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Social Change in Portugal: 1960-2000

António Barreto¹

In the last four decades, Portuguese society has undergone dramatic and rapid change. But it is one of the mysteries of nationality and cultural identity that, despite rifts and profound change, citizens still feel they belong to the same country as they ever did. As we shall see, some essential traits of the Portugal of 1960 have disappeared: from structural aspects of population and society to traditional characteristics of their behaviour and mentality. First, though, we must look at some historical events of that period to put some of these changes into context.²

An historical background

The period between the late 1950s and early 1960s was decisive in Portuguese history. In 1959, Portugal was one of the founders of EFTA (European Free Trade Association), the response by a group of countries to the creation of the European Common Market.³ This was to have important repercussions in the immediate future. It would not only lessen the relative isolation of Salazar's authoritarian regime in terms of international relations, but, principally, it initiated a process of opening up the economy to the outside world, particularly to other European countries.⁴ In just a few years, external investment in Portugal grew as never before. Foreign assembly and manufacturing plants were set up to export to developed economies. Trade exchanges with European countries mainly of industrial products were moderately liberalized⁵. In some years, industrial production grew by more than 20 per cent. For the first time, there appeared to be an industrial alternative to agricultural employment, offering Portuguese workers new working environments, higher wages and employment for

¹ Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon. Most statistical data referred to in this article are taken from the following studies: António Barreto, "A Situação Social em Portugal, 1960-1995", 1st volume, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon 1996; and "A Situação Social em Portugal, 1960-1999", 2nd volume, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon 2000. Two other sources referred to are: the "Anuários Estatísticos" and "Portugal Social" from the Instituto Nacional de Estatística, Lisbon, various years; and the database "New Cronos" from EUROSTAT, Statistical Division of the European Union, Luxembourg, various years.

² Many historical events have had a decisive influence on social change, such as the political revolution of 1974. But one must not lose sight of the inverse relationship: the foundation of the democratic State and the adoption of liberal politics owe much to economic growth, to the pressure from the middle classes and to social changes originating in the 1960s.

³ Great Britain, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Portugal. Finland and Iceland joined later. In 1973, Great Britain and Denmark (along with Ireland), left EFTA to join the Common Market (European Economic Community).

⁴ According to a study by EFTA, the Portuguese industrial product grew significantly, between 1960 and 1965, thanks to the effects of this new international framework: almost 80 per cent; while exports to EFTA increased more than 140 per cent; in the same period, the increase of total Portuguese exports was only 76 per cent. See EFTA, "The Effects of EFTA on the Economies of Member States", Geneva 1969. See also V. Xavier Pintado, "Structure and Growth of the Portuguese Economy", (2nd edition), Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon 2002.

⁵ Despite this opening up of the economy, the Portuguese government decided to keep certain sectors, companies and goods, under special protection. This protection was the aim of Annexe G of the Stockholm Convention, which created EFTA, and was put into effect in the first half of 1960.

most of the year.⁶ Between 1960 and 1973, the national income per capita grew on average by more than 6.5 per cent each year and at times by more than 10 per cent.⁷ This period saw the greatest economic growth in the country's history.

Emigrants leaving Portugal had traditionally tended to gravitate towards Brazil, other Latin American countries, USA, Canada, South Africa and the Portuguese colonies in Africa (mainly Angola and Mozambique). In the early 1960s, they began to move to European destinations, especially France. The total number of emigrants leaving Portugal each year climbed to previously unknown heights. From the mid 1960s, the annual net migration cancelled out the natural increase of population, which meant, in absolute terms, that the population decreased.

This migratory flow coincided with the beginning of mass tourism in Portugal. Tourists, mostly of European origin (Britain, Germany, Spain, etc.), headed towards the south of the country, the Algarve. In just a few years, the annual number of tourists visiting Portugal reached several million. Tourism was important not just for the balance of payments, but for the development of several activities (hotels, business, construction, real estate, etc.) in coastal regions where the country's industrial boom - at that time only really in evidence around the metropolitan areas - was not yet offering alternatives to agriculture.

