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Workshop No. 6: Comparative Perspectives on Local Party Politics

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Title: «Party politics in Portugal: municipalities and central government».

Introduction:

Since the Portuguese revolution of April 25th, 1974, and the beginning of the democratic regime, political parties dominate the electoral process, both on central government and on the municipalities. The analysis of the political elites, their party filiations and recruitment and their social backgrounds has occupied Portuguese social scientists for the last years: André Freire has studied members of parliament; Maria Antónia Pires de Almeida has done the same with mayors and governors; Marina Costa Lobo, António Costa Pinto and Pedro Tavares de Almeida have analysed ministers and presidents in the South of Europe. With this paper, the author proposes to establish the relationship between these two levels of government, national and local (and also supra-national, with an analysis of the Portuguese members of the European Parliament), and access the importance of political parties in each of them. Many mayors’ political careers include vertical mobility, both upwards and downwards: from mayors to members of parliament to members of the European Parliament and ministers or even President of the Republic and Prime-Minister (in the case of two
mayors of Lisbon: Jorge Sampaio and Pedro Santana Lopes), or from ministers and members of parliament to mayors. In all of these cases, their party and their positions within the party has played a central role, even when some individuals have pursued other party choices in order to get re-elected, or even have presented independent candidacies.

All these factors are subject to analysis and comment, in order to compare local and central governments in Portugal, the role the parties in each of them and the phenomena of independent candidacies. In order to achieve our goal, we have posed the following research questions:

1. Are political parties equally prevalent across all levels of representative institutions in Portugal, as it happens across Europe, from national government to the smallest municipality?
2. Is there personal mobility between different levels of government in Portugal? What is the importance of a previous political career on a different level in order to get elected locally or centrally?
3. What is the impact political parties have within different levels of government in Portugal? Which are the roles, responsibilities, power and impact of party politics within local democracy, in a comparative perspective with central government?

These are important issues, not only because they haven't yet been approached by the Portuguese scientific community, but especially because in Portugal, for the last thirty years, political parties have monopolised political representation on the different levels of government. Yet, in the last decade, the competition among parties has changed in Portugal, with the introduction of new ones that have questioned the way the two major parties, which have ruled our country for the entire democratic period, function and exercise their power when in government. Also, with the 1997 constitutional change, which allowed independent candidacies in local government, a new phenomenon of elected mayors and councillors that run outside the party system is arising and asserting a challenge to the usual rules of party politics in Portugal.

In order to answer these questions, we shall use the method of a case study, centred in Portugal, and establish the relationship between different levels of government. We shall examine the relationships between the various layers of political parties; the impact of political party activity on sub-national representative institutions; the organisation, activity, power and roles of political parties at the sub-national level; party loyalty and discipline; and the special position of independent lists and citizen’s groups in local government. As it was stated in this workshop’s call for papers, in most European political and governmental systems, parties are a basic element of
representative democracy and the main, through not only, vehicle through which political representation is secured. Parties are responsible for political recruitment, providing political experience in organising and campaigning, selecting candidates and contesting elections at all levels, and for delivering the party’s policies in local government. However, in some countries a distinctly anti-party mood has developed at the sub-national level. Has this happened in Portugal? Are there any local parties in Portugal, independent of the mainstream ones? What is the impact of independent or citizen’s groups’ candidacies?

Independent candidacies are extremely important to access the value and presence of political parties within the system. One of our main hypotheses is that the higher the place within the political hierarchy, the most important is the role of the parties and the less important is the presence of independent candidates. The other one is that the model of the party influence the behaviour and the weight of party politics within the parties: elite parties could accept more independent candidacies, as mass parties have them in lesser numbers. And finally, a previous career in local politics is important to being elected to central government: going up the hierarchy of power does matter, but going the other way around is also quite acceptable and is actually beginning to be desirable, as is a technical and professional background that is turning politicians into professionals of the political business and technocrats.

To test these hypotheses, there is the need to describe the Portuguese political system, its rules and regulations, and to analyse the Constitution (chapter 1). And then, on chapter 2 we analyse the different levels of government, recruitment criteria and the presence of independents. Concerning local government, we present the data of the 2001 local election and analyse it, comparing it with the lowest and highest levels of government: civil parishes, members of the Portuguese Parliament, Members of the European Parliament and Ministers. For the local level, several groups were considered: mayors and councillors, citizen’s groups, independent candidacies, and independent candidates associated with a political party. Since citizen’s groups’ candidacies are a very recent phenomenon in Portugal, the numbers of elected councillors are quite small. Anyway, it is possible to reach some conclusions regarding


2 The first one to admit citizen’s groups candidacies. We do not yet have the complete data available for the 2005 election.
the types of municipalities which have elected them, especially considering their regional importance, size and spatial location. We can also find some of the reasons for their creation, and for the types of interests they represent, namely whether or not they ran against the political parties, or even against the political system itself. Another possibility is a personalised candidacy (within a citizen’s group) or a candidacy against another person.

On chapter 3 we follow political careers in several levels of the Portuguese government, from central to local and vice-versa and try to assert the importance of mobility between levels of government and the impact of a previous political career in order to get elected.

Chapter 1: Historical background and legal framework

Portugal has been living in Democracy for the last thirty one years. After the revolution of April 25th 1974, and a two year transition period, democratic institutions have begun to function with some regularity, towards a multi-party system. There have been four major parties in Portugal since 1974/1975: the Socialist Party (PS), the Social Democrat Party (PSD), the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and the Popular Party (former CDS – Social Democrat Centre, now CDS-PP), on the right wing. The two major parties, the Socialist Party (PS) and the Social Democrat Party (PSD), usually alternate in the control of central government, sometimes in coalition. This system characterizes most democracies nowadays.

The first democratic elections were held on the first anniversary of the revolution and they were destined to form a Constituent Assembly whose main goal was to write and approve a new Constitution. As for results, the Socialist Party won with 38 per cent of the votes, and the Communist Party, which assumed it held a revolutionary legitimacy to impose its model, had only a 12 per cent result. These first elections were held under an electoral law which established for the first time universal suffrage and total gender equality, just as many other laws were written in those days to pave the way towards political, social and civic rights equality.

