



# **Master**

## International Economics and European Studies

### **Master's Final Work**

#### Internship Report

Internship at the Consulate-General of the Portuguese Republic in Bordeaux, France.

Pierre-Marie de Mendonça Bello Ruas

May - 2021



# **Master**

## International Economics and European Studies

### **Master's Final Work**

#### Internship Report

Internship at the Consulate-General of the Portuguese  
Republic in Bordeaux, France.

Pierre-Marie de Mendonça Bello Ruas

**Supervision:**

Dr. Mario Gomes, Consul-General of Portugal  
Professor Dr. António Augusto da Ascensão Mendonça

May - 2021

## GLOSSARY

AICEP	Agência para o Investimento e Comércio Externo de Portugal
CCI	Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Luso Française
CCIFP	Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Franco-Portugaise
CCILF	Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Luso Française
DB	Database
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
ED	Economic Diplomacy
EME	Emerging Market Economy
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
MPC	Marginal Propensity to Consume
NAFTA	North-American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

## ABSTRACT, KEYWORDS AND JEL CODES

In this report I will outline the activities developed in the context of my internship at the Consulate-General of Portugal in Bordeaux from the 25<sup>th</sup> of January to the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, as well as their relevance for the Master's degree in International Economics and European Studies at the Lisbon School of Economics and Management.

Keywords: Economic; Diplomacy; Consulate; Internship; Bordeaux; France

JEL Codes: F00; F10; F50; F53; H00

## ABSTRATO, PALAVRAS CHAVES E CÓDIGOS JEL

Neste relatório irei delinear as atividades desenvolvidas no contexto do estágio curricular no Consulado-Geral de Portugal em Bordéus entre o 25 de janeiro e 25 de abril, assim como a relevância do mesmo para o Mestrado em Economia Internacional e Estudos Europeus no ISEG - Lisbon School of Economics and Management.

Palavras Chaves: Economia; Diplomacia; Consulado; Estágio; Bordéus; França

Códigos JEL: F00; F10; F50; F53; H00

# INDEX

<b>GLOSSARY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ABSTRACT, KEYWORDS AND JEL CODES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INDEX</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
The Consulate General of the Portuguese Republic in Bordeaux	7
Opting for an internship	8
Internship report	9
<b>II Economic Diplomacy in Bordeaux</b>	<b>11</b>
Existing scholarship	11
The economic ties of Aquitaine and Portugal	12
Meeting with Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel de Oliveira	14
<b>III The Consulate</b>	<b>15</b>
Internship and relevance for the Master's degree in International Economics and European studies	15
The staff and duties	15
The IT Framework	16
Local Community	16
<b>IV Tasks and Activities</b>	<b>19</b>
A note on paperwork	20
Scheduling and information	21
Database and soft power	22
<b>V Experience and impressions</b>	<b>24</b>
Internship and pandemic	24
Learning experience	25
Master's degree in International Economics and European Studies	25
On future internships	26
<b>VI A critical viewpoint on the consulate-general</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>VII Conclusion</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>34</b>
Appendice 01, Organogram of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, courtesy of the Ministry.	34
Appendice 02, day-to-day breakdown of activities:	34

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Mário Gomes, Consul-General of Portugal, and the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for giving me this internship opportunity; in particular for the opportunity to research and work on a wide scope of subjects pertaining to economic diplomacy. I'm equally grateful to Professor Dr. António Augusto da Ascensão Mendonça, of ISEG, for the help in elaborating this report.

I'm also thankful to the entire staff at the Consulate General, for all the sympathy, help and patience; in particular for taking the time to explain all the specificity and complexity of a consular delegation. Finally to Dr. Emmanuel de Oliveira for agreeing to a meeting and taking the time to discuss the legal and economic ties between Aquitaine and Portugal.

# I Introduction

## The Consulate General of the Portuguese Republic in Bordeaux

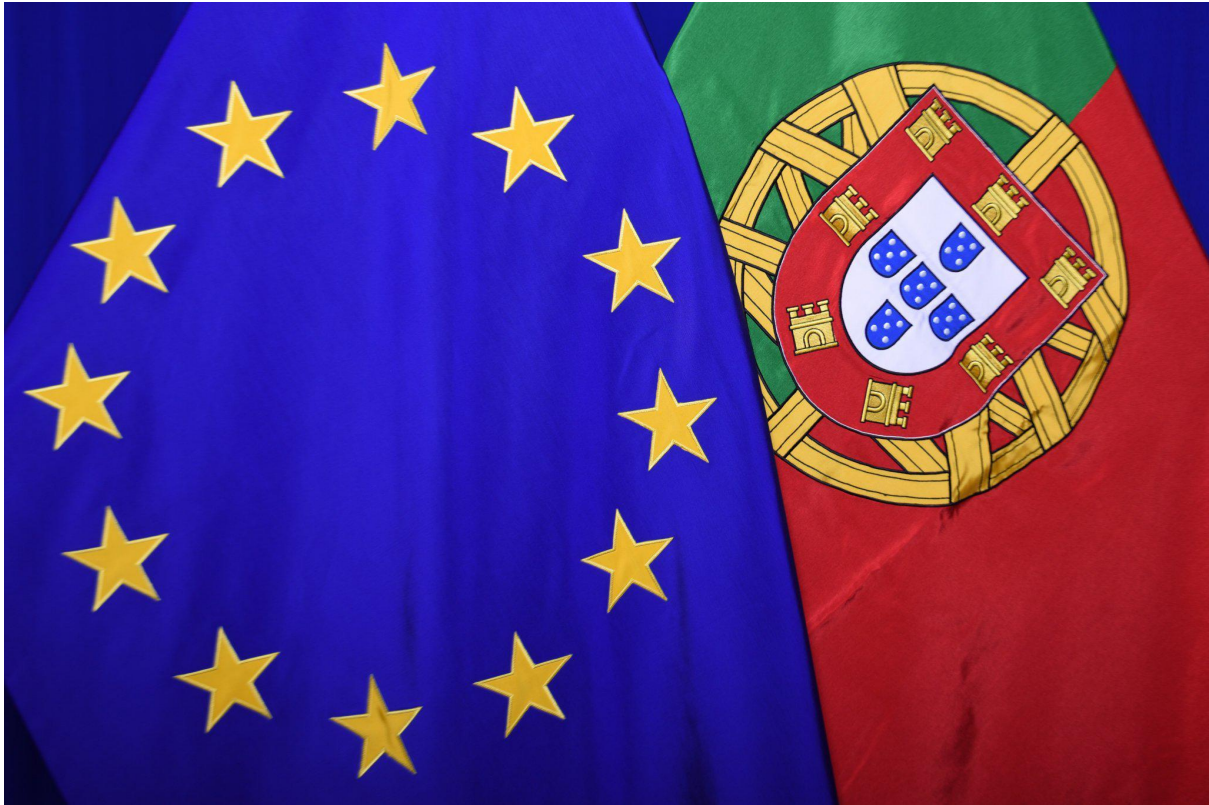


Figure 1: Image courtesy of the office of the President of the European Parliament.

