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*Working far afield*

The reception and societal impact of rural labour migration in the municipality of Odemira,  
South Portugal



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**Master Thesis**

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## ***Abstract***

This research focuses on the increased presence of international labour migrants in the municipality of Odemira. The data collected includes eight interviews and one written questionnaire. Firstly, this research analyses the perception and evaluation of the local governmental and non-governmental actors of the increasing international labour migration to the municipality of Odemira. From this perspective, relating economic globalization and theories on international labour migration helps understanding and grasping the local perception of this phenomenon. Secondly, through considerable theoretical research on local governance, it explores the measures governmental and non-governmental actors are taking to address the phenomena. Lastly, paying closer attention to the reception of these immigrants, one can examine the arrangements local actors create regarding the regularization of their legal status and the consequent impact on their rights.

*Keywords:* Immigrant integration; Immigrant reception; International labour migration; Local Governance; municipality of Odemira, Portugal.

## **Introduction**

Since the early 2000s, Portugal has experienced a new migration flow of labour migration to rural areas in the south like Alentejo (Fonseca, 2008). In the case of Odemira, this flow is largely explained by an influx of foreign investment in the intensive agriculture of berries in the region. This investment has increased dramatically since the 1980s, which has caused a corresponding rise in the demand for labour (Pereira, Moreno, Esteves, Esteves & Malheiros, 2016). Like most rural areas in Portugal, Alentejo has an ageing and declining population (Fonseca, 2008). The shortage of national workers willing to accept hard agricultural work and poor working conditions has contributed to the rise of foreign labour migration to the region (Sampaio & Carvalho, 2016). While the first wave of international labour migration mostly consisted of migrant workers from Eastern Europe, recently waves are largely composed of migrants from Nepal, Thailand and India (Fonseca, 2008).

The increase and diversification of the immigrant population creates substantial challenges for rural municipalities like Odemira. Odemira had a total population of approximately 24.621 people in 2018 from which 6124 are legal migrants (PORDATA,

2018). According to SEFSTAT, the main nationalities of legal migrants in the municipality in 2018 originated from Bulgaria (1098), Nepal (1015), Thailand (825) and India (795). As the Mayor of the Municipality of Odemira (José Alberto Guerreiro) has stated: “the territory is not prepared to meet the demands caused by the new agriculture, regarding the provision of housing for immigrants, infrastructure, social development, cultural articulation and population growth in such a small period of time” (Dias, 2019). As a result, immigrants are currently facing poor working and living conditions in the municipality (Faget, 2018).

### ***Central problem definition and Research Goal***

In this thesis research, I analyse how changes in international labour migration patterns pose local governance challenges for rural municipalities in the South of Portugal. The increasing immigration to the region is dramatically changing the rural scenario (Pereira, Moreno, Estevens, Esteves & Malheiros, 2016). The municipality is facing several challenges regarding housing and access to public services (Dias, 2019). According to most respondents, the villages are not prepared to accommodate the current amount of immigrants. Meanwhile, migrant rights are being breached as they face precarious working and living conditions (Faget, 2018). This leads us to formulate the following main research question and corresponding subquestions:

### ***Main research question***

*How do changing patterns in international labour pose local governance challenges to governmental and non-governmental actors in the municipality of Odemira, South of Portugal?*

### ***Sub Questions***

1. How do governmental and civil society actors perceive and evaluate the increased presence of international labour migrants in the municipality of Odemira?

2. Which formal and informal measures are governmental and non-governmental actors taking to deal with the increase of international labour migration to the municipality of Odemira?
3. What impact do local governance arrangements on the reception of international labour migrants in Odemira have on migrants' rights position?

### ***Societal Relevance***

The councillor for Social Action in the Odemira Municipality (Deolinda Seno Luís) stressed that the increased number of immigrants “started to reflect some social asymmetries in the territory” (Casaca, 2019). Social problems, such as housing, access to public services and work exploitation are emerging in the municipality of Odemira due to the increasing migration. This study analyses new strategies concerning how local actors are perceiving and addressing this scenario. Therefore, this research aims to provide an accurate overview of the situation in Odemira, but also explore how civil society and governmental actors are approaching this challenge.

### ***Academic Relevance***

This paper aims to contribute to the academic gap that exists in two different fields. First, the lack of academic research regarding the case of Odemira. The existing literature is mainly descriptive and does not provide a deeper understanding on how local actors are approaching this changing scenario. Moreover, critical analysis of the case of Odemira can contribute to the development of innovative approaches on local governance. Secondly, this study addresses the gap that exists in local governance literature regarding rural municipalities. Although some scholars develop on the rural context (Goldman & Reynolds, 2008; Cloke, Milbourne & Widdowfield, 2000), the central theoretical focus is on urban settings (Glick-Schiller & Çağlar, 2009; Pierre, 1999; Schiller, 2016; Zapata-Barrero et al, 2017). This paper would contribute to the literature on local governance with a focus on rural areas [that are primary destinations for international labour migrants]. This approach can provide an innovative insight, compared to the urban scope, as they face different circumstances.

## **Theoretical Framework**

In order to answer each sub-research question, this paper explores three different fields of literature. The first focuses on major theories of international labour migration. These theories explore labour shortage, employers' interest in hiring foreign workforce and its consequences on migrants' vulnerability. The second emphasises the literature on local governance and explores how the interaction between governmental and non-governmental actors contribute to the consolidation of the 'local turn'. The last section analyses how immigrants' legal status affects their working conditions.

### ***International Labour Migration***

As Portes' put it "capital is global, labour is local". Put differently, the role of economic globalization is essential to draw the link between international labour migration theory and the new patterns of labour migration to the Odemira municipality in Portugal (Portes, 2000, p.2). Labour migration is one of the major categorizations authors use to theorize about migration, however, these categorizations have blurred boundaries (Schrover, 2018). Nevertheless, labour migration is considered to be "movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment" (IOM, 2019, p.121). This section explores how international labour migration works to fulfil labour gaps capitalism needs to solve, as well as migrants' vulnerability as a consequence of the duality of labour and the employer's interest in hiring foreign workers.

The idea that international labour migration is related to labour shortage and demand is one of the main arguments in the international labour migration literature. Piore includes this idea in his work from 1979, where he develops three reasons why international labour migration is constant and inevitable. He argues that labour shortages influence migration patterns. Consequently, Sassen goes further and elaborates on the idea of international labour migration as a labour supply system consolidating the capitalist system. According to Sassen, it all begins with labour scarcity, one of the capital's major problems. The strong emphasis on labour shortage is theoretically stressed by Sassen and Piore. The idea of international labour

migration as a labour-supply system is visible in the migration flow to be studied where the market's demands influence migratory flows to the region of Odemira (Fonseca, 2008; Peixoto, 2002).

The duality between capital and labour, the division between those who own the capital and those who belong to labour, is incorporated in Piore's argument of why international labour migration is unavoidable (Piore, 1979). Additionally, Portes and Walton stress this idea in their work, arguing the usage of migrants as cheap labour, through political manipulation, establishes conditions of vulnerability between the migrants and the capital (Portes & Walton, 2013; Goldring & Landolt, 2011; Piore 1979). The vulnerability of the workforce is often highlighted by theorists as a consequence of the duality between capital and labour, but also as a required characteristic by employers. Immigrants are often considered a vulnerable workforce, which makes them desirable to employers. Sassen elaborates on the employers' interest to hire foreign labour: "immigrants are not necessarily that much cheaper than low-wage national workers; it is also their powerlessness which makes them profitable" (Sassen, 1981, p. 72). The idea migrants are powerless comes from their foreign status or irregular legal status, lack of knowledge with union politics and their common alienation (Sassen, 1981; McGovern, 2007; De Genova, 2002; Gomberg-Muñoz, 2010; Castles, 2011; Goldring & Landolt 2011, 2012). This tends to result in a dependency between the migrant workers and their employers. Consequently, the employers' interest comes down to two aspects; the labour-supply flexibility, easily hired and fired; and organizational flexibility, there is no improvement of production techniques or working conditions (Sassen, 1981, Mezzadra, 2011; Castles, 2011).

