirmation of a change in the relative weight of the different Lusophone nationalities in the immigration flow, by the almost simultaneous development of

⁸ Signs of this increase are evidenced by the concession, between 2001 and 2004, of 37,765 residence permits to Brazilian immigrants who were irregularly living in the country.

inflows of immigrants and outflow of Portuguese citizens to Lusophone destinies (especially Brazil and Angola), and thus by the intensification of the migratory flows that occur within the Lusophone migration system.

If we take migration as "a form of geographical mobility to take up opportunities for inclusion in functional systems and their organizations" (Bommes, 1999: 14), and if we bear in mind that the realization of these opportunities may include different types of migratory movements (labour migration - skilled and unskilled - migration for academic or professional training, migration of sportsmen, etc..), we can advance the hypothesis that the analysis of the changes, both in terms of intensity and in terms of composition, which occur in Lusophone migration system should take into account the multi-contextuality of migrations that occur within this migration system.

Final remarks

The analysis of recent Portuguese migration flows, allows us to present, albeit in a incipient form, the evolution of the Lusophone migration system and stress that the development of this system is influenced by the imbrication of the constituent countries in other migration systems. It is clear that this system is not a static entity, indifferent to the factors that determine its existence.

These conjunctural variations, allow us to acknowledge the development of what Jorge Malheiros (Malheiros, 2005: 261) termed autonomous subsystems based on intensive migratory networks. That is, migration subsystems consisting of a limited number of countries, of which at least one is part of a larger migration system (such as the Lusophone migration system, or the European migration system) and which have the peculiarity of, through this integration, expand its action to other migration systems interconnected with that.

The Lusophone migration system is thus an changeable migration system that, like other migration systems, reflects the political, legal, economic and social changes that occur in its constituent parts. This mutability enables, as was shown in the case of the Portuguese participation in the Western European migration system, the activation of different nodes of the migration system according to the structures of opportunities that emerge and develop in different potential host countries. The sustention in time of the migration flows that develop in this way is conditioned both

by the evolution of these structures and by the emergence of alternative structures of migration opportunity (Marques, 2008).

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