The nation of Portugal is amongst Europe's oldest, and the country's historical influence and reach has been tremendous. Although the decline and loss it experienced over the years has diminished its prestige, it has nonetheless retained a strong soft power capability - akin to other European former colonial powers. As a historically far-reaching nation, and one with a large emigrant population, it has an extensive network of embassies and consulates throughout the world. It is most certainly a country "punching far above its weight" in terms of soft-power and diplomatic effort - and one doing so with a very limited budget.

France is of particular importance to Portugal and the Portuguese. Not only through the close socioeconomic ties - which will be explored further down in this paper - but also through the extensive Portuguese community in the country.

Within that paradigm, the traditional duties of a consulate is to provide administrative services outside the homeland. It is not an embassy, which performs duties pertaining to the relationship between the country of origin and the host. A consulate rather works to protect<sup>1,2</sup> and promote the local emigrant community.

On this last point the Consulate General has worked with both Portuguese migrants in France, their descendants, the local institutions and associations and their counterparts in Portugal. The goal is to promote the contemporary Portuguese culture and business opportunities for both French FDI in Portugal, and market possibilities for Portuguese corporations in France (such as Amorim or Carmwood).

Note that the General suffix in the name is largely honorific, and refers to the importance and prominence of this entity. It is, however, formally codified in the Decreto-Lei n.º 71/2009 sobre o Regulamento Consular<sup>3</sup>.

### **Opting for an internship**

The choice of an internship at the end of my Master's degree was based on several factors:

First, from a fairly pragmatic point of view, the European job market is increasingly competitive and work experience is highly valued. Although a Master's diploma opens many doors, it is often not enough by itself to land a position, and further work experience is a competitive advantage - it is becoming a running theme for recent graduates, especially in the south of Europe, that *you need experience to get experience*. An internship has this advantage compared to an academic thesis, the latter of which is necessarily in depth and focused on a specific field, and thus less of a selling point on a CV or interview for most job, albeit not all evidently

---

<sup>1</sup> Convention de Vienne sur les relations consulaires de 1963

<sup>2</sup> Decreto Regulamentar n.º 9/2012.

<sup>3</sup> Specifically "Regulamento Consular, Capítulo II, Artigo 4.º, epígrafe Criação de consulados-gerais: A criação de consulados-gerais é determinada pela consideração de factores históricos, culturais, económicos ou sociais relevantes e justificativos da atribuição daquela categoria aos postos consulares."



Much more importantly, however, was the strong interest in international Diplomacy, and the inner workings of the field. Simply the opportunity to do an internship, “any” internship, would not have been quite as relevant for this Master, so it mattered tremendously that this position was within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic corp. Being able to learn how the skills lectured on the metaphorical school-benches apply in practice is very important and useful for the future, and even for helping guide one through future job prospects.

Overall the decision hinged on the wish to learn more about the institution that is the Ministry of Foreigner Affairs as well as, more specifically, the diplomatic corp. And I’m evidently exceedingly grateful to the Ministry and the Consulate-General for affording me this opportunity.

### **Internship report**

With this report I will give an overview of the work that was carried out during the course of the internship, from January 25 to April 25, breaking it down into four parts.

- 1) An introduction, outlining what the consulate is, and its most basic function. This will be followed by a short overview of the background diplomatic and economic ties between the region of Aquitaine and the country of Portugal. As well as the precious insights of Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel de Oliveira on this subject.
- 2) A summary of what the consulate is from a more practical perspective, as well as why the experience I had there was relevant to the master’s degree in International Economics and European Studies. A look also at the community whose interests it works for.
- 3) An explanation of the tasks I undertook during the internship, and how they pertained to the goals of the consulate.
- 4) Finally, a brief critical overview of how the consulate manages to achieve most of its goals despite the limited resources and public-health regulations that were present at the time.

It’s also relevant to note that a more in-detailed report of the activities developed during each day of the internship is to be found in the annex. Although not the most

enthralling of readings, it helps give a sense of the shifting duties and responsibilities over the course of the month the internship lasted.

## II Economic Diplomacy in Bordeaux

### Existing scholarship

The academic literature on European economic diplomacy is an interlinked mesh of several fields. Diplomatic relations are highly dependent on the historical and cultural ties of countries, as well as historical rivalries. As such an understanding of diplomacy can't be dissociated from understanding the historical links of two countries. More recent efforts, especially in the post-war period, to codify norms and traditions into international laws have also deeply tied it to legal principles and writings. And evidently, research into social sciences can't be discarded, notably political and economics sciences.

Ultimately, however, no specific prior work on the modern-day relations of the region of Aquitaine and Portugal was found. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that Aquitaine has not been a sovereign state with *ius legatio* in centuries, and as such diplomatic ties of the former kingdom to Portugal had to go through Paris. That doesn't mean no useful documents exist, as background information on the ties between the regions was found. Furthermore historical documents and research on both regions was useful to better understand the realities, as well as data from respective national statistics agencies and chambers of commerce. Finally elements concerning the European project, particularly the single market, were also interesting to consider - it's now well established that the ease and cost of doing business between European Member-States has lowered significantly thanks to the EU (Baldwin, R. E.; Wyplosz, C. 2009).

In a broader scope, three works stood-out in regards to European Economic Diplomacy:

- Van Bergeijk, P., & Moons, S. (2009, July 22). Economic diplomacy and economic security.
- Also from Van Bergeijk, P (2009). Economic Diplomacy and the Geography of International Trade
- Bayne, N., & Woolcock, S. (2017). The new economic diplomacy decision making and negotiation in international economic relations. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

What these works brought to be particularly interesting was the focus in the 2009 literature on new actors, and a shift to a multipolar world, contrasting with the 2017 where these are now established agents in the global economy. This will be covered in more details below, but it's clear that for both Aquitaine's and Portugal's export and as a source of FDI, these new agents have proven important.

Doing research into this subject highlighted something I also felt very much on the terrain: there's no manual to economic diplomacy. A diplomat assigned to a foreign state will have to go through history books, language courses, cultural and protocolar training. They will rely on the prior knowledge and work of their diplomatic corps, established slowly over the course of years or even decades. And evidently personal experience.