3 The statutes of the four main parties were analysed and described by Marina Costa Lobo – op. cit., pp. 253-261.
4 According to article 116\textsuperscript{th} of the 1976 Portuguese Constitution, elections are direct, free, secret, regular and universal, based on the system of proportional representation.
5 Decree number 621-A/74, November 15\textsuperscript{th} 1974. Yet, there is still a “feminine sub-representation” in Portuguese politics, inscribed into the larger problem of women’s access to all aspects of social, cultural and economic life, José Manuel Leite Viegas and Sérgio Faria – \textit{As mulheres na politica}, Lisboa, INCM, 1999.
After one of the most troubling years of Portugal’s history, with bank, industry and land occupations and nationalizations, and a few aborted revolutionary movements, finally, on April 25th 1976, elections were held to form a new Parliament and the first constitutional government. Two months later the first president was democratically elected and, in December of the same year, local elections were held to vote for mayors and members of municipal councils. Since then there have been eight more local elections, initially for three year terms, and, since 1985, for four year terms. After over half a century of mayors being appointed by the central government, from that date on local councillors were elected by the people, mediated by the political parties. There has been a real enforcement of local democracy. After a very centralized regime, which deprived municipalities of its centuries’ old tradition of autonomy, the goal of the new legislators was to create a safety net of several levels of government in order to protect the citizens from the return of another potentially authoritarian regime. The decision to decentralise and strengthen local government at the municipal level was quite easily accepted by all political forces at the time.

This is how the electoral process works: the first democratic Constitution, approved on April 1976, established a representative democracy, mediated by political parties, which definitely monopolise political representation on the different levels of government (except for the presidency). The President of the Republic has representative functions for the state and he/she is a warrantee of national independence and unity and of the regular functioning of democratic institutions. He/she is also the commander in chief of the armed forces (article 120th of the Constitution). He/she is elected under a two round majority run-off system, by direct, universal and secret suffrage on a personal candidacy, on proposal by a list of a minimum 7,500 signatures (articles 121st and 124th).

Both on parliament and municipalities there is a list system of proportional representation: candidacies are presented by political parties, alone or in coalition and may contain citizens that are not members of political parties. Since 1976, non-partisan citizen’s groups could only run at the lowest level of local government: the civil

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9 Independent candidacies for parliament and municipalities have been allowed since 1976, but only within party lists, articles 151st and 239th of the Portuguese Constitution.
parishes, called *freguesias*. It is only since the 1997 revision of the Constitution that non-partisan lists may present candidacies for municipalities. Therefore, the 2001 local election was the first one to elect mayors and councillors who were not included in party lists. But parties still monopolize the process in the parliament: lists of independents and citizen’s groups are not allowed to run.

On national elections, the winning party’s leader (or the leader of a coalition) is usually invited by the President of the Republic to form a new government, with executive functions (article 182 of the Constitution), composed of a Prime-Minister, Ministers, Secretaries of State and Under-Secretaries of State (article 186). The selection process of ministers is personalized: they are appointed by the President, upon proposal of the Prime-Minister (article 187) and there are no specific party rules as to who is supposed to be chosen. Therefore, they may either be members of the party or independents and are usually chosen for their professional area of specialization.

It is within the parties that political representatives are chosen, both central and locally: each party has a convention that elects a leader and each one proposes a list of candidates to the parliament (both national and European) or the municipalities. This is a rather centralized and informal process: the intervention of the bases of each party is possible mostly in an indirect way through delegates in the party convention. Lists of candidates depend heavily on national party leadership, which definitely controls political careers. Therefore, in Portugal, the level of democracy within political parties is rather more limited than the one that can be found in most democracies of its geopolitical area.

Party selection of its representatives varies according to internal statutes, which also distinguishes party roles within the system. Presently, the Socialist Party has an advantage in Parliament, which allowed it to form a government with Prime-Minister

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10 Decree n. 701-A/76, September 29th, 1976.
14 André Freire (coord.) – *Recrutamento Parlamentar..., op. cit.*, p. 147, 149.
José Sócrates, party leader since the September 2004 convention. Its 121 members of parliament, elected in February 20\textsuperscript{th} 2005, were chosen in a centralized process, according to the party’s statutes\textsuperscript{15}. Its internal rules specify that the secretary-general of the party is elected on the convention by direct vote of all members. Then, there is a national comity that defines the political orientation of the party and is responsible for choosing the lists of candidates. Thirty per cent of the names and ranks in the lists are chosen from top to bottom. For example, in the 1999 election, the party’s leader chose the first 23 names in the lists\textsuperscript{16}. Afterwards, in each district, local members of the party may choose the rest of the candidates, knowing that their candidates are placed on secondary positions, after the national party elites. These lists are subject to approval by the national comity.

On the Social Democrat Party, the whole process is more decentralized. There is also a convention that elects national bodies, but lists of candidates are chosen by local comities, and then voted by district comities. Afterwards the lists are sent to the national comity, which may change them or approve them\textsuperscript{17}.

The Communist Party (on the left) and the Popular Party (on the right) have the most centralized selection processes of their members of parliament. The Portuguese Communist Party is the oldest left party in Portugal. It was funded in 1921 and it has survived clandestinely throughout the entire totalitarian regime\textsuperscript{18}. Álvaro Cunhal was its historical leader and he is one of the most important characters in twentieth century Portuguese History\textsuperscript{19}. This party maintains its old structure\textsuperscript{20}. Particularly, it maintains its ideology, even after the fall of the soviet regimes in Easter Europe, which made it loose a considerable amount of voters and members of parliament. It is such a totalitarian party that it ordered an elected mayor to resign because he disobeyed an order from the central comity. And he did resign. The PCP has a central comity elected by a convention. This comity chooses all the other political bodies, runs all political activities, orients all elected representatives and chooses candidate’s lists.

The Popular Party is similar to the Social Democrat Party in its statutes, but its reduced size makes it put a lot more weight on the selection and political importance of its members of parliament\textsuperscript{21}.

