The present document is supposed to be a complement to the presentation "Introduction to Portuguese cultural peculiarities" given in Aveiro at September 13th, in the framework of the orientation week by CMU-Portugal programme.

This notes were produced based in different information collected in the web, bank and following the guidelines of the Marie-Curie fellowship welcome pack (http://www.mariecurie.org/pt/welcome.html).
You may want to look more information and curiosities in:
www.europa.eu
http://wikitravel.org
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portugal
1. **Living Conditions**  
   a. **General Informations**

The country consists of a continental territory and two archipelagos: Madeira and Azores. Its total surface is 91 632 km$^2$, with about 10 million inhabitants, which gives a density of 110 inhabitants/km$^2$. Portuguese main cities are: Lisbon, the capital city, with 2 069 000 inhabitants; Oporto, on the north, with 1 562 000 inhabitants; Setubal, across the river from Lisbon, 658 000 inhabitants; Coimbra, with the oldest university, with 436 000 inhabitants and Faro, on the south, with a very changing population due to seasonal changes in tourists.

We have a mild climate across the country. In Oporto, maximum average temperatures rise to 25 ºC in July and descend to 13 ºC in January. Rainfall amounts to about 1150 mm/year. In Lisbon, average maximum temperatures rise to 28 ºC in July and descend to 14 ºC in January. Rainfall is around 700 mm/year. In Faro, extreme average temperatures are 28 ºC in July and 15 ºC in January. Rainfall is only 450 mm/year.

Winter time is GMT and in Summer GMT+1, i.e. same as in the U. K. and Ireland. The change arrives in the last Sundays of March and September.

Portuguese is the national language, but English, French and Spanish speakers are easily found. Portugal is a member of the Euro countries, but as in the rest of the E. U., legal tender will only be available by 2002. Until then, the Escudo will be the money of current use. Conversion rate is 1 Euro = 200.482 PTE.

Most people are traditional Roman Catholic but other denominations are active, namely in the main cities.

Shopping times are generally from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mondays through Fridays and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. Shopping centres and big surfaces are usually open daily from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. except on Sundays, where some close at 1 p.m..

Banking times are 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. In major cities, some agencies are also open through afternoons.
Usually, Post Offices open at 8:30 a.m. and close at 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Public and Administrative Services are generally open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. However, as there are some exceptions it is advisable to phone and enquire the exact schedule.

There are good conditions for the practice of sports, namely water sports(surf, bodyboard), soccer (the most spoken one), golf, tennis.

The major cities provide a good deal of cultural and artistic events.

b. Lodging

The offer can be scarce and sometimes expensive, particularly in major cities and tourist oriented regions. Offers can be found in the newspapers or in real estate agencies. Most contracts have a minimum duration of 6 months. The non-existence of a written contract is a frequent situation and not to be feared. A 2 months payment is generally requested, in advance.

This amount is recovered at the end of the contract, since the rent concerning the last month is generally not collected.

Most apartments are proposed with only minimum furniture: cupboards, wardrobe, closet. Central heating is rarely available. Rooms in private houses, usually come with furniture.

Charges with water, electricity, gas and telephone are not included. If the option is for a room in a private house, near the university, the cost will be around 300-500 eur/month, including utilities.

c. Money and Banks

Money transfers and payments can be very slow and are not always reliable, thus it is advisable to bring enough money to deal with first expenses.

Cash is generally used to pay for minor amounts (until 100 eur), although bank cards are usually welcomed. All other amounts are often paid by credit card or cheque.
To open a bank account you need to present a passport and a fiscal card (see 4.1). Several types of account are possible, but the more practical is an order account (PT: conta à ordem), which allows withdrawals at any time and the obtention of a cheque-book and a credit card. It can also be used to perform regular payments and money transfers. Many banks have partnerships with foreign banks and there are also representations of major international banking institutions in Portugal, namely in the major cities. The government bank is Caixa Geral de Depositos (CGD) and has several protocols with the universities, being usual to find MB cards jointed with student ID.

