Immigration to Portugal in pandemic times – the surprising resilience of the flows and foreign residents

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Goals

To provide an quick and simple insight on the present migratory flows to Portugal;

To show that the specific context responses to pandemia and specially the macroeconomic and social context factors have pushed immigration and limited the impacts in the flows
International Migration Flows during the Pandemic period – comparative elements

Long term immigration flows - 2012-2021 (OECD calculations)

Source: OECD (2022). International Migration Outlook 2022
Evolution of inflows

Source: Foreigners and Borders Office
Evolution of legal foreigners stocks

Stock of foreign population in Portugal – 2011-2021

Stock of foreign population in Portugal (continentes) – 2011-2021
Evolution of Legal Foreigners Stocks II

Stock of foreign population in Portugal (selected European nationalities) – 2011-2021

Stock of foreign population in Portugal (selected Non-European nationalities) – 2011-2021
People in need of international protection

Demands of International protection in Portugal + resettle refugees – 2007-2021

Assisted voluntary return (with IOM support)

Exceptional responses to pandemic (targeting migrants)

Generalized examples, also taking place in Portugal

- Temporary measures aimed at extending the legality of migrants during the periods of State of Emergency associated with COVID19 (automatic extension of visas, extension of deadlines for renewal of documents; consideration of foreigners whose documents have expired or are being renewed as regular citizens);

- Expansion of the possibilities of contact with the services and document exchange using digital platforms (for the delivery of documents, for example);

- Exceptional support for international students (access to services, some extra subsidies, extension of deadlines for delivering assessment elements);

- Expansion of opportunities for access to health for immigrants in an irregular situation (vaccination);
Alguém do agregado familiar ficou desempregado por causa da COVID19 (n=287)

Alguém do agregado familiar ficou em lay-off parcial ou temporário por causa da COVID19 (n=251)

Decréscimo no rendimento familiar (n=285)

Tem dificuldades financeiras para comprar alimentos (n=286)

Tem dificuldades financeiras para pagar telefone e internet (n=284)

Impacto socioeconómico da COVID19 (amostra de população do município da Amadora - Portugal) - comparação entre nascidos em Portugal e nascidos no estrangeiro (país não UE)

Experiences of international students in Portugal during the lock down period of COVID19 (% cases).

Discriminatory element – the “Chinese” virus

Concluding remarks – effects of pandemic in immigration to Portugal

• The pandemic, specially at the beginning, hit strongly the migrants, socially, psychologically and economically

• The flows experienced some decline in 2020 (a “closed” world) but in most cases resumed the trends immediately in the following year

• Limited increase in the returns and generalization of measures of support (legal support, social support and health)

• Despite the general decline in 2020, there were some differences between the migrant groups (South Asians, Western Europeans, North-Americans evidences of a more limited impact)

• **General idea 1**: structural elements (economic; eventually geopolitical) prevail over the specific impact of the pandemia

• **General idea 2**: Good adaptation in situ strategy by the immigrants (new “opportunities” – e.g. platform economy services)