\textsuperscript{15} André Freire – op. cit., p. 199. See also http://ps.pt/main.php.
\textsuperscript{17} http://www.psd.pt/
\textsuperscript{18} See full history in www.pcp.pt.
\textsuperscript{21} http://www.partido-popular.pt/
In 1999 a new party was created: the Left Block, which mobilized old communist voters and many other groups from across the political spectrum, such as the younger generations and the urban middle class, some of them a part of the Socialist Party electoral basis. This party ran for parliament for the first time in 1999 and obtained immediately a 2.44 per cent result. Its statutes were approved in 2000 and it has run for central and local elections since then. In 2005, the Left Block elected 8 members of parliament (6.35 per cent), 4 men and 4 women (which makes it the most equalitarian party, with a 50 per cent quota of men and women). They were all elected in Portugal’s largest cities’ electoral circles: Lisbon, Oporto and Setúbal. This reflects a rather urban character of this party. In local power, this party has only won elections in one municipality: it has elected a woman mayor, who had previously been elected by the Communist Party. Along with three other councillors, she moved to the Left Block in the 2001 elections and was re-elected in 2005. There are Left Block councillors in several other municipalities and their favourite role is to go against the flow. Being active and engaging, against the usual party politics and the traditional parties political directions was their first goal, something which continues to be quite visible both in parliament and in local municipal councils. For example, in Lisbon, independent councillor José Sá Fernandes (elected in Left Block’s lists) has made it a mission, for several years, to contest most decisions the local municipality makes. His main targets are environmental issues and corruption and he has been able to raise the level of debate and public awareness to very important themes.

It is also important to define and understand the Portuguese local government political organization:

Nowadays, continental Portugal is divided into 18 districts and there are two autonomous regions, on the Atlantic islands of the Madeira and the Azores. Each district is divided into municipalities. In 1976 municipalities were established as democratic local governments, but the pre-1974 boundaries have remained. There was no reorganization of the local administration since the nineteenth century, mostly because of the people’s attachment to their municipalities and the existing historical and traditional links. The average size of the Portuguese municipalities is 301 square kilometres, with a population of more than 32,000 people. At present there are 308 municipalities (four were added since 1979 for demographic reasons, resulting from the split of a previous one), governed by an elected group of councillors, whose president

22 http://bloco.esquerda.net/media/EstatutosIVConv.pdf.
23 When campaigning for the 2002 election, the Left Block’s strategy and political statements were: it is more useful to elect a Left Block Member of Parliament, because he/she shall be more active and engaging, then another Socialist or Social Democrat Member of Parliament, with a political career, who will simply follow party politics, Diário de Notícias, 15/2/2002, p. 10.
(the mayor) is the head of the winning list. The territory of each municipality is made up of civil parishes which are institutionally represented in the organic structure of their respective municipal autarchy.\textsuperscript{24}

The Constitution of 1976 defined the purpose of administrative decentralisation and contains many innovatory principles concerning local government. It is recognised the principle of local government autonomy.\textsuperscript{25} As fundamental bases of decentralisation, the Constitution established four important principles relating to local government: the autonomy of local units of administration; the existence of local government as part of the democratic organisation of the state; the financial and patrimonial autonomy of local authorities; and local government’s self-regulatory capacity.\textsuperscript{26} Municipalities are in fact local authorities integrated into the democratic organization of the state. They have financial autonomy through their own resources and assets, and democratic autonomy through assemblies composed of freely elected members.\textsuperscript{27}

The representative bodies of the municipalities are elected separately but simultaneously by resident citizens on a same election day, for a four year mandate: the municipal assembly is the deliberative body, composed of the elected representatives of the citizens and the chairmen of the executive bodies of the various parishes; the municipal executive, the executive body, is normally comprised of between five and eleven members (except for Lisbon, where there are 17, and Oporto, 13 vereadores, councillors or aldermen), one of them being the president, who is a powerful mayor (as in France).\textsuperscript{28} The winner list elects the mayor and the number of councillors for each party is proportional to the electoral results. So the body of councillors is usually composed of multiple parties and they all have to work together and run the municipality. Each councillor is given a field of action and has to provide a service. Usually the mayor gets the most important roles, especially the ones related to real estate and development. Under the Constitution, the municipalities have a general competence for matters of purely local interest. Municipal functions are legally defined as: management of real property, land purchases; management of physical assets; water, gas and electric supplies; rural and urban facilities, such as streets and roads, fairs and markets, cemeteries, fire prevention and control; sewerage; public

\textsuperscript{24} Armando Pereira – op. cit., pp. 135-136.
\textsuperscript{26} Armando Pereira – op. cit., p. 134.
\textsuperscript{27} Portuguese Constitution of 1976, article 238\textsuperscript{th}. See J. M Pedroso de Almeida – op. cit., p. 498.
\textsuperscript{28} Armando Pereira – op. cit., p. 137.
transportation; education and culture (pre-school and primary school equipments, museums, libraries, theatres); subsidised housing; sports facilities; natural parks, recreational areas; town planning; health care.

Local elected representatives operate in an increasingly complex legal, financial and technical context, put together by the 1979 Local Finances Act, which regulated the financial framework of the municipalities and has been revised over the years. Full time members of the executive have a general obligation to reveal all their sources of income before the beginning and at the end of their terms. They must also declare pecuniary or individual interests. Mayors and councillors may perform their duties on a full-time or part-time basis, with a corresponding remuneration, which represents a real income. The remuneration varies according to the population of the municipality. There are also travel and expense allowances. Of course, the ones who get the best electoral results are the ones who get full time jobs. The smallest parties and the last councillors on the lists usually are not even attributed a function and do not receive a salary.

Municipal elected representatives have an automatic right to be absent from their employment for attendance at official meetings and for the exercise of their terms. All costs and expenses are met by the municipality. The law gives local elected representatives protection during their term of office as regards job security and career prospects in their original employment. In Portugal there is statutory provision for assistance in returning to professional life. Full-time members are entitled to a retirement pension and their time on the representative office counts twice for pension purposes. Each local authority enjoys local autonomy and is accordingly free to approve the staffing structure, and to recruit its own personnel. However, rates of payment, area of selection, norms of recruitment, qualifications for promotion, conditions of service, retirement allowances and pensions, and so on, are standardised throughout the country.

Local finances: local authorities have property and finances of their own managed by the representative bodies. Their resources are: local taxes and transfers from the state (a provision from the state budget). In 1979 a Financial Equalisation Fund was created to reduce local inequalities between municipalities of the same level and to provide for a fair distribution of public resources between the state and local government. There is also the possibility of discretionary transfers from the state:

30 Portuguese Constitution of 1976, article 254.
central government may take extraordinary financial measures in cases of public emergency or extraordinary expenses\textsuperscript{31}.

The municipal executive in facts runs the municipalities on a daily bases and then presents proposals to the municipal assembly, which has ultimate responsibility for the approval of the most important matters, such as the annual plan, the budget, the annual report and accounts, the municipal master plan, local taxes, personnel framework, and others\textsuperscript{32}.