In conclusion, the international labour migration literature illustrates the growing importance of the market and the consequent vulnerability of migrants. In order to answer the question of '*How do governmental and civil society actors perceive and evaluate the increased presence of international labour migrants in the region of Odemira?*' it is relevant to consider the participants' perception on the impact of the foreign investment in intensive agriculture in the region. It is worth noting the literature mentioned above focuses mainly on macro processes and portrays migrants as victims of economic and political structures. This paper aims to combine structuralist arguments with a central focus on the local level, as a way of localizing these global phenomena.

## *Local Governance*

The literature on local governance contributes to an effective analysis of the role played by governmental and non-governmental actors in addressing the increase of international labour migration to the municipality of Odemira. Governance has taken a ‘local turn’ and moved beyond the Nation-State framework (Glick-Schiller & Çağlar, 2009; Zapata-Barrero et al, 2017; Joppke, 2007). As governance involves the interaction between public and private sector and negotiation mechanisms between them (Schiller, 2018), local governance focuses on the interaction of local actors and their political agenda involving different levels of policymaking (Zapata-Barrero et al, 2017).

The way formal and informal actors interact determines the existence of a local governance approach. According to Schiller, there are several ways in which these actors can interact, depending on the intensity of the interaction and the power distribution between the state and non-state actors. The power distribution involves the degree of hierarchy and the possibility of state and non-state actors influencing the policymaking process. Based on these two aspects, the author elaborates a scart plott where she positions power distribution on the vertical axis and the intensity of collaboration on the horizontal axis (Figure 1 in Appendix). As a result, the author presents four categories of local integration governance: information, consultation, co-optation and cooperation. Local governance entails the involvement of state and non-state actors in policymaking at the local level, Schiller suggests that only cooperation should be considered governance. The power distribution as well as the intensity of collaboration between state and non-state actors are examined in Odemira’s context.

Municipalities’ importance within the integration process has increased significantly over recent years (De Graauw, 2016). Bommers uses the case of Germany to demonstrate the growing importance of municipalities, as well as actors from the civil society and their desire for recognition. The author outlines the main reason for concern from the municipalities in dealing with migration and integration: “they are obliged to make available to their inhabitants and thus also to foreigners, that is, migrants, the required economic, social and cultural institutions and services” (Bommers, 2012, p.128). A conceptualization of this topic is provided by Meeus et al. when theorizing about the existence of arrival infrastructures. These can be defined as “those parts of the urban fabric within which newcomers become entangled

on arrival, and where their future local or translocal social mobilities are produced as much as negotiated” (see Meeus et al. 2019, p.34). De Graauw and Bloemraad (2017) also explore the increased importance of municipality in the reception and integration processes in the United States. The authors stress the Municipalities’ commitment to the integration challenge through the development of programs, commissions, councils, etc. In addition to the role of Municipalities, the authors elaborate on the growing importance of public-private partnerships: “The new public-private partnerships focus on policy innovation as well as immigrant leadership development and improved, more efficient service delivery to immigrant communities. As interactions between public and private sector actors have become more coordinated and sophisticated, they have facilitated mutual learning and sharing of resources” (De Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017, p. 115). Both parts benefit from this interaction by sharing knowledge and resources. This paper analyses the interaction between the Municipality of Odemira and other private and public entities, as well as the existence of public-private partnerships.

This study builds on the previous insights while aiming to “contribute to a more in-depth understanding of why and how cities and regions respond differently to similar challenges” (Zapata-Barrero et al, 2017, p. 242). By exploring the approach of municipal governmental and non-governmental actors to this phenomenon, this research contributes to enrich local governance literature on rural areas.

### ***Precarious Legal Status***

The work of Düvell (2011) explores the States’ interest in legalizing or not legalizing immigrants. His study analyses policies on irregular migration in the different EU States and the role of these States in creating irregular immigrants. When analysing restrictive immigration policies in Europe, the author stated: “Mediterranean countries unregulated migrations coincided with equally unregulated labour markets, and in combination offered vast opportunities for irregular immigrant workers” which is an important aspect of this paper (Düvell, 2012, p. 280). After analysing the different legal definitions of irregular migration according to the different European countries, the author explores the responses of the

different States to irregular migration and irregular employment. This research will analyse Portugal's approach to irregular migration and employment and its' interest (or lack thereof) in regularizing migration.

There is a significant relationship between an immigrant's precarious legal status and the impact on other spheres of their lives, such as working and living conditions. Goldring & Landolt define precarious legal status<sup>1</sup> as “forms of legal status characterized by any of the following: lack of permanent residence or permanent work authorization, limited or no social benefits, inability to sponsor relatives and deportability” (Goldring & Landolt, 2012, p.12). The work of Goldring & Landolt (2011; 2012) highlights the relationship between precarious legal status and precarious working conditions. The authors emphasise the proliferation of flexible production and the transformation in the organization of work through the global mobility of capital. Moreover, they stress the fact that citizenship acts as a power differential between migrant workers and employers. Consequently, the authors analyse the case of Canada and explore indicators of precarious employment. They conclude that a precarious legal status affects job quality and becomes a source of vulnerability. However, a positive change in the legal status does not necessarily mean a reduction in job precarity. Although this study is performed in the Canadian context, their theoretical analysis is relevant to the Portuguese context.

In conclusion, migrants' legal status has a strong impact on migrants' everyday lives, affecting their precarious working conditions and enhances the relationship of dependency between the immigrant worker and the employer (Goldring & Landolt, 2011; Goldring & Landolt, 2012; Sassen, 1981). The local governance reception of these immigrants' impacts their legal status and therefore different spheres of their lives. The impact on migrants' lives needs to be taken into consideration. Thus, the local reception is the central concern: *What impact do local governance arrangements on the reception of international labour migrants in Odemira have on migrants' rights position?*

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this research, the term precarious legal status will be applied according to this definition.

## **Methodology**

### ***Link research question***

In order to explore the societal impact of the international labour migration towards the Odemira region, I relied on qualitative methods (Babbie, 2018). This research explores the perception and action of local governmental and non-governmental actors through semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2016). By doing so, one can explore (1) the perceived impact of global economic forces in the region, (2) the possible existence of a local governance approach and (3) the impact of the local actors' action on migrants' legal status.

### ***Scope of Research***

This research will involve different levels of analysis according to each sub-question. The first research question focuses mainly on the impact of global economic forces in rural Portugal. Through interviews with governmental and non-governmental actors one can test how theories on international labour migration can apply to the case of Odemira. The second research question concerns theoretical and practical aspects of local governance, and therefore focuses mainly at the Municipal level. Lastly, the third sub-question involves migrants' legal status which entails a National and local focus, since immigration and regularization laws are applied nationally and the arrangements are executed locally. The third sub-question brings to light some limitations of the research. The impact local governance arrangements potentially have on migrants' rights position would ideally involve the perspective of migrants themselves. However, performing interviews to immigrants in Odemira was a limitation of this study. By focusing on the local governance arrangements regarding migrants' legal status I tried to assess the impact on their rights.