Politically, the year 1961 was crucial in Portugal's recent history. In the first three months, independence movements started an armed struggle in Angola. The Portuguese government sent in the armed forces. Thus began the colonial war, which later spread to Guinea and Mozambique.⁸ The war was to last almost thirteen years. It consumed close to fifty per cent of public spending, and occupied on average around 200,000 personnel in the armed forces at any one time.⁹ Also, in December 1961, after several years of diplomatic wrangling and border incidents, the armed forces of the Indian Union invaded the Portuguese possessions in India (the enclaves of Goa, Damão and Diu). It constituted the first colonial loss for Portugal in the twentieth century and the beginning of the end of the Empire.¹⁰ For more than ten years, the colonial war would play a pivotal role in national life. It conditioned all political life, took up a considerable part of budget resources and strengthened the severity of a dictatorship based on one party, the use of political police, censorship of the press and state rec-

Comment: It did say "finalmente," but this implied the end of this section.

⁶ According to official reports of the time, in the agricultural regions of the South, namely the Alentejo, the Algarve and the Ribatejo, the average number of paid rural workdays varied between 140 and 160 days per year (c. 1960).

⁷ See António Barreto, "A Situação Social em Portugal, 1960-1995", op. cit.

⁸ The MPLA, Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola), began guerrilla operations in the city of Luanda in February 1961. In the March, it was the turn of the UPA, União dos Povos de Angola (the Union of the Angolan Peoples) to carry out several terrorist actions in various regions, especially against farm owners and their workers.

⁹ This figure represented more than 2 per cent of the total population of the country, a level which no other European country or the USA have attained in any colonial or overseas conflict since the Second World War, including the Vietnam war.

ognised trade unions. After Marcelo Caetano succeeded Salazar as Prime Minister, the colonial war continued to determine politics, acting as a barrier against pressures for political liberalization coming from society or even from within the government.¹¹

The end of the colonial war came with the military coup of 1974. The revolution lasted from 1974 until 1976. It radically altered political life and had enormous social, cultural and economic repercussions.¹² Rapid de-colonisation caused around 650,000 European settlers to return from Africa, mainly from Angola and Mozambique.¹³ Thus Portugal's colonial age ended. Overseas links were cut, perhaps irrevocably.¹⁴ Economic links with the new independent African states were drastically reduced.¹⁵ Prospects of emigration from Portugal to Africa— a constant in the recent history of the country -- disappeared. The Portuguese State was now limited to her European territory.

An immediate consequence of the revolution was the nationalization of vast sectors of the economy, spelling destruction for most private company groups. A large part of the country's farm land was also subject to nationalization and occupation, in a complex, collectivist process of 'agrarian reform'.¹⁶ For a period of one or two years, an inversion of political and social powers took place. Workers, political groups, trade unions and revolutionary soldiers, exercised authority legally or by their own initiative. Leftists and members of the revolutionary military dominated successive governments. But after a political process that was rapid and peaceful (as the revolution) – based on elections, the approval of a Constitution and the restoration of constitutional administrative and legal authority – a democratic and parliamentary regime was founded. This gradual 'normalization' meant that legal guarantees to fundamental rights were returned, including rights of ownership. All those who had been exiled for various reasons returned to Portugal and economic life reverted to free market conditions.

¹⁰ The remaining Portuguese colonies became independent states in 1974 and 1975 (East Timor being a special case: having declared independence in 1975, she was by annexed by Indonesia. She only regained independence in 2002 thanks to UN intervention).

¹¹ After forty years of absolute power, Marcelo Caetano replaced Salazar after suffering post-operative complications. Salazar died in 1970. Caetano was one of the principal leaders of the regime, the so-called New State.

¹² The various phases can be distinguished in what was a very complex process: the military coup on 25th April 1974; a political and social revolution between 1974 and 1975; a democratic counter revolution between the end of 1975 and 1976 (this was the year in which a democratic Constitution was passed; legislative, presidential and municipal elections took place; and the first democratic government was appointed); a period of democratic "normalization", between 1976 and 1982, until the revision of the Constitution (from which were removed several revolutionary clauses and the military tutelage over the regime) and the approval of new laws regarding the armed forces. The more political aspects of the whole process will not be dealt with here, but the experience had profound social and cultural effects.

¹³ The dragging on of the colonial war, with no prospects of a political solution, was the determining factor for the initiative and action by the military on the 25th April. In a country that lived under a dictatorship, there was no alternative action possible but a military coup, which would inevitably end by causing the downfall of the regime.

¹⁴ For several reasons, including the after effects of the war and de-colonization, relations between Portugal and the newly independent states remain erratic and very fragile, almost thirty years on.