As for the civil parishes, they are also elected on the same day. There are more than 4.200 \textit{freguesias}, with an average territory of about 20 square kilometres, with a population between 500 and 2.000 inhabitants\textsuperscript{33}. Their elected members look after the interests of their inhabitants; they take care of markets, cemeteries, recreational and sports facilities, and promote local tourism.

There is also the possibility of direct participation of citizens in the management of local public affairs. Every citizen is able to influence and follow up policy decision-making, by voting in local elections, participating in political parties, by using their freedom of speech and direct intervention, especially by the possibility to intervene during municipal meetings\textsuperscript{34}. It is also recognized in the Constitution another form of political participation: neighbourhood organizations or associations, in areas smaller than the parishes\textsuperscript{35}. Also according to the Constitution, two or more municipalities may form voluntary associations in order to carry out tasks of common interest and to use common technical, human and financial resources\textsuperscript{36}. A national association of municipalities exists in the form of the Portuguese Association of Local Authorities: it is a private organization for co-operation and services which advises and assists municipalities in legal, financial, administrative and technical matters. It also acts as a vehicle of opinion and spokesperson for local government\textsuperscript{37}.

For a long time, a local government representative could also be, at the same time, a Member of Parliament. In fact, 5 per cent of all mayors since 1976 have accumulated those two elected offices, as well as 0,2 per cent of them were Members of the European Parliament. But, since 2001, this is no longer possible and elected

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{31} In Portugal, local expenditure represents 2.5 per cent of the Gross National Product and 7 per cent of the total public expenditure. The Financial Equalisation Fund represents 6 per cent of the state budget, J. M Pedroso de Almeida – \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 509-511.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibidem}, p. 501.
  \item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibidem}, p. 499.
  \item \textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibidem}, p. 504.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Portuguese Constitution of 1976, article 263\textsuperscript{35}.
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Portuguese Constitution of 1976, article 253\textsuperscript{35}.
  \item \textsuperscript{37} J. M Pedroso de Almeida – \textit{op. cit.}, p. 507.
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Members of Parliament and local councillors now have to choose one of the jobs and resign the other\textsuperscript{38}.

**Chapter 2: The role of political parties on the different levels of government**

The Portuguese political system and the legal framework it works upon shows us that political parties dominate the electoral process, except for the presidential election, which is personalized. But, in order to understand how far parties do control every level of government, we shall evaluate party performance in each of them. Independent elected representatives are a very good factor to test the initial hypothesis that the higher the place within the political hierarchy, the most important is the role of the parties and the less important is the presence of independent candidates.

Starting out with the President of the Republic: even though in Portugal, during the democratic period, all candidates have run as individuals, separated from political parties, the last three presidents, since 1986, had all previously been presidents of their respective parties. And, without any doubt, they all had the support of their parties and traditional coalition partners in order to get elected.

2.1 – National Government.

As far as government goes, the prime-ministers are always the leaders of their parties or the leaders of the largest party in a coalition. Ministers are a different matter. Marina Costa Lobo has studied independent members of government in order to assert the level of freedom or party autonomy a Portuguese prime-minister has in his staff’s selection. Throughout the entire democratic period, there were always around 30 per cent independent members of government, mostly in key ministries. The Socialist Party has been the one with the largest number of independents in its governments\textsuperscript{39}. For example, from 1999 to 2002, António Guterres, socialist prime-minister of the 14\textsuperscript{th} Constitutional Government, appointed 5 independent ministers (28 per cent) and 4 Secretaries of State (9 per cent). The five ministers were all in key areas, such as Health, Education, Plan, Science and Technology and Defence. After a few replacements in this government, there were six independent ministers (36,6 per cent): Interior, Economy, Health, Education, Culture and Science and Technology. Costa Lobo points out a few reasons for independent appointments in governments: to

\textsuperscript{38} Law n. 3/2001, February 23\textsuperscript{rd}, 2001 has changed article 20\textsuperscript{th} (n. 1, line g) of Law 7/93, March 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1993: Statutes of Members of Parliament.

\textsuperscript{39} Marina Costa Lobo – op. cit., p. 267.
diminish political tension among coalition partners; an electoral strategy which attempts to open up governments and parties to civil society; and a way for parties to overcome the problem of a weak social insertion. Specialization and professional skills have become major assets for ministerial selection. Universities, rather than former regime's prisons or exile (as it was during the revolutionary period), became the main breeding ground for political elites.

The first elected prime-minister of Portugal was Mário Soares. He was appointed as the leader of the Socialist Party, who won the 1976 elections. His prestige came from his exile and resistance to the earlier regime. Even though he came from a wealthy family, his father, a school teacher and the owner of an elite private school, had a political history that had begun in the First Republic, before Salazar's New State. He is a lawyer, but it was his political carrier, and not his professional one, that lead him to power. Of course, those first years of democracy were unstable and governments fell rather quickly: after two years as prime-minister, Mário Soares was replaced and three other governments were appointed until the following elections, in 1979. A right wing coalition was elected, lead by Francisco Sà Carneiro, an attorney who had been a young member of parliament during the final years of the former regime. He was killed in 1980, along with another political leader of his coalition. The right wing coalition remained in power until the next election, in 1983. Mário Soares was re-elected, but his government, again, lasted only two years: in 1985 the Social Democrat Party won the elections and a centre-right government was formed. Prime-minister Cavaco Silva inaugurated a period of stability and economic prosperity, very much influenced by the Portuguese adhesion to the European Union (EEC by then) in 1986. Just as the revolution had been directed by a few centralized elites, also Portugal's transition into democratic stability was related to the interest right wing governments had in creating more favourable conditions to Portuguese integration in the EEC. And there were profits in it, for a great amount of money was invested into the Portuguese economy. After Cavaco Silva, an Economist and University Professor, António Guterres (1995-2002) also had this type of background: he is an engineer, and his government was formed with other engineers and economists. This was a new Socialist Party, the one that emerged in the mid nineties, completely different from the early one: after the old revolutionaries from the time of Mário Soares, an atheist and a

40 By recognizing that their representative function is diminutive, governments attract independents as an attempt to get closer to voters. *ibidem*, p. 268.

