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Political parties openness to immigrants in Portugal:

between the opportunity structure
and the individual perceptions



Alto Comissariado para as Migrações, I.P.

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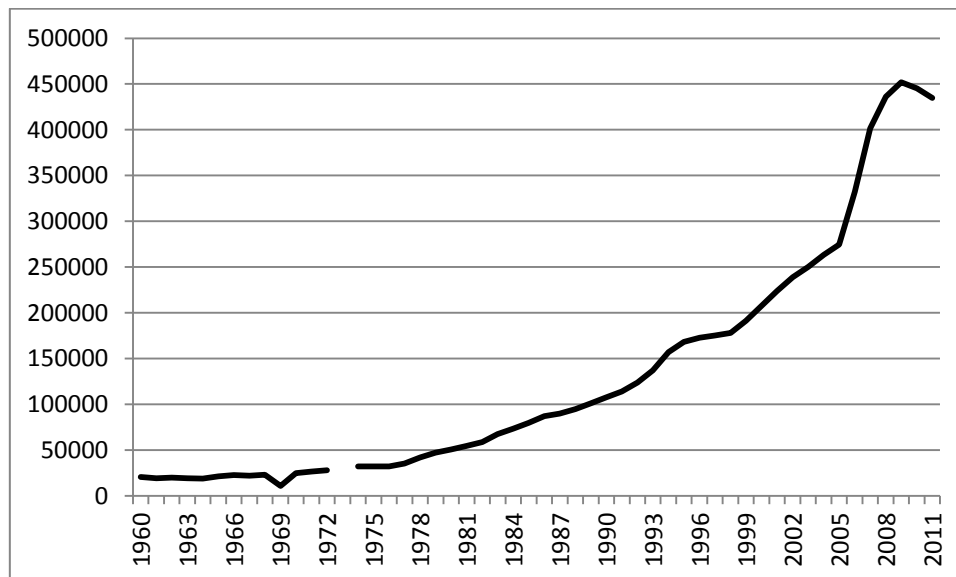
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1. Introduction

From a negative net migration for decades, Portugal shifted to an immigration country in the end of the 20th century. In the 1970s and 1980s immigration flows were mainly unqualified and originated from African Portuguese-speaking countries (PALOP), with whom Portugal has historical and cultural links coming from previous colonial experience. The immigration cycle diversified after the mid-1980s, not only because Portugal increased the demand for labour, but also because it became a more attractive destination due to its entrance into the European Union. Accordingly, Portugal's immigration population, still being dominated by PALOP nationals incorporated in the construction and cleaning sectors, started to also have professionals coming from Western Europe, the United States (in a lesser extent) and Brazil. At the end of the 1990s significant new immigration flows occurred - mainly from Eastern Europe – which doubled the immigrant population in the country within a few years and further diversified the education and professional profile of immigrants. (Figure 1 summarises the trend). After 2008 due to the fragile economic situation of Portugal and the growth of unemployment in the economic sectors where immigrants were mainly incorporated in, the foreign population residing in Portugal started to decrease. This decrease can also be explained by the increased number of foreigners becoming “new citizens” due to the citizenship act change in 2006.

Figure 2: Foreign population with legal residence status



Source: Immigrant and Border Service (SEF)

Although the foreign population in Portugal has not yet reached the proportions observed in Western European countries – according to 2011 Census data foreigners represent only 3.7% of the total residents -, the settlement of immigrants has presented new challenges. During the past three decades Portugal had to adapt – and continues to have to do so – to this new reality. At the level of public policy several changes are easily identifiable at a normative level. Important integration programmes and measures started to be implemented. As a consequence, while having a recent



immigration experience, Portugal has been acknowledged in the last years in several international reports as having the best integration policies, being several of its measures and programmes exemplified as good practices (MIPEX 2007 and 2010, IOM 2010, UNDP 2009). That international recognition is a consequence of how the *integration* concept has been incorporated in Portuguese policy that is based on a holistic perspective with a whole-of-government approach in which also immigrant communities are mobilised to participate (Oliveira 2012).

These good outcomes in international rankings and studies on integration policies do not apply, however, to the electoral rights or political liberties. According to EU' *Migrant Integration Index* (MIPEX), out of 31 countries, Portugal is the second country with the best integration policies to immigrants. Nevertheless, according to the same report, Portugal has voting rights less effective, having the 7th overall position in immigrants' political participation. As will be analysed in detail in this study, the existing system of allowing foreigners to vote only at local level based on reciprocity is proving to be less effective for the integration of all residents. In the past decade, although it increased the rate of eligible foreign residents to vote per the total number of foreign residents (53,3% in 2001 and 62,9% in 2011), still 37% of the foreigner residents do not have active electoral capacity in Portugal (see table 1). Furthermore, is relevant to identify that in the past decade the rate of registered citizens to vote per the total eligible foreign residents to vote in local elections decreased (-37.5%) – in 2001 were 21.7% and became 13.5% in 2011 - which reinforced the disinterest and absence of political rights among foreign communities in Portugal (see table 1).

Table 3: Citizens registered to vote

Year	Number of citizens registered to vote*	Foreign residents with more than 20 years of age**	Foreign residents with more than 20 years of age eligible ¹ to vote in local elections **	% of registered citizens to vote per total foreign residents eligible to vote in local elections	% foreigners eligible to vote per total number of foreign residents
2001	20.602	178.426	95.036	21,7	53,3
2011	26.957	316.406	199.064	13,5	62,9
Rate of change 2001-2011	30,8	77,3	109,5	-37,5	141,5

Source: *DGAI/MAI -Administração Eleitoral and ** Census 2001 and 2011

As it will be highlighted in this report, immigrants are also underrepresented in political parties' structures. Very few immigrant politicians and/or politicians with immigrant background used their passive electoral capacity in the past years in Portugal, and there are significant examples of politicians with immigrant background in non-eligible places in the parties' local lists of candidates, getting the feeling (as reported in the fieldwork) of being used as electoral baits in local elections in specific immigrant residential areas.

¹ As it will be analyzed in detail in chapter 3.2. of this report are eligible to vote in local elections in Portugal: all EU citizens residing in Portugal, citizens from Cape Verde and Brazil with more than 2 years of residence, and citizens from Norway, Island, Uruguay, Venezuela, Chile and Argentina that reside in Portugal at least for 3 years.



As such the political participation of immigrants in Portugal has been limited. This study aims to understand the causes of that exploring the impacts of two explanatory dimensions: from one side, the impact of the *opportunity structure* (developed in chapter 3) and, from the other side, the effects of the *perceptions* on the relationship of politics with immigrants' political participation in Portugal both from the political elites (subchapter 4.1.) and from the immigrants and relevant stakeholders (subchapter 4.2.).

In the opportunity structure of Portugal to immigrants participate in the political arena we will detail the legal and institutional frameworks to political rights of foreigners, analyze the prerequisites for active and passive electoral capacity (subchapter 3.2.), the political parties internal regulations and the freedom to join and act within a political party in Portugal (subchapter 3.3.). The Portuguese Constitution foresees equal rights between Portuguese citizens and foreign citizens that reside legally in Portugal. Nevertheless this equality principle does not include the access to political rights and public offices that are not predominantly technical in nature (inhibited in article 15^o of the Constitution). In case of reciprocity, third country nationals have access to voting rights in local elections, but are still excluded from the offices of President of the Republic, President of the Assembly of the Republic, Prime Minister and President of any of the supreme courts, and of service in the armed forces and the diplomatic corps.

Also in the opportunity structure we considered the other channels for immigrants' political participation in Portugal (e.g. Consultative Council for Immigration Affairs - COCAI, immigrant associations), namely detailing the role of immigrant associations and immigrant leaders that work as lobbyists locally (developed in subchapter 3.4.), and the advocacy and outreach strategies that had been promoted by several institutions for immigrant political participation (subchapter 3.5.).

Moreover, the Portuguese opportunity structure to immigrants' political participation is interesting to analyse because while there has been a significant convergence of the political parties on integration policies and immigration has not being used as a fracturing dimension in political campaigns, this political consensus does not extended to the matter of foreigners' political rights. The Parliamentary discussions over the past decades highlight three main political positions: right-wing parties mainly defending the reciprocity principle to define who can and who cannot vote; centre-left and left parties arguing against the reciprocity principle to define foreigners' political rights at local level; and a third position underlined by radical left that is in favour of generalise voting rights at local and national level to all legal foreigners (analysed in subchapter 3.3.).

Still is relevant to understand both the political parties' discussions on the immigrants' access to political rights in Portugal and their effectively openness to immigrants either as militants or as active politicians (chapter 5). To highlight that we considered the arguments of 51 interviewees contacted between May 2013 and January 2014 with five profiles of persons - politicians with a immigration background (IB), politicians without a IB, party members and workers of political parties represented in the Portuguese Parliament both with and without IB, and relevant stakeholders and representatives of migration organizations (methodological details in chapter 1.1.).

The empirical results will be presented in three chapters. The first one resumes the characterisation of the political parties' rules and practices in regard to a) the presence of immigrants in their structures, b) the attention given to immigration issues in their (electoral) agendas, c) the integration of immigrant politicians (IP) and/or politicians with immigrant background (PIB) in the lists of



candidates to local elections, and, finally, d) their networking/partnerships with civic actors close to immigrant communities and ethnic minorities (chapter 5).

The second chapter summarises the perceptions these actors have conveyed about several questions, namely each party's general position in regard, on the one hand, to the presence of immigrants in Portuguese society, and, on the other hand, to their political participation (chapter 4.1.). In the latter case, it was intended to capture both the normative stands of the interviewees (how should reality look like) and their interpretations on the present legal frame regarding immigrants' political citizenship as it is. This included opinions on the present differentiation between passive rights (rights of eligibility) and active elective rights (voting rights), as well as on the intimate relationship between the granting of such rights to immigrants and the constitutional principle of reciprocity. Finally, it analyses the actors' perceptions on the ways different immigrant communities seem to relate to their political rights when they have them, or to the idea of accessing them. In this chapter the perceptions of active politicians or party members and the perceptions of relevant stakeholders or immigrant association leaders are analysed separately.

The third chapter analyses the main perceptions of stakeholders (subchapter 4.2.) that were interviewed for the purpose of this project and/or the various actors located in civil society, namely trade union confederations, Catholic Church, immigrant associations and entities that deal close with migration issues, such as the Portuguese representation of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). We look at how these actors understand the political parties' approach to immigration in Portugal, as well as parties' approach to the political participation of immigrants and people with immigrant background, whether as electors, or as militants and active members of their internal political structures. We also look at these actors' perceptions on the kind of commitment "immigrants" seem to have with political life, that is, whether they are active or not. We look also at who seems to be best representing immigrants, or who should be in that charge. Following this, we are interested also in their opinions on the relationships that associations/institutions in general and theirs in particular have with political life, in terms of fostering communities' social and political integration, as well as their views on how civil society, namely through associativism, is contributing or should be contributing to deepen the integration of immigrant communities.

This report concludes underlining the obstacles, opportunities and prospects of diversity in the political parties in Portugal (chapter 6) and listing several policy recommendations gathered in the interviews (chapter 7).

1.1. Methodological options

The empirical data presented and analysed in this report was collected in accordance with the methodological model adopted by all *DivPol* project partners. This included, in a first phase, literature revision, analysis of policy and regulations on political rights (that comprised a characterization of the prerequisites to acquire political rights and to access to political parties), description of the political and electoral system and analysis of official data on registered citizens to vote.

Following the phase of desk research, in a second phase, individual interviews were conducted with five profiles of persons – (1) politicians with an immigrant background (IB), (2) politicians without an



immigrant background B (WIB), (3) party members and (4) workers of political parties represented in the Portuguese Parliament both with and without IB, and (5) relevant stakeholders and representatives of migration organizations and other associations located in civil society with a relevant connection to migration. For the purposes of this research, only political parties that hold parliamentary seats have been analysed, and since there is great stability as far as the party composition of the hemicycle is concerned over the last decade, our selection has faced no further difficulties in this regard.

The individual interviews were complemented by three *focus groups* to gather more information in the context of dialogue with persons from the same five profiles. The interviews were conducted between May and December 2013 and the three *focus groups* were held on 28 of May, 21 and 22 of October 2013.

Table 4: Profile of interviewees

Political parties represented in Parliament		Profile of interviewees					Participants in focus groups	Individual interviews	Speech deliverers on behalf of political parties with parliamentary seat in the Workshop in the Portuguese Parliament	Total*	Representation of parties in the Parliament since 2011	
		politicians with IB	politicians without IB	party member or worker of political party with IB	party member or worker of political party without IB	relevant stakeholders or representatives of migration organizations					N	%
Left-wing parties	Left Bloc (BE)		1	1		1	2	1	3	8	3,5	
	Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)		1		1	2	2	1	5	14	6,1	
	Green Party (PEV)		1	1			2		2	2	0,9	
	Socialist Party (PS, centre-left)	2	5	2		2	4	6	2	11	74	32,2
Right-wing parties	Social Democrat Party (PSD, centre-right)	1	5	2	1		2	5	2	9	108	47
	Popular Party (CDS-PP, Christian-democratic)	1	2		1			3	1	4	24	10,4
Independent or without a formal filiation in a political party			1			16	8	9		17		
Total		4	16	6	3	21	17	29	7	51	230	100

*Persons that were interviewed individually and also participate in the workshop were counted only once.



To better capture some of the particularities of the Portuguese context - connected mainly to historical relations with Portuguese Speaking countries that echo in the legal framework on the access to political rights as well as in the political parties' regulations and statutes - several questions were added to the *DivPol* common guidelines for the interviews and *focus groups*.

The table 2 summarizes the profile of 46 persons that were interviewed (29) or participated in one of the *focus groups* (17 participants). The allocation of the interviewees to each profile and/or to political parties' filiations was reported by themselves. In the beginning of each interview and of the focus groups, an individual form was provided to each participant asking for several personal data (e.g. date and place of birth, nationality, institutional and political filiation, year of filiation in a political party if applicable). These forms provided relevant contextual variables to the interviewees' answers and were therefore quite valuable to our analysis.

In addition, on the 14th of January it was promoted a closed workshop in the Portuguese Parliament that reached 23 participants – 11 relevant stakeholders, 7 members of Parliament (MPs) (2 PSD centre-right, 2 PS centre-left, 1 Left Bloc, 1 Communist Party and 1 CDS-PP Christian-democratic) and 5 party members or workers of political parties (2 PSD + 1 CDS + 1 PS).² This workshop was convened by the Commission for Ethics, Citizenship and Communication of the Portuguese Parliament, and had three main goals: 1. to inform participants about DivPol project and to present the first results of the field work which has been conducted over the last year in Portugal; 2. to present and discuss the list of favourable and unfavourable factors of TCNs participation in political parties in Portugal; and 3. to collect the MPs' feedback to the first results presented, gathering opinions, comments, questions and recommendations. In this workshop 7 MPs delivered a speech (details in table 2) on behalf of political parties with parliamentary seat. Both the reactions of these political actors (two of them had already been involved in our study as interviewees) and other material resulting from less structured interventions brought further refinement to our analysis and ensemble our empirical findings.

Although only 51 persons participated in the empirical phase, almost the double of persons was invited to participate. Two strategies were adopted to get participants. The first strategy was based on formal invitation letters signed by the high commissioner of ACIDI – a first letter was sent to the headquarters of each the political party represented in the Portuguese Parliament (6 in total) and a second letter was sent to the President of the Parliament and other MPs that joined her in a visit to the ACIDI's National Immigrant Support Centre located in Lisbon, (CNAI/the one-stop-shop) on March 2013. Both letters presented the main aims of the DivPol project, the expected outcomes, and a request for political parties to participate and send us a contact person in each party. Out of the six political parties represented in Parliament, only three reacted to those letters and provided contact persons (as a consequence more persons from those political parties participated in the empirical work in Portugal).

A second strategy to get participants was adopted using a snowball process and the direct contact with relevant stakeholders. Privileged contacts were used to get more interviewees: active immigrant associations – especially from the largest immigrant communities or from the communities with political rights in Portugal (e.g. Brazilians, Cape Verdeans and other African Portuguese Speaking Countries) - and relevant NGOs that work close to migration were invited to participate; several

² Details available at http://media.parlamento.pt/site/XIILEG/3SL/COM/12-CpECC/SEMIN%C3%81RIOS/CpECC_WORSHOP_20140114.mp3



leaders and representatives of those associations were also contacted. It was interesting to realise³ that several immigrant associations and NGOs leaders that accepted to be interviewed had a formal filiation to a political party represented in the Portuguese Parliament (reported in the individual forms they filled in the beginning of the interview). As a result, in some cases they had a double role – as party members (with specific roles in the party) and as immigrant association leaders. Thus, although we aimed to create a balanced representation of parties in the distribution of the interviewees and/or reflect the seats distribution in the Parliament, the fact was because of these double role cases (and formal party filiation cases that were not of our knowledge) there was an increased representation of certain political parties in the sample (as the table 2 shows). Whenever immigrant leaders and representatives from civil society organizations (working close with immigrants and/or human rights) had a formal filiation to a political party, it was with a left-wing party (as the table 2 highlights).

In addition, several politicians with former positions linked to immigration and integration of immigrants were contacted (e.g. former ministers, former secretaries of state and former high commissioners for immigration). One representative of the main trade union confederations were also contacted and interviewed.

In sum, we have conducted interviews among the six political parties represented in the Portuguese Parliament, selecting between key political actors with leading roles inside the party, and members of the parties' secretariats holding diverse positions in the parties' internal structures. In some cases, these were interviewees with immigrant background (IB) and in other cases they were without IB (WIB). In total we have worked with 29 active political actors - 16 interviews to WIB politicians, 4 interviews to IB politicians, 6 interviews to IB party members and 3 interviews to WIB party members. Among the political actors with no immigrant background, we also interviewed 4 key political actors that were selected on the basis of previous leading political roles directly connected to immigration affairs. In addition, we conduct 21 interviews to relevant stakeholders.