### ***Data Collection***

Eight Skype semi-structured interviews and one written questionnaire were conducted (Bryman, 2016), with a focus on the institutional level. Therefore, purposive sampling was

used as participants were chosen in a strategic way in order to answer the research questions (Zapata-Barrero & Yalas, 2018). Additionally, content analysis of documents was performed to improve understanding of the case (Bryman, 2016). The eight interviews included the participation of two Parish Council Presidents, a representative of Odemira's Municipal Plan for Integration, an agriculture workers' union, a working conditions inspector, a representative of an association for migrants' rights, a representatives from a local organization for regional development, and a representative of a regional environmentalist movement. Additionally, a written questionnaire was answered by a fruit growers' association. The interviews focused on governmental and non-governmental actors' perception of the increase of international labour migration to the municipality of Odemira and the measures being taken to address this issue. The interviews were conducted individually in Portuguese and recorded with the consent of the participants.

### ***Data Analysis***

The interviews were transcribed verbatim using F4 and then translated into English. The transcripts were uploaded, coded and analysed qualitatively using ATLAS.Ti. In order to reduce the data gathered and analyse the interviews codes were generated inductively (Bryman, 2016). Consequently, patterns and relationships between concepts were sought and related to the theory previously analysed.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

The main ethical concern of this research is the fact that it indirectly involves immigrants' lives in vulnerable positions (Düvell, Triandafyllidou, & Vollmer, 2008). Although interviews were not performed directly with migrants, it is relevant to acknowledge they are indirectly involved in this research and might be affected. Taking this into consideration, this research in no way intends to contribute to the stigmatization of these immigrants.

Before performing the interviews, each respondent was properly informed about the research and signed a consent agreement. Recording each interview required consent

and respondents were given the freedom to not answer questions they found uncomfortable. The participants were anonymized (Bryman, 2016). The data was safely stored on a computer and backed up on an external hard drive that only I have access to.

## *Results*

This section explores how the changing migration patterns pose a local governance challenge for the municipality of Odemira. The section is divided into three main topics: first there is a contextualization of the case of Odemira; secondly explores the actors' perception of the impact and its challenge for governance, including three sub-topics (impact on local communities, impact on migrants and the lack of arrival infrastructures); lastly, analyses the local response on two different levels: integration policies and labour policies.

### *Contextualizing the case*

Based on expert interviews with local actors, two factors need to be taken into consideration in order to contextualize the economic situation in Odemira. The first concerns demographic aspects of the region of Odemira as well as Portugal. The second involves political and legal aspects of national laws.

Several respondents indicated that the region suffers from a shortage of national workers available to work in the intensive agriculture sector. In demographic terms, the region of Odemira is characterised by its low population density, with an average number of individuals per km<sup>2</sup> of 14,3, as well as by its ageing population, with 238,9 elderly people per every 100 young people (PORDATA, 2018). Yet, demographic reasons alone are insufficient to explain labour shortages in the agricultural sector. Work in agriculture is generally considered to be physically tough and underpaid. Working conditions and salaries close to the minimum wage explaining why Portuguese workers are not attracted to the sector. This in turn creates opportunities for migrant workers who *are* willing to accept these tough of working conditions. As the main working conditions inspector of the district

indicated in the interview, labour shortages in the sector can further be explained by the fact that Portuguese workers migrate to other European countries where low-skilled jobs, such as intensive agriculture, are better paid: “Portuguese workers, even those who work in agriculture, tend to go to the wealthiest countries in Europe, given their free movement and mobility facilities. Hence, the lack of national workforce” (Interview 7).

Furthermore, several respondents pointed out that market forces have had a tremendous environmental and social impact on the Region in recent years<sup>2</sup>. This impact is related to the growth of intensive agriculture in the region, but also with liberalization of national laws in two different areas. In 2005, Portugal liberalized laws on the creation and dissolving of companies and cutting down on the bureaucratic paperwork involved (Decreto-Lei n.º 111/2005), hence facilitating the creation of temporary work agencies. This liberalization created the possibility for less than transparent temporary work agencies to be legally conceived and dissolved rather quickly, which causes the tracking and conviction of these agencies extremely difficult. The second liberalization process concerns national immigration laws. In 2017 there was an amendment (Lei n.º 59/2017) to the immigration law 23/2007 (Lei n.º 23/2007). This amendment enables immigrants to become regularized once they have a work contract and are registered in Social Security. Yet, there was one more condition: the person had to have entered the country legally. In 2019, this aspect was reformulated: the legal entry in the country “is assumed whenever the applicant works in national territory and has his/her situation regularized before social security for at least 12 months” (Lei n.º 28/2019).

### *I. Perception of governance challenges*

The analysis of the interviews revealed important differences in how local actors perceive and evaluate the governance challenges posed by the increased presence of international labour migrants in the region of Odemira. In this section, I first explore diverging discourses regarding the activities of companies and the accompanying increased

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<sup>2</sup> This second aspect is related to whether the respondent has positive or negative opinion regarding the expansion of intensive agriculture in the region and its impacts, which will be elaborated in the next section.

presence of immigrants in the region. Next, I zoom in on perceived problems relating to local reception infrastructures (see Meeus et al. 2019) and the particular challenges they pose for effective governance.

### *1.1 Impact on the region and local communities*

#### *Environmental and economic impact*

The link between the growth of the intensive agriculture industry and the increased presence of labour immigrants in the region of Odemira is clear. However, the benefits of intensive agriculture for the region divided the respondents. In October 2019, the Portuguese State allowed agricultural companies to explore up to 40% of the area currently being explored (Perímetro de Rega do Mira). For some respondents, the State is prioritizing economic growth while ignoring local impact. The President of the Parish Council of one of these villages expressed this as follows (Interview 1): “What we feel is an absence of the State. The State is in Lisbon and it is not worried. They want numbers, invoicing, values for the GDP growth. Impacts on the territory in environmental and social terms, they do not seem to be very interested in pursuing this matter”. Economically, they all agreed that the sector is fruitful and beneficial for the region. This position is perhaps most clearly articulated by the association of agricultural companies, which regards “this agricultural development as highly positive, bringing more jobs, wealth and better living conditions to the region, in a sustainable way and through a majority of companies with highly responsible social and environmental practices” (Interview 9). Nevertheless, the environmental consequences involved in using plastics and consuming water by intensive agriculture makes some respondents wonder if it’s worth it. For example, one respondent stated that: “this is a natural park that has commitments made at national and international level, it does not have to be subject to the law of supply and demand for red fruits from the liberal market” (Interview 4).

### *Social and cultural impact*

When evaluating the accompanying increased presence of immigrants in the region, most respondents emphasise the social impact this has had on local communities. A word often heard during the interviews was “quantity” - “the problem is the quantity” (Interview 1) - implying the number of immigrants is too high for what these villages can accommodate. Interestingly, the actual number of immigrants in the region is hard, if not impossible, to track down. Nevertheless, estimates are that the immigrants comprise approximately 24,8 % of the population (PORDATA, 2018). Moreover, in S. Teotónio it is estimated that immigrants represents already 50% of the population (Maia, 2019), which is a serious concern for the Parish Councils. The President of the one Parish Council fears for the well-being of the villages’ populations, stressing that people do not feel comfortable anymore: “the ladies that used to go for a walk alone at the end of the day don’t feel comfortable anymore because there are groups of foreign men walking around in groups of 10 or 12” (Interview 1). A local organization for development mostly fears the prejudice and discrimination that might arise from the Portuguese population towards immigrants (Interview 6).