¹⁵ Exports to the colonies made under the protectionist regime came to represent almost a quarter of Portugal's external trade. Some basic commodities, such as oil-seeds, coffee, sugar, sisal, cotton, diamonds, oil and some other minerals had played a very important role in the Portuguese balance of trade.

¹⁶ See António Barreto, "Anatomia de uma revolução – A Reforma Agrária no Alentejo, 1974/76", Publicações Europa-América, Lisbon 1986. In total, around 1.2 million hectares were occupied and placed in the hands of "collective production units": around 14 per cent of the area of the country, or a quarter of useable agricultural land.

Almost immediately after the political revolution, Portugal put forward her candidature to the European Economic Community (today, the European Union, EU). It was first accepted in 1977 and full membership came into effect in 1986. Then began the “second European push” of the economy and Portuguese society, following the first, that of EFTA and the emigration of the 1960s. This new stimulus, however, was more radical and today, the EU accounts for three quarters of the Portuguese balance of trade. Portuguese companies are very closely linked to multi-national and European companies. Economic protectionism has practically disappeared. Portugal is now one of the most open economies in Europe, as measured by the proportion of her external trade relative to her national product. And at the beginning of the 21st century Portugal was among the countries that adopted the Euro as the single currency.¹⁷

Comment: Does this mean holding companies or company groups or what?

It was in this second phase, from 1976 until the end of the century, that, for the first time in Portugal’s history, a political system was founded and consolidated, based on fundamental civic and parliamentary rights, including universal suffrage and freedom of political activity.¹⁸ It was in this period that the independence of the judiciary was guaranteed and that most of the media became entirely independent of the State and free of any political censorship. Perhaps for the first time in two centuries, a kind of “constitutional consensus” is evident: most voters and most elected members of parliament agree with the general idea of the Constitution.¹⁹ Contrary to what went on in most of the 19th and 20th centuries, the nature of the regime is not in question and its democratic foundations are accepted by almost the entire electorate. There is no ‘religious question’, as distinct from other periods in the last two centuries. For the first time in many decades there are neither political exiles nor prisoners of conscience, nor is there the concept of ‘political crime’. These things may not seem much, but in the modern history of this country they are novelties.

Social Change

With these events forming an historical and political backdrop, we shall now look at the main trends of social change that have taken place in these forty years. Five decades ago, Portugal had the youngest population in Europe. Today, though not the oldest, it is one of the

¹⁷ See António Pinto Barbosa (org.), “O impacto do euro na economia portuguesa”, Publicações Dom Quixote, Lisbon 1999; also see “As implicações sociais do euro”, in António Barreto, “Tempo de incerteza”, Relógio d’Água, Lisbon 2002.

¹⁸ According to a certain cultural and historiographical tradition, Portugal has known other periods of democracy, such as, for example, some decades in the 19th century (the period of the constitutional monarchy) and the so-called “First Republic”, from 1910 to 1926. It can be said that, in these periods, there were moments in which fundamental liberties were practised and more or less guaranteed, and in which a parliamentary institution existed and met (incidentally, it was dissolved several times). But electoral capacity was reduced for the lower ends of the population (women, the destitute, the unemployed and the illiterate were almost always denied rights of suffrage). The parliament depended more on the government and on the monarchy than the other way around, and the principal political parties behaved almost like a dictatorship.

¹⁹ The fact, unusual in the western world, that the Constitution has been revised five times in twenty-five years does not negate this concordance rather it confirms it. Effectively, two thirds of votes are needed to approve a revision. What this means is that it was possible to find such a majority as many times as were deemed necessary by the two most important political parties, PSD (Social Democratic Party) and PS (Socialist Party).

populations who are ageing the fastest. Since the late 1990s, the proportion of the elderly (i.e. those over the age of 65) in the total population became higher than that of children under 15.²⁰ Life expectancy has increased considerably, rising from 60 and 66 years (men and women, respectively) in 1960 to 73 and 79 in 2001. Largely responsible for the ageing of the population is the fall in the birth rate; it has become one of the lowest in Europe (11 per thousand currently), having been the highest in the 1960s (24 per thousand). The same has happened with the fecundity index (currently 1.4 per woman of child-bearing age; it was 3.4 in 1960). General mortality (10.6 per thousand) remains relatively stable, but infant mortality has been drastically cut: from more than 80 per thousand in 1960, to less than 7 per thousand today.

