

# The condition of Portuguese democracy during the Troika's intervention,

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### 1 - Introduction

The purpose of this article is to reflect on the state of Portuguese democracy during the time in which the Troika (International Monetary Fund, European Commission and European Central Bank) bailout has been in effect (2011-2014). We begin by presenting the outcome of the 2011 elections, the party manifestos and the main thrust of the 2011 Troika programme. In the second section we will reflect on how the practical application of the government and Troika programmes (in their various revisions) collided, or not, with the mandate received from the electorate. In the third section we will analyse the format of the party system between 1975 and 2011, and of the relationships between the political parties. In the final section we will present the several shades of socio-political contestation against the government and/or Troika, especially that of an extra-party nature. The text ends with some conclusions.

The Socialist Party (PS — *Partido Socialista*), which had been in power since 2005, lost the 2011 legislative elections (see Table 1).<sup>2</sup> Although a significant defeat, it was not resounding, particularly when compared with the results in Spain (2011) and Greece (2012) (Bosco and Verney, 2012). The loss was explained by the popular rejection of the incumbent prime minister, by a negative assessment of the PS's legacy in terms of their management of the portfolios that most concerned the electorate, and the negative effects of its policies.<sup>3</sup> However, despite the strong neo-liberal inflection of the Social Democratic Party (PSD — *Partido Social Democrata*) in terms of policies that are unfavourable to the state and favourable to the market (Freire, Tsatsanis and Lima, 2013),<sup>4</sup> and the PS's attempt to mobilise the electorate in defence of the Welfare State, the analysis of post-2011 election studies reveal that the electorate was not more supportive of neo-liberal ideologies (it remained strongly in favour of the Welfare State

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[http://www.cies.iscte.pt/np4/?newsId=474&fileName=CV\\_English\\_January\\_2014\\_AF\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cies.iscte.pt/np4/?newsId=474&fileName=CV_English_January_2014_AF_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Between 2005 and 2009, with an absolute majority in parliament; and from 2009 to 2011 with a relative majority and with the support of the PSD, the PS was able to push through the 2010 and 2011 budgets and the first three stability and growth plans (PEC I, II and III). See Tables 1 and 2 below.

<sup>3</sup> Socialist Party, centre left, member of the Socialist and Democrat group in the European Parliament (EP).

<sup>4</sup> Social Democratic Party, centre right, member of the European Popular Party (EPP) in the EP.

and against inequalities), and that the electorate voted largely as a consequence of the incumbent's performance (Magalhães, 2012).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> A more recent study based on surveys of electors at the end of 2012, and of the deputies of the various parties at the end of 2012 and the first three half of 2013, revealed the following (Freire, Tsatsanis and Lima, 2014). First, the electorate is clearly aware of the PSD's move to the right from 2009 to 2011-12. Second, an identical movement is discernible among PSD deputies from the previous legislature (XI) to the current (XII). Third, putting these two together with the stability of the political-ideological preferences of the electorate of the right (and not only them), particularly on socio-economic matters, this generates a significant and growing incongruence between the electors and the elected on the right, particularly in the case of the PSD.

**Table 1: Elections to the Portuguese National Parliament, 2011, 2009, and 2005**

Parties	2011			2009			2005		
	Seats		Votes	Seats		Votes	Seats		Votes
	N	per cent	per cent	N	per cent	per cent	N	per cent	per cent
PSD	108	46.9	38.7	81	35.2	29.1	75	32.6	28.8
PS	74	32.2	28.1	97	42.2	36.6	121	52.6	45.0
CDS-PP	24	10.4	11.7	21	9.1	10.4	12	5.2	7.3
PCP/PEV	16	6.9	7.9	15	6.5	7.7	14	6.1	7.5
BE	8	3.5	5.2	16	6.9	9.8	8	3.5	6.4
Others	0	0.0	4.4	0	0.0	3.1	0	0.0	2.1
Invalid and blank votes	-	-	4.0	-	-	3.1	-	-	2.9
Total	-	-	100	230	100	100	230	100	100
Turnout	-	-	58.0	-	-	60.5	-	-	64.3

Sources: official results published in [www.cne.pt](http://www.cne.pt)

Note: In Portuguese elections invalid and blank votes are counted as a percentage of the total vote.

The radical left, which despite being at the root of the government's fall through its rejection (with the parties of the right) of the 4th Stability and Growth Programme (PEC IV — *Programa de Estabilidade e Crescimento*), did not benefit from the PS's losses. The Left Bloc (BE — *Bloco de Esquerda*) lost around half of its voters and seats in parliament (Table 1).<sup>6</sup> The vote for the Portuguese Communist Party/Democratic Union Coalition (PCP/CDU — *Partido Comunista Português/Coligação Democrática Unitária*) increased slightly,<sup>7</sup> as did its parliamentary representation, but its marginal influence remained.

<sup>6</sup> Left Bloc, from the radical left, 'democratic socialists', 'left socialists', or 'party movement' (of the left), depending on their designations. It is a member of the Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) in the EP.

<sup>7</sup> Portuguese Communist Party / Democratic Unitarian Coalition (PCP/PEV), extreme left, 'conservative communist' or 'orthodox communist', depending on their designations. It is a member of the GUE/NGL in the EP.

**Table 2: Portuguese cabinets, 1976-2014\***

Prime Minister and governing period	Composition	Partisan support (per cent of MPs)	Duration** (months)	Reason for Termination
Soares I (1976-77)	PS	40.7	17	Rejected motion of confidence
Soares I 1978	PS, CDS	56.7	6	Dismissal by president
Nobre da Costa 1978	Non-partisan (President's initiative)	--	1	Rejection of Go. Programme
Mota Pinto (1978-79)	Non-partisan (ditto)	--	7	Rejection of prime minister
Pintassilgo 1979	Non-partisan (ditto)	--	5	Elections
Sá Carneiro (1980)	PSD, CDS, PPM	51.2	11	Elections after prime minister's death
Balsemão I (1981) <sup>(a)</sup>	PSD, CDS, PPM	53.6	8 (28)	Resignation of prime minister
Balsemão II (1981-82) <sup>(a)</sup>	PSD, CDS, PPM	53.6	20 (28)	Resignation of prime minister, Elections
Soares III 1983-85	PS, PSD	70.4	24	Resignation of prime minister, Elections
1985-87	PSD	35.2	18	Approval of motion of censure
Cavaco Silva II (1987-91)	PSD	59.2	48	Elections
Cavaco Silva III (1991-95)	PSD	58.7	48	Elections
Guterres I 1995-99	PS	48.7	48	Elections
Guterres II (1999-02)	PS	50.0	24	Resignation of prime minister
Barroso (2002- 04) <sup>(b)</sup>	PSD, CDS	51.8	27 (35)	Resignation of prime minister (appointed as president of the EU Commission)
Lopes (2004-05) <sup>(b)</sup>	PSD, CDS	51.8	8 (35)	President dismissed parliament and called for early elections
Sócrates (2005-09)	PS	52.6		Elections
Sócrates (2009-11)	PS	42.2	20	Prime minister resignation; president dismissed parliament and called for early elections
Passos Coelho (2011-15: full mandate)	PSD, CDS	57.3	-	-

