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Eurozone prosperity

Living costs and quality of life in Portugal, 1999–2026

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About this paper

Every figure in the text carries a numbered source and an evidence grade that says how the figure was checked (Appendix A explains the grades). Claims about groups of people are presented as hypotheses, with the data for and against them set out side by side. The paper was drafted with AI language models under a written protocol. A reviewer from a different AI model family then checked it against the sources, and the sources were re-read where they could be reached; the Methods appendix states this in full. Where a source could not be read, the paper says so and treats the gap as a gap, not as a finding.

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Abstract

This paper asks whether Portugal has converged with the euro area since 1999, whether its living costs are high relative to incomes, how its quality of life compares beyond money, how large its regional gaps are, and what the euro changed, using official series read at source, legislation and published studies.

Portugal is richer than in 1999 but has not caught up. Real GDP per head rose 25,7 % between 1999 and 2025, against 29,8 % in the euro area (EA20) [S4; A]. In purchasing power, GDP per head fell from 85 to 81 (EU27 = 100), while actual individual consumption (AIC) per head stood at 86 [S1; A]. Against the euro area rather than the EU27, the gap narrowed slightly. Prices for household consumption are 85,3 % of the EU level, but food, telecoms and motor fuel are at or above it, while median income is 73,5 % of the EU27 in purchasing power [S1; S6; A].

On most non-monetary measures (life expectancy, life satisfaction, safety, poverty or social exclusion, early school leaving) Portugal is at or better than the EU average. Weak spots are income, cold homes, households' out-of-pocket health spending and regional dispersion. Weak adult literacy and declining mathematics and reading results qualify the educational gains [S90; S95; A]. Productivity and the costly adjustment after capital inflows remain the strongest explanations. Counterfactual estimates of the euro's effect on Portugal are not peer-reviewed. Convergence arithmetic shows how sensitive catch-up horizons are to growth differentials; it is not a forecast. Readings for this version settled Madeira's wage, INE poverty years, OECD country-note access and BLI methodology, wage-agreement monitoring, food-tax pass-through and central-bank projections. Older workers' attainment, Açores wages, current OECD well-being scores, capital stocks, the correction-coefficient method, sectoral value added, emigrants' education, small-area data, sampling precision and statistical refreshes remain open, alongside population and Commission debt discrepancies.

Key findings

1. Real GDP per head rose 25,7 % between 1999 and 2025, against 29,8 % in the euro area (EA20): Portugal is richer than in 1999 but has not caught up [S4; A].
2. In purchasing power, GDP per head fell from 85 to 81 (EU27 = 100) while actual individual consumption per head stood at 86; against the EA20 the GDP ratio rose from 74,6 % to 77,9 %, because the euro-area average itself fell from 114 to 104 [S1; A].
3. “German prices, Portuguese wages” is contradicted on average (AIC price level 85,3 against 109,1 in Germany) and supported for some categories: food 102,0, telecoms 110,4 and motor fuel 102,4, while median income is 73,5 % of the EU27 in purchasing power [S1; S6; A].
4. Households paid 28,67 % of current health spending out of pocket in 2024, close to twice the EU27’s 15,06 % [S46; A], and 15,6 % cannot keep their home adequately warm, against 8,8 % in the EU27 [S10; A].
5. Grande Lisboa’s GDP per head (129) is more than twice Península de Setúbal’s (55), but the household-income gap is much narrower (21 600 against 17 500 PPS) [S25; S26; A].
6. “The euro made Portugal poorer” is contradicted on average for “poorer” in absolute terms, supported for “fell behind the euro area until about 2013”, and not measured by peer-reviewed evidence for the euro’s causal effect [S4; A].
7. Hypothesis, not fact: “many young people avoid work” is contradicted on average for inactivity outside education (young people neither in employment nor in education or training: 8,0 % against 11,0 % in the EU27) [S68; A], while willingness to work is not measured.

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1 Introduction and research questions

When Portugal joined the euro in 1999, its GDP per head in purchasing power stood at 85 % of today's EU27 average. Of the countries that joined the Union in 2004 or after, only Cyprus (94) was above it; Malta (83) and Slovenia (82) sat just below, and the rest were far behind [S1; A]. By 2025 Portugal stood at 81 %. Czechia, Slovenia, Malta and Lithuania had moved above it, and Poland was level [S1; A]. That fall in rank is the starting point of a public debate in which three claims recur: that Portugal has "German prices and Portuguese wages", that the euro made the country poorer, and that quality of life makes up for low pay. Each is partly right and partly wrong, and each depends on the measure used.

This paper, prepared for mowei.pt, is a documentary study. It brings together official statistics, legislation and published research, gives every statistic a source and an evidence grade, and keeps disagreements between sources visible. It estimates no new causal model; where a study does, the paper reports what it measured, how, and its limits for Portugal.

Five research questions organise the analysis.

1. **RQ1. Convergence.** Has Portugal converged with the euro area since 1999, and does the answer change with the measure (GDP or household consumption, volume or purchasing-power level), the base year (1999 or 2002) and the comparator (EA20 or EU27)?
2. **RQ2. Living costs.** Are living costs high relative to incomes, and in which categories?
3. **RQ3. Quality of life.** How does Portugal compare on health, education, safety, life satisfaction, poverty, inequality and housing conditions?
4. **RQ4. Regions.** How large are the regional gaps under the NUTS 2024 classification, and do output and household income tell the same story?
5. **RQ5. The euro and the outlook.** What did the euro change, what do the best available studies say about its effect on Portugal, and what do official projections imply?

Sections 3 and 4 give the chronology and symptoms; Section 5 ranks causes by evidence quality; Section 6 rebuilds the central figure and reviews the euro literature; Section 7 covers law and policy; Section 8 behavioural hypotheses; Section 9 projections and convergence scenarios; Section 10 measures; and Section 11 limitations and open conflicts.

2 Data, sources and method

Evidence base. The paper closes on 9 November 2026. It rests on an evidence file prepared on 8 November 2026 (sources [S1]–[S40], 4 661 raw rows from 84 logged calls), a scan of Mowei's own evidence stores, the drafting stage's reads ([S41]–[S61]), an independent review of that draft, and reads made at source after the review ([S62]–[S73]). Later additions use readings recorded by the enrichment stage on 9 November 2026. Mowei's evidence stores contain AI-generated summaries; they served only as pointers and supply no figure to the analysis. An earlier draft quoted two poverty figures from Mowei's facts database inside a conflict note; the revised text replaces them with the Eurostat series read at source (Section 11, conflict 12). Mowei's household price tracker (the Índice) is Mowei's own measure, not an official statistic; it starts in July 2026, so it is not used as evidence.

Evidence grades. A grade describes what was done, not how credible the statistic is (full table in Appendix A).

- **A** read at the official source (API, legal text or official page) by the drafting stage, 8 November 2026, or the enrichment stage, 9 November 2026, with provenance recorded in the ledger.
- **A** read at the official source by the drafting stage after the review, 8 November 2026 (17:46–17:56 UTC).
- **A-i** read at the official source by an independent reviewer, 8 November 2026.
- **A** read at the official source by the evidence run of 8 November 2026, carried with its raw rows.
- **A-c** read at the official source on 7 November 2026 for the companion housing paper and carried without a new read.
- **C** official page read through a summariser or automated reader.
- **D** press, think tank, law firm, or an agency republishing a third-party index.
- **E** working paper, search-result snippet or unofficial site.

A failed fetch is a retrieval gap, not a finding: the claim becomes open, not false. Three verdicts are used for claims in public debate: *supported*, *contradicted on average* (the claim may still hold for some groups), and *not measured* (open).

Concepts used throughout.

- *Purchasing power standard (PPS).* A common currency that removes price-level differences; one PPS buys the same basket everywhere. Income in PPS must never be divided again by a price level index.
- *Actual individual consumption (AIC).* What households consume, whoever pays: their purchases plus the health, education and other services provided by the State and non-profit bodies. For living standards it is better than GDP, which also includes investment, collective services and profits paid to foreign owners.
- *Price level index (PLI).* Purchasing power parity divided by the exchange rate, EU27 = 100: a PLI of 85 means the basket costs 85 % of the EU average in that year.

Comparators. EA20 is the euro area with its 2023–2025 membership, recalculated backwards; EU27 is fixed in the same way. Both averages move as members catch up: the EA20 fell from 114 to 104 relative to the EU27 between 1999 and 2025 [S1; A]. For a question about the euro, the euro area is the relevant comparator (Section 11, conflict 3).

Vintages. Eurostat replaced `prc_ppp_ind` (last updated 10 July 2025) with `prc_ppp_ind_1` (9 July 2026); values differ slightly [S1; S2; A]. This paper uses the 2026 vintage; the summary table `tec00114` agrees for 2023–2025 [S3; A]. Several 2025 values are flagged provisional ("p") at source, including Portugal's GDP per head in PPS (81) and productivity in PPS [S1; A; S41; A-i]. The price level of household final consumption in `tec00120` is 86,6 for Portugal in 2025 [S13; A], close to but not the same concept as the AIC price level of 85,3.

Retrieval gaps. The enrichment stage recorded partial readings of the *How's Life? 2024* Portugal country note, including its future-resource table and qualified endpoint periods [S77; A]. The Better Life Index methodology was also read, including user-selected weights, normalisation and

imputation [S96; A]. Portugal's current Better Life Index scores and well-being observations remain unread: the Data Explorer returned an application shell, and the SDMX request attempted was inaccessible.

Analysis. "Arithmetic" marks growth rates and ratios computed from the levels in the data file. Volumes are used for growth and PPS indices for levels; the two are combined only in the labelled arithmetic of Section 9 (Section 11, conflict 4).

3 Since when: timeline

The chronology separates events from their effects. Mechanisms belong to Sections 5 and 6.

1960 and 1986: EFTA and the European Communities. Portugal was one of the seven founding members of the European Free Trade Association. The EFTA Convention "was agreed in Stockholm in November 1959. It entered into force on 3 May 1960" [S63; A], and the EFTA website confirms that the association was established in 1960 [S97; A]. Reis writes that "income per capita doubled in the decade after 1960, when Portugal joined the European Free Trade Association. The years after joining the European Community in 1986 were likewise marked by great progress" [S58; A]. The PPS series used here begins in 1995, so the path from 1986 to 1994 is not measured in this paper.

1992: the escudo enters the Exchange Rate Mechanism. Banco de Portugal's account states that "the escudo formally joined the ERM on 6 April 1992. The central rate against the ECU was set at 178.735 escudos per ECU" [S67; A]. The Portuguese 10-year government bond yield was 11,47 % in 1995 and 4,78 % in 1999 [S30; A]. Blanchard dates the start of the boom to this period: "triggered by the commitment by Portugal to join the euro, a sharp drop in interest rates and expectations of faster growth both led to a decrease in private saving and an increase in investment" [S57; A].

1999: the euro as a currency; 2002: notes and coins. Investment reached 27,6 % of GDP in 1999, against 22,2 % in the EA20 [S45; A]. The current-account deficit was 8,9 % of GDP in 1999 and 10,8 % in 2000 [S44; A]. HICP inflation ran at 2,2 % in 1999 and 4,4 % in 2001 [S29; A].

2000–2007: the slump inside the credit boom. Real GDP per head grew 1,13 % a year from 1999 to 2007, against 1,79 % in the EA20 [S4; A, arithmetic]. Reis describes 2000–2012 as a period in which "the Portuguese economy grew less than the United States during the Great Depression and less than Japan during its lost decade" [S58; A]. The current-account deficit stayed between 6,6 % and 11,8 % of GDP in every year from 1999 to 2010 [S44; A].

2008–2014: crisis and the adjustment programme. The 10-year yield rose to 10,24 % in 2011 and 10,55 % in 2012 [S30; A]. A joint €78 billion package (the EU through the EFSM, the euro area through the EFSF, and the IMF, about €26 billion each) was adopted on 17 May 2011 and ran to mid-2014 [S33; A]. Real GDP per head fell 1,22 % a year between 2007 and 2013 [S4; A, arithmetic]. The minimum wage, as Eurostat measures it, stayed at 566 € from 2011 to 2014 [S7; A].

2015–2019: recovery. Real GDP per head grew 2,42 % a year in 2013–2019, against 1,73 % in the EA20 [S4; A, arithmetic].

2020–2023: COVID-19 and the inflation shock. GDP per head in PPS fell from 77 to 74 (EU27 = 100) between 2019 and 2021 [S1; A]. HICP inflation reached 8,1 % in 2022 and 5,3 % in 2023 [S29; A], the same values as in the sibling paper. A zero VAT rate on a basket of essential foods applied from 18 April to 31 December 2023 [S51; S52; A].

2024–2026. Inflation fell to 2,7 % in 2024 and 2,2 % in 2025 [S29; A], and GDP per head in PPS recovered to 81–82 [S1; A]. The statutory minimum wage for 2026 is 920 € a month on the mainland [S64; A].

