The Portuguese Diaspora: the Business Perspective
Supporting and promoting the Portuguese communities abroad and economic internationalization are two of the main objectives of Portugal’s foreign policy.
There is an increasingly business-friendlier atmosphere in Portugal.

The internationalization of the Portuguese economy is done at national, regional and local levels. As well as in the Portuguese Communities.

There are millions of Portuguese citizens and people of Portuguese heritage all over the world. They are a very important strategic asset that has to be fully considered, valued and empowered. Including in the economic and business perspective.
The Portuguese Diaspora: the Business Perspective

The Portuguese take Portugal to the World and bring the World to Portugal.

Both when visiting or returning to Portugal, the Portuguese bring with them influences, ideas and experiences which enrich the economic, social and cultural fabric of the country and inspire the promotion of projects and initiatives.

- more than 5 million Portuguese all over the world
- with high levels of success, integration and prosperity
- conveying a modern image of Portugal
- but also keeping and cherishing the connection to Portugal and to Portuguese culture and traditions
Those who stay abroad

Those who intend to return

Those who choose mobility

Potentially, all Portuguese people in the World can be influencers, facilitators or entrepreneurs.
There is a clear perception:

- of the strategic importance of Diaspora entrepreneurship,
- of its economic expression,
- and of its double potential both as origin and destination of business and investment,
Managing and promoting this very important strategic asset requires:

- **Development of mechanisms to promote, facilitate, support and inform**
- **Creation of an institutional framework for the concept and work**
- **Promotion of contacts and networks**

The Gabinete de Apoio ao Investidor da Diáspora/Office for Diaspora Investors Support (GAID) has been working directly with the Secretary of State for Portuguese Communities since 2016 and is connected at functional level to the General Directorate for Consular Affairs and Portuguese Communities, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal.

It is a facilitation platform aimed at supporting and creating a favorable context for Diaspora micro and small investment projects in Portugal and for the internationalization of regional and local initiatives through the Portuguese communities.
GAID identifies, supports and facilitates micro and small investment originating in the Portuguese Communities which is directed to Portugal.

Informs potential entrepreneurs on opportunities, programs and support mechanisms in Portugal.

TO KNOW IN ORDER TO INVEST is the motto of our events and initiatives.
Business is often hindered, delayed or unfinished due to insufficient or confusing information, or simply because people do not know how to find the right interlocutor or institution.

Especially if they are far away from Portugal.
GAID forwards initiatives (both ongoing and in planning) to the relevant institutions for support, guidance and facilitation.
GAID also welcomes and forwards proposals from micro and small companies based in Portugal that work at local and regional levels and wish to expand and internationalize their activity through the Portuguese communities as a platform of support and promotion. Special focus is placed on regional quality products and traditional Portuguese arts and crafts.
GAID actively promotes the creation of contact networks, which are very important in a world that works and communicates globally.
GAID works in close interaction with, and supported by networks. Their action and intervention are crucial for the development of projects and initiatives.

The Diplomatic and Consular Network

The Embassies and Consulates of Portugal around the world are a very important connection to the Diaspora business scene. They know and assess the situation on the ground and are in touch with entrepreneurs, economic agents, Chambers of Commerce and Industry and other representatives of business associations.
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The Municipal Network

A close coordination with municipalities is paramount, especially with the network of Gabinetes de Apoio ao Emigrante/Emmigrant Support Offices (GAEs) that function within municipal councils, in particular those that have been trained to inform and support emigrants in the areas of business and local and regional economic development. These are the so-called 2nd generation GAEs. They exist in an increasing number of municipalities and the network is being expanded.

GAID also works with other regional and local authorities as needed.
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The Institutional Network

The office of the Secretary of State for Portuguese Communities established a network of interministerial and intersectorial focal points. These are representatives of institutions (Ministries, institutes and public services) who, within their competences, help clarify doubts and obtain the necessary information for advancing investors’ processes and projects and speed their development.
GAID has been supporting and following many projects in different areas of activity, developed by entrepreneurs who are Portuguese citizens or have Portuguese ancestry and live in multiple countries, on all five continents. Likewise, GAID has been supporting and following projects of national entrepreneurs aiming to expand their activity in the international markets through the platform of promotion provided by the Portuguese Diaspora.
Micro and small businesses, micro and small companies.

No other institution was/is covering this niche.

Local or regional scope.

Connection between the territories and investment or internationalization

Diaspora both as origin or destination of business.

In multiple areas of activity.

With a personal approach.

In several regions of Portugal.

In short: GAID supports, informs and facilitates contacts and networking between businesses, institutions and services, as well as among businesses and business associations.
The Office of the Secretary of State for the Portuguese Communities and the Office for Diaspora Investors Support (GAID) organize initiatives and events specifically directed at Diaspora entrepreneurs around the world.

