

## **Waves of Migration: Social and Economic dimensions of Brazilian immigrants in Europe**

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### **Abstract**

Brazil used to be a country that received migrants from around the world. Before the 1960s, Brazil was a country of immigration. In recent years, however, it is estimated that between 4-5 million Brazilians have migrated to the USA, Europe and Japan. Brazilian migration to European Union countries partially differs from the migration pattern to the USA and substantially differs from those to Japan. Regarding the EU, available evidence indicated that the current flow of Brazilians to the EU is significantly distinct from the previous migratory waves. Thus while previous migration maybe mainly attributed to historical colonial links (e.g. to Portugal or Italy), this new wave seems to be structured in a very different way. Although economic reasoning may explain the individual decisions, the evolution of the migratory flow depends also on the political sanctions of the countries involved (e.g. regularization possibilities) as well as on the force and degree of the structuring of formal and informal migratory networks at both ends of the migratory chain. In terms of human capital the newcomers from Brazil seem to have an heterogeneous composition, this is, the European Union is attracting all sort of migrants ranging from highly qualified Brazilian migrants to non qualified Brazilian migrants. Despite its importance, Brazilian immigration has not been yet the subject of a broad research and/or research dissemination, contrary to what has happened with other immigrant groups in the EU.

Based on research conducted recently by the authors, the main objective of this presentation is to present the main characteristics of this recent migratory flow of Brazilians to the EU, their incorporation into the labour market and in other social spheres, and the relations they maintain with the country of origin.

It will be showed that this flow is above all a labour movement composed mainly by young adults that take the opportunities offered in the secondary segments of the labour market. The flow of Brazilians to Portugal is particularly illustrative of a more generalized migration pattern that spread to other European countries in the last years and its study could thus lead to a better knowledge of the new Brazilian migration waves to the EU. In fact, Brazilian immigrants in Portugal present a profile and migration strategies that aren't radically different from other recent international migration flows directed to the EU, namely to Ireland and Belgium. In the Portuguese case, the existence of a consolidated lusophone migration system, the functioning of the social networks, and the political opportunities available to Brazilian immigrants seem to explain the reason why the country as been one of the most desired European destinies for Brazilians and, also, an open door or a transit country to other EU contries.