Discourses on migrants themselves are both negative and positive. On the one hand, negative discourses mainly focus on the perceived risk that the large number of immigrants might have on the values and habits of local communities. A President of a Parish Council stated: “our cultural values have taken so many centuries to conquer, (...) I feel a little bit that we are putting our social well-being at risk” (Interview 1). Another respondent is concerned with the identity of the region: “It is clear that an oversized migration influx which isn’t planned, slightly compromises the identity of the region” (Interview 4). Conversely, positive opinions emphasize the role of this immigration influx in repopulating these villages, as well as stimulating the public services (see Interviews 2, 7, 9). A working conditions inspector of the District stresses the fact that historically migration flows have always represented something positive: “historically there was never a country, no country, in which the immigration balance has represented a negative aspect” (Interview 7). Additionally, the representative of an Association for Immigrants’ Rights states “immigration is always a gain for the receiving countries, immigration is only a misfortune for the origin countries” (Interview 2).

Interestingly, there is an issue that is common to all discourses: the high turnover of the workforce. Economic migrants tend to stay for a short period of time, which makes the workforce rather unstable (Interview 1, 6, 7). This instability makes any integration effort rather difficult. All respondents see this as a negative aspect of the migration influx to the region. The working conditions inspector states: “Floating workforce is the type that has less benefits for the country. Still it is advantageous, but comes get wealth and leaves” (Interview 7). Local actors are trying to fixate as many immigrants as they can, yet it has been proven to be a hard task to accomplish. One explanation comes from the fact that a major portion of these migrants arrive in Portugal through the migration schemes mentioned above, and as the service companies involved have no interest for the migrants to settle long-term, any integration effort is difficult to accomplish<sup>3</sup>.

### *1.2 Impact on migrants*

As it was previously mentioned, Portugal’s immigration laws facilitate the regularization process. In order to become regularized in Portugal an immigrant needs to have a contract and a residence certificate from the Parish Council to prove the migrant lives in a certain locality. When asked about the precarious legal status, respondents stressed the amendments to the law and how regularization is currently being facilitated (Interview 2, 3, 7). Respondent number 7 stated that “today, talking about illegal immigrants is almost exaggerated in the country (Portugal)”. The respondent highlighted the fact that agriculture itself is precarious due to its seasonality. Another respondent said that the precarity is more related to the economic practices than to the legal status (Interview 2). Lastly, a unionist stated: "Immigrant status is usually synonymous with precariousness" (Interview 3). The unionist continues explaining how workers’ rights are frequently violated and elaborates on the role of the migration industry.

The precarity of the working and living conditions are related to the contracts these immigrants hold and the migration schemes they are involved in (Interview 2, 3, 7). As a Unionist interviewed put, this has led to a surge in so-called “service companies” in the

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<sup>3</sup> The dependency of the immigrants to the service companies will be further elaborated in the Migrants’ Legal Status section.

region that de facto operate as temporary work agencies and “grow like mushrooms” (Interview 3). These service companies, or “pseudo-companies” as the working conditions inspector calls them, typically ‘sublet’ the labour of their employees to different companies (Interview 7). These companies are hard to track down because they are as easy to create as they are to dissolve (idem). The working conditions inspector explains the different working conditions depending on the type of contract the immigrants have:

“In terms of stratification, I would say that those who have better conditions, both contractual and accommodation, are those who work directly for companies of reference; then, at an intermediate level, there would be workers who work for temporary work companies, but even so, already with very significant deficits; and at the base of the pyramid, and that perhaps represents the majority, are workers who work for the service of ‘pseudo service providers companies’, and where the most degrading working conditions are found. But this is where most of the workers work, at the service of these ‘pseudo companies’. These are companies that appear today and disappear tomorrow. If they are intercepted by any authority the next day that company has disappeared, and the next day a new company is already formed” (Interview 7).

These ‘service companies’ were a current topic during the interviews, mostly initiated by the respondents to describe the situation in region, and why it is difficult to regulate both the number of immigrants and their living conditions. The Unionist interviewed depicted the different struggles immigrants face:

“There are situations of immigrants who came to Portugal with promises of easy money and good working conditions, but then the companies - some of these ‘service companies’ created by immigrants themselves - keep their passports, charge them money, charge them a monthly fee, when they start working they will receive the minimum wage, they will live in temporary housing containers, sometimes there are 17 people in a house without conditions, the income in some situations is taken directly from their salary, it is not presented any type of invoice by the company so that they can declare taxes, the companies do not give them the necessary

documentation for them to present and be remunerated for the discounts they make, some are working in Portugal in inhuman conditions” (Interview 3).

The fact that some of these so called ‘service providers companies’ sublet their employees to different companies around the country has an impact on the integration process. This is perceived as a technique to keep the immigrants in vulnerable positions: "they are always moving these workers from a place to another, because what interests them is to keep them in a precarious, irregular, and unstable situation" (Interview 7). Only when an immigrant is able to become regularized is he/she able to earn a certain independence from these companies (idem).

However, the presence of these ‘service companies’ does not fully explain the precarious working conditions of these immigrants. The representative of an association for migrants’ rights stresses the fact that even though the agricultural companies have contracts directly with employees, they also hire these ‘service companies’. The respondent explains that the landowners hire the lowest bidder, and exposes the agriculture companies’ awareness of these issues:

“the owners of the land themselves, or of the greenhouses, who hire these companies, as it is for the lowest price, if they did the math, take that amount of fruit, or olives, or whatever, they knew it was not enough to pay the minimum wages, let alone taxes, taxes, social security, etc. So how is it possible? The law does not establish any limit, it is the laws of the market at work” (Interview 2).

Additionally, the interest of the employers in hiring immigrants is another topic discussed in the interviews (Interview 2, 3). The representative for an association for migrants’ rights elaborated on the lack of interest from the employers to hire Portuguese workers: “naturally, the companies themselves are not very interested in hiring Portuguese because they are more informed, they will complain to the Labor Court, Authority for Working Conditions, etc” (Interview 2). The lack of information the immigrants have on working conditions is perceived as an advantage by the employers. Furthermore, the Unionist interviewed relates the lack of national workforce to the low salary the companies are willing to offer: “there

could be more national workforce if the companies offer a monetary value higher than what they are paying” (Interview 3).

### *1.3 Lacking arrival infrastructures*

A second major theme addressed by all respondents concerns the lack of local arrival infrastructures (see Meeus et al. 2009) to properly accommodate and integrate migrants into the local social fabric. The fact that the region of Odemira is mainly a rural area does not contribute to solid arrival infrastructures, as such infrastructures are more likely to be found in cities. Thus, there are several problems emerging from these rural areas that are not adequately equipped to accommodate this influx of people, including problems related to housing, water pressure, public services, and public health.

An important aspect of arrival infrastructures concerns suitable housing for migrant workers. Due to the increasing housing demand, the values of the housing market are increasing and it is currently difficult to find accommodation in these villages. The representative of the local organization for development and inhabitant of this region, states that “there is not enough habitation for everybody - a young couple looking for a house is going to have a lot of trouble in finding it because most houses are being rented to migrants” (Interview 6). Some landlords prefer renting the houses to migrants, since there are migrants living in overcrowded houses paying 100€ to 110€ per person (Interview 7). Hence, it is more profitable to rent houses to migrants than to Portuguese people. At the same time, the migrants are living in overcrowded houses, apartments, and sometimes establishments not proper to accommodate people. A briefly depicted image of the situation is provided by the working conditions inspector:

“If I tell you I have already counted 53 people living in a 3 bedrooms apartment you can think it is a lie but it is not. If I tell you in an old car shop, with one bathroom, with mattresses piled up around the floor, where approximately 43 or 44 families were living, I’m telling the truth. If I tell you that in old commercial spaces of companies that ceased activity are filled with bunk beds, it is true” (Interview 7).

