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2020 GENERATION

Portugal's future according to University students

September 2014, Lisbon

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Introduction

What do young people's expectations say about Portugal's reputation?

How can their perceptions be defined in this new cultural scenario which is not focused in the past and heritage but is orientated to the present and future in a dynamic way?

How must institutions understand these expectations in order to build and participate in a new dialogue using a common language?

>> The perceptions and expectations gathered in this research show good-wills, which are the ones that manage to move societies

- What «2020 Generation» offers, is a proposal to think about Portugal based on its young-adults generation's expectations. We have elaborated a series of questions and interviewed over 1,000 people between 18 and 30 years old (most of them University students). The information has not been evaluated as part of a sociological or demographical research. As communication consultants, what we are really looking for are the perceptions different groups have expressed and shared about reality and organized forms; how is this reality organized and understood on a daily basis through companies and its leaders or other organizations and countries. And what is more important, what do people expect from these institutions.
- Peter Hanenberg, Director of the Research Center for Communication and Culture of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, has analyzed the results and offers an interpretation of the results as part of a new concept of culture for the twenty-first century, consisting on a way of orientation, expression and belonging of people with the same interests.
- LLORENTE & CUENCA also acknowledges the collaboration of PhD Patrícia Dias, researcher and teacher at the Humanities School in Universidad Católica Portuguesa for her valuable help in the methodological organization of this research.

We are adopting a new language

Filipe Nogueira

A country's reputation is made from the perceptions and opinions its citizens express.

Even if we only focused in the past year, there have been several events that give a special meaning to the present of Portugal and make its citizens perceptions especially important. We could mention, for instance, a financial crisis which is deeply changing lives and expectations; the end of a financial aid period; the European elections which registered in Portugal the highest rate of abstention up to date; the drama of the degradation of one of the most important reference banks; the increasing doubts about the reputation of the financial system and its regulation which is translated into a political and business leadership crisis... All this together create a perfect scenario for opinions, controversy and expectations independent of the dimension that History will give to this concrete moment. One thing is certain: this is our moment.

When future generations will study the beginning of the twenty-first century History, the current crisis will be seen as a result of the «western world» way of living capitalism and as a natural corollary of the deregulation of the system during the last decades of the 20th century. Meanwhile, other crisis related to water and energy resources, food or demographical problems will have appeared in following decades. History has always treated social crisis in a cruel way by forgetting them in the past or by having bigger crisis.

Nevertheless, for us, the ones living the current crisis, this is not just a small setback but a warning of a big change in all we have known so far. What makes this crisis especially dramatic is its little duration in time. In other words, we know that it is a signal for change and that its causes and consequences belong to a whole generation's life. For people in general, the crisis is a worry. For organizations' leaders (governments, social structures, companies...) it represents a responsibility for which only a few are ready. It also means, for all, a need of thinking about the future in a very urgent and clear way that was never taught before.

Expectations are the only part of the future that we live in the present, a taste of what is to come that we can savor now.

This is why, when looking for perceptions about the country, we have focused the research on the ones related to expectations since we know that the present circumstances have an important role on those expectations. We have especially focused our research on what makes us be part of what we call «reality» Therefore, the first step we have taken is to pay attention to those perceptions related to the current moment, understanding them as the country's thermometer and the situation of its reputation.

2020 GENERATION

«Generation 2020» does not actually exist. What does exist, and that is why we use this expression, is a group of people with expectations. By definition, the younger the person is, the longer he will be able to develop and define his expectations over time. With this aim, our target for the research have been young people to which we have questioned how do they see Portugal in 2020 and what do they think can make the country a better place to live.

We are aware that those we have interviewed in our research do not represent all young people in the country and neither the whole society. Their expectations do not have a higher value than those citizens older just because they are supposed to have longer time in their futures to come. Nevertheless, our aim was to gather opinions from those who still have a long future to be defined. Towards this objective, the target of our research has been chosen.

WHAT IS THE USE OF THIS INFORMATION?

The opinions and expectations resulting from our research show good-wills, which are really what achieve to change and mobilize societies. They highlight a desire for dialogue and performance that organizations should fulfill. They also mobilize societies because they are structured on active processes of building and sharing opinions and influences.

Companies and other organizations, as well as countries, cannot continue ignoring this opinion movements as if they were marginal cases. If they continue with this attitude, it will be themselves the ones completely out of the path of big opinion and dialogue movements. Being in direct contact with these movements should be the way for companies and organizations to meet their individual interests.