Source: adapted (and updated) by the author from Freire (2005: p. 22). Notes: \* Only the Constitutional period is considered; \*\* Normal parliamentary mandate: 48 months. (b) Balsemão I and II's governments have precisely the same partisan support, and no elections took place between them. In terms of cabinet durability, therefore, they are considered to be the same executive; this explains why it is here considered to have existed for 28 months. Same rule for Barroso's (2002-04) and Lopes' (2004-05) government (35 months).

On the other hand, in June 2011 the parties of the right, the PSD and the Democratic and Social Centre-Popular Party (CDS-PP — *Centro Democrático e Social-Partido*

*Popular*) were the big winners (Table 1).<sup>8</sup> Given that no party could form a majority government, these two parties formed a coalition (Table 2). The right's ability to reach an understanding to form a government, while the PS did not have the effective ability to reach an agreement with the parties to its left, and the fact the right refused to govern with it, was also a crucial asset for the right (Freire and Santana-Pereira, 2011).

Following the defeat of PEC IV and the prime minister's resignation (23 March 2011), the upward pressure on Portuguese debt interest rates became even greater, forcing the government to request external assistance. Despite the memorandum between the government and the Troika having been signed at the beginning of May 2011, in reality it was negotiated and agreed by the PS, PSD and CDS-PP. The parties of the radical left not only opposed the agreement, they actually refused to meet the Troika. While presenting the agreement to the public, the then prime minister made a point of highlighting what was not included (cuts to salaries, the Christmas and summer holiday payments, public sector job losses, etc.). The agreement has a strongly neo-liberal flavour: a wide-ranging programme of privatisations, ostensibly to pay the debt and to promote competition in monopolistic sectors; the extensive and profound deregulation of the labour market, allegedly to promote economic competitiveness by increasing labour flexibility and reducing labour costs; reducing the size of the state through pay freezes and a moderate and phased reduction in the number of public sector employees. However, the programme also called for the rationalisation of the state (reduction in the number of local authorities and balancing the deficits in public companies; reform of the pension system; renegotiation of public-private partnerships [PPP]) and for a reduction in the cost of red tape to companies (streamlining the justice system; reducing excess costs in the utilities, etc.) Finally, it called for the recapitalisation of the banks, not only in order to comply with the new capital ratios demanded by the European Union (EU) in the aftermath of the 2008 crisis and its aftershocks, but also in order to make credit available again to businesses (Abreu et al, 2013; Monastiriotis et al, 2013; Moury and Freire, 2013; Naumann, 2013).

The Memorandum (MoU) and the proposals of the parties framed the choices of the electorate in the 2011 election. Although Sócrates was reluctant to seek external assistance, once the agreement had been signed the PS had to accept it as their responsibility. During the election campaign, the PS said it would honour the agreement and that it would not support any 'radical changes' beyond those of the Troika as proposed by the PSD (Freire and Santana-Pereira, 2011). The PSD, on the other hand, was exulted by the accord, which to their mind was a kind of redemption from the excesses that the country and the people had been engaged in over the past few years, and stated that they wanted to go even further than the Troika. However, it should be noted that in relation to the reform of the state, the PSD confirmed that it wanted to 'trim the fat' (intermediate costs, duplicated jobs, cuts in PPP charges, etc.) but not cut the Welfare State, and to this end made certain promises (no salary cuts, no cuts to holiday pay, to not promote public sector redundancies, not to make it easier to dismiss employees, not to increase VAT in restaurants, etc.) (Freire and Santana-Pereira, 2011). The CDS-PP held a more moderate position: half way between that of the PS and the PSD. The BE and PCP/CDU were bitterly opposed to the agreement, and instead called for the renegotiation of the debt (Freire and Santana-Pereira, 2011).

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<sup>8</sup> Social and Democratic Centre-Popular Party, conservative, right, member of the European People's Party (PPE) in the European Parliament.

## II — Democracy, governments and their political mandates, and the Troika

The great liberal revolutions of the 18th century brought important innovations to the art of government (Manin, 1997; Freire, 2011). Underlying these innovations — in addition to the aim of eradicating tyranny (via the separation of powers) and of the arbitrariness of power (via bills of rights) — was one fundamental principle: that government is based on consent. And ‘free, fair and frequent’ elections are the fundamental mechanism for ensuring this consent (Freire, 2011; Manin, 1997; Schedler, 1998; Manin, Przeworski and Stokes, 1999; Pierce, 1999). In a representative regime, it is the elected representatives who govern, taking into account the fundamental choices of the sovereign: the parties present policy proposals to the electorate that then takes these proposals, which act as beacons of governance, into account (Schedler, 1998; Pierce, 1999). At the end of the mandate, the electorate judges whether or not the government governed in accordance with ‘popular preferences’.

Since the 2011 elections, the rules underpinning the concept of ‘government based on consent’ have been violated: many of this government’s flagship measures (such as cuts to public sector wages,<sup>9</sup> retirement incomes and pensions,<sup>10</sup> especially those of former public servants, which went way beyond those announced, and the ‘enormous increases in taxes’, etc.) appeared nowhere in the party manifestos nor in the Troika programme in 2011. While it is true that the failure of governments to keep their manifesto promises is not unknown in Portuguese politics, the extent, depth and gravity of the measures that have been introduced since 2011 is unprecedented. However, this kind of repeated violation has undermined the confidence of the electorate in their representatives and, at its extreme, in democracy itself.

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<sup>9</sup> Initially, the public sector wage cuts of between 3.5 and 10 per cent, which had been in force since the 2011 state budget, that is, since the PS government (always reiterated by the right), only applied from €1,500. The 2014 state budget introduced cuts to gross salaries above €675, starting at 2.5 per cent and rising to 12 per cent for gross wages above €2,000 per month. It also introduced cuts to the Christmas and summer payments, with only the 2011 Christmas payment being cut by half, although in 2012 both Christmas and summer payments being withheld. However, the Constitutional Court forced the government to make both payments in 2013, effectively preventing the government from continuing with this policy.

