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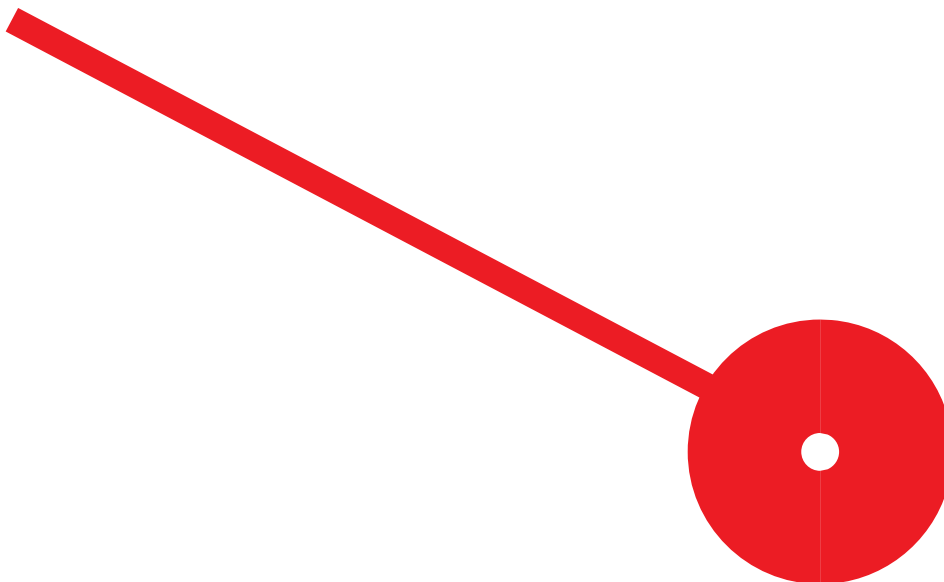
M Intercultural Studies for Business ÁREA DE ESPECIALIZAÇÃO

# Migratory Movements in Portugal: An Analysis on the City of Braga

Rafaela Carina Martins Magalhães

09/2024

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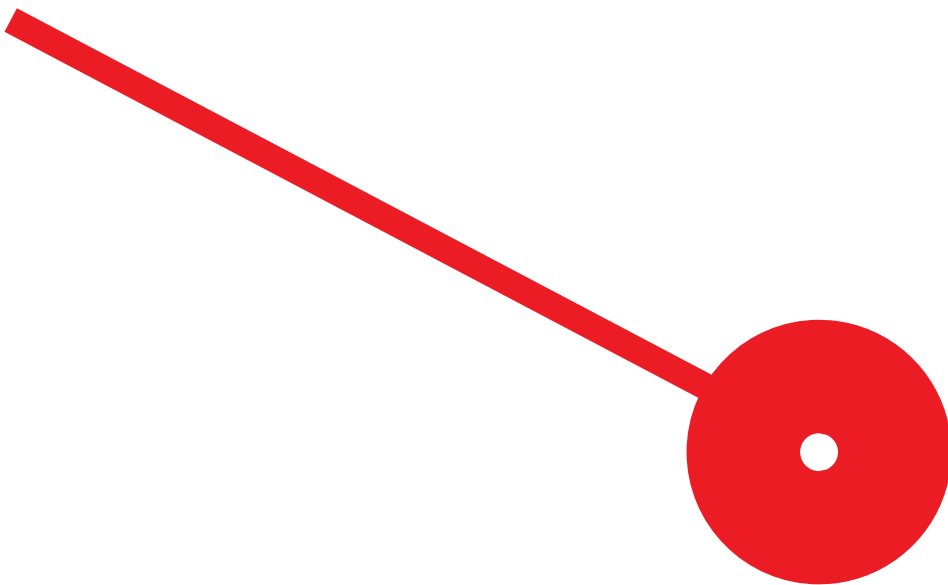
# Migratory Movements in Portugal: An Analysis on the City of Braga

**Rafaela Carina Martins Magalhães**

**Dissertação de Mestrado**

Dissertation presented to Instituto Superior de  
Contabilidade e Administração do Porto/Porto Accounting and  
Business School to obtain the master's degree in Intercultural  
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Rafaela Magalhães. Migratory Movements  
in Portugal: An Analyses on the City of  
Braga 09/2024



## **Dedication**

To my parents, who gave me wings so that I could fly, I leave this verse in gratitude, because thanks to you, I can now reach the sky.

## Acknowledgements

During these two years of this master's degree, I encountered a lot of obstacles that I could not have overcome without the help of a lot of people.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my parents, who allowed me to study and believed in me when I did not. Without you I would not be here today, so this achievement is also yours.

I can not help to also give a special word of recognition and gratitude to my grandparents, who helped to shape the person that I am today and who were always there by my side when I needed, to you, my most sincere thank you.

A word of gratefulness to my boyfriend, who was my support since day one and was never afraid to offer his help, and who always gave me the courage that I needed. Thank you for always being there for me.

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An extremely special thank you to my dog, Alex, who is my biggest emotional support even though he does not know it.

To my childhood friends, who always helped me when I needed and stayed motivated alongside with me, thank you.

I would also like to thank both the President of the Municipality of Braga, Ricardo Rio and the President of UAI, Alexandra Gomide, who kind were enough to, in spite of their busy schedules, accept to participate on the interviews.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the people who replied to the surveys conducted and helped shape this dissertation.

**Abstract:**

This study investigates the impact of migratory flows on the city of Braga, exploring how these movements have contributed to the urban, social, economic, and cultural transformation of the region. Portugal, with its unique situation, has experienced significant changes in migratory dynamics, making it an increasingly attractive destination for immigrants from various parts of the world. The objective of this dissertation is to analyse these migratory flows both historically and currently, with a specific focus on Braga, a city in northern Portugal with a history dating back to the Roman era.

To achieve a comprehensive understanding, a mixed methodology was employed. The qualitative method included interviews with the Mayor of Braga, Ricardo Rio, and the President of the Immigrant Integration Association, providing direct insights from management sources on the influence of recent migratory dynamics in the city. Concurrently, the quantitative method involved the administration of questionnaires to immigrants, enabling the collection of data on their experiences and perceptions.

The results indicate that the number of immigrants in Braga has significantly increased in recent years, due to various factors that will be examined in the chapters of the dissertation. Beyond the numbers, this study analyses the social, cultural, and economic implications of this growth. The arrival of new residents brings benefits, such as the introduction of new cultures and customs, but also challenges, such as the need for new integration policies and the adaptation of social services.

The analysis also explores the connection between migratory movements and regional economic development, highlighting the complexity of integrating newcomers into Braga's society. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the current migratory dynamics, examining the advantages and disadvantages that migration brings to the city of Braga.

**Key words:** Migration, Immigration, Integration, Portugal

## **Resumo:**

Este estudo investiga o impacto dos fluxos migratórios na cidade de Braga, explorando como esses movimentos têm contribuído para a transformação urbana, social, econômica e cultural da região. Portugal, com sua situação única, tem visto uma mudança significativa nas dinâmicas migratórias, tornando-se um destino cada vez mais atrativo para imigrantes de várias partes do mundo. O objetivo desta dissertação é analisar esses fluxos migratórios tanto do ponto de vista histórico quanto atual, com um foco específico em Braga, uma cidade no norte de Portugal com uma história que remonta à era romana.

Para alcançar uma compreensão abrangente, foi empregada uma metodologia mista. O método qualitativo incluiu entrevistas com o presidente da Câmara de Braga, Ricardo Rio, e com o presidente da Associação de Integração dos Imigrantes, obtendo informações diretas de fontes de gestão sobre as influências das dinâmicas migratórias recentes na cidade. Paralelamente, o método quantitativo envolveu a aplicação de questionários direcionados a imigrantes, permitindo a coleta de dados sobre suas experiências e percepções.

Os resultados indicam que o número de imigrantes em Braga tem aumentado significativamente nos últimos anos, devido a vários fatores que serão examinados nos capítulos da dissertação. Além dos números, este estudo analisa as implicações sociais, culturais e econômicas desse crescimento. A chegada de novos habitantes traz consigo benefícios, como a introdução de novas culturas e costumes, mas também desafios, como a necessidade de novas políticas de integração e a adaptação dos serviços sociais.

A análise também explora a conexão entre os movimentos migratórios e o desenvolvimento econômico regional, destacando a complexidade do processo de integração dos recém-chegados na sociedade bracarense. Este estudo visa fornecer uma compreensão mais profunda das dinâmicas migratórias atuais, examinando os prós e contras que a migração traz para a cidade de Braga.

**Palavras chave:** Migration, Immigration, Integration, Portugal

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## **Abbreviation List**

**ACM-** Alto Comissariado para as Migrações

**AIMA-** Agência para a Integração Migrações e Asilo

**PMIM-** Plano Municipal para a Integração às Migrações

**UAI-** União Apoio e Integração

## Introduction

This research study aims to determine the ways in which migratory movements have impacted the city of Braga. The Urban social, economic, and cultural transformation has been advanced by movements in recent years. Portugal's unique situation of being recognized mainly as an emigration country, has resulted in a notable change in its migratory dynamics, making it a more desirable location for immigrants worldwide. The purpose of this study is to analyse these migratory fluxes both historically and currently, focusing on the city of

Braga. As a native of Braga, witnessing the city's recent influx of immigrants is both fascinating and significant. Choosing to study migration flows in Braga, particularly given this current trend, offers several compelling insights.

Located in the north of Portugal, Braga is a city with a long history that dates back to the Roman era. The number of migrants in Braga has significantly increased in recent years, this way, it is going to affect directly the dynamics of the city. Numerous reasons have contributed to its increase, which will be examined further along in this study's chapters. However, there is more to this research of the migratory movements in the city of Braga than just numbers. It is crucial to analyse and comprehend the social, cultural, and economic ramifications of this growth in this study. With this growth we are able to consider adjustments in the dynamic of the city, some of them being positive ones.

Some of the positive aspects of the influx of newcomers to the city include the introduction of fresh customs and cultures, since it enriches the cultural fabric of the city, adding vibrancy with new festivals, art forms, and culinary experiences. This diversity enhances the city's cultural scene and offers residents unique experiences they might not have encountered otherwise. Moreover, exposure to diverse cultures is going to stimulate creativity and innovation. Moreover, fresh perspectives can lead to unique ideas and solutions across various fields, including business, technology, and the arts. It also fosters greater tolerance and understanding among residents. By interacting with people from divergent backgrounds, the community can reduce prejudices and promote inclusivity, leading to a more harmonious environment.

Not only in terms of culture, but also in economic terms, we can reveal that positive outcomes have been brought, since it produces effects on Braga's local

businesses, labour markets, and overall economic growth. Insights into how immigrants contribute to and challenge the local economy can highlight both the opportunities and potential issues arising from this demographic shift. This understanding can be crucial for harnessing the benefits of immigration while addressing any associated challenges.

However, we can conclude that there are obstacles as well, such the requirement for new integration-related laws and the modification of social services. The connection between migrant movements and regional economic development will also be significant to this research. The process of integrating newcomers into Braga's society is intricate and involves a number of parties, including the local community, associations, and governmental and non-governmental organizations like town halls.

The demographic shift also influences Braga's infrastructure and public services. As the population grows, there will be increased demand for housing, transportation, healthcare, and educational facilities. The city will need to adapt its infrastructure to accommodate this growth, ensuring that it can support the needs of both new and existing residents. Effective urban planning and investment in public services will be crucial to maintaining a high quality of life for all inhabitants.

The goal of this study on migratory movements in Braga is to provide a more thorough understanding of the dynamics that exist today by examining the advantages and disadvantages that migration is posing for the city.

A qualitative and quantitative methodology was employed, utilizing interviews with the mayor of Braga, Ricardo Rio, and the representative of the Immigrant Integration Association, and a survey to the immigrant community to gather data directly from management sources, in order to comprehend how the recent dynamics of migration to the city of Braga influence the dynamics of the city.

this research aims to shed light on the multifaceted impact of migratory movements on the city of Braga.

By exploring historical and current trends, and analysing the socio-economic and cultural implications, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how migration is reshaping Braga. The insights gathered from interviews with key stakeholders, including the mayor and representatives from the Immigrant Integration Association, will offer valuable perspectives on the benefits and challenges posed by this influx. Ultimately, this research aspires to contribute to the discourse on migration and

urban transformation, informing policies and practices that foster integration and regional development.

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## Methodology

In this chapter there are going to be described the methodological approaches used in the realization of this project. In this study, the focus lays primarily on the examination of migration patterns within Portugal, with a specific emphasis on the city of Braga. It analyses the consequential impact of these migration flows on the city and explores the integration processes of immigrants within this context. Due to the concurrent nature of this examination, a particular attention is going to be directed towards to understanding the complicated dynamics that have emerged as a result of these recent migration movements on the city.

Talking about methodological considerations, when planning this dissertation, there were a variety of them. Primary among these was the adoption of a qualitative approach, which strengthened all subsequent decisions. The selection for this choice began from the recognition that a quantitative framework would not adequately capture the intricate nuances inherent in immigrants' individual experiences. In the qualitative approach, the researcher has to create a dialectic between the formulation of the investigation's questions, the literature review, the participants and the collection and analysis of data. Therefore, a range of characteristics must be brought together, including openness, sensitivity, creativity and data reflection (Coutinho 2008). Instead, it was chosen to dive into these experiences through the interpretation, acknowledging the intrinsic limitations of quantification in capturing subjective perceptions and nuances. In order to collect the desired information from each of the interviews included in the study, a semi-structured individual interview will be used, carried out in person. This interview will consist mainly of open questions, allowing the professionals to express their insights in a more spontaneous way. The use of this kind of interview creates a sense of empathy between the interview and the interviewer and allows to be able to bring to the table more themes, which is going to possibly provide more valuable details (Smith, 1999, quoted by Tegethof, 2007).