We all share the same world, and that is why we should all accept the global dialogue rules learning and adopting a common language.

TECHNICAL DATA

- In order to carry the survey «2020 Generation», 1,100 people between 18 and 30 years old have been interviewed.
- Most of them are University students from state and private Universities from different places in the country; However, been an University student was not a requirement to answer the questions.
- Those questions that had more than two possible answers were asked to be answered with more than one option.
- The research was carried and analyzed between May and June 2014.



Realistic, educated, disappointed and self-confident

«My future depends mainly on me; I am educated and I have access to information; I hold no hopes; they better not try to cheat me as they did with my parents». This could be a description of one of the individuals that have taken part on our research «2020 GENERATION».

When trying to evaluate the perceptions that almost 1,100 of the young people interviewed have about themselves and Portugal in general with a regard to the future, the above mentioned description should be one of the possible readings we should take into account. Indeed, if we did a general reading of all the information, some of the indicators such as personal assessment (even in comparison with the previous generation), the emphasis on education or the lack of confidence in politicians, picture a realistic, educated, disappointed and self-confident profile of people.

As we read the quantitative data from the answers we can almost hear them saying «I do not expect from others more than what I expect from me». When they refer to «others» they are talking about, for instance, politicians who are traditionally expected to add some extra value to everyone's lives. We should not see the negative evaluation about politicians as a simple cliché. What this fact reveals, together with concepts like «yourself», «family» and «University» is a high self-evaluation. This is also the origin of the self-confident spirit that can be felt in almost all the answers.

In the same proportion as «realism» there is a clear disappointment on these people's attitude. «Disappointment» is not necessarily a bad attitude. It can also be a sign for an extreme realism. In Portugal, the disappointment has a specific meaning. It is certainly true that there was a «thrilled» generation (the one before the current generation). A generation that, forty years ago, achieved a social awareness after the 1974 revolution and that later joined the excitement about the 80s surprising economy. This young people clearly say that they have nothing to do with that previous generation.

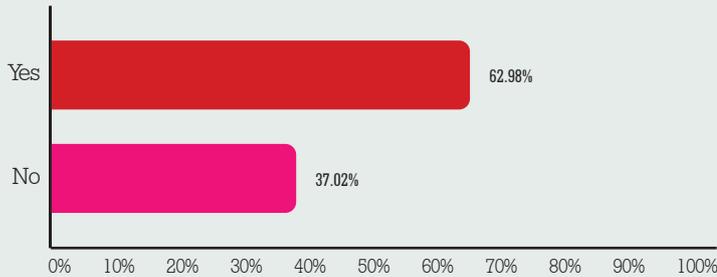
Here we find a warning for those worried with the dialogue with this people since when disappointment turns into a way of living, it ends up on cynicism. Cynicism turns into dogmas, stubbornness and limitations which do not allow an honest and constructive social dialogue.

With regard to the last question, the way answers have been chosen make us believe that instead on dividing them on «very optimistic» or «totally pessimistic» all of them have chosen both, optimistic and pessimistic expressions. This does not show indecision but again a high level of realism.

Since the research was mainly carried with University students this study cannot aim to represent the whole society. What it could maybe represent is the future leadership of the society. Therefore it is very important that we know how all this people express themselves since nowadays leadership does not come from stages or desks but from sharing opinions on the net.

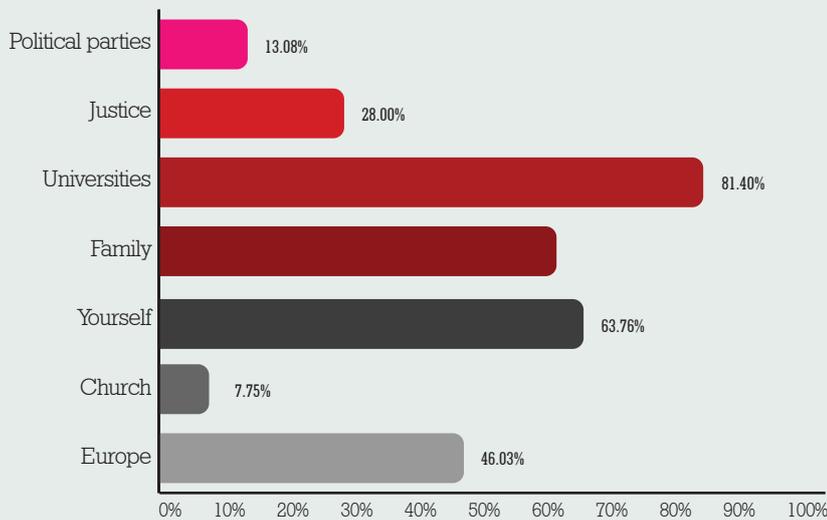
Results from the 2020 Generation survey

Will Portugal be in 2020 a better place to live in comparison to 2014?