Table 3.1. Inflation and long-term interest rates at selected dates (F3.1)

Year	HICP inflation, PT (%)	HICP inflation, euro area (%)	10-year yield, PT (%)	10-year yield, DE (%)
1995	n.a. (series starts 1997)	n.a.	11,47	6,85
1999	2,2	1,1	4,78	4,49
2001	4,4	2,3	—	—
2007 (yields) / 2008 (HICP)	2,7	3,3	4,42	4,22
2012	2,8	2,5	10,55	1,50
2021 (yields) / 2022 (HICP)	8,1	8,4	0,30	−0,37
2025	2,2	2,1	3,08	2,59

Sources: Eurostat prc_hicp_aind [S29] and irt_lt_mcby_a [S30]; A. "—": not extracted. Where the data file holds adjacent years only, the row names both. The euro-area HICP aggregate is Eurostat's "EA" (changing composition).

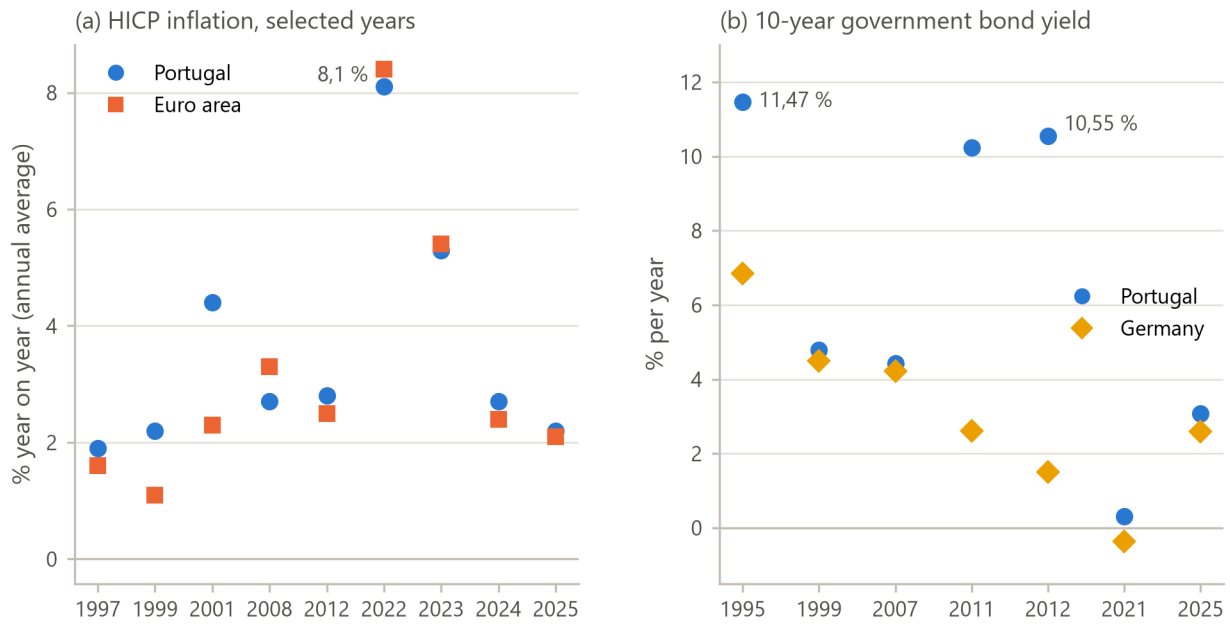


Figure 1. HICP inflation (Portugal and euro area) and 10-year government bond yields (Portugal and Germany), selected years 1995–2025.

Source: Eurostat prc_hicp_aind [S29; A] and irt_lt_mcby_a [S30; A]; the years held in the data file (Table 3.1), drawn as points.

4 How it shows: the measured symptoms

4.1 Convergence in GDP and AIC per head

Table 4.1 reports real GDP per head, in chain-linked 2010 euros, by period. It answers "how fast did each economy grow?" and is unaffected by price-level comparisons.

Table 4.1. Real GDP per head, average yearly growth (F4.1)

Period	Portugal	EA20	EU27
1999–2007	1,13 %	1,79 %	2,09 %
2007–2013	−1,22 %	−0,50 %	−0,25 %
2013–2019	2,42 %	1,73 %	1,99 %
2019–2025	1,16 %	0,77 %	0,98 %
1999–2025	0,88 % (+25,7 % in total)	1,01 % (+29,8 %)	1,27 % (+38,7 %)

Source: Eurostat nama_10_pc [S4; A]; growth rates are arithmetic on the levels in the data file (Portugal 15 770 € in 1999, 19 830 € in 2025).

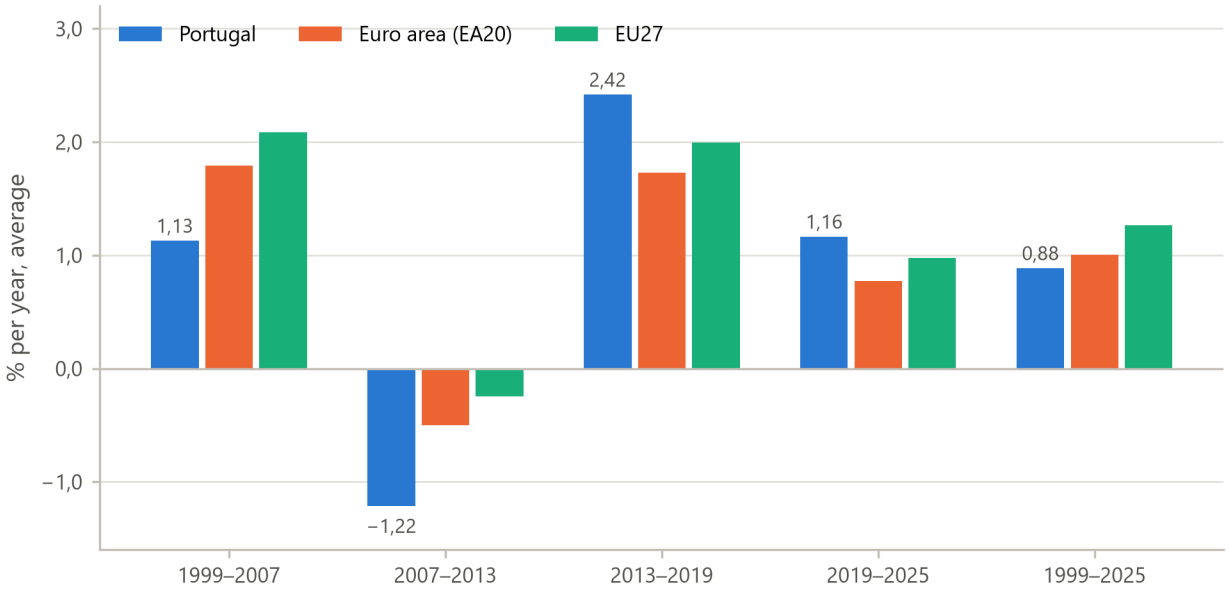


Figure 2. Real GDP per head, average yearly growth by period, Portugal, EA20 and EU27.

Source: Eurostat nama_10_pc, chain-linked 2010 euros [S4; A]; growth rates computed from the levels in the data file (Table 4.1).

Portugal grew more slowly than the euro area until 2013 and faster after; over the whole period, more slowly. Against the EU27 in purchasing power, GDP per head went from 85 to 81 and AIC per head from 89 to 86 [S1; A]. Against the EA20 the ratio rose, GDP per head from 74,6 % to 77,9 % and AIC per head from 78,8 % to 82,7 % (arithmetic on [S1; A]), because the EA20 itself fell from 114 to 104 relative to the EU27 (Section 11, conflicts 3 and 4).

4.2 Price levels by category, against median income

The claim "*preços alemães, salários portugueses*" (German prices, Portuguese wages) is *contradicted on average*: in 2025 the price level of household consumption (AIC) was 85,3 in Portugal, 109,1 in Germany and 104,4 in the EA20 [S1; A]. For some categories it is *supported*.

Table 4.2. Price level indices by category, 2025, EU27 = 100 (F4.2)

Category	Portugal	EA20	Germany	Spain
Actual individual consumption (all)	85,3	104,4	109,1	91,1
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	**102,0**	102,2	102,4	95,3
Information and communication	**110,4**	105,5	—	—
Fuels and lubricants for personal transport	**102,4**	102,1	—	—
Electricity, gas and other fuels	100,7	105,8	—	—
Clothing and footwear	91,4	99,8	—	—
Health	89,2	108,2	—	—
Transport	87,9	102,3	—	—
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	81,1	108,2	—	—
Education services	75,7	105,6	—	—
Restaurants and accommodation services	73,6	102,0	—	—

Source: Eurostat prc_ppp_ind_1, 2026 vintage [S1; A]. "—": not in the query.

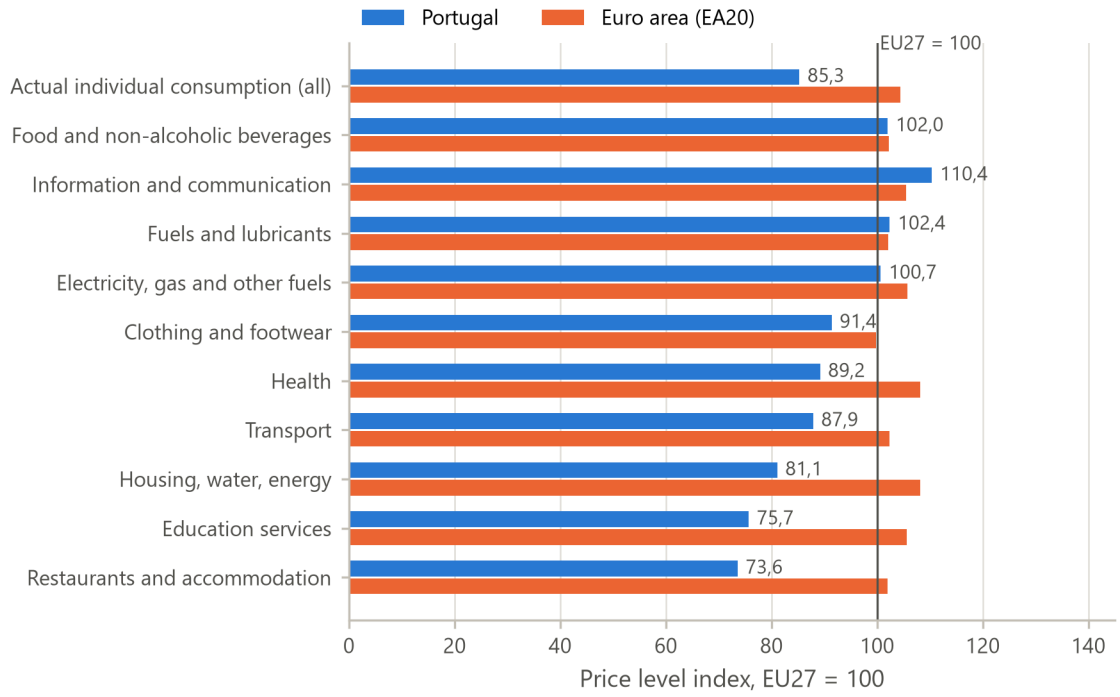


Figure 3. Price level indices by consumption category, 2025, Portugal and EA20, EU27 = 100.

Source: Eurostat prc_ppp_ind_1, 2026 vintage [S1; A] (Table 4.2).

Traded goods (food, fuel) cost about the same everywhere, while services produced with local labour (restaurants, education, health) are cheaper where wages are lower; telecoms are an exception. The housing category averages all households, owners' imputed costs included, and does not describe what a new tenant in Lisboa pays (house prices: 263,85 in 2025 against 161,93 in the EU27, 2015 = 100 [S40; A-c]; see the companion housing paper).

Against prices, incomes are lower still. Median equivalised net income was 14 465 € in Portugal (EU-SILC 2025, income year 2024), against 22 939 € in the EU27, or 63,1 % [S6; A]. In purchasing power it was 16 634 PPS against 22 638 PPS, or 73,5 % of the EU27 and 69,5 % of the EA20 (arithmetic on [S6;

A]). Real wage dynamics are left to the sibling paper "Inflation and national wage". Because the food basket costs as much as in richer countries, it weighs more: food took 17,3 % of household consumption spending in 2022, against 12,9 % in the EA20 [S12; A].

Table 4.3. Median equivalised net income and food share (F4.3)

Measure	Portugal	EA20	EU27
Median income, EUR, EU-SILC 2015	8 435	17 606	15 422
Median income, EUR, EU-SILC 2025	14 465	25 108	22 939
Median income, PPS, EU-SILC 2015	10 317	17 262	15 641
Median income, PPS, EU-SILC 2025	16 634	23 938	22 638
Food share of household consumption, 2022	17,3 %	12,9 %	13,6 %

Sources: [S6] [S12]; A.

INE's release corroborates Portugal's 14 465 € for income year 2024, survey 2025 [S81; A].

The EU staff correction coefficients, which adjust EU officials' pay to local living costs, put Portugal at 84,7 and France at 103,1 in the second half of 2026 (Belgium = 100); excluding actual rents, 86,1 and 97,6 [S11; A]. These are national indices whose city basis could not be checked. The claim that "Lisboa is as expensive as Paris" is therefore *contradicted on average at national level* for consumer prices and *not measured* for the two cities.

