

Background Information on the Portuguese Police

Structure of the Police

There are two uniformed police agencies in Portugal. The Public Security Police (PSP) and the Republican National Guard (GNR) provide general police services.

Law enforcement in Portugal is the responsibility of three bodies:

- Guarda Nacional Republicana- National Republican Guard. A military police who mainly work in rural areas too small to warrant the PSP, and provide a national highway patrol and fiscal guard. About 26,600 police officers.
- Policia de Segurança Publica - Public Security Police. Civilian police force who work in larger urban areas. About 22,000 police officers. The Maritime police also organises under the public security police.
- Policia Judiciaria - Judicial Police. Overseen by the Public Ministry investigate criminal cases. About 1200 police officers
- Servicio de Estrangeiros e Fonteiros - Border Police. About 1000 officers.

Mainland Portugal is divided into 18 districts. The Azores islands comprises of three districts and the region Madeira one district.

The ministry of Justice appoints the Polícia Judiciária. The National Director and the ministry of Internal Affaires appoint the PSP, GNR and SEF National Directors.

Policia de Segurança Publica

The Public Security Police is a civilian, metropolitan integrated police with both crime prevention – public order and crime investigation responsibilities. It operates in demographic high-density urban areas. Several specialized units also make out a part of the PSP such as a anti-terrorist unit and a security police.

In EuroCOP PSP is represented by SINAPOL, which is a full member (since August 2007).

Guarda Nacional Republicana

The Portuguese National Republican Guard GNR assures public order and investigates non-organised crimes and violent crimes in non-urban areas. The members are subject to military law and organisation. It is responsible to providing Honour Guards and changing of guards ceremonies in public buildings.

GNR is the successor of Guarda Real da Polícia, founded in 1801 by the King Joao V of Portugal.

In EuroCOP GNR is represented by APG-GNR who holds observer status (since March 2008).

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Facts on Portugal

Portugal is the westernmost country of mainland Europe. The Azores and Madeira are also a part of Portugal. It is boarded by the Atlantic Ocean and Spain.

The country has 10.6 million inhabitants, the capital Lisbon about 500,000. Portugal joined the European Union in 1986.

Portugal has been a republic since 1910. The Constitution dates back to 1976. The national and regional governments as well as the Parliament are dominated by two political parties, the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party.

Portugal's economy is based on services and industry such as software and automotive. Business services have overtaken more traditional industries such as textiles, clothing, footwear, cork and wood products and beverages (wine, beer, juice, soft drinks). The country has increased its role in the automotive, mold-making and software sectors. Services, particularly tourism, are playing an increasingly important role .

Chief of State: President Anibal Cavaco Silva (since March 2006)
Head of Government: Prime Minister Jose Socrates Carvalho Pinto de Sousa (since March 2005)