In most cases we considered that there was no methodological need to analyse the four profiles of members of political parties separately as they spoke mainly as militants, reproducing therefore the view of the party. In other words, no relevant distinction was seen on the basis of these interviewees' background. Again, in the case of these 4 key actors, we saw no need to analyse their perceptions separately – perceptions that were quite valuable indeed in reinforcing positions and opinions conveyed by other actors. We did, however, analyse separately the discourses and perceptions of active politicians or party members, and of relevant stakeholders or immigrant associations' leaders.

³ In several situations was not of our knowledge that those persons were militants of political parties before inviting them to participate in the project.



2. Immigrants participation in political arena in Portugal: state of the art

Research on the participation of immigrants in political parties in Portugal is still incipient. The political inclusion of immigrants has been analysed mainly through the angle of the inclusion (both passive and active) of immigrants in the electoral arena (Carvalhais, 2006; Carvalhais, 2007; Zobel e Barbosa, 2010; Freire et al., 2013), without taking an explicit focus on the participation in party organisations. Research on adjacent issues such as the acquisition of Portuguese citizenship by foreigners (Oliveira and Inácio, 1999; Healy, 2011; Jerónimo e Vink, 2011) and the civic participation of migrants in civil society organisations and/or immigrants associations (Sardinha 2009; Horta 2010) also provides some insights on the relations established between parties and immigrants. Due to the scarcity of research conducted on the party inclusion of immigrants, particularly, on the participation through political parties, these adjacent topics will also be covered in this brief overview.

In Portugal the research that has dealt more closely with the participation of immigrants in political parties was conducted by Carvalhais (2006; 2007). Carvalhais draws on the political inclusion of non-nationals in order to theorise about the concept of “postnational citizenship”, understood as “a project, one aiming at empowering those who, within states, are socially, politically, culturally, and economically more fragile (be they nationals or non-nationals)” (Carvalhais, 2007: 5). Carvalhais assessed the state of representation of non-nationals in Portuguese politics by conducting a series of interviews with key stakeholders - Members of the Parliament, party representatives, union leaders, and NGOs leaders - and by applying a questionnaire to representatives of municipal councils.

Carvalhais reports that party members tended to conceptualise political rights as being one step further in relation to social rights (Carvalhais, 2006: 118), while representatives of immigrants’ organisations, on the other hand, did not distinct so much one type of rights from the other. Also, asked about the political integration of non-national residents, most of the interviewees “invariably equated ‘political integration’ with ‘the right to vote and to be elected’, sharing thus a rather strict notion about political life” (Carvalhais, 2007: 127). The author further mentions that “all the representatives of political parties stated their concern for the political integration of non-nationals and for the necessity to make their discourses more appealing to the presence of diversity and, simultaneously, increase the consequences of such discourses in the openness of the access to their organisational structures” (Carvalhais, 2006: 122). She argues, however, that this discourse contrasts with the effective commitment shown by parties to incorporate diversity into their organisations.

Carvalhais also reports that some of the interviewees mistook foreigners for Portuguese with an immigrant background, being in fact either new “Portuguese” citizens who had acquired citizenship or were descendants of immigrants. She also mentions that several interviewees stressed that “have been persuading non-nationals and nationals with diverse ethnic origins (mostly black Portuguese citizens) to join their lists of candidates only to cause the public impression that they are becoming increasingly pluralist and sensitive to diversity” (Carvalhais, 2007: 139). As it will be highlighted in this report, this is a tendency that has been reinforced in the last local election (2013) in which increased the number of participants with an immigrant background in the lists of candidates specially in the Lisbon Metropolitan area’ municipalities with higher rates of immigrants inhabitants.

The inclusion of non-nationals as candidates to local office is also analysed in an article published Zobel and Barbosa (2010). After analysing the rather low rates of electoral registration among



foreigners, they conclude that the approval of the Law allowing the participation of foreigners in local elections in 1996 was not followed by a thorough “strategy of dissemination and evaluation” (Zobel e Barbosa, 2010: 73). They state that the personal involvement of leaders in the process was “not able to produce institutional enduring structures that could integrate all the concerned groups and nationalities”. They emphasise that the participation of Cape Verdeans “is linked with the influence of associational networks, to the links between host and destination country and to the important role of a political-administrative elite that has its roots in the Colonial past”. In their opinion, “the demographic concentration of Cape Verdeans leads parties to take their electoral weight into consideration in some municipalities of Metropolitan Lisbon” (Zobel e Barbosa, 2010: 73).

Other insights on the relation between immigrant citizens and political parties are provided by research on adjacent topics. As mentioned in the assessment by Horta (2010), the initial research on the civic participation of migrants through associations identified a weak collective action, due to the fragility of status of a large share of migrants, and of the lack of attention and support devoted to them by the Portuguese State (Horta, 2010: 16). This context would change in the mid-1990s, following the rising acknowledgment of immigrants associations as institutional partners of the State, and the creation of funding programmes by the Portuguese State to immigrant associations develop integration projects to their communities. However, this has also brought the increasing professionalization of these associations, and perhaps a dependency of public subsidies, national and European alike (Horta, 2010: 17).

The increasing proximity between State and civil society has also been studied in the context of local politics. Analysing the case of Oeiras, in the suburbs of Lisbon, Marques and Santos (2004) observed that “the forms taken by local mobilisation seem to depend heavily on the channels created by the Town Hall for civic and political participation and for access to resources” (Marques e Santos, 2004: 118). Most associations in Oeiras, the authors argue, would put their efforts into narrow objectives such as the preservation of a common cultural heritage or the provision of sport activities. Qualitative data collected between 1998 and 1999 show that, by then, political participation was far from being a priority in the agenda of local associations (Marques et al., 2008: 122). Also, links between associations and local party structures were considered to rely not on formal ties but upon “personal charisma”, which could eventually culminate in the election for local office et al, 2008: 132).

This resembles the illustration by Horta and Malheiros (2006) in drawing from the experience of Cape Verdean associations in Amadora, a city in the outskirts of Lisbon. The authors argue that “a close contact with political parties seems to reflect the overall local political structure that has been mainly channelled to local political partisanship. Local agents tend to solve local administrative problems through their own informal connections and partisan networks rather than through official local interest groups”. The relational network of migrant Capeverdean associations with political parties tends to reflect the local model. They also state that “for some associations, political parties are viewed as an important means to access scarce resources” and that “political parties tend to lobby migrant associations, especially during local election Campaigns” (Horta e Malheiros, 2006: 159) .

In a more recent research Horta (2010) also argues that at the local level informal links between leaders of parties and organisations are very important: “collective mobilization tends to capitalize



existing resources in the local political and partisan framework. Formal and informal contacts, temporary coalitions between civic leaders and political parties create alternative spaces for intervention of associations in the local political life” (Horta, 2010: 19).

Other interesting finding of researchers of immigrants’ associations relate to the links between such organisations and political parties from the countries of origin. Sardinha (2009) argues that some of the most prominent associations of citizens from Angola were linked with the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and also with the Portuguese Communist Party: *“The early associations were transnational in nature – acting, first, as a political front for Angolan political party activities in Portugal and, second, taking on the task of being charity organisations, supplying aid to an Angola that remained at war for 22 years”* (Sardinha, 2009: 268). Sardinha also identified political connections between some associations or its board members and Portuguese political parties. However, he states that *“the majority of the associations interviewed highlighted the fact that they are apolitical”*.

As recollected by Vianna (2010), *“in 1991 the Socialist Party (PS) signed an agreement with four associations, each one representing immigrants from Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Angola and Cape Verde, compromising to defend an agenda”*. According to Vianna (2010), the launching of the political careers of Fernando Ká and Celeste Correia (MP from the Socialist party) is also connected to this moment. This process is also narrated by Marques and Santos (2004: 57), along with Teixeira and Albuquerque (2005).

The impact of the new Citizenship Act (2006) has been addressed by several authors (Healy, 2011). As it will highlighted later in this report, this legal framework is especially relevant to frame the political participation of immigrants – in the empirical work several politicians argued that the limitations foreseen in the provision of political rights to immigrants should be relativized by the Portuguese generous framework of proving citizenship. In other words, given that the political opportunities available to non-nationals are very limited this trend of “new Portuguese citizens” should not be overlooked.

The prior Law offered special provisions to people from Portuguese Speaking Countries. This should be seen in a the broader context of *“Portugal’s postcolonial reconstruction”*, which *“revolves around the maintenance of special ties with peoples from former colonies with which Portugal shares cultural traits such as language, religion and mores”* (Jerónimo e Vink, 2011: 112). Even if this provision was removed in the access to nationality, it would persist, as further developed, in the case of access to political rights.

3. The Portuguese political system: assessing the prerequisites and regulations that targets immigrants

The Portuguese democracy and its party system have not historical roots as deep as in other European polities. The military coup on April 25 of 1974 initiated a revolution and the prompt collapse of the autocratic regime of the *Estado Novo*. This revolution, which eventually culminated



with the transition to democracy and its subsequent consolidation, marked the beginning of the so called third wave of democratization worldwide “because coup d’état more frequently overthrown democratic regimes than introduce them.” (Huntington, 1991: 3-4).

This experience of Portugal shaped a complex transition to democracy, with political parties emerging in a revolutionary period in which the establishing of mass organizations was a secondary concern to the more immediate conflict over regime choice. As a consequence of this, several authors argue that “Portugal presents a strong party system with ‘weak’ parties. (...) This genetic imprint of the revolution was to endure subsequently: parties – notably PS [Centre-left Socialists] and PSD [Centre-Right Social Democrats] – have relatively weak organizations bases, and never developed deep social anchors. This is also reflected in the nature of the party membership, which is generally low and top-heavy, with ‘more chiefs than Indians’.” (Jalali et al, 2012:300-301).

This framework also undermines the prerequisites and regulations targeting immigrants and the nature of Political parties’ mobilization of supports and members, including immigrants or citizens with immigrant background.

3.1. Political system: parties and the electoral system

With a dictatorial regime up to forty years ago, a one-party-system lasted in Portugal until 1974. The Communist Portuguese Party (PCP), founded in 1921, was the only party which managed to endure, even if illegally, through the whole authoritarian period (Bruneau 1997:5). Some leftist parties and the Socialist Party (PS) were founded in the final stage of the authoritarian regime, even if their existence was not acknowledged by law. Other parties, such as the Social Democrat Party (PSD, centre-right) and the Popular Party (CDS-PP, Christian-democratic), were founded immediately after the revolution.

The party system thus carries a distinctive birthmark. From their inception, parties have been institutions of a centralised nature, developing mainly through top-down processes (Jalali, 2007: 26). There are not parties of local or regional scope, but lists of independent citizens (not affiliated to a specific party) may run for local offices.

Portugal is a semi-presidential system (Lobo, Pinto, and Magalhães, 2012). The President is elected by direct suffrage for 5 years (maximum of 2 consecutive terms). The Parliament is elected for 4 years, with political parties presenting closed lists on 20 electoral districts of varying magnitude (from 2 seats to 45). The conversion of votes into seats is based on the principle of proportional representation (through the d’Hondt formula). The Executive is led by a Prime-Minister, who is appointed by the President. The President is not formally required to nominate the leader of the most voted party in an election to the Parliament as a PM. However, the elections to the Parliament are often perceived, in practice, as a competition between candidates to the post of Prime Minister.

From an administrative point of view, Portugal is a unitary state, with the exception of two regions, each corresponding to one of the Atlantic archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira. These regions have their own Parliament and Government, which have some autonomous powers. However, for the purposes of this project, it should be stated that there is not have a large share of TCN among the respective populations. In mainland Portugal, where the large majority of immigrants live, there are



only two levels of political competition: the central/national level, described above; and the local level.

Table 3: Public offices within the Portuguese political system (national and local)

Public office	Who can elect	Who can be potentially elected/nominated
President of the Republic	Portuguese citizens	Portuguese citizens by origin, from 35 years old on
Member of the National Parliament ⁴	Portuguese citizens; Brazilians who request status of equal political rights	Portuguese citizens; Brazilians who request status of equal political rights.
President of the National Parliament	Members of the Parliament (indirect election)	Portuguese Members of the Parliament.
Prime-minister	The PM is not directly elected. He is typically the leader of the most voted party; however, the President may nominate other politician without having to call for elections.	Portuguese citizens
Minister	Chosen by the PM	Portuguese citizens; Brazilians who request status of equal political rights.
Mayor of the Municipality ⁵ [Presidente da Câmara]	Portuguese citizens; EU citizens; Citizens from countries with which Portugal has agreements	Portuguese citizens; EU citizens; Citizens from countries with which Portugal has agreements
Member of the Municipal Assembly	Portuguese citizens; EU citizens; Citizens from countries with which Portugal has agreements	Portuguese citizens; EU citizens; Citizens from countries with which Portugal has agreements
Mayor of the Parish or <i>Juntas de Freguesia</i> ⁶ [political unit below the Municipality]	Portuguese citizens; EU citizens; Citizens from countries with which Portugal has agreements	Portuguese citizens; EU citizens; Citizens from countries with which Portugal has agreements

At the local level there are 308 municipalities (“municípios”), each of them led by a Mayor (“Presidente da Câmara”). According to data from the 2011 census, the average population for

⁴ Members of the Parliament are elected from lists that parties or coalitions of parties put forward in each constituency. Votes are converted into seats using the proportional representation system and *d’Hondt’s* highest-average rule. Each Member represents the whole country and not just the citizens from the constituency for which he or she was elected. Their term of office is four years, which corresponds to the duration of one legislature.

⁵ In Portugal, a municipality is a directly elected local area authority generally consisting of a main city or town and surrounding villages, with wide-ranging local administration powers. There are 308 municipalities in Portugal, pretty diverse in size (from 300 inhabitants to 500.000 in the case of Lisbon)

⁶ A *Junta de Freguesia* is the Portuguese term for civil parish, a secondary local administrative unit in Portugal. A *freguesia* is a subdivision of a municipality. Each civil parish is administered by a *junta de freguesia*, drawn from a publicly elected four-year-term *assembleia de freguesia*. There are 4,260 in Portugal.



municipalities was 34,276 inhabitants. However they largely differ in population, with 115 municipalities having less than 10,000 inhabitants, while 25 have 100,000 or more inhabitants. Municipalities are composed by Parishes (“Freguesias”), which also have elected leaders. Until 2013 there were 4,260 Parishes, with an average of 2,479 inhabitants. Again, this average figure hides a big variance, as 1,970 parishes, or approximately half of the parishes, have less than 1,000 inhabitants, whereas over 10,000 people live in 230 of them. Typically some of the urban parishes and those in the suburbs are much more populated than the ones in rural areas and some of the “old parishes” in the city centres.

Table 3 summarizes the public offices within the Portuguese political system, detailing who can elect and who can potentially be elected according to the nationality of the citizen, both at national and at the local level.

In the past decades votes have concentrated in two parties: Socialist Party (PS, centre-left) and Social Democrat Party (PSD, centre-right). Since 1985 this two parties have almost entirely controlled government, with either achieving single-party parliament majorities or large pluralities (Javali, 2007). These parties have managed to consolidate their position in the electoral system and be “*the key political institutions*” of democratic Portugal (Bruneau, 1997: 19), achieving a prevalence of the party in public office, political representation in the Parliament and the capacity to top tap state resources (Javali et al, 2012: 301).

The Popular Party (CDS-PP, Christian-democratic) and the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) are the two other parties that have been represented in parliament ever since the first election in 1975. A radical left party, the Left Bloc (BE), elected its first MPs in 2002, and has since established itself as a constant presence in the parliament.

Since 2011 a centre-right majority holds control of the 230 seats Parliament: PSD (108) and CDS-PP (24). The other parties with elected MPs are PS (74), PCP (14), BE (8), PEV (Green Party, elected in coalition with the PCP, 2 seats). The Prime Minister and the 4 other Ministers are members of the PSD; 3 ministers come from the CDS-PP; and 4 ministers are seen as “independent”, or technocrats.

3.2. Legal prerequisites to passive and active political rights in Portugal: the legal framework to immigrants’ political participation

The Portuguese Constitution was approved in 1976 and has been revised seven times, with the current revision dating of 2005. In the 1st paragraph of Article 15 it is stated in the Constitution that “*Foreigners and stateless persons who fund themselves or who reside in Portugal shall enjoy the same rights and be subject to the same duties as Portuguese citizens*”. This equal treatment in light of rights and duties constitutionally consigned to Portuguese citizens (as stated in article 12.1) appears in full harmony with article 16.2 which declares that “*the constitutional and legal precepts related to the fundamental rights must be interpreted and integrated in full harmony with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*” (Canotilho et al, 2007). It seems clear, then, that fundamental rights necessarily belong to both nationals and non-nationals resident on Portuguese soil. These inclusionary terms seem also to animate the spirit of article 13.2 which declares: “*No one shall be privileged or favoured, or discriminated against, or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty,*



by reason of ancestry, gender, race, language, land of origin, religion, political or ideological beliefs, education, economic situation or social circumstances”. (Our translation).

The 1st paragraph of Article 49 of the Portuguese Constitution further underline that *“Every citizen who has attained the age of eighteen years shall possess the right to vote, save such incapacities as may be provided for in the general law”*. However, in article 15.2 it is stated that *“political rights, the exercise of public offices that are not predominantly technical in nature, and the rights that this Constitution and the law reserve exclusively to Portuguese citizens shall be excepted from the provisions of the previous paragraph [that state that foreigners and nationals have the same rights and duties in Portugal]”*.

The 3rd paragraph further asserts that *“with the exceptions of appointment to the offices of President of the Republic, President of the Assembly of the Republic, Prime Minister and President of any of the supreme courts, and of service in the armed forces and the diplomatic corps, in accordance with the law and subject to reciprocity, such rights as are not otherwise granted to foreigners shall apply to citizens of Portuguese-speaking states who reside permanently in Portugal”*.

The principle of reciprocity is also explicit in the 4th paragraph of article 15^o - *“subject to reciprocity, the law may grant foreigners who reside in Portugal the right to vote for and stand for election as local councilors”* – and in the 5th paragraph - *“subject to reciprocity, the law may also grant citizens of European Union Member States who reside in Portugal the right to vote for and stand for election as Members of the European Parliament”*.

The Chapter II of the Constitution, entitled “Rights, Freedoms and guarantees of political participation” includes articles on the “participation in public life”, “right to vote”, “right to the access of public office”, and “Political associations and parties”.