>> Almost two thirds of young people think that in comparison to 2014, Portugal will be a better place to live in 2020

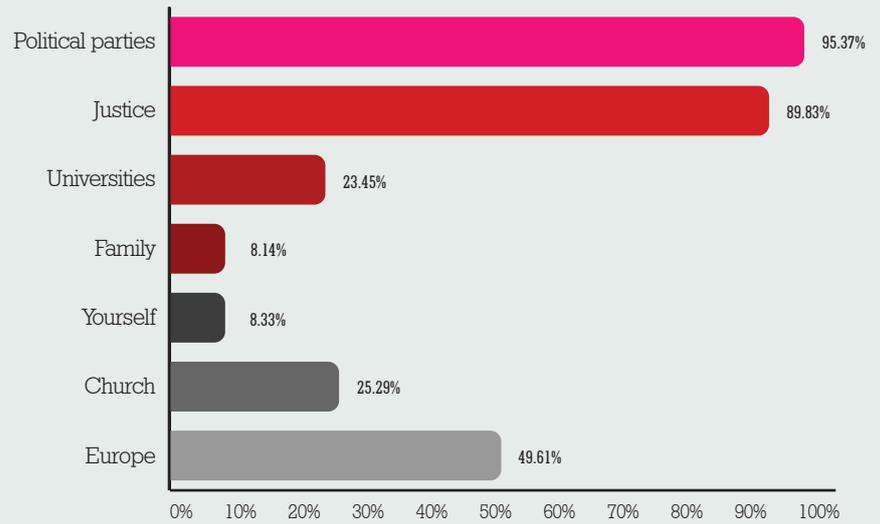
Which institutions do you believe will be the ones making Portugal a better country in 2020?



>> Young people show a strong self-confidence in order to turn Portugal into a better country (63.7%). Nevertheless, Universities are the institutions which are seen more capable of changing the country (81.4%). The lowest percentages are held by Justice, political parties and the Church

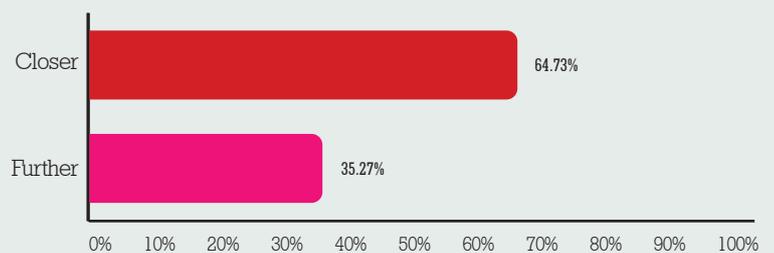


Which are the institutions that have to change in a deeper way to make Portugal a better country in 2020?



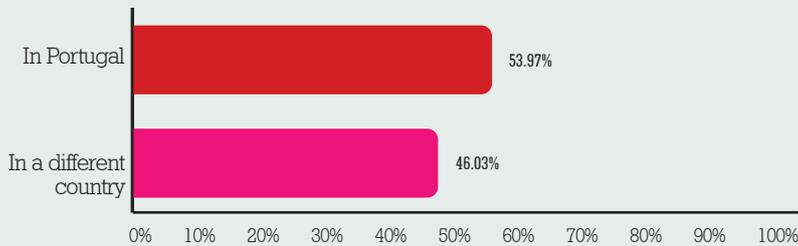
>>> With no doubts, political parties and Justice are the institutions which have to change the most. This answer is also a wake-up call for Europe: half of the interviewed people consider that current Europe does not benefit Portugal

Will Portugal be closer to or further from Europe in 2020?



>>> Despite reticence, almost two thirds consider that Portugal will be closer to Europe

Will you live in Portugal by 2020 or in a different country?