Family size has reduced considerably and now hovers at around 2.8 people per household. As a cause and effect of this, the nature of the family has also changed. Essentially, the strictly nuclear family, of one or two generations, in which the father and the mother work, is now predominant. There are fewer and fewer families where more than two generations live together under the same roof. Also reduced in number are the family households that comprise more than five or six people. Growing in number are common-law marriages, single parent families and households consisting of just one person. The number of divorces has increased (currently 1 divorce in every 4 marriages) as has the number of second marriages.²¹ And the number of children born outside marriage is growing significantly: one in four births belong to this group.²²

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Traditionally, the country had a high rate of emigration, but now the current has reversed and it has become a net recipient of migrants. This is perhaps one of the most dramatic changes occurring in Portugal in the last few decades.²³

²⁰ This fact confirmed by the General Census of the population of 2001, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, Lisbon.

²¹ Until 1975, because of the joint effect of laws in force and the Concordat (signed between the government and the Holy See), divorce in catholic marriages (which were the great majority) was prohibited. From that year on, thanks to a revision of the Concordat and the approval of new civil laws, divorce became permissible.

²² The general direction of demographic evolution in Portugal has been approaching the recognised European patterns: ageing population, low birth rate, longer life expectancy, reduced fecundity, reduced family sizes, increased numbers of common-law marriages and children born outside marriage, more single parent families, growing numbers of divorces, etc. What stands out in Portugal's case, is the fact that all these demographic trends have in some way begun to develop later than in the rest of Europe. Consequently, they have happened far faster. In some cases, Portuguese rates have overtaken the European averages (low birth rate, reduced fecundity and rate of ageing of the population).

²³ The Portuguese evolution in respect of emigration is not unique in Europe. Other countries, such as Italy and Spain, were, in mid-twentieth century, countries of emigration and are now net recipients of migrants. Relative to the European demographic and social averages, the Portuguese are remarkably above all for rates and time periods, more than for the nature of the facts. In the 1960s, Portugal registered the highest number of emigrants, relative to the resident population. In the 1970s, the return of white settlers from Africa constituted, proportionate to the population, the greatest flow of people returning rapidly to their country of origin in Europe: more than 7 per cent in just one year. In the late 1990s, Portugal was the European country where the proportion of foreign immigrants grew the fastest.

Between 1960 and 1973, more than a million and a half Portuguese left the country to work abroad. Breaking with a centuries old tradition, these emigrants abandoned Brazil and other Latin American countries as their favourite destination, preferring instead Europe, specifically France, closely followed by Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland (and later, Great Britain, The Netherlands and Spain). The urge to migrate was so great that the number of 'illegal' emigrants began overtaking that of legal emigrants.²⁴ In the first half of the 1970s, emigration slowed down, partly due to the international economic and social climate (recession and the oil crisis). De-colonisation prompted the return of several thousand people (around 650,000) who had previously been resident in the colonies (for many it was their first time in Portugal, since they had been born in the colonies and had never even visited the mother country). Their social and economic integration was rapid, without any problems worthy of note. Emigrants continued to leave Portugal, but in greatly reduced numbers.²⁵

Then, within a short time, a complete inversion of population movement took place. Effectively, during the 1980s, a flow of immigrants originating in Brazil and the old colonies was gradually consolidating. A growing number of Europeans were also choosing Portugal for their home or as a base for work (those connected with foreign business and new investments, farmers, retired people, etc.) By the mid 1990s, the (legal) resident foreign population was close to 2 per cent of the total population. Some emigrants continued to leave Portugal, but on average there were no more than ten thousand permanent emigrants and fifteen thousand temporary emigrants per year. Gradually, starting in 1995/97, the migration balance became positive, that is, the number of immigrants overtook that of emigrants.²⁶ Since then, a new wave of immigration has sprung up, and with surprising speed: workers are arriving from Eastern and Central Europe, specifically Ukrainians, Russians, Romanians, former Yugoslavians and Moldavians. And now, less than ten years later, the resident foreign population has reached 4 per cent of the total resident population.

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Although Portugal was an already fairly homogeneous country in terms of currency, language, the law and the armed forces, and although administrative power had long since

²⁴ Official Portuguese policy regarding emigration has always been ambiguous, perhaps purposefully. On the one hand, the government did not want to recognise publicly the fact that so many people were leaving, as if this were evidence of social ill ease in the country. As well as this, military commanders demanded that the flow of emigrants was controlled as a means of maintaining desirable recruitment levels. On the other hand, emigration was in the government interests for at least two reasons. Firstly, it alleviated social tensions in large areas of the country, namely the north and the interior. Second, the money sent home by the emigrants, once they were settled, constituted a substantial input for the balance of payments.

