Consolidating Democracy

A fully European Portugal

Political stability, the rule of law, democratic consolidation.

"Joining Europe was a decision based on freedom, hope and confidence in our European destiny."

Mário Soares,
President of the Republic (1986)

Portugal's accession to the European Economic Community in 1986 was only possible because **the country achieved freedom and democracy in 1974**. After decades of isolation, and eight years of successful accession negotiations, Portugal took up its place amongst the European democracies.

The EU contributed to prosperity, economic and social development, and to the international recognition of the country's emerging democracy.

The Accession Treaty, signed at the Jerónimos Monastery, symbolised a **return to the European family** – a moment of collective hope and confidence in the future.
Forty years later, Portuguese democracy enjoys high levels of civic and political participation, European institutional integration and international trust, reflecting the evolution from a young democracy into a politically stable nation within the European family.

A Modern Country

Infrastructure for the future – 50 years of the EIB

European funds have supported cohesion and brought Portugal closer to its European partners, transforming the country and its economy and society. Improvements to roads, railways, ports, schools, hospitals, the electrical grid, water supply and sanitation have revitalised the country and brought regions and people closer together.

Access to education, mobility and shared knowledge.

"Mobility is one of the greatest assets of European integration."

Carlos Moedas,
former European Commissioner (2015)

Since the start of its first activities in Portugal in 1976, the **European Investment Bank** (EIB) has been a strategic partner in the **modernization of infrastructure** and the socio-economic development of the country.
Over the past 50 years, the EIB has financed key infrastructure projects that have transformed transport and public services, such as the Vasco da Gama Bridge and the metro systems in Porto and Lisbon, as well as programmes to modernize state schools through improved teaching and learning conditions.
The EIB has also supported key investments in the water and sanitation infrastructure, ensuring a more equal access to these services across the country.
The EIB has also supported investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, contributing to the decarbonisation of the national economy.

Today, the **EU brand** is visible on the bridges and roads connecting cities, in the schools educating new generations, and in projects in the fields of science, innovation, technology and infrastructure that **link Portugal to Europe.**

Economic modernization and a better quality of life.

"Portugal is, unequivocally, a beneficiary of European integration. (...) Only those who do not remember (...) can ignore the enormous transformation that the country has undergone and what that has done for the quality of life of the Portuguese people."

Cavaco Silva, former Prime Minister and former President of the Republic of Portugal (1996)

Studying, researching and working in the EU

The Erasmus Generation

EU programmes have opened up new opportunities for study, education and vocational training, research and work for several generations of Portuguese people.

Increased access to higher education and participation in initiatives such as **Erasmus** and **Horizon Europe** have boosted academic and scientific mobility. Universities and research centres have strengthened their **integration into international networks**, improved resources and attracted talent.

The mobility of students and researchers has contributed to the development of human resources and to innovation across multiple sectors.

The result is a more skilled society, with skills that reflect European standards and active participation in collaborative projects on knowledge, innovation and training.