To be able to analyse and take the conclusions of these interviews, it was used the technic of content analysis. This has the main goal of identifying, telling and interpreting

themes, questions and motives, this way, the information previously provided is going to be more resumed and easier to manipulate (Almeida,2007 quoted by Tegethof).

However, within this qualitative research, different methods could have been used, nonetheless, semi-structured interviews were the chosen ones, which according to Kvale's (1996) work is « (...) an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena» (p.5 and 6) Fundamentally, this way it would be relatively close with the reality of the interviewed, so that it would be possible to obtain more concrete data. These interviews were recorded with the verbal consent of all interviewed, for the use of the content to develop this dissertation.

Within this qualitative research, it was determined that it would be relevant to conduct interviews with individuals at the forefront of this emerging urban paradigm, as their direct involvement provides more valuable insights. Subsequently, it was possible to seize the opportunity to interview Mr. Ricardo Rio, the Mayor of the Municipality of Braga. This interview occurred on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, in the city council of Braga, by the choice of the president. The president's perspective proved influential in addressing inquiries pertinent to the subject matter, thereby enriching the depth of my research.

It was also possible to conduct an interview with Alexandra Gomide, the President of the local association for the integration of immigrants, UAI (União Apoio Integração) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, in the office of the association, by the choice of the president. This association is dedicated to facilitating the integration of Brazilian immigrants, a demographic representing a significant proportion of immigrants in the city of Braga.

The insights gathered from this interview proved to be exceptionally valuable, as they provided a unique perspective on immigrant integration. In contrast to my previous interview with the President of the Municipality of Braga, Ricardo Rio, which offered respected insights from the perspective of the host community, this interview offered a different view from the standpoint of those being welcomed. The comparison of these perspectives is vital, since it is going to allow a nuanced analysis and comparison, facilitating this way the formulation of comprehensive conclusions. Having both viewpoints enriches the discourse and enhances the understanding of immigrant integration dynamics within the community.

Quantitative analysis is also crucial in studies of migration, such as the examination of immigration in Braga, for several reasons. By collecting numerical data and conducting statistical analysis, one can gain a comprehensive and objective understanding of the phenomenon, identify patterns and trends, and rigorously evaluate the impact of public policies.

Firstly, quantitative methods provide precise and objective measurement of the studied variables. By conducting surveys with immigrants, concrete data on their experiences, needs, and opinions can be obtained, reducing the subjective bias present in qualitative analyses. Secondly, analysing large volumes of data allows for the identification of patterns and trends that might be difficult to discern through qualitative observations alone. For instance, it is possible to quantify satisfaction with integration policies, the geographical distribution of immigrants, or the areas where they face the greatest challenges.

Moreover, quantitative analysis, especially when based on representative samples, enables the generalization of results to a larger population. This is crucial for informing effective public policies based on robust evidence that accurately reflects the reality. Finally, quantitative methods allow for rigorous evaluation of the impact of interventions and public policies, such as measuring the effect of integration programs on immigrants' employability or access to public services.

Alan Bryman, in "Social Research Methods," highlights the importance of quantitative methods for social science, noting their ability to provide generalizable and statistically significant data. John W. Creswell, in "Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches," argues that quantitative methods are essential for establishing causal relationships and measuring the extent of social phenomena. Mark Saunders, in "Research Methods for Business Students," emphasizes that quantitative research is fundamental for testing hypotheses and theories with scientific rigor.

In the context of immigration in Braga, conducting surveys with immigrants provides direct data on their experiences and perceptions. This is essential for identifying specific needs, understanding the primary challenges faced by immigrants regarding housing, employment, health, and education, and assessing the effectiveness of municipal and national policies aimed at facilitating immigrant integration. Additionally, the data

collected informs the development of programs and initiatives that directly address the identified needs of the immigrant population.

Quantitative analysis is an essential tool for studying migration patterns and evaluating the impact of integration policies. By providing objective and precise data, it allows for the identification of patterns, assessment of intervention impacts, and development of informed and effective policies. In the specific case of Braga, surveys with immigrants are fundamental for understanding their experiences and needs, contributing to a more effective and harmonious integration process.

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## Literature Review

Migratory movements represent a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that directly impacts the social, economic and cultural structure of cities. In Portugal, the city of Braga has been a focal point for analysis due to its growing migrant population and the implementation of specific integration policies. This literature review explores the various dimensions of migratory movements in Braga, highlighting theoretical studies that were used during the process of writing and researching, as well as, statistical data, integration policies and the socio-economic impact.

Understanding migratory movements requires a solid theoretical basis. Lee (1966) presents a classic theory of migration, emphasising the attraction and repulsion factors that influence the decision to migrate. According to Lee, factors such as economic opportunities, political stability, and social networks in the destination country act as pull factors, while adverse conditions in the country of origin, such as conflict, poverty, and lack of opportunities, serve as push factors.

Complementing this perspective, the more recent research from Castles, de Haas, and Miller (2014) offer a comprehensive view of international migration, addressing the global dynamics that shape migratory flows. Their work highlights the interplay between macro-level factors, such as global economic trends, international policies, and microlevel factors, including individual motivations and family strategies. This multi-faceted approach provides a deeper understanding of the complexities of migration, considering both structural forces and personal agency in shaping the migratory movements. By integrating these theoretical insights, one can better analyse and interpret the migration patterns observed in studies like this one conducted in Braga. In the context of integration, Ager and Strang (2008) propose a conceptual framework that identifies key indicators for the successful integration of migrants, including social, economic and political factors. This framework is particularly relevant for analysing the integration of migrants in Braga, where local policies have been developed to facilitate this process.

When it comes to Portugal's migration history is complex, with significant flows of both emigration and immigration. Baganha, Marques and Góis (2009) provide a historical overview of immigrants in Portugal, highlighting the changes in migration

policies and trends over time. In another study, Baganha and Góis (1998) discuss Portuguese emigration after the Second World War, highlighting the economic and social impacts of these movements.

Recent immigration to Braga reflects changes in immigration policies and economic patterns. Studies such as Pereira's (2014) show how the *Estado Novo* allowed clandestine emigration, while more recently, integration policies have been focussed on accommodating the new wave of immigration. Nowadays, it is possible to affirm that the High Commission for Migration (ACM) has played a crucial role in formulating and implementing integration policies. The 'Municipal Plan for the Integration of Migrants' (ACM, 2022) exemplifies the local strategies adopted in Braga to promote the inclusion of migrants.

It is possible to affirm that the economic contribution of migrants is significant. According to CNN Portugal (2023), immigrants contributed 1,861 million euros to Social Security, highlighting the positive impact on the local economy. In addition, Baptista's analysis (2018) shows how the property market in Braga has been influenced by the presence of immigrants, resulting in a significant increase in property prices. However, despite progress, challenges remain. Discrimination in access to housing is a problem identified by Lima (2024), where more than 90 per cent of immigrants report difficulties. Cultural integration is also an area of focus, as discussed by Cattle (2013) and ZapataBarrero (2015, 2017), who explore interculturality as a new paradigm for immigrant inclusion.

Analysing migratory movements in Braga reveals a panorama of complexity and dynamism. The city has adapted to new migratory realities through robust integration policies and initiatives that seek to maximise the economic and social benefits of migratory flows. However, significant challenges still need to be addressed to ensure the full and equitable integration of migrants.

# 1 Chapter I – Concepts Definition

## 1.1 Migration

Migration has been a concept evolving for a long time, that comes with both hopes and fears. When it comes to the migrants, they come to the hosting countries filled with hopes and dreams to build a better future. However, if the initial plan of for instance, to find a job, fails, it could lead to a loss of all family savings, worsening this way the situation that they were in (Castles et. all. 2019). Not only for the migrants can this migration carry a profound impact, but also for the receiving country, which would benefit from a boost in the economy with labour shortages being filled and stimulating business and trade.

There are several Factors that influence the decision to migrate, according to the researcher Everett Lee (1966) conditions in the country of origin, such as lack of job opportunities, low wages, or conflicts, motivate people to leave, and the conditions in the country of destination, such as better wages, job opportunities, or political stability, attract people to emigrate. Not only these economic conditions but also there are barriers that are going to obstruct migration, such as the distance between both countries, physical barriers (for example, mountains or seas that are difficult to cross), restrictive immigration laws, and costs associated with travelling and documentation (Lee, 1966). Individual characteristics also influence the decision since people with more human capital (education and skills), more predisposition to take risks, and with support networks in the destination country are more likely to migrate. This means that migration tends to happen in a concentrated way, from specific places at origin to specific places at destination (Lee, 1966).

In the words of the researchers Castles, de Haas and Miller (2019), the concept of migration has been difficult to define, however, they state that "Migration can be defined as a change of residency across administrative borders. Whether these borders are municipalities, provinces, departments, federal or national states, the feature of migration is that people move across such borders to live in another administrative unit. " (p. 21). Within this context, according to these authors the terms of Migratory and non-migratory mobility emerge. These terms could be differentiated by the fact that migratory mobility Involves movement not far from the original residence, for instance, movements within the same town or neighbourhood, although sometimes could cause a great cultural impact,

it cannot be qualified as Migration (Commuting, shopping and tourism for instance). While non-migratory mobility comprises all forms of mobility that do not qualify as migration (Castles et.al.,2019).

The main issue in regard of the definition of migration, relies on the fact that exists a lot of different definitions for it, founding on the amount of time that someone stays in a foreign country, being this reason, the one who causes more misunderstanding. Since some governments put their limits from three to twelve months, for instance, in the European Schengen zone, the tourist visa is only valid for three months and after that people must apply for other options. However, in countries like United Kingdom and United States, this takes longer to materialize, making it this way harder to provide a specific time for a person to be considered a migrant, it would basically depend on the rules of the government of the place that they are located (Castle *et. al.*, 2019).

Throughout their work, they emphasise that migration is a dynamic process, influenced by multiple interrelated factors. Migration is not a concept that is just limited to physical movement, but also involves social, cultural and economic transformations in both the areas of origin and destination (Castle *et. al.*, 2019).

The researcher Hein de Haas (2007) argues that migration is not just about escaping poverty. He discusses the modern view of labour migration, based on new economic and livelihood theories. He contradicts the traditional idea that migration is just an "escape from misery", a last option to escape extreme poverty. He talks about a new economy of labour migration (NELM) and with it proposes that migration is, in most cases, a deliberate strategy by families (or social groups) to reduce risks and diversify the family's income and reduce dependence on a single source of livelihood, improving the family's quality of life, both for the migrant and for those left behind in the country of origin.

This view of the researcher corroborates the models of transnational migration, providing a fresher view of the concept. These models show that migration does not necessarily lead to a break in ties with the community of origin. On the contrary, migration can be a way of maintaining and strengthening these ties. Migration can be seen as an expression of strong social ties and the desire to improve the lives of those left behind. Many migrants send money and support to their country of origin, helping their family and the local community (de Haas, 2007).

## 1.2 Immigration and Emigration

It is difficult to come up with a definition for the concept of immigration, due to the fact that it is a common spoken term that people already know and think that they understand its definition fully (Kukathas, 2021). According to the researcher Chandran Kukathas (2021) this concept should be deeper investigated to study what it actually means. It has also been complicated to define these terms since they are not based on “natural categories”. For instance, an immigrant is not characterized by his age, gender or race, but rather for its reasons of movement (Kukathas,2021). However, also according to Kukathas (2021) the concept of immigration cannot be considered only the movement of people across borders, but rather the conquer of new and improved status and rights, by people who have or have not physically moved to do so.

Nevertheless, the fact that this mass immigration is a recent topic, also makes it hard to develop a complete definition. It is true that human movement has been existing for a very long time, since people would always move due to the of the situations that they would be in (de Haas, 2010). According to de Haas (2010) it is important to understand both the individual motivations and structural constrains that shape these migration trajectories. These motivations to move across borders, can come from looking for better economic opportunities, escaping political persecution or wanting to reunite with family, while structural constraints include legal barriers, economic conditions, and social networks that facilitate or hinder migration.

However, we cannot assume that migration and Immigration have the same definition. According to Kukathas:

But migration is not immigration, for migration is about demography, while immigration is about politics. For immigration to become possible there must be political boundaries. More than that, there must be political agents (governments) who are capable of determining the location of these boundaries, who possess the technology and the resources to police their borders, and who are also sufficiently interested in monitoring both the movement of people across them and the behaviour of people within (Kukathas, 2021. p.13).

As the researcher points out, the concept of immigration would not exist without political control of boarders by governments. This regulation and control of who is going to enter

or stay, highlight the political nature of immigration policies. This presented argument of Kukathas (2021) raises questions about the effectiveness and the ethics of a strict border control.

The same researcher (Kukathas, 2021) even questions the definition of the term “native” since it is not a natural characteristic, as stated above, but rather a social and political designation, this way, it can be questioned. For this very reason, an immigrant, can become a native. What the author explains is that the fact that someone is residing in a foreign country, it does not become an immigrant, since there is for instance a difference between immigrants (someone who has the intention of staying in the country for a long period of time) and visitors (someone that is going to stay temporarily, like tourists). Even citizenship status is possible to suffer changes, if for instance, modifications in the immigration law to make it stricter are developed, this way someone who was legal, can be considered again as an immigrant. Even simpler than this, Kukathas (2021) explains that if there are changes in a country’s border, someone who was a citizen, can now be living in a different country and can be considered an immigrant.