4.3 The minimum wage in purchasing power (headline only)

Eurostat reports a monthly minimum wage for Portugal of 1 073 € in the second half of 2026, equal to 1 240 PPS [S7; A]. This is not the statutory monthly amount. Eurostat's metadata explains that "when the minimum wage is paid for more than 12 months per year (as in Greece, Spain and Portugal, where it is paid for 14 months a year), data have been adjusted to take these payments into account. The minimum wage is calculated as follows: (monthly rate x 14) / 12" [S47; A]. Eurostat's 1 073 € is a twelve-month equivalent.

The statutory amount was read in the Diário da República. *Decreto-Lei* n.º 139/2025, de 29 de dezembro, "atualiza o valor da retribuição mínima mensal garantida para 2026"; its article 3 states that the value of the RMMG "é de € 920,00", with effect from 1 January 2026 (article 7), and article 2 limits it to "todo o território continental" [S64; A]. The *Retribuição Mínima Mensal Garantida* (RMMG) is the statutory minimum monthly wage; Madeira and the Açores set their own amounts. Madeira's RMMG is 980,00 €, effective 1 January 2026, under articles 2 and 4 of *Decreto Legislativo Regional* (regional legislative decree) n.º 1/2026/M [S75; A]. The Açores amount remains unread at source after failed retrievals. A law-firm note had reported the same amount [S49; D]. As a consistency check only, 920 × 14 / 12 = 1 073,33, which matches Eurostat's 1 073 €; no statutory amount is derived from Eurostat's figure.

Of the eighteen euro members in the evidence query, ten pay more in euros and six less; seven have a lower minimum wage in PPS. Outside the euro, Poland (1 547 PPS) and Romania (1 317 PPS) are above Portugal [S7; A].

Table 4.4. Monthly minimum wage, second half of 2026, Eurostat basis (F4.4)

Country	EUR	PPS
Portugal	1 073	1 240
Spain	1 425	1 556
France	1 867	1 692
Greece	1 073	1 229
Croatia	1 050	1 339
Lithuania	1 153	1 393
Germany	2 343	2 164
Poland (outside the euro)	1 119	1 547
Romania (outside the euro)	825	1 317

Source: Eurostat earn_mw_cur [S7; A]; twelve-month equivalent of a fourteen-payment wage for PT, ES and EL [S47; A].

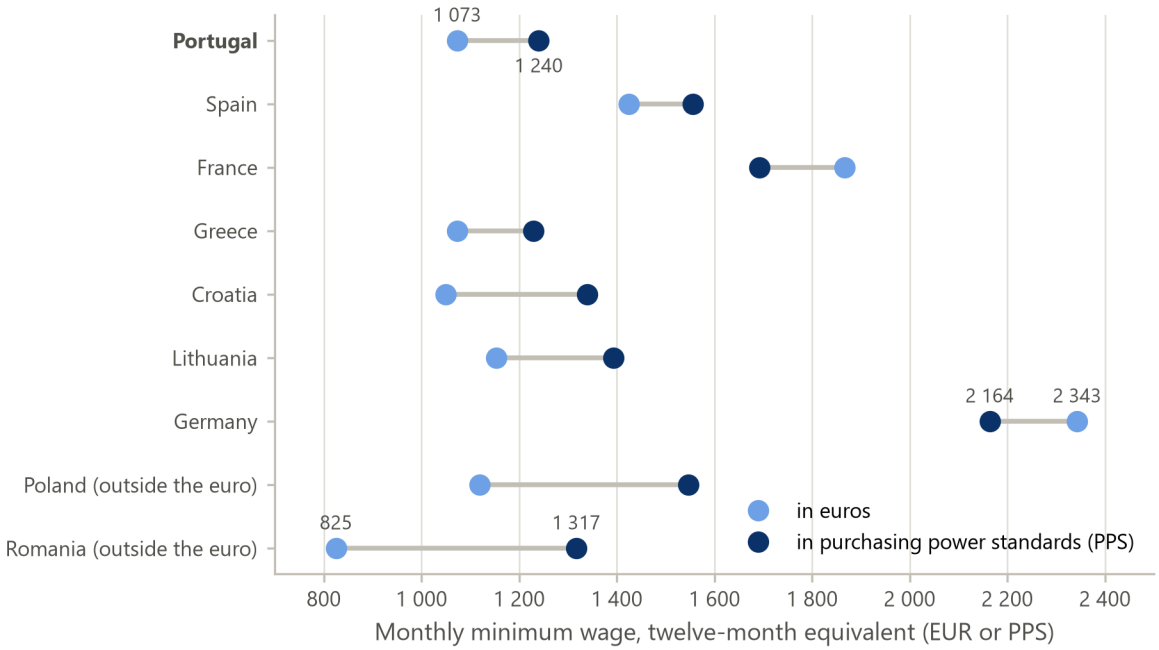


Figure 4. Monthly minimum wage in euros and in purchasing power standards, second half of 2026, nine countries.

Source: Eurostat earn_mw_cur [S7; A]; twelve-month equivalent of a fourteen-payment wage for PT, ES and EL [S47; A] (Table 4.4).

4.4 Electricity with and without taxes, and cold homes

For households consuming 2 500–4 999 kWh a year, Portuguese electricity in the first half of 2026 was below the EU27 and euro-area prices in euros, with and without taxes and levies; Portugal ranked 18th of 27 with taxes and 21st without [S8; A]. In PPS with all taxes it was about the EU level [S8; A]. This paper reports Eurostat's with-tax and without-tax prices only and states no VAT rule for electricity.

Table 4.5. Household electricity and cold homes (F4.5)

Measure	Portugal	EU27	Euro area
€/kWh, all taxes, 2026-S1	0,2367	0,2832	0,2851
€/kWh, excluding taxes and levies, 2026-S1	0,1576	0,2027	0,2061
PPS/kWh, all taxes, 2026-S1	0,282	0,2836	0,2778
PPS/kWh, all taxes, 2024-S2	0,319	0,2838	0,2913
Cannot keep home adequately warm, 2015	23,8 %	9,6 %	9,4 %
Cannot keep home adequately warm, 2025	15,6 %	8,8 %	9,4 %

Sources: Eurostat nrg_pc_204 [S8], ilc_mdes01 [S10]; A. "Euro area" is Eurostat's EA aggregate.

The share unable to keep their home adequately warm fell from 23,8 % (2015) to 15,6 % (2025), still far above the EU27's 8,8 % [S10; A]. The indicator also reflects insulation and heating equipment, which were not measured.

Refreshes of GDP, AIC, category prices, median income, Eurostat minimum wages, electricity and cold homes remain open: no newer Eurostat observations or release dates were retrieved, and INE corroboration does not establish Eurostat currency. The correction-coefficient city basis and the carried house-price reading also remain open.

4.5 Quality of life beyond money

Table 4.6 brings together Eurostat's indicators for the dimensions of well-being, read side by side, not combined into a composite.

OECD's *How's Life? 2024* country note reports household debt falling from 149 % to 112 % of household net disposable income, with endpoints qualified as *2010 or earliest available* and *2023 or latest available* [S77; A]. The Better Life Index method uses user-selected weights, normalisation and some imputation [S96; A]. Portugal's BLI scores remain open.

Table 4.6. Quality-of-life indicators (F4.6)

Indicator	Year	Portugal	EU27	EA20	Source
Life expectancy at birth (years)	2024	82,5	81,5	82,4	[S17; A]
Healthy life years at birth (series break, see text)	2024	64,8	65,2	—	[S18; A]
Unmet need for medical examination: cost, distance or waiting list (16+)	2025	2,5 %	2,4 %	2,4 %	[S19; A]
… waiting list only	2019 → 2025	0,3 % → 1,5 %	0,7 % → 1,2 %	—	[S19; A]
… poorest income quintile	2025	4,2 %	3,7 %	—	[S19; A]
Out-of-pocket payments, % of current health spending	2024	28,67 %	15,06 %	—	[S46; A]
Early leavers from education and training (18–24)	2025	6,1 %	9,1 %	—	[S20; A]
Tertiary attainment (25–34)	2025	42,5 %	44,8 %	—	[S21; A]
Crime, violence or vandalism in the area	2023	6,9 %	10,0 %	11,3 %	[S24; A]
Intentional homicide per 100 000 (police-recorded)	2024	0,68	—	—	[S23; A]
Overall life satisfaction (0–10)	2025	7,3	7,2	7,2	[S22; A]
At risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE)	2025	18,6 %	20,9 %	21,4 %	[S14; A]
At-risk-of-poverty rate (60 % of median)	2025	15,4 %	16,3 %	—	[S71; A]
Gini coefficient of disposable income	2025	30,9	29,2	—	[S15; A]
S80/S20 income quintile share ratio	2025	4,86	4,62	—	[S16; A]
Housing cost overburden rate	2025	6,3 %	7,6 %	7,9 %	[S9; A]

EU-SILC years are survey years; income refers to the previous year.

Eurostat refreshes of life expectancy, healthy life years, unmet medical need, out-of-pocket spending and education remain open after failed retrievals. Existing grades are retained.

Health. Life expectancy is above the EU average. Healthy life years at birth rose from 59,6 (2023) to 64,8 (2024) in Portugal and from 63,1 to 65,2 in the EU27 [S18; A], but Eurostat flags Portugal's 2024 value "b" (break in series) and 2022 "bp" [S18; A], and its metadata says the way the activity-limitation question was implemented "hampers comparison in time for some countries" [S48; A]. The change from 2023 to 2024 is not a trend. Access looks average on the combined unmet-need indicator, but unmet need caused by waiting lists rose from 0,3 % to 1,5 % between 2019 and 2025 (EU27: 0,7 % to 1,2 %) [S19; A], and the poorest income quintile reports more unmet need than the EU27 average [S19; A].

Households paid 28,67 % of all current health spending out of pocket in 2024, close to twice the EU27's 15,06 %; the share was 25,67 % in 2000, 30,2 % in 2019 and 27,77 % in 2025 [S46; A]. Government and compulsory schemes financed 61,88 % and voluntary schemes, mostly private insurance, 9,45 % [S46; A]. Out-of-pocket spending is concentrated in medical goods (2 504,10 of 4 969,78 million €, about half; 68 % for therapeutic appliances) and outpatient care (3 809,26 of 10 962,54 million €, about 35 %), and is small for inpatient care (about 10 %) and prevention (about 7 %) [S73; A; shares arithmetic]. These data measure households' total health-cost burden. They do not say whether a payment went to the *Serviço Nacional de Saúde* (SNS, National Health Service) or to a private provider, and Eurostat publishes no series of SNS user charges. The claim "*o SNS é gratuito*" (the SNS is free) is therefore *not measured*; what is measured is a household health-cost share far above the EU average, mainly for medicines, appliances and outpatient care. Health outcomes are at or above the EU level.

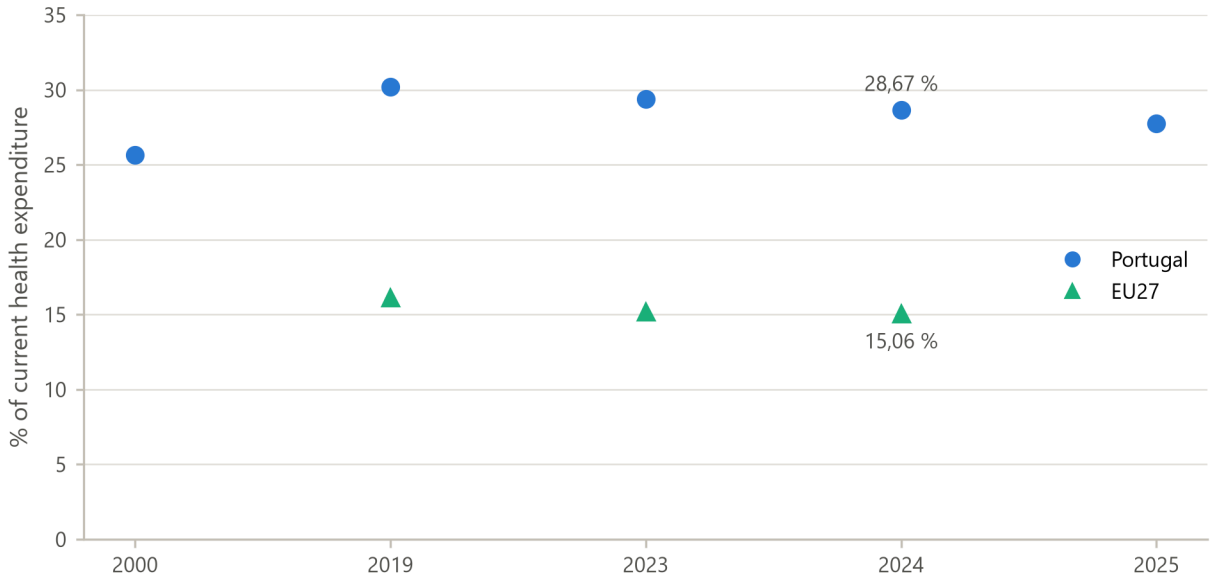


Figure 5. Household out-of-pocket payments as a share of current health spending, Portugal and EU27, years held in the data file.