<sup>10</sup> Sofia Rodrigues, Luís Villalobos and Pedro Sousa Carvalho, ‘Governo alarga cortes nas pensões a partir dos mil euros e aumenta ADSE’, *Público*, 2 January 2014, 22.41pm, [www.publico.pt/economia/noticia/governo-alarga-cortes-a-mais-pensionistas-e-aos-funcionarios-publicos-1618257](http://www.publico.pt/economia/noticia/governo-alarga-cortes-a-mais-pensionistas-e-aos-funcionarios-publicos-1618257)

**Table 3: Portuguese confidence ('some' and 'much') in institutions, 2008 and 2012. Percentage of each sample**

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Difference 2012-2008</b>
Church	67.3	66.1	-1.2
Armed Forces	74.4	72.9	-1.5
Press	62.1	55.2	-6.9
Employers' Associations		38.6	
Large Companies	48.6	35.1	-13.5
Banks/Financial System		22.8	
Unions	53.2	57.9	4.7
Parties	30.5	19.2	-11.3
Parliament	48.5	22.3	-26.2
Government	44.5	13.6	-30.9
President	73.4	35.2	-38.2
Courts	50.2	36.3	-13.9
Public Administration	48.9	41.3	-7.6
European Union	64.7	42.6	-22.1
N	1350	1209	-

Sources: Survey of a representative sample of the adult Portuguese population in continental Portugal. More specifically, it concerns studies carried out as part of two CIES-IUL research projects. See [er.cies.iscte-iul.pt/](http://er.cies.iscte-iul.pt/)

Recently President Cavaco Silva has spoken of the importance of respecting international agreements in order to secure the trust of investors and international partners. Clearly, on the one hand government leaders have a responsibility to honour international agreements, thereby generating the necessary trust in the country. However, it is remarkable that the president, who is the supreme defender of democracy and the regular functioning of its institutions, has in this discourse neglected the equally important need for a high degree of trust between the represented and their representatives (Silva, 2013: pp. 4-5).<sup>11</sup> An eminent German sociologist said that the indebted states of today's capitalist West function as if they have two types of constituents: 'The population (the people of the state) on the one hand, and the 'markets' (the people of the market) on the other' (Streeck, 2013: pp. 129-130). The successive declarations and actions of the Portuguese president on this matter, as well as those of the coalition's leaders and parliamentary deputies, suggest they are no longer concerned with their national constituents, but are concerned exclusively with the 'people of the market'.

As you can see in Table 3, this situation is particularly problematic for Portugal. Based on representative surveys of the adult Portuguese population in mid-2008 and at the end of 2012, we see first that confidence in the political institutions in 2012 is much lower than in the other institutions represented (except Banks/Financial System). On the other hand, some traditional institutions (Church; Armed Forces; Press) and the unions appear to be those in which the Portuguese have most trust.

Except for the case of the president (73.4 per cent in 2008), the situation is unchanged from 2008 in respect of the hierarchy of political vis-à-vis other institutions. However, between 2008 and 2012 the situation has got much worse. In the context of the erosion

<sup>11</sup> On this dilemma, see Mair, 2011, and Streeck, 2013.

of social and labour rights, it is interesting to note that Portuguese trust in the trade unions is the only one to have increased between 2008 and 2012. The erosion in trust in the EU is also noticeable: the greatest fall over the period 2008-2012, greater than that suffered by the political institutions. Given the EU's responsibility for the difficulties currently being experienced in several European countries, especially those that are included in the financial assistance programme, it is not difficult to understand why people in Portugal have lost faith in the EU. It should be noted that this situation can be seen in other countries subjected to austerity programmes (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2014: pp. 59-77). In relation to the Portuguese situation in general, it is difficult not to see the extent and depth of the failure to fulfil electoral promises as at least one of the explanatory factors.

I am not arguing that, in extraordinary situations, it is not possible to make exceptional adjustments or break promises; it is precisely for this reason that the regime is 'representative' and the 'mandate is not imperative' (Pitkin, 1967). However, the elections cannot give the victor a blank cheque, otherwise democracy itself is discredited (Schedler, 1998). Moreover, in the 2012 survey we asked the Portuguese two things. First, whether the respondents believed the 'economic and financial emergency situation justified the breaking of the election promises made by the governing parties'; 68.1 per cent of respondents said it did not (60.3 per cent of supporters of right-wing parties). Then we asked if 'in the specific application of the so-called accord with the Troika, the PSD and CDS-PP coalition has shared the sacrifices evenly': the responses were overwhelmingly negative, that is, a huge majority of people believe the 'PS/CDS-PP coalition has not shared the sacrifices evenly, but that it has penalised employees, pensioners and small businesses much more than the large economic groups' (90.6 per cent and 77.0 per cent, respectively). It should be noted that these positions adopted by the electorate and the parties of the right contrast greatly with the views of the PSD and CDS-PP deputies to whom we asked exactly the same questions (in 2012-13), generating a strong incongruence between the electorate and the elected on these matters; on the left the opposite was the case (Moury and Freire, 2013).

This asymmetry is clearly visible in the enormous sacrifices being asked of wage earners and pensioners: cuts to wages and pensions, particularly of public sector workers and pensioners, and in the (generalised) working tax increases, the relaxation of redundancy rules (reductions in redundancy payments, more permissive dismissal laws and a politically-motivated and substantial reduction in collective bargaining), in the increase in the public sector working day (from 35 to 40 hours), the (generalised) reduction in the number of days holiday, etc. All this contrasts with the rather limited sacrifices being asked of capital: which as well as being rewarded with reductions in corporation tax, from 2014 onwards, in a move approved by both the right and the PS (at the beginning of 2014), it has received several other benefits. For example, the limited cuts to the 'excessive profits' earned by the PPPs and the private (almost) monopolies (in energy, etc.), as well as the help for the banks (approximately €4 billion by the middle of 2013), suggest this is so.

