



Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership

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Restoration of the Independence

The restoration of the independence of Portugal commemorates the end of the Spanish rule over Portugal. Led by Portuguese noblemen, on the 1st of December 1640, the revolt against the Spanish dynasty took place. In 1580, when the only Portuguese heir to the throne died, the Spanish prince, Phillip II, overtook the country. The Spanish Phillip dynasty then ruled Portugal for 60 years until the 1640-revolution.

The Spanish rule was disastrous for Portugal. Political and commercial associations with Britain and The Netherlands, two previous partners, were broken since Portugal started to be seen as a partner of Spain, the long-term enemy of those two nations. Moreover, during those years, taxes were raised on Portuguese merchant ships and an endeavor was made to make Portugal a district of Spain rather than a separate country and so Portugal lost its impact both in Madrid and even within Portugal itself once there was an unrest feeling everywhere.

This holiday recalls the well-organised action of Portuguese noblemen, who on December 1st 1640, invaded the Royal Palace and killed Miguel de Vasconcelos, the representative of Spain in Lisbon, acclaiming D. João, Duke of Bragança, as king of Portugal.

Ever since then (over the past 381 years), there have been cultural events promoted by the governments. Most Portuguese recall, on this day, their historical legacy from monarchy times when Portugal used to be a standout amongst the most important nations in the world. It's also a day used by monarchic factions in Portugal to recall the importance of the monarchic historical background in building it up.

December 1st is one of the most important holidays in Portugal because, excluding the 60 years of the Spanish rule, it reinforces the 818-year-old -sovereignty of Portugal as an independent nation.