



Portugal

Trends, Recent Developments, “Feeding in” and “Feeding out”

A Study of National Policies

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1. Summary

The Portuguese IRNRP reveals a clear awareness of the need to respond positively to the recommendations and areas to watch identified by the Commission. This is an important factor for improvement and for an increased effort to produce changes.

The report identifies crucial improvements in areas related to the sustainability of the Social Security System, to education and qualification and to the restructuring of the health system. These achievements send a clear political sign of the engagement in addressing some fundamental challenges that had been delayed for too long.

However, the nature of the information provided by the IRNRP reveals an imbalance between different areas of concern: more detail and relevance given to the challenges arising from concerns over financial sustainability, monitoring and budgetary control and significant less detail on relevant information that allows us to assess the impact of the measures in terms of social inclusion and social cohesion challenges. There are even signs of the erosion of individual rights which are eventually being sacrificed in the struggle over financial sustainability.

On the other hand, there is a lack of impact assessment information and an imbalance in the information provided regarding areas that are more directly related to social inclusion. In some cases, the report could have profited from existing available information regarding monitoring and evaluation reports. It is important to highlight at this stage that monitoring reports and assessment evaluation – when available – should be envisaged as useful tools for improvement and the obstacles and risks identified in those analysis do not undermine the value of the achievements reported in implementation exercises. On the contrary, they contribute to greater transparency and accuracy and they should be considered positive and constructive outputs.

The above mentioned imbalance may be related to a lack of communication and cooperation between central administration bodies and certainly from a lack of dialogue and articulation with the local levels of governance. Contributions from all these different stakeholders – provided they are given the necessary conditions to contribute – would certainly enhance a more complete implementation analysis of the NRP.

An effective and mutual interaction between the different levels of governance is certainly a condition not only for more complete IRNRPs but certainly and most importantly for a closer interaction between growth and employment objectives and social cohesion goals.

2. IRNRP Assessment from a Social Inclusion perspective

According to the Commission guidelines this first section aims at assessing the extent to which the 2007 implementation report of the 2005-2008 NRP for Portugal has taken into account the *feeding in* and *feeding out* of social inclusion.

A first global impression from reading the whole contents of the Implementation Report is the expressed and visible concern with a greater budgetary control over public expenditure with a view to restore public finances (thus answering to the Commission's recommendations in the 2006 Country Profiles).

Public finances, economic growth and competitiveness seem to have an overwhelming presence in the Report. On the other hand, the social cohesion dimension of the Lisbon Strategy is, in our opinion, given a much more limited focus.

An example of this “overall impression” is the way the four strategic objectives are addressed in the initial section of the report (section 1). Last year’s Implementation Report on the NRP identified the fourth objective as: “To reinforce employment and social cohesion”. In the present report regarding the second year’s implementation, it is stated that the fourth objective was focused on “consolidating employability and the increase of the employment rate” which seems a very narrow perspective on reinforcing employment and particularly on achieving social cohesion.

On the other hand, no mention is made in this initial section of the report on impact and improvements achieved in the social cohesion dimension. The word is not even mentioned in the initial paragraphs.

The overall message is that the country is now addressing important challenges in terms of increasing its competitiveness levels, its control over public finances, and its capacity to create more jobs. Knowing how some of these processes also imply high risks of increasing poverty and social exclusion it would be expected that the NRP would clearly address how these risks are being taken care of in this important changing process and what results have been achieved during this second year implementation.

In the following sections we will highlight the major strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the Report. The changes introduced in the social security system in order to promote its sustainability, the achievements in the education area, the widening of some benefits and the introduction of new ones and a greater concern with monitoring procedures and transparency are clearly among the former. On the other hand, there is a continued lack of implementation information regarding the impact of measures in promoting social inclusion and social cohesion, a trend towards the erosion of individual rights brought about by needs of budgetary constraints, a lack of an actual mainstreaming of social inclusion within many reforms and policies and an apparent lack of coordination between state entities resulting in the invisibility of important initiatives, programmes and even good practice examples.

2.1. Feeding in aspects

Social Protection/Social Inclusion links

The link with the Social Inclusion and Social Protection Strategy is explicitly referred to in the Report, namely through an explicit reference to the importance of the NAPincl respective measures. However, there is no actual information on the NAPincl implementation and even the Proximity Community Services Driver gives more information on expected achievements (e.g. table on the evolution of investment in the network of social facilities) than on actual results during this second year implementation. The annexed tables regarding for example the PARES Programme and the Social Local Development Contracts contain no information regarding implementation of the measures.

The social protection dimension is given particular emphasis, namely regarding the positive concern on ensuring a financially sustainable and adaptable social protection system (e.g. the IRNRP’s section on Sustainability of Social Security Driver). On the other hand, one of the

weaknesses of this report is the lack of relevant information on social inclusion policies. It is not clear how the social inclusion challenges are being addressed from the contents of the IRNRP, and these gaps may also result from what seems to be a lack of coordination between the NRP and the NAPincl.

In the following paragraphs, the information gaps regarding initiatives or programmes directly relevant to social inclusion challenges regarding areas such as active inclusion, immigration, housing and regeneration or education seem to be consistent to that lack of communication.

Addressing 2007 Joint Report Challenges

The second year report on the implementation of the NRP provides explicit references to all the challenges identified for Portugal in the 2007 Joint Report, although the information provided varies considerably in terms of the ability to adequately respond to those challenges. The next paragraphs will provide an overview on how the IRNRP is addressing each of those challenges.

The Report explicitly addresses the **Social Insertion Income** and the targets it is committed to reach as well as the fact that the intervention strategy has reinforced the component of the beneficiaries' insertion, at the social and professional level. It does not, however, give any information on the impact of the measures in ensuring the effective insertion of the beneficiaries. No implementation information is made available.

On the other hand, in March 2007 the Minister presented a new strategy¹ for the active inclusion of the Social Insertion Income beneficiaries, in order to fulfill the NAP target of ensuring that until 2008, 90% of the families benefiting from the measure have an insertion programme. According to the Ministry's data only 49% of the 107 thousand families covered by the Programme have insertion agreements. This new strategy has an interesting potential given the need for a closer and better performance of the insertion component of the measure and the impact it may have on directly contributing to more growth and social cohesion. The strategy considers three different dimensions: priority intervention directed at children and young people; mediation intervention aiming at the professional qualification of different profiles; participated intervention for the qualification of the families.