**GAID: initiatives, projects and events**

- December 2016, Sintra: 300 participants from 35 countries
- December 2017, Viana do Castelo: 540 participants from 38 countries, 5 continents

The Annual Meetings (Encontros) of Diaspora Investors are the most emblematic and comprehensive events organized by GAID.
Bring together, in Portugal, entrepreneurs from all over the world who are Portuguese nationals or of Portuguese ancestry, Chambers of Commerce, Mayors, economic agents and members of the Portuguese Government who are responsible for key areas related to business and investment.

Provide the participants with important information on investment opportunities in Portugal and on economic internationalization in countries with large Portuguese communities. This information is presented on stage by leaders and representatives of the relevant institutions.
Create a favorable atmosphere for networking and useful contacts while providing an important meeting point for participants and their projects.

Pay tribute to the Portuguese around the World and their extraordinary life stories.
Offer a platform for presenting initiatives and success stories, sharing experiences, building affinities and mutual knowledge, as well as for launching business partnerships in various areas of economic activity.
The Meeting of Diaspora Investors:

Are also a platform for supporting the expansion of micro and small businesses of regional or local scope in the international markets, through the Portuguese Diaspora, with a focus on the promotion of endogenous products as well as traditional Portuguese arts and crafts.

The creation and international promotion of quality regional brands contribute in turn to attract tourism to those regions of Portugal.
A few examples of actions aimed at the internationalization of traditional products and crafts:

Rota do Azeite de Trás-os-Montes

Rede dos Restaurantes Portugueses no Mundo / Taste Portugal
A few examples of actions aimed at the internationalization of traditional products and crafts:

- **Rota da Filigrana de Gondomar**

- Reedição do livro “Arte de Cozinha” de 1876, do Grémio Literário e Recreativo Português de Belém do Pará
Mid-term Meetings of Diaspora Investors with a regional scope are also held. The first took place in the Azores in July 2018. The second will be held in Madeira in July 2019.

The 1st mid-term Meeting of Diaspora Investors took place in Praia da Vitória, Terceira, Azores, on July 5-8 2018.

It was jointly organized by the Office of the Secretary of State for Portuguese Communities through GAID (Office for Diaspora Investors Support) and the Regional Government of Azores through the Office of the Regional Assistant Secretary of the Presidency for External Relations, in partnership with Sociedade para o Desenvolvimento Empresarial dos Açores (SDEA) and the Municipality of Praia da Vitória.
The main discussion themes were related to the major strategic areas of Azores’ economy: maritime economy, science and technology, tourism, and agro-food industry.
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Third Annual Meeting of Diaspora Investors: Penafiel, December 13-16 2018
Joint organization of the Office of the Secretary of State for Portuguese Communities through GAID (Office for Diaspora Investors Support) and the Intermunicipal Community of Tâmega e Sousa.

Why Tâmega e Sousa?
- High emigration rates;
- Social indicators that require a higher investment in the promotion of local resources;
- Combination of rural and industrial areas – focus on the agro-food, textile and footwear industries, gastronomy and cultural tourism.
GAID also carries out an intense public diplomacy work aimed at raising awareness of the strategic importance of Diaspora in a business and entrepreneurial perspective. That includes participation in numerous conferences, debates and events organized by Universities, Municipalities, Foundations, Business Associations and other public and private institutions.

GAID supports initiatives directed at the so-called “Qualified Young Diaspora”:

• Project “Empreender 2020 – Regresso de uma Geração Preparada”, AEP Foundation;

• “Elevar o seu negócio 4.0” AEP Foundation awards to young entrepreneurs;

• Collaboration with the networks of Portuguese graduates and researchers abroad.
So what are the mid- and long-term results of working the strategic potential of Diaspora both as source of investment and business and as a platform of destination and promotion for internationalization of regional and local initiatives?

It contributes to the economic development and business growth of the country.

It promotes the creation of international networks of information, knowledge and support, as well as business partnerships within the Diaspora.

It mobilizes economic agents and institutions to develop solutions and opportunities for those wishing to return to and/or invest in Portugal.
So what are the mid- and long-term results of working the strategic potential of Diaspora both as source of investment and business and as a platform of destination and promotion for internationalization of regional and local initiatives?

It underscores and strengthens the crucial connection between research, innovation and qualified entrepreneurship.

Diaspora entrepreneurship is being increasingly considered and included in public policies at national, regional and local levels, in the syllabus of university degrees and in management and business decision-making.
And it is an increasingly relevant area of Portugal’s Foreign Policy, especially within two of its top priorities – supporting and promoting the Portuguese communities abroad and economic internationalization.

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Thank you very much!

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