Nevertheless, this problem has a solution. According to a few respondents the lack of national housing legislation on the number of people allowed to live in an accommodation is a crucial aspect of the problems in the region (Interviews 3, 4, 7, 8).

As an attempt to solve the housing problem in the region, the governmental resolution of October 2019, the same resolution that allowed the companies to expand the area being explored, also allowed the companies to install temporary housing containers for their workers. As the area being explored is considered a Natural Park, no constructions were allowed. However, due to the lack of housing, the government opened an exception and allowed temporary housing containers to be installed in the protected area. The authorization for the instalment of temporary housing containers was contested by some respondents (Interview 2, 4). In a resentful tone the regional environmentalist movement states:

“this resolution of the Council of Ministers responded to the only obstacle to the advance of intensive agriculture. The only obstacle was the lack of housing for the workforce that is mostly foreign. As there was not enough housing (...) for what this agricultural industry requires, the resolution allowed to install housing containers on the farms in the heart of the Natural Park to accommodate migrant workers to work in the agricultural industry. Almost as if considering a migrant worker as well as an agricultural implement, in the end it is an accessory that they have to put inside the farms” (Interview 4).

In addition to the lack of housing there are other problems arising from the vast increase of population in the region: from more technical problems, such as water and internet to the capacity of response of the public services. The Presidents of the Parish Councils, as well as inhabitants of these villages, argue the infrastructure is not prepared to receive this many people. A respondent, resident in one of these villages, exposes that “there are problems in the water pipes, there is not enough water pressure, there are problems in the telephone lines because often they are overcharged” (Interview 3).

At the same time the public services, such as social security, tax offices and healthcare centres, are overloaded due to the increasing number of inhabitants. Another resident reports that the social services are overcrowded and fears for public health: “Public services can’t handle the job, it’s impossible to go to the tax office, to the social security or to

the health care centre, it's impossible. The fact that one knows about the houses in Alentejo villages that are inhabited by dozens of people causes some insecurity in public health" (Interview 4). Conversely, the district representative of an Association for Immigrants Rights believes that this influx is helping to stimulate and energise the public services: "this forced the public services to stir up" (Interview 2).

In sum, the perception of the respondents towards the increase of intensive agriculture in the region, as well as towards the increase presence of labour immigrants in the region, is both positive and negative. The negative discourses are concerned with environmental issues, the disproportionate number of immigrants these villages are receiving, as well as the capacity of their infrastructure, workers' rights, and lack of legislation. The positive aspects in the discourses concern the economic prosperity this sector and the immigration influx have brought to the region, as well as the rich multicultural environment, the stimulation of the public services and the cooperation between actors involved. The increased presence of international labour migrants in the region of Odemira has impacted several spheres of society, such as the social dynamics of the villages, the housing market, the public service, which currently translate into complex issues to address. Taking this into consideration, the societal impact of the increased labour migration to the municipality of Odemira poses a true challenge for governance and immigrant integration.

## *II. The local governance response*

Both governmental and non-governmental actors are involved in the reception and integration of immigrants in the region of Odemira. In order to answer the question: '*Which formal and informal measures are governmental and non-governmental actors taking to deal with the increase of international labour migration to the region of Odemira?*' there are two main actors to be analysed. The Municipality of Odemira as the coordinator of the Municipal Plan for Migrant Integration, and TAIPA - an organization that promotes the development of the municipality of Odemira. This section is divided into two crucial issues: integration of migrants and labour policies.

### *Integration policies: Setting up arrival infrastructures*

The first Municipal Plan for the Integration of Migrants in Odemira was developed between 2015 to 2017. The current Municipal Plan 2018-2020 is based on the National Strategy for Migrant Integration of the High Commissioner for Migration and adapted to the local reality. The Plan is part of the Project Odemira Integra + and is coordinated by the Municipality of Odemira and funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). More than 40 entities participated in the conception, formulation and execution of the strategy (see Interview 5). A representative of the Municipal Plan emphasizes the participation of the actors involved: “The great added value this Project has has to do with the collaborative network that was created, the Project is not only of the Municipality. Although the Municipality is the coordinator (...) this would not be possible without the collaboration and participation of all entities” (Interview 5). This Plan covers 10 operation fields: reception and integration, urbanism and housing, job market and entrepreneurship, education and language, health, solidarity and social response, citizenship and civic participation, media and public opinion sensibilization, racism and discrimination, and religion (“Odemira Integra+”, 2019).

The 40 entities previously mentioned now form a Platform: the Local Commission for Interculturality which gathers governmental and non-governmental entities. Public entities include the Parish Councils, the Public Schools, the Social Security, the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF), the Authority for Working Conditions (ACT), among many others. The non-public entities include TAIPA (Organization for regional development), a Union for Agricultural Workers, agriculture companies, a regional association of fruit growers, migrants representatives, among others. All these entities interact and work together on this Platform. The Platform divides the entities into work groups with different topics and tasks to execute. Currently there are 6 work groups and each entity can belong to more than one. Thus different entities work closely with different issues more suited to their professional experience. In addition, all entities gather in a “large group” every 3 months to evaluate the work that is being done and what needs to be adjusted. Taking this into consideration, the Municipality as the Plan coordinator is central in gathering every actor and incentivizing the cooperation. The respondents involved in this Platform highlight the constant interaction between all actors involved.

The measures currently being taken target a variety of issues, more specifically, the 10 operation fields previously mentioned. In a broad sense of the execution phase of the Municipal Plan, the plan includes the following measures:

- Train public service employees / technicians in public services
  - Translate, print the "Welcoming Kit for Migrant Citizens in Odemira"
  - Ensure proximity responses to specific problems presented by non-portuguese citizens (*in partnership with TAIPA*)
  - Commemoration of Interculturality Day
  - Inform migrant citizens about the rights / duties in tenant situations. (Translate into 3 languages, print and distribute flyer)
  - Translation (in 3 languages), printing and distribution of information materials on "Support for Housing Improvements" and "Support for Leasing"
  - Elaboration, translation and dissemination of the "Welcome Guide for the Migrant Student and the Student's Guardian"
  - Translate, publish and disseminate, to the migrant population, an information brochure on the functioning of the NHS, guaranteeing an essential level of information for access to health services
- ("Odemira Integra+", 2019)

The Municipality works closely with TAIPA - an organization for regional development. TAIPA has a fundamental role in the reception and integration process of immigrants in the region of Odemira. The Organization has three main projects dedicated to the reception and integration of migrants: ST Project, CLAIM and Giramundo.

TAIPA has been executing the ST project since 2013 in the Parish of S. Teotónio. This project is dedicated to "children, young people and migrant families when they have just arrived, establishing a parallel with schools, facilitating integration at the school level, promoting children's school success" (Interview 6), a representative of the Organization stated. In addition, the project also has a physical space, where school support is provided, Portuguese is taught and more than 30 children of different nationalities attend daily after school. When elaborating on the importance of the interaction with the school of S. Teotónio the respondent stressed the numbers of non-Portuguese students in the School: "in the School of S. Teotónio, I would say that more than 50% of the students are not Portuguese. It was around 46%, possibly more now, closer to 60% maybe" (Interview 6).