The IRNRP gives no information on this new strategy. In order to have an adequate monitoring and assessment of these policy measures it would be essential that the implementation report could give more detailed information on how they are performing and explaining how the new strategies put forward, not only exist, but that they respond to identified and quantified results that need to be improved.

The Solidarity Supplement for the Elderly is also mentioned in the IRNRP. Information is given on the number of beneficiaries and on the foreseen enlargement of the measure from 2008 onwards aiming at reaching people above 65 years old, eligible to receive the Supplement. This enlargement will be an important improvement given the high levels of poverty which affect the elderly population basic deriving from the low levels of pensions. It would, nevertheless, be useful to have access once again to the impact of the implementation of this measure up to now,

¹ Available in http://www.portugal.gov.pt/portal/pt/governos/governos_constitucionais/gc17/ministerios/mtss/comunicacao/outros_documentos/20070327_mtss_doc_insercao_rsi.htm

through indicators that control the quality, the participation and the satisfaction of the beneficiaries of such measures. The fact that some of the eligibility criteria regarding income may prove to be too restrictive should strengthen the need to collect information on these specific issues in terms of the implementation impact of the measure.

Another challenge regards the **groups farther away from the labour market** and the need to ensure that they benefit from the insertion measures, with a special emphasis on the high number of poor workers who have no qualifications and on young school leavers.

The report presents useful information regarding the implementation of measures directly contributing to address this challenge. Some of these are:

- The New Opportunities Programme - addressed both at young people and adults, the Programme has clearly exceeded its initial targets and the figures presented show the achievements reached both in terms of young people involved in Professional Training (over 150.000 in 2006) and of the adult population who has been involved in professional training under the System for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (100 000 adults certified at the level of basic education). It will be important to assess the impact of the enlargement of the RVCC processes to the secondary level since it is essential that the system is able to generalise the secondary level as the minimum threshold of qualification which will enable to qualify Portuguese active population and to push them closer to the European average; .
- INSERJOVEM Programme – addressed at young unemployed people has involved in 2006 around 45000 young people and in 2007 (up to April) a total of 27 269 young people; it would be useful to have indicators on the kind of response given (education, training, employment) in order to assess the actual impact of this measure;
- Dynamisation of education offer in the secondary education – the enlargement and reinforcement of professional courses is given as an example of a measure that may have an important impact on employment opportunities. The impact of these measures may, in our opinion, be wider than this. The offer of different alternatives to students and their families at this level may contribute to reducing school-drop out and to enlarge the scope of choices which is an important factor for promoting citizenship. Recent figures show that school failure in the secondary level dropped from 33% to 25% between 2004/2005 to 2006/2007. Although the figures are still high, the Minister highlighted that the drop represents *"an historic reduction, since for the first time we are below 30% which was a kind of fatality."*²
- Intervention programme for unemployed immigrants – the figures show that 6400 people were involved in this programme in 2006, but the report provides no other assessment of the implementation of this programme or its impact. The figure does not tell us how these people were involved, what actions were taken, what impact they had and other essential assessment elements;
- Intervention programmes for specific unemployed publics, including young first job seekers and long-term unemployed – the information available shows a significant growth

² In http://dn.sapo.pt/2007/10/30/sociedade/insucesso_secundario_caiu_32_para_25.html

in the number of beneficiaries between 2005 and 2006, but once again no information is available regarding qualitative results.

An important gap in the report is the issue of poor workers who have no qualification. This issue is not directly addressed by the IRNRP since the information provided on the different programmes is limited to the number of people involved and although some of the groups identified are particularly vulnerable to poverty, there is no real assessment that poor workers who represent a large share of the poor population (see section 3.2) will be adequately tackled by any of the measures.

The need to implement the **reform of the Pensions System** is an explicit concern of the Implementation Report, namely in the section on Sustainability of Social Security Driver. The Report presents the main changes arising from the new Social Security Base Law which have been introduced in order to reinforce the structural coherence of the system, and to ensure its social, economic and financial sustainability. These are positive expected impacts and the fact that there was a Reform Agreement signed with Social Partners regarding the new Law is a clear sign of the urgency to introduce these changes. The implementation of the reform is a crucial and demanding task and some sectors have alerted to the fact that there are risks that need to be seriously taken into consideration. Some of these relate to the updating of pensions and the reduction of their actual value and its impact on the living conditions of the beneficiaries; the introduction of growing mechanisms to reduce the universality of family benefits and transforming for example benefits that every children should be entitled to into means-tested benefits; the need to update the Social Support Index, taking into account the actual inflation rate and the GDP growth.

The issue of the universality of benefits is, in our opinion, a crucial one since there seems to be a recent trend into the erosion of individual rights and the increasing trend of systematically relating them into means-tested proofing. In cases such as the Social Insertion Income, the Solidarity Supplement for the Elderly or other specific social benefits there is a clear scope for this kind of criteria. However, there are other benefits which are related to individual conditions (childhood, maternity, disability) and on which there has been a trend for stricter restrictions in terms of its universality (e.g. the new incentives to childbirth, changes introduced in the family allowance, restrictions regarding fiscal benefits for disabled people).

Finally, regarding the challenge on the reform of the pensions system the report also addresses the issue of the active ageing principle and its promotion which is taken on board in the New Social Security Base Law, the results of which will need to be assessed at a further stage.

The final challenges relate to the **health system** and the need to improve efficacy and implement policies to improve the health of the population and facilitate access to those people in disadvantaged situations.

The IRNRP presents an overview on the rationalisation and sustainability of the health systems and presents the main changes introduced regarding hospital care, primary care units, pharmaceutical and pharmacy policy. The information provided in the report gives a clear picture of the gains obtained in terms of a better budgetary control, increased reduction of expenses and a greater investment in planning and control procedures. Figures are given regarding the financial performances and the gains and reductions achieved. However, there is no information that the new changes introduced are in fact increasing accessibility to health care, having a positive impact on the most disadvantaged groups of the population, reducing inequalities, improving the

quality of the services provided within the system and improving the levels of satisfaction among users.

On the other hand, some of these changes arose strong protests from several sectors, namely at the local level. Thus, it is essential that there is an effort to clearly show how the objectives pursued regarding the provision of better health services are in fact being met and that these do not only respond to budgetary or financial concerns.