At the end result of this asymmetrical austerity, we have, according to data from the European Commission cited by Abreu et al. (2013: p. 74), the share of wages in GDP has fallen from 58.4 per cent in 2010 to 55.6 per cent in 2012, and it is forecast to fall to 54.1 percent in 2014. Another study by the European Commission, published in 2011, compared the distributive effects of the austerity measures between 2009 and 2011 in six of the European countries in which, following the 2008 crisis, the deficits increased

most, creating the need for corrective measures, which shows the austerity policies that have been followed, especially in Portugal, have substantially increased inequality and significantly penalised the poorest (European Commission, 2011). Recent data from the National Statistics Institute (INE) shows that between 2011 and 2013, while there has been a reduction in inequality as a consequence of the slight reduction in the Gini index (the result of the squeeze on middle class salaries, particularly those of public sector employees and pensioners), the disparities between the rich and the poor have greatly increased, as have levels of poverty and of ‘severe material deprivation’.<sup>12</sup> It also showed that Portugal was the EU country that made the most cuts to social programmes during the period being examined.<sup>13</sup>

The proposal for a further €4 billion cut (or €5.3 billion, cutting an additional €1.3 billion to allegedly compensate for the fiscal losses caused by the Constitutional Court’s 2013 rejection of some of the government’s measures) to public expenditure in 2013-2014 is another example of the violation of the basic principle of ‘government based on the consent of those being governed’.<sup>14</sup> And for 2014-2015 it is proposed to cut public expenditure by a further €1,700 million.<sup>15</sup> However, on the one hand, particularly taking into account the already low level of social spending in Portugal,<sup>16</sup> as well as the reduced number of public sector workers per thousand inhabitants compared to other European partners,<sup>17</sup> such cuts will represent a step on the road from a ‘social and democratic state’ to a ‘neo-liberal state’ (or ‘minimalist state’) that, at the very least, should have to be subject to the scrutiny of a public vote. These cuts to the state’s social responsibilities are clearly rejected by the majority of Portuguese (CESOP opinion poll, *Diário de Notícias*, 5 March 2013). Finally, there have also been breaches of the constitution while the Troika programme has been in operation (CRP) (see Gouveia and Piçarra, 2013).

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<sup>12</sup> Cláudia Bancalheiro and Sérgio Aníbal, ‘Diferença entre muito ricos e muito pobres continuou a subir em Portugal’, *Público*, 24 March 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Ana Suspiro, ‘Portugal lidera cortes na despesa social na União Europeia’, *Jornal i*, 24 March 2014.

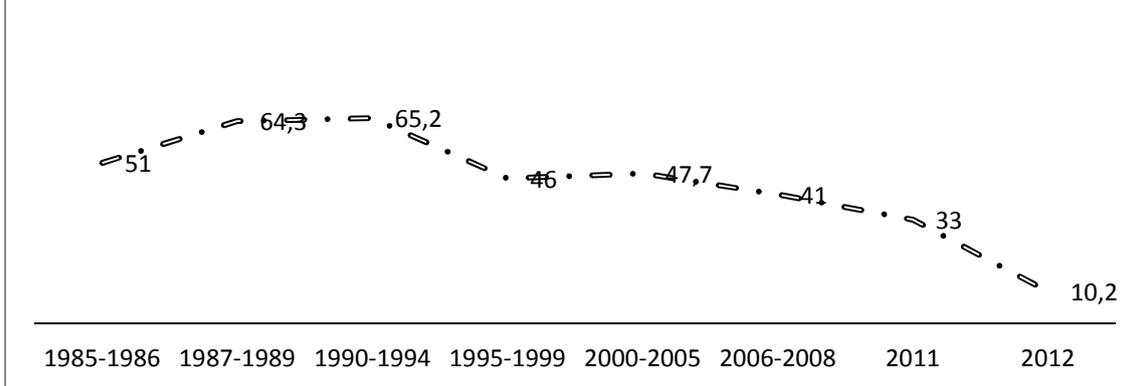
<sup>14</sup> The most recent data revealed by the Prime Minister suggest €6,000 billion by 2017.

<sup>15</sup> See Carla Soares, ‘PSD propõe corte de 1700 milhões’, *Jornal de Notícias*, 21 April 2014, [www.jn.pt/PaginaInicial/Nacional/Interior.aspx?content\\_id=1549210](http://www.jn.pt/PaginaInicial/Nacional/Interior.aspx?content_id=1549210)

<sup>16</sup> See references on this point in Freire, 2013a: pp. 77-78, note 14.

<sup>17</sup> In the 21 member states of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), public sector employment stands at 15 per cent compared to the 11.1 per cent in Portugal at the end of 2011, the last year for which data on public employment is available.

**Figura 1: Satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, Portugal, 1985-2011**



Sources: data elaborated by the author from *Manheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-1999*, ICPSR study number 3384 (1985-1999); Eurobarometer 54.1, ICPSR study number 3209 (2000); Portugal EEN (Estudo Eleitoral Nacional) 2002 and 2005 (2002 and 2005); *Participação e Deliberação Democrática* – CIES project (2006); *Os Deputados Portugueses em Perspectiva Comparada* – CIES project (2008); *Barómetro sobre a Qualidade da Democracia*, ICS-UL (2011); for the 2012 data see the sources for Table 1.

In Figure 1 we see an accentuated decline in Portuguese satisfaction with the functioning of democracy between 1985 and 2012, which is particularly pronounced between 2006-2008 (41 per cent), 2011 (33 per cent) and 2012 (10.2 per cent), reaching its nadir at this last date. It should be noted that an identical tendency is apparent in Spain and the other countries with debt problems (Italy, Greece and Ireland) (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2014: pp. 73-77). There are several reasons for this phenomenon, but there are three factors that appear fundamental to us (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2014: pp. 118-164, notes identical factors in Spain). First, the political and business classes are discredited for their poor example.<sup>18</sup> In particular, during the period being studied, the number of multimillionaires and the size of their fortunes and increased (an identical phenomenon has been witnessed in Spain: Sánchez-Cuenca, 2014: p. 126-138).<sup>19</sup> Second, there is the de-legitimation of democracy by the procedures: by the succession of election promises that have been broken since 2011, as well as by the attacks on the Constitution.

<sup>18</sup> In the context of a huge rise in unemployment and salary and pension cuts, it has been noted that, despite the crisis, the ‘salaries of the heads of the top 20 companies on the Portuguese stock exchange rose by 5.3 per cent in 2011’, *Público*, 14 May 2012, p. 12. The major entrepreneurs have also provided evidence of their lack of solidarity: ‘Jerónimo Martins muda sede para a Holanda’, [expresso.sapo.pt/soares-dos-santos-muda-participacao-na-jeronimo-martins-para-a-holanda=f697509](http://expresso.sapo.pt/soares-dos-santos-muda-participacao-na-jeronimo-martins-para-a-holanda=f697509), and ‘Cotadas de malas feitas para a Holanda’, [www.publico.pt/economia/noticia/cotadas-portuguesas-de-malas-feitas-para-a-holanda-1527364](http://www.publico.pt/economia/noticia/cotadas-portuguesas-de-malas-feitas-para-a-holanda-1527364) See also Fernandez, McGauran and Frederik (2013).