Hence, political participation may occur in two basic forms: through the formal exercise of (1) electoral rights, and through (2) political and social movements and groups.

Under the second form of political participation, the consecration of immigrant associativism was defined by Law 115/99 which led to the juridical legitimation of immigrant associations as political actors. The character of political and social movements it is also framed by the Portuguese Constitution as article 46.4 prohibits the existence of racist or fascist organisations. The creation of fascist organisations is strictly forbidden according to law 64/78, having the Constitutional Court the right to declare any such organisation as illegal. Although this law only applies specifically to fascist organisations, art. 240 of the Criminal Code helps to extend this to all racist entities, by also declaring the creation of racist organisations as a punishable offence, to participate in their activities, or to provide them with assistance of any kind. There are other legal provisions in the Portuguese order to prevent attacks against human rights. Article 239 of the Criminal Code, for instance, defines and prohibits genocide, incitement and conspiracy to commit it, while article 240 punishes discrimination on grounds of race or religion. Under article 132.2 f) of the Criminal Code on homicide, any racial, religious or political motive leading to assassination are aggravating circumstances for a heavier penalty.

Under the formal exercise of electoral rights, Organic Law no. 1/2001 dated 14th August, attributed to Third-Country-Nationals (TCN) to whom Portugal have reciprocity the right to political participation with **active and passive political rights in local elections**, i.e. the right to vote and to be elected to



the local government bodies (Parishes and Municipalities). This should be considered as the result of a political process and also as a consequence of recognition of the importance of participatory immigrant populations in the context of local politics in Portugal. The Portuguese law foresees, however, some differences in terms of political rights to nationals of Portuguese-speaking countries with permanent residence in Portugal and to other TCNs nationalities:

- In the context of the local political arena, the citizens of Portuguese-speaking countries (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe) legally resident for more than two years enjoy **active political rights** for local elections. In contrast citizens with other nationalities with legal residence in Portugal only have that right after three years of residence.
- Furthermore as eligibility for local authority bodies with a capacity to stand for an election (**passive political rights**) is concerned, citizens from Portuguese-speaking countries with residence are entitled after four years of residence, as other citizens residing in Portugal have are entitled only after five years, under conditions of reciprocity.

Regarding non-EU nationals from other countries, agreements have been signed with Norway, Iceland, Argentina, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela and Chile. Citizens from these countries who have been legally living in the country for over three years can vote in local elections (but not be elected), as such accessing only to active electoral capacity.

In 2005 the residents who could vote and be elected for local elections were the national citizens of EU member-states (including the new member-states), the national residents from Brazil, Cape Verde, Uruguay, and Peru. As for those who could only vote, the active electoral capacity comprehended all legal residents from EU member states, as well as Brazil, Cape Verde, Uruguay and Peru, Argentina, Israel, and Norway. Estonia, Venezuela and Chile had updated the list in 2001 as announced by Declaration 10/2001. By 2005, and according to the Declaration 9/2005, Iceland entered the list of active rights, while Israel was out as well as Estonia buy in this case because it is now an EU member-state.

The Declaration 252/2009 has provided a new updated list for the 2009 local elections, with *active electoral capacity* granted to EU member-states citizens, Brazilians, Cape Verdeans along with citizens from Argentina, Chile, Iceland, Norway, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, and *passive electoral capacity* granted to EU member-states citizens, Brazilians, Cape Verdeans only, thus becoming far more restrict than previous declarations.

The main reason why each local election implies the publication of a new declaration with an updated list is that under the Portuguese constitution, article 15, political rights can be granted to foreigners but only following the **principle of reciprocity**, which means that in the absence, or non-renewal of bilateral agreements between Portugal and other countries, their citizens will not be able to exercise political rights in their respective countries of residence. For the last local elections that took place on the 29th of September 2013, no new declaration was published, meaning that Declaration 252/2009 is still into force.



Therefore, only TCNs of the nine countries – Cape Verde, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Iceland, Norway, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela⁷ – which have signed reciprocal agreements with Portugal are **eligible to vote in local elections** after three years' residence; those from Portuguese-speaking countries are eligible after two. Residents from Cape Verde and Brazil can be candidates as well, while only Brazilian migrants granted “special statutory political rights equality” can vote in **national elections**.

The *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Consultation* signed between Brazil and Portugal⁸ offers Brazilian residents the possibility of having access to an almost complete set of political rights, including voting in all elections. Brazilians who request the “special status of equality of political rights” are also eligible for voting for the Presidency of the Republic, the National Parliament and the Regional Parliaments, though, as stated before, they cannot present themselves as candidates in the case of the Presidency of the Republic.

The special status (*estatuto especial*) of citizenship rights and duties follows the principle of reciprocity⁹ and follows very specific legal rules: citizens must be legally capable, hold no criminal background, and have at least three years of legal residence. Furthermore this access is only possible if the individual presents a written requirement making his/her intentions clearly explicit. This means that is not an automatic concession, but one that must result from an act of initiative of the individual. By doing so, the individual is also agreeing on suspending her corresponding rights in her home country. This condition – of losing analogous rights in Brazil – has been pointed out by Brazilians as a disincentive to register and benefit from these wider political rights in Portugal. Presently, and according to the Brazilian Electoral High Court (*Tribunal Superior Eleitoral*) only 296 Brazilians residing in Portugal are under this special regime by their own initiative, with suspended political rights in Brazil by voluntary will. As such, the regime of equality of rights and duties of Brazilians and Portuguese is a specific legal figure that allows, under reciprocity, the expansion of citizenship rights only for those Brazilian residents who consider that their bond to this country justifies that they acquire higher and wider political rights, such as the right to vote on regional, legislative and presidential elections, or the right to candidate to public organs (except the organ of President of the Republic).

Still is important to understand that this legal frame here briefly summarised has *no relation* with the active and passive political rights that Brazilians have been entitled with since 1997 at the local level. In other words, the special statute is simply a parallel mechanism that helps to deepen, under voluntary will, the intensity and quality of social and political integration of a specific foreign

⁷ In accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1 (d) of Organic Law no. 1/2001 dated 14th August, and paragraph 1 of the Declaration no. 252/2009 dated 23rd July from the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The access to active and passive local electoral rights, as first established by Declaration 2-A/97 (subsequently updated by Declaration 10/2001, Declaration 9/2005 and Declaration 252/2009).

⁸ This treaty is presently responsible for regulating the access of Brazilian residents to higher and wider political rights in Portugal (article 17) - Resolução da Assembleia da República n. 83/2000, available at: <http://dre.pt/pdf1sdip/2000/12/287A00/71727187.pdf>

⁹ The *estatuto de igualdade de direitos e deveres* has its roots in five hundred years of common History, and more recently in the 1972 Brasilia Convention. This convention required no constitutional up-grading or adjustment, since in the Portuguese case for instance, the Constitution proclaims in article 15, number three, the possibility of expanding citizenship to other Portuguese speaking non-national residents, in light of the reciprocity principle.



community, but which does not have any determinant reading upon the acquisition of full political rights at the local level. This is important to stress, as the special status cannot be evoked to explain, as often done, the low rates of electoral registering among the Brazilian community in Portugal (as we shall see ahead).

The differentiation between Portuguese-speaking countries with permanent residence in Portugal and other TCNs nationalities in relations to access passive and active political rights is subjected to criteria that favor positive discrimination towards communities with closer cultural and historic ties with Portugal. Positive discrimination is a common trend among various democratic regimes (Waldrauch, 2003) equating the access of their immigrant communities to political citizenship. The observation of such regimes reveals that there is a tendency to grant preferable conditions to culturally and linguistically closer geographies; restriction of rights to local levels (although in the Portuguese case, Brazilians may access a wider set of rights following the adherence to a special status); and the predominance of the principle of reciprocity (Strudel, 2003), as it happens also in Portugal with its insertion in article 15 of the Portuguese constitution. It is also relevant to underline that among the lusophone countries, only Brazil and Cape Verde benefit so far from this regime of proximity via reciprocity agreements, with the Brazilian case deserving a more detailed reading, as referred before.

All foreigner nationals can gain access to full political rights if they acquire Portuguese citizenship¹⁰. The **Citizenship Act** and its prerequisites changed in 2006 in Portugal, being acknowledged internationally as the current best policy in EU (ranked first among MIPEX countries).¹¹ This law was approved with strong political consensus by the Portuguese Parliament, with 91 percent of MP votes in favour and none against. It was possible to reach a consensus over a very advanced form of *jus soli* (territory-based) citizenship, which provides automatic *jus soli* to certain foreigners independent of the length of his or her stay or legal status. While Portugal historically sponsored *jus sanguinis* (blood-based) citizenship lineages, a more inclusive law had been sought to improve the situation of descendants of immigrants born in Portugal, allowing them through various channels to become citizens. This new policy frees them from the protective restraints and potentially abusive situation of lacking citizenship rights that was contained in the original legislation. This legal framework¹² also widened the criteria for attribution and acquisition of nationality, with the strengthening of the principle of *ius soli*, through the recognition of citizenship to individuals who hold a strong connection to Portugal:

- Attribution of Portuguese nationality by origin to those born in national territory, having foreign parents, if at least one of those parents was also born in Portugal and had his/her residence here when the child was born;
- Attribution of Portuguese nationality by origin to those born in national territory, having foreign parents who are not serving their countries, if the child declares wanting to be

¹⁰ The only exception is running for President of the Republic, which requires Portuguese citizenship of origin.

¹¹ Healy (2011), who assessed the alteration of the legal framework to the acquisition of Portuguese citizenship, remarked that in the new Law “the procedures for the attribution and acquisition of Portuguese nationality are much clearer and more comprehensible under the new regime” (p. 39). She also notes “that the number of rejected applications is relatively low – although that number does not include potential applicants who have dropped out of the process for various reasons before finalising the procedure” (p. 40).

¹² Law nr. 2/2006, dated 17th April, in force since 15th December 2006

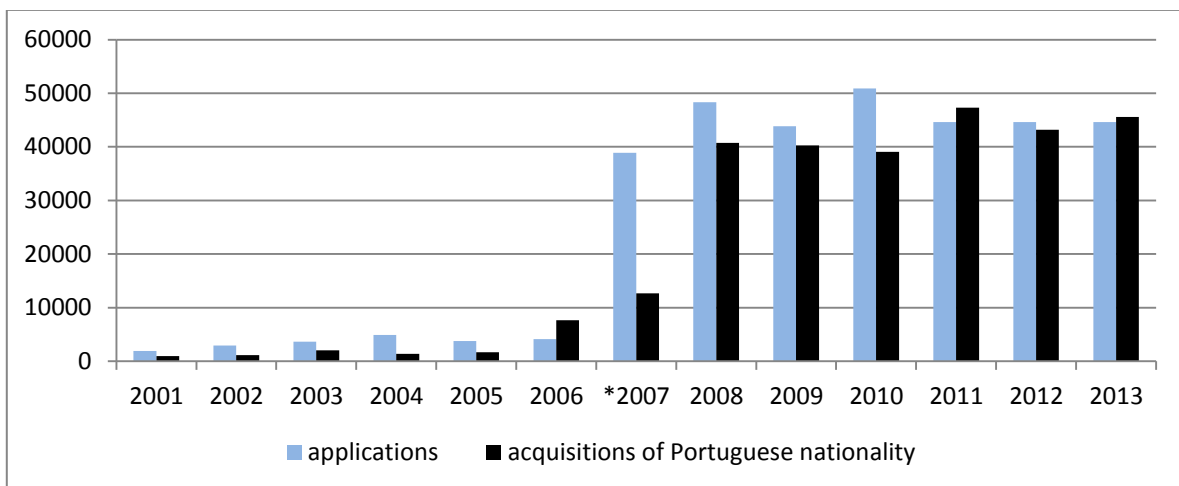


Portuguese, and if at least one of the parents has had his/her residence here for, at least, 5 years;

- Establishment of a general right to naturalization for minors who were born on Portuguese territory, having foreign parents, if, at the time of the request, one of the child’s parents has had his/her residence here for, at least, 5 years, or if the child has concluded in Portugal the first level of basic education.

Portuguese law further determines that every individual born in national territory, which does not possess any other nationality, is Portuguese by origin – paragraph 1 of article 1 of Law 2/2006, and paragraph c) of article 3 of Decree-Law 237-A/2006.

Figure 2: Number of applications and acquisitions of Portuguese nationality between 2001 and 2013



Source: SEF and Central Registry Office

These changes had a significant impact in the increase of applications and acquisitions of Portuguese citizenship after 2006 (see figure 2). The average of refusal rate of applicants between 2007 and 2013 was 6,1% (representing 16.397 refusals) and 268.831 citizens had acquired Portuguese citizenship in the past six years.

It is important to reinforce that this framework, being more facilitator of generating “new” Portuguese citizens, indirectly promote also political rights and participation. “New” Portuguese citizens acquire all political rights as any other national, the only exception is that they cannot be candidate for President of Republic as that position is only accessible for “Portuguese by origin” (underlined in electoral law for the Portuguese Republic President – Law-Decree 219-A/76 of 1976).

3.3. The freedom to join and act within a political party in Portugal

3.3.1. The political parties act and political parties internal regulations

Even if closely linked, electoral participation and the freedom to join and act within a political party are not exactly coincident. According to Canotilho *et al.* (2007:363)



“Other than electoral franchising, we may wonder whether foreigners may be granted other political rights (such as participating in referenda, founding and joining political parties, etc.). That is not an obstacle in the case of citizens from Portuguese speaking countries, since article 15.3 does not restrict itself to electoral rights. However, the answer to this question may affect European citizens and other foreigners, since articles 4 and 5 only address elections. However, there is no reason to distinguish, as the Law may extend these other political rights to all foreigners who benefit from electoral rights, in their respective scope (for instance, those who can participate in local elections must be able to participate in the local structures of parties and in the local referenda of their area of residence).”

The general argument of these authors is that someone who benefits from more an exclusive right (voting) should benefit from a broader one, such as participating in a political party.

The article 7 of the [Organic Law no. 2/2003 dated 22nd August \(Political Parties Act\)](#) considers that *“political parties are constituted by citizens who hold political rights”*; in other words that includes all TCNs that have political rights recognised by the Portuguese law and international bilateral agreements (described in previous subchapter). This Organic Law also establishes, under its article 20, that *“no person shall be denied membership in any particular political party or expulsion on grounds of...place of origin”*. Therefore, in general terms, TCNs who hold political rights and are legally residents in Portugal have the right to join a political party if they want to do so.

However, depending on particular parties’ statutes it is possible to identify some variety in the criteria of admittance of TCNs and/or the roles that they might have in the political party. An analysis of the statutes of the political parties that are represented in the Portuguese Parliament allows identifying the following distinctions:

- According to the statute of the centre-right **Social Democratic Party (Partido Social Democrata – PSD)**¹³, the major partner of the governing coalition, in addition to Portuguese citizens *“may also enroll in the party foreign nationals resident in Portugal who have been recognized by law, the right to vote”* (article 5, paragraph 2 of the Statute of Social Democratic Party as approved in March 2012¹⁴). This article proposes an approach related to the **voting rights** condition underlined in Article 15 of the Portuguese Constitution.
- The **Socialist Party (Partido Socialista – PS)**¹⁵, a *centre-left* party currently in opposition, recognizes under Chapter II, article 6, paragraph 2 of its Party Statute¹⁶ that *“in addition to Portuguese citizens, legal residents nationals from other countries may also apply for membership”*. However, the following paragraph states that may not become members of the

¹³ The PSD is a liberal conservative political party in Portugal. The PSD is member of the European People's Party (EPP) Group, along with European conservative and Christian-democratic parties. Currently, the party has 108 of the 230 seats in the Assembly of the Republic.

¹⁴ Accessed on 15 March 2013, at the following website: http://www.psd.pt/archive/doc/Estatutos_aprovados_XXXIV_Congresso_-_versao_B_Acordo_Ortografico_2.pdf

¹⁵ The party has currently 74 of 230 seats in the Portuguese Parliament.

¹⁶ Accessed on 15 March 2013, at the following website: <http://www.ps.pt/partido/estatutos-do-partido-socialista.html?layout=artigoimagemlivre&showall=all>



Party “those who are subject to the civic and political incapacities defined by Law”, thus seems to exclude foreign citizens who do not possess political rights as defined by the Constitution.

- The **Central Social Democratic - Popular Party** (*Centro Democrático e Social - Partido Popular – CDS-PP*)¹⁷, the party more to the right-wing in the Portuguese parliamentary spectrum (currently with 24 seats), defines that “foreign nationals legally residing in Portugal, who are holders of political rights may also be affiliated” (article 5, paragraph 3, of its Party Rules document¹⁸). In this case, the **political rights** are the requirement (that argument is enshrined in Article 7 of Organic Law no. 2/2003).
- The statute of the **Left Bloc Party** (*Bloco de Esquerda – BE*)²⁰ shares the condition of **political rights**, but excludes any references to nationalities. Therefore, members of BE are defined as all those, including TCNs, “who have expressed their desire to join the Movement and are in full possession of their political rights” (article 3, paragraph 1 of BE Statutes). In practice, however, this implies that a TCN from a country not covered by a reciprocity agreement is excluded.
- The only two parties that **do not have express any formal requirements or legal constraints** towards the admission of TCN’s are: the **Portuguese Communist Party** (*Partido Comunista Português – PCP*)²¹ and the **Ecologist Party "The Greens"** (*Partido Ecologista "Os Verdes" – PEV*)²². In fact, the only constraints are political. In the case of PCP “It may be a member of the Portuguese Communist Party whoever accepts its Programme and Statutes” (article 9 of its Party Rules)²³. Regarding PEV every citizen “must demonstrate a commitment to the eco-effective political project” (article 11, paragraph 1 of its Statutes)²⁴.

¹⁷ The CDS-PP is a Portuguese right-wing political party, with an ideological foundation of Christian democracy, conservatism and classical liberalism. The party is affiliated to the European People's Party and the International Democrat Union.