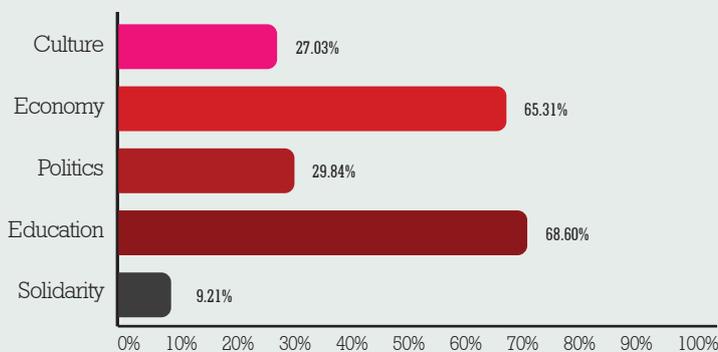
>> This answer shows the clearest division: almost half of those consulted think that they will be living in a different country by 2020. Slightly over the half will live in Portugal

Regarding the capacity of solving the country's problems, do you consider your generation to be more competent than your parents' generation?



>> Is it self-confidence or criticism to the previous generation? The generation answering this survey consider themselves more competent (59.8%) in order to solve Portugal's problems than their parents' generation (40.2%)

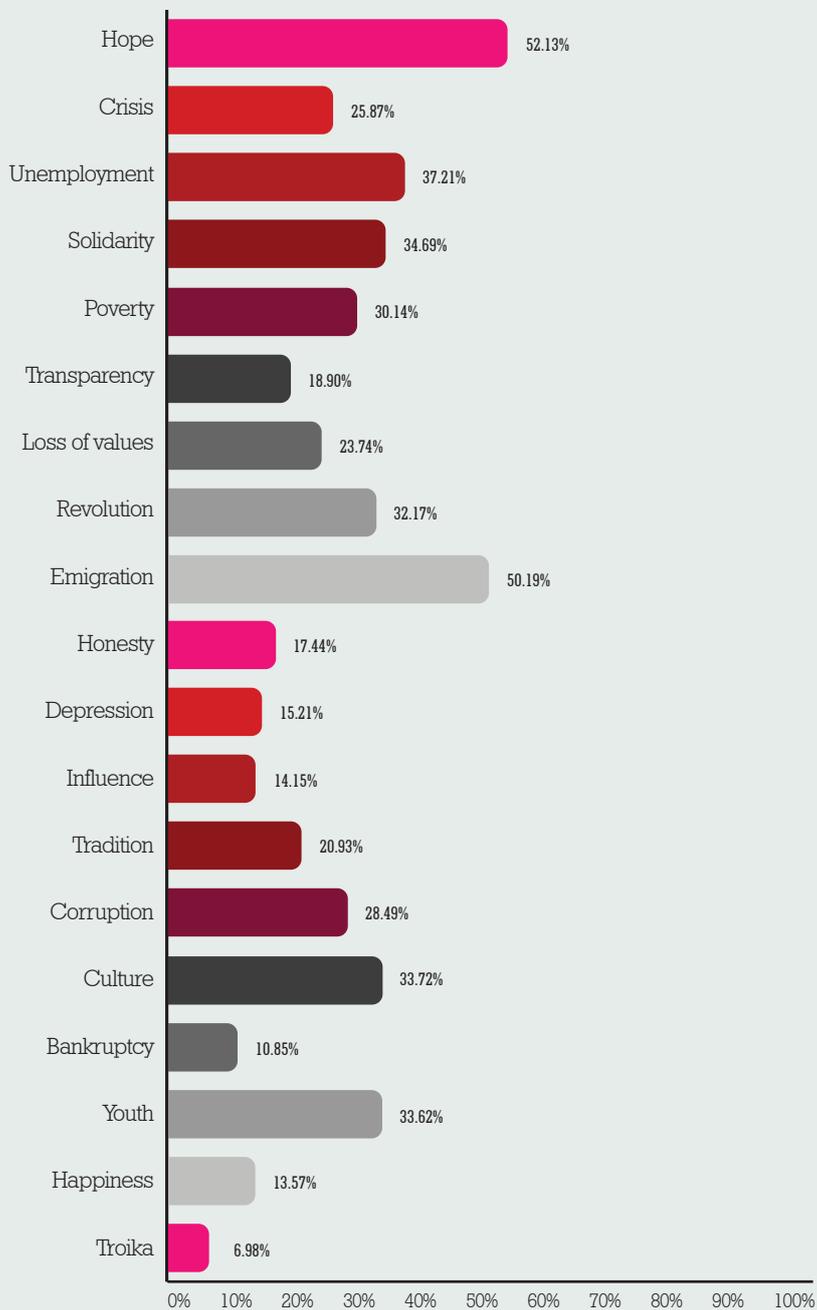
What are the most crucial areas for Portugal's future?



>> Education and economy (both of them doubling rates in comparison with other areas) are the areas considered to be crucial to define Portugal's future



Which expression would you link more to Portugal?