Furthermore, there is even some available information coming from Monitoring Reports regarding the implementation of some relevant programmes. A good example is the Monitoring Report for the Implementation of the Pilot Experiences for the National Network for Continued Integrated Care³ which provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the pilot experiences underway. According to the Unit Coordinator in the 6 months covered by the study it was possible to implement a network on the ground involving several partners and support around 1400 people. However, there is a clear need to make a strong effort in order to sensitise hospital services towards refereeing potential patients: "*The Network is still not well known by the health professionals or the citizens (...) and the challenge is to work hard in sending the message through, particularly inside hospitals.*" (in Jornal de Notícias, 24/08/2007)⁴

Another important document containing relevant information regarding the implementation of changes in the health sector is the Spring Report of the Portuguese Observatory on the Health Systems⁵ which draws some relevant conclusions on the period between June 2006 and May 2007. The conclusions stress several positive achievements: 1) the important relaunch of the local health units as one of the most relevant social policies of the present Government; 2) the above mentioned Network for Integrated Care; 3) the "true" budget for 2006; 4) the rationalisation and reorganisation of the health care network. The Report also highlights some hindrances that need to be addressed: 1) a lack of interaction between the State, the civil society and the private sector; 2) a fragmented and inconsistent local approach which hinders trust and a perception of the retraction of the public service in the health sector; 3) a lack of clear information on the situation of access to health care, namely in critical areas such as waiting lists; 4) stagnation of the quality control within the health system.

The Constitutional Court, in the course of an audit on access to health care in the National Health System has concluded that although the new Management System of Users enrolled for Surgery (SIGIC) introduced improvements at the level of information centralisation and of a greater transparency in the relationship with the user, it did not allow to achieve the objective of equity in the treatment of patients and the rentabilisation of the hospitals capacity.

The excessive focus of the implementation report on budgetary results and achievements and the lack of information on impact of the changes undertaken should, in our opinion, be seriously reflected upon in future exercises.

³ Available in www.portugal.gov.pt/NR/rdonlyres/51BE57F9-80FE-49F2-BCF9-E317296434F5/0/Rel_RCCISASocial.pdf

⁴ Available in http://jn.sapo.pt/2007/08/24/nacional/hospitais_pouco_sensibilizados_para_.html

⁵ Available in www.observaport.org/

Examples of good practice

The measures regarding the integration of immigrants on which the Report only mentions the recent approval of the Plan for the Integration of Immigrants (but gives no other information on contents or relevance), could be an interesting example of good practice, particularly in enhancing access of immigrants to the labour market. As referred to in section 3.3., the recently developed policies regarding the integration of immigrants are considered to be favourable policies, putting Portugal in the second place (after Sweden) in the Index of Policies for the Integration of Immigrants. In the specific domain of access to the labour market, Portugal *“almost reaches the best practices in eligibility and integration measures in the labour market. After one year or less working in Portugal, migrants become eligible to accept most jobs, like Community citizens. (...) Security in employment and the rights of migrant workers already correspond to the best practices”*. (Niessen, Jan et al, 2007: 148)

The new Plan which will cross-cut the activity of all the ministries was discussed with immigrants associations and other associations in the field. Its main goal is to reinforce the integration of immigrants in the society and it was conceived as a political programme which intends to reach high levels of integration both in a sectoral and in a transversal perspective.

The integration of immigrants was one of the three priorities in the NAPincl and given the achievements made in this particular area, particularly regarding the potential in terms of the labour market dimension, it would have been expected that the IRNRP would have provided a better coverage of this policy area.

2.2. Feeding out aspects

The analysis of the Portuguese IRNRP shows there has been an explicit concern in responding to the Commission's recommendations and points to watch identified in the 2006 Country Profiles. But it also shows that these challenges have not been equally addressed. The focus on controlling public expenditure and an important investment in education are clear, but less clear is their impact in addressing factors undermining social cohesion, or in reducing inequality and poverty levels in Portugal.

A closer look into the three main recommendations will allow us to provide evidence on the above mentioned considerations.

Social Cohesion and Economic Growth

In section 2, the Report explicitly states Portugal's commitment during the second year of the NRP implementation to respond to the Commission's recommendations and considerations and explicitly refers social cohesion challenges and the National Action Plan for Inclusion. However, throughout the document it is very often not at all clear how employment growth and measures regarding economic and financial sustainability are addressing social inclusion challenges.

Looking at the competitiveness vector no mention is made acknowledging the fact that the new competitive paradigm involves serious risks for the deepening of poverty and social exclusion, particularly in a country where poverty is a persistent and extensive phenomenon, which cannot be dissociated from the development model pursued. Several dimensions are covered in this

section, namely the better framework for firms, administrative simplification of procedures, promotion of innovative projects, access to risk capital, the insertion of young people with high level of qualifications, scientific and technological development initiatives. The importance of such measures for the modernisation of the economic tissue and for the relaunching of competitiveness is not being questioned. However, there is no evidence on how this modernisation process is also including measures that allow for competitiveness measures to be determined also by the way they promote the development and innovation within social relations and how they respond to the risks of deepening inequalities and social exclusion and of creating a more fragmented market.

Particularly positive are the results of the increased fiscalisation on non-declared work and of the Unit for the Integrated Intervention for Enterprises Restructuring, on which the report provides quantitative indicators.

The Commission's recommendation regarding **education and vocational training** is explicitly addressed in the Report and the progress made in this area is clearly relevant to social cohesion goals.

The Report presents some relevant indicators on the performance of some of the initiatives taken in the area of basic and secondary education, namely the increase in the number of enrolled students, the increase of vocational education and several set of measures with regard to Basic Education.

It is important to recognise the efforts and improvements made recently in this domain and in our opinion, there are other relevant measures – not mentioned in the Report – which have been taken which may have an important impact on improving the educational attainment levels but also on reinforcing social and territorial cohesion.

The first example is the recently announced reinforcement of social action support for students in secondary education, where this kind of support is extremely low and where the level of attendance is very low (in 2004/2005 only six in every ten young people who should be attending secondary education were effectively enrolled). Merit scholarships for these students and a transport subsidy for students attending professional courses within this level of education will also be provided.

These new measures are important steps in order to try to reduce the existing “negative competition between school and work” for those youngsters whose families live in difficult socio-economic conditions.