¹⁸ Accessed on 29 December 2010, at the following website: http://www.cds.pt/images/stories/CONVOCA_LISTAS/estatutos%20aprovados%20no%20xxiv%20congresso%20-%20maro%202011.pdf

¹⁹ Accessed on 15 March 2013, at the following website: http://www.cds.pt/images/stories/CONVOCA_LISTAS/estatutos%20aprovados%20no%20xxiv%20congresso%20-%20maro%202011.pdf

²⁰ The BE is a Portuguese left-wing political party founded in 1999. A Party affiliated with the European Unitary Left / Nordic Green Left. The Left Bloc (B.E.) is supported by independents and a number of left-wing political groups: the People's Democratic Union (*União Democrática Popular*, UDP), Revolutionary Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista Revolucionário – PSR*, and Politics XXI (*Política XXI*). This party has from the beginning a full party status, yet the constituent groups have maintained their existence has political associations and some levels of autonomy, leading to a loose structure. At the national elections in 2011, BE got 8 seats in parliament in the 230-seat Assembly of the Republic.

²¹ The PCP founded in 1921 is a major left-wing political party in Portugal. It is a Marxist-Leninist party, and its organization is based upon democratic centralism. In the 2011 election, the party won 14 seats in Portuguese Parliament. The party is affiliated to the European Unitary Left / Nordic Green Left.

²² The PEV is a Portuguese green and eco-socialist party. It is a member of the European Greens and a founding member of the European Federation of Green Parties. It was the first Portuguese ecologist party and since its foundation, in 1982, the PEV has had a close relationship with the Portuguese Communist Party, and now (as of 2005), after participating allied with it in the Unitarian Democratic Coalition in all the elections, the PEV holds 2 seats in the Assembly of the Republic.

²³ Accessed on 15 March 2013,, at: http://www.pcp.pt/estatutos_pcp

²⁴ Accessed on 15 March 2013, at <http://www.osverdes.pt/pages/partido---estatutos.php>



It is worth noting that parties' statuses have been changing over the last years, approaching more to the general legal framework underlined in the Political Parties Act. In 2006, Carvalhais (2006: 123) remarked that the Social Democrats (PSD) considered for matters of admission only '*...citizens... that hold total capacity over their political rights*', clearly in reference to national citizens as these are the sole citizens with complete capacity over political rights (chapter II, article 5). The Social Democrat Youth was even more explicit by referring clearly to 'Portuguese citizens' in chapter III, article 10 of their statuses. In Carvalhais' view, this was symptomatic of political citizenship being read as *national citizenship*.

In contrast, the Socialist Party (PS) seemed by then to play the role of an exception, since it proclaimed in article 1, paragraph 2 of its statuses the possibility of admitting as militants any non-national citizen from the Lusophone space. Indeed, the previous version of the statute mentioned clearly that "*in addition to Portuguese citizens may also apply for entry the EU citizens and nationals of member countries of the CPLP [Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries], legally resident in Portugal*". As it stood, the article implied two formal requirements only: the nationality condition (only EU citizens and CPLP citizens could enter), and the residence permit condition.

In relation to TCNs voting rights within political parties, once TCNs become effective members of a political party, they enjoy of all rights and duties as any other party member, including rights to vote within the party.

However, regarding the eligibility of the candidates, there are the formal constraints referred before (e.g. most of TCNs who have political voting rights are only eligible candidates for local elections). As described before only the Portuguese citizen voters are eligible for the Assembly of the Republic, thus, the ability of TCNs to be members of parliament is null. In this context, there are not TCNs as members of parliament only some members with "dual citizenship" (Portuguese and from other country).

3.3.2. Political parties' discussion on immigrants' political rights in Portugal and immigration in political parties' agenda and activities

During the last ten years in Portugal, there has been a significant convergence in the political positions of the major political parties - the Socialist Party and the Social Democrat Party - on immigration. The most revealing examples can be seen in the parliamentary vote on changes to the citizenship law (2006) and the immigration act (2007 and 2012). The Citizenship law was passed by Parliament with 91 percent of votes in favour and none against. An agreement was also reached about changes to the law on immigration with 85 percent of MPs in support, with the only opposition votes coming from the extreme right and the extreme left. This political consensus was equally accepted by social partners ranging from the Confederation of Unions and Employers, NGOs, religious bodies and immigrant associations. Another example of this political consensus was revealed in the actual government decision to maintain the *National Action Plan for Immigrant Integration* (2010-2013) that was defined by the socialist government, although was mainly implemented by the current colligation between PSD and CDS. These results are extremely important for the success of immigration and integration policies. They not only lead to co-responsibility for the success of these



policies, but also to restricting the opportunity for populist arguments taking advantage of political divides on the subject.

This consensus was confirmed in a 2008 survey to Members of the Parliament (Freire and Viegas, 2009), in which out of 141 surveyed Members of the Parliament, only 2 disagreed with the statement that "Immigration enriches Portuguese society", 103 agreed, and 36 completely agreed.

Political arguments made by the extreme right, propagating racist attitudes and xenophobia, have not led, at this point, to significant electoral gains. The extremist right wing party that advertises "Portugal for the Portuguese" and other similar slogans obtained only around 17.742 votes at the 2011 election (being one third of these voters Portuguese residents in Brazil), representing 0.32% of votes cast which does not allow them to elect a single representative in the Portuguese Parliament. This low success rate reflects, on the one hand, a lack of willingness on the part of the electorate to support these ideas but also, on the other hand, these parties' lack of political weight and their inability to cast influence over government and legislation. Unlike other European countries, the extremist right in Portugal has had no influence upon government formation, the choice of Prime Minister, or the definition of public policies, including those that affect immigrants.

Although there is this reasonable political consensus around immigration issues and integration policy, there are also significant divergences among political parties related to the concession of political rights to immigrants that cannot be overlooked. The Portuguese political elite has revealed an ambiguous attitude, divided mostly in two opposing visions: one that sees citizenship and its interlinked rights as a national matter and, as such, only accessible for nationals, being closer to conservative political actors (right-wing parties and more conservative sectors of civil society); and another vision, more common among more liberal political actors (left-wing parties, immigrant associations, human rights associations, NGOs, Churches, trade unions), that sees citizenship as an integrated set of rights that must be open to the residents of the state regardless of national belonging, for the sake of stronger and more responsible democracy. It is worth noting that under this last reading, it is not simply the access of non-nationals to wider forms of citizenship that is at stake, but is above all the uprising of citizenship as a status of people empowerment for stronger and better democracy. These two visions have been raised both in Parliament discussions and in the fieldwork undertaken.

At the National Parliament the last debate among MPs regarding the extension of political rights to foreigners (namely voting rights, with the issue of participation in political parties being thus implicitly included) took place in January 2011.

The discussion between the members of the parliament under the Parliament' working group for the VIII revision of the Portuguese Constitution highlighted different positions among political parties (see details in table 4). Left wing parties argued mainly in favour of the enlargement of political rights to immigrants, stressing that article 15 of Portuguese Constitution should be revised and/or should not limit the right to vote to the principle of reciprocity. Still, the positions of left parties were not homogeneous: the Left Bloc (BE) argued for voting rights for local, regional and national elections and the immigrants' chance to be elected in local elections. The Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and the Socialist Party (PS, centre-left) underlined that political rights, whether passive or active, should be provided to immigrants gradually, but fundamentally at the local level where immigrants are integrated in local communities regardless of their nationality. PCP further sustained that



immigrants should be excluded from public offices only when regarding Portuguese authority powers.

Table 4: Political parties' positions about the revision of article 15 of the Portuguese Constitution under the VIII Constitutional Revision, 26 January 2011

Political parties represented in Parliament		Reciprocity		Elections		Who can?		Public offices	
		Yes	No	Local	National	Friendship agreements (mainly Portuguese speaking countries)	Equality principle: all nationalities	Only technical	All except public authority positions
Left-wing parties	Left Bloc (BE)		x	x	x		x		x
	Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)		x	x			x		x
	Socialist Party (PS, centre-left)		x	x			x	x	
Right-wing parties	Social Democrat Party (PSD, centre-right)	x		x		x		x	
	Popular Party (CDS-PP, Christian-democratic)	x		x		x		x	

Members of the parliament representing the Social Democrat Party (PSD, centre-right) and the Popular Party (CDS-PP, Christian-democratic) held a quite different position from those of the left-wing parties, stating that the *principle of reciprocity* should be kept as a way to pressure other states to give electoral rights to Portuguese emigrants. It was further argued that the distinction made between citizens of Portuguese Speaking Countries (with whom Portugal has more reciprocity and friendship agreements) and other third country nationals in regard to access to political rights, should be kept. The previous State Secretary of the present government lead by PSD (Feliciano Barreiras Duarte), responsible for the folder of immigrants' integration, and who had previously been a member of the parliament, was however in favour of abolishing the principle of reciprocity, arguing that Portugal should not provide political democratic rights to immigrants depending on the discretion of other states.

Meanwhile, the economic crisis that the country is going through came to interrupt these discussions and developments of this more progressive vision. Now that more urgent matters are at stake (as



returning to the international financial markets), discussing the roles of non-nationals' political integration in the country's democracy, seems the least of the country's concerns. Still, the place that immigrants' rights (in general and of political ones in particular) occupy in the national political agenda, reflect on how domestic political elites think such matters should belong: is it *outside* the national citizens' agenda of priorities, being still a matter of 'us vs them'?

Parties do not have specific concessions for foreigners or immigrants. Programmes or party manifestos on this are also absent. Although most respondents mentioned a certain preoccupation about including immigration on the parties' agendas, this seems to follow very random strategies.

The Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), for instance, has a "Working Group on immigration affairs" composed by seven members (according to Rosa Rabiais, member of the party's secretariat, these include among others, the president of the Cape Verdean Associations; an expert on immigration; and a person connected to the trade unions). The group is formed by immigrants and militants with immigrant background and helps the party to make a more targeted approach to immigrants during electoral campaigns (i.e. production of specific flyers).²⁵

The Socialist Party (PS) has a Think Tank called LIP – *Laboratório de Ideias para Portugal*, characterised by MP Elza Pais (PS) as composed by 40 groups, one being devoted to social movements and immigration issues. This group is formed by independent people from various parts of society. However, another militant, Celeste Correia, politician of Cape-Verdean descent and double nationality says that this is a group working *on* and not necessarily *with* immigrant communities.

The existence of the parliamentary groups of friendship with lusophone countries (*Grupos Parlamentares de Amizade*) or the National Parliament's Commission on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedom and Guaranties, were also presented as examples of channels that try to bring the parties closer to the reality of immigrant communities.

Also as part of what parties see as illustrative of their concern about immigration is their **legislative activity**. All parties mentioned their most relevant legislative initiatives, with the PS particularly proud of the citizenship law (Law 2/2006).

Indirect forms of concern were also mentioned, as in the case of the CDS-PP that pointed out the party's argument in favour of social action promoted by organized civil society in the support of the most vulnerable, as a way of fighting for immigrants' interests since these are among the most fragile groups in society.

In a **less structured form**, respondents mentioned the existence of activities such as debates (*tertúlias*), workshops, *fora*, where immigrant associative structures and personalities are often invited to take an active role. Despite all these efforts, respondents were nevertheless too evasive

²⁵ This group is also responsible for establishing contacts with various immigrant associations, although Rabiais considers this could be even more regular (the last big round among several associations was made 2 years ago). However, that would imply more resources which are limited. This working group occasionally launches manifestos in ephemerides such as the International Day of Migrations (December 18th) or the International Day against Racial Discrimination (March 21st), in which it appeals to the political participation and protest of immigrants.



about providing further details on the parties' forms of interacting with migrant communities, especially on how the formal and informal interactions with associations and other civil society agents take place. To mention though the cases of the PCP, which has a close relation with the "Anti-Racist Front" (FAR)²⁶, and of the BE, closely connected to "SOS Racism", sharing some of its leaders.

3.4. Other channels for immigrants' political participation in Portugal and advocacy for immigrants access to political rights

Immigrants' political participation in Portugal is also framed by other possibilities that aim to involve them in the political decision-making process of the policies that directly affect their lives in Portugal, being also identifiable several examples of advocacy for immigrants' access to political rights in Portugal over the past decade.

The participation of immigrant communities in integration policy making and/or debate has been formally introduced in 1998 (Decree-Law nº. 39/98) with the creation of the **Consultative Council for Immigration Affairs** (COCAI). This Council further clarified its aims and intervention in 2007 (in Decree-Law no. 167/2007) as part of the High Commission for Immigration (ACIDI), seeking to ensure the consultation and participation of immigrant communities, social partners and social solidarity associations in the definition of integration policies. The Council, presided by the High Commissioner, has representatives from each of the Portuguese-speaking immigrant communities (Brazilian, São Toméan, Cape Verdean, Angolan, Mozambican and Guinean); one representative from each of the three other most numerous immigrant communities (currently Ukrainian, Moldovan and Chinese); one representative of private charitable institutions; and two representatives of institutions that work with migrants; and also has representatives of trade unions, of different ministries that deal with immigrants (internal affairs, education, social security and labour) and of municipalities. The Council's competences include making statements regarding immigrant rights, participating in policy-making for the social integration of immigrants, improving living conditions and participating in the defence of immigrant rights. The Council also issues deliberations in the recognition and financial support of immigrant associations. The plans for immigrant integration were referred to the Council for consultation, as were the proposals for the new Nationality and Immigration Laws. As will be highlighted, COCAI also discussed and made official statements about political rights of immigrants. The focus in the implementation of policies is therefore on working together with immigrants and other sections of society to achieve success in integration.

Following the Parliamentary discussions on the Constitution revisions, in February 2011, COCAI sent to the Parliament a declaration (approved unanimously by the counsellors) defending the revision of article 15 of Portuguese Constitution, which limits the right to vote to the principle of reciprocity.²⁷ The COCAI counsellors argued that the principle of reciprocity has been failing as a way to guarantee

²⁶ The Anti-Racist Front (FAR), an organisation linked to the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) was created in 1994. It was active until the mid-2000s, but its intervention in the public sphere has dropped since. However, it should be stressed that there is a formal independence between the PCP and FAR.

²⁷ Declaration available at <http://www.acidi.gov.pt/cfn/4cdc2fd224704/live/Ver+Delibera%C3%A7%C3%A3o+sobre+o+direito+de+voto+dos+Imigrantes>



the voting aspirations of Portuguese emigrants and compromises the integration of immigrants in Portugal. The declaration stated that the political participation of immigrants – active and passive – should be guaranteed as a way to achieve social cohesion and a stronger sense of belonging by immigrants in Portuguese society. Furthermore, it argued that the principle of equality requires the elimination of reciprocity conditions and promotes a democratic responsibility among all citizens.

Prior to that in September 2007, COCAI, responding to an invitation from the President of the Parliament, took the topic to an extraordinary meeting at the Parliament, inviting all political parties with parliamentary seats to share their views about the political participation of immigrants in Portugal. In concluding the meeting, the Minister of the Presidency, from the socialist government of the time, stated that *“this meeting already demonstrates in itself the participation of immigrants in Portuguese society.”*

Another essential instrument for developing public policies on immigrant integration, within this framework of widening consensus, was the two **Plans for the Integration of Immigrant** after broad debate with social partners. It considers a variety of sectors in which integration should occur (employment, health, education), as well as themes which traverse traditional immigration issues (descendants of immigrants, family reunification, and elderly). These action plans adopts a holistic approach to integration and serves as a reference point for both the state and for civil society in developing more specific initiatives. This huge Portuguese investment, within the framework of political and social consensus, and under the coordination of the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI), had in both plans a specific measure to advocate the registration of all immigrants eligible to vote in Portugal and/or appeal for the electoral participation of immigrants.²⁸

Among the specificities of the Portuguese integration policy developments, it is also important to mention the one-stop-shop approach. The Law-Decree 27/2005, 4th February, defined the legal framework for the functioning of the National and Local Immigrant Support Centres, the Portuguese one-stop-shops. These centres, created exclusively for immigrants, bring together under the same roof a number of services related to immigration. The centres involve the departments of six Ministries and offer specialised offices that provide specific support. This reinforced the partnership principle of the integration policy – the public administration working for the integration of immigrants with collaboration protocols established with civil society organizations, namely immigrant associations – and the principle of immigrants participating in the formulation of integration policies and integration service provision – namely with the presence of intercultural mediators (most of them immigrant themselves) to narrowing the gap between public administration services and immigrant citizens (Oliveira et. al 2009). In March 2013, under an official visit of the President of the Parliament to the Lisbon national immigrant support centre (CNAI), ACIDI, in partnership with the internal affairs administration, launched the **support cabinet to the registration of foreigners eligible to vote and/or to be elected** aiming to advocate their political participation.

²⁸ Further details at <http://www.acidi.gov.pt/acidi-i-p/-plano-para-a-integracao-de-imigrantes---pii>



4. Immigrants' political participation in Portugal: electoral records and perceptions

When it comes to the participation of immigrants in political parties, official figures are unavailable in Portugal. Figures of the general membership of political parties are not generally seen as reliable or do not include information about the place of birth of militants and are not provided by parties on a regular basis. This makes harder to estimate the number of immigrant members or to analyse the relative importance of immigrants in political arena.

However, we can observe data from two surveys directed at immigrants: (1) the “*Immigrant Citizens Survey*” (KBF/MPG, 2012) and (2) the “*Third Country Nationals in Portugal – Paths, Integration and Discrimination*” (CLAII-ACIDI, 2012). Both encompassed a wide scope of topics, and included questions on the membership of citizens in multiple organisations, including political parties.

According to the results from the *Immigrant Citizen Survey* (ICS), membership in a political party or group of the surveyed immigrants in Portuguese cities appears lower in comparison with Northern European cities. Only 0.7% of the surveyed immigrants in Lisbon declared to belong to a political organization, increasing slightly that figure to 1.2% and 2% in Faro and Setúbal. Even if these figures are quite low, it should be stressed that membership across the general Portuguese population is not that high either; according to the 2008 *European Value Survey*, only 3.4% were affiliated in a Party. Of the 5669 immigrants surveyed who are included in the CLAII-ACIDI survey database, only 57 stated that they were members of a political party (around 1%).

ICS survey also reported some findings about immigrants' motivation to vote in a hypothetical election, identifying that in Portuguese cities the interest to vote is high (around 70%) among surveyed non-EU immigrants as it was among the general population when asked for the 2008 *European Values Survey* (72%).

