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Part 1 Portugal

Introduction

Portugal is a European nation located in the south-western part of the continent. It is one of the Iberian nations that constitutes Portugal, Spain and Andorra. The country is a member of the European Union. Its history dates back centuries back when it was the world's most dominant maritime power. Portugal has good relations with other nations on the international scene, especially the South American nations such as Brazil, its former colony. Like other European nations, Portugal has a population structure where there is low population growth and the elderly outnumber the youth. Portugal plays a major role in the global market because of its active participation in international trade.

Portugal was a global maritime super power during the 15th to the 16th century. During this time, Portugal had colonies all over the world. It accumulated wealth from international trade in South America, East Africa and Asia. The country was linked to the slave trade during the Triangular trade where slaves were brought from Africa to America to work on farms then the farm produce taken to Europe. However, the Portuguese empire declined partly due to 1755 earth quake in Lisbon and the rise of Napoleon. Napoleonic wars weakened Portugal. When Brazil, Portugal's largest colony got independence in 1822, Portugal lost its source of wealth. There was a revolution in 1910 to dispose the monarchical system of government. This created political instability in the once super power. However, I 1974,

Portugal was taken over by a left-wing military coup, which installed democratic reforms. The country has since become a strong economy. It was a founder member of NATO, and it also joined the European Union in 1986.

Important dates

In the history of Portugal, there are important dates that have defined the history of the country socially, economically and politically. In 1394, Henry the navigator was born. He would later lead the nation into maritime superiority. On 8th July 1497, Vasco Dagama set of in his journey to Africa and later Asia. This discovery was the beginning of Portugal's international trade. In 1807, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Portugal. Portugal was renamed the Kingdom of Portugal in the same year. In 1822, Portugal granted Brazil its independence. In 1910, the Portuguese Revolution began signifying the end of the monarchical system. Portugal also took part in World War 1 between 1914 and 1918. On May 28th 1926, a military coup led to the introduction of fascist leaders into government. One 4th April 1949, Portugal was part of the founders of NATO. On 25th April 1974, another coup during the Carnation Revolution overthrew the fascist regime hence the introduction of a democratic government. On the 1st of January 1986, Portugal joined the EU.

Geographic location

Portugal is located in the South-west part of Europe. It borders Spain to the east and the North Atlantic Ocean to the west. Its geographical coordinates are 39 30, 8 00 W. The nation is 92090 square kilometres big. Of the total area, 91471 square kilometres is land and 620 square kilometres is water.

The country's border to the ocean has made the Nation develop economically because of international trade. The cities of Porto and Lisbon are all port cities and economic hubs.

Population structure

Portugal has a population of 10799270 people as per the 2013 estimations. The population structure is similar to most European nations. 16 percent of the population are children between o and 14 years. 11. 4% are aged 15-24 years, 42% are aged 25-54 years, 11. 8% are aged 55-64 and 18. 4% are over 65 years. The average age in the country is 40. 4 years, meaning the country has a large proportion of its population in their productive years. Thee population growth rate in Portugal is estimated to be 0. 181%. Most of the people live in urban areas, for example, Lisbon has 2, 808 million people while Porto has 1. 344 million people. In the population, the ratio of males to females is 0. 95. The life expectancy is 78. 7 years with females living longer than men. The fertility rate is 1. 51 children per woman. 95% of the population is literate, and the unemployment rate is 22. 3%.

Role in the global market

Since the 15th century, Portugal has been an economic powerhouse on the global scene. It collapsed in the 17th century but has recovered well. Currently, Portugal is a diversified and mainly a service-based economy since joining the European Union in 1986. Privatization has been given priority by government. The euro started circulating in 1998, boosting the nation's global activity in Europe. The nation was affected by the financial crisis but has recovered.

Portugal's exports in 2012 were worth 57. 8 billion US dollars. The exports comprised agricultural products, oil, wine, chemicals, plastic, hides, rubber, paper textiles, cloth, machinery and tools and base materials among others. It exported 13. 6% of its products to Germany, 25. 1% to Spain, 12. 1% to Angola and 5. 1% to UK.

Portugal's imports were valued at 67. 03 billion US dollars in 2012. It imported agricultural products, vehicles, chemical, technological equipment, food and textile products. Its imports came from Spain, Germany, France, Italy and Netherlands. Therefore, Portugal's net exports are negative implying that the country has a deficit balance of trade.

Conclusion

Therefore, Portugal is a European nation with a rich history dating centuries back. The country was a colonial power to Brazil and other South American nations and some African countries like Angola and Mozambique. The nation had political instability since the end of the monarchy in 1910 until 1974 when democracy was restored. It has taken part in forming the NATO after World War 2 and also been a member of the European Union since 1986. It borders Spain and the North Atlantic Ocean. It has a population structure where the middle aged are the majority, and the population growth rate is low. Portugal remains an integral member in the global market as it participates in international trade, especially within the European Union.

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