>> Among 19 positive and negative expressions that young people link to Portugal in 2020 we must divide them into two different groups: the only two highlighted expressions (the only ones over 50%) are emigration and hope. Within the group with over 30% of support we can find unemployment, poverty, solidarity, revolution culture and youth

2020 Culture

Peter Hanenberg, Director of the Research Center for Communication and Culture of the Universidad Católica Portuguesa

When talking about culture we usually think about traditions and customs, relating culture to history rather than future or development. In this sense, the concept of culture appears as a concept linked to the past.

In fact, this is the concept sociologist Alain Tourain identified as the twenty-first century paradigm. There were other paradigms in previous centuries such as religion or politics. As for the twenty-first century, culture shows the path to follow. Fighting to defend some faith or a political ideology does not define this century agenda; instead, differences and cultural rights do.

In order to understand what Tourain means by the culture paradigm we need to recognize that a global culture is not a synonym for national culture. Nowadays, the concept of nation is not the main and only element that creates specific cultures; there is a wide range of groups and organizations that defend a specific culture. They may represent regional groups, even neighborhood groups or social groups that have some specific orientations or interests. «Be yourself» is the lay-motive for a global society. That is what the culture paradigm offers: the share of a common interest, the group experience and the individual orientation within a group. Therefore, culture is understood as the way people find to orientate, express and guarantee that they belong to a group that enables them to share a common interest that can be regional; national or local; professional or generational (youths' culture); gender, technological (digital culture); class interest... or any other association that aims to share the same interests. In this respect, one person can belong to several cultures at the same time. However, what is difficult is to imagine someone who does not belong to several cultures at the same time. It is also difficult to imagine someone who does not belong to any culture at all: human beings need and depend on the culture(s) they live in. We all learn our culture(s), we all live them and we pass them on. A human life without a cultural belonging is not possible.

With this definition of culture it is clear that it is not a concept addressed to the past but with a dynamic orientation to the present and the future. In our current society which is increasingly opened to the world, with global processes that have a direct impact into the local experiences, recognizing the culture paradigm appears to be crucial in all levels.

We must know that there exist multiple forms of culture which are associated to practices and habits that justify their defense. We also need to admit the diversity of cultures, their existence and rights. However, it also lets us see how the challenge of the relationships between cultures lets a new space for new organizations, practices and a whole new social dynamic.





>> Young people show their faith on learning by choosing Universities as the institutions that will turn Portugal into a better place to live

The big challenge for the twenty-first century generations is to be able to manage this dynamic. At the same time it also represents an important chance to find new solutions and new ways. In cultural processes, past experiences become potential present experiences (especially when dealing with processes between different cultures). Most of the time, a new culture grows thanks to cultural mediation of the inherited conflicts between cultures.

By thinking that Universities are the institutions that will make Portugal a better place to live in 2020 (with a 81.4%), those interviewed show their support for education. The same happens when they are asked about the crucial institutions for Portugal's future (68.6% chose education). They also indicate that they are the ones responsible for the change (63.76%) and they believed they are already following the right path to achieve that change. One remarkable point is that only a 27.03% see culture as a decisive area for Portugal's future (only placing solidarity with a lower rate of 9.21%). As we will try to prove, the reasons for these results are explained by the change on the value and the meaning of culture experienced in this current society and the culture that will be experienced in the future to come.

Thus, how will Portugal's culture in 2020 be? First of all, and taking into account the results of the research and the thought about the culture paradigm, it seems that culture in Portugal will be a less Portuguese culture and a more diverse culture. Around 64.73% of the young people interviewed see Portugal closer to Europe than now. We should not see this diversification as a loss of self-identity but as a chance to grow several and different forms of culture that already exist or that come from the contact with the «outside-world». Signs for this diversification can be found almost everywhere: for instance, *fado* being recognized as a World Heritage; its modernization by young musicians; the different cultural groups in defense of heritage; the concepts of a multicultural society and the real presence of different faiths; the culture of the *Barrio Alto*, the *Mouraria* culture; the awareness of regionalism; the movements defending welfare... Far from having a single and agreed Portuguese culture, we see that Portugal cultures offer a social dynamic with multiplying effects. In this process there also exist some reluctances, pressures and powers that could turn the dynamic into a real conflict with destructive effects. All changes have to face resistance and that will of «freezing» ad *eternum* an imagined and idyllic past within a limited conservatism. Nevertheless, in order to defend ourselves from the power of the promise of an easy change and against the pressures of a new universal uniformity, we must admit that certain conservatism is needed. Portugal will only be able to develop its mobilizing potential when mechanisms to enable the change and at the same time with enough strength

to reinforce and give value to diversity against all kinds of uniformity among Portuguese cultures are found.

