

Voluntary national report on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Portugal

I. Framework and methodology

The approach adopted by Portugal is one which recognises the importance of migration as a key asset for the country's demographic, economic, social and cultural development. For many decades, this recognition has been reflected in global and integrated public policies involving several stakeholders with targeted and cross-cutting responsibilities, at both local and national levels, in the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration flows, thus enhancing integration into the fold of Portuguese society.

It is within this framework, and as set forth in the [first voluntary regional review of Portugal's Global Compact for Migration \(GCM\)](#), presented in 2020, that Portugal was also one of the first countries in the world to prepare a [National Implementation Plan of the Global Compact for Migration](#) (PNIPGM), which transposes the commitment established within the scope of the GCM¹ to the national context.

As Portugal is a Champion Country in the implementation of the GCM, it is the aim of this report to share the experience of implementing the National Plan and the advances achieved since 2020, when the first voluntary national

2021 the [High Commission for Migration](#) (ACM), in partnership with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), developed a [consultative process on the involvement of civil society in the PNIPGM](#). The aim of this process, which included information sessions and the development of a questionnaire to 49 entities, was both to ascertain civil society's degree of involvement in the PNIPGM, intervention areas and opportunities for synergy and to gather suggestions and recommendations to better execute the Objectives.

Also in articulation with the IOM, Portugal is currently participating in the [Migration Governance Index](#) (MGI),

III. Promotion of the reception and integration of immigrants. *Rede Integrar Valoriza*, the

Note: the continuous implementation measures shall not be concluded at the end of the PNIPGM, thus ensuring constant improved and continued action throughout the duration of the Plan.

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Cooperation Programmes (SCPs) and Triangular Cooperation Agreements play an important role in this regard. In addition to the CPLP mobility agreement approved in 2021, Portugal has Memoranda of Understanding for Triangular Cooperation with countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Israel, Morocco, Peru and Uruguay, with a view to implementing triangular initiatives to promote sustainable development in third countries. Portugal manages and co-finances development support projects, notably in Mozambique, in order to increase economic opportunities in the Cabo Delgado region; in Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau in order to improve security levels and migration management. There is also active cooperation in the area of vocational training with Sao Tome and Principe, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Angola and East Timor.

Objective 3. In order to guarantee access to information on the process of reception and integration of migrants in Portugal, online information in Portuguese and English has been made available on [ePortugal](#), an electronic channel facilitating access to State services. This information, intended for migrants, addresses and provides clarification on how to access the different public services and respective procedures in various areas of integration.

permits. It should be noted that the dematerialisation of processes became all the more urgent when the pandemic forced SEF spaces to close.

Objective 13. With a view to promoting the referral of citizens to the support services for their regularisation and integration, the articulation channels among the institutions have been improved to obtain swifter and more effective responses. A Cooperation Protocol was also signed in November 2020 by the Bar Association, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Justice for the permanent provision of lawyers to provide legal advice and assistance to foreign citizens who are refused entry into the country at national airports, ensuring their full

of foreign academic degrees and higher education diplomas to view the case number, the entity/institution of higher education responsible for its analysis and its status.

Objective 19. In acknowledgement of the important Portuguese diaspora spread around the world, in 2021 Turismo de Portugal launched the 1st edition of the *Online Summer School 2021* for people of Portuguese descent living outside Portugal, which included 5 "schools" to promote regional tourism with contents in Portuguese and English. 534 people of Portuguese descent from 46 different countries were involved in this initiative. Additionally, 2021 saw the publication of the [Guide to Support Investment in the Diaspora](#), which aims to facilitate and clarify investment opportunities in the diaspora, both for Portuguese emigrants and people of Portuguese descent living abroad, as well as national entrepreneurs seeking to internationalise their businesses through the diaspora.

Objective 20. The promotion of remittance transfers is essential for the financial inclusion of migrants. Therefore, an assessment of migrants' problems and difficulties in transferring remittances to their countries of origin was carried out to ensure the monitoring of the implementation of this process. Additionally, the revision of the non-habitual resident tax regime made it possible to overcome the difficulties in hiring workers revealed by employers of various sectors, having strengthened the attractiveness factors of workers who move to Portugal.

Objective 21. All those wishing to return to their countries of origin should be supported in this process. Between 2020 and 2021, 453 migrants benefited from the [Voluntary Return and Reintegration Support Programme](#) (ARVoRe VII) promoted by the IOM, which aims to support migrants who wish to return voluntarily, enabling them to be supported in their reintegration. The CNAIMs also offer support in the referral of cases to ARVoRe VII, having provided over 350 consultations on voluntary return since 2020.

Objective 22. As far as the portability of migrants' social protection rights and benefits acquired outside Portugal is concerned, the Ibero-American Multilateral Convention on Social Security currently covers 12 countries – Portugal, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay. New bilateral conventions are also being negotiated with Algeria, China and Israel, and negotiations are foreseen with Serbia.