Finally, several studies in the area of education have been highlighting the evolution of a situation of “exclusion from school” (when only a minority of children had access to school) towards a situation of “exclusion in school”, i.e. the school system in Portugal still discriminates students according to schools, classes and teaching areas, which deepens already existing social inequalities. The best schools, located in the most favourable environments receive more candidates than the vacancies they have and therefore often select the students, by excluding those who have failed, those who come from “social neighbourhoods”. Other schools, on the contrary, are seen as “not recommended environments” and they tend to have vacancies and thus to receive all those who have not been accepted in neighbouring “better” schools.

The second generation Choices Programme already mentioned is an important contribution in this field. Other important measures in this field are the Educational Territories of Priority Intervention (TEIP) launched by the Ministry of Education and the Critical Neighbourhood Programme launched by the Ministry of Environment, Territorial Planning and Regional Development. Under the TEIP, thirty six schools prepared projects and are now starting to sign the respective protocols with the Ministry in order to develop the activities. The Ministry of Education will invest 15 million euros in these 36 schools. The Critical Neighbourhoods Programme is not directly addressing education issues but its activities involve intervention in the area of education and they directly involve children at high risk, living in areas where education issues will be one of the main dimensions to tackle and improve. Three major neighbourhoods have been selected and the main guidelines for the respective Intervention Programmes for 2007-2011 have been presented in the neighbourhoods themselves. The Programmes were prepared by the institutional partners involved in the creation of the Programme (several ministries, namely the ministry of Education) and other partners, such as the Local Partners Group. Programmes such as PIISE (Immediate Programme for Social and Educational Intervention) and intervention in parental skills have been identified and will be developed within the Programme.

The dynamics and methodologies which are being developed in some of these programmes enhancing partnership and the involvement of local actors since the beginning of the intervention design are, in our opinion, an important strength, namely for the sustainability of the activities in the post-programme period.

Another missing dimension of the promotion of social cohesion within the report regards the issue of **gender equality**. The gender dimension and its impact on social cohesion and on sustainable and equitable growth is also absent. However, such a concern is explicit in the National Action Plan for Employment (PNE), namely under priority "Promote equal opportunities between men and women in the labour market". The importance to promote an approach of work based on the life cycle should also be taken on board by the IRNRP in order to reduce the existing and recognised gender differences in employment, wages, sectoral and occupational segregation and in the large imbalance that characterises the allocation of working (paid and unpaid) time between men and women.

Once again the challenges brought about by modernisation and competitiveness may either favour or deepen the existing gender inequality dimensions which are only mentioned in the report under the specific theme of proximity services regarding the need to reinforce the extension and upgrading of the network. The IRNRP would certainly benefit from a close cooperation with the existing governmental bodies with responsibilities in this areas, namely the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) and the Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment (CITE).

Ensuring an adequate income from work

The crucial issue of adequate incomes from work is partially addressed by the Agreement on the Fixation and Evolution of the Minimum Monthly Guaranteed Reuneration (RMMG) which was signed by the Government and the social partners and which constitutes a positive development in this area. The creation of a tripartite commission for analysing and monitoring the impacts of the evolution of the RMMG which is referred to in the document should clearly be given conditions to develop a consistent work. This is even more important in a context where there are

clearly different perspectives on the evolution of salaries, e.g. trade unions, government and employers.

Employment and job creation for vulnerable groups

In the domain of qualification and employment it is important to highlight some positive initiatives, that may contribute to a less segmented market and to address some important challenges arising from the competitiveness paradigm:

- Consultancy and training for small and medium firms in the areas of management and organisation which is a positive initiative given the low level of qualification among SME managers and even resistance to engage in training;
- The specific mention to non-declared employment where special attention has been given and concrete results are shown and which should necessarily be extended to all forms of precarious labour which have been increasing;
- Good achievements of the New Opportunities Initiative regarding the qualification of adults and young people.

An important element to be taken into consideration regarding the clear investment in qualification and vocational training is the need to introduce procedures that allow a greater transparency into the procedures and processes, namely by allowing the participation of workers' representatives at the level of access to information regarding the firms' professional training plans and its implementation. This would allow a better performance in the results to be obtained in this particular area, where previous experiences have shown that the availability of financial resources is not a sufficient condition to actual improvements and positive impacts.

The modernisation of employment protection is addressed in the Qualification and Employment Vector. The report highlights several initiatives in the domain of the public employment service and presents results for these measures namely addressing unemployed young people and adults, and specific unemployed groups experiencing increased labour insertion difficulties. The figures provided in the annexed tables show the number of individuals covered by the different measures as well as the financial allocation to the Programmes. However, given the wider scope of the objectives identified in the programmes, it would be necessary to have other type of available information in order to assess the implementation of the measures and their impact, namely in addressing labour market segmentation and in promoting a "decent work" approach.

The information provided regarding the new legislative regime for temporary work with the aim to better protect temporary workers is also a positive development although it is still too early to assess its impact. It should be noted that this effort should be accompanied by an efficient monitoring system in order to ensure that the new legal norms regarding temporary work will be respected. On the other hand, the fight against non-declared work should clearly be widened up to include all forms of precarious work, which in 2006 represented 20.6% of paid employment, particularly affecting women, young people and immigrants.

Addressing territorial differences and regional gaps

A positive example of how the report can improve the relevant feeding out considerations is to be found in the Connecting Portugal Driver. Here the document makes an explicit reference to measures which are being taken in order to ensure that Digital Inclusion is being widely disseminated and accessible to all, thus promoting social and territorial cohesion. At the same time, the document refers the second generation Choices Programme, which is a good example of targeting vulnerable groups in this particular area of the Digital inclusion and therefore addressing further (and new) risks of inequality and exclusion.

One missing element relevant for the feeding out analysis of the IRNRP is a territorial approach of the impact of measures in different areas, namely regarding employment. Given the importance of the local level in the implementation of the NAPincl measures in order to foster its consistency and adjustability to the local and regional contexts, it would have been expected that the Report would make considerations on the local and regional implementation of employment protection measures. Active employment policies, qualification initiatives among others need to be clearly articulated with the existing local structures and mechanisms, namely the Local Social Networks and their Social Development Plans.

Finally, the modernisation of the **social protection system** has already been addressed in the previous section and therefore the comments remain valid for the present section.

2.3. Governance

Several considerations have been made regarding aspects related to the assessment of impact of policies, namely the lack of information on the actual impact of relevant changes in areas such as health, social protection, professional qualification, long-term care and labour market integration.