In this research, this work of Chandran Kukathas was the one that provided a more concrete and developed (however not definite) definition of this concept. However, Hein de Haas had his study deepened in the migration theories, and although not approaching the concept of immigration itself, in his migration work he discusses some ideas of what the concept is about. He talks about the return migrants stating that for instance:

Return migrants were seen as important agents of change and innovation. It was expected that migrants not only bring back money but also new ideas, knowledge, and entrepreneurial attitudes. In this way, migrants were expected to play a positive role in development and contribute to the accelerated spatial diffusion of modernization in developing countries (de Haas, 2010).

This understanding on the return migration highlights the positive impact that immigration can have on the country of origin. Usually, immigration policies focus on the receiving country, however this perspective from the researcher encourages acknowledging the potential benefits for the countries migrants come from.

Emigration is a concept that similar to immigration, can be frequently defined as the movement of people seeking to gain new status and rights in a political context,

motivated by various reasons, such as better economic opportunities, fleeing political persecution or family reunification. This movement is influenced by legal barriers, economic conditions and social networks, and the definition of "immigrant" is fluid, subject to political and social changes.

The concept of Emigration since it can be defined as the act of a person leaving their country of residence to live in another, it has been a concept of a central topic in migration studies. For instance, in the study of the researcher Hein de Haas (2007), he states that the act of emigration is most commonly known as the movement of individuals out of their country of origin to reside permanently (or temporarily) in another country. This definition highlights the intentional nature of the majority of emigration, motivated by the chase of improved and better living conditions, better employment, improved education.

The complexity of emigration is captured in various studies, highlighting its multifaceted nature which includes economic, social, and political dimensions. In the work of the prominent migration researcher, de Haas argues that emigration can contribute significantly to the development of both origin and destination countries. Emigrants often send transfer of funds back home, which can improve living standards, support education, and stimulate the local economies (de Haas, 2010). This view is supported by Eurostat data, which highlights the substantial economic contributions of emigrants through remittances and the alleviation of unemployment pressures in home countries (Eurostat, 2023). According to Eurostat (2023), it can be said that emigration also has intense social and demographic effects. These studies nowadays show that emigrants tend to be younger and often of the working age, which is going to lead to a demographic shift in both sending and receiving countries. For instance, recent data from Eurostat reveal that non-nationals residing in EU countries are typically younger than the national populations, which affects labour markets and social services (Eurostat, 2023).

While de Haas dives into the developmental benefits of emigration, other researchers examine the policy implications. Migration control, as it was stated above, remains a contentious issue. Chandran Kukathas and other researchers focus on the ethical aspects of immigration control, which can lead to a reduction in individual freedoms and human rights. When comparing these two perspectives, it is evident that while the economic and developmental benefits of emigration are well-recognized, there is also a significant need to address the ethical and human rights factors.

To conclude what was being discussed, according to the works of de Hass (2021) and Kukathas (2021) the concept of emigration involves a wide range of factors including economic benefits, social impacts, and policy implications. Recent academic works are highlighting the importance of a balanced approach that recognizes both the positive contributions of emigrants and the ethical considerations of migration control.

### **1.3 Acculturation**

The discussion of this topic is highly absorbing, given that acculturation normally occurs in the host country. This phenomenon is multifaceted and can result in various outcomes, ranging from cultural assimilation to the retention of distinct cultural identities.

The concept of acculturation leads to significant cultural transformations, according to Natália Ramos (2006), in her work, she suggests that “the process of acculturation leads to the loss, acquisition, transformation, replacement, and reinterpretation of cultural traits of the groups present.” This sociocultural process occurs when one cultural group engages in prolonged and substantial interaction with another, resulting in the modification and adaptation of its own cultural traits to align with those of the host or dominant culture (Ramos 2006). Contemporary research has expanded the understanding of this concept to include the concept of biculturalism, where individuals can integrate elements from both their heritage culture and the host culture. This approach recognizes the fluidity and adaptability of cultural identities in a globalized world (Ferguson, Iturbide, & Raffaelli, 2020). Additionally, the psychological impact of acculturation has been a substantial area of study. The stress related with crossing multiple cultural identities can affect mental health, leading to the development of frameworks for supportive interventions. Yoon *et al.* (2020) emphasize the importance of considering both bilinear and multidimensional aspects of acculturation processes, having in mind that successful adaptation often involves balancing multiple cultural influences.

Acculturation leads to an exchange of customs, values, and behaviours between the interacting cultures, encouraging this way a balanced blend of traditions and contributing to a shared cultural environment. As it was stated before, this phenomenon logically leads to profound changes within the minority group, typically the newcomers, as they encounter a different culture and sometimes a different language. The process involves not only the adaptation to the new cultural background but also the potential

stress and health implications associated with it. According to Berry, J. W. (1997) the definition of acculturation relies on "...the phenomenon that results when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact..." (p. 6)

Understanding acculturation is essential for developing effective interventions and support mechanisms for migrants as they navigate this complex cultural transition. Bringing together all discussed elements, we can say that acculturation is a complex and continuing process that involves significant changes for individuals and groups interacting with a different cultural environment. It incorporates a range of strategies and results, from assimilation to biculturalism, and has profound implications for identity development and the mental health. Understanding these dynamics is fundamental for developing effective support systems for individuals undergoing acculturation, particularly in increasingly multicultural societies.

#### **1.4 Interculturalism**

The concept of Interculturalism is frequently viewed as a reaction to multiculturalism's alleged flaws and failures, especially regarding how well it integrates minority groups (Cantle,2013). For instance, in the work of the professor Ted Cantle (2013), he mentions that the researcher Ranjit Sondhi (2009) states that these failures came due to the fact that multiculturalism mainly focused on managing public order and relations between majority and minority populations by allowing ethnic cultures to mediate this process. As a result from this approach, it was emphasized the right to be different over the right to be equal, encouraging the preservation of minority languages, religions, and cultural practices "Minority languages, religions and cultural practices were encouraged, and gradually the right to be equal was overshadowed by the right to be different" (Ranjit Sondhi 2009).

By allowing this situation, Ranjit Sondhi (2009) argues that multicultural policies accidentally created separate, culturally distinct communities led by community leaders who prioritized cultural over social capital. This unintentional separation led to communities living in separate different worlds resulting in a form of self-imposed segregation. Consequently, multiculturalism failed to foster a broader societal integration,

maintaining the exoticism of minority cultures and hindering meaningful interaction with the majority culture.

(...) far from being a system that spoke to the whole of society, multiculturalism spoke only to each specific minority in isolation. This served to maintain the exoticism and essentialism of minority cultures hindering a two-way conversation with the majority culture (Ranjit Sondhi 2009,7).

This way, the concept of Interculturalism is going to be more directed to dialogue and interaction, as opposed to Multiculturalism. Interculturalism is also going to be viewed as being less focused on maintaining separate cultural groups and more concerned in fostering a productive integration of different cultures compared to multiculturalism. In other words, interculturalism emphasizes creating a unified society where different cultural influences come together, rather than coexisting separately (Meer e Modood 2011).

Interculturalism revolves around the idea of "community cohesion" (Cantle 2013, 10). The limits of multicultural policies led to the development of this strategy and the larger intercultural worldview. The idea of "parallel lives" in which some communities live apart and on the periphery of society, is rejected by interculturalism. Stated differently, the main goal is to incorporate the small communities into the wider social structure, promoting communication and solidarity instead of permitting them to stay apart (Cantle, 2013). The notion of interculturalism is examined by Ricard ZapataBarrero (2017) and according to this researcher in reaction to multiculturalism's failings, diversity frequently leads to the emergence of distinct, isolated communities, or "parallel lives." The integration and cohesiveness of society have suffered as a result of this segregation. Contrarily, interculturalism places a strong emphasis on the value of communication and contact between various cultural groups within a society in an effort to promote a sense of common belonging and understanding. Zapata-Barrero (2017) joins other academics who question the efficacy of conventional multicultural policies in defending interculturalism. For example, Modood (2013) contends that although multiculturalism has played a significant role in the recognition of minority rights, it has not done enough to address the necessity of mutual adaptation and integration between the minority and

the majority groups. Cantle (2013), as stated before, also emphasizes the significance of "community cohesion" as a primary objective of interculturalism, arguing in favour of laws that encourage cross-cultural communication and understanding in order to stop the emergence of "parallel lives."

Furthermore, according to Zapata-Barrero, interculturalism opposes multiculturalism's tendency to classify individuals according to their origin and ethnicity. He contends that this classification imposes inflexible cultural identities and restricts personal freedom. Interculturalism, on the other hand, allows people to be recognized as individuals rather than just as representations of their ethnic groups by emphasizing personal choices over group loyalty. This change tries to promote more individual freedom and flexibility in cultural identity by avoiding the presumption that all members of a minority group think and behave in the same way (Zapata-Barrero 2015, 5).

## **1.5 Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is a concept where different cultural groups maintain their uniqueness but live together peacefully in a nation or community. It is about recognizing and appreciating cultural differences, promoting identity that embraces everybody. Multiculturalism demands for equal rights and treatment of diverse heritages to ensure that people from different backgrounds can live together comfortably in one society. Nevertheless, the policies of multiculturalism are essential in ensuring justice and equality among societies with differing cultures (Kymlicka 2018). However, minority groups need to adapt themselves into the majority population. This culture of multiculturalism should not only be limited to protecting the rights and recognition of minority communities but should also focus on persuading the majority community to embrace it as well. In turn, this process will facilitate an all-inclusive society (Modood 2019). Modood (2019) believes that the integration of immigrants and minority groups involves both maintaining their cultural identities and developing a sense of belonging to the broader society. This dual approach helps to prevent the marginalization of minority communities and promotes social harmony (Modood, 2019). One of the approaches that he defends is the realization of an intercultural dialogue. He stated that by encouraging open communication and interaction, societies can link cultural divisions and build a collective identity that incorporates diversity. This process involves educational initiatives, community

programs, and public policies that ease meaningful exchanges among diverse groups (Modood, 2019). In his work, the same researcher Modood (2019) analyses the conventional policy of assimilation that requires minority groups to abandon their cultural uniqueness in favour of the dominant culture. According to him, this way is not only impractical but also unfair because it does not value multiculturalism and contributions made by minority societies. On other hand, he understands an immigrant as someone who enjoys fully those human rights he or she could have been deprived of in home country (Modood, 2019). In the other hand, while this process of integration of one community into another was criticized by several researchers. For instance, the researcher

Parekh (2000, p. 230) digs deeper into a problem that comes with Multiculturalism, the question of national identity. He defines several conditions that are necessary for finding a resolution to the challenges associated with national identity in the context of multicultural societies. Firstly, he states that national identity should be founded on political and institutional principles rather than ethnic and cultural ones, as these later principles are unlikely to be universally shared among all citizens. Secondly, the question of national identity should not conflict with subnational identities, allowing individuals to simultaneously identify with their ethnic group, local community, and the state.

Lastly, national identity must incorporate all individuals and the entire cultural majority within the state, including those resulting from immigration, this way, this approach ensures equality and prevents segregation. Consequently, this integration requires the formulation of specific public policies and does not occur naturally. Indeed, while multicultural models are theoretically based on the premises Parekh outlines, they have often struggled to achieve success. This explains the recent interest in understanding the interculturalist alternative, which may offer more effective solutions (Parekh, 2000).

The researcher Will Kymlicka argues that the minority cultural groups should be established special rights and also protections to preserve their unique cultural identities. He also makes difference between the national minorities and the immigrant groups, suggesting that national minorities deserve more vigorous forms of self-government and cultural autonomy, while immigrant groups, should be integrated into the society through policies that support their cultural practices and encourage societal participation. His approach is base in the principles of individual freedom and equality, advocating for policies that mitigate cultural inequalities without challenging the cohesion of the broader

society. Modood, on the other hand, criticizes the secular framework of liberal democracies. While Parekh's approach is more philosophical and dialogical, advocating for a dynamic and participatory process of cultural engagement.

The works of these researchers offer collectively a comprehensive understanding of multiculturalism, highlighting its complexities and the various dimensions that need to be considered in its implementation. When integrating their perceptions, societies are able to develop more nuanced and effective approaches to administering cultural diversity, fostering inclusive and vibrant communities that value and celebrate their multicultural heritage.

## **2 Chapter II Migration in Portugal: Historical and contemporary overview**

Formally known as the European Union's country with the largest number of emigrants, in proportion of the resident population, (ACM,IP), in 2022, the landscape has dramatically changed and Portugal witnessed an astonishing increase in the numbers, with more than one million living in the country (. However, it is necessary to briefly analyse migration from Portugal in order to understand this phenomenon. To begin with, it must be said that the independence of the overseas territories and Portugal's entry into the European Community significantly changed emigration flows from the 70s onwards. Initially, until the 1970s, emigration to Portugal was predominantly from the former Portuguese colonies, specifically Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique, due to decolonisation (Baganha, 1994).

During the 1970s, when Portugal experienced a large wave of emigration, the main destination for Portuguese emigrants was European countries such as France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg and Switzerland (Peixoto, 2002).

According to official data from the National Statistics Institute (INE), the number of Portuguese emigrants increased significantly between 1976 and 1980, then fell slightly, but then rose again at the end of the 80s. Over the last few decades of the 20th century, there was a considerable increase in emigration (in 1980 there were 58091 foreigners living in the country, while in 1999 there were 190086) (Baganha, Marques and Gois 2009, 125). According to Peixoto (2002), in these decades, the most predominant flows were from the Portuguese-speaking world, Africans from the PALOP countries, and a stable contingent of Brazilians. According to Peixoto, this flow can be called a "Lusophone migratory system".