Source: Eurostat hlth_sha11_hf, financing scheme HF3 [S46; A] (Table 4.6).

Education. Early leaving among 18–24-year-olds fell from 45,0 % in 2002 to 6,1 % in 2025, below the EU27's 9,1 % [S20; A]; tertiary attainment among 25–34-year-olds rose from 15,3 % to 42,5 %, against 23,1 % and 44,8 % in the EU27 [S21; A]. Both are substantial improvements. PISA 2022 mathematics

and reading declined relative to 2018, while science was approximately unchanged [S95; A]. OECD warns of a small upward non-response bias in Portugal's 2018 results [S95; A]. Later-cycle availability remains open.

Safety. Police-recorded homicide was 0,68 per 100 000 in 2024; four EU countries recorded lower rates, an indicative rank given different recording practices [S23; A]. 6,9 % reported crime, violence or vandalism in their area in 2023, against 10,0 % in the EU27; twelve EU countries reported less [S24; A]. A peace index ranks Portugal 7th in the world for 2026, as reported by AICEP [S34; D]; its method was not read.

Life satisfaction, poverty and inequality. Life satisfaction rose from 6,2 in 2013 to 7,3 in 2025, above the EU27 and EA20 (both 7,2) [S22; A]. The AROPE rate fell from 26,4 % (2015) to 18,6 % (2025), below the EU27's 20,9 % [S14; A]. The at-risk-of-poverty rate (income below 60 % of the national median) was 16,6 % in survey year 2024 and 15,4 % in 2025, against 16,2 % and 16,3 % in the EU27 [S71; A]; a rate anchored at the 2008 threshold was 7,4 % in 2025 [S72; A]. Inequality fell (Gini 34,0 to 30,9) but remains above the EU27 [S15; A].

INE independently confirms survey-2025 AROPE (18,6 %), Gini (30,9) and poverty (15,4 % for income year 2024) [S81; A]. The Eurostat release refresh remains open.

Housing conditions. The overburden rate (housing costs above 40 % of disposable income) was 6,3 % in 2025, below the EU27's 7,6 % [S9; A]. As the companion housing paper shows, the national average hides tenants on market rents and recent movers.

Taken together, the claim "*a qualidade de vida é alta, o problema é o dinheiro*" (quality of life is high; money is the problem) is *supported* for most non-monetary indicators, with four qualifications: cold homes, households' out-of-pocket health costs, above-average inequality, and declining school performance in mathematics and reading [S95; A].

4.6 Regional gaps under NUTS 2024

Under NUTS 2024 the former Lisboa region is split into Grande Lisboa and Península de Setúbal, and Oeste e Vale do Tejo becomes a region of its own [S25; A]. Eurostat recalculates the series backwards on the new boundaries.

Table 4.7. Regional output, household income and population (F4.7)

Region (NUTS 2024)	GDP per head, PPS (EU27 = 100), 2000	2024	Net disposable household income per head, PPS, 2023	Population change, 2015–2025
Grande Lisboa	143	**129**	21 600	+6,0 %
Algarve	88	89	21 600	+9,5 %
Região Autónoma da Madeira	76	88	18 200	+0,7 %
Alentejo	78	77	18 400	**−3,3 %**
Região Autónoma dos Açores	68	73	17 800	−0,6 %
Norte	68	71	16 000	+2,0 %
Centro	72	71	16 800	+1,4 %
Oeste e Vale do Tejo	76	65	16 800	+5,5 %
Península de Setúbal	69	**55**	17 500	+7,9 %
Portugal	85	82	17 900	+3,4 %
EU27	100	100	21 000	—

Sources: Eurostat nama_10r_2gdp [S25], nama_10r_2hhinc [S26], demo_r_d2jan [S27]; A. Population changes are arithmetic. Regional GDP for the national total (82 in 2024) comes from a regional dataset updated in February 2026 and differs slightly from [S1].

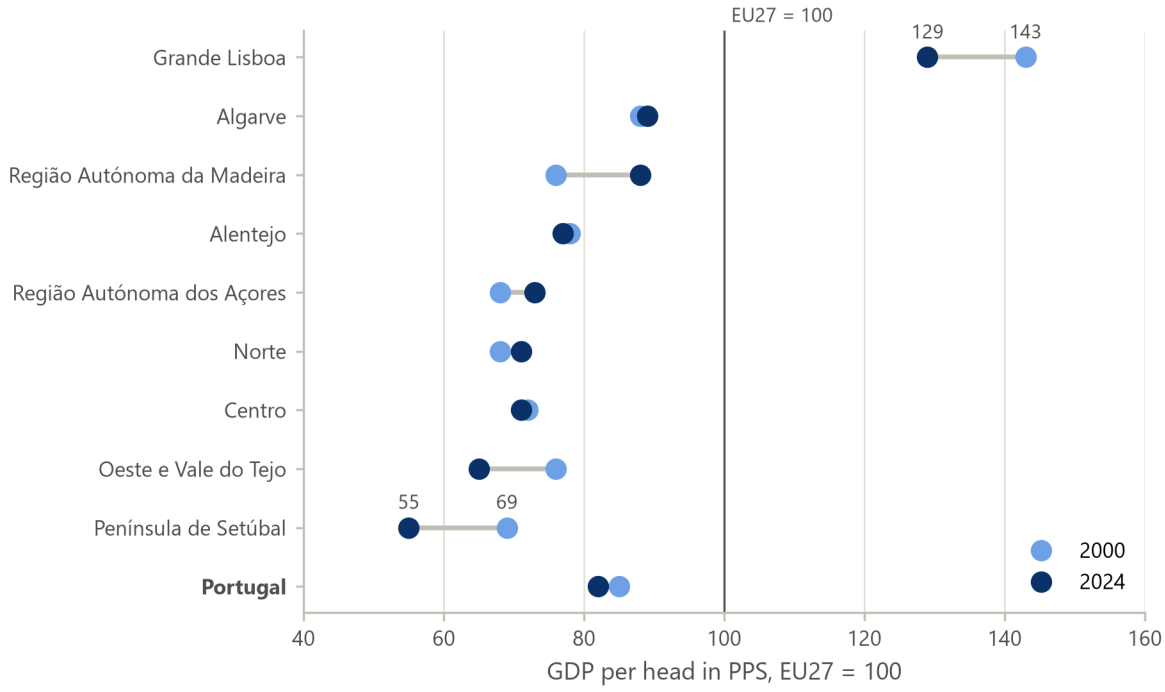


Figure 6. Regional GDP per head in PPS, EU27 = 100, NUTS 2024 regions, 2000 and 2024.

Source: Eurostat nama_10r_2gdp [S25; A] (Table 4.7).

The output gap is wide: Grande Lisboa's GDP per head is more than twice that of Península de Setúbal, across the Tagus. The household-income gap is much narrower: Grande Lisboa and the Algarve reach 21 600 PPS, about the EU27 level, Norte 16 000 [S26; A]. Output is counted where it is produced, income where people live, after taxes and transfers. For living standards, household income is the better measure (Section 11, conflict 10). Between 2000 and 2024 Grande Lisboa fell from 143 to 129 and Península de Setúbal from 69 to 55, while Madeira and the Açores rose [S25; A].

"*O interior está abandonado*" (the interior is abandoned) is *not measured* at the right scale. "Interior" is not a NUTS 2 region: Centro and Alentejo each mix coast and interior. At NUTS 2, Alentejo lost 3,3 % of its population between 2015 and 2025, while Centro and Norte grew slightly [S27; A]. NUTS 3 and municipal data were not read.

INE's EU-SILC sampling notes have been read [S81; A], but numerical standard errors and confidence intervals remain open, limiting comparisons of close regional poverty ranks.

5 Why: causes ranked by strength of evidence

The candidates below are hypotheses to test, not conclusions. The causes interact: a credit boom raises non-tradable prices, which erodes competitiveness, which matters more when the exchange rate cannot move. Aggregate time paths establish timing and consistency; they rarely isolate a cause.

How evidence is graded. Each cause is graded on three questions: (a) is the proximate fact measured directly by official series read at source; (b) do independent sources (different datasets, or a peer-reviewed or refereed study) point the same way; (c) has any source read here tested the causal link for Portugal, rather than shown that the timing fits? *Strong* means yes to (a) and (b), with at least a refereed mechanism study; *moderate* means (a) but (b) or the mechanism is thin; *weak* means the fact is consistent with the cause but the cause itself is not measured. No cause scores yes on (c): none of the sources read decomposes Portugal's income gap into shares. The ranking orders confidence that a cause operated, not its size.

5.1 Productivity and capital deepening (strong)

Data: (F5.1).

Real labour productivity per hour worked rose 21,4 % in Portugal from 1999 to 2025, against 23,0 % in the EA20 and 31,8 % in the EU27 (arithmetic on [S42; A]). The path matters more than the total. From 1999 to 2013 Portuguese productivity per hour grew faster than the euro area's (+19,0 % against +15,2 %). One hypothesis is a composition effect, with low-productivity jobs lost in the crisis; no decomposition or study read here tests it. From 2013 to 2025 it grew only 2,0 %, against 6,7 % in the EA20 (arithmetic on [S42; A]). The recovery after 2013 came from more people working, not from more output per hour.

In purchasing-power levels, output per hour worked was 66,7 % of the EU27 average in 2025 (provisional), against 107,1 % in the EA20; it was 69,1 % in 2007 and 65,1 % in 2019 [S41; A; 2007 A-i]. Output per person employed was 79,5 % of the EU27 in 2025 (provisional) [S41; A]. Portuguese workers work longer hours (37,4 actual hours a week in the main job against 35,9 in the EU27 in 2025 [S37; A-c]), which partly closes the gap per person; this series starts in 2005 for Portugal.

Gross fixed capital formation fell from 27,6 % of GDP in 1999 to 14,8 % in 2013 and recovered to 21,0 % in 2025 (provisional), against 21,3 % in the EA20 [S45; A]. Banco de Portugal's October bulletin corroborates the 2025 share of 21,0 % [S82; A]; the provisional flag is carried from the prior review. Fresh Eurostat readings of investment and productivity levels remain open. A share of GDP is not a capital stock per worker, and AMECO's capital stock could not be retrieved, so capital per worker is *not measured*. Blanchard named the problem in 2006: "Productivity growth is anemic. Growth is very low" [S57; A]. Reis argues a mechanism: foreign capital went to less productive non-tradables firms, so "productivity will fall, generating a slump" [S58; A].

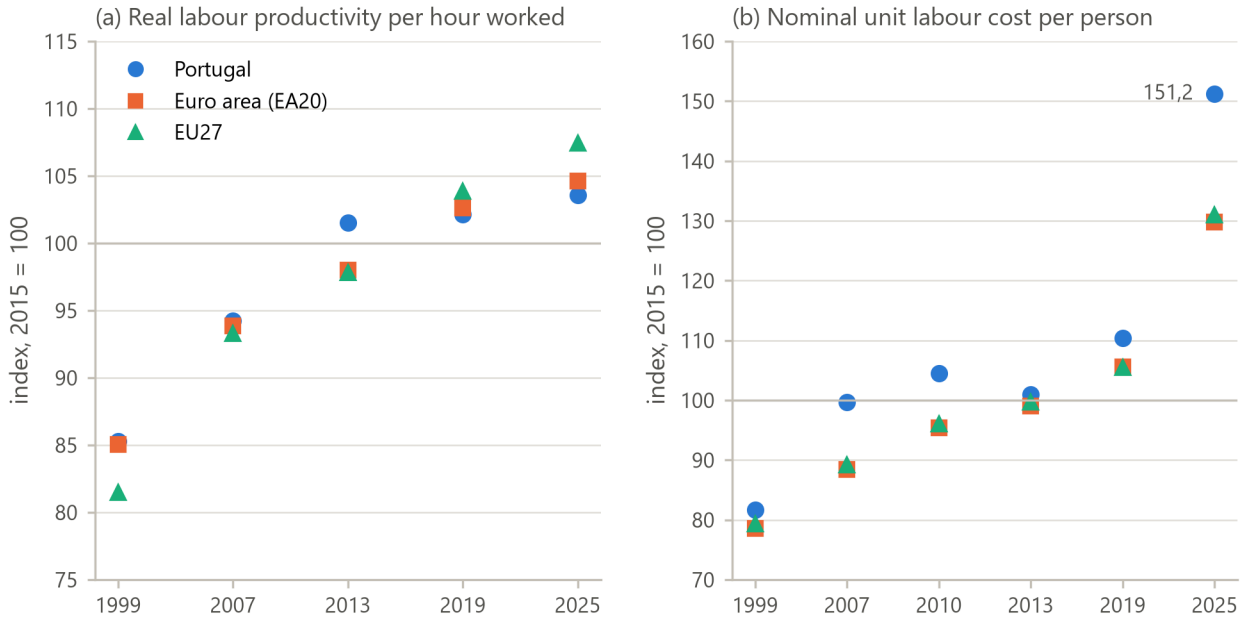


Figure 7. Real labour productivity per hour and nominal unit labour cost per person, 2015 = 100, Portugal, EA20 and EU27, benchmark years.