The same is true of academic research. It will either have to give a generalised overview into the ties of two countries, of a global region, or even the world. The works I highlighted were referenced and cited often, and are very good reference points for an understanding of the field; they are, however, a starting point for any diplomat or researcher eager to delve further into this field, rather than a thorough explanation.

### **The economic ties of Aquitaine and Portugal**

The Nouvelle-Aquitaine region of France is both typical and atypical within the larger French economy and its connections to the outside world.

It is typical in its strong internal connections with the rest of the country, as exchanges between Aquitaine and the rest of France represent the bulk of trade, be it by tonnage or value. The same is true for the movement of people.

It is, however, atypical in its positive balance of trade or the nature of its exports. As of 2018 it had a 597M€ surplus, compared to the -79'718M€ of France (CCI Aquitaine 2019). The nature of the exports is equally unusual as the agricultural and food industries account for nearly 40% of exports (by value). Specifically, and in accordance with the reputation of Bordeaux as the wine capital, over 1/3 of exports are comprised of drinks.

In regards to the outside world the region's main partner is evidently the EU, owing to the close geographical and historical proximity. With Brexit the UK became one of the largest non-EU markets, and the world's second largest wine export market for the Bordeaux Grands-Crus (as of 2019).

The year 2020 represented a ~66% drop in wine exports for both France and Portugal (EC - DG Agri. 2021). This is not surprising, as these types of goods are often where people first reduce or cut consumption in more economically challenging times. The case of wine is compounded by the supply chain disruption that hit the globe in 2020, as it is a heavy and fragile good to transport.

Unsurprisingly Portugal, a smaller economy, in which wine is an even larger part of the economy than France (EC - DG Agri 2021), was hit even harder. However, despite the exchanges between the two countries relating to the wine economy, a lot of the production and activity, even though it is done by Portuguese companies (such as Amorim and Carmwood), is located in France. In turn the products exported from Portugal to France are typically less sensitive to economic cycles.

En 2018, les importations françaises en provenance du Portugal ont atteint 6,7 Md€ (+ 11,2 %) [...]. Plus de la moitié des importations (53,2 %) concernaient d'autres produits industriels dont un tiers relève de la catégorie textiles, habillement, cuir et chaussures [...]. Les importations de ce poste sont cependant en net repli cette année (- 6 %), en raison de la baisse de ventes de chaussures et de vêtements. Notons également le repli significatif des importations de cigarettes (- 57 %) à 40 M€.

In: Les échanges commerciaux entre la France et le Portugal en 2018, DG Trésor,  
Avril 2019

But despite comparatively more robust exports, France is Portugal's second export market (DG Trésor 2019), notably in regards to tourism and the automotive industries. This means the Portuguese economy is tied to the well being of the French economy, one whose nature makes it more sensitive to global ups and downs; this being due the French activities of luxury goods and tourism exports.

Aquitaine, however, is slightly less tied to Portugal than other regions of France. Although the local economy imports industrial parts, this activity has declined and is more

deeply linked to Italy, Britain and Germany. And as the viticultural industry tends to cluster physically, the Portuguese exports to the region are comparatively reduced.

*Aquitain*, the people of Aquitaine, are also potential tourists (INE 2020). The strong links of the region with Heraklion, Porto and Lisbon showcases just how much (Observatoire social des transports 2016). But it is nonetheless a less wealthy and populated region than the capital, and downturns in Aquitaine have therefore a reduced impact compared to the same phenomenon happening in Paris.

### **Meeting with Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel de Oliveira**

On the 16th of March I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel de Oliveira, lawyer in both France and Portugal, doctor of law and president of the *Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Franco-Portugaise* (CCIFP 2021) Bordeaux, who kindly agreed to answer a few questions regarding the economic links between Aquitaine and Portugal.

Dr. de Oliveira discussed the motivations leading French investors of Portuguese origin or descent to choose Portugal for investment, notably the mix between a somewhat irrational decision based on cultural proximity and personal link, as well as economic attractiveness. The campaigns and good communication on the part of the Portuguese governments and entities, such as AICEP, seemed to have had a very positive effect. Some praise was also given to the advances the country had made in many fields, including in regards to laws and regulations being at the same level as any other developed western European country.

However other aspects, like the culture and weather, were also seen as strong selling points for people seeking to relocate part or all of their activities in the country, as well as favourable tax incentives. Finally it was also important to distinguish between new investment, which focused more heavily on real-estate, and existing exchanges pertaining to industries which already have established ties.

The meeting was for me a great opportunity to see in practice phenomena discussed theoretically in economic papers, such as the effect of distance, on investment. It was also interesting to hear a positive view on investment in Portugal. It also allowed me to have a

broader understanding of the links between the two countries, as well as gaining insights directly from an expert of the subject.

### **III The Consulate**

#### **Internship and relevance for the Master's degree in International Economics and European studies**

Having the opportunity to work for the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs directly relates to the European Studies aspects of the Master's program: an institution dealing with international matters, and part of a member-state of the European Union at a time when that member-state will hold the European presidency.

Quote from the information provided, by the faculty, about the degree: *“It is aimed for all those interested in acquiring specialised and professional skills in the fields of international economics, European economics, and European institutions, and particularly for those interested in pursuing a career with EU entities and international institutions [and] the diplomatic service [...]”* (ISEG 2020)

The Consulate in Bordeaux specifically is important, as not only is it a formal delegation in a fellow member-state of the European Union, but in virtue of that it deals daily with matters pertaining to administration and law. It's an exceptional opportunity to contact with the daily aspects of the field. Finally there are strong economic ties between the region and Portugal, be it through the Portuguese migrant community in Aquitaine, French entrepreneurs seeking business opportunities in Portugal or through the region having industries similar and/or dependent on Portuguese industries; in the latter case viticulture and cork production is a good example.

#### **The staff and duties**

The general duties and responsibilities of the staff are extensive, and require a broad set of skills. Perfect fluency in French and Portuguese are sine qua non, evidently, but so is formal training. It also requires an ability to translate both languages quickly and knowledge of both cultures and geography. An ability to deal with people from all socioeconomic backgrounds, from the older illiterate generations to the younger and highly educated.

As is often heard within the walls of the institution, the consulate aggregates all the duties of the Portuguese administration. This also requires a far broader skill set than that of a typical cleric.

### **The IT Framework**

The IT framework within the consulate itself is rather simple: it consists of two networks, one dedicated to the computers and the other to the VoiP phones. The first one has a modem, connecting to the WAN, which in turn is connected to a Firewall/Router. This device checks the MAC address and IP of the LAN equipment against a whitelist. In turn this is connected to a CISCO switch, which handles the wired connections.

