

Climate, Immigration and Labour in Portugal

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Q1

How are global geopolitical events affecting mobility in your jurisdiction?

In this regard, considering the current situation in Portugal, global geopolitical events have significantly influenced mobility within the country's jurisdiction, impacting both immigration and emigration patterns.

Firstly, the ongoing global geopolitical tensions, such as conflicts and economic instability in various regions, have led to an increase in asylum seekers and refugees seeking safety in Portugal. The country, known for its relatively welcoming stance on immigration, has seen a rise in applications for asylum, influenced by global crises. This increase had legal implications, requiring the Portuguese government to adopt asylum and refugee policies with immediate effect, including the processing of applications, integration measures and guarantees of compliance with international human rights legislation. This also meant an increase in pressure on the government services responsible for processing applications, which had already been felt since the pandemic, and which led to the Portuguese government having to act to extend visas and authorisations already issued, given the services' inability to cope with applications.

The geopolitical landscape has

also indirectly affected emigration from Portugal. Economic sanctions and trade barriers can lead to economic downturns, prompting Portuguese citizens to seek opportunities abroad. Legal frameworks facilitating emigration, bilateral agreements on labour mobility, and the protection of Portuguese citizens working overseas are areas that require ongoing attention and adjustment in response to these global changes.

In summary, global geopolitical events have a multifaceted impact on mobility in Portugal's jurisdiction, affecting immigration and emigration trends. These impacts necessitate a dynamic and responsive legal framework that addresses humanitarian needs, economic demands, and security concerns, while aligning with EU policies and international law.

Q2

Climate concerns are increasingly becoming a decision-making factor in global migration – how is this impacting your jurisdiction?

Under the lens of Portugal's legal framework, climate concerns as a factor in global migration are increasingly impacting the nation's jurisdiction in several ways.

Portugal, like many other countries, is witnessing an increase in what can be



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termed "climate refugees" – individuals and families displaced by climate-related disasters or the gradual effects of climate change. Although international law does not currently recognise the legal status of "climate refugee", the growing number of these migrants is beginning to lead to proposals from political parties within the framework of these asylum and immigration policies. This may involve broadening the criteria for humanitarian protection or developing specific legal frameworks to respond to the needs of people displaced by environmental factors.

Portugal's relatively mild climate makes it an attractive destination for individuals from regions severely affected by climate change. This is leading to a shift in immigration patterns, with a growing number of migrants from regions experiencing extreme weather events, sea-level rise, or other climate-related issues. The legal system is adapting to accommodate these shifts, potentially creating special visas for those affected by climate change.

From another perspective, climate change is affecting agriculture in various parts of the world, including Portugal. This has implications for the legal framework governing seasonal and agricultural employees. Changes in crop yields and harvesting periods due to climate variations may lead to adjustments in the demand for seasonal labour, which in turn influences immigration policies for temporary agricultural employees.

In conclusion, as climate concerns become a more significant factor in global migration, the Portuguese legal system is still beginning the necessary adaptation to the complex

challenges posed by climate-induced displacement. This involves revising immigration policies, accommodating new migration patterns, ensuring socio-economic integration and participating in international efforts to address the global challenge of climate migration.

Q3

How is government policy influencing mobility in your jurisdiction – particularly in regard to employment relocation?

Currently, government policy in Portugal is significantly influencing mobility within its jurisdiction, especially concerning employment relocation. The government's strategic approach to attracting foreign talent and encouraging internal mobility is reflected in several key policy areas.

For instance, the Portuguese government has implemented incentives for foreign professionals with policies aimed at attracting skilled professionals from abroad. This includes tax incentives, such as the Non-Habitual Resident (NHR) regime, which offers reduced tax rates for new residents for a period of ten years. Additionally, there are streamlined visa processes for highly skilled workers, including those in technology, science, and research sectors. These measures aim to bolster Portugal's workforce with international expertise, particularly in areas facing skill shortages.

On the other hand, recognising the growing trend of remote working, Portugal

has adapted its visa policies to cater to digital nomads. This policy attracts a global workforce that can work remotely while residing in Portugal. It not only diversifies the skill base in the country but also stimulates local economies, particularly in less urbanised areas.

Moreover, the government provides support for start-ups and entrepreneurial ventures, encouraging both domestic and international entrepreneurs to establish their businesses in Portugal. This includes initiatives like startup visas, which facilitate the entry and stay of non-EU entrepreneurs who plan to launch start-ups in Portugal. Such policies attract foreign investment and talent, contributing to job creation and economic growth.

From an internal perspective, to address regional disparities and prevent the depopulation of rural areas, the Portuguese government has initiated policies to encourage internal mobility. This includes incentives for businesses and individuals relocating to less dense regions, such as tax benefits, grants, and support in infrastructure development. These initiatives aim to balance economic growth across different regions of Portugal.

As a member of the European Union, Portugal aligns with EU-wide policies that facilitate labour mobility within member states. This includes adherence to principles of free movement, allowing EU citizens to work in Portugal without the need for a work permit, thus simplifying the process for both employers and employees.

In conclusion, government policies in Portugal are actively shaping the landscape of employment relocation. By creating an attractive environment for foreign professionals, supporting digital nomadism, fostering entrepreneurial growth, and encouraging internal mobility, Portugal is enhancing its position as a dynamic and diverse hub for employment opportunities.

Nevertheless, despite policies to attract foreign talent, the fact is that when it comes to internal talent, there is a high outflow of qualified workers, given the low internal competitiveness and low salaries. This outflow trend contrasts with the inflow trend of unskilled labour.

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