Source: Eurostat nama_10_lp_ulc, RLPR_HW and NULC_PER [S42; A]; the years held in the data file (F5.1).

Rank: strong on (a) and (b): two Eurostat datasets and two refereed studies. Why productivity stalled after 2013 is open; firm size, management and capital per worker are plausible but unmeasured.

5.2 The 2000s non-tradable and credit boom, current-account deficits and the loss of exchange-rate adjustment (strong for 1995–2013)

Data for Sections 5.2–5.3: (F5.2) and (F5.1).

The current account was in deficit by 8,9 % of GDP in 1999 and by 11,8 % in 2008 [S44; A]. Unit labour costs rose 28,0 % from 1999 to 2010, against 21,5 % in the EA20 (arithmetic on [S42; A]). The real effective exchange rate deflated by unit labour costs, against the other euro-area members, rose 20,8 % from 1995 to 2005 (index 93,1 to 112,4, 2015 = 100) [S43; A, A-i]. Inside a monetary union this appreciation cannot be undone by devaluing; only relative wages, prices or productivity can move. Blanchard: "nominal wage growth was substantially higher than labor productivity growth, leading to growth in unit labor costs higher than in the rest of the euro area" [S57; A].

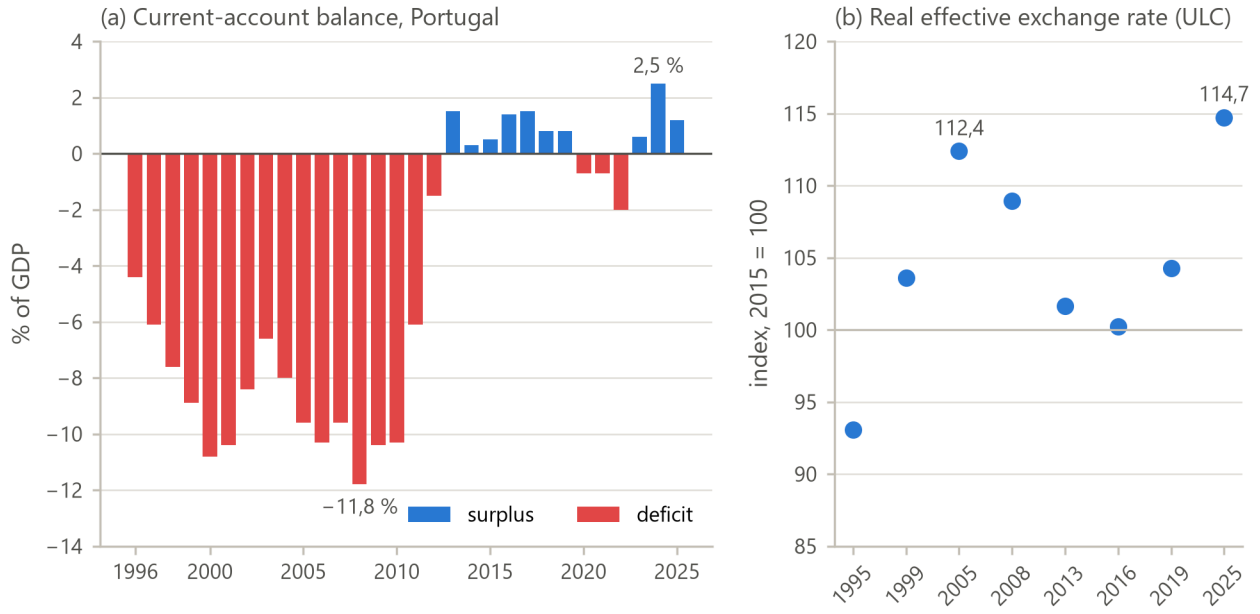


Figure 8. Current-account balance (% of GDP, 1996–2025) and ULC-based real effective exchange rate against the EA20 (2015 = 100), Portugal.

Source: Eurostat bop_gdp6_q [S44; A] and ert_eff_ic_a, REER_EA20_ULCT [S43; A] (F5.2).

Rank: strong for the boom and its unwinding. Two independent official series (balance of payments, effective exchange rate) and two refereed analyses agree. Unlike Spain and Ireland, Portugal had no housing boom then, as Reis notes; the inflow went into non-tradable services more broadly [S58; A].

5.3 The sovereign crisis and internal devaluation (strong for 2010–2014; moderate for the long run)

The programme years combined high yields (10,55 % in 2012), falling investment and a frozen minimum wage [S30; S45; S7; A]. Unit labour costs fell 3,5 % from 2010 to 2013 while the euro area's rose 3,8 % (arithmetic on [S42; A]); the ULC-based real effective exchange rate fell 10,8 % from 2005 to 2016 [S43; A]. The current account moved from −10,3 % of GDP in 2010 to +1,5 % in 2013 [S44; A]. Blanchard had warned of "competitive disinflation, a period of sustained high unemployment until competitiveness has been reestablished" [S57; A]. This describes what happened; it does not prove another path was available.

Since 2019 the picture has reversed: unit labour costs rose 37,0 % from 2019 to 2025 against 22,9 % in the EA20, and the ULC-based real exchange rate reached 114,7 in 2025, above its 2005 level (112,4), a level it had already passed in 2024 (112,75), while the current account remains in surplus (1,2 % of GDP in 2025) [S42; S43; S44; A; A-i]. Whether this reflects wage catch-up with rising labour demand or a renewed loss of cost competitiveness cannot be settled from these series.

Rank: strong for the crisis; moderate as a cause of today's gap. The crisis cut real GDP per head by about 7 % between 2007 and 2013 [S4; A]; most of that has since been recovered.

5.4 The human-capital legacy and its catch-up (strong for the legacy; the catch-up has not yet shown in productivity)

Data: (F5.3).

In 2002 early leaving was 45,0 % (EU27 16,9 %) and tertiary attainment among 25–34-year-olds 15,3 % (EU27 23,1 %); by 2025, 6,1 % and 42,5 % [S20; S21; A]. Young adults' attainment is now close to the EU27's: early leaving is below it (6,1 % against 9,1 %) and tertiary attainment 2,3 points under it (42,5 % against 44,8 %) [S20; S21; A]. The attainment of workers aged 35–64 was not measured here, so whether an older-cohort gap remains is open. Productivity shows no matching acceleration after 2013: returns may lag, graduates may leave (5.5), or the sector mix may not use them (5.6). None was tested here.

Measured skills qualify the attainment catch-up. In PIAAC's 2022–23 survey, 42 % of adults aged 16–65 in Portugal had literacy at Level 1 or below, against 26 % across the OECD, and ages 55–65 scored 32 points below ages 25–34 [S90; A]. These are adult skills, not employed-person attainment. PISA 2022 recorded declines in mathematics and reading relative to 2018, with science approximately unchanged; Portugal's 2018 results had a small upward non-response bias [S95; A]. Neither comparison estimates the skills contribution to today's productivity gap.

Rank: strong for the legacy as a historical cause; open for the current gap.

5.5 Demographics and emigration (moderate)

Data: (F5.4).

Emigration was 40 377 in 2015, 28 219 in 2019, 25 079 in 2021 and 33 916 in 2024 [S38; A]; who leaves, by education, was not read. Population on 1 January 2025 was 10 749 635 (Eurostat) [S27; A]; INE's estimate for 31 December 2025 is 11 424 031 (Section 11, conflict 9) [S62; A]. EUROPOP2023 projects 9 650 059 residents in 2050 [S28; A], a shrinking working-age population unless migration exceeds the projection, as it did in 2022–2025.

The carried Eurostat emigration series predates INE's migration-flow revision released on 30 September 2026 [S82; A]; the revised emigrant counts remain unread. Banco de Portugal attributes population revisions to administrative residence evidence: the 2024 estimate rose by 637 600, while national accounts and the Labour Force Survey had not incorporated the revision [S82; A]. The exact Eurostat–INE population gap remains open; the exact INE total was not re-read.

Rank: moderate. Emigration of the educated is a plausible drag on productivity, but emigrants' education was not read.

5.6 Sector mix: tourism and low-value services (weak, untested here)

Restaurants and accommodation cost 73,6 % of the EU price level [S1; A]. That is consistent with a large, low-wage services sector, but sectoral value added and employment shares were not read, so sector mix as a cause is *not measured*. Reis's model is relevant: misallocated capital expanded "relatively unproductive firms in the non-tradables sector ... at the expense of more productive tradables firms" [S58; A].

5.7 Housing costs (moderate for the young and tenants; weak for the average household)

House prices rose to 263,85 (2015 = 100) by 2025, against 161,93 in the EU27 [S40; A-c]. Young people leave the parental home at 28,8 years, against 26,3 in the EU27 [S39; A-c]. Yet the average overburden rate is below the EU27's (6,3 % against 7,6 %) [S9; A], and the national housing price level is 81,1 [S1;

A]. These averages do not show a housing burden above the EU's; they can conceal large burdens for renters, the young, and Lisboa and the Algarve. The companion housing paper treats the topic in depth.

5.8 Energy and taxes on energy (weak as a cause of the income gap; relevant to cold homes)

Electricity is cheaper per kWh than the EU average in euros and about average in PPS [S8; A], yet 15,6 % cannot keep their home warm [S10; A]. Building quality, equipment and income are likelier contributors, though unmeasured. The evidence does not support energy prices as a cause of the convergence gap.

5.9 Summary: ranking, and what would change it

Table 5.1. Causes ranked by quality of evidence, with the evidence that would move each

Rank	Cause	(a) Fact measured directly	(b) Independent support	Weakest link	Evidence that would change the rank
1	Productivity after 1999	Yes: hours and PPS series [S41] [S42]	Two refereed studies [S57] [S58]	Why it stalled after 2013	Firm-level productivity by size and sector; AMECO capital per worker. A post-2013 stall explained by composition would lower it
2	Boom and loss of exchange-rate adjustment, 1995–2013	Yes: current account, ULC, REER [S42] [S43] [S44]	Two refereed studies	No estimate of its share of today's gap	A peer-reviewed synthetic-control study that includes Portugal
3	Crisis and internal devaluation	Yes: yields, ULC, GDP [S4] [S30] [S42]	Blanchard's ex ante warning	Mostly recovered since 2013	Evidence of lasting scarring (lost firms, emigrants who did not return) would raise it
4	Human-capital legacy	Yes: attainment 2002–2025 [S20] [S21]; literacy [S90]	OECD adult-skills and PISA notes [S90] [S95]	Catch-up not visible in productivity	Attainment of workers aged 35–64; returns to schooling
5	Demographics and emigration	Yes: flows, population [S27] [S38]	No study read	Emigrants' education unknown	Education profile of emigrants; return rates
6	Housing costs, for specific groups	Partly: prices, age leaving home [S39] [S40]	Companion paper	Averages below EU	Overburden for tenants at market rent by region
7	Sector mix	No	Reis's model only	Sector shares not read	Value added and hours by sector
8	Energy	Yes, but it points against [S8]	—	Prices not high	Bill burden by income decile; insulation data

Grades as defined at the start of Section 5; no row is a measured share of the gap.

6 The key evidence base

6.1 The central figure: GDP and AIC per head in PPS, 1995–2025

Tables 6.1a and 6.1b rebuild the central figure from Eurostat's 2026 vintage: Portugal against the EA20 and the EU27, and against the countries that passed it at benchmark years.

Table 6.1a. GDP and AIC per head in PPS, Portugal and the euro area, EU27 = 100 (F6.1)

Year	GDP per head, PT	GDP per head, EA20	PT as % of EA20	AIC per head, PT	AIC per head, EA20	PT as % of EA20
1995	81	114	71,1	86	114	75,4
1999	85	114	74,6	89	113	78,8
2002	84	113	74,3	88	112	78,6
2005	84	112	75,0	92	111	82,9
2007	82	111	73,9	90	110	81,8
2010	82	108	75,9	88	108	81,5
2012	75	108	69,4	80	107	74,8
2013	77	108	71,3	82	107	76,6
2019	77	106	72,6	83	105	79,0
2023	81	105	77,1	86	105	81,9
2024	82	104	78,8	86	104	82,7
2025	81	104	77,9	86	104	82,7

Source: Eurostat prc_ppp_ind_1, indicator VI_PPS_EU27_2020_HAB, 2026 vintage [S1; A]. The data file holds every year from 1995 to 2025. Ratios are arithmetic.