Other types of account are also available in case you want to invest some money and get a higher interest. ATMs are widely available. There you can withdraw cash and make payments (electricity, water, gas, telephone,...) as well as buying show tickets, pay taxes, get your account's last movements, etc.

d. Kindergarten and Schools

Mandatory education in public schools is free. Up from 3 years old, children can go to kindergarten, which is optional. In major cities, vacancies are hard to find in the public system. The private system (charities, trade unions, cooperatives) also run kindergartens where vacancies are easily found. Moreover, they even take younger children. Opening hours are from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and payment is proportional to parents' income. After 6 years old, children must enter the mandatory education system that runs for 9 years. There are 3 consecutive cycles, with 4, 2 and 3 years duration. Primary school has 4 years duration. A single professor teaches all subjects. Next comes the basic secondary cycle, already with a teacher for each subject. The third cycle runs for 3 years.

After the mandatory education comes a 3 year complementary cycle for those wishing to enter university or get a better job qualification.

Main cities have international schools, fully equivalent with E. U. systems.

Baby-sitting is available with nannies either at their places or at the parents' home. Newspapers and the local commerce are a good source to find them. Also, at the universities and local churches, there are students that baby-sit in part-time.
2. Arriving Formalities
   a. Residency Permit

Any E. U. citizen can enter Portugal by simply presenting his/her Passport or ID card. For a longer than 3 months stay, a residency permit will be needed. It will be issued by the Immigration Authorities. However, from a practical point of view, if you are an European citizen and your stay does not exceed 2 years, you will not get much benefit from it. The ID issued by your country of origin guarantees most of the rights of a Portuguese citizen.

For those wishing to proceed according to the book, the first step should be to contact the Immigration Authorities (Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras).

Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras
Av. António Augusto de Aguiar, Nº 20A
1069-118 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-315 96 81
Metro Station - Parque

In order to avoid big lines, it is convenient to arrive before opening hours (9 a.m.). Working hours are 9 a.m. – 12 a.m. and 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

The first information obtained will concern the documents needed to perform your request (1998 information):

- ID card or Passport;
- 2 photos;
- work contract (you can use the one signed for the CMU program);
- registration in your Embassy/Consulate;
- your signature (i. e., no one can do this in your substitution);
- Residency certificate (issued by the Junta de Freguesia of your residency area).

The residency certificate is not easily obtained, but it is also needed to obtain your Elector card (Cartão de Eleitor). The difficulty arises from the need to obtain the signatures of two neighbours registered in the same area (Freguesia). The Elector card gives you the right to vote in local elections and has to be presented for the inscription in the area's Health Centre, as well as when requesting any certificate from your Junta de Freguesia.

You should present all the documents at the Immigration services against a receipt. After 1 month or more, you will receive a letter telling you that you can change your receipt for the Residency card. It is good for 2 years. After
this period you should obtain a Foreigner card. It can be obtained at any dependency of the Register Office (Conservatória do Registo Civil). Most big and medium cities have at least one, although it is fast to obtain it directly in Lisbon. You will need this ID card to obtain a Portuguese driving-licence. However, there is a government proposition to discontinue the emission of ID cards for foreigners. Their national ID will, according to this proposition, be of legal value and equivalent to a Portuguese ID card, in case of E. U. citizens.

b. Driving-Licence and Automobile

Any driving-licence issued by a member-state of the E. U. are accepted in any other member-state. However, licences issued by a non-E. U. state, already recognized by a member-state, are not automatically recognized by the other E. U. countries. Driving-licenses issued to those under-18 are also not accepted in Portugal.

For those arriving with their automobiles and staying for over a year, the registration of the vehicle is mandatory. It is a complicated bureaucratic procedure that will become easier if you become a member of the Automobile Club (ACP). They will take charge of all the procedure.

ACP
Rua Rosa Araújo, 24
1250-195 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-318 01 00
Fax: 351-21-318 02 27

There is a tax on all vehicles, which can be paid in any stationer's shop. You will receive a stamp to put in the windscreen. Payment is due in May and June. Tax value is a function of the vehicle's age and cylinder capacity. A technical control is mandatory for any vehicle with more than 4 years.