According to the author Baganha (1994), the impacts of emigration can be divided into two groups: economic and demographic. The extraordinary outflow of Portuguese citizens significantly influenced immigration flows to Portugal. The growing need to fill gaps in the labour market created by this emigration and the demand for new skills gave rise to immigration policies that attracted workers from various parts of the world. As a result, the Portuguese migratory flow underwent a new change, with higher immigration figures than in the past.

## 2.1 Migration during the *Estado Novo*

The concept of migration during *Estado novo* era is a complex topic given that a major shift in Portuguese migration was observed at this time. This chapter seeks to understand what brought this about by looking into these changes, consequently giving an insight into deeper social, political and economic factors that influenced trends in migration over such periods. The goal here is to show how complex mid-20th century Portuguese migration dynamics were, indeed as reflected in emigration policies put in place by the *Estado Novo* regime of the time.

The regime aimed at maintaining social and political order using repressive measures. These measures were created for the purposes of limiting disagreement, controlling public opinion, and enforcing dictatorial principles of the ruling regime. Censorship was one of the central tools used by the *Estado Novo* to control information and influence public opinion; while other role players like Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado (PIDE) also known as political police played a significant role in preserving power within the jurisdiction of *Estado Novo*. Concerning the education system, it was designed to teach children values that would make them integral part of Salazar's policy with regards to obedience, patriotism and loyalty. It is possible to say that these repressive measures were comprehensive and deeply rooted in Portuguese society under *Estado Novo* rule. The government sought information control; suppressed civil society; trained younger generations politically; and held economic sway over its subjects in an attempt to make them pliant and submissive.

This regime had a major role in the emigration rate of the country, since it was between the years of 1960 and 1974, that Portugal experienced one of the highest emigration rates in its history, with more than one million Portuguese people choosing to leave the country (Martins, A. J. S. 2005). This period was characterized by a significant socio-economic challenge and the political repression under the *Estado Novo* regime. The combination of economic stagnation, limited opportunities, and political repression that the country was going through, incentivized a lot of Portuguese to seek better lives abroad.

Although the *Estado Novo* regime imposed strict regulations on emigration to prevent the outflow of its population, particularly skilled labour that was essential for the country's economic needs, a lot of people were still able to flee the country. It is estimated that between 1900 and 1988 around 3.5 million people emigrated from Portugal, 25 per

cent of whom did so illegally (Baganha, 1994, p. 960). According to the same researcher Baganha (2003), this regime established legal and administrative barriers to emigration, including a requirement of exit visas and other bureaucratic difficulties. The goal was to maintain a stable and controllable workforce within the country and to avoid the brain drain that could delay the economic development. The regime was remarkably concerned about political revolutionists and those who might seek to leave the country to escape repression. Telephone tapping, interception of correspondence, and informers were common tactics used to keep track of individuals' movements and intentions (Moreira, 2018).

Despite these restrictions, as it was mentioned above, a lot of Portuguese citizens sought to leave the country clandestinely, driven by economic hardship and political repression. According to the researcher Vitor Pereira, clandestine emigration, was a form of daily resistance to poor the living conditions and allowed emigrants to come into contact with promising social realities, which were then told to those who stayed in the country, helping to open up horizons of possibilities in the country of origin, which would the come to explain, among other factors, the discrediting of the *Estado Novo* among increasingly large sections of the population (Pereira, V. 2014). The lack of political freedom and the oppressive atmosphere caused many to leave the country in search of not just economic opportunities but also political freedom and personal safety. Moreira (2018) notes that the repressive measures, including censorship, political controlling, and subjective arrests, created an environment where leaving the country was often seen as the only viable option for a better life.

During this period, the main destinations for Portuguese emigrants to “escape” were France, Germany, and Luxembourg. These countries were experiencing post-war economic booms and required employment to fuel their growing industries. When it comes to the country, France, it was one of the main destinations for Portuguese citizens due to its proximity and the demand for labour in industries such as for instance, construction, manufacturing, and agriculture. Portuguese immigrants were valued for their work ethic and for their commitment to take on low-skilled, labour-intensive jobs.

According to Volovitch-Tavares and Stoenesco (2007), the presence of Portuguese immigrants in France has significantly influenced the local culture, blending Portuguese traditions with French societal norms and were crucial in building a lot of the infrastructure and housing in post-war France. In a similar way, Germany, during its

Wirtschaftswunder (economic miracle), needed a substantial labour force to support its quickly growing industrial sector (Rinne & Zimmermann, 2012). Portuguese migrants found employment in factories, construction locations, and other manual labour roles. According to Machado (2022), the contributions of Portuguese migrants were also crucial in maintaining Germany's industrial growth during this period.

Luxembourg also attracted a considerable number of Portuguese workers, particularly in the steel industry (Clément, F. 2015). This country expanding economy required a steady supply of labour, and Portuguese migrants filled this gap, contributing to the country's economic success.

According to the source Eurofund (2016) the impact that this mass emigration had was intense, not only for Portugal but also for the hosting countries. In Portugal, the leaving of a significant portion of the population had mixed effects, this eased some of the pressures on the domestic labour market, reducing unemployment. Conversely, it resulted in a "brain drain", taking away a significant part of able-bodied population until today with direct consequences for economic development and demographic trends (Eurofound 2016). As we noted earlier these Portuguese migrants have made great contributions to their host countries' economic growth because they supplied reliable labour essential for building infrastructures and developing different industries (Eurofund 2016). The transfer of funds sent back by these migrants could also have had a significant impact on the Portuguese economy. According to the Source World Bank, these transfers of funds were highly positive in other countries, and since it was also happening in Portugal, it could also be affecting positively the economy of the country. This transfer of funds also provided vital financial support to families in Portugal, helping to improve living standards and contributing to the local economy (World Bank 2011). According to the same fount, it is also pointed out that transfers of funds became a crucial source of income for a lot of rural households, funding improvements in housing, education, and small businesses. However, the integration of Portuguese migrants into the hosting societies was not without challenges. Many faced challenges in living and working conditions, language barriers, and social exclusion.

Despite these challenges, the Portuguese communities that are located abroad were often able to maintain a strong cultural tie and to establish a strong migration network. Logically, these networks were responsible for providing social support and help to

preserve cultural traditions, which ease the transition for new migrants and strength the community relationships.

Ultimately, this phenomenon of migration during the *Estado Novo* era is a multifaceted and significant topic, revealing the socio-political and economic factors that influenced Portugal's migration patterns. As we have seen above, the regime's repressive measures and their economic policies led to one of the highest emigration rates in the country's history. Despite rigorous regulations and supervision, a lot of Portuguese citizens sought better opportunities abroad, significantly contributing to these countries' post-war economic booms. This authoritarian nature of the *Estado Novo* created an environment where leaving the country was often seen as the only viable option for a better life. The impact of this mass emigration was profound, leading to both positive and negative consequences for Portugal. While it relieved domestic labour market pressures and reduced unemployment, it also resulted in a brain drain and the loss of a significant portion of the working-age population.

All things considered, Portuguese migrants have played a crucial role in the economic development of their host countries, occupying essential labour gaps and also contributing to the infrastructure and to a growth on the industry. The financial remittances that were sent back to their home country, provided vital support to families and local economies, improving this way, living standards. Overall, the migration patterns during the era of *Estado Novo*, reflect the wider socio-economic and political dynamics of a mid-20th century Portugal, highlighting the complex interplay between repression, economic hardship, and the search for better opportunities in foreign countries. The history of this period changed drastically the demographic and continues to shape the experiences and identities of Portuguese diaspora communities today.

## **2.2 Immigration in Portugal after the fall of *Estado Novo***

It is of a high importance to address this subject, as the issue of immigration began to gather a significant recognition following the 1974 Carnation Revolution in Portugal, a peaceful military coup aiming to end the long-standing dictatorship that Portugal was undergoing. The instant aftermath of this revolution made the implementation of massive political and social reforms aimed at dismantling the structures of the *Estado Novo* and establishing a democratic governance. These new imposed social reforms involved the plan of a new constitution in 1976, which aimed to preserve fundamental rights and

freedoms, the establishment of a multiparty political system, and the nationalization of fundamental industries and banks (Constitute Project, 2005). The process of creating a new constitution in 1976 was essential for Portugal's democratic transition because it laid down the framework for governance under democracy. Political reforms also removed certain repressive measures that had been imposed during the period of *Estado Novo*, including disbanding secret political police, abolishing censorship and releasing political prisoners (Constitute Project, 2005).

These changes helped to establish a democratic system as well as prepare Portugal to join the European Economic Community (EEC) which will be discussed later in this chapter. Another significant consequence of the revolution was the rapid process of decolonization. Portugal, which had continued to have a vast colonial empire in Africa and Asia, began granting independence to its colonies. This process led to the return of approximately 500,000 Portuguese settlers, known as "retornados," from former colonies such as Angola and Mozambique (Oliveira, N. e Ribeiro 2020). As it was noted previously, the integration of these returnees caused significant economic and social challenges for the country, as they required housing, employment, and social services.

As it was stated before, Portugal was already not known for being used to be a host country, and at the time, the country was undergoing an emigration crisis, since the active population was abandoning the country diminishing demographically some regions of Portugal (Moreira.L,2018 :20). In consequence, the coming back of the returns was going to have a positive impact on the demographics of the country since it would "fill the gap" that the young and active population left. Portugal was also undergoing a housing crisis, and logically, the situation suffered consequences with the return of these half a million Portuguese. In spite of the presented challenges, these citizens were able to adapt and integrate in the country easily, since the majority of them were highly skilled and were able to contribute to the economy. As detailed in the extensive research conducted by the researcher Duarte (2019), she articulates the following:

They were highly qualified higher education, predominantly in the areas of technology/engineering and agricultural sciences. As a result, they were able to quickly integrate and reintegrate into the labour market and strengthen the most qualified members of the Portuguese population (Duarte.M. 2019).

This statement could have repercussions on the economical view of the country since they were contributing directly to it by working in Portugal. It is wise to affirm that these citizens have played a significant role in shaping Portugal's post-colonial landscape. While their return in the aftermath of decolonization presented initial challenges, for instance the habitation crisis, the long-term contributions have been remarkable.

Nevertheless, the immigration flow did not stop with their return, another factor that changed the country after the fall of the *Estado Novo* was the fact that Portugal was able to join the European Communities, something that, although it was in Salazar's interest, had not been possible due to his regime not complying with the rules stipulated for its accession (Meneses, 2009). Through the Treaty of Accession to the European Communities, Portugal joined the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986. According to the researcher Syrett (2002), this accession not only transformed the country's economy and politics, but also had a significant impact on immigration patterns.

The transition of Portugal from a predominantly emigration country to an attractive destination for immigrants was influenced by various political, economic and social changes resulting from the European integration (Syrett, S. 2002). The following analysis is going to examine the impacts of the accession of Portugal, on immigration, pointing out the significant changes and the developments that have occurred as a result.

Upon joining the EEC, Portugal experienced a period of strong economic growth, that was fuelled by foreign investment and EU structural funds. This economic growth created a lot of job opportunities since the country did not have a high demand for labour, especially in sectors such as construction, agriculture, and services (Martins, A. J. S. 2005). This favourable economic environment attracted immigrants from various parts of the world, including Portuguese-speaking African countries, Brazil and Eastern European countries (Cabral & Soromenho-Marques-do, 2014). According to Syrett, S. (2002), this entry into the EEC simplified the modernisation of the Portuguese economy, thus making the country more attractive to foreign workers. Immigrants fulfilled the existential gap for workers caused by factors such as the infrastructure development, expansion of industrial and service sectors. Portugal also revised its immigration policies when it joined the EEC. In order to harmonize with European standards, the country put in place regularization programs for undocumented immigrants in 1992, 1996 and 2001 (Finotelli & Ponzio 2023). The regularizations not only legalized the status of many existing immigrants, but they have also signalled an open and more reasonable approach

to immigration. This has helped immigrants integrate into Portuguese society and enhance social cohesion (Finotelli & Ponzo 2023). The property market crash in United States sparked a global economic crisis known as the 2008 global financial crises that affected Portugal severely leading to a deep economic recession. The contraction of Portugal's economy was substantial with unemployment rising and consumption along with investment falling (Maria, J. R.,2016).

In addition, the crisis revealed structural weaknesses in the Portuguese economy. The response to the crisis involved severe measures imposed by the troika (group formed by the European Commission, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Found that provided financial bailouts and imposed austerity measures on crisis-hit European countries) as a condition of the bailout in 2011. These measures resulted in public spending cuts, tax increases and labour market reforms, worsening the unemployment and the social inequality (Legido *et al.*, 2016). Legido (2016) argues that the crisis ended up having an impact on the rate of immigration in Portugal. The economic decline, that happened due to this crisis, resulted in a rise in unemployment, which conducted to a reduction in the attraction of the country as a destination for immigrants (Legido *et al.*, 2016).

However, the subsequent economic recovery, especially after 2014, saw a new revival of immigration to Portugal, this way, the country has been seeing a significant increase in the number of immigrants in recent years. Although there are no specific numbers in regard of foreign population in Portugal in 2024, it is known that these numbers surpass the one million bar (Moleiro, R. 2024) representing an increase of more than 40 per cent compared to the beginning of the previous decade. This growth has been driven by several factors, including economic attractiveness, quality of life and beneficial migration policies. As it was stated before in this dissertation Portugal has been becoming a favourite destination for Brazilians, Africans from Portuguese-speaking countries, Eastern Europeans and Asians, especially Chinese and Indians.