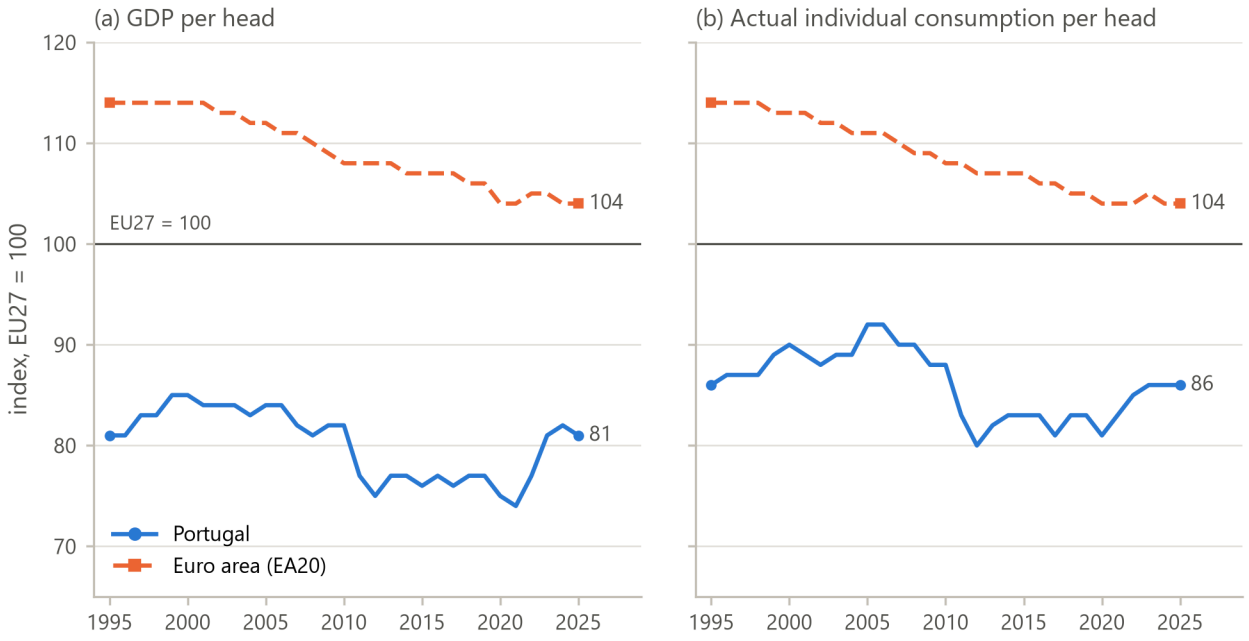


Figure 9. GDP per head and actual individual consumption per head in PPS, EU27 = 100, Portugal and EA20, 1995–2025.

Source: Eurostat prc_ppp_ind_1, VI_PPS_EU27_2020_HAB, 2026 vintage [S1; A] (Table 6.1a).

Table 6.1b. Countries that passed Portugal, and the closest 1999 peers, GDP and AIC per head in PPS, EU27 = 100 (F6.1)

Country	GDP 1999	GDP 2013	GDP 2025	AIC 1999	AIC 2025
Portugal	85	77	81	89	86
Cyprus	94	—	98	—	—
Czechia	74	85	92	70	83
Slovenia	82	81	90	82	86
Malta	83	91	110	85	88
Lithuania	38	73	87	46	87
Poland	49	67	81	53	88
Estonia	41	76	79	43	74
Spain	96	90	92	96	92
Greece	85	71	68	93	80

Source: [S1; A], all-country query at benchmark years; Cyprus [S1; A]. "—": not in the rows read.

Three readings follow. First, on GDP per head the overtaking is real: Czechia and Slovenia were above Portugal by 2007, Malta by 2013 and Lithuania by 2019; Poland is level in 2025; Cyprus was above throughout [S1; A]. Second, on AIC per head Portugal in 2025 is level with Slovenia, above Czechia and Estonia, and below Lithuania, Malta and Poland. Czechia was above it in 2019 (88 against 83), so the 2025 order is recent. GDP includes profits sent abroad by foreign-owned firms, which matters for Czechia. Third, against the euro area Portugal's GDP per head peaked in 2024 (78,8 %), and its AIC per head (82,7 % in 2024–2025) sits just below the 2005 peak (82,9 %); both bottomed in 2012. The claim "Portugal is being overtaken by Eastern Europe" is *supported* for four or five countries, not for the region as a whole.

6.2 Studies of Portugal inside the euro

Blanchard (2007), *Portuguese Economic Journal* 6(1): 1–21 [S57; A, full text]. *Measured:* the 1995–2006 path of output, unemployment, saving, investment, wages, productivity and the current account, from OECD data. *Method:* descriptive macroeconomics with a simple framework for adjusting competitiveness inside a monetary union. *Result:* the prospect of euro entry "led to an output boom and large current account deficits"; the boom "turned into a slump"; the options were higher productivity growth not fully passed into wages, or lower nominal wage growth. *Limits:* a 2006 diagnosis; no counterfactual without the euro.

Reis (2013), *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, Spring 2013: 143–210 [S58; A, full text]. *Measured:* Portugal's 2000–2012 performance against Ireland and Spain. *Method:* stylised facts, then a model of credit frictions in which "if financial integration exceeds financial deepening, productivity will fall, generating a slump"; the author states that "the model is too simple to seriously calibrate to the data". *Result:* misallocated capital inflows plus rising taxes explain the slump. *Limits:* a calibrated illustration, not an estimate; the share of bank financing of firms is set at 0,2–0,3 by back-of-the-envelope reasoning.

Puzzello and Gomis-Porqueras (2018), *European Economic Review* 108: 129–152 [S59; A, abstract only]. *Method:* synthetic control, comparing each member's income per head with a weighted combination of non-members that tracked it before 1999. *Scope:* Belgium, France, Germany, Italy,

Ireland and the Netherlands; **not Portugal.** *Result:* four would have had higher income without the euro, Ireland lower, the Netherlands about the same; "the integration of capital markets" played "a key role in increasing post-euro income losses". *Use for Portugal:* indirect.

Gabriel and Pessoa (2020), MPRA working paper 99622 [S60; E, abstract]. *Method:* synthetic control for twelve members. *Result:* Portugal among "some mild losers (France, Germany, Italy, and Portugal)". *Limits:* not peer-reviewed; size and confidence band not read.

cep (2019), "20 Years of the Euro: Winners and Losers" [S61; D, full text]. *Method:* synthetic control for eight members, cumulated over 1999–2017. *Result:* "Aggregated, it has given rise to a drop in prosperity of 424 billion overall or 40,604 per capita." *Limits:* not peer-reviewed; cumulating annual gaps produces large totals; results depend on the donor pool and cannot separate the currency from the crisis.

What the literature supports. The two studies read in full agree on the mechanism: lower interest rates, capital inflows going disproportionately to non-tradables, eroded competitiveness, and slow, costly adjustment without a currency. The counterfactual studies agree on the sign for Portugal (a loss), but are a working paper and a think tank, and differ on size. The verdict for "*o euro empobreceu Portugal*" (the euro made Portugal poorer) is: *contradicted on average* for "poorer" in absolute terms (real GDP per head is 25,7 % higher than in 1999 [S4; A]); *supported* for "fell behind the euro area until about 2013"; and *not measured* by peer-reviewed evidence for the euro's causal effect on Portuguese income. No chart from these studies is reproduced.

7 Current law and policy: what exists vs what is proposed

Minimum wage and the *acordo de rendimentos*. *Decreto-Lei* n.º 139/2025, de 29 de dezembro, published in the Diário da República (1.ª série, n.º 249), sets the RMMG at € 920,00 from 1 January 2026 for the mainland; it was approved in the Council of Ministers on 17 December 2025 and promulgated on 18 December [S64; A]. Its preamble places it in the tripartite agreement of 1 October 2024 (*Acordo Tripartido sobre a Valorização Salarial e Crescimento Económico 2025-2028*, the *acordo de rendimentos*), which set 2025 at "€ 870,00 ... no quadro de uma trajetória de aumentos anuais e sucessivos de € 50,00, por forma a atingir uma RMMG de € 1 020,00, em 2028" [S64; A]. The agreement's annual-review clause was read (Section 10.3) [S85; A]. The autonomous regions set their own amounts. Madeira's RMMG is €980,00 from 1 January 2026 under *Decreto Legislativo Regional* n.º 1/2026/M (regional legislative decree), articles 2 and 4 [S75; A]. The Açores amount remains open after failed official-page retrievals.

***IRS Jovem*.** Article 12.º-B of the *Código do IRS* (Personal Income Tax Code), as amended by *Lei* n.º 45-A/2024, de 31 de dezembro, partially exempts employment and self-employment income of taxpayers "até 35 anos de idade" who are not dependants, for their first ten years of earning income, on election. The exemption, "com o limite de 55 vezes o valor do IAS", is 100 % in year one, 75 % in years two to four, 50 % in years five to seven and 25 % in years eight to ten; past or present non-habitual residents are excluded, among others [S50; A]. The paper computes no individual benefit. No evaluation of its effect on emigration was found.

***Tarifa social de energia*.** ERSE's October 2026 leaflet states that for 2026 the social energy tariff provides "um desconto de 33,8% sobre o preço bruto das tarifas transitórias do mercado regulado", excluding taxes and levies, under *Despacho* n.º 12372/2025, de 21 de outubro. Eligibility "passou a ser

um processo automático", validated by the Direção-Geral de Energia e Geologia (DGEG) from social-security and tax data and reviewed monthly [S54; A]. The number of beneficiaries was not read.

The 2023 zero-VAT food basket and its end. *Lei* n.º 17/2023, de 14 de abril, applied a temporary VAT exemption, with the right to deduct input VAT, to a basket of essential foods; *Lei* n.º 60-A/2023, de 31 de outubro, extended it: "A presente lei entra em vigor a 18 de abril de 2023 e vigora até 31 de dezembro de 2023" [S51; S52; A]. The government's notice of 8 September 2023 lists 46 products and gives its own estimate that basket prices fell by "quase 10%" [S53; A], a government claim, not an independent evaluation. Banco de Portugal estimates May 2023 affected-category price changes 4,0 percentage points below Spain and 3,5 below the euro area, with large standard errors [S86; A]. Retailer affected-product prices initially fell about 6 % [S86; A]. No renewal after 31 December 2023 was found.

PRR and Portugal 2030. The Commission values Portugal's *Plano de Recuperação e Resiliência* (PRR, recovery and resilience plan) at €21,9 billion (€16,3 billion grants, €5,6 billion loans), with 117 investment streams and 44 reforms, including €420 million for residential energy efficiency [S55; A]. Portugal 2030, the cohesion-fund partnership agreement, applies "23 mil milhões de euros dos fundos europeus" in 2021–2027 through 12 programmes; 22,8 % of the programmed fund was executed at 30 September 2026 [S56; A]. These are commitments and executions, not effects; no evaluation was read.

Regional policy for the interior; proposals. No primary text of an interior-development programme was read, and the regional allocations of Portugal 2030 were not extracted [S56; A]. A government minimum-wage target beyond 2028 was seen only in a web summary and is not reported. No other proposals were read at source.

8 Behavioural and field hypotheses: data for, data against, untestable

Statements about how "the Portuguese" behave are treated here as hypotheses about averages, with data for and against, never as facts about individuals or groups. Observations reported by a member of the Mowei team, from experience as landlord, employer and resident, are tested in the same way.

Hypothesis	Data for	Data against	Verdict
Young people emigrate because the outlook abroad is better	33 916 emigrants in 2024, up from 25 079 in 2021 [S38; A]; median income in PPS is 73,5 % of the EU27 [S6; A]	Life satisfaction (7,3) is above the EU27 (7,2) and Germany (7,0) [S22; A]; emigration was higher in 2015 (40 377) [S38; A]	*Supported* for pay; the motive is *not measured*
Young people stay with their family	Leave home at 28,8 against 26,3 in the EU27 (2025) [S39; A-c]	—	*Supported*; why they stay is *not measured*
High taxes punish staying in Portugal	—	Fiscal context only: taxes and social contributions are 37,1 % of GDP against 40,7 % in the EU27 (2025) [S35; A-c]; an economy-wide ratio does not measure an individual's tax or incentive to leave	*Not measured* (see *IRS Jovem*, Section 7)
Inflation eats savings and income cannot keep up	HICP 8,1 % (2022), 5,3 % (2023) [S29; A]	Price index 2025 (2015 = 100): Portugal 124,83, euro area 128,75 [S29; A]; median income rose from 8 435 € to 14 465 € between EU-SILC 2015 and 2025 [S6; A]	*Supported* for 2022–23; *contradicted on average* since 2015 (nominal survey income; real wages are for the sibling paper)

Hypothesis	Data for	Data against	Verdict
Most people save little	Saving rate 12,32 % against 14,31 % in the EU27 (2025) [S36; A-c]	—	*Not measured*: aggregate saving does not show how many save little
Many young people avoid work	Employment rate at 15–24 is 27,9 % against 34,5 % in the EU27, partly reflecting students [S69; A]; youth unemployment rate 19,5 % against 15,2 % (2025) [S70; A]	Young people (15–29) neither in employment nor in education or training: 8,0 % against 11,0 % in the EU27; inactive and not studying: 3,2 % against 6,8 % (2025) [S68; A]	*Contradicted on average* for inactivity outside education; youth unemployment is high; willingness to work is *not measured*
"The Portuguese accept low wages"	The minimum wage was frozen at 566 € (Eurostat basis) from 2011 to 2014 [S7; A]; unit labour costs fell 3,5 % in 2010–2013 while the euro area's rose [S42; A]	Unit labour costs rose faster than the euro area's in 1999–2010 and in 2019–2025 [S42; A]; the minimum wage almost doubled from 2014 to 2026 on Eurostat's basis [S7; A]	*Not measured*; wage restraint shows only in the programme years (2010–2014).
"The best leave" (brain drain)	Emigration rose again after 2021 [S38; A]; tertiary attainment rose sharply [S21; A] while productivity per hour barely grew after 2013 [S42; A]	Tertiary attainment of 25–34-year-olds resident in Portugal is close to the EU average (42,5 % against 44,8 %) [S21; A]	*Not measured*: the education profile of emigrants was not read
"Quality of life compensates for pay"	Life satisfaction, life expectancy, safety and AROPE at or better than the EU average (Table 4.6)	Cold homes, out-of-pocket health costs and inequality above the EU average (Table 4.6)	*Supported* for most indicators; *not measured* as a trade-off for individuals

Data for youth employment: (F8.1).