Giramundo is the most recent project of TAIPA since 2017, and it aims to improve the reception and integration of immigrants through cultural expressions, and promote dialogue with the local community. The project works directly with migrants through mediators, whom are immigrants that promote the migrants' interaction with the project. This

interaction is perceived as extremely valuable in order to have a better response to the problems felt by the population (Interview 6). These are some of the project Giramundo measures: “We organize national days, they organize themselves, we are only facilitators. We have thematic awareness actions, road safety, maritime safety, citizenship, the environment” (Interview 6). Among the measures there is also the initiative “À Descoberta do Concelho” (“Discovering the municipality”) that includes travelling in the municipality with the goal of sharing gastronomic and local traditional experiences. Other initiatives include a sports championship, that promotes learning and playing football, handball and criquet, as well as artistic workshops that aims integration through art (“Giramundo”, n.d.). According to the representative, Giramundo is the project that has been able to better approach the immigrants and highlights the project's success: “We have reached more than 2000 migrants in the last 2 years of the Giramundo project” (Interview 6).

CLAIM - Local Support Center for the Integration of Migrants from Odemira, a project that has existed since 2014, has been able to maintain their activity without depending on community funds. TAIPA proposed to the agricultural companies existing in the region to finance this project. At the same time, the Municipal Plan was being developed and as both entities - the Municipality and TAIPA - had the same objective, TAIPA also proposed to the Municipality to finance this project. Therefore, CLAIM is financed by the Municipality and large agricultural companies. However, TAIPA’s representative stresses the neutrality that CLAIM must have: "Our vision, and our follow-up work, involves a lot of reflection, a vision with the impartiality that we must assume regardless of the partners we have, whether private or public" (Interview 6). CLAIM’s main tasks are issues regarding legalization, family reunification and renewal of the residence permit. The project has an office in S. Teotónio where immigrants go in order to take care of these issues. In addition, CLAIM has an “itinerary human resource”, an employee that travels between localities carrying out CLAIM’s work. Between July 2018 and December 2019 CLAIM performed 6061 appointments and 3645 processes were open (“CLAIM Odemira Info”, n.d.)<sup>4</sup>. CLAIM meetings happen every two months with the entities involved in the platform, which are the companies that finance the project, the Municipality, three Parish Councils, an association of fruit growers and the Police of S. Teotónio. In these meetings they evaluate the intervention,

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<sup>4</sup> Private document sent from Taipa’s representative to the researcher

characterize the immigrant population (nationality, age and what brings them to CLAIM) and Parish Councils share their struggles and strategies. The representative emphasises this interaction as a positive aspect:

“There are the two sides here: we have the Municipalities, the Parishes, the Local Authorities and on the other side we have companies, which have different challenges. But that if there is cooperation and harmony they can better response on the integration level. And our role there is a bit of an intermediary, of mediation and also of being able to bring all the parties together, so that everyone can be heard and we can give an effective response that is at the level of the migrants’ needs but also satisfactory to both parties. Because sometimes, as we know, it is difficult to combine the vision of a company, of a company whose main purpose is profit, and of a local entity whose main purpose is the well-being of its population. Combining all this has been increasingly challenging lately, but these meetings, this intervention, this sharing, I think it ends up being the added value of this consortium ” (Interview 6).

### *Labour policies*

There were three main respondents involved in the combat of the precarious working conditions of these workers: the Unionists, the working conditions inspector and the association for migrants’ rights. Part of the measures these actors take target and try to dissolve the so-called ‘service companies’.

The representative of the Union for agricultural workers holds concern over the immigrant workers’ precarious situation. The Union performs mainly informative measures: “The measures that are being taken are: informing immigrants about their rights, that is our main struggle, it is to inform immigrants” (Interview 3). Moreover, they try to find and prove a certain situation of exploitation and report to the Authority for Working Conditions. However proving this situations is hard because, according to the representative, the immigrants are afraid of their employers:

“We have some situations, unionized immigrants in companies with serious problems. We got in touch with the companies in order to solve things in the best possible way. And the immigrants were coerced to leave the union and drop the complaints that were to be made to the Authority of Working Conditions. Coerced in such a way that they either gave up, left the Union or went back home” (Interview 3).

The working conditions inspector stresses the fact that targeting these ‘service companies’ involves the commitment of several entities: tax offices, Immigration and Borders Service (SEF), Authority for Working Conditions (ACT), social security, public order forces, public health, and municipalities. Due to the fact that these phenomena infiltrate the legal sphere of several entities, the respondents highlights the importance of cooperation in order to be able to obtain results: “It is through multidisciplinary teams that we can achieve articulated operations that we manage to obtain some results. Not always the ones we would like, but it is the only way” (Interview 7).

In 2016, a law was approved with the strong input of an association for migrants’ rights, the Joint and Several Liability Law (Lei nº 28/2016). This law aims to place increased responsibility on all entities involved in the hiring chain:

“if someone fails in the hiring chain - from the landowner to the worker there are 5 intermediaries, there are several companies working in the same space, so if there is one that fails - they are all responsible. Ultimately, if they do not pay salaries, social security, taxes, the state to whom they owe money can get it from the landowner” (Interview 2).

Although the intentions behind this law are commendable it is very hard to apply for the same reasons that it is hard to trace and prosecute these so-called ‘service companies’. Due to the fact that it is as easy to create companies as it is to dissolve them, the conviction of these entities is extremely difficult, affecting the enforcement of this law:

“This law has a problem: someone must be convicted, with *res judicata*, so that the responsibility can be assigned up to the landowner if necessary. These small contractors, these small labour recruiters - many are also foreigners, of the nationality

of the workers they are exploiting or not - disappear, they leave. And if no one is condemned, there is no one condemned in solidarity” (Interview 2).

In conclusion, the migrants’ precarious situation goes beyond their legal status as it emerges mainly from the established economic practices.

### *A cooperative model of local governance*

Although these two actors - the Municipality and TAIPA - have a fundamental role in the reception and integration of immigrants in the region of Odemira, the work would not be possible without the interaction and cooperation with other actors that take part in these processes. These actors include companies, associations, unions and Parish Councils, as well as, the public services, such as SEF, ACT and social security, among other entities.

The interaction between governmental and non-governmental actors is incessant. The Municipal Plan truly gathers all actors involved and its horizontality is praised in their ‘Governance Model’: “democratic practices, guided by local protagonism and based on horizontality, where local political decision makers are inserted, as partners” (“Odemira Integra+”, 2019). Respondents praise the work done by the Municipality and the degree of interaction of the Commission for Interculturality. When asked about the level of interaction between the Authority for Working Conditions and the Municipality the inspector answered: “There is [interaction], *permanently*. Because we are part of several work groups and several initiatives whose main promoter is the Municipality.” (Interview 7). An agricultural workers Union states: “There is a link between the union, SEF (Immigration and Borders Services), the ACT (Authority for Working Conditions), the Police, the local parishes and the local companies: *the Commission for Interculturality*.”