In CLAII-ACIDI survey (2012) immigrants were asked about their effective active political participation in the last local elections in Portugal. The results were that out of 5.673 surveyed immigrants, only 40% had the right to vote in the last local elections and of those only 63% did vote, which reflect the same abstention rate (of around 40%) of the Portuguese voters.

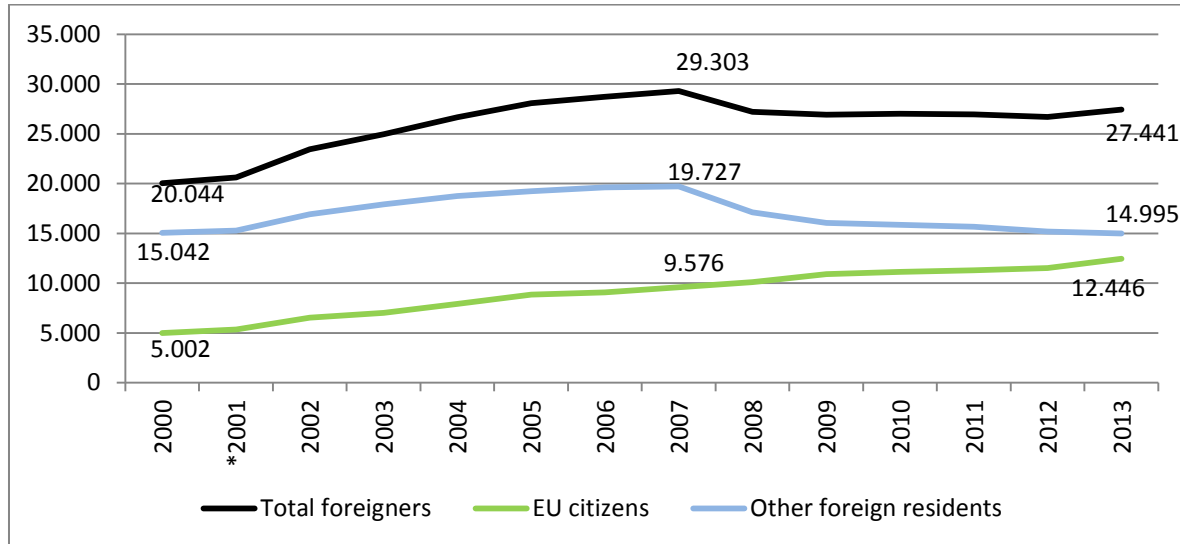
Electoral records at the individual level according to the nationality are not available, and so it is not possible to aggregate data to determine to which extent eligible foreigners do exercise their right to vote in Portugal. However, given that voting rights are not automatically conceded to foreigners (unlike the procedure for Portuguese citizens) we can assess the extent to which foreign residents register themselves to vote (see figure 3).

In the last decade the number of registered foreigners to vote increased 37% - were 20.044 in 2000 and become 27.441 in 2013 -, although since 2008 it is observed a slightly decrease (were 29.303 in 2007) that is caused by the reduction of third-country nationals (TCNs) listed to vote in Portugal (were 19.727 in 2007 and become 14.995 in 2013). This decrease reflects two facts: one is the upsurge of “new” Portuguese citizens since 2007 (see figure 2), as result of the new citizenship act, which made thousands of foreigners (especially TCN) disappear from the list of foreigner voters; the second fact was the decrease of the immigrant population in Portugal since 2010 due to the



economic crisis that affected the country, which interlinks with the list of foreigner residents that register to vote in Portugal.

Figure 3: Number of foreigners that registered to vote in local elections between 2000 and 2012



Sources: * DGAI/MAI - Administração Eleitoral

Among the nationalities more represented in the list of registered foreigners to vote in local elections we find the Cape Verdeans (about 40% of the total foreigners registered to vote in 2012), followed by the Brazilians (17%), English (10%) and Germans (8%).

Using the number of residents as a basis for comparison we can estimate an approximate proportion of registered voters in the overall stock of citizens from specific nationalities that have the right to vote. We should keep in mind, however, that a minimum period of time with legal residence in the country is required for Third Country Nationals to register, and so the number of potential voters is likely to be smaller than that of residents (see table 5).

Data from 2011 show us that out of some 108.000 European citizens living in Portugal, only 11.300 registered themselves. The European countries with larger proportions of registered voters in their residents' stocks are Belgium (28.5%), the Netherlands (23.4%), Germany (23.3%) and France (22.4%). Nationals from Romania and Bulgaria, on the contrary, are much less likely to be registered for voting, with shares around 1%.

Regarding TCNs the most interesting cases are those of Brazilians and Cape Verdeans, not only for being, respectively, the most significant foreign groups nowadays in Portugal (representing in 2011 about 111.445 and 43.920 legal residents, respectively) and the longest-standing origin of international migration to Portugal, but also for the contrasting pictures they exhibit regarding the motivation for political participation.



Table 5: Rate of registered citizens to vote by total residents with a valid permit according to nationality in 2011

Nationality	Citizens registered to vote *	Total residents with a valid permit **	Rate of registered citizens to vote by total residents
Germany	2.109	9.054	23,3
Belgium	499	1.752	28,5
Bulgaria	151	8.606	1,8
Spain	1.905	9.310	20,5
France	1.186	5.293	22,4
The Netherlands	1.136	4.862	23,4
Italy	585	5.338	11,0
United Kingdom	2.756	17.675	15,6
Romania	400	39.312	1,0
Sweden	116	918	12,6
Total EU	11.301	107.965	10,5
Cape Verde	11.067	43.920	25,2
Argentina	60	487	12,3
Brazil	4.308	111.445	3,9
Peru	15	277	5,4
Uruguay	9	126	7,1
Venezuela	141	1.999	7,1
Chile	13	218	6,0
Total other foreigners	15.656	328.857	4,8
Total registered foreigners	26.957	436.822	6,2

Sources: * DGAI/MAI - Administração Eleitoral / ** Immigrant and Border Service (SEF)

As underlined before, Brazilians are the foreign nationality in Portugal holding more political rights after a three-year period of legal residence, benefiting thus from the special provisions that entitle them to vote in elections inaccessible to all other foreigners. Despite that, only a slight proportion of Brazilian residents above 20 years old (4.6%) has registered for voting locally (see table 6). This figure is interesting to analyze deeper, as the registration for local electoral rights holds no relation whatsoever to the wider political rights that Brazilians may access via special status. In other words, while the special status that grants them the possibility of exercising political rights at the national level in Portugal implies a suspension of equal rights in their homeland, Brazil, the registration for passive and active rights at the local level has no impact on their political citizenship in Brazil. So, other reasons must be underneath the low rates of registration at the local level that not those related to the impacts of the special status. It may be, however, that a confusion is occurring among Brazilians perceptions between what is actually at stake by exercising political citizenship at the local level in Portugal, and which are the duties implied by the adherence to the special status. There may be indeed Brazilians who believe they would be suspending their national political rights in Brazil due to the exercise of local political rights in Portugal. But, as already stressed, these imply two different



scenarios. In the one regarding the special status, and according to the Brazilian Electoral Supreme Court, less than three hundred Brazilians residing in Portugal have in fact suspended their political rights at the highest level, as a consequence of having voluntarily and explicitly adhered to the special status that grants them the access to a wider and higher panoply of political rights in Portugal.

In parallel, a much bigger share (31.5%) of residents above 20 years old from Cape Verde is registered and can thus vote and be elected in local elections.

Table 6: Share of citizens registered to vote in 2011 by total of valid permits of citizens above 20 years old, according to nationality

Nationality	Citizens registered to vote *	All valid permits above 20 years **	%
Norway	42	402	10,4
Cape Verde	11.067	35.096	31,5
Argentina	60	416	14,4
Brazil	4.308	94.157	4,6
Peru	15	252	6,0
Uruguay	9	108	8,3
Venezuela	141	1.836	7,7

Sources: * DGAI/MAI - Administração Eleitoral / ** Eurostat

These figures should be, however, confronted with the perceptions about immigrants’ political participation both as militants and as voters of political parties in Portugal. These perceptions are divided by the actors that were interviewed in this research: first we described the perceptions of political elites and then of civil society leaders and immigrant associations’ representatives.

4.1. Political Elites’ perception on immigrant’s political participation

There are six political parties with national parliamentary seats in Portugal.²⁹ As reported before, several interviews were conducted among these parties, selecting between key political actors with leading roles inside the party, and members of the parties’ secretariats holding diverse positions of the parties’ internal structures, and between militants with and without immigrant background. Because both actors spoke as parties’ militants in most cases, we see here no methodological utility in separating them; instead we will try to compare them as much as needed along this section.

This subchapter mainly resumes the perceptions these actors have conveyed about several questions, namely each party’s general position in regard on the one hand, to the presence of immigrants in Portuguese society, and, on the other hand, their political participation. In the latter

²⁹ The Greens (Partido Ecologista os Verdes) enter the Parliament via electoral coalition (CDU - Coligação Democrática Unida) with the PCP.



case, it was intended to capture both the normative stands of the interviewees (how should reality look like) and their interpretations on the present legal frame regarding immigrants' political citizenship as it is. This included opinions on the present differentiation between passive and active elective rights, as well as on the intimate relationship between the granting of such rights to immigrants and the constitutional principle of reciprocity. Finally, it analyses the actors' perceptions on the ways different immigrant communities seem to relate to their political rights when they have them, or to the idea of accessing them.

While persons with a link to a political party - militants in most cases, or independents – all respondents conveyed both personally and institutionally, very positive views on the presence of immigrants in our society and on the need to keep fostering their social *and* political integration.

One particularly striking image was that of ***immigration not being a fracturing issue in Portugal***, contrary to what seems to happen in other European countries according to our respondents' views. As stated by one key political actor (previous Minister of Presidency responsible for integration policies): *"We are lucky that immigration is not a fracturing issue in our society."* (Pedro Silva Pereira, PS).

Important to note also that **immigration** is recognized by politicians (regardless of their background and political orientation) as being a rather **consensual issue** among political parties. In the words of Fernando Negrão (MP from PSD): *"Immigration is more consensual as an issue than what may look like"*, aligning thus with Ana Catarina Mendes (MP from PS) who signals a progressive convergence of the main parties, PS and PSD, over the last years around legislative production on immigration and nationality. Politicians with immigrant background also gathered around this view, stating as in the case of Jorge Humberto (PS militant of Cape-Verdean descent) that ideological questions are no longer that relevant in defining the approaches of the political parties to immigration. Ideological differences among parties were spotted often and much more vividly by respondents from civil society (church, trade unions and immigrant associations) as we will see ahead.

This should not mean however a total agreement among political actors about this stated convergence. Indeed, in the words of one key respondent, Feliciano B. Duarte (former secretary of state with the folder of immigrants integration between 2002 and 2004 and again between 2011 and 2013), *"Immigration is not consensual in the PSD or in any other party"*. Also illustrative of this less optimistic vision on the parties' convergence, are the words of Morais Sarmiento. This key actor, militant of the PSD and former Minister of the Presidency during the PSD/CDS-PP coalition government lead by Durão Barroso, responsible back then for immigration and integration affairs, and who had invited Feliciano to integrate his ministerial team, gave the example of the CDS-PP which normally stands for family values and yet, as part of that governmental coalition in 2002-2004, opposed to family reunion of labour immigrants from Eastern Europe. But he also criticized the left parties which seemed to be very concerned with the immigrants' rights and simultaneously seemed to accept perfectly well the existence of a rather small High Commission (the earlier ACIDI) which operated in the early 2000s as the single public interface to respond to immigrants' specific problems:

"[The] interface the country thought to be enough (...) to respond specifically to immigrants' problems was a supposed high commissariat, with three ladies, and a secretariat, in the Palácio



Foz ... and we lived in perfectly good consciousness with this, which is extraordinary!" (Morais Sarmiento, PSD).

He signals in particular the socialist party. In his opinion, the PS could have a leading role in a full integration of migrants, however it seems lost in a *"puzzling lack of understanding about immigration"*, which in his opinion runs from the no less incomprehensible political relationship of the PS with the lusophone countries, that he classifies as *"absolutely pathologic"*. He grants though high credits to José Sócrates (socialist prime minister between 2005-2009 and 2009-2011) for his effort to change this complex relationship that has derived from the decolonization process.

As for the diagnosis of present reality of political participation of immigrants, in general terms political parties agree that this is very low - **residual** and **low** were the most common adjectives used. Political engagement happens mainly at the local level. There are records of a broad political mobilisation in one specific town located in Lisbon's Metropolitan Area, Oeiras. This seems to result, at least partially, from an investment by the local executive in housing programmes that affected immigrants of Cape Verdean origin. Marques and Santos (2008) report that the concession of the right to participate in local elections in 1996 caused not only a direct effect in political participation, but also in the campaigns for registration and in the electoral campaigns, which were *"an important experience of the engagement of national and local associations in the formal political process"* (Marques and Santos, 2008: 59). Still, these are only punctual cases that do not contradict the overall picture of low political engagement.

When trying to explore possible explanations for the lack of immigrants' political engagement, participants underlined a set of common reasons, among which:

1. Portuguese society, in general, distrusts politicians at present, so immigrants are just part of a wider sentiment of frustration about politics. As one respondent stated:

"Nowadays there is a strong connection between citizens and politics but also a great disappointment about political agents' performance". (Ana Catarina Mendes, PS).

Some respondents also stressed the simple **lack of political interest** of immigrant communities. Although admitting that communities vary in their behaviours, among and within themselves, respondents preferred not to stress the behaviour of any community in particular. Still, there were a few references to the Brazilian community as being little participative in contrast with the Cape-Verdean often mentioned as the most active and politically visible among those with political rights.

2. Language was also signalled as a problem not only when immigrants don't dominate it, but also when they do. In fact, speaking Portuguese was in some respondents' views one reason underneath the lack of political concern about a better social and political integration of lusophone immigrants. In other words, politicians have been assuming for too long that such communities are more easily integrated because they speak Portuguese. As a result, public policies regarding immigration have not been designed to accommodate ways to stimulate in particular a more active participation among lusophone communities. The fact that immigration is not a fracturing issue was also noted as contributing ironically to this state of mind because it seems to merit less attention than other issues in the political agenda.



3. Also pointed out as a reason is the **social and political capitals** that immigrants bring from their homelands and which in some cases are low, not facilitating their political engagement here. This was however subject to much debate in one of the focus groups. While some participants supported this idea, Manuel Correia (PCP, CGTP) totally opposed, stressing that in many cases, lusophone immigrants come from societies with strong political participation, visible in higher rates of electoral participation than those registered in Portugal.

4. **Economic reasons:** For some respondents, a main explanation for immigrants' lack of political visibility lies in the weight of their economic position. Pedro Costa Jorge, CDS-PP militant, considers that one reason why Lisbon still has few PIB and IP lies in the fact that *"communities there may be huge and have some labour impact, but still possess very limited economic impact"*, and that dictates in his opinion why they are not perceived by local powers as determinant for political decision making. In another perspective, economic vulnerability is a strong explanation for people's lack of political engagement. Immigrants who still have many problems with their social integration, especially those in the lower ranks of the social ladder, are more likely to feel less motivated, or have little time to dedicate to other life spheres such as associativism and political activism. Most respondents from left to the right, with and without migrant background, (i.e. Jorge Humberto, Elsa Pais, Ana Mendes, Teresa Caeiro, Pedro Costa Jorge, Susana Amador, António Filipe, Rosa Rosa Rabiais, José Luis Ferreira, Cecília Honório) were rather consensual in establishing a strong link between economic vulnerability and lack of resources (time at front) for political as well as cultural engagement, since people are in those cases abandoned to the need of fulfilling basic priorities.

5. **Legal reasons:** Most interviewees consider the persistence of the **reciprocity principle (RP)** as a paramount obstacle to immigrants' political participation, stating that electoral capacity at least at the local level should be given to *all migrants* on the basis of legal residence. Reciprocity is though not consensual among interviewees. Some considered it should be abolished even at the national level (Cecília Honório, BE; Rui Marques, former High Commissioner for Immigration and founder of a new political party in 2008 called MEP that was extinct in 2012), while others stressed it should be abolished at the local level but kept at the national one (António Filipe, PCP) and others held to a more conservative position, considering that the reciprocity principle has a legal frame provided by international law that cannot be simply overstepped (Teresa Caeiro, CDS-PP). Still, even in this last case, the respondent saw space for legal innovations in order to widen immigrants' political integration, stating *"I think it is difficult to run away from this principle, but I don't see it as an inevitable one."* The principle was also openly defended as in the case of Pedro Costa Jorge (CDS-PP) who considered that political participation has to be framed by reciprocity. In his opinion, it makes all sense that people may actively participate in the residing country following this legal frame that is also accepted and practiced by other countries. He also considers that as countries become overwhelmed by huge immigrant communities, it becomes more understandable that the receiving societies get more cautious about opening the doors of political rights even when framed by reciprocity. This principle gathered also a few sympathies as a result of what seems to be its biggest political virtue: to foster the widening of political rights of Portuguese Diaspora. José Luis Ferreira (PEV) sees reciprocity as a way to reinforce our communities' political visibility and in that sense it is a good principle that could be expanded both to increase the participation of immigrant communities here and of Portuguese diaspora in other countries, *"especially the lusophone countries"*. In general terms, most respondents within the entire political spectrum agreed that the reciprocity principle is



relevant in the diplomatic relations between states, but that for the practical purpose of fostering the integration of communities at local level, it has become too constraining:

“Reciprocity sets a vicious circle. If we want to cut with that circle, we must go a step forward and be more flexible in granting political rights to other communities.” (Susana Amador, PS)

“Reciprocity ... has become an obstacle (...) not an advantage.” (Rui Marques, MEP)

“Reciprocity is very important, but we may start doing the opposite way: meaning to privilege the access to rights without looking at reciprocity. This is a personal position. The party has not brought this into the agenda yet.” (Fernando Negrão, PSD.)

It is also relevant to note the consistencies or evolution that a longitudinal comparison may reveal about some of these respondents³⁰. One PSD key actor, for instance, stated in this research that:

“It makes all sense that immigrant citizens may not only become militants but also achieve wider action through electoral participation, voting and getting elected. (...) I have argued in the due place on several occasions that [reciprocity] is a principle that should have already been expurgated from the Constitution. I have proved it politically and technically.” (Feliciano Barreiras Duarte).