This network had a server which handled several internal tasks, including data storage and printing. Due to hardware issues, this machine was down for the duration of my stay at the consulate

The VoiP network has a simple modem, linked to a Router/Switch combo. This is also the network providing wireless connectivity, which explains that it is physically separated from the wired network.

### **Local Community**

The cultural influence of France in Portugal, strongly felt from the era of Kings and Queens all the way to the end of the dictatorship, is a strong factor of proximity. Not only for trade, by reducing the metaphorical “distance” between the two cultures, but also by promoting the movement of people. Hailing both from Latin and Roman origins, Portugal, alongside much of Europe, would be strongly influenced by the kingdom of the Franks, later France. As the largest and most powerful state of Western Europe for most of the continent’s history since the fall of Rome, many looked at it as something to be emulated. The Carolingian Renaissance would echo in the Portuguese one centuries later, with authors translating and writing work in a Latin codified during the reign of the Emperor.

This undeniable influence of the French culture on Portugal, as well as the mandatory lecturing of the French language in Lusitanian schools to this day, no doubt weighed heavily in the decision of so many Portuguese to opt for France, or neighbouring Romandie (a French speaking region of Switzerland of indubitably French culture) as a destination. And inversely,



French retirees and investors may opt for Portugal for rational reasons, but also, and as explored during the interview with Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel de Oliveira, for the links and proximity they feel for the country.

Although the ties and exchanges between Aquitaine and Portugal are, as mentioned, ancient, the contemporary Portuguese community in France has been largely defined by the emigration of the last years of the Salazarian regime (Almeida, J.C. Ferreira de, 1964) and the few years after the revolution (Pereira, Pedro & Tavares, Lara, 2000). Despite a slight increase in the 2010's over the previous decade (INSEE 2021; Observatório da Emigração: França. 2021) due to 2012 crisis (Tooze, J. A. 2018), it is nowadays a largely aging population.

It is also a dwindling population in Aquitaine; according to INSEE, the Portuguese population went from 47.701 to 43.584 in the past few years. The consular registry accounts for 77.888 people in the same geographic area, however. This discrepancy is explained largely by dual-national counting as French for France, and Portuguese for Portugal. This further reinforces the notion that the number of 1<sup>st</sup> generation migrants are dwindling and a notable portion of “lusu descendente” (offspring of Portuguese emigrants) hold French citizenship.

In economic terms this 1<sup>st</sup> generation is composed largely of lower-skill workers (Pires, R., Azevedo, J., Vidigal, I., Moura Veiga, C. 2020). Although evidently only anecdotal evidence, the necessity for the consulate, and frequent use of, procedures to assist illiterate people is testament to this. These workers, mostly from the northern region of Portugal, worked largely in the construction or hospitality industries.

The consulate has made efforts in the past few years to promote a more modern image of Portugal, especially in the arts. Attempting to bring Portuguese artists to France and promote younger artists and art styles. This is done as much for the benefit of the local community, as for the French public.

French are a notable portion of tourists in pre-pandemic Portugal (INE 2017; INE 2020), as well as an increasingly important migration to the country. Promoting the image of

a modern and European Portugal works to the benefit of Portuguese exports, particularly tourism, and to attract investment from French retirees wishing to live in Portugal.

## IV Tasks and Activities

During my internship at the consulate-general I was assigned a fairly eclectic array of tasks. However those would fit within three broader categories:

- Assist the consular staff in their duties with the public. This very broad category would account for the largest portion of the time spent working at the consulate. The duties included controlling and managing entry in the consulate, as well as preventing people from clustering in enclosed spaces, as per the COVID-19 hygiene regulations, or generally preventing sub-optimal behaviours. It also implied providing the public with information regarding legal duties and requirements, be it for traveling internationally or in regards to the French administration. Whilst not legal advice in the same way a lawyer would provide, basic assistance with rules and regulations was provided.

It also implied explaining the duties and limitations of a consulate, and providing information on where people could find further assistance, if needed. There were a vast array of situations, from having to show a certain vehemence with individuals refusing to wear masks, to situations of genuine distress where people were seeking help to reach their families.

Finally the creation of request forms was also part of the assigned tasks. Those forms would be used either in addition to, or in lieu of, explaining the request procedure. This also helped bridge the language barrier with people who were not proficient with either French, Portuguese or English languages.

This also encompasses a large swath of clerical work, from the creation and redaction of documents, to general administrative work. Answering written queries and requests, be it via email or traditional mail.

- Research the local community and its actors. This equally broad subject consisted in doing research into the local history, geography and economy. It also requires researching the Portuguese migrant community in Bordeaux, its specific nature and sociocultural paradigm. What business these people found themselves working in, if

they had business of their own, and so forth. It also is important to understand the way the Portuguese community saw themselves in regards to their Portuguese homeland. All this, from the history of the Sephardi Jews who left Iberia in the XVth century, to the activities of Amorim in the region, allows the consulate to better articulate its cultural policy. In turn this helps build a positive rapport and image with the French people in Bordeaux, which improves soft power, and projects the image of a modern European Portugal, one open to tourism and business.

Part of this implied the creation of a database on events, artists and elected officials. This specific task is further detailed below

- Finding potential business opportunities for Portuguese companies. In essence doing research and contacting local entities to find potential venues for Aquitainian companies to invest in Portugal, or for Portuguese companies to expand their business to Aquitaine. Similarly to culture, this aims to promote the image and well being of Portugal - although in a more direct way. Several projects in regards to this were developed, notably in the fields of education and viticulture.

### **A note on paperwork**

Over the first couple weeks of the internship I noticed that some of the consulate documentation could be updated. I first compiled as many documents and version history as I could, both from local digital files as well as paper archives. After reading through the paperwork, and having gained some sensibility as to the difficulties people were encountering, I created a standard template.

The new template consists of a few elements:

- A header with logotype, mail address, email address and little else. As the consulate does not presently have the staff necessary to pick-up the phone, including this contact would only mislead the public.
- A specific page structure was created, with fixed typesetting, fonts, etc.

- A few disclaimers were also standardised and present on all documents. The important information was outlined by a textbox.

There were several goals with this. Update the information on all documentation to reflect the present requirements. Provide word & pdf versions of all documents to avoid relying on photocopies. Fix any language issues, especially with the French translation of some documents - from typos to outdated nomenclature. For some older documents they were also updated to reflect a more modern mindset regarding weddings, notably by adding the possibility for the husband to take the wife's last name in the paperwork, as well as accounting for same-sex couples.

Once these documents were created, compiled and approved by the head administrator of the consulate they were made available to the public.