This new wave of immigration has also been influenced by the safety of the country. With the country being in the 7<sup>th</sup> place of safest country in the world (Global Peace Index, 2023:10). This can be extremely persuasive especially for the ones coming from other countries with a lower rate of security, who want to build a better life, warmer climate, comparing with other western European countries, makes it even more attractive for people to choose Portugal to live, instead of countries, where the winter is harder.

Portugal also has a relatively low cost of living compared to other Western European countries, and better job opportunities that locals often do not use, as we can see in the work of Vitorino:

As far as unskilled labour is concerned, the immigrant community generally does the work that nationals refuse to do because it doesn't pay to exchange the support provided by social security or family for a job that earns as much or less than that resulting from such support

(Vitorino,2003:34).

Therefore, it is beneficial and a positive reason for immigrants to embrace Portugal since it is simpler to find a profession. This is also advantageous for the country, since it is going to benefit from this new wave of labour, filling the gap that was on certain areas of domain. Nowadays, as we have seen above, Portugal counts with more than 800 000 immigrants living in the country. This immigrant community in Portugal is distinct, as it was stated before, it counts with significant communities from countries such as: Brazil, Ukraine, Cape Verde, and other countries. This variety is mirrored in the work market, where immigrants operate in various markets, adding to the financial and also social variety.

Current studies similarly highlight the favourable effect of movement on Portugal's economic climate and also culture. For instance, looking into a 2023 research study performed by the Institute for Public Policy and also Social Research (IPPS) found that immigrants add in a substantial means to the GDP development and also are vital in maintaining many financial industries. According to resources such as the European Commission, the combination of immigrants right into the labour market and also culture is viewed as a lasting advantage for Portugal given that it makes certain a secure plus required supply of labour sustains financial development, and also attends to group obstacles. This way, when regulated the immigration in Portugal presents a win-win scenario. For immigrants, the country offers economic opportunities and a high quality of life. For Portugal, immigrants fill significant labour market gaps, contribute to demographic restoration, and improve the cultural fabric of the nation. As Portugal continues to welcome its immigrant population, the shared benefits are most likely to continue to grow, supporting this way a more inclusive society.

### **3 Chapter III- Plan for the Integration of Immigrants**

Given the recent significance of immigration in Portugal, a development and an implementation of immigrant integration programs became a crucial priority to governmental policies. These programs were designed to create comprehensive strategies that facilitate the smooth and effective transition of immigrants who would choose to settle in the country. When focusing on aspects such as language development, employment opportunities, social inclusion, and cultural adaptation, these initiatives have the goal to ensure that immigrants can integrate successfully into the Portuguese society. In this chapter, it is going to be discussed the development of the plans 2007-2009/2010-2013.

The first known plan to be created for this matter was the Plan for Immigrant Integration 2007-2009. This plan in Portugal was a complete initiative predictable at fostering the successful integration of immigrants into the Portuguese society during the stated period, by examining the specific measures and their outcomes, we can develop insights into how integration strategies have developed over time, how they address the presented challenges, and their overall success in promoting social cohesion and economic participation among immigrants in Portugal.

This planned proposal, implemented by the Portuguese government, discussed several aspects of immigrant integration, including social, economic, and cultural dimensions. This plan also recognized the importance to create a welcoming environment for the ones who are coming to our country, recognizing their contributions to the socio-economic fabric of Portugal. It also emphasized the need to provide support in the most important areas such as education, employment, and healthcare to facilitate the integration process. These initiatives incorporate a multitude of areas, articulating specific measures to promote the full inclusion of immigrants into Portuguese society.

Upon the conclusion of this inaugural plan, the II Integration Plan came to assume its role, also preserving a significant portion of the measures that were initially proposed. This continuity underscores a deliberate and persistent effort to achieve success in the ambitious undertaking of immigrant integration. Overall, some of these shared measures between the two plans, according to the work of Cristina Casas in “The Plans for Immigrant Integration and the New Strategic Plan for Migration in Portugal: one decade (2007-2016) in retrospect” are essentially:

- Promoting equal rights for immigrants compared to other citizens;
- Greater accessibility to information;
- The participation and co-responsibility of immigrants in immigration policies;
- The protection of immigrants' specific vulnerabilities, in terms of access to health, labour rights, access to justice workers' rights, among others;
- The valorisation of interculturality, with the provision of a training plan for interculturality among professionals in the areas of health and education, intercultural mediation in schools and cultural diversity in the media;
- Promoting the fulfilment of duties.

The evident persistence of shared measures across both plans underscores a strategic and cumulative approach, reflecting an ongoing commitment to realizing the objectives set forth in the realm of immigrant integration.

Both documents show a significant effort to establish an action plan for the integration of immigrants, although they also reveal a number of limitations, some of which are technical, particularly in the definition of indicators and targets, and others that are more political, such as political coordination in the definition and articulation of measures by the various ministries and the lack of an official document that provides the necessary framework and determines the criteria that should guide the presentation of action measures. (Costa, n.d.)

It is possible to confirm what was stated before by analysing some of the measures proposed, for instance, the measure 78 “Strengthening the local dimension of interculturality and immigrant integration (PCM/ACIDI, I. P.)” In this measure, the main objective is to facilitate the interculturality as a strategic approach supporting the multifaceted process of welcoming and integrating immigrants at the local level. This involves the implementation of projects aimed at enhancing integration processes and fostering positive interaction with the host society. It is stated that it is also important to encourage the development of local projects to support immigrant integration through the production of two manuals on best practices- one tailored for professionals and another proposed for politicians. However, after the end of the term of this plan, there was not another plan created as it happened before, instead, this proposal of Integration of Immigrants, started in 2015 (ACM) to be approached with another plan the Strategic Plan for the Migrations.

Overall, it is possible to affirm that Portugal has been demonstrating a concerted and evolving commitment to immigrant integration through consecutive plans, particularly the "Plano para Integração dos Imigrantes 2007-2009" and the one that came after, the II Integration Plan, as it was stated before. These initiatives have emphasized the government's recognition of the multifaceted challenges immigrants face when coming to the country and the importance of encouraging their successful integration into the Portuguese society.

In fundamental terms, the trajectory of Portugal in addressing the integration of immigrants, manifests as a dynamic and evolving response, involuntarily shaped to assert with the intricate challenges caused by the phenomenon of migration. Nonetheless, the initiation of the Strategic Plan for Migrations in 2015 signifies a more comprehensive approach to addressing migration issues that transcends the limitations of specific integration plans.

On 12 of March of 2015, the Strategic Plan for Migrations (2015-2020) was officially promulgated by the late Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, as documented by the High Commission for Migration (ACM). This wide-ranging plan was carefully designed with the main intention of achieving a consistent and aligned political response to the increasingly complex and challenging migratory dynamics faced by the nation. It sought to address and adapt to the multilayered nature of migration in the modern era, while ensuring that the country's policies were both responsive and proactive in managing migration flows, integrating immigrants, and maintaining the rights and dignity of all migrants (ACM). However, challenges within this problem continue to be arising, being this way, needed to reinforce the integration measures. Some of these challenges centred on the fact that AIMA (the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum) was unable to deal with all immigration cases, thus leading to a lack of control. In Portugal, there are currently more than 400,000 pending immigration cases (Luís Montenegro, 2024).

AIMA is currently overburdened, making it difficult to control immigration in the country more effectively, thus harming the country. This delay in managing immigration processes significantly affects the lives of illegal immigrants in Portugal. Many of these immigrants manage to find work, especially in labour-intensive sectors such as construction, agriculture and domestic services. However, due to this irregular situation, they often face precarious working conditions, low wages and a lack of access to basic labour rights. In addition, the integration of these people into Portuguese society is

complicated by their lack of legal documentation, which also prevents them from accessing health services, education and other social benefits. AIMA is aware of these problems and plans to launch a digital portal to improve the processing of applications for residency and other documents, as well as collaborating with local authorities and migrant support centres to improve the management of these cases (AIMA Portugal).

On June 3, 2024, the Portuguese government launched a completely new immigration plan that aimed at referring to several critical issues in the country's immigration system. This initiative seeks to correct significant flaws in the rules governing entry into Portugal, enhancing both the clarity and competence of these regulations. A key component of the plan focuses on resolving the current operational incapacity of AIMA, which, as mentioned above, has been a blockage in the effective processing and management of immigration cases (Governo de Portugal 2024). Additionally, the plan includes measures to ensure that border control systems are fully operational, in so doing, there is going to be an improvement in security and streamlining the entry process for immigrants. In this same plan, the government recognises important issues to mention. In particular, it recognises that immigration is beneficial for the country: "Immigration is essentially active and contributory for Portugal, reinforcing the sustainability of Social Security" (as seen earlier in this paper).

Another issue of equal importance to clarify was the fact that immigration is not associated with an increase in crime rates in Portugal, thus contradicting popular belief. This belief, when introduced into society, can generate social conflicts such as xenophobia, where immigrants are seen as a threat to the safety and well-being of the native population, thus leading to possible social exclusion, making it difficult for them to integrate into society. This can manifest itself in the form of discrimination in the workplace, difficulties in finding housing and limited access to public services.

The plan, which rests on four main pillars (emigration, immigration, reception and integration) and is based on 41 concrete measures, presents the following significant changes: The measure that showed the most reaction from the population was the exclusion of the expression of interest (a mechanism available to foreign citizens wishing to obtain a residence permit in Portugal) this has come to an end with this new agreement approved by the government. In the words of Prime Minister Luís Montenegro, the government wants to "put an end to some mechanisms that have become an abuse of our capacity to welcome". At the moment, a work visa is required before entering the country.

At the conference, the Prime Minister also said that "the possibility of regularising immigrants who were not in possession of a consular residence visa" was an "illconsidered" measure that ended up calling into question "the principles assumed by Portugal and its European partners in the Schengen Area".

This new measure in the new Migration Action Plan has been met with different responses, with some people applauding these measures as necessary to improve the management of migratory flows and promote the integration of immigrants. However, others criticise the end of the Expression of Interest scheme, as they consider it essential for attracting foreign workers and combating the ageing of the population. The creation of new Local Support Centres for the Integration of Migrants (CLAIM) was also mentioned and is a crucial step under the Portuguese government's new Migration Action Plan, as its main objective is to facilitate the integration of immigrants into Portuguese society, and they will offer a range of services aimed at helping immigrants in various aspects of their integration into the country, such as: Orientation to the labour market, support for job hunting, recognition of qualifications, vocational training and entrepreneurship; Language training; Information and support in accessing basic rights such as health, education, housing, social security and documentation; Awareness of cultural diversity, support for interaction between different social groups and promotion of intercultural dialogue. The assimilation of immigrants is a vital obstacle for the success of Portugal's movement plan. Well-integrated immigrants can make a considerable payment to the nation's financial and also social growth via their labour force, credentials, social variety as well as entrepreneurship. The development of the CLAIMs in this brandnew strategy shows the Portuguese federal government's dedication to the assimilation of immigrants and also identifies that their complete incorporation in Portuguese culture is essential to private and also cumulative well-being.

When it comes to the more than 400,000 delayed situations pointed out over, the Portuguese federal government acknowledges the relevance of locating options to the scenario of irregular immigrants and also is devoted to locating reasonable as well as reliable remedies to this current problem. It is necessary to stress that there is still no due date established for fixing the 400,000 stored cases. The Portuguese federal government is functioning to discover solutions as rapidly as possible however, it is necessary to remember that this is a complicated procedure that will certainly call for not just time yet also sources as there are presently a number of difficulties to conquer.

These challenges include the large number of cases. This significant backlog of cases makes the regularisation process complex and challenging. Combined with the lack of human and financial resources (Publico 2024, 31 May), it creates an overload on Portuguese public services, so regularising irregular immigrants will require a significant investment in human and financial resources, as highlighted above. However, at the moment, some measures are being considered and discussed, with the aim of reducing bureaucracy in the regularisation process, speeding up the analysis of applications and finding fair and appropriate solutions for each case.

#### **4 Chapter IV - Immigration on the city of Braga**

Following the previous discussion on the Strategic Plan for Migrations 2024, which outlines national policies and objectives for managing and supporting migration, we now turn our focus to the specific case of Braga. This chapter examines how these broader strategies are implemented at the local level, highlighting the city's unique challenges and successes in integrating immigrants. By exploring Braga's initiatives, community responses, and the lived experiences of the immigrant community, we gain a deeper understanding of how national migration policies translate into local actions and impacts. To begin this chapter, it is essential to consider that the history of the immigration rate in Braga, as in various of other regions in Portugal, has been shaped by a lot of different migratory waves, influenced by the economic, political and social conditions both in Portugal and in the immigrants' countries of origin. As a vibrant and economically active city, Braga has attracted different groups of immigrants over the years.

The city of Braga is an historical place located in the northwest of Portugal, settled in the Minho region, Braga was previously an ancient and antique city, and is nowadays developing and growing even more. Not only in economic terms, but also demographic ones, the city has faced an astonishing growth. Immigration has played a pivotal role in this growth, since in a legislative debate in February 2024, Rui Rocha, leader of the Liberal Initiative, stated that "3.3 per cent of the population is immigrant" (as quoted in Ferreira, 2024).

Initially, from the 1970s onwards, as mentioned earlier in this dissertation, emigration in Portugal grew predominantly from Portugal's former colonies, specifically Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique, due to decolonisation. These immigrants, a lot of whom chose to settle around the country's capital, Lisbon, eventually began to seek and

discover other regions, including the city of Braga, to look for better life and work opportunities. In the 1990s, according to the researcher Borrego (2018) Portugal underwent a new wave of immigration, this time from Eastern Europe, including countries such as for instance Ukraine, Romania and Moldova (Borrego, 2018). With the opening of the European Union's borders this change in the migration pattern started to gain more intensity.