However, back in 2002, this actor did not consider the immigrants’ political rights to be a priority, stating:

“I don’t think this [access to political rights] is the most relevant for communities right now. Actually, those who already have the possibility of participating politically, do so in a very incipient way.(...) They are more concerned about their security, jobs and health conditions.” (Feliciano Barreiras Duarte, cit in Carvalhais, 2007: 131).

6. Closely related to this analysis on the reciprocity principle, were the respondents’ comments on the possible relevance of **historical ties** in particular with lusophone communities. Positions varied between what participants deem to be their actual role, and what they believe should be their role as far as the political integration of migrant communities of lusophone culture is concerned. In regard to what participants assume as a reality, they were all unanimous in affirming that these are ties with a special place in the country’s collective emotions. There were no doubts that regardless of how these ties should be politically treated, they have a role and dimension of their own. As for how each respondent assessed the political significance of these ties in the political integration of lusophone communities, positions varied between (1) those who argued against any form of positive discrimination on the basis of cultural advantage, and (2) those that saw the strategic pertinence of

³⁰ Consistencies between discourses made a decade ago (Carvalhais (2007) and made at present by other repeated participants (Celeste Correia, Fernando Negrão, António Filipe, Fernando Ká, Carlos Vianna) were though much more commonly found. In other words, their main perceptions about the low political participation of migrants in Portuguese society, their critique to the reciprocity principle, their critique to migrant communities particularly to the associative lack of stronger public engagement, their argument in favor of expanding at least local political rights on the basis of residence, their critique to the conservative functioning of political parties in general terms, along with the recognition also made of some efforts on legislative grounds to reinforce migrants’ social and political integration, have continued to be associated to these actors’ discourses. This, in a sense, is also revealing sign of a certain stagnation of the reality regarding immigrants’ political integration in Portugal.



such discrimination. The former were often combined with the rejection of quota system and rejection of the principle of reciprocity. The latter were often combined with the argument of a revised reciprocity, that is, one capable of including more communities, with special emphasis on the lusophone which are still out (immigrants from Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Timor).

As an example of the first stand, Jorge Humberto, a politician of African descent, considers that Portugal is a humanist country, a country of the World, a global nation, and must permit therefore the same conditions of political participation for all its immigrant communities, without positive discrimination on grounds of historical ties, although history is important. By the same token, António Filipe (PCP) and Ana Catarina Mendes (PS) consider that while being undeniable the existence of a debt towards the lusophone communities; the obligation of memory; the need for stronger cooperation and the need to combat many deficiencies in their social integration, this cannot be solved simply by giving these communities preference in accessing political rights. In the words of Elza Pais: *“The historical bounds cannot be facilitators of inequalities.”* With a different rationale, Teresa Caeiro (CDS-PP militant) stresses that historical relations are important but *“(…) cannot be seen as sovereign over other relations. In that regard, some flexibility in the Reciprocity Principle does not have to contemplate preferably the communities under these historical relations.”* On the contrary, Celeste Correia (a PS militant with Cape-Verdean descent³¹) considered that the lusophone communities should have preferable treatment. As brothers sharing the same language, there should be a stronger relation consecrated legally in more visible ways. Paulo Edson da Cunha (PSD militant) and Jorge Taylor, both of African descent too, align with this position, as Taylor’s statement illustrates:

“Portugal has gone very far in promoting ties with lusophone communities (by the nationality law for instance). This means a legacy and a compromise that must be preserved and respected. Younger lusophone generations are losing sight of history. Whether good or bad it is our past and must be preserved as part of our relationships and identities. Lusophone communities feel Portuguese and African at the same time, and this must mean something!”
(Jorge Taylor, PEV militant).

For Rosa Moniz, an independent politician of Cape-Verdean descent, now presiding the Associação Cabo-Verdeana de Sintra (ACVSi), the pride about lusophony should clearly be more consistent with political practices including thus, forms of some positive discrimination *“not as a way to be better treated in regard to other communities, but in recognition of the cultural proximity between Portugal and those who share the same language.”*

Other respondents were not in favour of positive discriminations, but recognized the need to treat cautiously the countries with special historical ties with Portugal. Historical ties are important also for what they may mean politically and economically for the Portuguese Diaspora, especially the one residing in Angola and Mozambique, both countries with no reciprocity agreements on citizenship rights with Portugal. Morais Sarmiento (PSD) fears therefore that some diplomatic difficulties that have recently emerged in the political relationship between Portugal and lusophone countries such as Angola might dislocate future local elites to other foreign centres in the pursuit of their

³¹ See her biographic note at the end.



educational training, weakening in the long run the ties those elites used to have with Portuguese academies and culture.

7. Political reasons: Respondents were all, without exception, unanimous in portraying the **Portuguese political class** as quite **conservative** and **closed** as far as the functioning of their internal structures are concerned. This was interpreted as being also behind the lack of participation of immigrants as it will be analysed ahead. This reason was though often combined with a critical appreciation of **immigrants' passivity**. Jorge Taylor, a young politician of African descent, militant and PEV's secretariat member, underlined this lack of interest among communities, stressing these should be more pro-active. Likewise, Paulo Edson Cunha, also a young politician of Angolan descent, with Portuguese nationality, PSD militant, stressed this very same lack of interest. As a result, even if the **quota system** was spontaneously referred by various respondents as theoretically a way to increase the number of IP and PIB in political leading roles and indirectly to stimulate the engagement of communities with electoral registration and voting, it was nevertheless not believed to be the best solution to create stronger ties with democratic habits.

4.1.1. The political elites' perceptions on who represents immigrants

Regardless of how much immigrants participate politically, another different matter is to reflect on who is responsible for representing them. Several answers were formulated and which can be systematized in two main groups: those who see immigrants as being deficiently represented or even totally unrepresented in society; and those who identify various structures of (in)direct (non)political and institutional representation. In the first group there were actors such as Paulo Edson da Cunha, PIB, who considers that almost no one represents immigrants. The same frustrated view was shared by Morais Sarmiento (PSD). As for the second group, there were those who mentioned political structures as the main representatives and those who pointed out structures located in civil society. In brief, there were references to:

- a) **Political parties:** For Pedro Silva Pereira (PS), for instance, political parties are who better play that role because they represent everybody including those who are not voters.
- b) **Sovereign organs:** According to Rui Marques (founder of a political party, MEP and former High Commissioner for Immigration) "*Supposedly in a State of Law, the sovereignty organs have that function.*" And indeed, while no other political participant indicated sovereign actors, one actor from civil society (Sidinéia Yamaguchi, *Associação Mais Brasil*, located in Porto) mentioned the Courts as sovereign independent organs which represent best the immigrants' rights. In Yamaguchi's opinion, Courts are all that relevant because they are in the leading front of protecting labour migrants' rights. As a lawyer, she considers that while courts might have at times a margin for discrimination within the limits of the law, they usually decide in full protection of the labour rights of migrants which is fundamental in their whole process of further integration.
- c) **Catholic Church:** although seen as not having the responsibility for political representation, it was often mentioned for its strong social action. The *Obra Católica para as Migrações* was also mentioned.



- d) **ACIDI:** “as a structure without a police dimension, unlikely to the SEF (Foreigners and Borders Bureau), ACIDI inspires trust” (Gustavo Behr, militant of the BE and vice-president of Casa do Brasil) notes.
- e) **COCAI:** as an entity with a *forum* structure where associations are represented and are called to take part in the process of collective reflection about public policies, it was also mentioned by various actors. Again, not spared from criticism, the COCAI was defined by Moniz as “*a façade*”. She justified her definition by describing what she believes is as simulation of an open debate, with topics/issues being sent for associations for discussion and formulation of opinions only when in advanced stages of the decision making process; when there is already too much background work made, and with associations being asked to send their opinions within a few days. Doing this, while also knowing that not all associations have enough time and expertise to read the material and help the associative leaders to convey well sustained opinions in due time, reveals the structure is not seriously committed with debate. In a less intense manner, Gustavo Behr (BE and Brazilian Association) also mentions that COCAI should have much more visibility and that immigrant communities with seats there should actually have more decision power, contrary to what happens in the present model where governmental entities are the majority.
- f) **Immigrant associations:** these were often referred as being representatives of immigrants, but covering a wide palette of opinions, from quite enthusiastic to rather hesitating ones. In general terms, all actors, whether politicians or not, agree that **associations** are **opportunity spaces** for immigrants’ expression of interests and development of a strong civic voice. They are in many regards good substitutes of the State in promoting social rights; they are providers of relevant information to migrants; they help therefore individuals to get in touch with their citizenship rights and duties; and they may actually be important pressure groups, if they lobby efficiently next to the political institutions. But most participants also agreed that immigrant associations are still too limited in their capacities and powers.

The fact is, in democracy, the political power is anchored in the democratic vote, thus, as Rui Marques sated: “*At the end of the day, in practical terms, whoever does not hold political rights is someone who is not actually represented.*”

4.2. Civil society’ perceptions on the relationship of political parties with immigrants’ political participation

The following section comprises a brief analysis of the main perceptions of various actors located in civil society that were interviewed for the purpose of this project, namely in trade union confederations, Catholic Church, immigrant associations and entities that deal close with migration issues, such as the Portuguese representation of the *International Organisation for Migration* (IOM).

We look at how these actors understand the political parties’ approach to immigration in Portugal, as well as parties’ approach to the political participation of immigrants and people with immigrant background, whether as electors, or as militants and active members of their internal political structures. We also look at these actors’ perceptions on the kind of commitment “immigrants” seem to have with political life, that is, whether they are active or not. We look also at who seems to be



best representing immigrants, or who should be in that charge. Following this, we are interested also in their opinions on the relationships that associations/institutions in general and theirs in particular have with political life, in terms of fostering communities' social and political integration, as well as their views on how civil society, namely through associativism, is contributing or should be contributing to deepen the integration of immigrant communities.

Immigrants' engagement with politics and with associative life was described as being rather low. This deserved a unanimous position among all interviewees and focus groups' participants located in civil society. As for reasons that might explain this lack of civic culture, of strong sense of citizenship, they varied across the participants but there was a general alignment with the reasons stated by political elites.

1. Cultural reasons: Again, one main reason seems to be rooted in society's lack of engagement with rights and citizenship, which in turn affects the perception of people on the importance of claiming for active civic and political roles. João Silva (*Olho Vivo*) signals precisely this and Jackilson Pereira (*Moinho da Juventude*) insists that this mentality is translated into citizens who do not believe in themselves and do not seek for empowerment.

2. Social and economic reasons: Manuel Correia (PCP, CGTP) underlines the economic subordination of most immigrants, which disables them to reach out for other spheres of life, including capacity of performing more attentive parental roles in schools. Júlia Cruz, coordinator of the *support cabinet to the registration of foreigners eligible to vote* of the Lisbon national immigrant support centre (the one-stop-shop), provides an illustrative example of this, by stating that from April to September 2013, of all immigrants that could register to vote to the local elections of September 2013, only fifteen came seeking for information regarding political rights. She admits that the recently created office for information on electoral registration (GARE) is still rather new (was only launched in March 2013) and unknown to most people. Adding to that she believes that there is also a lack of people's concern about politics.

3. Legal reasons: The persistence of the reciprocity principle was criticised also by civil society actors, since it keeps other immigrant communities away from political citizenship; does not strengthen their ties with the democratic regime; and leaves migrants with naturalisation as the sole gate to enter full integration which is against freedom of will and choice.

4. Political reasons: While recognised as **legitimate formal representatives** in public decision making organs of all citizens, immigrants included, **parties** were, again, seen as a **major obstacle** due to their internal practices, strategies of dialogue with immigrant communities and relevance given in their agendas to immigrants' integration. Ideological differences were noticed, but not much valued in general. Still, left wing parties were criticized for having become too passive over the last years, considering in particular their legacy of a legislative frame that although not perfect, has been positive for immigrants' integration and internationally recognised as such.

Parties are quite keen on approaching communities, especially associations, during pre-electoral moments, Antónia Pimental (*Morabeza*) noted, but incapable or unwilling to go further with that interest after elections. As consequence of this distance between parties and communities, immigrants appear as **totally underrepresented** in parties' internal structures. Various participants referred again the use of PIB and IP simply as **electoral baits** with non-eligible places in the parties'



local lists of candidates. This has been for Antónia Pimentel (*Morabeza*) the reason why she has turned out invitations from parties to join lists, a position Francisco Pereira (MICA) totally supports as *“immigrants must be more demanding about the places they can accept”*.

Again **closed** and **conservative** were adjectives often applied to characterise parties' internal functioning in regard to the opportunities they give to PIBs and IPs. Mário Silva (CPAC) who felt *“very angry with political parties”*, described what he saw as an example of how political parties misbehave, by referring to the 2009 local elections in Oeiras:

“(...) parties went to the neighbourhoods to get votes but, in the end, lists had very few candidates from immigrant communities and, most importantly, [parties] had very few concerns about immigration in their agendas.” (Mário Silva, CPAC).

However, he also felt the need to do justice to left wing parties which in his own experience were always much more receptive to talk about and *with* immigrants.

“The PCP is always there, always looking for immigrants' rights. (...) Maybe it is for the votes, maybe for ideological beliefs, I don't know. But they are always much more active and when we (CPAC) wanted to be heard in the Parliament, or to discuss something regarding immigrant communities, they would be the first we contacted because they were also the first to be interested. The BE too, but, PCP was quite obvious and this should be noted.” (Mário Silva, CPAC).

This positive note on left wing parties was also conveyed by other participants, but we cannot forget that some of them also have connections to left wing parties (e.g. Manuel Correia is CGTP syndicalist and also PCP active militant; Felismina Mendes runs the Associação Cabo-Verdeana de Setúbal, ACVSe and ran in 2010 to the European Parliament as candidate by the PCP; Gustavo Behr is vice-president of Casa do Brazil and also militant of the BE).

5. According to civil society's participants, another reason underneath the parties' lack of interest about immigration and about opening their doors to immigrants was the **absence of immigration as a fracturing issue** which *“induces parties in the wrong belief that everybody is integrated, thus, immigration needs not to be a priority in the political agenda. (...) Immigration is a relatively pacific issue in our society which unfortunately is not capitalized to create conditions for better political integration.”* (Paulo Mendes, AIPA president).

4.2.1. Civil society's role in immigrants' political citizenship: realities and intended actions

Repeating the question addressed to political elites, civil society and immigrant associations' leaders were asked about who better represents immigrant communities in Portugal. The results were that there is wide agreement that interests of immigrants must be represented *in* the National Parliament and *by* legally recognized political parties. But since this happens only partially, *“representation of rights and interests are left basically to associations”* Mário de Carvalho (ACL) noted. Still, there were also participants that elected ACIDI as the prime organism in the struggle for immigrants' integration such as Mário Silva (CPAC), Catarina Tavares (Trade Union UGT) and Paulo Mendes (AIPA).



“It’s kind of funny - it’s only my perception - but, although the ACIDI is attached to the Government, it represents better, and is a much more organized voice in the name of immigrants than associations are.” (Mário Silva)

But ACIDI was also subject of critiques of Rosa Moniz (ACVSi), who stated that:

“We have the ACIDI that, in theory, should represent the interests of the immigrants... but one thing is theory another one is practice. (...) It’s more like a corridor between the State and immigrants. (...) At present, immigrants don’t actually have anyone to defend them (...) [ACIDI] is pretending that immigrants are being heard.”

The widest converge on who best represents immigrants’ interests was though for associations, described as privileged bridges between communities (Sidinéia Yamaguchi); channels of communities’ interests in the public sphere (Carlos Trindade, Trade Union CGTP); and democratic spaces where communities share cultures, concerns and aspirations (Catarina Tavares, Trade Union UGT).

Associations *“exist not for fun but for necessity”*, said Carlos Trindade and may turn into fundamental spaces of immigrants’ political empowerment. However, they must want to become that. Indeed, while recognized and cherished by most participants for their roles and potentials, associations were also perceived as spaces of limited efficacy. Lack of multiple resources (money, boards, expertise, time), lack of dialogue and cooperative strategies among associative leaders (i.e. Fernando Ká from Aguienso complains about leaders and associations that seek to become more notorious than others), and lack of empowering agendas, were among the internal explanations for such limited efficacy.

“Associations do wonderful projects but they should be much more active, give more voice and visibility to their communities, go out and talk to them and not simply go for cultural agendas.” (Mário Silva, CPAC)

Still several examples can be provided on associations that have been committed in promoting immigrants political participation. There are two major associations of immigrants in Portugal working, among others areas, on this issue: the Immigrant Association in the Azores (*Associação dos Imigrantes nos Açores – AIPA*) with the project *“who does not does not count”* and the Association for Cooperation and Development (*Associação para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento – Morabeza*) with the project *“local vote, local citizenship”*. Both projects aim to contribute to greater political participation of foreigners, by increasing the number of registered foreign nationals and raise the rate of political participation of foreigners (further in annex 3).

In addition it should be mentioned the Platform of Representative Structures of Immigrant Communities in Portugal (*Plataforma das Estruturas Representativas das Comunidades Imigrantes*) – PERCIP) - 64 immigrant associations that defined in 2006 a platform to work together under the same goal of promoting immigrants integration in Portugal - that works among other areas on immigrant rights. Moreover, PERCIP was also created with the aim of promoting the area of voter registration for TCNs and to help the exercise of their right to vote, since the authorities concluded that this issue alone was a hard work process³².

³² For more information, see <http://www.percip.pt/> (Accessed on 27 December 2010).



5. Immigrants effective access to political parties and political positions in Portugal

As reported by the Immigrant Citizens Survey (KBF/MPG, 2012), most immigrants want more diversity in politics: surveyed immigrants were asked about whether they think that the country definitely or probably needed more Members of Parliament (MPs) with an immigrant background, being the supporters in Portuguese cities relatively high (between 64% in Faro and 78% e Setúbal, with Lisbon with 74%). Immigrants from the Portuguese Speaking African Countries and Brazil stated most frequently the need to increase the number of such MPs; while immigrants from Eastern Europe were the least likely to acknowledge this need. When asked why, 90 to 95% of the surveyed immigrants in Portuguese cities answered that MPs with an immigrant background would better understand them, better represent them, and would be symbolically important for the country. These findings highlight the relevance of opening up political organisations, such as political parties, to achieve higher political participation rates among immigrants.

