

Portugal is a country in Europe. This summer, there was a very big fire there. Two thousand firefighters battled the fire. It took one week. These firefighters risked their lives. They did not get any money.

Most firefighters in Portugal are **volunteers**. A volunteer is someone who works for no money. They give their time and effort for free.

There are many fires in Portugal in the summer. These fires can be very dangerous. Firefighters are sent far away to stop them.

Hugo Simoes is a firefighter. He lives in Lisbon. That is the capital city of Portugal. Mr. Simoes helped fight the very big fire this summer.

### **Most Firefighters Do Not Get Paid**

Many countries have volunteer firefighters. But volunteers in Portugal must help with the country's biggest emergencies. They are the first ones there. It is a very important job. It is very dangerous, too.

"Here in Portugal it has been like this for a long time," Mr. Simoes says. "We like what we do."

The big fire this summer happened far from Lisbon. Still, Mr. Simoes went. He went with other firefighters. They all wanted to help.

"Some walked out of work," Simoes says. Across the country, many volunteer firefighters did the same.

### **Wildfires Grow Fast**

The weather was hot. There were strong winds. The fire grew quickly. The **conditions** were very dangerous.

"At times it can get a bit hairy," Mr. Simoes said. "But our **training** kicks in."

There have been a lot of wildfires this year in Portugal. The country has not had enough rain. The land is very dry. This makes it easier for fires to spread.

Last week, Mr. Simoes and others were sent to another big fire. They stopped the fire from spreading. It only took two days.

### **People Like To Help**

People in Portugal love their firefighters. They appreciate the work volunteers do. They call the firefighters "heroes without capes." People give them food and water. They **donate** money for supplies. They want to support the firefighters who **protect** them.

Mr. Simoes says the fire station in Lisbon has plenty of workers. There are about 80 volunteers. There are other things they need, though. The station always needs money for supplies. Fire suits are expensive. Helmets are, too. The station only buys used trucks. A new fire truck would cost too much.

The volunteer firefighters have a wish. One day, they want to have a big American fire truck.