<sup>19</sup> Camilo Soldado, ‘Os multimilionários portugueses são mais e estão mais ricos’, *Público*, 7 November 2013.

**Table 4: Economic Indicators of Crisis: The Case of Portugal, 2007-2013**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Real GDP Growth: per cent of GDP	2.1*	0.0	-2.9	1.4	-1.7	-3.2	-1.4
Unemployment	8.9	8.5	10.6	12.0	12.9	15.7	16.5
Public Debt ( per cent of GDP)	68.4	71.7	83.2	93.5	108.1	123.6	129.4
Government deficit (-) or surplus (+) ( per cent of GDP)	-3.1	-3.6	-10.2	-9.8	-4.4	-6.4	-4.9

Source: Eurostat cited in Bosco and Verney, *op. cit.*, 2012: p. 10 (for 2007-2011); for 2012-2013, see newspapers sources in text and Banco de Portugal (2013), *Indicadores de Conjuntura – Abril de 2013*, Lisboa, BP, See [www.bportugal.pt/pt-PT/EstudosEconomicos/Publicacoes/IndicadoresConjuntura/Publicacoes/ind\\_abr\\_13\\_p.pdf](http://www.bportugal.pt/pt-PT/EstudosEconomicos/Publicacoes/IndicadoresConjuntura/Publicacoes/ind_abr_13_p.pdf)  
 Banco de Portugal (2013), *Projeções para a Economia Portuguesa, 2013-2014*, Lisbon, Bank of Portugal, [www.bporstugal.pt/pt-PT/EstudosEconomicos/Publicacoes/BoletimEconomico/Publicacoes/projecoes\\_p.pdf](http://www.bporstugal.pt/pt-PT/EstudosEconomicos/Publicacoes/BoletimEconomico/Publicacoes/projecoes_p.pdf)

\* Annual average for 1998–2007.

Finally, we have the de-legitimisation of democracy by the results. First, there is the deep and prolonged economic recession: GDP stagnated in 2008, 0.0 per cent, fell by 2.9 per cent in 2009, by a further 1.7 per cent in 2011, by 3.2 per cent in 2012 and 1.4 per cent in 2013 (see Table 4 for the 2007-2013 data). With these negative rates it would be very difficult for the country to repay the debt and sustain the welfare state. Second, there has been a large increase in unemployment: 8.5 per cent of the active population in 2008, 10.6 per cent, in 2009, 12.0 per cent, in 2010, 12.9 per cent in 2011, 15.7 per cent in 2012, and around 16.5 per cent in 2013. In other words, we have a problem that is socially and politically intolerable, and which is placing unsustainable pressure on the social security budget. Third, the deficit data is also problematic, as it has always been above the Troika's initial forecasts: -3.6 per cent in 2008, -10.2 per cent in 2009, -9.8 per cent in 2010, -4.4 per cent in 2011, -6.4 per cent in 2012 and a revised forecast of -5.5 per cent in 2013 (the final result was -4.9 per cent). Finally, there has been the extremely worrying and unsustainable rise in the level of public debt, which is difficult to repay, accounting for 71.7 per cent of GDP in 2008, 83.7 per cent in 2009, 93.5 per cent in 2010, 108.1 per cent in 2011, 123.6 per cent in 2012, and forecast to reach 122.4 per cent in 2013 (the final figure for 2013 was 129.4 per cent).<sup>20</sup>

However, there have been some more or less apparently positive results. First, there has been a reduction in the trade deficit from 2011-2014: the country now imports less and exports more. Second, it is now claimed Portugal is more credible to foreign partners and investors. The interest rates on Portuguese debt have fallen quite a bit since 2012. However, on the one hand there are those who claim this is due more to the increasingly assertive intervention of the European Central Bank in purchasing national debts (since 2012, when the debt crisis began to affect Spain and Italy, which were declared 'too big to fail'), which has been operating as a lender of last resort, rather than to the specific merits of these countries (Sánchez-Cuenca, Ignacio, *op cit*, p. 57). On the other hand, since 2013 interest rates have been very low in Europe and the US, and are thus not specific to any one country in particular.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See Rodrigues, Jorge N., 'Dívida em 129.4 per cent do PIB no final de 2013', *Expresso* online, 19 February 2014, accessed 29 March 2014, 3.52pm.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Sérgio Aníbal's interview with Jens Nordvig, the leader of the Nomura Bank's research department, 'Agora é muito fácil ter emissões de dívida bem sucedidas', *Público*, 27 February

Additionally, it is also true that there have been some signs of a slight growth in GDP and a fall in unemployment between the last quarter of 2013 and the first quarter of 2014, but it is far too weak to undermine the arguments outlined above. In any case, the fall in unemployment has to be seen in the context of the high levels of emigration during the bailout,<sup>22</sup> as well as the poor quality, insecurity and low pay offered in the newly-created jobs.<sup>23</sup>

### **III – Parties and governments before and after the Troika: format and dynamic**

As we can see in Table 2, the right-wing coalition that governs the country cannot formally be distinguished from previous governments. It is made up of two right-wing parties, a form of coalition that has governed three times in the past. It is also a coalition with a parliamentary majority, as with the three previous examples. Its continuation in power, to date, as well as the increasing expectation that it will survive to the end of its mandate, means it is potentially one of the most stable coalitions in the history of Portuguese democracy. It is true that, at times, the CDS-PP has sought to distance itself from some of the government's measures and/or strategies (such as the Single Social Tax proposed in the summer of 2012, or the emphasis on budgetary discipline and the almost complete subordination of these measures to the pursuit of economic growth). These differences reached their peak in the summer of 2013 following the resignation of the then minister of finance and the prime minister's decision to opt for continuity (in his replacement), which did not please the CDS-PP. This led to the leader of this party resigning from government.<sup>24</sup> However, the prime minister managed to convince him to reconsider: despite not changing his decision regarding the finance ministry, he offered the CDS-PP more power in government (in addition to the portfolios it already

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2014: p. 22. See, for example, Sérgio Aníbal, 'Grécia tenta ser a nova história de sucesso nos mercados', *Público*, 3 April 2014, p. 24.