INE revised its migration flows on 30 September 2026 [S82; A]. The carried emigrant counts need refreshing, and no replacement counts were read. Re-reading the figures for taxes, saving and leaving home also remains open after failed retrievals.

Data show outcomes, not attitudes. The "not measured" rows work best as informal observation, not as national facts.

9 Projections

All projections below are scenarios from their source and date, not this paper's forecasts.

Table 9.1. Official projections for Portugal (F9.1)

Source and date	Variable	2025	2026	2027	2028	2030
European Commission, Spring 2026 (21 May 2026)	Real GDP growth, PT (euro area)	1,9 %	1,7 % (0,9 %)	1,8 % (1,2 %)	—	—
European Commission, Spring 2026	HICP inflation	2,2 %	3,0 %	2,3 %	—	—
European Commission, Spring 2026	Unemployment	6,0 %	5,9 %	5,8 %	—	—
European Commission, Spring 2026	Government balance (% of GDP)	+0,7	−0,1	−0,4	—	—
European Commission, Spring 2026	Government debt (% of GDP)	89,7	87,6	86,0	—	—
Banco de Portugal, October 2026 (7 October 2026)	Real GDP growth	—	2,3 %	1,8 %	1,8 %	—
Banco de Portugal, October 2026	HICP inflation	—	3,1 %	2,4 %	2,0 %	—
Banco de Portugal, October 2026	Unemployment [S82; A]	—	5,6 %	5,6 %	5,6 %	—
IMF WEO, October 2026	Real GDP growth, PT (euro area)	—	2,1 % (1,1 %)	1,9 % (1,2 %)	—	1,6 % (1,1 %)
IMF WEO, October 2026	Inflation, PT (euro area)	—	3,2 % (3,1 %)	3,0 % (2,8 %)	—	1,9 % (2,0 %)
IMF WEO, October 2026	Government debt (% of GDP), PT (euro area)	—	85,1 (88,0)	81,0 (88,5)	—	73,4 (89,9)
IMF WEO, October 2026	GDP per head, PPP, PT as % of EU (arithmetic)	—	77,3 %	—	—	79,3 %
EUROPOP2023 baseline	Resident population	10 372 141	—	—	—	10 249 138

Sources: EC [S32; A; euro-area figures S66; A], Banco de Portugal [S82; A], IMF [S31; A], EUROPOP2023 [S28; A], which projects 9 650 059 for 2050.

The Commission's Portugal page still displays Spring 2026 (21 May 2026); AMECO schedules its Autumn update for 17 November 2026, after this reading on 9 November [S66; S102; A]. Both the Portugal page and the Spring PDF give 2026 debt of 87,6 % of GDP in the table but 86,7 % in the narrative [S66; S79; A]; the conflict remains open, with the table value carried (Section 11, conflict 18). Banco de Portugal's bulletin table projects unemployment of 5,6 % in each of 2026–2028 and uses information available by 30 September 2026 [S82; A]. Its communiqué states that growth in 2026–28 "situa-se acima do projetado para a área do euro" and sees risks "predominantemente em baixa para atividade e em alta para a inflação" [S65; A]. The OECD's June Outlook (3 June 2026) projects growth of 1,8 % in 2026 and 1,7 % in 2027, with inflation peaking at 3,2 % in 2026 [S88; S94; A]; no newer Portugal forecast was established.

The EC, BdP and IMF put Portuguese growth above the euro area's in 2026–2027; the European Commission and the IMF also project public debt falling. The IMF's PPP series puts Portugal's GDP per head at 77,3 % of the EU in 2026, below Eurostat's 81 for 2025; price bases and aggregates differ (conflict 17), so only the IMF's change, about +2 points by 2030, is used. EUROPOP2023's 2025 baseline is below the 2025 outturn (10 749 635) [S27; A] because migration exceeded it.

Convergence arithmetic. How long would it take to close the 2025 PPS gap with the euro area if Portugal kept growing faster? Let L be the level per head in PPS (EU27 = 100), with LPT = 86 and LEA = 104 for AIC, and 81 and 104 for GDP [S1; A]. Let gPT and gEA be yearly volume growth rates per head. If both are constant and relative price levels do not change, Portugal's relative level grows each year by the factor $(1 + g\text{PT}) / (1 + g\text{EA})$, and the gap closes after

$T = \ln(L\text{EA} / L\text{PT}) / \ln[(1 + g\text{PT}) / (1 + g\text{EA})]$ years.

For the illustrative rows, m is defined directly as the relative growth rate, $(1 + g\text{PT}) / (1 + g\text{EA}) = 1 + m$, so $T = \ln(L\text{EA} / L\text{PT}) / \ln(1 + m)$. An earlier version used a percentage-point difference in place of m, which understated horizons by up to 0,7 years.

Table 9.2. Years to close the 2025 PPS gap with the EA20, under stated growth assumptions (F9.2)

Growth assumption, PT against EA20	Basis	AIC per head (86 → 104)	GDP per head (81 → 104)
1,16 % against 0,77 %	Per-head growth, 2019–2025	49,2	64,7
2,42 % against 1,73 %	Per-head growth, 2013–2019	28,1	37,0
1,7 % against 0,9 %	EC forecast for 2026, total GDP	24,1	31,6
1,8 % against 1,2 %	EC forecast for 2027, total GDP	32,1	42,3
2,1 % against 1,1 %	IMF projection for 2026, total GDP	19,3	25,4
1,6 % against 1,1 %	IMF projection for 2030, total GDP	38,5	50,7
m = 1,0 %	Illustrative	19,1	25,1
m = 2,0 %	Illustrative	9,6	12,6
0,88 % against 1,01 %	Per-head growth, 1999–2025	never	never

Arithmetic on [S1] levels and [S4] growth rates (A), EC [S32; S66] and IMF [S31] rates. Scenarios, not forecasts.

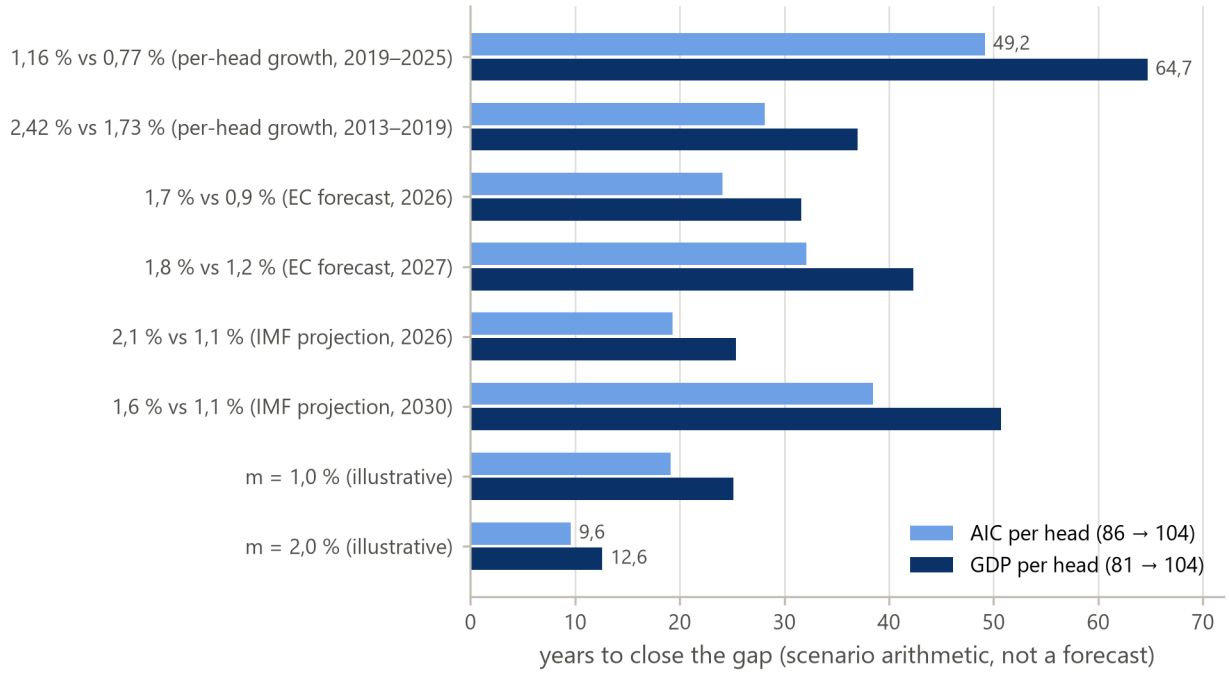


Figure 10. Years to close the 2025 PPS gap with the EA20 under the growth margins of Table 9.2 (the 1999–2025 margin, under which the gap never closes, is not drawn).

Source: Arithmetic on Eurostat prc_ppp_ind_1 [S1; A] and nama_10_pc [S4; A], EC [S32; S66] and IMF [S31] rates (Table 9.2). Scenarios, not forecasts.

The assumptions, each of which matters:

1. **Constant growth rates.** The margin has changed sign twice since 1999 (Table 4.1); no decades-long constant margin has been observed.
2. **Per head vs total.** The historical rows use GDP per head; the EC and IMF rows total GDP. If Portugal's population grows faster than the euro area's, per-head margins are smaller.
3. **GDP growth applied to AIC.** The AIC column assumes household consumption per head grows at the GDP per head rate.

4. **Constant relative prices.** PPS levels move with relative prices: from 1999 to 2025 Portugal's AIC ratio to the EA20 rose (78,8 % to 82,7 %) despite slower volume growth (conflict 4). The arithmetic can err in either direction.
5. **Rounding.** The indices are published as integers. With AIC between 85,5 and 86,5 and 2019–2025 growth, the horizon runs from about 50,7 to 47,7 years.
6. **Moving target.** The EA20 average fell from 114 to 104 relative to the EU27 since 1999.

Under the margins Portugal achieved in 2013–2025, closing the household-consumption gap takes roughly three to five decades; under the official projections for 2026–2027, two to three, if those margins held for that long, which none of the sources claims.

10 Measures

The proposals below are policy judgements (opinion), not estimated treatment effects and not personal financial advice. Phase 1 means 0–12 months; Phase 2, 1–3 years; Phase 3, 3+ years. Costs are qualitative.

10.1 Medir a produtividade por empresa / Measure productivity at firm level and publish it

- **Mechanism:** a regular public release of firm-level productivity by size, sector and region, from existing administrative data, so the post-2013 stall can be explained.
- **Evidence:** productivity per hour grew 2,0 % in 2013–2025 against 6,7 % in the EA20 [S42; A]. OECD identifies weak micro/small-firm productivity; micro firms account for 39 % of business employment (reference period unspecified) [S91; A].
- **Cost / risk:** statistical-office staff and data-access agreements; confidentiality.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1 design; Phase 2 first release.

10.2 Direcionar os fundos europeus para o investimento produtivo / Steer EU funds to productive investment and evaluate it

- **Mechanism:** evaluate PRR outcomes retrospectively; tie remaining Portugal 2030 calls to productivity outcomes and counterfactual evaluation.
- **Evidence:** PRR milestones/targets were due by August 2026 [S55; A]; Portugal 2030 execution was 22,8 % at 30 September 2026 [S56; A]. Investment reached 21,0 % of GDP in 2025 [S82; A]; Eurostat's provisional flag is carried from the prior review, re-reading open [S45; A].
- **Cost / risk:** evaluation budgets; deadlines push spending to easy projects.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1 PRR evaluation design and Portugal 2030 calls; Phase 2 evaluations published.

10.3 Ligar salários e produtividade na negociação / Anchor wage-setting on productivity and prices, with transparency

- **Mechanism:** publish productivity, unit labour costs, the real effective exchange rate and employment effects with minimum-wage decisions and the mandatory annual CPCS (Standing Commission for Social Concertation) agreement review [S85; A].

- **Evidence:** unit labour costs rose 37,0 % in 2019–2025 against 22,9 % in the EA20, and the ULC-based real exchange rate is above its 2005 level [S42; S43; A]; the last correction was costly (Section 5.3).
- **Cost / risk:** low; may be misread as a wage cap.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1.

