

# Portugal

## Habitat for Humanity in Portugal

A group of volunteers concerned about poverty housing in Braga, in northern Portugal, started a Habitat affiliate there in 1996. Two groups of international and local volunteers helped build Portugal's first Habitat house in the town of Vieira do Minho in 1999. In 2002, Habitat expanded its activities to renovating existing homes of low-income families. Habitat in Braga partners with local municipalities to build and rehabilitate homes for people living on small incomes.

## The housing need in Portugal

Housing is a major concern of poor Portuguese families, who often live in dilapidated homes in rural areas or shacks in the big cities. Successive governments have liberalized key areas of the economy over the past 20 years after decades of military dictatorship, but economic growth has been slowing, especially after the 2008 crisis. Many people were left without jobs or savings to improve housing conditions.

At the same time, the need for housing is growing, especially in urban areas. The state cannot support the development of new social housing units. Portugal has been a destination for emigrants, mainly from former African colonies and Brazil.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Portugal

Habitat for Humanity in Portugal helps low-income families by building new homes on family-owned land and by renovating houses in the municipalities of Braga and Amarante. Homes are made of traditional local materials: bricks, red roof tiles, shutters on the windows, and ceramic tiles inside. Recently, the Habitat Portugal has been looking for local opportunities to raise funds to build more simple and decent homes.



## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	Lisbon
<b>Main country facts</b>	Joined the European Community, now the European Union in 1986
<b>Population</b>	10.83 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	63.5 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	79.3 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	11.3 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	18.7 percent

\*Sources: CIA World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Portugal**  
1996

**Individuals served in FY16**  
35

**Volunteers hosted in FY16**  
527

**Housing solutions**  
New builds  
Rehabilitation and repair



## Home construction with volunteer labour

The Habitat affiliate in Portugal is a lively example of an effective volunteering program. It attracts the enthusiasm of more than 300 volunteers a year. At the same time, local volunteers are showing their commitment to improving their communities by working on the construction sites. They are building homes in partnership with low income families.

## Working with companies

The affiliate also hosts corporate partner builds with such long-term Habitat supporters as Whirlpool and Thrivent Financial. Many international churches and women's associations have also found Braga to be a prime building location. Some international affiliates also have worked with Habitat in Portugal.

## Working with international schools

Habitat Portugal works with international schools from Switzerland, Norway, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, UAE and Austria. Strong partnerships have been built with schools in Braga, Lisbon and Porto. Students come to build their teams and homes with poor families.

## Meet a Habitat family

For many years the Lage family has dreamed of having their own home. The family is comprised of Madalena and Fernando, and their three children. Their daughter Ana suffers from a mental impairment, and although she is physically independent, she needs monitoring and assistance. The family presently live in a rented house with poor living conditions, including very limited space, high levels of humidity, an outdoor bathroom, and low indoor temperature as some exterior walls are made of wood. The house Habitat Portugal is going to rebuild is a family inheritance, but is currently not suitable for living. In this project, outdoor and indoor renovations will be done and after so many years, this family will finally have their own home, where they can have a happy life as a family.

## What you can do

You can help Portuguese families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

### DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate/portugal](http://habitat.org/donate/portugal)

### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Portugal or lead your own. For more information go to:

<http://www.habitat.org/emea/volunteer/global-village/trip-schedule>

### TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **813801, PORTUGAL** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St., Americus, GA 31709

To learn more about Habitat projects in Portugal please contact us.

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