<sup>22</sup> See Rafael Albuquerque, 'Número de emigrantes em 2012 foi superior ao total de nascimentos', 29 October 2013, 8.56pm, [www.publico.pt/sociedade/noticia/numero-de-emigrantes-em-2012-foi-superior-ao-total-de-nascimentos-1610703#/0](http://www.publico.pt/sociedade/noticia/numero-de-emigrantes-em-2012-foi-superior-ao-total-de-nascimentos-1610703#/0); Catarina Gomes, 'Emigração terá levado um quinto dos trabalhadores qualificados de Portugal', *Público*, 12 March 2014, 10.30pm, [www.publico.pt/sociedade/noticia/portugal-tera-perdido-um-quinto-dos-seustrabalhadores-qualificados-com-a-emigracao-1628049](http://www.publico.pt/sociedade/noticia/portugal-tera-perdido-um-quinto-dos-seustrabalhadores-qualificados-com-a-emigracao-1628049)

<sup>23</sup> For example, between 2006 and 2012 the number of workers receiving the national minimum wage (frozen at €485 per month since 2011) increased to around 400,000 people in an active population of around 5 million and only 4.5 million in employment. Moreover, of those who are employed (3.5 million), around one million receive between €310 and €599 clear per month, with a further million clearing between €600 and €899, with a substantial portion of these (and practically all of those in the first group) constituting the working poor. See Natália Faria and Raquel Martines (2014), 'Se for para tirar ainda mais, prefiro que não me aumentem', 'Trabalhadores a receber o salário mínimo triplicam nos últimos seis anos', *Público*, 13 April 2014, pp. 4-5. See João Silvestre (2014), 'No jobs for the boys', 'Salários recuam dez anos' and 'Zona Euro atrás na saída da crise', *Expresso*, 12 February 2014. Citing Eurostat data, this article reveals that, first, when hit by the 2008 crisis, the loss of employment in Portugal (-546.8 thousand) was the fourth greatest in the Eurozone, after Spain (-3071.9), Italy (-989.2) and Greece (-934.9). It also shows that real incomes, that is, allowing for inflation, have fallen to levels last seen in 2003 (-5.7 per cent), and that these losses were even greater among workers with higher education qualifications (-9.8 per cent). It also reveals that the majority of jobs created in 2013-2014 have been part-time and for people with secondary or higher education qualifications. Moreover, of the 622.9 thousand people in part-time jobs, 263.4 thousand say they would like to work more hours.

<sup>24</sup> See Sofia Rodrigues, São José Almeida e Leonete Botelho, 'Portas demite-se do Governo descontente com solução para as Finanças', *Público*, 2 July 2013, 4.31pm, [www.publico.pt/politica/noticia/portas-demite-se-do-governo-1599014](http://www.publico.pt/politica/noticia/portas-demite-se-do-governo-1599014)

controlled - social security -, it received the government vice-presidency and economy portfolios). In the end, this only bound the CDS-PP more tightly to the government, strengthening its cohesion by reducing its room for manoeuvre to differentiate itself.

Portuguese democracy is generally divided into two phases: one that approximates to the ‘consensual democracy’ model (greater party fragmentation, unstable coalition or minority governments, etc.), between 1976 and 1987; and the more recent phase of ‘majoritarian democracy’ (concentration of the vote in the two main parties, more stable governments often based on single-party or almost single-party majorities), between 1987 and the present (Freire, 2010). The data on electoral volatility, disproportionality and party fragmentation are practically the same for the 2011 election and all the others that took place between 1987 and 2009 (see Table 5). Thus, from the point of view of these fundamental indicators of the evolution of electoral behaviour, of the effects of the electoral system and of the format of the party system, there is nothing that would allow us to say the 2011 elections were in any way extraordinary.

**Table 5: Disproportionality, Two Major Parties’ Vote Share and the Effective Number of Electoral (ENEP) and Parliamentary (ENPP) Parties in the Legislative elections: Portugal**

Legislative elections	1975	1976	1979	1980	1983	1985	1987	1991	1995	1999
Total volatility	-	8.6	8.0	4.0	9.9	21.3	22.3	13.6	19.4	2.6
Inter-bloc volatility	-	5.0	0.5	2.1	4.2	0.2	7.6	3.3	6.9	2.1
Disproportionality	5.7	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.0	3.6	6.1	6.1	4.6	4.9
PS & PSD Vote per cent	64.3	59.0	55.3	56.5	63.4	50.6	72.4	79.7	77.8	76.3
ENEP	3.7	3.9	4.7	4.6	3.7	4.8	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.1
ENPP	2.9	3.4	3.9	4.0	3.4	4.2	2.4	2.2	2.6	2.6
Legislative elections	2002	2005	2009	2011						
Total volatility	8.9	12.9	9.0	13.4						
Inter-bloc volatility	7.9	12.1	4.7	11.3						
Disproportionality	4.6	5.8	5.6	6.9						
PS & PSD Vote per cent	78.0	73.8	65.7	66.8						
ENEP	3.2	3.3	4.1	3.9						
ENPP	2.6	2.6	3.3	2.9						

Sources: author’s computations from official electoral statistics: [www.cne.pt](http://www.cne.pt)

Notes: <sup>1</sup> Volatility indices we calculated using the formulas presented in Bartolini and Mair (1990: pp. 17-52 and 313-314). <sup>2</sup> Effective number of electoral (ENEP) and parliamentary (ENPP) parties - data elaborated by the authors using the formula proposed by Laakso and Taagepera (1979: pp. 3-27). <sup>3</sup> Vote for the two major parties – total percentage vote of PS and PSD. <sup>4</sup> Disproportionality: Least Squares Index (Gallagher, 1991).

However, it should be noted that the 2013 local elections, in which independent candidates can stand, there was not only a large increase in abstentions but also an explosion in support for citizen lists, representing an embryonic challenge to the established party system.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, a large number of voters abstained from the 2011 presidential election while the candidates who did not have party political backing

<sup>25</sup> In the 2013 local elections, the ‘citizen lists’ obtained their best results since they were first permitted in 2001. First, because, with 6.9 per cent of the vote they became the fourth political force in Portugal. Second, because they increased the number of mayor’s offices under their control from three in 2001 to 13 in 2013. See André Freire, ‘As candidaturas independentes e a reforma do sistema político’, *Público*, 19 October 2013.

received a great deal of support, not forgetting the large number of blank and spoiled votes,<sup>26</sup> signs that are convergent with the local election results.