10.4 Reabilitar casas frias / Insulate cold homes, poorest first

- **Mechanism:** target building-efficiency grants at households already identified as vulnerable through the automatic *tarifa social* process.
- **Evidence:** 15,6 % cannot keep the home warm against 8,8 % in the EU27 [S10; A]. The historical *Vale Eficiência II* offered up to three vouchers of €1 300 plus IVA (value added tax), with social-tariff/social-benefit eligibility routes [S93; A]; this does not establish current availability.
- **Cost / risk:** grant budget and installer capacity; landlords may capture the benefit through rents; low take-up among older owners.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1 targeting rule; Phase 2 roll-out; Phase 3 evaluation against the cold-home indicator.

10.5 Reduzir os pagamentos diretos em saúde / Reduce out-of-pocket health payments for low-income households

- **Mechanism:** review the items driving out-of-pocket spending, first medical goods and outpatient care, and protect the poorest quintile; publish SNS user charges and private payments separately.
- **Evidence:** out-of-pocket payments 28,67 % of health spending against 15,06 % in the EU27 [S46; A], about half of medical goods and 35 % of outpatient care [S73; A]; unmet need 4,2 % in the poorest quintile against 3,7 % [S19; A].
- **Cost / risk:** ageing and unmet need increase budget pressure; pair payment protection with prevention and efficient primary care [S91; A]; higher demand without capacity lengthens waiting lists.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1 itemised review; Phase 2 targeted measures.

10.6 Avaliar o IRS Jovem / Evaluate IRS Jovem before extending it

- **Mechanism:** publish take-up, cost, and the emigration and return behaviour of eligible cohorts.
- **Evidence:** the regime covers ten years up to age 35 [S50; A]. AT/U-TAX calls for ex ante justification and ex post cost-benefit assessment of tax benefits generally [S87; A]; IRS Jovem take-up, revenue cost and causal migration effects remain open.
- **Cost / risk:** low for evaluation; deadweight, with benefits going to those who would have stayed anyway.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1 data; Phase 2 evaluation.

10.7 Publicar dados regionais de rendimento e preços / Publish regional income and price-level data at NUTS 3

- **Mechanism:** regional price levels and NUTS 3 household income, so that "interior" and "Lisboa versus Setúbal" can be measured.

- **Evidence:** the income gap (16 000 to 21 600 PPS) is far narrower than the output gap (55 to 129) [S25; S26; A]; no regional price levels were found.
- **Cost / risk:** statistical-office resources; the ICOR (Survey on Income and Living Conditions) stratifies at NUTS II [S81; A], so NUTS 3 needs a sampling/model strategy.
- **Sequence:** Phase 2.

10.8 Transporte entre Setúbal e Lisboa / Treat commuting as a living-standards issue

- **Mechanism:** prioritise transport capacity and housing near stations for residents of lower-output regions who work in Grande Lisboa.
- **Evidence:** Fertagus recorded 30 464 218 passenger journeys in 2024 [S101; A]; this measures corridor use, not commuting origins/destinations or peak crowding, which remain open.
- **Cost / risk:** high capital cost; better links can raise housing costs near stations.
- **Sequence:** Phase 2 planning; Phase 3 delivery.

10.9 Concorrência nas telecomunicações / Review competition in telecoms

- **Mechanism:** ask the regulator and competition authority to review prices, switching costs, lock-in periods and service-quality information, following OECD recommendations [S91; A].
- **Evidence:** information and communication price level 110,4 against 105,5 in the EA20 (2025) [S1; A].
- **Cost / risk:** low; price regulation can reduce network investment.
- **Sequence:** Phase 1.

10.10 Formação de adultos / Adult skills for the legacy cohorts

- **Mechanism:** target adult education and training at workers aged 35–64.
- **Evidence:** PIAAC 2022–23 finds 42 % of Portuguese adults aged 16–65 at literacy Level 1 or below, versus 26 % across the OECD [S90; A]. Adults aged 55–65 score 32 points below those aged 25–34 [S90; A]. The attainment of workers aged 35–64 was not read, so a gap among older workers is an inference, not a measurement (open).
- **Cost / risk:** training budgets and employer time; low completion, credentials without skills. Training spending averaged 0,18 % of GDP in 2017–2023 [S91; A], a historical benchmark, not this proposal's cost. Publish provider/course outcomes as OECD recommends [S91; A].
- **Sequence:** Phase 2.

11 Limitations and open conflicts

Limitations. No causal model is estimated; Section 5 orders evidence quality, not effect sizes. The euro counterfactual for Portugal rests on a working paper and a think-tank study. Not read at source: current OECD well-being country scores, the correction-coefficient methodology, AMECO capital-stock observations, NUTS 3 data, sectoral value added, emigrants' education and the Açores minimum wage. The OECD country note and BLI methodology were read [S77; S96; A]. INE sampling notes were read, but numerical EU-SILC sampling errors remain open [S81; A]. Latest

PISA-cycle availability and a later OECD Portugal forecast were not established. Failed Eurostat refreshes leave current values unconfirmed. Carried grades keep their earlier provenance unless a new reading is recorded; the final draft was written from the recorded readings without web access.

Open conflicts carried from the evidence file:

1. **GDP vs AIC per head.** 81 against 86 in 2025 [S1; A]; the countries above Portugal differ (Czechia above on GDP, below on AIC). AIC is used for living standards.
2. **1999 vs 2002 base.** GDP per head in PPS 85 (1999) or 84 (2002) to 81; real growth to 2025 +25,7 % from 1999, +20,3 % from 2002 (EA20 +29,8 % and +22,5 %) [S1; S4; A]. The base changes the gap's size, not its direction.
3. **EU27 vs euro area.** Against the EU27 Portugal fell from 85 to 81; against the EA20 it rose from 74,6 % to 77,9 % [S1; A]. The euro area is used for questions about the euro.
4. **PPS ratios vs real growth.** Slower volume growth than the EA20 (0,88 % against 1,01 % a year) [S4; A], yet a rising PPS ratio; PPS levels move with relative prices. **Unresolved**; combined only in Table 9.2.
5. **Two PPP vintages.** Portuguese AIC in 2019: 84 in `prc_ppp_ind`, 83 in `prc_ppp_ind_1` [S1; S2; A]. The 2026 vintage is used.
6. **Eurostat vs IMF, 2024 growth.** 2,7 % [S5; A] against 2,2 % [S31; A]. Eurostat for history, the IMF for projections.
7. **NUTS 2024.** Older "Lisboa" figures of about 100 are not comparable with Grande Lisboa (129) and Península de Setúbal (55) [S25; A].
8. **Healthy life years break.** 59,6 (2023) to 64,8 (2024) [S18; A], flagged "b" [S18; A], with an implementation warning in the metadata [S48; A]. Not a trend; the questionnaire change was not read.
9. **Population totals.** Eurostat, 1 January 2025: 10 749 635 [S27; A]. INE, 31 December 2025: 11 424 031, "as primeiras de base totalmente administrativa", with 2021–2024 revised by the same method and census-based estimates until 2020 [S62; A]. EUROPOP2023 baseline for 2025: 10 372 141 [S28; A]. BdP reports a 637 600 upward revision to the 2024 population using administrative residence evidence; national accounts and the labour force survey had not incorporated it [S82; A]. Dates and methods differ; the gap of about 674 000 between Eurostat and INE (arithmetic) is not reconciled.
10. **GDP vs household income by region.** Grande Lisboa: 129 on GDP per head (2024), about the EU27 on household income (21 600 against 21 000 PPS, 2023) [S25; S26; A]. Household income is used for living standards.
11. **Electricity in euros vs PPS.** 18th of 27 in euros; about the EU level in PPS, above it in 2024-S2 [S8; A]. Euros answer "is the tariff high"; PPS "how heavy is the bill".

Conflicts and open items added during drafting and review:

12. **At-risk-of-poverty: 15,4 % vs 16,6 %.** The first drafting stage treated these as two thresholds for one income year. Eurostat's `ilc_li02` shows the same indicator (60 % of the median) in consecutive survey years: 16,6 % (2024) and 15,4 % (2025) [S71; A]; the anchored-threshold rate is a different, lower series (7,4 % in 2025) [S72; A]. INE confirms 15,4 % for income year 2024, survey 2025, and 16,6 % for the previous income year [S81; A]. **Resolved.**

13. **Minimum wage: statutory vs Eurostat basis.** 920 € a month (statutory, 14 payments, mainland) [S64; A] and 1 073 € (twelve-month equivalent) [S7; A; S47; A] agree by arithmetic. **Resolved.** Madeira's retribuição mínima mensal garantida (statutory minimum monthly wage) is 980,00 €, effective 1 January 2026 [S75; A]; Açores remains open.
14. **Out-of-pocket health spending, EU27 2023.** An earlier internal figure differed from the Eurostat reading of 15,2 [S46; A]. Rounding or revision; only the Eurostat reading is used.
15. **Productivity per hour vs per person.** 66,7 % of the EU27 per hour, 79,5 % per person (2025, provisional) [S41; A]. Say which.
16. **Unit labour costs since 2019.** Whether the 37,0 % rise (EA20 22,9 %) is catch-up or lost competitiveness is not settled [S42; S43; A].
17. **IMF PPP vs Eurostat PPS levels.** IMF 77,3 % of the EU in 2026 [S31; A, arithmetic]; Eurostat 81 in 2025 [S1; A]. Different price bases and aggregates, not a four-point fall; only the IMF's change is used.
18. **EC debt forecast, 2026.** 87,6 % in the Commission's table, 86,7 % in its text [S66; S79; A]. The discrepancy persists in both HTML and PDF. The table value is carried.
19. **SNS user charges.** No Eurostat series separates payments to the SNS from payments to private providers [S46; S73; A]; whether the SNS is free at the point of use is *not measured*.

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Appendix A. Methods and evidence grades

How the evidence was gathered. The paper closed on 9 November 2026. Its figures come from three layers of reading. First, an evidence file prepared on 8 November 2026 holds the raw rows returned by official statistical interfaces (sources [S1]–[S40], 4 661 rows from 84 logged calls), each row with its query, its unit and the time it was read. Second, the drafting stage read further official pages, legal texts and published studies ([S41]–[S61]); an independent reviewer then re-read a sample of those sources, and the drafting stage made further reads at source after the review ([S62]–[S73]). Third, the enrichment stage added readings recorded on 9 November 2026 (the entries from [S75] onwards, together with re-reads of some earlier entries). Mowei's own evidence stores, which contain AI-generated summaries, served only as pointers to official sources and supply no figure to the paper.

How the evidence was checked. Every statistic in the text carries a source number and an evidence grade, written as `[S#; grade]`. The grade records what was done to check the figure, not how credible the statistic is. Where several sources share a tag, the grade applies to each unless a second grade is given. An independent cross-check re-read the figures changed in the final revision at their sources; the figures it could not reach kept their grade and are listed as open in Section 11.

Table A.1. Evidence grades

Code	Meaning
A	Read at the official source (API, legal text or official page) by the drafting or enrichment stage of this project.
A-i	Read at the official source by an independent reviewer or verifier.
A-c	Read at the official source on 7 November 2026 for the companion housing paper and carried without a new read.
B	Official statistic taken from the sourced local facts database. No figure in this paper carries this grade.
C	Official page or journal abstract read through a summariser or an automated reading stage.
D	Press report, law firm, think tank or other secondary site.
E	Working paper, search-result snippet or unofficial site.

Computed figures. The word "arithmetic" (or "computed") marks a growth rate, ratio, share or difference calculated by the authors from levels in the data file, for example the average yearly growth rates of Table 4.1 and the convergence horizons of Table 9.2. The formula is stated where the figure appears. Volumes are used for growth and purchasing-power indices for levels; the two are combined only in the labelled arithmetic of Section 9.

Retrieval gaps. A page or file that could not be fetched is a retrieval gap, not a finding. The claim that depended on it becomes open; it is not treated as false and its grade is not changed.

Verdicts. Claims heard in public debate receive one of three verdicts. *Supported* means the official series read here agree with the claim on average. *Contradicted on average* means they disagree with it on average, although the claim may still hold for some groups. *Not measured* means no series read here settles it, and the question stays open. Statements about groups of people are presented as hypotheses with data for and against; none is stated as a fact.

Data file. The data behind every table are in `data-v3-eurozone-prosperity.csv`; each table caption names its `figure_id`. The figures in this paper are drawn from that file and from the paper's own tables, and nothing else; the values plotted are listed in `plotted-values.csv`. Numbers in the text follow Portuguese conventions (decimal comma, space as thousands separator); the data file uses a decimal point.

AI assistance and independent checking. Drafting, review and verification of this paper used AI language models under a written protocol: a drafting stage produced the text from the evidence record; a reviewer from a different AI model family checked it against the sources, re-reading the sources it could reach and recomputing the arithmetic; and an enrichment stage added further readings, recorded in the References. Items that no stage could reach are marked as not read and listed as open. The protocol fixes what each stage may change and requires every change that touches a figure, a date, a source tag or a verdict to be logged. The text was edited for publication by the company, which is responsible for its content. LusoAnalytica, Lda · Mowei.pt · press@mowei.pt.