²⁵ This was mainly: traditional emigration from Madeira and the Azores, mostly to the USA, Canada, Venezuela and South Africa; seasonal emigration for agricultural work (beet, grape harvesting, etc.) in Spain, France and Switzerland; and normal emigration to some non-EU members, like Switzerland.

²⁶ It is certain that, considering the European Union, the free circulation of people and the "Schengen Space", it has become impossible to maintain exhaustive and accurate statistics of population movements within respective borders.

been enforced over the whole territory, a large part of the country did live to a different rhythm to that of the capital and the other main urban areas.²⁷ Several factors contributed to national integration, including the mobilization of conscripts to the colonial wars, the expansion and broadening of television coverage, the expansion of health services and social security and the establishment of school, postal and bank networks that would eventually cover the country. But the most important factor in the homogenisation of the country was certainly the expansion of the economically active population, especially with the inclusion of women. Women can now be found in all jobs and professions, and at schools and universities.²⁸ There has been a profound change in the presence of women in society and in the public arena.²⁹ At the start of the 1970s, women represented around 20 per cent of the economically active population; three or four decades later, this rose to practically 50 per cent. In many sectors, such as public administration and public services (especially in health and education), women are in the majority. The university student population consists of more women than men (around 56 per cent) and, every year, it is women who receive most of the university diplomas (65 per cent). This change, linked to the cultural evolution of the last few decades, has been responsible for an important alteration in the distribution of the power of the sexes: a patriarchal and masculine society has given way to one with a more visible balance between the sexes.³⁰

The young have also benefited from further inclusion in society. With the development of a 'youth culture' and of 'youth' as an age group and social category, a new, active generation group of voters, consumers and producers has been born. The evolution of the economy and the education sector helped the younger generation delay their entry into professional life by some years, which in turn helped to increase the size and number of colleges of further and higher education. They are virtually excused from military service, freeing them from that bond to the State. With the right to vote at 18 (since 1976), they are subject to special attention from the political parties and the authorities. The youth branches of the political parties try to attract them to take part in political campaigns and they are targeted by advertising and business. Making an indelible mark on the towns and cities, the 'young' have their own meeting places, leisure spaces, and cultural venues and animate the nightlife of bars and discotheques.

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²⁷ It was in this respect that Adérito Sedas Nunes characterised Portugal in the 1960s as "a dualist society in development". See Maria Filomena Mónica, (organizer), "Antologia Sociológica", Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon 2000.

²⁸ Until 1976, some professions were legally reserved for men: careers in the judiciary and public prosecution; diplomacy; the police and the armed forces.

²⁹ Many of their citizens' rights (the vote, legal and commercial capacity, the passport, freedom of movement, etc.) have only been recognized since the 1970s, that is, since the revolution and the approval of the Constitution in 1976.

The process of creating a tertiary economy was rapid, with a drastic reduction of the primary sector and the stagnation of the numbers of industrial workers. The primary sector, still the largest sector during the 1960s, became the smallest (accounting for less than 8 per cent of the total workforce in 2000). Contrary to other western European countries, industry has never been the most important employer of the working population in Portugal. It was the tertiary sector that passed directly from last to first place in hiring manpower. Public Administration grew strikingly: the 196,000 or so employees of the local and central administrations in 1968 increased to 516,000 in 1983 and to more than 716,000 in 2001. The number of employees in the education and health sectors also increased significantly. There has been a visible expansion of business, restaurant and hotel activity, of the bank system and of telecommunications services. Along with 'tertiarization', 'coastalization' and urbanization have also intensified. Population movement within the country has continued, concentrating populations along the coast and in the urban centres, especially in the two large metropolitan areas of Lisbon and Porto, but also around some foci of urban growth which have resisted the pull of Lisbon and Porto: Braga, Aveiro, Coimbra, Viseu, Évora and Faro.