**Table 6: Portuguese attitudes towards a left-wing government, 2012, by party sympathy — % of each group total**

<b>'As was the case with the parties of the right in Portugal, the parties of the left (PS, PCP/CDU and BE) should reach an understanding in order to create an alternative stable government'</b>						
	<b>Party sympathy</b>					
	<b>CDU/PCP</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>PS</b>	<b>PSD</b>	<b>CDS-PP</b>	<b>No party</b>
Entirely disagree	0.0	2.2	7.5	0.9	6.3	0.2
Disagree	3.6	3.3	2.8	7.8	12.5	3.7
Neither agree nor disagree	13.1	7.6	13.4	20.9	18.8	19.1
Agree	56.0	48.9	59.8	61.7	50.0	64.4
Entirely agree	27.4	38.0	16.5	8.7	12.5	12.7
N	84	92	254	115	16	592

Source: see Table 4; N = 1209.

One of the most persistent traits of Portuguese politics, which is also clear to see in Table 2, is that the right has been able to form coalitions and produce stable executives, something the left has been unable to do. However, the harshness of the austerity policies, the systematic and profound violation of several election promises by the serving government, as well as the affronts to the constitution of the Portuguese republic, seem to present at least the potential to overturn this situation and cause the parties of the left to reach an understanding. The analysis of the ideological positions (left-right) of the parties and deputies before (2008) and after (201-13) the crisis, shows an increasing alignment to the right of the PSD and the maintenance of strengthening of left-wing position within the left (Freire, Tsatsanis and Lima, 2013). In a recent article, the position of the parties (via their deputies) was analysed on a series of economic and non-economic concerning whether the bailout has had an impact on the ideological distance separating the parties of the left and, therefore, their potential to form a coalition. One of the most interesting results of this study was that, in general, the parties of the 'radical left' have assumed positions that are not only similar to one another in Parliament, but also in their systematic opposition to the right-wing government; however, the socialists have been more cooperative, particularly with the PSD (Freire, Lisi and Lima, 2013). As has been demonstrated, this standard of behaviour is not only due to the restrictions imposed by the Troika agreement, since it was also in evidence during the minority socialist government of 2009-201.

Another curious result is that the economic crisis has increased the polarisation of the party system, with the parties on the 'radical left' and those on the right adopting more extreme positions, especially on socio-economic matters. This effect is clear among the party elites, while the position of the electorate does not exhibit any significant change. However, the results suggest that a coalition of parties on the left continues to be

<sup>26</sup> First, at 46.5 per cent, the 2011 presidential election had the highest abstention rate since 2001, when it was 45.4 per cent. Second, the protest vote reached spectacular levels: blank and spoiled votes reached 6.9 per cent; while the non-party candidacies of Nobre and Coelho together accounted for 18.6 per cent, See André Freire, 'A vitória de Cavaco e o refluxo da esquerda não comunista', *Público*, 31 January 2011.

problematic. On one hand, the distance between the parties of the ‘radical left’ and the socialists remains significant, although in the eyes of the voters it is much narrower. On the other hand, the PSD’s swing to the right could lead the PS to consider the advantages of avoiding any coalition in its attempts to attract moderate voters who are dissatisfied with the incumbents, and seek to obtain an absolute majority in the 2015 election. This aspect speaks to the potential for a left coalition. Independently of their ideological preferences, an overwhelming majority of voters support the idea of a left-wing coalition (Table 6). Nevertheless, this position is not so clearly reflected in the thinking of the left-wing party elites, who are not much convinced in a hypothetical alliance, which is particularly true among the communists (Freire, Lisi and Lima, 2013).

#### **IV – The socio-political challenge to the Troika programme<sup>27</sup>**

Particularly in more recent times, that is, once the participative euphoria of the transition to democracy was over, several studies have shown that Portugal is a country in which conventional socio-political participation (particularly in elections and trade unions) is in decline; however, unlike what has been happening in other countries, these studies also show that this decline has not been compensated with a significant increase in so-called non-conventional forms of political participation (Viegas, Belchior and Seiceira, 2010; Torcal and Magalhães, 2010; Amador, 2013; Lima and Artiles, 2011; 2013). One of the (few) positive outcomes of this crisis has been the growing social mobilisation and the increasing political awareness of many Portuguese who before had shown little interest in politics, or simply the reawakening of a civic activism that had been lying dormant (Amador, 2013), which is a development witnessed also in other countries (Rüdig and Karyotis, 2013). One example of this is the appearance of new movements including the *Auditoria Cidadã à Dívida Pública* (Citizens’ Debt Audit Group), the *Congresso Democrático das Alternativas* (Democratic Congress of Alternatives), the *Associação de Reformados e Pensionistas* (Pensioners’ Association), the ‘*Que se Lixe a Troika*’ (‘Screw the Troika’) movement, and the huge mass demonstrations of 12 March 2011, 15 September 2012 and 2 March 2013. Let us deal with the questions related to socio-political participation since the 2008 crisis a little more systematically, by breaking it down into three parts. First, conventional political participation, divided into two subgroups, the petitions on the one side, and trade union participation on the other. Second, non-conventional participation: demonstrations, boycotts, etc.

In relation to petitions to parliament, there has clearly been an increase in these since the crisis began, accentuating an earlier tendency (Tibúrcio, 2014). Sometimes these petitions have underlying political manifestos published in the press and are led by intellectuals and other members of the social and political elites. Of these we have two examples. The first of these was a manifesto that was later transformed into a petition that claimed it was a ‘Manifesto in defence of democracy, equality and public services’, that is, against the excessive penalisation of public sector employees and pensioners when distributing the costs of austerity.<sup>28</sup> The second was the so-called ‘Manifesto dos

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<sup>27</sup> I would like to thank Cristina Nunes, Paulo Alves and Alan Stoleroff, for providing material for this section.

<sup>28</sup> *Público*, 4 November 2011. This demonstration resulted in the presentation of a petition to parliament (Petition 52/XII (1st)), on 11 November 2011, which had collected 6,759 signatures in just one week (4-10 November 2011), and which was debated during a plenary session of parliament.

74',<sup>29</sup> which also gave rise to a petition that was handed into parliament (with almost 34,000 signatures), and which later received the support of around 70 renowned foreign economists.<sup>30</sup> The novelty of this latter manifesto was that it represented a substantial confluence of positions among people (former ministers, former deputies, business and trade union leaders) from a wide range of social, political and ideological backgrounds (from the BE to the CDS-PP, including some from the PS and the PSD) calling for a restructuring of the public debt in order that Portugal can return to growth and thereby meet some of its financial commitments.