Augusto Mateus says in a recent report that «we will go to globalization with what we are». Our culture is getting more plural and different every day. It is not seen as a burden of the past but as a resource of mobilization. Therefore we can say that in 2020 the culture of Portugal will be a less single and individual culture. Portugal's culture will become a plural culture made of different cultures; aware of its origins and opened to the world (as it has always been).

Another aspect that must be highlighted is the importance of the technological development for the culture. The importance of this development will be increasingly important as the cultural meanings lose their independence from their basements. This is not new in the culture's History; culture has always had a big dependence on the material conditions used to express itself. This fact goes from the way we dress to the way we eat, tools and weapons. Nevertheless, there is no doubt the biggest impact on cultures is caused by the forms of communication.

During the Classical Antiquity books allowed the communication between people that did not share the same space and period of the History and that is the reason why it had a long-term impact on the development of knowledge and wisdom. With the invention of the printing press during the Modern Age this development could reinforce its process in a unique way. Humanity has always grown with its forms of communication (and knowledge storage) and it will still grow in a never-seen way thank to the digital and online world that has appeared during the last decades. Cultures will deeply change with an accelerated speed thank to this development. The period between the invention of books 500 years ago and the appearance of digital books will seem an eternity compared to the speed of transformations already achieved in our current society by the direct and permanent access to knowledge through the digital world.

What will help to the creation of a new culture based on technology is the pressure that the so-called material culture has on the daily activities. Consumption and leisure habits, contact and meeting forms, the concept of audience and public... all these concepts will change and will have an increasing articulation with the digital world. How we communicate, see things, the way we get informed and learn and maybe even how we live our ideas, beliefs and our faith, will always be influenced by the digital aspect (an aspect that we consider to be very immaterial but that exposes us in a real and radical way to the world). In 2020 cultures, the digital aspect will be integrated in a transversal way.



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The third aspect that will be characteristic for the 2020 culture comes straight from the two other aspects: the meaning of culture will be recognized for the national economy and for the world in general. On their report about «Culture, creativity & internationalization of the Portuguese economy», Augusto Mateus & Associados are sure about the need of studying culture and economy together. It is not possible to have a cultural world separated from the world of economics. None of the sectors is more real or important than the other.

Culture appears in economy in several ways: firstly, it is the base of values and practices on which economy performs; secondly, it is a product differentiation; and last, it is storage of contents and meanings that are used as raw material in economy. In fact, what we call cultural and creation industries and services (that comprehend architecture, design research, edition and arts... etc.) represent a very important sector which in 2006 contributed with a 2.8% growth to the wealth and with a 2.6% to the national employment and a forecast of high performance.

The value of culture can be clearly seen in the tourism sector whose diversification belongs to the cultural diversification in general. All kinds of tourism («sun and sand» tourism, cultural, sport and religious or health tourism) represent opportunities for development. However, culture does not only offer aspects for a plural tourism but also nourishes the knowledge, entertainment and leisure industry which is developing in an accelerated way. The «cross-fertilization» (Mateus) between technology and culture offers new chances for the Portuguese economy that should be taken in the following years. Culture reinforces its performance as scenario and force of change as we are witnesses of the transformation of the goods and services society into a society of experiences.

Culture is a perfect tool for the products and services differentiation and the economy's success will depend on the magnitude of this differentiation. Therefore, when Alain Touraine mentions the paradigm of culture he does not only talk about a value but about an aspect that highly contributes to social development.

Far from being a secondary area with no economically importance, culture is an essential resource for the twenty-first century societies. In particular, the close relationship

>> The close relationship between the concepts of culture and creativity create a dynamic where it could even seem that economy takes all the action from the cultural performance

between the concepts of culture and creativity produce a dynamic where it could even seem that economy takes all the action from the cultural performance. Present shows a creative aspect which seems to be becoming an imposition: new creative classes appear, cities seek for recognition as creative cities and young people are expected to have a creative and entrepreneurial spirit. What will happen to creativity if it is imposed as a rule? This would be a challenge for the 2020 cultures. They will need to find a way to keep the differentiation and changes as well as to offer what culture has always given: the feeling of belonging, orientation and interest. All in all, in 2020 Portugal will be a better place to live in comparison to 2014, as 62.98% of the interviewed assume.



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