Consideration was also given to the “soft power” aspect. Having a standardised, consistent and modern-looking paperwork set does project a more organised and efficient appearance. Portugal is a comparatively modern country in many aspects of its administration, from openness to non-national languages, to the extensive use of digital tools. Reflecting that in the documents available to the public is important, especially for a community who left Portugal decades ago and retained the image of the country as it was then..

### **Scheduling and information**

Around the midpoint of the internship (9th of march) some slight changes were made to the daily operations of the consulate. The normally empty time slot between 12h and 13h would be used for emergency requests. These requests would have to be emailed-in and duly justified. For the remainder of the internship I had the responsibility for accepting, or denying, those requests, as well as scheduling them. I therefore created an ad-hoc scheduling system (using a few small excel scripts to ease the work), as well as a series of canned email replies. This proved to be a slightly chronophage activity, but having optimised the workflow I was able to minimise the impact of this specific duty.

Creating this scheduling system, with remote access and backups, and maintaining it. This required the creation of a database that contained the information relative to available and taken spots, output a printable schedule and was accessible through a mobile device to circumvent the somewhat lackluster hardware available through the consulate.

Through the semi-automated email system people were able to request a meeting for urgent consular matters during an allotted time slot via a seamless interaction. This system proved to be efficient and successful and fully fulfilled its role.

As a function of its success, however, a plurality, if not a majority, of the requests that were made were not in regards to scheduling. This required a far more hands-on approach with only limited automation available. Consideration was given to using a tool such as GPT-2 to assist, but this would have proven time inefficient. The influx could range from low to high depending on time of the week and other events, such as upcoming festivities. The time before the easter holiday seeing the largest influx, whilst the holidays themselves saw the lowest volume of requests.

Another proposed change was the recording of a voice-message for the consulate's phone system. Many members of the local Portuguese community make limited use of computers, which result in added difficulty at transmitting information. I should note that this is, for most, the result of habits rather than lack of access to technology from lack of financial means.

As a result I suggested recording a message to be automatically played back on the phone, reminding people that they could schedule their consular acts on the entities' website. This could have been done using some audio recording equipment I had on hand, as well as a few basic softwares (such as audacity). This change was ultimately not implemented, however.

### **Database and soft power**

One of the earliest tasks I was assigned was the creation of a database, containing a large array of datasets. The first step consisted in the creation of the framework itself. Due to the inherent limitations and available software, the only option was MS Access. Even though this proved to be a sub-optimal option compared to a MYSQL database, or other similar

software, it presented the advantage of being already available on the local computers and requiring no further installation.

Once the software was decided, the data, which existed in various formats, including a few word documents and excel sheets, was to be compiled and scrubbed. The first step was to create a python script to convert the .docx string to an excel sheet. Afterwards issues with unicode conversion were fixed, the dataset scrubbed and compiled into an excel sheet. The other dataset were all scrubbed and inserted into the access database, and some basic script to compare datasets were created; notably to extract information on elected officials and the event within their Mairie<sup>4</sup>.

Due to concerns over privacy and confidentiality I am unfortunately unable to include this database, or any of its dataset, in this report.

---

<sup>4</sup> Town hall and its administrative framework responsible for the lowest subdivision of French territory, such as a *commune* or *ville*

## **V Experience and impressions**

The internship at the consulate-general proved to be a tremendous experience. Not only from the international mobility perspective, as I had the opportunity to live and work in Bordeaux, but also from the perspective of work experience in the public sector.

Living in France was particularly interesting, as although it is by all accounts a foreign country to me, I felt very much at home. It is a country very close culturally, as well as a member of the European Union and one who uses the Euro; specially relevant to the European Studies aspect of this master's degree, this sense of cultural similarity and homeliness definitely reinforced my view of closeness and kinship between European cultures.

However traveling to and from France proved to be a challenging experience, to say the least. Not only were flights repeatedly canceled, but at the point of departure from Portugal the country was reaching over 10'000 daily cases of covid-19. And once in France the healthcare measures were equally drastic, with obligations to be and remain home after 18h. Returning to Portugal proved also difficult, albeit less so. This looming shadow of pandemic, sanitary rules and restrictions would cover the whole internship.

### **Internship and pandemic**

I have so far avoided dwelling too deeply upon the effects the pandemic had on the work experience. However, this peculiar situation certainly altered things compared to what it would have been otherwise. Not only as an at-risk person for the disease, but also from the impossibility to organise events during my stay; in a normal situation part of my work would have entailed those very tasks. In fact many ouvertures were made to hold such events, but they would only come to fruition after I left the institution.

It also affected opportunities to meet and socialise with peers, an important part of an international experience, as student residences were closed at the time, and any social event (which would have been of dubious legality) presented a serious health risk.

Finally the pandemic reduced opportunities to engage more with local institutions, and thus reduced the scope of the internship slightly. However it also meant more time and



work could be dedicated to what the more traditional tasks of the consulate were, and delve deeper into these practical aspects, as well as the socioeconomic realities of the communities and their relationship with Portugal.

### **Learning experience**

An internship is, first and foremost, supposed to be a learning experience. And in that respect it definitely satisfied that criteria. I had the opportunity to see every aspect of the consulate's work, from simple to difficult cases. Every document, procedure and so forth. The staff proved very patient and willing to answer every question, from obscure legal procedures to historical elements. But it was also the opportunity to meet the local people, understand how the policies of Lisbon affects them all the way to France. How they feel and relate to Portugal.

Of course it was also a chance to dig deeper into the economic ties of the two countries, as well as socioeconomic realities. Remittances, investment in the homeland for emotional reasons, but also motivated by rational economics. Meeting with Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel was also important in understanding what and why small private investors chose Portugal as a recipient of investment. Finally it was obviously useful to experience the public sector from the inside, and see the realities and challenges inherent to it.

Not only was it obviously useful on a personal level, but so was it in terms of taking decisions regarding future employment and future job opportunities. It was a terrific chance for certain.

### **Master's degree in International Economics and European Studies**

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the internship gave me the opportunity to enact in practice the skills learned at University, and see from a practical perspective the usage of the tools lectured during different subjects. Obviously no position is likely to ever make use of the broad skill-set obtained across several years of academic learning, and it was the case for this specific one too. However it still afforded me the chance to use research skills learned at ISEG, as well as to have a critical view of articles and information on the economic relations of the two regions. The socioeconomic aspects were also crucial in better

understanding the economic behaviours of the local expat community, and what they valued as important.

Parts of the internship, such as the work done in updating the documentation, would be closer to the European Studies aspect of the degree, and would likely have been done just as well using skill sets from other areas of expertise such as law or communication. However the research into financial aspects, investment opportunities and the whole umbrella of economic diplomacy was definitely made possible by, or at least helped significantly through, the skills learnt as part of the international economics aspect of the degree.