In fact most of the figures provided regarding the implementation of measures in these areas primarily focus on financial or management performance and in some cases identify the number of people covered by the measures. As referred to above, there is a lack of information on the actual impact of those measures even when in some cases there are available monitoring reports that could give an important added value to the analysis made.

Therefore, in our opinion, this gap seems to be simultaneously linked to a lack of indicators that would enable to identify the impact of those measures, but also problems of communication and coordination between governmental bodies from different areas.

In fact, although in the IRNRP introduction it is stated that the implementation report received contributions from different bodies, the nature of those contributors reveals a high level of centralisation and a continuation of the missing cooperation with local level actors directly intervening in the different territories where issues of growth, employment and social cohesion are a daily challenge.

Section 3 will provide several examples of governance related aspects that directly arise from the implementation of relevant policies and that provides a closer insight into some of the hindrances still affecting the governance dimension.

3. Update on key trends and recent developments in poverty and social exclusion

3.1. Relevant economic and political developments

In 2006 the Portuguese economy presented a comparatively better performance than in previous years. According to the Portuguese Central Bank (Banco de Portugal): *"The economic activity accelerated, pushed by the export of goods and services. The conditions of labour market registered a still incipient improvement, with a positive variation of employment and the almost stabilisation of unemployment. The budget deficit presented a significant reduction, above the foreseen figures, i.e., from 6.0 to 3.9 per cent of the GDP."* (Banco de Portugal, 2007: 11)

Nevertheless, the Portuguese economy growth in 2006 was not sufficient to attain the level needed for an actual convergence with the Euro zone.

Table 1 - MAIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS Variation rates, in percentage (except where indicated otherwise)		
	2005	2006
Gross Domestic Product	0.5	1.3
Private Consumption	2.1	1.1
Public Consumption	2.0	-0.3
Gross Fixed Capital Formation	-3.1	-2.1
Exports	1.6	9.1
Imports	2.2	4.2
Employment	0.0	0.7
Unemployment rate (% of the total of population)	7.6	7.7
Budgetary Balance (% of GDP)	6.0	3.9
Capacity (+) / Necessity(-) of financing of the economy (% of GDP)	-8.6	-8.7

Sources: National Statistical Institute and Bank of Portugal

The strong increase of exports contrasted to the almost inexistent growth of internal demand. In fact, the increased weight of fiscal duties and bank interest rates, led to a moderate consumption among households, which occurs within a context of already high levels of indebtedment.

The reduction of the budget deficit translates according to the Central Bank *"the restrictive nature of the budgetary policy during 2006 (...) namely deriving from the increase of the fiscal weight and the reduction of expenses with personnel and investment."* (Banco de Portugal, 2007: 31)

However, according to the Technical Unit for the Budget Support of the Parliament (UTAO) the reduction of the structural deficit of 8 per cent points in 2007 will only be 3 per cent points in 2008, according to the forecast of the recently presented 2008 State Budget.

The budget deficit “issue” and its implications was one of the hot political topics during the last year, dividing positions and arguments. From the Government side, the emphasis has been put on the importance of achieving this goal, whereas opposition parties from the left stress the fact that the budget deficit must be envisaged as a means to enhance the country's economic growth and sustainable development and not as a goal in itself.

The recent presentation of the State Budget for 2008 has once again raised immense criticisms linked to this issue (and clearly overcoming it) from different sectors (opposition parties, trade union federations and other social partners).

According to the Government, the 2008 State Budget strategy is based on 4 major guidelines: 1) to proceed with a policy of budgetary accuracy in order to deepen the consolidation of public accounts; 2) to support the under-going recovery and restructuring of the economy and job creation; 3) to support citizens and families in order to reinforce they ability to participate in the collective effort for creating wealth, modernising the society, developing their citizenship and sharing the well-being improvements; 4) to modernise public administration as an essential basis for economic development.⁶

The State Budget Proposal for 2008 was officially presented to Parliament on the 12th October and will start to be discussed in Parliament in the beginning of November.

Some arguments have been put forward regarding the fact that the priority given to the reduction of the public deficit has had strong negative impacts on public investment and on unemployment. Some analysts highlight the fact that Portugal is the only country in the EU where there has been a reduction of the public investment between 2003 and 2007, representing only 2.2% of the economy and the fifth lowest within the EU (Diário Económico, 31/10/07)⁷.

On the other hand, criticisms have been raised regarding the negative impact of the 2008 Budget proposals on pensioners and workers, deriving from a new increase of the fiscal charge and from an insufficient updating of thresholds and deductions regarding the Individual Revenue Tax (IRS). According to some analysts *“The Government's proposal for the 2008 State Budget will determine an increase of fiscal injustice since the revenues coming from indirect taxes – which are more unjust taxes - will increase much more than revenues originated by direct taxes. (...) On the other hand, fiscal benefits granted to firms which make the State lose millions of Euros from fiscal revenues which are not received have gone up sharply.”* (Eugénio Rosa, 2007)

There have been other relevant reactions to the 2008 State Budget which directly relate to the role of main stakeholders in the Social Inclusion domain. These refer to the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (ANMP) which is strongly contesting the criteria for the distribution of transfers from the state budget to the municipalities. According to the ANMP, the dispositions contained in the new Law for Local Finances – which should have been applied in 2007 – were delayed and the amount transferred was the same as in 2005. This situation should now be corrected in order to allow an increase of the foreseen transfer in 2008 which will, nevertheless, not compensate the *“pushback verified in revenues transferred by the Government since 2005.”* (ANMP, 2007:6)⁸

⁶ Further and more detailed information on the 2008 State Budget Proposal is available at <http://www.portugal.gov.pt>

⁷ Available at <http://diarioeconomico.sapo.pt/edicion/diarioeconomico/opinion/columnistas/pt/desarrollo/1051757.html>

⁸ In <http://www.anmp.pt/anmp/bol2007/bol161.pdf>

This discussion around transfers from the state central level to the local level is particularly important at this stage since it is occurring at the same time as there is a process of transferring responsibilities from the Central Administration to the local authorities which started in January 2007. According to the ANMP, this process which includes responsibility transfers in several areas, namely Health, Education and Social Action is not evolving at the expected rhythm and therefore *"given the delays registered in the quantitative and qualitative concretisation of proposals, the lack of any regulatory diploma or discussed the resources to be allocated, it is not possible to operationalise any responsibilities' transfers towards the municipalities."* (ANMP, 2007:5)⁹