41 The theme of European Union membership as a way to secure democracy and promote economic development was also studied in Spain by Carolyn Marie Dudek – *EU Accession and Spanish Regional Development. Winners and Losers*, Bruxelles, New York, P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2005. See also: Jeanie Bukowski, Simona Piattoni, Marc Smyrl (eds.) – *Between Europeanization and Local Societies. The Space for Territorial Governance*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.
free mason, these new socialist elites were practicing Catholics, very much influenced by a few members of the high church hierarchy, with ties to the Opus Dei organization. Guterres’ career followed a path that is now usual for Portuguese politicians: he went on to be appointed the president of the Socialist International, from 1999 to 2005. Since then, he is the High Commissioner of the United Nations to the refugees. The same path was followed by Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, the Secretary-General of the Socialist Party from 2002 to 2004. An engineer and university professor, he resigned from his post and was invited to be Portugal’s ambassador to the OECD.

The Social Democrats won the election in 2002, and Durão Barroso formed a new government. His career was both professional and political: in Law school he was a leader of the student’s association, and he went on to obtain masters and doctoral degrees in Political Science. In parallel to his academic career (he was a professor in the University of Lisbon and the Georgetown University, in Washington) he was an active leader of the Social Democratic Party, a member of parliament, a secretary of state and a minister in several governments. Also, like Guterres, after being prime-minister, he went abroad to an internationally prestigious job: since 2004 he is the President of the European Commission. He was replaced by Pedro Santana Lopes, whose career includes the presidency of a football club and mayor of Lisbon. Anyway, he only lasted four months. President Jorge Sampaio did not consider him fit to run the country, so he dissolved the parliament and ordered an election. In 2005 the Socialist Party won and José Sócrates formed a new government composed of technocrats, recruited mainly on the best universities in Portugal and abroad. Like Guterres, Sócrates is an engineer, and a post-graduate. He had been a member of parliament since 1987, a party leader since 1991, a secretary of state and a minister in Guterres’ government, in 1999.

2.2 – Parliament.

Very much like governments, the Portuguese parliament reflects the same evolution in its political elites. The first elected members were mostly university graduates, but this group was under sixty per cent. Afterwards, more than eighty per cent are graduates and post-graduates. There are considerable differences among parties: for example, in 1975 over eighty per cent of the Communist Party’s members of parliament had only high school. And right wing members of parliament were usually

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higher educated than the ones on the left wing. The dominant field of studies is Law\textsuperscript{43}. But nowadays the parties are very similar regarding educational profiles of its elected members. There has been a strong approach of the profiles of left wing parties’ members of parliament to the so called bourgeois parties, just as it happened to the European left wing parties after World War II\textsuperscript{44}. As for age, the early members of parliament were younger than nowadays. The average rose from 42 to 45 years old (by the time they were elected). Their main professional careers are in Law, followed by managers and teachers. There were also quite a few farm and industry workers during the first years of democracy, most of them within the Communist Party, but those ones were almost totally eliminated from parliament\textsuperscript{45}.

This elitist profile is determined by the parties’ selection process: for their candidates, leaders choose preferably male, middle-aged individuals, with large educational and professional resources. Equally as important as demand, there is the offer factor: these are the same individuals who are more available to pursue a political career, than others\textsuperscript{46}.

Concerning independent members of parliament, there was a research problem: there is no mention of independent elected representatives in party lists, neither in the published official election results. Anyway, they do exist and they are an important renewal factor for parties. Our major source for this research was the press, where we analysed the electoral speech of different parties, which showed us that independent candidacies are not so important, and they are usually not even mentioned. When parties present their candidates’ lists for parliament, they are not so concerned about individuals, but more about results that should allow them to form a government.

As far as official documents go, we did find the lists of members of parliament who, after being elected within a party list, have requested an independent status. The first legislature, in 1976, was the one with the largest number of members of parliament who have made this request. There were 48 of them who did so and they represent a young democracy and a young party system. Clearly, parties did not yet have enough members to compose their lists, and they accepted people from the outside, who have latter joined their ranks (in most cases). These 48 individuals represent an 18,25 percentage and they were mainly in the Social Democrat Party’s lists: 77,1 per cent.

\textsuperscript{43} In 2005, 31 per cent of all members of parliament were lawyers, followed, in a long distance, by teachers, Sónia Tavares – \textit{Atlas Eleitoral. Assembleia da República 2005}, STAPE, 2006, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{44} André Freire (coord.) – \textit{op. cit.}, p. 69.
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Ibidem}, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Ibidem}, p. 151.
There were also 18.8 per cent with the Socialist Party and 4.2 per cent with the former CDS (now Popular Party). It was easier for the Communist Party to recruit its members, for it had a long history of clandestine existence, therefore it had no need to accept independent members into its ranks.

After this first legislature, only 27 more members of parliament have requested this status since 1979 until 2005. Clearly there was a different approach to this phenomenon: independent candidates have begun making private deals with parties and the ones that do request this official independent status are individuals that are usually upset with party orientation, or are about to change parties. Therefore, they do not represent a clear party strategy, but a party dissention, and cannot be considered for this study.

Regarding the 2002 elections, only the two major parties, PS and PSD, could “afford the luxury” of independent candidates in eligible places. There were 19 independents who were elected members of parliament, representing 8.3 per cent of a 230 total. Eleven of them were in the Socialist Party list, and they represent 11.5 per cent of this party’s 96 elected members or parliament; eight of them were in the Social Democrat’s list, where they had a 7.6 percentage (on a 105 total).

We had the same research problem with the Portuguese members of the European Parliament: official lists only mention name and identification of the party’s candidates. There is no mention of independents. Therefore we shall also have to look for them in the press and present results later. For now we can say, for instance, that the Socialist Party has elected 12 members to the European Parliament and only one of them is an independent (representing 8.3 per cent). Anyway, this Member of Parliament is a woman with a political career within the Socialist Party ranks, which includes being twice a minister in Guterres’ governments and following all the party’s programs and politics. So there is not much to distinguish her from the rest of her peers.

2.3 – Local Government.

