

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*

Capital	Lisbon
Main country facts	Joined the European Community, now the European Union in 1986
Population	10.8 million
Urbanization	63.5 percent live in cities
Life expectancy	79 years
Unemployment rate	13.9 percent
Population living below poverty line	18.7 percent

*Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank, UN

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Zambia
1996

Families served
More than 70

Volunteers hosted
More than 700 a year

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

About a year ago, the Araújo family were evicted from their home and have been renting a house since then. Because of the unemployment crisis, Mr. Araújo had to move to France to find work, since his wife's income was not enough to cover the family's expenses. Habitat will help the family by renovating a house that was donated to them by other family members. The project will be supported by the municipality of Vila Verde. This couple has always dreamt of having their own home, and this way they will prevent situations like the eviction a year ago, providing the stability essential to the whole family. Together we will help this family make their dream come true, giving them decent and safe living conditions.

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

VOLUNTEER

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

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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