### **On future internships**

Evidently it would be nonsensical to criticise either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Consulate-General for the challenges inherent to a world pandemic. However I strongly believe improvements could have been made in the information provided by the academic institution or the ministry in regards to the specifics of international travels and access to healthcare during the pandemic.

On the point of cost, the unpaid nature of the internship proved a tremendous financial effort. As this international experience was entirely funded “from pocket”, the lack of financial support was, in the most generous of manners, very challenging. I strongly believe it would be positive to have financial support or remuneration tied to the internship, similar to what other countries, including France, offer.

It also bears to note that, in France, unpaid internships exceeding a short length are frowned upon, if not illegal, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs owes escaping such norms largely to the fact that the consulate-general is a diplomatic mission - however it is in my view relevant to consider local principles and adjust expectations accordingly. From a purely economic point of view it also reinforces the plutocratic nature of work opportunities for diplomatic services and public institutions.

Consideration is also to be given to the effect that, as the intern bears no cost for the institution, it falls on the good will of the specific delegation to provide adequate conditions; there is limited loss in failing to do so. I was fortunate to have a great and insightful

experience, but I believe this to be due to the amazing people working at the consulate-general. More “dismal” economics leads me to think that putting an opportunity-cost on having an intern, whatever this cost may be, would incentivise all institutions to provide similar opportunities as I had. It would increase the “loss” from failing to provide good working conditions and opportunities to work.

## **VI A critical viewpoint on the consulate-general**

A recurring criticism of the people dealing with the consulate was the impossibility to reach the institution via phone. And whilst this is true, enabling this would require a call-center; something I’ve been told was being worked on by the ministry. More personal criticism would regard the dilapidated state of parts of the building itself. But once again this was being addressed at the time, and repair work was hoped to start after the pandemic situation improved sufficiently.

It is certainly important to promote FDI and soft-power that the consulate, the main point of contact with Portugal for many in Aquitaine, projects a modern image. Especially in the wake of the economic crisis, dilapidated infrastructure does not inspire confidence in the state’s finances.

However other issues weren’t being addressed, and they also pertained to the lack of resources. The computers and servers were outdated, or in some cases even broken. Repairs would be delayed because of slow procurement, and purchase decisions often didn’t account for cost-effectiveness. Despite much querying, I couldn’t find any explanation from a netsec perspective, leading me to believe this could be improved with optimised management on the part of the central procurement office. This may seem small, but added-up to slower work and ever longer waiting lines.

Another point of contention is the wage offered to new joiners. Not only would someone joining the ministry be slightly underpaid by the standards of Bordeaux, but crucially they would be dismally underpaid by those of Paris (which offer similar compensation). Having looked at the specific opportunities offered in Geneva, I was surprised to see some falling below the local minimum wage.

The mandatory fiscal residence in Portugal for the ministry's workers makes perfect sense, however having to be burdened by Portuguese tax rates on areas with costs of living several folds higher is highly problematic. The solution may arise in further reducing the tax burden on the staff, or adjusting it to local realities.

Crucially this point does not come exclusively from a moral paradigm of a “just wage”, but also from a fairly pragmatic view that underpaying will not attract talent, and will especially not be effective at retaining it. Whilst the ministry can offer the prestige of being a diplomatic corps, it also brings its staff all the challenges, administrative and otherwise, inherent to it. And attachment to the homeland will only go so far in hiring and keeping qualified workers in Paris, Geneva and London. These expensive locations require fair compensation. But the Consulate-General itself is, in my opinion, truly doing the best it can with the finite resources at its disposal. And although there is margin for some optimisation in the ministry, such as the aforementioned, as well as more uniformisation in between delegations, the Consulate itself appeared as a well-run ship.

## VII Conclusion

Economic diplomacy is ever growing in importance. And akin to diplomacy itself, it takes a plurality of forms. The most obvious and direct are the high-profile trade deals, such as NAFTA or the EU-Mercosur agreement, or the negotiation at the EU level. However soft-power, promoting FDI and other policies are as important, if not more, than the more mediated deals.

The resource poor country of Switzerland owes its wealth in part to its location, history, but also, and crucially, stability. Meanwhile, emerging market economies, EME, have benefited heavily from FDI.

The work I developed at the consulate tried, alongside the normal consular duties, to promote the image of a modern country. Updating the documentation to reflect the contemporary procedure<sup>5</sup>, with a consistent graphic chart, was part of this; the consulate is often the sole contact many emigrants have with their home country's government. For programs like the *programa regressar* (programa regressar 2021) to succeed despite the comparatively lower purchase power and higher unemployment, it is important that the institutions abroad showcase the image of an attractive country.

Projects like researching the FDI potential of the KEDGE group, or researching Portuguese companies potentially interested in expanding to the French market also played a role in this. Efforts have been made for the consulate to act as a link between various entities, and finding potential partners or contacts is paramount. Budget constraints limit the ability of the ministry to organise events and partnerships. However the image and “gravitas” of the entity and the nominal backing of the Portuguese state facilitates things.

And although I had hoped to be able to have more contact with local entities, something rendered impossible by the pandemic, it proved a terrific learning experience, and I had the opportunity to improve on a wide variety of skills, from administrative norms, law (national and international alike), economics, excel, to the inner workings of a shredder or

---

<sup>5</sup> The documentation relative to the wedding was particularly interesting, as it held rather outdated notions. Notably it did not account for either homosexual weddings, or heterosexual weddings where the husband would take their partner's name.

python programing. On a less academic level it was also the opportunity to reside in France for a few months, and experience the life and culture of a fellow European country.

## REFERENCES

DG Trésor (2019). *Les échanges commerciaux entre la France et le Portugal en 2018*. DG Trésor

CCI Aquitaine (2019). *Commerce International de la Nouvelle-Aquitaine en 2018*. CCI Aquitaine

EC - DG Agri (2021). *Wine Trade Data*. Retrieved February 11, 2021, from <https://agridata.ec.europa.eu/extensions/DashboardWine/WineTrade.html>

Observatoire social des transports (2016). *Tableau de bord des Transports routiers de voyageurs et de marchandises en Aquitaine, données 2015*. Observatoire social des transports

Legifrance (2021). *Loi du 1er juillet 1901 relative au contrat d'association*. Retrieved February 11, 2021, from <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/LEGITEXT000006069570/>

Deloitte (2020). *Rapport du commissaire aux comptes sur les comptes annuels du groupe KEDGE Business School*. Retrieved February 11, 2021, from [https://www.journal-officiel.gouv.fr/document/associations\\_a/514005123\\_30062020](https://www.journal-officiel.gouv.fr/document/associations_a/514005123_30062020)

Almeida, J.C. Ferreira de (1964), "*A emigração portuguesa para França em 1953-65: alguns aspectos quantitativos*", *Análise Social*, II (7-8), pp. 599-622.