Particularly worrying is also the reaction of the ANMP regarding the regulation process of the Programmes of the 2007-2013 National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). According to the National Association the agreed greater participation of the local authorities in the approval of the Programmes' Regulations is not being respected and there is a centralisation of the whole process: *"The regulation of the NSRF Programmes includes compulsory statements from the Central Administration for access (before selection), before applications, which is a clear violation of the autonomy of Local Administration. (...) The regulation of the NSRF Programmes which is being prepared includes the discrimination of applications coming from municipalities, which in some cases, are given lower participation rates than applications from Central Administration."*(ANMP, 2007)¹⁰

The Social and Economic Council had already highlighted its concern regarding the model of mobilisation and involvement of stakeholders in the discussion of the NSRF and Operational Programmes which should clearly go beyond formal procedures: *"(...) the Social and Economic Council expresses, once again, its concern regarding the model of participation of these partners (regional and local authorities, economic and social partners and other civil society representatives) in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the OPs, considering that partnership should not be resumed to a strictly formal participation within the monitoring bodies, similar to what happened in former Community Action Programmes (QCA). (...) It is still not clear what is the role of social partners, municipalities' associations and other civil society's organised entities as partners in the contractualisation processes for the management of programmes within the NSRF and the Operational Programmes."* (CES, 2007: 7)

The risks of a deficitary model of participation and of a reinforcement of concentration policies should clearly be addressed if as stated in the NSRF social, economic and territorial cohesion should act as referential guidelines for the implementation of policies in all areas. The risks of a deepening of poverty and social exclusion arising from the new competitiveness paradigm does not allow us to "discard" the vital contribution of all relevant partners, particularly those who at the local level have the responsibility to enhance the rights of citizens and to promote social progress.

⁹ In <http://www.anmp.pt/anmp/bol2007/bol161.pdf>

¹⁰ In <http://www.anmp.pt/anmp/div2007/d02/CG2007102301.pdf>

3.2. Poverty and social exclusion – recent trends and challenges

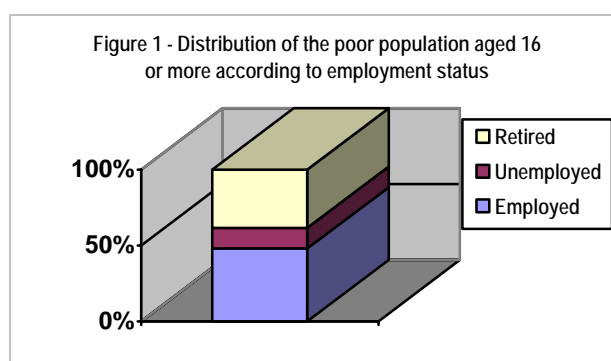
The recent publication by the National Statistical Institute of the latest figures regarding poverty is based on the analysis of the EU-SILC 2006¹¹.

In 2006 around one in every five people (18%) living in Portugal were poor, compared to the 16% EU average for the same year.

The highest poverty rate was 41% and it was registered among households composed of one adult living with dependent children and also among households composed of one older person (65 or plus) living alone.

Older people and young people below 16 years old were the two age groups more vulnerable to poverty (26% and 21% respectively were below the poverty line). Women presented a slightly upper rate than men (19% and 18% respectively).

Vulnerability to poverty is higher among the unemployed (31%) and the retired (23%). However, looking at the composition of the poor population in Portugal in 2006, the NSI figures show that contrary to the unemployed, the retired population concentrates both a high vulnerability to poverty and a high contribution to the group of people below the poverty line (28%).



In Portugal social transfers had an impact of 7 per cent points in the reduction of the poverty rate (from 25% to 18%), compared to 10 per cent points impact registered in the whole of the EU countries.

Finally, the data from 2006 EU SILC also highlights the strong inequality that continues to affect the income distribution in Portugal: the income of the 20% of the population with the highest level of income was 6.8 times higher than the income of the bottom 20% of the population. This ratio reaches 11.9% if we consider the bottom 10% and the upper 10% of the income distribution. This inequality level is the second highest registered among the EU25 countries, only outreached by Latvia. At the same time, the evolution of this indicator reveals a trend that seems difficult to revert although the latest figures show a shy decrease of inequality. The evolution in the following years will show us whether this is an actual shift in this persistent path of high levels of income inequality.

¹¹ Available at http://www.ine.pt/portal/page/portal/PORTAL_INE/Destaques/?DESTAQUESdest_boui=7764627&DESTAQUE_Smodo=2

Table 2 - Income inequality indicators - Portugal

ECHP/EU-SILC	1998	2001	2004	2005	2006 p
<i>Gini</i> Coeficient	37	37	38	38	38
S80/S20	6.8	6.5	6.9	6.9	6.8
S90/S10	12.0	11.0	12.3	12.2	11.9

P – provisional figure

Source: INE (2007) and Rodrigues (2007)

Although there has been an improvement in the living conditions of the Portuguese population in the last decades, not all the population has benefited in the same way from this overall improvement: *"We have salaries which are clearly below the European average, but if you look at the high level managers in a big Portuguese firm, the salaries are already at the EU average."* (Carlos Farinha Rodrigues in <http://reapnimprensa.blogspot.com/2007/06/rendimento-desigualdade-e-pobreza-em.html>)

A recent study (Costa, coord, 2007) on Poverty and Social Exclusion in Portugal highlights the persistent and extensive character of poverty in Portugal and draws attention to the fact a *"policy to combat poverty that only takes into account the cross-sectional characteristics in one single year, risks to miss fundamental aspects, that only a dynamic analysis of poverty will allow us to identify"* (Costa, coord, 2007: 150). The authors analysed a period of 6 years (from 1995 to 2000¹²) and verified that almost half (47%) of the Portuguese households are vulnerable to poverty, since at least in one year of the period they were below the poverty line. Among these households, almost three in every four (72%) were poor for at least two years out of the six.