In order to benefit from your car insurance, you will need a certificate issued by your insurance company.

c. Equivalence of Academic Degrees
Academic degrees obtained abroad are not automatically recognised by E. U. member states. Your diploma may be evaluated by the "Centro de Informação sobre Reconhecimento Académico de Diplomas" at the Ministry of Education.

CIRAD
Av.Elias Garcia
Lisboa

In principle, have already their diplomas recognised by the host institution and this should not be a problem. Anyway, it follows a brief explanation on how to proceed in case of need.

Basically, there are two options:

1. go to the secretariat of the University or Institute where diplomas equivalent to yours are issued;
2. go to the portuguese Ministry of Education.

The first option tends to be slower and more expensive. At the Ministry the equivalence is free of charge. Equivalences are regulated by the Decree 289/91, article 16 and the Norm 48/97. Some of the most important requisits demanded by the Decree are:

- requisition, written in Portuguese;
- ID documents;
- authenticated copies of diplomas, certificate or other degrees for which you seek equivalence;
- curricula of the course, final classifications, mandatory and optional disciplines, together with the respective time distribution;
- idoneousness examination (taking place only once a year), where you must show your knowledge of the portuguese language.

Papers must be handed by July and the examination takes place in October.

More information can be obtained at the Ministry, by telephone or at the homepage of the GAERI.

Departamento do Ensino Superior
Av. Duque d'Ávila, 137
1069-016 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-54 72 10
Fax: 351-21-54 78 73
3. Health and Social Security
   a. Structure

Although there are some Community rules on Social Security, each member state is free to decide:

- who should have access to the country's own social system;
- what kind of benefits and under which conditions;
- how the benefits are evaluated;
- what kind of taxes are to be paid.

Any foreign worker is subject to the laws of only one member state and is secured in the country where it is presently working, even if he/she is a resident of another member state. He/she also has the same rights and obligations of any national of the host country.

In Portugal, the national health system is managed by the Ministry of Health. Inscription in any of the social security systems is mandatory in order to receive any benefit. That inscription can be made with the Regional Centre of Social Security (Centro Regional de Segurança Social) of the employer area.

All taxes, 11% from the employee and 23.75% from the employer, are deducted from the salary. With the first salary, you will receive a Medical Assistance Book issued by the Health Centre, the Regional Health Administration or by the employer.

Further information is available at the Centro Regional de Segurança Social or at the special department for foreign citizens (Departamento de Relações Internacionais e Convenções da Segurança Social).

Departamento de Relações
Internacionais e Convenções
da Segurança Social
Rua da Junqueira, 112
1300-344 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-362 16 33
b. Hospitals and Physicians

You are free to choose your own physician, either general practitioner or specialist. An appointment at an Health Centre will cost you 2.5 Euro and in an Hospital 7 Euro. A treatment performed at a public hospital is subject to a tax. The choice of the facility is a function of the place of residency. The option for private hospitals or clinics may be covered by the system only if public institutions are not able to perform the treatment within a 3 month period. In order to obtain a "family doctor", the Fellow should go to his/her Health Centre of the Social Security (Centro de Saúde da Segurança Social) bringing the passport and Social Security card.

c. E-Documents

Every time you go abroad, you should fill an E111 document, in order to be covered in case of accident in a foreign country.

d. Health Insurance

Health insurance pays for any treatment at public institutions. Prescribed medication may be reimbursed at 100%, 80% or 50%, according to type and conditions. Prosthesis are reimbursed at 80% and spectacles and dental prosthesis at 75%.

e. Maternity Insurance

Any woman resident and covered by a Social Security system may benefit from this insurance. You will receive an 120 days payment for each birth. In case of adoption of a child under 3 years old, you will get a 60 days payment.

f. Retirement Insurance

Old age pensions are given to those that have contributed at least during 15 years to the Social Security system and are at least 65 years old*. Those interested must fill a special document and send it to the National Pensions Centre (Caixa Nacional de Pensões) or to the Centro Regional de Segurança Social, together with an ID document. The amount to be received is equal to the product of 2% of the average salary during the 10 best years of the last 15 years times the number of years of contribution. Medium pension is calculated by the formula S/60, where S stands for the
total amount of salaries received during the best 10 years.