TAIPA and the Municipality have a solid relationship, in the words of TAIPA’s representative: “it’s a close partnership, the Municipality is always invited and insists on being present in the projects that we develop” (Interview 6). In similar words, the representative of the Municipal Plan states: “TAIPA is a very strong partner here in the municipality” (Interview 5). This stable relationship is stressed by the fact that the Municipality, through the Municipal Plan and AFMI, finances half of CLAIM. Nevertheless,

TAIPA’s work is also highlighted by other entities. An association for migrants’ rights praises the work being developed by TAIPA in the region: “immigrants also started to be more informed, this has to do with our work and of some local entities, such as CLAIM in Odemira, a very respectable work” (Interview 2). A representative of a Union for agricultural workers stresses the important role CLAIM has in the immigrant workers’ legalization processes: “CLAIM is here to bridge the gap between immigrant workers and SEF (Immigration and Borders Services)” (Interview 3). TAIPA confirms this close relationship with SEF, as the representative stresses this relationship by stating: “SEF itself calls CLAIM to clarify one or other document, meaning there is a direct connection”. (Interview 6)

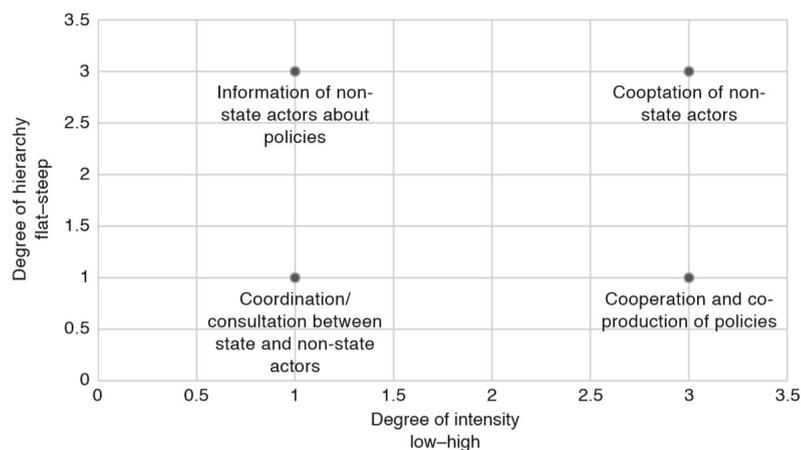


Figure 17.1 Analytical model for research on the government/governance of integration policies.

Source: Schiller, 2018, p.207

In conclusion, there seems to be cooperation between state and non-state actors in the local production of reception and integration policies and measures (Schiller, 2018). There is intense collaboration involving state and non-state actors, TAIPA’s representative recognizes the intense interaction between the association and the Municipality:

“Everyone knows that TAIPA is the one who’s on the ground and in the frontline in the immigration issue. It’s either the Municipality or Taipa, or it comes from the Municipality to Taipa” (Interview 6).

Regarding the level of hierarchy in the decision making process, when asked about how the decisions of the Commission for Interculturality are formed, a Unionist and participant in the meetings of the Commission for Interculturality, answered:

[the decisions] “they are suggestions in case the majority agrees. It is usually like this: there are many suggestions that we all from the Commission suggest, and then maybe there is another person who is there beside us who represents another entity that says: ‘look, but maybe there is this problem or this detail’, and we come to a consensus. Usually there is a consensus among all the entities that are present in the Commission” (Interview 3).

## **Conclusion**

The perception and evaluation of the increased presence of international labour migrants in the region of Odemira from the respondents' perspectives is unconditionally related to economic factors. According to the literature explored on international labour, migration flows work as a labour-supply system (Sassen, 1981). The shortage of labour influences and determines migration flows, which is reflected in the case of Odemira (Piore, 1979; Sassen, 1981). Not only is there a lack of workforce due to the precarity of the work, but also due to the fact that Portuguese workers migrate to other European countries where they can receive higher wages for similar work, contributing to the consolidation of Sassen's labour-supply system theory. Some respondents indicate the liberalization of the immigration laws as an aspect that contributed to the increased presence of immigrants in the region. Yet, other respondents identified the weight of economic factors and highlighted the economy as a pushing factor: “It is the economy that has the ‘calling’ effect. The law responds better or worse and usually late” (Interview 2). The vulnerability of these immigrants is mainly related to their working and housing conditions, and the strong presence of migration schemes. The so-called ‘service companies’ have interest in keeping their employees in vulnerable conditions, raising new barriers to integration for the migrants. However, the major agricultural companies hire these ‘service companies’, contributing to the perpetuation of precarity and vulnerability. The fact that agriculture is a

seasonal industry contributes to the employers' interest in hiring a flexible workforce (Castles, 2011; Sassen, 1981).

Local state and non-state actors developed measures to target both the reception and integration of international labour migrants in the region. There is a strong emphasis on locality in the projects being developed, which contribute to better understanding how the region is responding “differently to similar challenges (Zapata-Barrero et al, 2017, p. 242). Even though the Municipal Plan for Integration is a national initiative, it was conceived and is being developed solely by local actors. Collaboration between local state and non-state actors was a commonly mentioned and praised topic during the interviews. According to Schiller, cooperation and coproduction of local integration policies by state and non-state actors “entails the most intense collaboration and a flat hierarchy between different actors. Both the views of state and non-state actors inform the policymaking process” (Schiller, 2018). These definitions seem to apply to the governance approach of the Municipality's Commission for Interculturality, which not only gathers all entities involved in the reception or integration processes, but also forms consensus or majority approved decisions. Although with limitations, the Municipality's commitment to the reception and integration of immigrants is commendable. The Municipality's work seems to go beyond what is ‘mandatory’ according to Bommes<sup>5</sup> (Bommes, 2012). At the same time, one of their main struggles seems to be determining what is mandatory according to Bommes, which entails making the public services and institutions available to its inhabitants. Lastly, the coordinated interaction between TAIPA and the Municipality enables them to share resources and valuable information. Moreover, the private public-partnership between the Municipality and Agriculture Companies created in order to finance CLAIM, that is executed by TAIPA and aims mainly to facilitate regularization of migrants, is a truly innovative initiative that serves immigrant communities (De Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017).

Although migration and labour markets are defective in regulation, Portugal immigration laws currently facilitate migrants' regularization (Düvell, 2012). There is a joint effort promoting the regularization of migrants in the region. CLAIM's work is mainly dedicated to the regularization of migrants. Moreover, several actors strongly contribute to

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<sup>5</sup> “they are obliged to make available to their inhabitants and thus also to foreigners, that is, migrants, the required economic, social and cultural institutions and services” (Bommes, 2012, p. 128)

inform immigrants about their rights<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, the State's interest in maintaining migrants in an unregulated status is not verified in the case of Portugal, and more specifically in the case of Odemira (Düvell, 2012). However, the precariousness these migrants face goes beyond their legal status. Goldring & Landolt (2011; 2012) conclude that a precarious legal status has an impact on the workers' vulnerability, yet a positive change in the legal status does not imply a positive change in job precarity. The economic practices in place set the current precarious working conditions in the intensive agriculture in the region of Odemira. The negative impact the 'service companies' have on migrants' rights overtakes the impact of local arrangements on migrants' rights.

This research would be more complete if interviews with immigrants working in the region of Odemira were made. However, due to the pandemic situation we currently live within, such interviews were not possible. Thus, an answer to the third sub-research question was hampered due to these constraints. In order to have an in depth-understanding of the migrants' rights position, as well as how they act upon the precarity they face, their side of the story also has to be heard. Therefore, focusing on the migrants' perspective is simultaneously a limitation and an opportunity for future research. Nevertheless, this research contributes to existing academic and public debates on the local reception and integration of immigrant workers in rural areas by showing the challenges and opportunities involved in how institutional actors are developing innovative local governance approaches on the ground.