According to different works, such as the one from Fernandes *et al.* (2021), it was in the late 1990s and the early 2000s, that the Brazilian immigration grew significantly, becoming this way one of the largest immigrant communities in Portugal. The researchers Fernandes *et al.* (2021), describe this period as a "second wave" of Brazilian immigration, showing an increase in the number of Brazilians immigrants in Portugal. One of the attractions for this growing community could be the fact that Braga is a city that has an abundance of universities and a growing labour market, for these reasons, it could attract many Brazilians, both students and skilled and unskilled workers. The former Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF) recorded a notable growth in the number of Brazilians residing in Portugal, consequently reflecting a migratory trend that has had significant impacts on the demographics of cities like Braga.

When it comes to these days, Braga has seen a steady increase in immigration not only from the Brazilians mentioned, but from other countries. According to Barbu, vuțăru, străchinăru and ciacă (2017) immigrants have been a driving force in the property market, resulting in an increase in demand and property prices. This effect is particularly visible in urban areas and on the periphery of the city, where we can see that the construction of new housing is trying to keep up with the growing demand, but this subject will be covered in more depth in the next chapter.

As analysed above, despite the economic and cultural benefits, immigration also brings challenges, especially regarding to the social integration and access to public services. However, the city's local government and non-governmental organisations are persistently implementing integration policies that will help immigrants adapt, promoting social cohesion and community development. Braga is a city of opportunities, with a diverse population from all over the world contributing to its economic growth. An efficient management of this diversity will continue to be a challenge and a priority for the local authorities. Therefore, the arrival of immigrants has not only contributed to the city's demographics, but has also benefited from a blend of traditions, languages, and

perspectives. For instance, with the current growth of Brazilian immigrants in Braga, the city started to receive an annual carnival that is founded by the foundation “Bloco Minho de Janeiro”. Although the city already had a tradition of celebrating Carnival, the festival became bigger and more detailed with the arrival of Brazilian immigrants (O Minho, 2022). As Braga is becoming a melting pot of cultures, the city continues to welcome and to celebrate the contributions of its immigrant community, promoting a more inclusive social environment.

As the influx of immigration continues to grow, the city has developed a series of integration policies in order to facilitate the integration of new immigrants. According to the recent studies of INE/Pordata the Municipality of Braga had a demographic growth of its resident population of 17,8% in the last 20 years (from the year of 2001 to 2021) (Municipal Plan for Migrant Integration:17). This arrival of immigrants has accompanied in an associated set of new challenges and issues experienced by this demographic group.

The Municipal Plan for the Integration of Migrants, 2022 (PMIM) in Braga carefully presents challenges faced by migrants and incorporates their proposals and solutions. Covering aspects like cultural adaptation and access to services, the PMIM serves as a comprehensive guide to the migrant experience. It not only acknowledges obstacles but also, proposes measures, from cultural initiatives to the economic empowerment, aiming to enhance integration and enrich Braga's social fabric.

This plan is structured by the principles of:

- Non-Formal Education Practices;
- Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination;
- Cultural Diversity; • Entering the labour market;
- Promoting Interculturality.

Besides these principles, this plan is available online on the official website of the municipality of Braga and encompasses a set of 12 measures that are intended to be accomplished.

1<sup>st</sup>- Reception and Integration Services, “Make the Guide to Welcoming Migrants in the Municipality of Braga "Braga de Braços Abertos" available online and in paper format” this is going to facilitate the access to a diverse audience, accommodating individuals with different preferences and technological access, and also the measure

“Monitor the level of satisfaction with integration services” is going to allow the municipality to adapt its services to better meet the needs of migrants.

2<sup>nd</sup>- Urban Planning and Housing- “Promoting access to supported income for migrants”, this measure is going to have positive outcomes, it will be ensured access to stable housing, it is going to promote economic contributions, and enhance the overall resilience and sustainability of the urban environment.

3<sup>rd</sup>- Labour Market and Entrepreneurship- “Increase the transversal competences of migrants”, “Promoting migrant entrepreneurship” and “Promoting access to legal information on active job-seeking and guidance on labour issues”. By enhancing migrants' skills, it will cause a seamless integration into the workforce, while enriching the labour market with diverse talents. Additionally, offering accessible legal information informs and protects migrants, promoting fair employment practices and equity.

4<sup>th</sup>- Education and Training “Strengthening the skills of technicians and/or organisations working directly with the migrant population”.

These measures are going to make possible an effective support and integration. Improved capabilities allow these professionals to provide targeted assistance, address specific needs, eventually fostering a more inclusive and responsive environment for migrants.

5<sup>th</sup>- Education and Language, “Intensify the number of Portuguese language training sessions at different times of the day in order to better reconcile work and family life” and “Promote the recognition and appreciation of diversity as an opportunity and source of learning for all”, these measures are going to facilitate the communication and better integrate immigrants.

6<sup>th</sup>- Culture, “Organising multicultural activities that promote encounters between different cultures”. This measure is going to create more understanding, appreciation, and unity while also providing a platform for people from different backgrounds to share their traditions, allowing this way a rich tapestry of cultural exchange while also building a more inclusive and vibrant community.

7<sup>th</sup>: Health, “To sensitise all health professionals to the rights and duties of migrants” and “Provide information on migrants' rights and duties in terms of access to healthcare”. These stated measures are going to safeguard that healthcare services are culturally sensitive and that migrants can navigate the system with ease. Additionally, it is also going

to promote fair access to healthcare, contributing to the well-being of both migrants and the broader community.

8<sup>th</sup>: Solidarity and Social Response, “Articulate concerted actions between the different organisations working to support migrants” this measure enhances solidarity and social response. This is going to allow the creation of a more unified and resilient environment for the effective support and integration of migrants.

9<sup>th</sup>: Citizenship and civic participation- “Raise awareness among migrant communities about voter registration” and “Involving young audiences in a more informal context to promote and value diversity”- This is going to be crucial for the integration, allowing active civic engagement and a sense of belonging.

10<sup>th</sup> Media and Public Awareness- “Investing in innovative and creative information activities to any foreign citizen who wants to make Braga their place to live, work or invest”- This approach contributes to positive perceptions in the media, shaping a narrative that encourages integration and collaboration, ultimately reinforcing Braga's appeal to a diverse audience.

11<sup>th</sup> Racism and Discrimination- “Raise awareness among the local community and migrant communities about the multicultural reality and deconstruct myths and fears associated with migrants”. By applying this measure, a safer and more inclusive environment is going to grow, creating a better understanding between cultures.

12<sup>th</sup> International Relations- “To publicise the cultures and traditions of migrant communities” - This effort enhances Braga's global image as an inclusive and welcoming city and fosters positive international relations.

With Braga being known as an antique city full of traditions and that did not have a lot of migration, with the Municipal Plan for the Integration of Migrants, we are able to reach to the conclusion that this once old city is now evolving and holds a welldeveloped working plan with every possible measure calculated to better integrate the migrants and create a more welcoming environment. As was evident, through this Municipal Plan, Braga has carefully created a complete structure that aims to promote the integration of migrants into the structure of the city. Furthermore, the plan highlights the recognition of the city, of the invaluable contributions that migrants bring to the city's social, economic, and cultural life. When embracing the diversity and binding the skills

and experiences of the migrant population, Braga is not only enriching its own identity but also positioning itself as a multicultural centre.

Essentially, this Municipal Plan for the Integration of Migrants shows Braga's transition from an historical city immersed in tradition to a more dynamic and inclusive urban centre.

## **5 CHAPTER V – Economic Impact**

The arrival of new residents in the city of Braga has had a significant impact on several aspects, this new paradigm has had an impact on retail and catering, which are facing labour shortages in Portugal (Quintino, 2018). Worker shortage, especially in the above-mentioned sectors, is an obstacle to effective productivity and growth in these industries. Quintino (2018) states that the country needs these immigrants and their arrival in the represented an effective solution to moderate this labour shortage in the country. Several studies, emphasise that a significant proportion of recently arrived immigrants have chosen to join these specific sectors (Ramos, 2007). In an interview, the president of the Braga Business Association, Daniel Vilaça, mentioned the problems that the city was facing in those sectors, and stated the following:

We owe a lot to the immigrants who have arrived here in Braga and Portugal, who have filled some of the labour shortages here, and it's important that we look at this labour that is arriving, welcome them well, give them the conditions to be here in Portugal, because if they leave, we have serious problems in many companies (Diário de Notícias,2024).

Another study that mentioned practically the same situation was by Ramos (2007) that confirms that “Immigrants are found in all sectors of activity, with a greater weight in construction, hotels, restaurants and business services, i.e. they mostly appear as a lowskilled, low-paid workforce” (Ramos, 2007).

The participation of immigrants in commerce and catering not only solve the problem existing on the demand, but also gave a positive boost to these economic activities (Ramos, 2007). The contribution of immigrants to these sectors can be analysed from various perspectives such as, as mentioned above, filling essential work positions,

which guarantees the efficient running of shops and restaurants (Ramos,2007). This will allow these sectors to continue offering quality services to residents and visitors. In this way, the presence of immigrants will stimulate an economic growth in these sectors by increasing consumption, contributing to the cultural diversity and allow modernisation which basically is going to have a positive impact on the local economy, consequently making the arrival of immigrants beneficial for the country. Not only in these economic sectors, but also when it comes to social security, there have also been significant and very positive changes since the beginning of this demographic shift, as we can confirm in the same study mentioned above:

The regularisation of immigrants in Portugal has had beneficial consequences in terms of social security, public accounts, and the regularisation of companies in the informal economy. Studies carried out for the first time for the year 2001 concluded that immigrants made a positive contribution to public accounts, with 324 million euros (Almeida, 2003), with this contribution totalling 250 million euros for 2002 (ACIME). Immigration is important for the financial sustainability of social security, due to the increase and rejuvenation of the labour force (Ramos,2007:82-83).

The current situation remains consistent, with the social security contributions from these immigrants continuing to exhibit a highly positive balance. Recent reports, such as one from CNN Portugal, highlight this trend, demonstrating that immigrants have significantly contribute more to the social security system, than they withdraw in benefits. This positive fiscal impact underscores the continuing economic benefits that immigrants provide to the Portuguese economy, reinforcing this way their role in supporting public finances and enhancing the sustainability of social services.

Immigrants contributed 1,861 million euros to Social Security in 2022, while receiving around 257 million euros in social benefits - in other words, the value of their contributions is seven times higher than the benefits they received. As a result, there was a positive balance of immigrant contributions of 1.6 billion euros last year (CNN,2023).

The positive balance in immigrants' social security contributions not only benefits the social system but can also have a positive impact on the economy in general. In this way, it is possible to redirect the social security funds to other programmes and services. This way, it is possible to affirm that the financial contributions of immigrants to the Portuguese economy are highly significant, with their contributions outweighing the cost of public services that they utilize. This is going to indicate that immigrants are playing a positive role in the support of the public finances and that they may help offset the costs associated with providing services to the overall population. These numbers underline the importance of migration for economic and social balance, highlighting how immigrants' contributions can be a vital factor for the success of social and economic systems.

The economic impact of immigrants on an important subject such as, accommodation prices, is a multifaceted issue influenced by a several number of factors, them being for instance tourism, migratory dynamics, and the choice of certain political orientations, both at central and municipal level (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2010). However, in this work we are focusing only on the factor of immigration since it is the one who has a bigger interest for this dissertation with this chapter focusing on the general impact of population movements on the property market and housing. A lot of international researchers have investigated the impact of this issue in other countries, mainly in the field of economic sciences. It has been observed that the prices of properties increase often during periods of a significant migratory influx, as Barbu *et al.* (2017) state.

In areas with a higher immigration rate, there is a tendency to exist an increased demand for housing, (Barbu *et al.* 2017) both for rental and purchasing properties. Immigrants that are relocating to the city of Braga will often seek more suitable housing options to establish themselves and their families in their new environment. This arrival of immigrants makes an extra tension on the existing housing market, leading to intensified competition for the available rental properties and homes for sale. This increased demand is going to raise the prices as more individuals are looking for a house in a limited housing stock as it is already happening (Pinto, 2020).

This phenomenon is part of a broader trend observed in various Portuguese cities, where immigration contributes to dynamic changes in the housing sector. According to a report by the Portuguese Association of Real Estate Professionals and Agents (APEMIP), the Portuguese cities, have experienced a notable rise in property prices over the past few years:

The real estate sector in Portugal is facing significant challenges that reflect a housing crisis that knows no borders, extending beyond the major urban centres such as Lisbon and Porto. This is a reality that profoundly affects Portuguese families and has major social and economic implications (Santos 2024).

This rise can be attributed to a lot of factors, one of them, as it was mentioned before, would be the influx of foreign residents that are looking for accommodation. The city of Braga is continuously growing, although it is not as large as the city of Lisboa, and the city of Porto, Braga counts with 37 districts and 193.349 residents (INE, 2021). Currently, housing prices in the city of Braga do not correspond to the past, where the housing market was more affordable and available than the bigger cities. Nowadays, it is possible to affirm that although the prices are still lower than in the cities of Lisbon and Porto, Braga presented the highest increase on housing prices (22%), thus reducing supply and not corresponding to the salary reality of the majority of the inhabitants (Ribeiro *et al.*,2021), As it is evidenced by the following quotation from the same mentioned authors:

For example, according to data from INE (2020), the median value of sales per square metre of family housing was 1024 euros in 2020, compared to 642 euros in 2016. Similarly, with regard to median rents for family housing per square metre, in the second half of 2020, the median rent was around 5.26 euros per square metre, compared to 3.79 euros per square metre documented in the second half of 2017. Even so, and although not very significantly, in both the sales and rental segments, Braga has average values below the national average (INE, 2020). However, it should be borne in mind that Lisbon and Porto have values significantly above the average - 3,377 euros/m<sup>2</sup> and 2,142 euros/m<sup>2</sup> in the sales segment and 11.46 euros/m<sup>2</sup> and 8.70 euros/m<sup>2</sup> in the rental segment respectively - which substantially raises the overall average (Ribeiro *et al.*,2021).