The employment rates among the three sectors have, of course, changed significantly according to the evolution of the sectors themselves. According to the census, the population employed in the primary sector fell from 43.6 per cent (in 1960) to 10.9 per cent (in 1991) and currently to 7 per cent. The number employed in the secondary sector rose, in the same period, from 28.9 per cent to 37.9 per cent, and stands today at between 34 and 36 per cent. The number employed in the tertiary sector jumped from 27.5 to 51.3 per cent and might be 55 per cent in 2002. As we saw above, the secondary sector has never been the main employer of the active Portuguese population, which makes Portugal a unique case in European terms.³¹

Today, women make up the majority of the active population in the primary and tertiary sectors, though they are still in a minority in the secondary. Overall, women comprise half of the active employed population. Although we do not have a homogeneous series from the 1960s until 1974, existing estimates show that it was in this period that women were definitively included in the active population. In 1960, women represented between 20 and 25 per cent of the total. Industrialization and 'tertiarisation' are partially behind their integration, but more significantly emigration and the colonial wars forced women to the workplace.

³⁰ Inequality in salary, in Portugal as in other countries, is still significant in the private economy. In the last 20 years, the trend towards a closing of the gap has been well known, but the disparity remains, for equal work, around 15 to 20 per cent in favour of men. In public administration, meanwhile, equality is a legal and, in practice, effective requirement.

³¹ Analysis of the annual estimates of, and annual enquiries into, employment suggest that somewhere in the 1970s, the population of the secondary sector could have sporadically been the more important. But it is not what results from the analyses of middle- to long-term, nor from the results of the Census of the population.

During the last 25 years, the active population has increased by around a million people (maybe as many as 1.2 million). Today it totals around 5 million, which is equivalent to more or less half of the resident population. The increases were mainly in the tertiary sector (781,000 more women and 397,000 men), followed by the secondary (304,000 more men and 150,000 women). Meanwhile, the primary sector has lost at least 650,000 workers. Even more if, as well as all the farmers and labourers, we count their families and the supporting rural society: more than 1,630,000 have left agriculture since 1968.³²

The social and professional composition of the working population has also changed. The proportion of employers more than doubled (from 2.6 to 5.8 per cent) whereas that of self-employed/independent workers (from 16 to 19 per cent) and of employees (from 65 to 70 per cent) increased less drastically. More important were the changes within the active female population. The proportion of female employers (in each category of the active population including both sexes) rose from 10 to 26 per cent; that of the female self-employed from 22 to 46 per cent; and that of female employees from 35 to 45 per cent. On the other hand, in the case of household workers (domestic staff), there was a considerable fall from 80 per cent to 58 per cent.

Unemployment, usually correlated with economic cycles, reflects sometimes more deeply rooted structures and trends. It is worth emphasizing that, over the last 25 years, overall unemployment has never exceeded 10 per cent of the active population (contrary to what happened in most of the European Union). There is a tendency for the rate of female unemployment to be consistently higher than that of male unemployment (normally, 15 to 20 per cent higher). In periods of economic crisis and greater unemployment, the difference can be 50 per cent more women unemployed. Also, the rates of unemployment tend to hit the following categories harder: the young, workers in industry and transport; women employed in domestic service; workers on short-term contracts; and workers who possess no qualifications or have only a basic level of education.³³

As for employment contracts, the majority of employees have a permanent contract or a contract with no time limit. Only around 12 to 20 per cent of the total workforce work under short-term contracts. But this situation fluctuates considerably according to the state of the economy.³⁴ There is a trend, despite some fluctuation, towards more negotiated regulation

³² The "Inquérito às explorações agrícolas do continente" (from the Instituto Nacional de Estatística) is the reference for the last few decades.

³³ It can be noted that, in the last few years (1991 to 1999), the "qualified unemployed" began to have significance: people with a higher educational qualification (generally with degrees) or further education and managers or the professional elite ("quadros dirigentes e intelectuais"). The figures may already have increased from 20,000 to 23,000, of whom 12,000 have degrees.

³⁴ The sectors of the so-called "informal economy", "parallel economy", "illegal work market", "black market work", "work without contract", etc. may represent an important part of the workforce and may influence, according to the state of economy, the volume of unemployment. But nothing is strictly known about these facts and the estimates are so dissimilar (swinging between 1 per cent and 10 per cent of the total employed workforce) that it is not worth considering them.

of working conditions, affecting a growing number of workers. In the last two decades, a trend is noticeable towards a decrease in work conflicts, as measured by the number of strikes, number of workers involved and number of days of strike action.

As far as it concerns the comparison between Portugal and the other European Union countries, the evidence show that, in respect of demographic, health and educational indicators, Portugal's social structures are approaching European standards.