It is in local government that we have the most complete data to work on: the 2001 election, which introduced independent lists and citizen’s groups in municipalities. In order to verify how the party system really works locally, we can compare two

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47 The closest ones to the 2001 local elections.
48 Small parties like the PCP or the PP have few places in parliament, and they are all taken by members of the parties, *O Independente*, 1/2/2002, p. 9.
different levels of hierarchy: elected councillors within the municipalities and their
hierarchy in the lists of candidates and in the councils themselves (there is a higher
percentage of independent councillors than there is of independent mayors), and we
can compare municipalities and civil parishes (there are more independent elected
individuals in the parishes than in the municipalities). So here is the data:

On December 16th 2001 there were local elections in Portugal. There had been
socialist governments since 1995 and the victory of the Social Democrat Party in these
elections lead Prime-Minister António Guterres to resignation. National elections were
held three months later and a new government was formed, led by Social Democrat
Durão Barroso (now the President of the European Commission, since 2004).
Therefore, in this case, local elections were considered to mirror discontent with central
government’s options and actions. Anyway, local elections usually do not entirely
match national election results, because there are more personalised factors who
contribute to local results.

Table I: 2001 local elections’ results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winning list</th>
<th>Municipalities</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat Party (PSD)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>43,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party (PS)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>34,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party (PCP)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9,1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Social Democrat Party and Popular Party
  Coalition                                     | 15             | 4,9        |
| Independents with the Social Democrat
  Party                                         | 9              | 2,9        |
| Independents with the Socialist Party          | 7              | 2,3        |
| Popular Party (CDS-PP, right wing)             | 3              | 1,0        |
| Citizen's Groups                               | 3              | 1,0        |
| Independents                                   | 2              | 0,6        |
| Left Block (BE)                                | 1              | 0,3        |
| **Total**                                      | **308**        | **100,0**  |

These elections introduced a new factor in municipal suffrages: citizen groups
could present candidate lists in the municipalities. Civil parishes had this possibility
since 1976 and the performance of citizen’s groups in this lower level of local
government was studied by Manuel Meirinho Martins: on this 2001 election, 311
individuals were elected president of the parish as leader of a citizen’s group list. On
4252 freguesias, they represent 7,3 per cent⁴⁹. As for municipalities, there were 30
citizen’s group lists candidacies and only 5 of them won local elections (3 citizen’s
groups and 2 independent candidacies). On 308 municipalities, this is a 1,62 per cent

⁴⁹ Manuel Meirinho Martins – Participação Política e Grupos de Cidadãos Eleitores. Um Contributo para o
result. It is confirmed a really low performance of citizen’s groups in local elections; it is also possible to verify a larger presence in the parishes than in the municipalities and a probable lesser investment of parties in the lower levels of local government.

Concerning local councillors, 2,044 individuals were elected in Portugal in 2001, 173 of them as independents (8.46 per cent). There is a distinction to be made: of these 173, only 36 (1.76 per cent) were elected in non-partisan lists. The other 137 were elected as independents within party lists. On table II we can see that the two major parties in Portugal, PS and PSD are the ones that better accept independent candidates in their lists. One can verify that the type and the sociological characteristics of the party influence the behaviour and the weight of party politics within the parties: elite parties do accept more independent candidacies, as mass and smaller parties have them in lesser numbers.

**Table II: Independent councillors in Portuguese municipalities (2001).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party list</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party Lists</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat Party Lists</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Coalition Lists</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat Party and Popular Party Coalition Lists</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular Party Lists</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Lists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen’s Groups</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party and Popular Party Coalition Lists</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>173</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table III: Independent Mayors in Portugal (2001).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party list</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party Lists</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat Party Lists</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Lists</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen’s Groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, in the lists of candidates there is a hierarchy which is revealed in these results: of 137 independent councillors elected, there were only 16 (9 with the PSD and 7 with the PS) that were elected president, which means they were heads of party lists. There were two more, both heads of Social Democrat Party’s lists, who were candidates in municipalities were the Socialist Party won. Therefore they were in the 3rd and 4th place in their respective councils’ hierarchies. As a result, on 308 municipalities, only the two major parties invested in independents as party list heads and in only 5.8
per cent of the municipalities. The other 119 councillors (86,9 per cent) were placed in secondary positions in party lists and assumed the following places in the councils’ hierarchies: 17,4 per cent on second place, 33,9 per cent on 3rd and 4th places, 47,1 per cent on 5th to last positions. It is a clear majority of independents which is thrown to the least important places of the list, usually the ones without functions or salary. Anyway, these elected officers have an important job: because they are not subject to party discipline, many times their job is to denounce irregularities, insert debate, in sum, to introduce an inspection role to party actions, by publicising and exposing all the council’s actions to the media. Their function, by doing so, is to make all councillors accountable for their actions. This is an element to revitalize democracy and avoid (as good as possible) local vices and corruption 50, with a big help from the press and the judicial system.

These candidates were elected mostly in small municipalities: only one won in a city that is head of a district, and a rather unpopulated, rural one. In total, only 4 councillors were elected in heads of districts and 97,7 per cent of them were elected in municipalities that are quite small, rural and far away from Lisbon, the geographical and political centre of Portugal. In 2005 this phenomenon has hit Lisbon, with the election for councillor of a highly mediatised independent, associated with the Left Block, whose main job for the last few years has been to denounce enormous corruption scandals, with the precious help of the media. He has even managed to put to risk the Lisbon Council and asked for early elections.

As for the 21 mayors that were elected as independents and leaders of citizen’s groups, they represent 6,8 per cent of all mayors and they are distributed as seen on table III. They are all men and their municipalities are small, rural and far away from the centre (except for Portalegre, a district’s capital, and Figueira da Foz, an important beach town). They are mostly university graduates (71,4 per cent) and they have specialized professions, such as doctors, managers, engineers, lawyers and teachers. They have a 49,4 years old average, live in the same district (except for one) and were mostly born in the same municipality (71,4 per cent). Only 3 of them (14,3 per cent) had only this term as a political career: the other 18 had all been mayors before (and were also after) this election, one of them had already been a Member of Parliament and another one had been a Minister and a Secretary of State.

And now for the 36 local councillors in citizens’ groups lists: from the 30 lists that applied for the 2001 election, 10 of them were able to elect councillors. There were 10 councillors who were elected in independents’ lists, and two of them won the

50 Anne Phillips – op. cit., p. 20.
elections, therefore they were presidents of the council (mayors). There were 9 lists with different names, but mostly with the word “independent” in it. One of them is the Earth Party Movement, which is an actual party, but it does not run for parliament and is only involved in a few local elections. Its president and affiliates are all members of the Portuguese Parliament in the Social Democrat Party’s lists and locally its candidates are usually dissidents of other parties. In 2001 it elected 4 councillors in 2 municipalities of the northern mountains; one of them was a mayor who had already won two elections with the Socialist Party.