The same study launched a direct survey in late 2006 on all households identified as poor in 2004¹³ whose reference person was working at that time, in order to better understand the situation of working poor households who continue to represent an important share among the Portuguese population (39% in 2004). Some of the results of the survey on those 300 households (900 persons) highlighted some policy relevant information:

- The great majority of these working poor (72%) started to work before 16 years old and among these 31% before 12 years old;
- More than 80% have full-time jobs and more than three in every four make their contributions to Social Security;
- Among employees around 80% have a written contract and only 18 % had more than one employer during the two years before the survey;
- Although 70% of the respondents reached a higher education level than their parents, three in every four respondents completed only the 6th year education;

Fighting job precarity necessarily means fighting instability but also and clearly the low levels of salaries. The results show that precarity is clearly linked to this issue. Raising salaries is a complex task and it demands time and the decisive involvement of different stakeholders: workers, and their trade unions, employers and the State. This is not exactly a novelty. What is

¹² Data based on ECHP waves from 1995 to 2000.

¹³ Data from EU-SILC 2004

important at this stage is to recognise that this represents a fundamental push towards progress in Portugal and act accordingly.

On the other hand, from the results of the above mentioned survey the intergenerational reproduction of poverty becomes obvious in the reproduction of low levels of educational attainment leading to early entrance into the labour market and less favourable professional trajectories leading to higher vulnerability to poverty.

The education system plays a major importance in this domain, which in order to be successful, will have to ensure poor children access to school, which is vital, but also the conditions for success (translated into knowledge and skills acquisition) and, also, the support to their families, namely to "free" those children from the responsibility to contribute to the family's income.

Some recent trends regarding the composition of the labour market introduce disturbing signs in the domain of job precarity. According to NSI data, between 2005 and 2007 there was a reduction of around 116 thousand jobs in the group of workers with high schooling and qualification, therefore with higher salaries, an increase of around 60 thousand jobs in the group of "medium schooling and qualification" and an increase of around 70 thousand jobs in the group of "low schooling and qualification", therefore earning lower salaries: *"The increase between 2005 and 2007, of the average salary of employees (+1.6%), and of the global annual wage mass (massa salarial) of employees (+1.9%), represents increases lower than the accumulated inflation rate in these two years (5.4%) and lower than increases in salaries according to professions (between 2.2% and 10.9%). This shows that in Portugal we are witnessing a significant worsening of the living conditions also due to the recomposition which is affecting employment."*¹⁴

According to the trade unions *"The systematic underestimation of inflation (there have been discrepancies for 9 consecutive years) has penalised the evolution of actual salaries, which is not acceptable. The existence of a realistic target for the inflation rate is a vital element to update salaries, but also for the definition of a more efficient and fairer income policy, namely regarding the updating of tax thresholds, deductions and social benefits in the State Budget."*(UGT, 2007: 3)

Looking at the Employment Survey data it is possible to verify that although total employment grew 0.7 per cent points between 2005 and 2006 (inverting the stagnation that characterised the period between 2002 and 2005), the figures for the first semester 2007 show a decrease in the total employment figures and an increase in unemployment (-0.5% and 7.9% respectively in the second quarter of 2007).

Long-term unemployment has kept its upward trend (since 2003) and in 2006 it reached a total of 51.7% of the total unemployed. According to the Central Bank *"The new increase of the average duration of unemployment from 21.1 to 22.4 months in 2006 is consistent with the weak growth of the economic activity and with the gradual process of sectorial restructuring under way in the Portuguese economy."* (Bank of Portugal, 2007)

Under the light of these findings and considerations it is important to briefly review the available information on the progress made on the **NAP/inclusion process**.

A first positive element regards the fact that – contrary to what had been reported during the previous NAP/incl period – there have been regular meetings of the Interministerial Commission which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Plan.

¹⁴ In <http://papeisdealexandria.blogspot.com/2007/08/resumo-deste-estudo-de-acordo-com-as.html>

However, a recent document (October 2007) produced by the Non-Governmental Forum for Social Inclusion (FNGIS)¹⁵ which has been actively involved in the above mentioned work of the Interministerial Commission raises some concerns regarding the NAP implementation process.

Most of these concerns address the need to reinforce the participation mechanisms within the NAP implementation and monitoring process, namely those related to the central-local dialogue, to a wider and more structured involvement of NGO's and to the participation of the excluded population.

Apart from these concerns the document also stresses the fact that *"The NAP, and in spite of the recognised effort from its coordination team, is not able to have an effective and productive relationship with the different sectorial policies and with the other National Plans which came first – or worse even – which were drafted and implemented afterwards. On the contrary, pushed by a need to compete with them, the NAP clearly loses in terms of protagonism and visibility. In short, the NAP as an integrated and guiding strategy for social inclusion in Portugal, is mainly a Plan of the Ministry for Labour and Social Solidarity and, therefore, such a goal – social inclusion – has no conditions to be reached. At this level, it is particularly worrying the shortness of resources – financial and human – given to the National Coordination of the NAP, as well as its weak competence for a cross-sectional intervention in terms of implementation and monitoring."* (FNGIS, 2007: 2)

These concerns now expressed by the FNGIS are in line with some of our previous concerns and points to watch in previous reports, at a stage when the implementation process was about to begin. On the other hand, the analysis of the IRNRP – presented in the section – already highlighted the fact that the information on the NAP is clearly insufficient and seems to corroborate that lack of strategic cooperation between the NAP and other major national Plans.

Finally, another recent relevant document has been produced on the NAP/incl 2006-2008, under the responsibility of the Social and Economic Council.¹⁶ The Council expresses its overall agreement with the guiding principles defined in the NAP and its satisfaction that the NAP is framed by the NRSSPSI and by a global perspective on the development of the country and the governance dimensions considered for producing the document and its implementation.

The Council also alerts that these principles are demanding and that they need to be consistent in terms of the description of the Plan and in its implementation. Doubts are raised on the chosen structure for the NAP implementation monitoring which is considered strongly governmental, as well as on the need to closely articulate the central administration "focal points" with the social reality, and therefore with the local actors in the different territories.

The document questions the grounds for the choice of the three priorities chosen comparing to others, which are not fully justified in the diagnosis and the relevance of its impact in terms of reducing poverty (given the groups in question). The Council *"would consider it more useful the focalisation of the chosen priorities, through a strategic thought grounded on a deep diagnosis, and the clear identification of structuring projects/programmes, more than a pile of measures which derive from the regular programmes from each ministry."* (CES, 2007: 14).

Finally, several recommendations are made by the Council regarding the need to restructure the mobilisation and involvement of actors (local municipalities, local social networks, NGO's and the

¹⁵ Available at <http://foruminclusao.no.sapo.pt/index.html>

¹⁶ Available at www.ces.pt/file/doc/306/

poor people themselves), the functioning of the monitoring structures, the production of knowledge, the visibility of the NAP and finally the recognition of the importance of the issue of the “working poor”, with low salaries and precarious jobs.