Objective 23. Considering its Champion position in the implementation of the GCM and with a view to cooperating and exchanging experiences and best practices, Portugal has participated in several Forums such as: Champion Country consultations, in the meetings of the Friends of Migration group and in several working groups of the United Nations Migration Network; sharing best practices

Portugal assumed the [Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#) (PPUE) in the first semester of 2021, under which it sought to develop efforts to materialise a humanistic and holistic approach to migration and make progress in promoting a safe Europe, with a focus on prevention and protection and defending and promoting the fundamental values of the European Union (EU). Against this background, it should be noted that the informal 'jumbo' meeting of EU Foreign Affairs Ministers and Home Affairs Ministers, which had not occurred for six years, was an important step in the acknowledgement of migration as a matter of concern within the EU's internal and external policies. The Ministers discussed ways of developing comprehensive and mutually beneficial partnerships with third countries, as called for in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. During the PPUE the revision of the Blue Card directive was also approved and sought to promote legal migration channels for highly qualified third-country nationals. A provisional agreement was also reached between the Presidency of the Council of the EU and the European Parliament on the Regulation establishing the European Union Agency for Asylum. In addition, different dialogue and discussion arenas regarding integration policies for migrants within the Union were reactivated.

The involvement of civil society in the implementation of the PNIPGM was assumed by the Government as an essential premise for the achievement of the established objectives and to ensure compliance with the guiding principles of the GCM. In this regard, IOM's consultative process highlighted, inter alia, civil society's sparse knowledge of the PNIPGM. However, as a contribution to the national report, civil society entities offer particular contributions to seven of the objectives with activities such as:

- support for migrants' regularisation process and acquisition of documents;
- provision of direct support to migrants in regularisation situations, social issues,

- training and capacity building initiatives, dissemination of information and

[Nations on the implementation of the GCM](#) and the declaration of 16 Member States of the European Union in support of the Progress Declaration, as well as the [Rabat Declaration](#), adopted following the Ministerial Meeting of the Champion countries of the GCM.

Over two years into the PNIPGM's implementation, it is of utmost importance to ensure cohesive and coordinated national responses to consolidate the public policies that promote safe, orderly and regular migration flows and to invest in close monitoring, involving all the players with responsibility in the design and implementation of migration policies.

However, the constraints arising from the pandemic considerably affected and conditioned some of the timescales and activities foreseen in the PNIPGM. The national strategy and work methodology proved to be a crucial platform for dialogue in the fight against the pandemic, ensuring a transdisciplinary approach and a swift readaptation to emerging needs. Furthermore, the implementation of the PNIPGM has so far been subject to three legislatures, which has added impacts on the political coordination of the Plan and the ability to implement structuring measures, namely those that require profound legislative changes.

The creation of concrete responses for migrant citizens during and after the COVID-19 period shed light upon the potential of the concerted work carried out by the different government departments and public institutions, as a holistic approach implemented together with civil society and the development of local policies. Considering the challenges faced, the close coordination and articulation at political and technical levels enabled swift implementation, adjustment and adaptation processes to overcome the difficulties experienced, which translated into a high level of accomplishment of the established objectives for migration and integration policies.

Nevertheless, acknowledging the need to continually improve national mechanisms and strategies and to ensure adaptability to changing migration phenomena, and also considering the recommendations resulting from the consultations with civil society, there are still further steps to be taken:

- Pressing ahead with the policies already underway, which may be developed within the scope of the implementation of the National Plan, based on the ongoing comprehensive review process, deepening them and/or developing new policies for emerging issues;
- Implementing the measures providing for legislative changes which, despite the work carried out, have yet to be implemented, given the political changes in Portugal since the Plan's approval;
- Continuing to optimise articulation among the different government departments and services involved in the implementation of more complex measures, promoting articulation with other key players;
- Strengthening the monitoring mechanisms, namely through an electronic platform, enhancing continuation of the work, even in periods of transition;
- Encouraging the involvement of civil society in the implementation of the PNIPGM, with greater dissemination of its objectives and active participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Plan;
- Developing and disseminating national best practices in other countries, leveraging Portugal's position as a Champion country and promoting more transnational policies.

IV. Final Considerations

This report has presented the main achievements of the PNIPGM as another step in the entire society's involvement in the improvement of national public policies and international cooperation. It has also demonstrated Portugal's commitment to promoting safe, orderly and regular migration.

Portugal looks forward to the first IMRF, which will serve as an inter-ministerial platform for dialogue to promote best practices, challenges and future commitments in well-governed migration. The Progress Declaration will define the steps and priorities for the oncoming years and, rest assured, Portugal will be at the forefront in its implementation and accomplishment.