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<sup>6</sup> TAIPA, the Municipality, an agricultural workers' Union, an association for migrants' rights

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## *Appendix*

### *1) Interviews:*

- Interview 1: President of Parish Council 1
- Interview 2: Association for Migrants' Rights
- Interview 3: Agricultural Workers Union
- Interview 4: Regional Environmental Movement
- Interview 5: Municipal Plan for Integration Representative
- Interview 6: TAIPA - Regional Organization for Development
- Interview 7: Working Conditions Inspector (District of Beja)
- Interview notes 8: President of Parish Council 2 (was not recorded)
- Written Interview 9: Agricultural Companies Association

2) Figure 1: Analytical model for research on the government/governance of integration policies

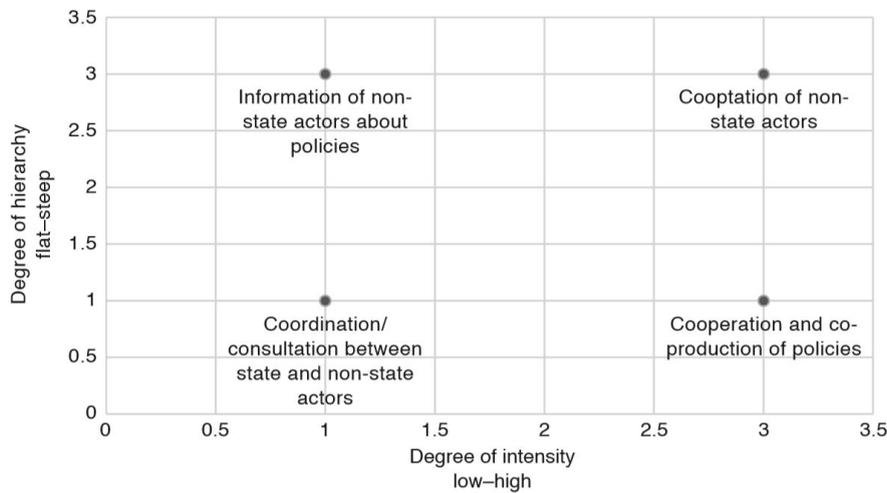


Figure 17.1 Analytical model for research on the government/governance of integration policies.

Source: Schiller, 2018, p. 207

3) Interview Guide

I. Professional involvement with migrants

1. First I would like to ask you if you can briefly explain your professional background and what position you currently hold within your organization?
2. How do you encounter the topic of labour migration in your professional context?

II. Organization

3. What is the vision of your organization on labour migration in the Odemira Region?
4. Does your organization work with labour migrants on a regular basis?  
→ If so: How?
5. What measures is your organization taking regarding the integration of labour immigrants?

II. Impact of the Economic Forces

6. In your opinion, how does the increase in foreign labor relate to the growth of intensive agriculture in the region?
7. The increase in intensive agriculture in the region has been remarkable and criticized by some, how do you see this increase?
  - In your opinion, brings more positive or negative things to the region?

### III. Governance:

8. What role does the local governmental play in the receiving and integrating international labour migrants?
  - Municipality
  - How are companies involved in the policy making around labour migrant integration?
  - How are labour unions involved in the policy making around labour migrant integration?
9. Is there cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors on the integration of these immigrants?
  - in which areas?
10. Is there a specific program regarding the integration or well-being of the migrants?
  - Tell me more about Odemira +
11. What kind of interaction is there between the Municipality and other actors?
12. Is there an community effort to receive / integrate these immigrants?

### IV. Local impact and perception

13. What impact does the increase in the number of immigrants have in the region / village?
14. How does local media report on the increase presence of labour migrants?

### V. Living Conditions

15. What type of contracts do these workers have?
16. What kind of housing conditions do these immigrants have?
17. Is the Union close to these migrants' situation?
  - Is the Unions taking measures regarding the working conditions?

### VI. Legal Status

18. What requirements do these immigrants have to meet to be regularized?

→ Due to the current pandemic, the Portuguese State took the decision to regularize the pending requests in SEF

→ How did this measure affect the process of legalizing these immigrants?

→ If the regularization occurred, what social impacts does it have?

19. Are there any efforts on the part of the Municipality/ Parish Councils/ companies / organizations to assist in the legalization process?

### *Final Questions*

20. How do you see the situation of labour migrants in the Odemira Region evolving in the near future?

→ Is there anything you would like to add?

## *4) CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH*

### **INSTRUCTION**

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website ([http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page\\_id=17](http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17)). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

### **PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

Project title: The societal impact of increase labour migration to the region of Odemira, in the South of Portugal

Name, email of student: Inês Cabral, 544981ic@eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Thomas Swerts, swerts@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: 11 December 2019 – 21 June 2020

Is the research study conducted within DPAS YES - ~~NO~~

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?  
(e.g. internship organization)

## **PART II: TYPE OF RESEARCH STUDY**

Please indicate the type of research study by circling the appropriate answer:

1. Research involving human participants. YES - ~~NO~~

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? ~~YES~~--  
NO

*Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).*

2. Field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. YES - ~~NO~~

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). YES - ~~NO~~

## **PART III: PARTICIPANTS**

**(Complete this section only if your study involves human participants)**

Where will you collect your data?

The data for this research will be collected in the Municipality of Odemira in the South of Portugal. It will be attempted to collect data and participants that concern and affect the immigrants' situation in the region. Interviews will be conducted individually with governmental staff of the Municipality, with members of companies associations, members of farmers' union and members of migrant associations. Moreover, data will also be gathered from public documents and content analysis will be performed.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

The interviews will be held with 9 people. Four of the participants are part of governmental institutions. Three others respondents are part of Associations, two of them concerning migrants and the other concerning the live of the region of Odemira. The other two respondents belong to the farming companies (multinationals) association and the farmers' union.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

In order to perform this research purposive sampling will be used. The reason why these nine respondents were chosen is to analyse the societal impact of the increase migration to the region of Odemira and how governmental and non-governmental actors are approaching the situation, in the context of local governance.

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? ~~YES~~ NO
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? ~~YES~~ NO
3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? ~~YES~~ NO
4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? ~~YES~~ NO  
*Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).*
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? ~~YES~~ NO
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)?  
  
YES - ~~NO~~
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent?  
  
~~YES~~ NO
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? ~~YES~~ NO
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? ~~YES~~ NO
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? ~~YES~~ NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

Regarding the ethical considerations of the analysis of the societal impact of the increase labour migration to the region of Odemira, the interviews might touch upon political opinions. Moreover, the respondents' opinions explored in the interviews will be carefully dealt with in order to not contribute to the stigmatization of the immigrants. The anonymization of the respondents will be taken into consideration and fulfilled in case of request.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

Informed consent will always be asked to inform the participants about the study before the data collection and also after the research has taken place.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

This research will have no unintended negative consequences for the participants. Furthermore, the stigmatization of the immigrants in Odemira will be carefully considered. Efforts will be made to formulate any less positive outcomes of the study as neutrally and discreetly as possible.

*Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.*

#### **Part IV: Data storage and backup**

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

Handwritten field notes will be kept safe in a locked room. Digital files will be secured on a private desktop, which is only accessible with a password. A back-up of the data will be made regularly on an external hard drive.

*Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.*

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

The researcher is responsible. All data will be secured by the researcher, who is the only person that knows the passwords.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

The research data will be backed-up every week. In the period of more frequent data collection in the field, the data will be backed-up twice a week.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

All data files will be completely anonymized. Personal details will be separated from the rest of the data. All personal details (names, places etc.) will be replaced by a code. This code will be stored in the database. The list of respondents will be kept separately from the other data files.

*Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.*

### **PART VI: SIGNATURE**

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

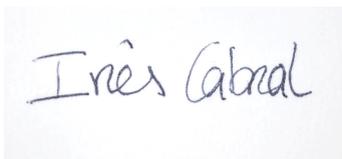
Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Inês Cabral

Name (EUR) supervisor: Thomas Swerts

Date: 20/03/2020

Date: 18/03/2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Inês Cabral".A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Thomas Swerts", with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.