"Special conditions may apply:
- unemployed persons may retire from 60 years on;

if a person can prove the payment of, at least, 15 years of contributions
(only those years with at least 120 days of contribution will be considered).

g. Useful Phone Numbers

Departamento de Relações Internacionais e Convenções da Segurança Social
Rua da Junqueira, 112
1300-344 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-362 16 33

4. Taxation
a. Tax System

You will need a Contributor card issued by the fiscal department of your residency area. They will ask for your passport. The card (Cartão de Contribuinte) is the only document you will need to sign your contract.

The tax on revenue (IRS) is evaluated annually by the contributor himself. Declarations must be delivered until March 15 of the year following the one concerned on the declaration. Payment must be made during one month period after receiving a notification issued by the Direction-General of Contributions (Direcção-Geral de Contribuições e Impostos). Residents are subject to IRS relative to all income.

Spouses, not separated or living in different places, must fill an annual declaration for all income received both in Portugal and/or abroad. The declaration must also indicate every person under charge considered members of the household. Single contributors fill an individual declaration.

The Portuguese system is based on the contribution of each spouse to a common income. If both spouses have income sources, the total amount is divided by 2 before application of progressive taxes. For example, if one of the spouses receives less than 95% of the total income, the coefficient will be 1.9. The number of children or persons under charge is not taken into
account for this division, only to evaluate possible deductions. Several deductions can be obtained:

- purchase of books and personal computers;
- health and life insurance;
- health expenses (appointments, medication and diagnostics);
- lodging expenses;
- education expenses of the contributor and descendants.

Double tribute may occur when a resident in a given country receives his/her income in a different country. Both countries will charge him/her in that case. In order to avoid such problems, Portugal has passed agreements with all E. U. member states, under which these countries accept to give up or at least reduce their taxation rights.

Detailed information on how to fill the declaration can be obtained in the annual review on IRS edited by DECO, the association for the defense of the consumer.

Edideco
Av. Arantes e Oliveira,nº 13, 1ºB
1900-221 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-841 08 58

Help online relative to all the fiscal system and even the possibility of online submission for tax declarations is available at the official site.

5. Research in Science and Technology in Portugal
   a. National Contact Point

Science and research in Portugal are managed by two different ministries. The Ministry of Education is in charge of education policy and the Ministry for Science and Technology is in charge of science and technology policies.

Research, both fundamental and applied, is mainly done at Universities and Institutes.
Financing of R&D projects:

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT)

Lisboa
Av. D.Carlos I, 126-1-2
1249-074 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-397 90 21
Fax: 351-21-390 74 81
e.mail: webmaster@fct.mct.pt

Porto
Av. da Boavista, 1311-6
4150 Porto
Tel: 351-22-600 90 16
Fax:351-22-600 90 17
e.mail: fctn@fe.up.pt

Cooperation with foreigners:

Instituto de Cooperação Científica e Tecnológica Internacional (ICCTI)
R. Castilho, 5, 4º
1250-066 Lisboa
Tel: 351-21-358 53 00
Fax: 351-21-315 40 65
e.mail: iccti@iccti.mct.pt
http://www.iccti.mct.pt

ICCTI is also the National Contact Point (NCP) for Portugal. Your personal contact there is

Ms. Ana Paula Cruz
Tel: 351-21-358 53 10
Fax: 351-21-315 40 65
e.mail: apcruz@iccti.mct.pt
b. Host Institutions and Work Contracts

All attention and care must be taken when you start your relation with the Host Institution, in order to establish a clear and well defined situation for both parties.

Do not hesitate to ask your supervisor assistance in knowing who will be responsible for the management of your grant. Since you may be the first person in these conditions to contact the Institution, bureaucracy may be somewhat complicated. A direct and personal contact with your manager (preferably in the presence of your supervisor) is the best approach to discuss the nature of your contract. You should enquire about your rights towards social security, vacations and salary.