That is a general characteristic of citizen’s groups in Portugal: they are usually created against the party system, their candidates are mostly party dissidents, due to discontent and also, in quite a few situations, due to expulsion from the party ranks. The same thing happens in the civil parishes. Just as some independents join party lists in order to avoid the trouble and the risk of creating a new independent list, the leaders of citizen’s groups create them when they know that they already have a support structure and a considerable percentage of sure voters. For example, in Ponte de Lima, a small northern town, there was a mayor who had been elected since 1993 with the right wing Popular Party. He wanted to promote a cheese factory and ask grants for it. His party did not support him, so he formed a citizen’s group to show how powerful he was locally and he won. On the next election, in 2005, he made up with the Popular Party and won the elections again within his traditional party. Also in Alcanena, the independent mayor elected in 2001 had already been a mayor since 1996, with the Socialist Party. With is new group, called “Independents for Alcanena”, he was able to elect himself and 4 other councillors. In Montemor-o-Novo, there were 3 councillors elected within a group called a “Civic Movement for Montemor”, but they were not re-elected in 2005. There was also a very personalized list in Famalicão: a “Movement Agostinho Fernandes”, made to elect a person called precisely Agostinho Fernandes. He was also a Socialist Party dissident, and he was the mayor since 1982. He lost his bet, when he believed the people would vote for him when he left the party. A coalition of the Social Democrat Party and the Popular Party won the elections and Agostinho Fernandes was only elected councillor, with another two members of his list. The 5th...

51 Manuel Meirinho Martins also inserts it in the citizen’s group list.
52 Law 1/2001, August 14th, 2001, allows members of citizen’s groups to be affiliated to a party, article 23rd. Meirinho Martins has made inquiries in civil parishes and has verified that 43% of people elected in citizens’ groups list were or had been members of a party, and most of them kept a relationship with a party. They were mostly associated with the Socialist Party and the Social Democrat Party, op. cit., pp. 18, 127-128. See also João Paulo Zbyszewski – “Algumas reflexões sobre a eleição e o funcionamento das autarquias locais”, Eleições. Revista de Assuntos Eleitorais, nº 10, Maio 2006, p. 100. This author says that these people are not even independents, but only act for their self interest, especially for their economic benefit in real estate businesses and others. That is also the reason why they get support for their candidacies from local economic elites associated with these interests.
citizen’s group mayor, in Penamacor, had been a councillor for 8 years with the Socialist Party. In 2001 he won the election as an independent, but, in 2005, he was re-elected mayor again with the Socialist Party.

The same thing happened in the 2005 elections, when five candidates who had been mayors for many years and had been expelled from their parties, due to judicial cases associated with corruption, ran as independents and heads of citizen’s group. Four of them actually won\(^{53}\), even though one had escaped to Brazil in order not to get arrested. The one that did not win made a bad bet, by switching municipalities. They are all presently involved in trials that may put them in jail for many years, but they are cherished by the people and they believe they are immune to the judicial system. We shall have to wait and see the results.

This is the image of local citizen’s groups in Portugal. Their councillors (like independents in party lists) were elected mostly in small rural towns, away from the centre: there is not even one districts capital on their ranks\(^{54}\). Apart from the 5 mayors, the other 31 councillors, just like independent councillors, performed poorly in the elections and were placed in the last positions in the councils’ hierarchy: 29 per cent on second place, 25,8 per cent on 3\(^{rd}\) and 4\(^{th}\) places, and 45,2 per cent on 5\(^{th}\) to last positions.

There are only two women on this group of 36 people (5,6 per cent)\(^{55}\), none of them mayors and both of them in the last positions of their respective councils. The group has an average 46 years of age\(^{56}\). Professionally, they occupy the top positions in their municipalities’ social and economic hierarchy: 68 percent of them are university graduates and have intellectual and scientific professions. There is a majority of teachers (32,4 per cent), followed by managers (14,7 per cent), medical doctors, agronomic engineers (very important in rural areas), sociologists, lawyers, pharmacists and architects. There are also 4 technicians, one bank clerk and one civil servant. These values, used to describe the social characteristics of citizen’s groups, are very close to the ones of local elites in general\(^{57}\). Civil parishes’ results are not very different, but these lower levels of government have higher percentages of civil

\(^{53}\) In 2005 there were 21 independent candidacies and 6 of them won: Alcanena, Felgueiras, Gondomar, Oeiras, Redondo, Sabrosa.
\(^{54}\) Also in civil parishes there is a concentration of these candidacies in the northern and more rural parts of the country, Manuel Meirinho Martins – op. cit., pp. 47, 53.
\(^{55}\) To access the presence of women in Portuguese local government, see Maria Antónia Pires de Almeida – “Local elites and the Portuguese revolution…”, op. cit., table X and pages 11-14.
\(^{56}\) Also in the civil parishes there are mostly men, but the age group average is lower than 45, Manuel Meirinho Martins – op. cit., pp. 56-57.
\(^{57}\) Maria Antónia Pires de Almeida – op. cit., p. 9.
servants, retired farmers and factory workers and they generally possess lower academic degrees\textsuperscript{58}.

They all live in the same municipality, 12,1 per cent were born on another municipality in the same district, and 27,3 per cent of them were born on another district. There are many teachers from other municipalities who go there to work and decide to participate in the local political life. And there are others who were born there, have lived their professional lives elsewhere, specially in Lisbon, and, after retirement, go back to where they were born and engage in a political career. Their previous political activities include: one was a Member of Parliament and 12 of them were mayors (both before and after the 2001 election), five of them the ones that were elected mayor in this election.

\textbf{Chapter 3: Political careers and mobility}

This question of mobility between levels of government is a growing factor in Portuguese politics. There is an increasing number of Members of Parliament who have had experience in local councils. In fact, “local councillor and parliamentary experience are the two main factors of political professionalization of Portuguese members of parliament” and, from 1987 on, over fifty per cent of them have had that experience, which is similar to the European average\textsuperscript{59}. But the other way around is also a reality, because 12,3 per cent of all Portuguese mayors since 1976 have had experience as Members of the Portuguese Parliament, and 1,1 per cent have been Members of the European Parliament, both before, during and after their job as presidents of local councils.