However, although these prices are being practiced, as Fonseca, McGarrigle and Esteves state in their work, “housing is considered a basic human need and access to it, is necessary to ensure integration in other domains not to mention to secure an individual ‘s wellbeing and state of health.” This way it is possible to conclude that the situation is worse than it looks, considering that the prices established to rent/buy a house are higher than the income of the buyers/renters. The growing pressure on the housing market

appears primarily from a shortage of supply, largely caused by an increase in demand. In this context, with the supply decreasing and the demand increasing, the market prices are going to rise significantly, fuelling speculation, where capital is once again the protagonist of this dynamic (Ribeiro *et al.*,2021).

To sum up, there is an urgent need to find a solution because firstly, as it was mentioned above, the constant increase of the housing prices is going to have a bigger impact on the vulnerable residents who struggle to afford an adequate accommodation. This constant disparity is going to undermine a societal cohesion and aggravate the existing division. And secondly, the unrestrained rise in housing prices causes unpredictable behavior, leading to a market impulsiveness and instability. These circumstances can have far-reaching consequences, including for instance financial crises and housing bubbles, with adverse effects on the broader economy (Sousa & Ferreira, 2024).

As it has been stated above, it is necessary and urgent to find the solution. According to a study from “XI Congresso Português de Sociologia” the government holds a lot of responsibility in regard of this manner and is responsible to establish a direct engagement with this issue to present possible solutions.

The state, mobilising the support of the local authorities, must fulfil one of its responsibilities, which is a right provided for at national and international level that even influences other rights: Everyone has the right, for himself and for his family, to housing of an adequate size, in conditions of hygiene and comfort and which preserves personal intimacy and family privacy (Article 65, CRP) (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2021).

However, not only is the housing market a current problem, but also the social factors behind it. Despite immigrants being significant contributors to the housing market, both in terms of renting and purchasing properties, they often encounter numerous obstacles in securing accommodation.

A 2024 survey conducted by Amanda Lima for “Diario de Noticias” revealed a strong and shocking reality: “more than 90 percent of immigrants interviewed reported experiencing some form of discrimination in relation to housing in Portugal.” These challenges can manifest in a lot of ways, including discrimination in rental practices, such as higher rent prices or a limited availability of housing options for immigrants.

Additionally, immigrants may deal with more challenges, for instance when they try to purchase a property, such as discrimination from the landlords or real estate agents, as well as challenges in accessing mortgage financing, as we can see in this excerpt from the survey mentioned before:

When we arrived, every time we called an advert and they heard our Brazilian accent, they said it was rented. We had to ask a Portuguese colleague to call, and then we were able to arrange visits." This is one of more than 90 stories collected in the survey "Immigration and discrimination in housing", carried out by Casa do Brazil and released yesterday (Lima, A., 2024).

Furthermore, in the same survey, it is seen that immigrants are encountering social prejudices and stereotypes that influence their housing opportunities, leading to exclusion or marginalization within certain neighbourhoods or communities, as we can verify in this excerpt from the same survey:

There are three predominant types of situations in the reports: the first, with 37.6%, is xenophobia at the time of contact or when visiting the property. In one of the testimonies, the immigrant said that she was the victim of a stereotype because she was a Brazilian woman. "The landlady said she wouldn't rent to Brazilian women because they brought a lot of men into the house, and it was a family environment"" (Lima, A., 2024)

Nonetheless, the housing affordability crisis is not a unique problem of Portugal; it extends across various countries and regions. As elucidated in the study conducted by Promnstat titled, "Possibilities and Limitations of Comparative Quantitative Research on Immigrants' Housing Conditions," a comprehensive understanding of this issue transcends national boundaries.

The majority of countries have experienced a decline in cheap housing in both public and private rented housing sectors. In particular, vulnerable groups, in which migrants and minorities are included, are most at risk from social exclusion in the housing market. This can be related with the privatisation of social housing and the fact that access to housing has become more market driven (Fonseca *et al.*,2010. p.24)

Not only are the housing crises a problem for those who are coming to the country seeking for a better life, but also for the residents who are looking for a home. Although it is not in the city of Braga that the highest prices are being practiced, as seen above, in 2023 it has been talked by the councillor, João Rodrigues, with responsibility for Urban Management, Urban Regeneration and Housing, of an increase on the urban area, in contrast of what is happening on other councils, Braga is a city that is expanding, as we can see by the speech of João Rodrigues:

As part of the review of the Municipal Master Plan, we expect something to happen in Braga that is not expected in most municipalities: a considerable increase in the urban area and, at the same time, within that same urban area, every square metre can be put to better use. This is an investment opportunity for the sector's agents, from which the population will benefit", he said, guaranteeing that this increase will be "reconciled with the qualification of the city and an increase in the quality of life of its citizens. (Rodrigues,2024)

Considering all the data, it is apparent that over the past decade, Braga has transitioned from a city that was characterized by an abundance of properties available for sale and rent at prices commonly lower than those in other large and medium-sized cities, to an urban scenario marked by an insufficiency of housing supply amongst an increasingly intense demand. Regard as this circumstance declared by João Rodrigues, it becomes evident that while this measure may not solve all of the problems, its significance lies in its pivotal role in fostering the development and expansion of Braga. When facilitating this urban expansion, the city can continue its trajectory of growth, thereby positioning itself as an attractive destination for potential residents and investors alike. This, in turn, can accelerate a virtuous cycle of economic advancement, with Braga serving as a centre of opportunity. Therefore, in spite of its apparent disconnect from immediate housing affordability issues, this strategic expansion of the city claims profound implications for its long-term economic vitality.

Even though facing challenging circumstances, the city of Braga has demonstrated a persistent commitment to its expansion and development. As seen above, while the housing prices remain elevated, Braga maintains a comparative advantage over cities like Lisbon and Porto, offering relatively lower prices. This commitment to growth

underscores Braga's resilience and determination to thrive amidst evolving urban dynamics.

## **6 Interviews**

It was chosen in this study to conduct interviews as a qualitative method for several compelling reasons. Firstly, interviews allow for a deep and nuanced understanding of the experiences and perspectives of individuals, which is essential for a comprehensive analysis of migratory movements in Braga. Through direct conversations with key stakeholders, such as the President of Braga and the President of the UAI Association, I was able to gather rich, detailed insights that would not have been possible through quantitative methods alone.

Interviews also provide the opportunity to explore complex issues in greater depth. By engaging with participants in a dialogical manner, I could probe into specific areas of interest, clarify responses, and follow up on intriguing points, thereby obtaining a more thorough understanding of the socio-economic and political factors influencing migration in Braga. This method allows for the capture of the subtleties and intricacies of personal experiences, opinions, and emotions, which are often lost in standardized surveys.

Additionally, interviews are particularly valuable in exploring sensitive topics. The personal and interactive nature of interviews creates a more comfortable environment for participants to share their honest and candid thoughts. This is especially important when discussing potentially challenging subjects such as discrimination, integration difficulties, and personal aspirations, which require a level of trust and rapport that interviews can facilitate.

Furthermore, the qualitative data obtained from interviews complements the quantitative data gathered from surveys, providing a holistic view of the migration phenomenon in Braga. While quantitative data can illustrate broad trends and patterns, qualitative data from interviews add depth and context, enriching the overall analysis and leading to more robust and informed conclusions.

In summary, the decision to use interviews as a qualitative method was driven by the need to gain a deep, detailed, and empathetic understanding of the migration dynamics in Braga. This approach enabled me to capture the complexities of individual experiences

and provided valuable insights that are critical for developing effective migration policies and practices.

When it was first proposed to the president to collaborate with my work, his first response was immediately positive and always showed cooperation and availability from the beginning. As it was mentioned before, the interview was scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup> on the office of the president by his choice and it is also important to state that this interview was recorded with his authorization, for the collection of data for this analysis. Furthermore, is possible to affirm that this interview underwent without any obstacles and therefore it was easy to gather the necessary information.

Ricardo Rio's perspective is fundamentally shaped by his position as a policymaker and city leader. He underscores Braga's historical significance as a diverse city, noting,

*"Historically, Braga has always had a great diversity of immigrant communities with different waves of immigration."*

This statement aligns with the findings of this thesis, particularly regarding Portugal's reputation as one of the safest countries globally, a factor Rio identifies as pivotal in attracting immigrants, especially from Brazil, who currently constitute about 10% of Braga's population.

Rio articulates the strategic advantages of Braga, highlighting the city's quality of life, economic vitality, job creation capabilities, and comparatively lower cost of living than other major Portuguese cities like Lisbon and Porto. He states:

*"Braga began to gain international and national visibility as a city with a great quality of life, with economic dynamism and a great capacity to create jobs."*

This attractiveness is bolstered by the city's safety, a critical factor frequently mentioned by immigrants in their decision to settle in Braga.

In discussing municipal challenges, the president of the city council acknowledges occasional difficulties, such as housing shortages and isolated cases of immigrants living in inadequate conditions like garages or attics. However, he asserts that these situations are exceptions rather than the norm. The city's proactive stance involves monitoring and

intervening, when necessary, often in collaboration with community associations, to ensure dignified living conditions and effective integration.

Economically, Rio emphasizes the dual benefits of immigration. Immigrants contribute to the continuity and growth of local businesses and the housing market, and they also play a crucial role in sectors ranging from hospitality to technology. He notes,

*"These immigrant citizens are in themselves a factor in the continuity and fuelling of the demand for jobs by companies."*

Furthermore, the presence of 40 different nationalities within Braga's schools enriches the educational environment, promoting intercultural dialogue and demographic rejuvenation.

Culturally, Rio appreciates the spontaneous initiatives of immigrant communities in organizing events, such as the revival of Carnival in Braga by Brazilian residents. He highlights the city's lack of ghettos and the successful integration of diverse groups, including Indians and Pakistanis, into the broader community. However, he also acknowledges the presence of xenophobic attitudes among a minority of residents, which

Alexandra Gomide's interview provides a ground-level view of the operational challenges and support mechanisms for immigrants in Braga. As the President of UAI, she plays a critical role in managing and providing a range of services, from psychological and legal counselling to financial and nutritional advice. Gomide explains, they try to welcome immigrants in all possible aspects, highlighting the comprehensive nature of UAI's support services.

One of the primary challenges identified by Gomide is housing, a difficulty exacerbated by bureaucratic delays associated with AIMA, the body responsible for immigration documentation. She highlights the bureaucratic hurdles that hinder immigrants' integration, emphasizing the delay in processing essential documents, which affects their ability to work, access healthcare, and education:

*"The biggest challenge has been AIMA... Sometimes they (immigrants) even manage to get the paperwork in, but it doesn't come out, the document isn't processed, it's all delayed, so that's been our biggest difficulty because these immigrants come here without these documents, they can't work, they can't have a family doctor, they can't even enrol in a*

school. This bureaucratic hurdle significantly hampers immigrants' ability to integrate and access essential services.

Despite these challenges, Gomide praises the city's welcoming atmosphere and the active participation of the Brazilian community in local events. She notes that Brazilians are highly visible in commerce and cultural activities, contributing significantly to Braga's vibrant social life. She observes that the Brazilian community feels welcomed in the city and does not feel as strange to immigrants as it did years ago, as she states also due to the fact that the Brazilian community is very participative in the life of the city as a whole.

Gomide also underscores the importance of proper documentation and support for immigrants to fully integrate and contribute to the local economy. She calls for a more controlled approach to immigration to ensure that newcomers receive the necessary bureaucratic support, thereby preventing exploitation and ensuring their successful integration.

Both perspectives underscore the importance of coordinated efforts between local government and support organisations. Braga's attractiveness as an immigrant destination is enhanced by its quality of life, economic opportunities, and cultural vibrancy. However, addressing systemic challenges related to housing and documentation remains crucial.

When examining the perspectives of President Ricardo Rio and Alexandra Gomide regarding the acceptance and integration of more immigrants in Braga, a notable divergence emerges. Although both express concerns regarding the integration of immigrants in Braga, due to challenges, their perspectives and approaches differ in notable ways. While both acknowledge the challenges immigrants face, the president maintains a generally positive stance towards welcoming more immigrants, whereas Gomide advocates for a more controlled approach. This section explores their exact statements and provides an analysis of their viewpoints.

President Ricardo Rio exhibits a positive and welcoming attitude towards the influx of immigrants into Braga. He highlights the city's strategic advantages and the benefits immigrants bring to the local economy and cultural diversity. Rio states:

*“Braga began to gain international and national visibility as a city with a great quality of life, with economic dynamism and a great capacity to*

*create jobs, with a clearly lower cost of living compared to other cities, especially Lisbon and Porto, and that was a great attraction.”*

He further emphasizes the economic contributions of immigrants, noting:

*“These immigrant citizens are in themselves a factor in the continuity and fuelling of the demand for jobs by companies, and therefore end up accelerating the growth of many companies in our territory.”*

However, he also acknowledges the challenges associated with integrating immigrants, particularly those in undignified social situations. He states:

*“Our concern has always been to monitor them, to see if there were any situations that might require another type of intervention, and I would say that these more undignified social situations are the ones that have caused us the most difficulties. In this plan to integrate immigrants, we have various actions, including linking with associations representing different communities.”*

The president is aware of and attentive to the difficulties some immigrants face, especially regarding housing and employment. He emphasizes the importance of monitoring and intervening in cases where immigrants encounter significant challenges. His approach involves collaboration with various community associations to support integration efforts.