Regarding the attitudes of party leaders towards diversity within the lists of candidates to the Parliament, a survey conducted within a research project conducted by Freire and Viegas (2009) included one question on the topic. In a set of interviews made in 2008 to party leaders one of the questions was related to the need to further include members of typically excluded groups such as women or young people. Some of them also expressed their opinions regarding the integration of sexual or ethnic minorities. Since this question was marginal to the project they were not analysed by the authors; however, the complete interviews are included as annexes to the publications resulting from the research. The answers of representatives of the national boards of three of the main Portuguese parties are as follows:

PSD (National Council): [After talking about the importance of integrating women and young people] *"Basically I don't think there are any other groups [to accommodate in party lists], since in Portugal there is not much debate on the integration of minorities, and that is not a question that PSD has ever posed"*

PS (National Political Commission): [Asked whether party officials think of Portuguese from ethnic minorities when approving electoral lists]: *"I think so, yes, mostly in contexts where such minorities are more present. We already have had a MP born in Guinea Bissau [Fernando Ká]. I think in larger electoral districts that issue is a concern".*

BE (National Board): *"When it comes to minorities, our discourse is desynchronised from our own reality. BE is a party with a discourse very focused on the situation of minorities, their inclusion and their political empowerment. In practice, that has not yet translated into the election of members of minorities - sexual or ethnic. We almost did it, but failed to".* Other representative stated that *"We are committed to, when it comes to immigrants and sexual minorities, translate our political concern into names in our lists."*



In this research we also tried to capture both the participation of immigrants in the internal structures of political parties and the presence of immigrant politicians in elected positions. As such the following subchapters summarises the characterisation made of political parties' rules and practices in regard to the presence of immigrants in their structures, to the attention given to immigration issues in their (electoral) agendas, to the integration of immigrant politicians (IP) and/or politicians with immigrant background (PIB) in the lists of candidates to local elections, and, finally, to their partnerships and networking with civic actors closer to immigrant communities and ethnic minorities.

5.1. Immigrant politicians and politicians with immigrant background in the internal structures of parties

When trying to dig deeper the reasons that might explain the underrepresentation of immigrants in the internal structures of political parties in Portugal, in political leading roles, as well as in lists of candidates to local organs, especially in eligible places, respondents' analysis revolved mainly around **power, lobbying and strategy**:

1. The existence of **strongly rooted power relations** inside the parties that cannot be easily challenged. One female respondent without immigrant background (Elza Pais, MP from PS) described the internal life of a party as one requiring the mastering of "*established internal codes not always easy to understand*", referring to the complex net of relationships that nourish the existent *status quo*. For some respondents, this same complexity of relationships, along with the formal rules on the competences of various internal organs does actually exempt the parties' leaders from most responsibilities in the design of the electoral lists. In other words, their power is limited in the making of lists and must share the capacity to suggest names for the lists with internal strictures such as the *Concelhias*. This, on the other hand, means that it is at the **local level** that potential PIBs and IPs must get to be noticed.

The process of elaboration of lists varies across the parties, with different weights of the national leadership and local structures. The process is decided by party members, with no open primary type institutional mechanisms. Organic Law 3/2006 imposed quotas regarding gender equality. In practice, for every 3 seats there must be male and female candidates. This applies to the lists for National Parliament, the European Parliament and for Local Executives. There are no formal quotas for immigrants. Still, Vianna (2010: 227) and Marques et al. (2008: 57) mention an exception in which the inclusion of a candidate with an immigrant background in an eligible position was part of an agreement signed between the Socialist Party and four migrant organisations in 1991. This agreement was described by Celeste Correia (MP from PS with Cape Verdean origin), who benefit from it to get into the Portuguese Parliament in 1995. Marques, Santos and Leitão (2008) reported that the concession of the right to participate in local elections in 1996 brought not only a direct effect in political participation, but also the campaigns of registration and the electoral campaign, which were "an important experience of the engagement of national and local associations in the formal political process" (Marques et al., 2008: 59).

2. The **lack of lobbying of immigrants** is through an obstacle to this. Jorge Humberto, a PIB of Cape-Verdean descent, civically very active since high school, says that communities have not reached



collective consciousness yet and points out the example of the Cape Verdean community whose associations are often divided in accordance with the original places of members (different islands) and how this solidarity limited by geographic criteria causes the incapacity to have strong common leaderships that could be spotted by parties as relevant to capture. But like other interviewed PIBs, Humberto believes that most of all, it takes **personal commitment** to search for opportunities also in the political sphere. The relevance of lobbying was also present in the words of Francisco Pereira, a young politician of Cape Verdean descent, participant in the third focus group organised in Portugal. He was very insistent on the need of communities to join, identify the best political actors among them and lobby collectively on their behalf next to the various political parties during the four years before the next local elections that will be held in 2017. For Pereira, it's all about a comprehensive strategy, collective cohesion with special emphasis on the role of associations, and persistent lobby.

3. The lack of parties' awareness about the electoral relevance of immigrants. Once parties begin to realise that these communities composed by immigrants and nationals of immigrant descent are demographically expressive and have their own specificities, they will be more careful about calling out candidates who may be closer to these communities' reality.

The effective and perceived distance between parties and immigrants may also be illustrated by one of the few episodes that came into public discussion in recent years. In the 2011 campaign for the election to the Parliament, several Asian immigrants participated in a rally of the Socialist Party, which promptly attracted the suspicions of journalists about the true commitment of these supporters. An interviewed immigrant campaigner was quoted as saying "*Sócrates [the leader of PS and then Prime Minister] is a great person, he took care of my [Portuguese] citizenship, he took care of everything*". According to other reportage, there were also over 100 people of African ascent coming from the outskirts of Lisbon. This could perhaps be perceived as a search for engagement with immigrants' communities, which effectively benefited of the approval of the 2006 Citizenship Law. However, some argued that the PS was simply using the support of these immigrants in exchange for meals. Both the immigrants and a source in the Socialist campaign denied this: "*they are not paid, they are voluntary supporters*".³³ Francisco Assis, then the parliamentary leader of PS, stated that "*these citizens do a very relevant political activity within the Party Section of Almirante Reis*", [Lisbon avenue with a large concentration of immigrant population]. However, a newspaper went to the party and interviewed some of the local members about the activities of immigrants: "*Immigrants? We have some neighbours, but not here. A Mozambican comes by from time to time, but I have never seen one Indian here*"³⁴. After widespread suspicions about the genuine political commitment of these migrants, they would not be seen again in later campaign rallies³⁵.

Still, if there is a place where prospects on immigrants' involvement and parties' receptivity look promising, it is the local level. Susana Amador, a PS militant and local leader (is currently mayor of the Town Hall of Odivelas), for instance, considers that the number of PIB candidates has increased in the last local elections. In her opinion, more and more parties' local structures recognize the

³³ <http://www.cmjornal.xl.pt/noticia.aspx?channelId=EC736CA6-BC68-46EE-B527-19AE2DBDB23A&contentId=875B12C3-552A-40DD-87B5-E005161C665E>

³⁴ <http://www1.ionline.pt/conteudo/125840-partido-socialista-na-seccao-da-almirante-reis-imigrantes-so-mesmo-na-vizinhanca>

³⁵ <http://expresso.sapo.pt/ps-tira-paquistaneses-da-campanha=f650496>



relevance of including immigrants or PIB candidates in the lists not simply because of their ethnic background, but because they facilitate the dialogue of the party and of its local members in decision making positions with the immigrant communities, and with neighbourhoods still facing serious problems of social integration as in the case of Cova de Santo Adrião in Pontinha.

Indeed, there was a wide consent among the respondents on the **relevance that PIB and IP have or may have in the parties' relationships with communities**. As for why they are relevant, the most signalled reasons were:

Know-how: IP and PIB may bring great added value to parties' approach to immigration, integration, social cohesion, because they have a powerful know-how that parties should recognize. They can bring useful inputs for the decision making process due to their experience on the ground and should be present in the making of public policies for that matter. By the same token, their presence is very important for communities, which see them as privileged interlocutors, as individuals more capable of implementing new social projects that will actually work for the sake of immigrant communities' specificities.

Communication facilitators: As Pedro Lomba (Independent, in the present PSD/CDS-PP governmental coalition as state secretary)³⁶ stated *"immigrant politicians are definitely the best positioned to dialogue with parties and with their own communities"*, because *"they facilitate communication, they understand better the communities' needs and demands"*. Rosa Rabiais (PCP) agrees on this vision, considering that immigrants like to see people from their own communities in the parties' lists; they trust them more because they feel they are closer to the communities, closer to understand their problems and to act therefore in accordance to such problems once they have decision power. This should be enough to stimulate the political parties to have more "immigrants" in their lists, as a way to have competent people to deal with communities that normally face greater problems. Fernando Negrão (PSD) shows this is a position that runs across all the ideological spectrum, as he too considers that having an active immigrant politician or one with immigrant descent, would be immediately perceived as very positive by the immigrant communities in areas where they are very numerous and often forgotten.

Simultaneously, respondents, in particular those with immigrant background, signalled that while being a politician may be relevant in accessing the communities, once elected they are and must be seen as **representatives of all citizens** and not only of communities in particular. Hélder Amaral (MP from CDS/PP) for instance, was very vehement in stressing the need to avoid the ghettoization of identities. Also Rui Marques (former High Commissioner for Immigration) stressed that the ambition of migrants and of individuals with migrant background willing to engage actively with politics must be to walk towards not their specialization as immigrant voices, as this could end up discriminating them and their communities, but towards their acceptance as active political citizens regardless of their background. That is also one reason why he opposes to the idea of adopting a quota system that could secure the presence of PIB and IP. PIBs like Francisco Pereira, Celeste Correia, Hélder Amaral, Lívio de Moraes, among others, while understanding why PIBs and IPs may be perceived by communities as important actors to speak out for them, aligned though with the idea that once

³⁶ Secretary to the Deputy Minister and of Regional Development (official name *Secretário Adjunto do Ministro Adjunto e do Desenvolvimento Regional*).



elected, people have to realize that these politicians are not just representing and must not simply represent their communities.

Following this, it was interesting to note that the **perceptions** some political actors with immigrant background (Hélder Amaral), without immigrant background (António Filipe, Elza Pais) and located in civil society (Paulo Mendes, Mário de Carvalho, both of African descent) had about IP and PIB was frequently different from the perceptions of these about themselves. It was notoriously the case of Celeste Correia, mentioned by most interviewees (Hélder Amaral included) as a key actor in representing the Cape Verdean community and other migrants. Celeste Correia, however, stressed that whilst member of the Portuguese national Parliament, she was representative of all those who elected her throughout the socialist party, regardless of national or ethnic condition.

In the words of a CDS-PP militant (Teresa Caeiro) it would be *“little intelligent”* not to see the **relevance of PIBs and IPs** in conceiving better channels to approach and understand the immigrant communities’ demands and realities.

However, parties are criticized precisely for not seeing these opportunities. In Celeste Correia’s opinion, as a PIB herself, parties are too conservative, closed and *“petty”* about strangeness, describing them as *“highly competitive power machines”* not only for immigrants but for any other citizen daring to challenge the positions of those in power already. She resumes this logics saying that *“It’s all about fighting for positions within the parties’ local organs”*.

As Fernando Negrão (PSD) stated: *“Nowadays parties’ functioning does not help them to open up to immigrants, even when recognizing the relevance of such communities”*. This lack of opportunities for immigrants and people of immigrant descent within parties and decision-making structures was more poignantly stressed by interviewees placed in civil society who registered the fact that most often parties choose PIBs or IPs simply for non-eligible positions in the lists of candidates to local elections. Previous work of Carvalhais (2004, 2006 and 2007) had revealed exactly the same critiques conveyed mostly by politicians with immigrant background and actors placed in civil society. The persistence of these perceptions is a worrying sign that what was concluded a decade ago is still present and evolution has thus not been too significant in regard to immigrants’ political presence in Portuguese society.

5.2. Immigrant politicians and politicians with immigrant background in Portuguese parliamentary structures

So far, all members of parliament (MPs) in the National Parliament (*Assembleia da República*) have been Portuguese citizens, even if holding dual citizenship. As we have seen, the only citizens who may be elected to the parliament are Brazilians (under the Special Status of Equality) and none has been until present.

The interviewees and participants of the focus groups mainly provided two examples of MPs that they perceived as having immigrant background: Celeste Correia (PS) and Hélder Amaral (CDS-PP).



Celeste Correia was born in Cape Verde in 1948 and studied in Lisbon. Already with dual citizenship she entered for the first time in the Portuguese Parliament in 1995³⁷ with an invitation from António Costa (PS politician, Goan descent, presently mayor of Lisbon city hall, and MP at that time). That invitation was part of a special programme of one month promoted by that MP to bring immigrant leaders to support the discussion of immigration policies and extraordinary regularization processes that were being defined and discussed at that time in the Parliament. With her, other immigrant leader entered in the Parliament for the same period of 1 month by the hands of PS – Fernando Ká, born in Guinea-Bissau (also interviewed for the purpose of this project). The PCP also integrated Manuel Correia in the Parliament in this period of intense discussions of immigration policies. Only Celeste Correia stayed in the Parliament after that period, formally running to the Parliament with PS from 1995 to 2011. In the focus group she assessed her 16 years in Parliament as highly positive for her role in the conception approval of important Legal Acts for the life of immigrants in Portugal, such as the law for the financial support of immigrants associations, the reform of the citizenship law and the creation of ACIDI.

Hélder Amaral born in Angola is also in Parliament, but representing the Christian-Democratic party (CDS-PP). He was elected in an inner district of Portugal (Viseu) and he is also the local head of CDS-PP. Therefore his trajectory is not the same of some former MPs of African descent who came from the Lisbon area, where a much larger number of immigrants live³⁸. There are cases of dual-citizens, such as Pedro Costa Jorge (CDS-PP), who during the interview explained he has also Brazilian citizenship by *jus sanguinis* since recently, while adding that it had been an option for the economic opportunities that personally this might bring to him.

At the local level we are more likely to find non-national politicians (IP) and national politicians with immigrant background (PIB)³⁹, or as often mentioned in this work for mere practical reasons “immigrants”⁴⁰. However, the numbers have not been impressive over the years. The results of the 2001 Local Elections - the first after the Declaration 2-A/97 that set the list of countries whose residents in Portugal were entitled with passive and/or active political rights at the local level, revealed that only 5 in 23 670 non-national residents registered to vote, got elected to a local organ.

³⁷ Where she stayed until 2011 and returned in 2014.

³⁸ Further details on Hélder Amaral’s CV are provided ahead.

³⁹ For mere practical reasons we will refer to PIB as politicians with immigrant background and to IP as immigrant politicians. The first category is a much wider one, including those who have been naturalised or have been born abroad under Portuguese colonial order, or have been born in Portugal but with an immigrant background as a result of parents’ origins. Plus, by immigrant background we also mean people with ethnic/racial descent, that is, people of black African descent. We are aware of the methodological challenge of using the expression PIB, with such a broad meaning. However, this research intends to respect the reality as our participants see it and talk about it and that means having some participants (black and none black) who incorporate in their discourses ‘immigrants’ and ‘blacks’ as synonyms. As for IP, this stands exclusively for those who have only one nationality that not the Portuguese one. In both cases, we are talking about active politicians, that is, people who have a political activity whether though party militancy, whether as independents.

⁴⁰ For the purposes of this work, by “immigrant” we mean anyone with non-Portuguese nationality, or with double nationality or Portuguese nationality only but also with immigrant background. As for what we mean by immigrant background, we have explained in the previous footnote. Finally, we clarify also that this section looks at perceptions of various political actors (with and without immigrant background) not only about “immigrants” in general terms (as defined here) but also and more specifically about “immigrants” with political activity (IP and PIB)



In the 2005 local elections, the results were even less inspiring as only 3 in 27 978 non-national residents were elected for local organs (Carvalhais, 2006: 122-3). In 2009, there was no change in the set (Zobel and Barbosa, 2009: 47-60).

Still, several methodological difficulties should be acknowledged in identifying the national condition of all the elected at the local level (Carvalhais, 2004). For instance, there was much confusion around *naturalidade* (birthplace) and *nacionalidade* (nationality), with elected born abroad (as often in the case of Portuguese children born in France) with Portuguese nationality or double nationality appearing the lists provided by town halls and assemblies to the STAPE⁴¹ simply as foreigners.

As for the results of the last local elections (29 September, 2013) the *Direcção Geral da Administração Interna* (DGAI) has not published the lists of all the elected yet, except the lists of mayors. However, it should be noted that in the lists still to be published, and according to the on-line registration forms available to be fulfilled by the elected local organs, there will be no direct reference to the nationality status of the elected, only to the birthplace which is away from being a reliable source of information for the purposes of this work. Still in the focus groups and interviews, made for the purpose of this project, several participants referred to (and exemplified with names) an increase of citizens with immigrant background in the lists of candidates for these last local elections, especially in metropolitan areas with higher concentration of immigrant residents (e.g. Sintra, Loures, Amadora, Oeiras).

6. Obstacles, opportunities and prospects to diversity in Political Parties in Portugal

After analysing the empirical research outcomes, it is possible to summarize the main obstacles, opportunities and prospects that, in the views of the different profile of participants - political actors, party members and relevant stakeholders or representatives of migrant organizations -, affect diversity in Political Parties in Portugal.

6.1. Obstacles

We here list the blockages most commonly spotted by all five profiles of participants as the biggest perils and challengers to immigrant communities' political integration:

Political parties' culture: There is lack of politicians' awareness about the long-term presence of immigrants, mostly translated in the absence of innovative approaches and consistent efforts to develop good public policies on integration.

"Second generation refuses deliberately to get politically involved because... we trained them to feel that lack of attachment (...) we mistreated them. (...) we have thus a few ticking-clock bombs." (Morais Sarmiento, PSD).

⁴¹ STAPE (*Serviço Técnico de Apoio ao Processo Eleitoral* – technical service of support to the electoral process) was estinguished (*Decreto-Lei 78/2007*) and its competences have been transferred to the DGAI.