Pereira, Pedro & Tavares, Lara. (2000). *Portuguese Population in France: a snapshot 25 years after their arrival*.

Tooze, J. A. (2018). *Crashed how a decade of financial crisis changed the world*.

INSEE (2021) *L'essentiel sur... les immigrés et les étrangers*. Retrieved February 17, 2021, from <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3633212>

Observatório da Emigração: França. (2021) (Observatório da Emigração Centro de

Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia do Instituto Universitário de Lisboa). *França*. Retrieved February 17, 2021, from <http://observatorioemigracao.pt/np4/paises.html?id=74>

Baldwin, R. E.; Wyplosz, C. (2009). *The economics of European integration (3rd ed.)*. London, McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

INE (2017). *Resultados preliminares de 2016 da Actividade Turística*. Retrieved February 17, 2021, from

[https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine\\_destaques&DESTAQUESdest\\_boui=249885665&DESTAQUESmodo=2&xlang=pt](https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=249885665&DESTAQUESmodo=2&xlang=pt)

INE (2020, July 23). *24,6 milhões de chegadas de turistas não residentes - 2019*. Retrieved February 17, 2021, from

[https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine\\_destaques&DESTAQUESdest\\_boui=414444819&DESTAQUEStema=55581&DESTAQUESmodo=2](https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=414444819&DESTAQUEStema=55581&DESTAQUESmodo=2)

Nations Unies, Recueil des Traités. *Convention de Vienne sur les relations consulaires de 1963*. vol. 596, p. 261. Retrieved February 22, 2021, from [https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/french/conventions/9\\_2\\_1963.pdf](https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/french/conventions/9_2_1963.pdf)

Diário da República, 1.ª série — N.º 14 — 19 de janeiro de 2012. *Decreto Regulamentar n.º 9/2012 de 19 de janeiro*. Retrieved February 22, 2021, from

<https://dre.pt/application/file/a/544203>

Social Science Research Network (2021). Economic Diplomacy: A Review. *Strategy & Macroeconomic Policy eJournal*. Accessed 22 February 2021.

Bayne, N., & Woolcock, S. (2017). *The new economic diplomacy decision making and negotiation in international economic relations*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Van Bergeijk, P., & Moons, S. (2009). *Economic diplomacy and economic security*. Accessed February 22, 2021.

Pires, R., Azevedo, J., Vidigal, I., Moura Veiga, C. (2020). *Emigração Portuguesa 2020*. Retrieved March 01, 2021, from

<https://repositorio.iscte-iul.pt/handle/10071/21972>



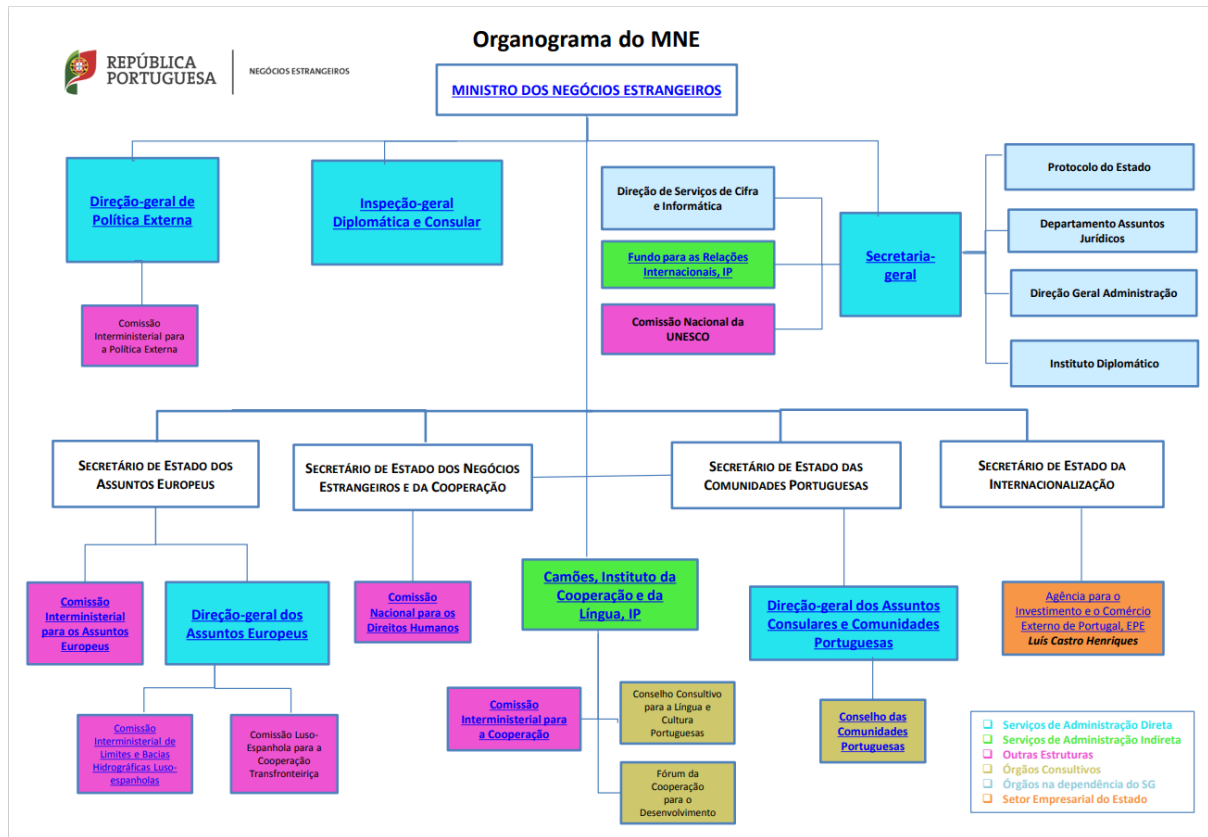
Programa Regressar (2021). *Programa Regressar*. Retrieved March 02, 2021, from <https://www.programaregressar.gov.pt/pt/>

Comité national français en hommage à Aristides de Sousa Mendes. *Les apports de l'immigration portugaise à Bordeaux et en Aquitaine. Cinq siècles de présence*. Retrieved March 03, 2021, from <http://www.sousamendes.org/pdf/expo-Apports-vF.pdf>.

Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Franco-Portugaise (2021). *Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Franco-Portugaise*. Retrieved May 11, 2021, from <http://ccifp.fr/>

## Appendices:

Appendice 01, Organogram of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, courtesy of the Ministry.



Appendice 02, day-to-day breakdown of activities:

### Day 01: 01/02/2021

The first day started with an interview with Mário Gomes, Consul-General of Portugal. It was followed after lunch by a tour of the facilities, an explanation of the activities of the consulate and of each person within that structure. Following that I was assigned a series of tasks and duties to complete during the internship.

- Research the local community. That is, to understand the local emigrant communities and its socio-economic composition.
- Research potential partnerships opportunities within the context of culture and softpower. The creation of a dynamic database was suggested as a tool to assist with this.
- Assist the consular staff during times of crunch.

**Day 02: 02/02/2021**

Consular duties

Research on the local history and geography. Garner information on how to best create a functional database within the software available

Once home, creating a python script to convert the datastring in the word document into a workable excel file

**Day 03: 03/02/2021**

Further work on the database, as well as research on the local situation - DB framework completed

Consular duties

**Day 04: 04/02/2021**

Wrapping up the historical background research. Further research into data available to expand database. Looking-up publications and entities with data; CCIFP & CCILF. Interesting insights into the local economy

Researching the Lusojournal's archive for articles on the "mercado da saudade". Effect of distance on consumer propensity. Potential points of study, such as the work of AICEP, the economic scope of the local Portuguese community, the contribution of Portuguese companies to the *LGV*. Equally interesting are the work done by *EDP renovaveis* and *Amorim*

Consular duties

**Day 05: 05/02/2021**

Consular duties; registering birth and international wedding

**Day 06: 08/02/2021**

Further research: AICEP database and publications, EU legislation on corporations, Portuguese and French NGOs in respective countries. Compiling the data

Consular duties

**Day 07: 09/02/2021**

Consular duties

Research on French law

Researching and writing on the economic relations between aquitaine and Portugal

Informations on the local viticulture and winery

**Day 08: 10/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Research on the Kedge university  
Legal incorporation, history, link to the CCI of Aquitaine (and research into it)  
IT framework of the consulate

**Day 09: 11/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Research on the legal status of consulates, and nomenclature.

**Day 10: 12/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Research on the Vienna conventions of international law and consular relations  
Research on event to garner French FDI  
Consular email

**Day 11: 15/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Compiling data on Portuguese companies working in viticulture  
Contacting the CCIFP

**Day 12: 16/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Portugal-France inheritances  
Research on migratory flux to and from France; specially from Portugal to France  
Resolving more challenging cases  
Data on migration

**Day 13: 17/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Research and compiling on the local community  
Database on viticultural companies  
Companies potentially interested in selling in France  
Snail mail

**Day 14: 18/02/2021**

Career day ISEG

**Day 15: 19/02/2021**

Consular duties  
Legal research into French administrative law

**Day 16: 22/02/2021**

Creation of an ad-hoc request form as a specific document  
Discussing companies potentially interested in selling their goods or expanding their activities in France  
Consular duties  
Research on economic diplomacy and the effect of distance  
Snail mail

**Day 17: 23/02/2021**

Reviewing the administrative documents. Checking for outdated information and creating new ones  
Consular duties  
Snail mail

**Day 18: 24/02/2021**

Flag straightening  
Creating new documents for the consulate  
Snail mail

**Day 19: 25/02/2021**

Working on new documents  
Consular duties  
Researching fixes for office shredder  
Attended the webinar “O papel do Fundo Europeu de Recuperação e Resiliência no futuro de Portugal”.

**Day 20: 26/02/2021**

Completed the new documents  
Meeting

**Day 21: 01/03/2021**

Research on MPC  
Compiling data obtained so far

Consular duties  
Snail mail

**Day 22: 02/03/2021**

Consular duties  
Translations  
Organising book event

**Day 23: 03/03/2021**

Consular duties  
Organising book event, for the work of author Nicolas Barral, “Sur un air de fado”  
Emailing  
Snail mail

**Day 24: 04/03/21**

Organising book event  
Emailing  
Consular duties

**Day 25: 05/03/21**

Paperwork  
Snailmail

**Day 26: 08/03/21**

Research on the wine market  
Consular duties  
Snail mail  
Paperwork

**Day 27: 09/03/21**

Consular duties  
Snail mail  
Paperwork  
Research on DBS and criminal records  
Emailing  
Creating a scheduling system and canned replies

**Day 28: 10/03/21**

Clerical work  
Paperwork  
Emailing

**Day 29: 11/03/21**

Clerical work  
Paperwork  
Emailing

**Day 30: 12/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 31: 14/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 32: 15/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 33: 16/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 34: 17/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & Clerical work

**Day 35: 18/03/21**

Emails  
Legal advice  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 36: 19/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 37: 22/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 38: 23/03/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 39: 24/03/21**

Emails  
Apec interview  
Snail Mail  
Linux deployment

**Day 40: 25/03/21**

Emails  
Linux deployment  
Clerical work  
Task assignment

**Day 41: 26/03/21**

Emails  
Linux deployment, backup server  
Clerical Work  
Task assignment

**Day 42: 29/03/21**

Emails  
Backup server repair and deployment  
Clerical work  
Task assignment



**Day 43: 30/03/21**

Emails  
Document server  
Linux server deployment  
Clerical work  
Task assignment

**Day 44: 31/03/21**

Emails  
Linux server study and deployment  
Clerical work

**Day 45: 01/04/21**

Emails  
Linux server wrapping-up, NAS deployment  
Clerical work  
Holiday send-off

**Day 46: 06/04/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 47: 07/04/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 48: 08/04/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 49: 09/04/21**

Emails  
Paperwork & clerical work  
Sysadmin/Linux

**Day 50: 12/04/21**

Emails

Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 51: 13/04/21**

Emails

Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 52: 14/04/21**

Emails

Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 53: 15/04/21**

Emails

Paperwork & clerical work

Research into international taxation and diplomatic status. Bilateral fiscal convention.

**Day 54: 16/04/21**

Emails

Paperwork & clerical work

**Day 55: 19/04/21**

Emails

New trainee guidance

**Day 56: 20/04/21**

Emails

New trainee guidance

**Day 57: 21/04/21**

PCR test

Emails

New trainee guidance

**Day 58: 23/04/21**

Closing of the emailing system

Closing of the scheduling system, transferring it to new intern

Final checkup on documents and server

Interview with the Consul-General

**Day 59: 24/04/21**

Return home. As the flight scheduled for the 25th was canceled (totaling five canceled flights over the course of the internship), I had to schedule it for the 23rd of April.