The trade unions have to date organised three general strikes that have united the two trade union confederations (UGT and CGTP), one in 2010 while the PS was still in office (and the first in which the UGT opposed a PS government) and two in 2012 and 2013, during the consulate of the Troika. However, the two confederations have oscillated between strikes and pacts, although the CGTP, with its allies in the radical left (BE and PCP/CDU) has tended more for the former while the UGT and its main party ally (PS) has tended more for the latter.<sup>31</sup> Besides the general strikes, the available data shows the number of ordinary strikes increased (between 2010 and 2012 from 123 to 127 per year),<sup>32</sup> as did the average number of workers affected by strike (from 71 to 92) and the number of working days lost (from 71 to 113). Moreover, while the number of strikes was not greater than that recorded in the 1990s and 2000s (up to 2007), the number of workers affected by them and the number of working days lost are clearly greater during the crisis of 2010-2012 than in 1990s and 2000s (see source cited in the previous note).

As for non-conventional participation, there has been an explosion of new movements (*Que se Lixe a Troika*, *Auditoria Cidadã à Dívida Pública*, M12M [March 12 Movement], *Plataforma 15 de Outubro* [15 October Platform], etc.), which have at times organised some huge demonstrations (Baumgarten, 2013a; 2013b; Lima and Artiles, 2013). However, despite the growth of this type of participation that has been witnessed since the crisis (Amador, 2013), although in a non-linear form, the most recent available data indicates that in Portugal the level of non-conventional participation continues at a level much lower than that witnessed in many European countries, particularly in Greece and Spain (Lima and Artiles, 2013; Amador, 2013). On the other hand, internally the dynamic of these movements seems to have lost some of its élan (Baumgarten, 2013b), as well as not having managed to build the desired bridges with the traditional organisations (the unions and political parties) in order to exert more effective socio-political pressure.

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<sup>29</sup> See 'Manifesto: Preparar a reestruturação da dívida para crescer sustentadamente', *Público*, 11 March 2014, accessed 29 March 2014, 2.59pm.

<sup>30</sup> See Pedro Sousa Carvalho and Paulo Pena, 'Manifesto da dívida recebe apoio de 74 economistas estrangeiros', *Público*, 19 March 2014, accessed 29 March 2014, 15.04pm.

<sup>31</sup> The UGT's other party ally is the PSD.

<sup>32</sup> There is no data available for 2013 and the 1995-2007 series, which covers all of Portugal, was interrupted between 2008 and 2009, and picked up again in 2010, but only with data for continental Portugal. See [www.pordata.pt/Portugal/Greves+total++trabalhadores+abrangidos+e+dias+de+trabalho+perdidos-71](http://www.pordata.pt/Portugal/Greves+total++trabalhadores+abrangidos+e+dias+de+trabalho+perdidos-71)

## Concluding notes

There are four main elements that characterise Portuguese democracy during the Troika's financial bailout. First, we have a government (of the right) that has governed well beyond the political mandate it received from the voters in 2011, as well as from the Troika's original programme that also framed the electorate's choices, in addition to governing at the limits of the constitution. All of this has generated in a certain de-legitimisation of democracy as a result of the violation of some of its basic procedures. Second, there has been an enormous imbalance in the sacrifices being required of citizens (wage earners and retired) and capital, as well as violations of undertakings and of the rights of the former and of the latter, which had generated the de-legitimisation of the regime through feelings of injustice. Third, there has also been a powerful de-legitimisation as a consequence of the results (the deficit, the debt, unemployment and impoverishment) that has always been beyond the goals that were initially set out in the Troika programme, and which also went beyond the absolute minimum for social well being. Fourth, despite all this, the last of the problems behind the Portuguese dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy is the inability of the system / of the opposition to come up with alternatives.

On the one hand, the PS opposition to the government only effectively began to reveal itself with clarity from the end of 2012 on (until then it had abstained on the budget votes and had either approved or abstained on the majority of legislation that undermined workers' rights, such as the deregulation of the labour market, for example), and even since then its opposition seems to operate more in the judicial field (requests for constitutional oversight of government legislation) than in the political field (Freire, Lisi and Lima). On the other hand, the capacity of the Portuguese right to reach an understanding in order to govern is well-known. However, the left (which appears united in defence of the constitution, of the welfare state and of the need to dial back on austerity) now as in the past, seems incapable of coming together to discuss the creation of an alternative government. In this situation, the electorate believes there is more likely to be a coalition of the PS and the parties to its right, which will not advance a solution that is that different from the status quo. More: this inability of the left is also the source of the incongruities in the preferences of the electorate (in favour of an understanding) and of the elected (incapable of reaching an understanding). Despite the importance that the growing socio-political pressure has had on parts of the new and old social movements, particularly in giving possible alternatives some social anchorage, in a democracy it is the political parties that can promote and give shape to the alternatives. It is precisely they that appear to have a certain block, a certain inability to run risks, to innovate and to seek to provide a reasonable response to the citizens' expectations.

In 2011 the Portuguese began to think about the need for the bailout programme and voted massively for the parties that signed the agreement (Moury and Freire, 2013: pp. 14-20). However, in a poll in May 2013, it was shown that when 'asked about how Portugal should respond to the Troika negotiations/impositions, 41.5 per cent of those asked called for the agreement to be torn up; 41 per cent called for its renegotiation, with only 10.8 per cent stating the agreement must be honoured'.<sup>33</sup> That is to say, that just two years after the bailout was first applied, an overwhelming majority of

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<sup>33</sup> See Público online 18 May 2011, [www.publico.pt/economia/noticia/sondagem-mostra-vontade-de-renegociar-ou-denunciar-acordo-com-a-troika-1594818](http://www.publico.pt/economia/noticia/sondagem-mostra-vontade-de-renegociar-ou-denunciar-acordo-com-a-troika-1594818)

Portuguese (82.5 per cent) called for the memorandum to be scrapped or renegotiated. This, though, does not appear to be the position of the main opposition PS, which has not only failed to agree with its competitors on the left to come up with an alternative, but is has become increasingly likely in the eyes of the electorate that it will enter into a grand coalition with the right should it fail to win a majority, and that it will refuse to restructure the debt (i.e. the haircut). Perhaps it is because of this that the de-legitimisation of the functioning of democracy that is associated with the exercise of power by the parties of the right from 2011-2014, seriously threatens to contaminate support for the regime. It is perhaps also because of this that, according to several opinion polls, the radical left (BE and PDP/CDU) and the PS are not benefiting as much as they would expect (as a result of the strong erosion in popular support for the government and its policies and the policies of the Troika) in terms of voting intentions.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> See [www.marktest.com/wap/a/p/id~112.aspx](http://www.marktest.com/wap/a/p/id~112.aspx)

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