In contrast, Alexandra Gomide, President of the Immigrant Integration Association (UAI- União, Apoio, Integração), goes a little further and expresses more cautious views on the acceptance of additional immigrants. She talks about the uncontrolled influx of immigrants and advocates for a more regulated approach to ensure adequate support and integration:

*“I'm in favour of controlling immigration, okay, sometimes that sounds a bit strong, but it's precisely because it takes care of the immigrant that I'm in Favour of this control because the ones who are paying the most for this lack of control, this unbridled entry into the country, are the immigrants.”*

She believes that without proper control and regulation, immigrants are the one who suffer the most. The lack of control leads to issues such as delays in processing documentation, inadequate housing, and other challenges that make it difficult for

immigrants to integrate successfully. By advocating for controlled immigration, she aims to ensure that immigrants receive the necessary support and resources to settle effectively.

She also states that the country needs to address current Immigrants conditions:

*“I don't think the country can continue to receive people when it first has to sort out who is here, and there are already a lot of people in complicated conditions because they can't sort it out. So my expectation is that they'll stop to take care of those who are already here.”*

Gomide emphasizes the need to prioritize the welfare of immigrants who are already in the country. She points out that many immigrants are in difficult situations due to bureaucratic and systemic inefficiencies. Before accepting more immigrants, she believes it is crucial to address and resolve these issues to improve the living conditions and integration process for those currently residing in the country.

Her viewpoint on immigration control comes from a concern for the well-being of immigrants. She argues that without proper control and regulation, the current system fails to adequately support immigrants, leading to various hardships. Her suggestion to focus on improving conditions for existing immigrants before accepting new ones highlights a pragmatic approach aimed at ensuring better integration and support for all immigrants in the long run.

She focuses on the practical challenges and systemic issues faced by immigrants in Braga.

In conclusion, this analysis reveals that while Braga has made significant strides in integrating immigrants, ongoing efforts are necessary to address practical challenges and ensure that all newcomers can fully participate in and contribute to the city's social and economic life. By continuing to enhance support systems and fostering a welcoming environment, Braga can serve as a model for effective immigrant integration.

## 7 Analysis of the Questionnaire

The making of a questionnaire was indispensable in order to gather the insight from the immigrants themselves. This questionnaire was able to gather responses from 50 immigrants that were living in Braga.

**Table 1**

*Survey for the Immigrants*

Category	Subcategory	Number of Answers
Age	18-42	12
Country of Origin	Brazil	44
	Pakistan	2
	England	1
	France	2
	Columbia	1
Years of residence	1-3	25
	4-7	15
	8-10	4
	+10	6
Motivation to move	Better conditions	30
	Reunite with family	10
	Work	5
	Escape poor conditions	2
Job sectors	Restaurants	10
	Local Commerce	15
	Construction	7
	Factories	9
Ratings on Integration on the city	4 out of 5	20
	5 out of 5	10

*Note:* It was not possible to consider all answers to the questionnaire since they seemed to be not reliable. Own Source.

The presented motivations align closely with the broader context of immigration trends discussed in this study, where safety and quality of life are pivotal in the decisionmaking process for a lot of immigrants. These motivations align with Lee's (1966) theory of migration, which highlights factors of attraction (better living conditions, job opportunities) and repulsion (poor conditions in the country of origin). Castles, de Haas, and Miller (2014) further support this by discussing the global dynamics that influence migration, such as economic disparities and the search for safety and stability.

Furthermore, the elevated level of positive feedback suggests that many immigrants feel well-integrated into the community. This sentiment is supported by numerous factors, including the city's welcoming atmosphere, effective support services, and the perceived safety and quality of life in Braga. The strong positive ratings reflect not only the individual experiences of the immigrants but also the efficacy of the local policies and community efforts aimed at fostering inclusivity and support for new residents. This positive feedback on integration is crucial for understanding the broader success of Braga's approach to managing and supporting its diverse immigrant population, highlighting the city's strengths in creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all its residents. The employment opportunities for immigrants in Braga are primarily concentrated in the restaurant industry, local commerce, construction, and factories. These sectors indicate that immigrants are currently filling significant gaps in the Portuguese job market. As analysed previously in this study, these industries are crucial for the economic vitality of Braga, providing essential services and contributing to the local economy's growth. The integration of immigrants into these sectors not only addresses labour shortages but also supports the continued demand for jobs and services, highlighting the mutual benefits of immigration for both the community and the immigrants themselves. This dynamic is crucial for understanding the broader implications of immigration on local economies and the ways in which immigrants contribute to the socio-economic landscape of their host cities.

In regard of the possible challenges that could be faced by immigrants in Braga, the tendency included a difficulty in adapting to a new culture, housing issues such as finding affordable accommodation, social inclusion difficulties coupled with the high cost of living, and temporary and insecure job conditions. Additionally, immigrants reported exploitation by employers and bureaucratic hurdles in regularizing documents. These challenges underscore the critical need for improved support systems for immigrants,

particularly in areas of housing and legal assistance, to facilitate better integration and enhance their quality of life in the city.

The positive reception from the local community, indicates a generally welcoming environment for immigrants in Braga, though there remains room for improvement. Respondents identified several areas where support could be enhanced to aid their integration into the community. The most frequently mentioned need was for more affordable housing, which would alleviate one of the primary challenges faced by many immigrants. Additionally, employment assistance was highlighted as crucial, helping newcomers find stable and secure job opportunities.

Beyond housing and employment, there was a call for the establishment of social, educational, and cultural support groups. These groups would facilitate the building of networks and provide a sense of community, making the adaptation process smoother. Legal assistance, particularly for obtaining residency, was also seen as essential, addressing bureaucratic hurdles that can impede integration.

Cultural and linguistic orientation programs were suggested to help immigrants better understand and adapt to their new environment. Moreover, the organization of community events celebrating immigrant cultures was proposed. Such events would not only honour the diverse backgrounds of immigrants but also foster a deeper connection between them and the local population.

These suggestions underscore the need for comprehensive support systems to aid in the integration of immigrants into the local community. Effective support can mitigate the challenges faced by immigrants and enhance the positive impacts of immigration on both the individuals and the host society. Implementing these measures would likely lead to a more inclusive and cohesive community, benefiting both immigrants and long-term residents of Braga.

The interviews with Ricardo Rio and Alexandra Gomide provide additional context to the questionnaire findings. Ricardo Rio, the President of Braga, emphasized the city's historical diversity and strategic advantages such as quality of life, economic vitality, and safety. He acknowledged challenges like housing shortages but noted the city's proactive stance in ensuring dignified living conditions for immigrants. Rio's perspective aligns with the questionnaire results, particularly regarding the importance of safety and job opportunities in attracting immigrants.

As we were able to examine before, Alexandra Gomide, President of UAI, highlighted the operational challenges and support mechanisms for immigrants, particularly in housing and bureaucratic delays. She emphasized the comprehensive support provided by UAI, which addresses psychological, legal, financial, and nutritional needs. Gomide's insights into the bureaucratic hurdles and the need for better documentation support echo the questionnaire responses, underscoring the importance of streamlined processes for immigrant integration.

The analysis of the questionnaire data reveals that while immigrants in Braga have positive experiences and find various employment opportunities, they face significant challenges in housing, social inclusion, and job security. The suggestions for improved support systems align with the findings from the interviews and the theoretical frameworks discussed in the thesis. Addressing these challenges through targeted support programs could significantly enhance the integration and well-being of immigrants in Braga, fostering a more inclusive and supportive community. The collaboration and proactive measures taken by local authorities, as highlighted in the interviews, further reinforce the potential for positive immigrant experiences in the city.

## Conclusion

The intricate interactions between economic, social, and political elements that influence the experiences of immigrants and the larger society, have been demonstrated through this study of migratory movements in the city of Braga. This comprehensive analysis highlights the significant ways in which migration shapes urban life and is shaped by it, resulting in a dynamic and changing environment. Several important revelations have come from speaking with important stakeholders, such as the presidents of the UAI Association and the President of the Municipality of Braga, as well as by asking immigrants directly through a survey.

First off, it is possible to affirm that there are many different aspects to the economic effects of migration in Braga. In Braga, immigrants have proved to be essential to maintaining and accelerating the city's economic prosperity. They cover vital labour shortages, especially in industries vital to the growth of the city, including construction, hospitality, and personal services. Their business endeavours add diversity and creativity to the corporate environment while also boosting regional economies.

Moreover, the influx of immigrants has had a significant impact for instance on the housing market in Braga. The increased demand for housing driven by immigrant populations can lead to higher rental prices and housing shortages, presenting a challenge for both new arrivals and long-standing residents as we were able to analyse. This increased competition for housing can aggravate even more the affordability issues and necessitate the development of comprehensive housing policies. Ensuring that there is adequate affordable housing to accommodate the growing population is crucial to maintaining social stability and preventing socioeconomic divisions.

Secondly, the qualitative data from interviews highlight the importance of inclusive governance and the role of local institutions in facilitating the integration of immigrants. As expressed by the President of the Municipality of Braga, the proactive approach of the municipal government highlights the dedication to fostering an inclusive atmosphere that celebrates diversity and fosters social cohesion. The UAI Association's initiatives highlight the importance of support networks in helping immigrants adjust to their new environment, find services, and form connections with the community.

Finally, the questions posed to immigrants in a questionnaire paint a nuanced picture of their actual experiences, which are characterized by both opportunities and challenges.

Many immigrants express deep appreciation for the relative safety and economic prospects available in Braga. They highlight the welcoming nature of the community and the opportunities for personal and professional growth that the city offers. These positive experiences underscore Braga's potential as a vibrant, inclusive hub for new residents.

However, the responses also illuminate areas for improvement, such as addressing language barriers, ensuring equal treatment in the workplace, and strengthening social support networks. Immigrants recognize the progress being made but also see room for further development. These insights highlight the ongoing need for strategies that encompass not only economic integration but also the social and cultural dimensions of migration.

The positive experiences shared by immigrants reflect the potential for Braga to serve as a model for other cities, demonstrating how thoughtful integration policies can lead to a harmonious and prosperous community. By embracing a holistic approach to migration that considers all facets of the immigrant experience, Braga can ensure that all its residents feel valued and supported. In sum, the case of Braga serves as a miniature of broader migratory trends, illustrating the profound economic contributions of immigrants alongside the challenges of integration. It calls for a balanced approach that controls the economic benefits of migration while fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. The findings of this study can inform policymakers and stakeholders in Braga and beyond, contributing to the development of more effective and humane migration policies.

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# APPENDIX

## **APPENDIX I – Interview with the President of the city council**

### **Migratory Movements in Portugal: An analysis of immigration in the city of Braga**

Questions addressed to the President of the city council

1. According to recent data from the National Statistics Institute, the city of Braga was considered to be the council with the highest population growth, with migration contributing enormously to this factor. In your view, what are the specific factors that have contributed to making Braga an attractive city for these communities compared to other municipalities in Portugal?
2. In the context of the Municipal Immigrant Integration Plan in Braga, could you share with us what the biggest challenges you faced during its implementation were?
3. What were the main benefits perceived by the City Council as a result of immigration in Braga? How does cultural diversity contribute to the city's development?
4. In terms of cultural policies, how is the council promoting the inclusion and active participation of the immigrant community in the cultural life of the city? Are there specific programmes to encourage these diverse traditions brought by immigrants?
5. From an economic point of view, how does the progressive immigration into the city of Braga impact or influence local economic indicators? For example, what kind of businesses are most developed? Which branches benefit?
6. From a social point of view, how do you perceive the opinion of Braga's inhabitants regarding immigration into the city? Is there a specific evaluation of the receptiveness and integration of the immigrant community by local residents?  
- What is the city council doing to make the reception more positive?
7. Are there any more projects for the future to facilitate the integration of the immigrant community?

## **APENDIX II-INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT OF UAI**

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### **Migratory Movements in Portugal: An analysis of immigration in the city of Braga**

Questions addressed to the president of UAI:

1. What is your role in the Immigrant Support Association and how have you been involved with migratory flows in Braga?
2. What would you say are the main challenges faced by immigrants arriving in Braga?
3. In terms of integration, what are the best practices that have been implemented in Braga to support immigrants?
4. How has this Association worked to address the challenges and promote the integration of immigrants in Braga?
5. In your view, how has the local community received immigrants in Braga and what efforts are being made to promote social cohesion and mutual understanding between different groups?
6. What are the prospects for the future of migratory flows in Braga and what challenges and opportunities lie ahead?

### Survey for the Immigrants

#### Questionnaire:

1. **Demographic Information:** ○ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ ○ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ ○ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_  
○ Length of residence in Braga: \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Reasons for Migration:**
  - What were the main reasons that led you to migrate to Braga?
    - Seeking better living conditions
    - Following family members
    - Escaping poor conditions in the country of origin
    - Job opportunities
    - Perceived safety
    - Climate
    - Language
    - Cost of living
3. **Integration:**
  - On a scale of 0 to 5, how do you rate your integration in Braga?
    - (0 = Not at all integrated, 5 = Fully integrated)
4. **Employment Opportunities:**
  - In your perception, what are the main employment opportunities available for immigrants in Braga?
5. **Challenges:**

- What are the main challenges you face as an immigrant in Braga?

**6. Community Reception:**

- On a scale of 0 to 5, how would you rate the local community's receptiveness to immigrants in Braga?
  - (0 = Not at all receptive, 5 = Very receptive)

**7. Support and Resources:**

- What type of support or resources would you like to see available for immigrants in the city?