3.3. Relevant legislative developments

Some relevant legislative developments occurred during the last year which will be briefly presented in this section.

In January 2007, the new Basic Law of the Social Security System was approved, following a long period of public discussion and an agreement reached in October 2006 with the social partners on the Social Security Reform. This was a major legislative development given the challenges faced by the Portuguese Social Security System which demanded a clear reform in view of its future sustainability. In fact, several structural trends were identified among which: the ageing of the population, the increasing number of pensioners every year (between 1.5 and 2%), the growth of the average amount of old-age pensions which increased more than 30% in the last 5 years and the gap between the growth of contributions to Social Security and the increase of pensions

In this context, the new Basic Law of the Social Security System has been built in order to reinforce the structural coherence of the system, and to ensure its social, economic and financial sustainability.

According to the Minister for Labour and Social Solidarity the major changes proposed in the new law are:

- *“The Sustainability Factor which adapts the pension system to the actual evolution of life expectancy;*
- *The Social Support Index (...) which ensures responsibility and solidarity in the increase of pensions, giving a greater protection to the poorer pensioners and workers (...);*
- *The quicker consideration, but always progressive, of the new calculation formula for pensions, which is fairer, since it considers the whole of the contributory career;*
- *The promotion of active aging (...);*
- *The Contributive Code and the Combat to Contributive Evasion, as well as the Revision of the Special Regimes of Contributions to Social Security.” (Vieira da Silva, 2007)¹⁷*

¹⁷ Available in
http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/MTSS/Comunicacao/Intervencoes/20061123_MTSS_Int_Seg_Social.htm

Other important pieces of legislation which have been recently approved for the first time are:

- The 1st National Plan against the Traffick of Human Beings¹⁸ which has defined the following strategic areas of intervention: the knowledge of the phenomenon and the dissemination of information, prevention, protection and repression of crimes;
- the Plan for the Integration of Immigrants¹⁹ which cross-cuts the activity of all the ministries, aiming at reinforcing the integration of immigrants in the Portuguese society and giving a specific focus to combat early school drop out and school failure among children descending from immigrant population;
- the first Action Plan for the Integration of Handicapped People²⁰ which is structured around three main axes: 1) to improve accessibility and information conditions; 2) to increase the levels of education, qualification and employment; 3) to enhance and ensure dignified living conditions.

Although it is still too early to evaluate the impact of these new tools it is important to refer that as far as immigration policies are concerned, Portugal has just been considered the second best performer in the MIPEX²¹ – a comparative study of the measures regarding the integration of immigrants in a total of 28 countries. The most relevant aspects identified in the Portuguese policies regard access to labour market, family regrouping and anti-discrimination.

¹⁸ Available in www.portugal.gov.pt/NR/rdonlyres/FC61D12F-BC21-4B2D-A7AF-53F0C99FA537/0/I_PNCTSH.pdf

¹⁹ Available in <http://www.dgeep.mtss.gov.pt/planeamento/pimigrantes.php>

²⁰ Available in <http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/Print.aspx?guid=%7B5F0ED881-8EA4-45C4-B9F1-BF36E103A623%7D>

²¹ Available in <http://www.integrationindex.eu>

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Websites

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Portuguese Observatory on the Health Systems: www.observaport.org/

National Association of Portuguese Municipalities: <http://www.anmp.pt/>

National Statistical Institute: <http://www.ine.pt>

European Anti-Poverty Network – Portugal: <http://reapn>

Non-Governmental Forum for Social Inclusion: <http://foruminclusao.no.sapo.pt/>

Social and Economic Council: www.ces.pt

Portuguese Central Bank: www.bportugal.pt

General directorate of studies, statistics and planning: <http://www.dgeep.mtss.gov.pt/>

ACIDI – High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue: www.acime.gov.pt

ANNEX - Relevant new legislation and key documents

2008 State Budget Proposal - <http://www.portugal.gov.pt>

Education

Lançamento do Programa de Modernização das Escolas Secundárias -
http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/ME/Comunicacao/Intervencoes/20070319_ME_Int_Modernizacao_Escolas_Secundarias.htm

Contratos para o Desenvolvimento de Escolas em Meio Social Difícil -
http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/ME/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20070312_ME_Doc_Escolas_Meio_Dificil.htm

Reconhecimento de competências ao nível do secundário
http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/ME/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20061116_ME_Doc_Competicencias_Secundario.htm

Health

Relatório de Monitorização das Experiências Piloto da Rede Nacional de Cuidados Continuados Integrados
http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/MS/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20070824_MS_Doc_Rel_Experiencias_RNCCI.htm

Inclusion

Estratégia Nacional para a Inclusão dos Beneficiários do Rendimento Social de Inserção
http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/MTSS/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20070327_MTSS_Doc_Insercao_RSI.htm

I Plano Nacional contra o Tráfico de Seres Humanos –
www.portugal.gov.pt/NR/rdonlyres/FC61D12F-BC21-4B2D-A7AF-53F0C99FA537/0/I_PNCTSH.pdf

Plano para a Integração dos Imigrantes –
www.acime.gov.pt/modules.php?name=News&file=categories&op=newindex&catid=38

I Plano de Acção para a Integração das Pessoas com Deficiências ou Incapacidade
www.mtss.gov.pt/tp_intro_destaque_iies.asp?688

Labour and Employment

Lei que altera o Código do Trabalho -

http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/MTSS/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20060320_MTSS_Doc_Altera_Codigo_Trabalho.htm

Livro Branco das Relações Laborais -

http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/MTSS/Comunicacao/Publicacoes/20070627_MTSS_Pub_Livro_Branco_Rel_Laborais.htm

Acordo sobre a Fixação do Salário Mínimo Garantido -

http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Primeiro_Ministro/Documentos/20061205_PM_Doc_Salario_Minimo.htm

Reforma das Políticas Activas de Emprego -

http://www.portugal.gov.pt/Portal/PT/Governos/Governos_Constitucionais/GC17/Ministerios/MTSS/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20070713_MTSS_Doc_Politiclas_Emprego.htm

Social Security

Basic Law of the Social Security System -

www.portugal.gov.pt/.../Ministerios/MTSS/Comunicacao/Outros_Documentos/20070116_MTSS_Doc_Lei_Seg_Social.htm