There have been 1.170 elected mayors from 1976 to 2005. Their job had an average 8 years length. 1.026 Of them were not Members of Parliament (87,7 per cent), neither the Portuguese, nor the European. The other 144 Mayors were Members of Parliament\textsuperscript{60}, and these are the ones we shall describe: 36,9 per cent of them were MP before being a mayor, 29,5 per cent after, and 33,5 per cent during (until the 2001 law change). In fact, in the 1999 national election, there were 23 mayors in the lists of candidates for parliament, and they were placed there for their popularity and capacity to attract votes locally\textsuperscript{61}.

\textsuperscript{58} Manuel Meirinho Martins – \textit{op. cit.}, p. 58.
\textsuperscript{59} André Freire (coord.) – \textit{Recrutamento Parlamentar…}, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 115, 118.
\textsuperscript{60} There were also 8 MP that were mayors before 1974, therefore they have made a regime transition.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{O Independente}, 6/8/1999, p. 15.
Since the Portuguese integration in the European Economic Community in 1986 (now European Union), there have been 87 individuals elected Members of the European Parliament. Twelve of them (13.8 per cent) were mayors during the democratic period: 5 of them were mayors before going to Brussels; another 5 were mayors after, and 2 of them were mayors in between two mandates in the European Parliament. One was mayor before 1974, and there was another one who was a president of an administrative commission during the revolutionary period of 1974-1976. On tables IV and V we can watch the chronological evolution of this factor: on the first two local elections, only about 11 per cent mayors were also members of parliament. During the eighties, their numbers rose, and on the 1993 election there was the highest percentage of mayors with a parliamentary career. With the 2001 law which forbade the possibility to accumulate these two jobs, there were choices to be made and many mayors chose to remain in their local offices, resigning their posts in Parliament.

Anyway we can assert that it is not only the upwards hierarchy path that is revealed in these numbers: more Members of the Parliament go on to be elected mayor than the other way around. In the European Parliament, these two factors have the same weight. Undoubtedly, early political experience counts in order to be elected in all levels of government and these people simple follow a path which is the most convenient at the time. Especially when there is a change in government and a few Members of Parliament, Ministers and Secretaries of State loose their jobs. Then, their party simply put them in the best possible list in order to get them elected, weather upwards, or downwards, usually waiting for the next election and the possibility of being called again for government. There is also mobility between these elected offices and political jobs in public companies. A career in politics also includes, in many cases, the presidency of the electric company (EDP) or national television (RTP), for instance, or a football club.

Table IV: Mayors that were also Members of the Portuguese Parliament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Date</th>
<th>Number of Mayors</th>
<th>Percentage of Mayors in the Municipalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table V: Mayors that were also Members of the European Parliament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Date</th>
<th>Number of Mayors</th>
<th>Percentage of Mayors in the Municipalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results confirm the words of Armando Pereira:

"the local government system is indeed one of the most successful achievements of Portugal’s young democracy. (...) there is a clear attachment of the population to municipal services and activities and an increasing responsiveness of political representatives to public accountability. Evidence for the accepted relevance of local government is provided by the fact that national politicians also run as candidates in municipal elections"\textsuperscript{62}.

Conclusions:

In response to this paper’s questions about the presence of political parties in each and all levels of government, and their impact and performance in elections, regarding the role of independents, there are some results, which may be resumed as follows:

Yes, in Portugal political parties have indeed monopolised political representation on the different levels of government. Lists of candidates and political careers definitely depend on party leaders. And parties do obtain majorities in all elections: the results of independent lists are quite diminutive. But, as far as elected offices go, our main hypothesis, that the higher the place within the political hierarchy, the most important is the role of the parties and the less important is the presence of independent candidates, it is confirmed only in local government, were the presence of independents is higher in the civil parishes than in the municipalities: 7,3 versus 6,8 per cent. When we compare parliament with municipalities, our hypothesis is denied, for, in the same chronological period, there were proportionally more independent Members of Parliament than Mayors: 8,3 versus 6,8 per cent. And if we add appointed offices to this equation (members of the government, which are selected by appointment, not election), the difference is still higher: a 30 per cent average of ministers is independent. Therefore, the higher the place within the Portuguese political hierarchy,

\textsuperscript{62} Armando Pereira – op. cit., p. 140.
the less important is the role of the parties and the higher the presence of independents.

Table VI: Percentage of Independents on different levels of government (2001-2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Government</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipalities</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Parishes</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regardless of these results, the Portuguese party system is still very strong in the Portuguese central and local governments. The 2001 local election has challenged this reality, but in a very limited way. Parties are a basic element of representative democracy and the main vehicle through which political representation is secured. This is still a correct description of the Portuguese local political system, since other forms of political representation are still at a very early stage and have very low levels of performance at elections and impact in the political system as a whole. Regarding a possible anti-party mood that could have developed at the sub-national level, the facts do not indicate that this is in fact happening, because the reasons for independent candidacies seem to be much more personalized than real civic movements away from party interests.

Did those citizen’s lists reveal a decline of party politics, combined with the increasing disenchantment and alienation with the established national parties? No, these cases are rare and do not mean a distance from the party system, but only an occasional distance for some of its members, without continuity in the following elections, because most of them returned to their early parties. And their motives for participation in citizen’s groups are too personal to be considered disenchantment and alienation with the established national parties.

Regarding the types of municipalities which have elected councillors from independent and citizen’s groups’ lists: these lists have succeeded only on small rural areas, of very low economic, social and political importance on the national panorama. This leads us to the conclusion that the party system is hierarchy sensitive, both on the geographical and social levels.

Anyway, there is hope that these groups shall evolve into something more permanent and with a larger political visibility. Citizen’s groups are political agents which may revitalize representative democracies and pave the way to a more participatory democracy. They should promote the political development of the people.
and improve the quality of democracy, as well as they contribute to increase voter’s participation\textsuperscript{63}. We shall have to analyse a few more elections in order to access the evolution of this new phenomenon in Portuguese local politics. But also, Portuguese citizens shall have to take a different approach to local politics in order to introduce a real difference in the established party system.

As far as careers go, these political elites are becoming professional politicians and the transition between levels of government does not respect the usual upwards hierarchy. Also, professional skills are becoming increasingly important, especially with the growing complexities of local government, so the early revolutionaries no longer have a place in a political system that needs technocrats and specialists.

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