Parties are too closed, too distant from the reality of most citizens, immigrants included, and too conservative about keeping the *status quo* of their internal power relations. They are also carved by internal high competitiveness which turns participation of new militants a most difficult task.

Legal framework: the constitutional reciprocity principle is the commonly spotted obstacle, as it keeps away from political citizenship most legal residents as already explained in this report. The process of constitutional review may also bring changes in the condition of reciprocity in the access of foreigners to political rights, and as such to their possibility of joining political parties. However, due to the economic crisis and to a high level of partisanship, a Constitutional review does not seem likely in the near future.

Society's political culture: There is generally a lack of interest about political engagement, a strong culture of civic participation. The lack of engagement of immigrant associations with political life does not help to combat the former topic. In the words of Mário de Carvalho (ACL) argues:

“Communities don't participate much in local politics, therefore they stay out of the decision cores, out of the projects, and out of the electoral market when it comes to being contemplated by parties as potential voters and potential political candidates. This is transversal to all communities that are entitled with political rights. Those which do not have such rights, face even bigger obstacles since they haven't political voice.”

Social integration of immigrants: Low intensity of social integration among many immigrants (affected by unemployment; less education; linguistic limitations, low paid jobs) doesn't help them to spread their interests to other spheres, including political sphere. As some participants mentioned, since political action depends also on the individual's social and human capital, even if the legal frame would grant a wider range of political rights to a wider number of immigrants, their participation would still suffer from the illness of hard daily circumstances. In a different perspective, low intensity of social integration can be understood as the cause itself of political self-exclusion. In Morais Sarmiento's opinion, second generations, although with full Portuguese citizenship, deliberately embrace the ghetto experience and self-exclusion as a political statement against what they feel was an absence of public policies designed to help their parents and their childhood to a much better integration. Finally, the structure and live of parties obey with routines that do not comply with the daily lives of most people, already moulded by difficulties (lack of time is often referred, as many “immigrants” reside in areas quite distant from their labour areas, and have to combine this with parenthood, more poignantly in the case of women, traditionally more affected by the responsibility of providing family support to children and to the elderly).

Cultural obstacles and information deficit: Although usually interconnected with other obstacles, on some occasions, language was highlighted, especially for its impact on acquiring valid information about one's citizenship rights.

Racial prejudice: The black phenotype as source of discrimination was seen as still present in Portuguese society. Its presence although with no institutional visibility - even because that would be legally forbidden –, some participants note that it is in people's emotional reaction to the colour of the skin especially when it comes to share power with that kind of Otherness. The emerging trend of xenophobic politics and racist attacks in Europe was in this context perceived also as an extra-source



of alarm and preoccupation as no society can claim to be spared from these phenomena just on the ground of its internal laws that forbid organised racism.

6.2. Opportunities and prospects

We list here the main opportunities that were mentioned by all our participants, highlighting though that identified opportunities were significantly less than obstacles, and accompanied by much less elaborated arguments.

Participants admitted that opportunities may vary according to differences among and within communities and individuals (periods of residence, legal condition, cultural proximity to the receiving society, language skills, social and economic position, generational and gender identity and so forth). Still, they preferred to speak mostly on what they perceived to be potentially **common opportunities**. Each opportunity was given a different weight and capacity to foster change, although none seemed to be as important as one being the *captain of one's soul*: “Individuals must be proactive, must search for opportunities” (Jorge Humberto, PS) and by adopting this attitude “obstacles may turn into opportunities” (Paulo Edson Cunha, PSD).

Political opportunities: The general political consensus among political parties in Portugal on immigration that, despite all differences and difficulties, exists in Portugal is a very important political capital. In parallel, Portugal does not have extreme right wing discourses and parties with xenophobic ideals.

Cultural opportunities: Language may be an integration facilitator and ease the empowerment most notably of lusophone citizens. Language can be an effective tool in breaking through cultural differences. By the same token, the effective launching of a **Lusophone Citizenship** should be seriously equated as an opportunity of mutual (economic, geopolitical, cultural) enrichment of all lusophone communities in a highly competitive globalised world.

Legal opportunities: Our legal frame on integration of immigrants is quite solid and wide, granting several civic, social and political rights to immigrants. So, although not dismissing the possibility of ameliorating and pushing it further, it becomes obvious that what it offers must be better explored in all its capacities.

Civic opportunities: While there are proximities between associations and political parties, such relations have not jeopardised the independence of the former. Several participants argued that the capacity associations have to escape mutual temptations that could transform them into political weapons, subject to subservience and social discredit, is a legacy to be preserved and gives associations the legitimate right to be in the pole-position of immigrants' empowerment. Associative structures are strong and varied (Pedro Silva Pereira, PS) and may open the doors to the individual's civic engagement since early in his life (e.g. by students associations), as André Jorge (SJR) mentioned. Voluntary work, participation in parents associations are also very important as ways to cooperate with local life, to learn to become a committed citizen, to create strong ties with and knowledge about the local community, and to pass on to children the values of citizenship, civic compromise and solidarity (Manuel Correia; Sidinéia Yamaguchi, Lívio de Morais).



7. Conclusions and recommendations

The following list does not intend to be exhaustive and contemplates both policy-making proposals and other proposals less dependent on public policy orientation. The list is mainly inspired in our participants' contributions. Since they are the ones working in the field, they, better than anyone else academics included, know which demands, challenges and difficulties they face as associate leaders, public decision makers, and as citizens of various social and ethnic backgrounds. However, we find also useful as much as necessary to introduce our own proposals sustained in the field work and in previous experiences that allow us some longitudinal work. In light of this, and for purposes of better systematisation, we have organised the presentation of the proposals as follows.

Political parties

- Political parties must embrace a new approach about their own internal functioning and practices when it comes to accept diversity and to promote it. This implies more than liberal statuses and admission of militants. People with immigrant background and in fact, as any citizen who joins a party, must have equal opportunities to climb up the internal ladder on the basis of competence and personal merit.
- Parties need urgently to start tracking their militants and have clear profiles of who is doing what, and where. This is important not only in what regards a better knowledge of the immigrants' presence inside the party, but also of other sectors and groups in society. Actors cannot go on sustaining their discourses on rather vague assumptions about immigrants' presence in parties, with limited empirical evidence subject to their own personal opinions and experiences. The result of this is also the **crystallization** of actors on images and opinions they *believe* to be correct and representative enough of reality.
- Parties need more method and expertise. As Susana Amador (PS) underlined, parties must study deeper, along with entities such as COCAI, ACIDI, and academics, the immigrant reality, its various communities, their demands, their specificities. In practical terms this means parties must invest on working groups dedicated to immigration studies, in wide cooperation with available national and international expertise. This is fundamental homework if they are to prepare good electoral programmes, and, most importantly, if they are to be well-succeeded in getting voters.
- Parties must be locally sensitive to the presence of communities and to their specificities. As Carlos Trindade exemplified, *"Retired British in the Algarve, are not the African workers of Seixal – they have different needs, they need different approaches thereof"*.

Public Policy

- Immigration and integration need global approaches as far as public policy building is concerned. As an example, education has to be seen as paramount in training people for civic engagement, democratic participation and intercultural interaction. This means that public



policies regarding education need to get great political attention and investment⁴². This was a common proposal among twenty participants.

- Investing on social integration is the best path to create solid grounds for strong political participation. This means operationalizing models for the creation and expanded delivery of social services that “*may help to release pressure from the individual’s shoulders*” (Teresa Caeiro, CDS), especially those economically less empowered or affected by gender inequality. Expanded nets of social care (most particularly kindergartens, daily facilities for the elderly, financial support to families taking care of disabled relatives) were often mentioned by participants as essential not only to better social integration but also to create conditions that may stimulate political engagement.

Legislation

- It is very important to preserve the positive general legislative legacy so far existent, which includes the nationality law, legal instruments to foster integration of migrants (in the health and education systems, in the labour market), the constitutional prohibition of any fascist or xenophobic actors that might promote messages of racism and hate against the Other.
- We need though to go further. Revising the utility of the Reciprocity Principle, in order to widen the access to electoral rights to legal aliens on the basis of residence, is a way. This is underlined by many participants, such as Manuel Correia, Felismina Mendes, João Silva, among many more as already seen.
- Automatic registration in the electoral books of legal residents entitled with political rights could increase political participation as happen with Portuguese above 18 years old, as Carlos Viana (Brazilian Association) and Paulo Mendes (AIPA association) recommended.
- Moving forward to a Lusophone Citizenship, in the pursuit of several (economic, cultural, political) advantages that it could bring to a space connected by the same language, and with free movement of people, is also a proposal that would require specific legislation on that matter.

Civil society - contributions for public policy making and citizenship capital

- Interviewees often mentioned the lack of citizenship capital both of immigrants and nationals. Participants consider that a way to combatting this is to have associations investing more in disseminating citizenship rights, with special emphasis among immigrant communities already entitled with electoral rights. This means associations performing regular and consistent activities next to the communities, including training sessions to inform individuals on their rights, to explain how people may register to vote. These sessions must though be adjusted to the social, cultural and labour context of people. For Mário de Carvalho (ACL) actions must meet immigrants’ expectations and ways of living. He gives the example of popular cultural festivals, dinners or football games as informal spaces where

⁴² Education is traditionally not considered by OCDE studies as making part of the welfare state’s provisions to secure the individual in times of need, being in fact a form of state investment. However, authors such Esping-Andersen argue differently, underlining the importance of having a ‘social investment state’ (Esping-Andersen 2002: 26–67) as a state concerned with the sustainability of its own future. In light of this, Education of children becomes fundamental to look at and to invest in.



information can be introduced to immigrants, instead of expecting them to go to more formal meetings. Bringing young people to see the functioning of local organs, such as town assemblies and halls, is also a way to help them understand better since early ages, how these decision organs work on behalf of the community. This was the proposal of Rosa Moniz (ACVS).

- Immigrant associations are also urged to gather around aggregate structures such as “associative federations” as a way to share resources, expertise, and avoid the overlapping of activities with common purposes such better information of communities. Furthermore, it should be explored the possibility of these platforms work as lobby next to the political parties and decision making structures.

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Annex 2: Persons with immigrant background that interviewees stand as examples of active political engagement

Arlindo Barradas, born in Cape Verde, has been elected In Oeiras, as a member of the municipal assembly.

Jerónimo David, born in Angola, ran for the Parish of Frielas, in the municipality Loures, in 2009, for the Centre-Right party PSD. His list obtained 108 out of 1076 votes, failing to gain the election but still being elected as a parish councillor. In the parish of Unhos, also in Loures, Rolando Borges, of Cape Verdean origin, was the second in the PSD's list and was also elected for the local council.

Lívio de Moraes, a painter born in Mozambique but who acquired Portuguese citizenship, was elected as the president of the parish assembly of Cacém (municipality of Sintra) in 2001, one of the largest in the country. He no longer holds this office.

António Tavares, who was born in Angola but also has Portuguese citizenship, was from 2005 to 2009 an elected member of the Lisbon Municipal Assembly, representing PSD (Centre-right). In 1996 he founded the Association for the Defense of Angolans, an organisation which João Sardinha classifies as having ties to the PSD (Centre-right).

Manuel Correia (see his story below), from the PCP, has also been a member of the Loures Municipal Assembly.

António Costa, the current Mayor of Lisbon, is a native of the city. However, he has Indian (Catholic Goan) ascent. Orlando Costa, his father, was a journalist and author who, in the time of the colonial empire, came from Goa to Lisbon to pursue studies and then settled in the city. António Costa is a major figure in Portuguese politics, who, prior to holding the presidency of the capital, has been a minister of the interior, a Member of the Parliament and a Member of the European Parliament. He is often referred to as one likely future leader of PS and hence a plausible candidate to being a future prime-minister. Despite having a different "ethnic profile" from that of the majority of Portuguese, he is not perceived as an immigrant (which he is not) or even as a descendent of one, thereof.

Jorge Humberto was born in Angola in 1970 from Cape Verdean parents. He has Portuguese citizenship. His parents moved to Angola in the 1960s because his mother was a schoolteacher. In 1977, Humberto's family moved to Portugal, following a brief interim period in Cape Verde between 1975 and 1976. Humberto holds a Master in Communication Organization. Jorge Humberto is a rank-and-file member of PSD (Social Democratic Party) since the 1980s and he currently serves as member of the parish council of Águas Livres (Amadora). Humberto has also served as president of the community council of Cova da Moura.

Jorge Taylor was born in Angola in 1962 and he has Portuguese citizenship. He moved to Portugal in 1975, during the decolonization process. Taylor works as an administrative officer in the Seixal municipality. He has been, since 1989, member of the PEV (Portuguese Green Party), in which he now serves in the national bureau responsible for the migration policies. In 2013 he was PEV's candidate in the local elections for the Seixal municipality.

Paulo Edson Cunha was born in Angola in 1969 and he has Portuguese citizenship. He moved to Portugal in 1975, during the decolonization process. Cunha graduated in Law and he now works as a Lawyer in Lisbon and in Seixal. He has been actively engaged in politics since 1985, when he joined the PSD (Social Democratic Party), where he now holds responsibilities as chairman of the political board of Setúbal.

Rosa Moniz was born in Cape Verde in 1968 and she has dual citizenship, Cape Verdean and Portuguese. She moved to Portugal in 1980s as an economic migrant, where she graduated in



Journalism (BA and MA). In 2002, she founded the Associação Luso-Cabo Verdiana de Sintra (Luso Cape Verdian Association of Sintra), to which she now presides. She has worked with several political parties as an independent (PS; PSD; CDU) in her parish in Monte Abrão (Sintra).

Francisco Pereira: in 2009 Local Elections he was head of an independent movement in Amadora, called MICA (independent movement of citizens of Amadora). Presently taking his PhD in Switzerland, this young politically very engaged and with strong civic cultural, justifies the movement's failure with the fact that it started too late in the pre-electoral period and was not capable of showing in that time that despite its ethnic constitution (gypsies, black citizens of cape-verdean, and other African descents involved) it was not meant to be an ethnic political movement, isolated from the rest of society, but instead a citizens' movement based on interculturality.



Annex 2: Role models within parties and/or pathways of careers of IP or PIB in political parties, reported by interviewees

Helder Amaral, a MP from CDS-PP, is not perceived as a representative of immigrants and Portuguese of African descent. In his interventions in Parliament he does not wave the flag of immigrants' rights. Moreover, he is not elected as a representative of Lisbon or other urban area, but from a rural electoral district.

Manuel Correia, who was born in Cape Verde in 1952, came to study in Portugal in 1968. He joined the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) in 1979. He was the leader of the Union of Electrical Workers (South and Islands) and 4 times elected a member of the municipal assembly of Loures, in the outskirts of Lisbon. He holds Portuguese citizenship.

Manuel Correia has been a leader in relevant workers unions (SIESI and FIEQUIMETAL) and a member of the National Directorate of the CGTP-IN, the biggest Portuguese confederation of unions, linked with the PCP. Also, for several years he was the President of the Federation of Cape Verdean Organisations and a leader of the Anti-Racist Front, an organisation in the orbit of the Communists founded in 1994.

He was elected to the Central Committee of the PCP for the first time in 1992, and has been re-elected ever since. His story shows the importance of the links between civil society organisations and political parties.

Celeste Correia (no family relation with Manuel Correia) was born in Mindelo, Cape Verde, in 1948, within a notable local family. She came to study in Lisbon, where she obtained a degree in Philology. She holds Portuguese citizenship.

Celeste Correia was invited by the Socialist Party in 1995 to run to the Parliament. She was a MP between 1995 and 2011. In 2011, her name was the 18th of the Socialist list in the Porto electoral district, and only 14 MPs were elected. It was made public that her name was not proposed by the Lisbon party organisation in the process of nominations. She is a member of the National Commission of PS. While in Parliament she expressed, along with other Socialist MPs, her opposition to the government of her own party when it proposed to reduce the quota for the entry of immigrants for working purposes.

She assessed her 16 years in Parliament as highly positive for her role in the conception approval of important Legal Acts for the life of immigrants in Portugal, such as the law for the financial support of immigrants associations, the reform of the citizenship law and the creation of ACIDI. Asked whether immigrants would be less represented after her leaving the Parliament, she said that "immigrants should get into parties, to participate, be included in lists, or else things won't change; that's the only way the Parliament will reflect the diversity of Portuguese society"⁴³.

Currently she is the Director of the Congress of Cape Verdean Professionals in Diaspora, an organisation that aggregates highly skilled from the country spread throughout the world.

⁴³ <http://noticias.sapo.cv/info/artigo/1162576.html>



Annex 3: Inspiring practices to promote immigrant' political participation in Portugal

Project Plataforma Imigração. Launched in November 2006, the Platform on Policies of Welcome and Integration of Immigrants (Plataforma Imigração) is organised within the Program for Human Development sponsored by the Foundation Calouste Gulbenkian. It works as a means to intervene, directly or indirectly, in receiving and integrating migrants in Portugal, through the joint efforts of various civil society organizations such as foundations, employers' associations, religious bodies and members of the Portuguese Economic and Social Council. This initiative aims to demonstrate that organized civil society can be more effective in facilitating the integration and promotion of a more tolerant society that values human rights. It integrates the following prizes: Distinction for Best Practices in Municipal integration of immigrants, Immigrant Entrepreneur Award of the Year

Projecto Voto Local Cidadania Local (local vote local citizenship), continuous project since 1993, targeting mostly Cape-Verdeans and Brazilians. Every year has young people participating in awareness, information and motivation on making neighbourhoods to be surveyed.

Projecto Quem não Vota não Conta (who does not vote does not count) – The Azorean Immigrant Association - AIPA's sponsored the project in the Azores targeting foreign citizens. This project intends to contribute to greater political participation of foreigners in the Azores. In concrete terms, it plans to increase the number of registered foreign nationals and facilitate the growth of the rate of political participation of foreigners in the Azores. Despite the relevance of the project, Paulo Mendes, AIPA's president regrets to admit it has not been that successful. The next step will thus to understand why that happened and how it can be improved.

ENGAGE – Projeto Mentores is an initiative developed in partnership by ACIDI - High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue and GRACE - Group Discussion and Support Corporate Citizenship for the creation of a network of volunteer mentors to support the integration of immigrants in Portuguese society.