

## **Carlos Manuel Martins do Vale César**

### **President of the Regional Government of the Azores**

**Born on:** 30-10-1956

Carlos Manuel Martins do Vale César was born in Ponta Delgada, in the Azores on October 30, 1956. He went to primary and secondary school in his hometown.

At a very early age, when he was studying at the Antero de Quental Secondary School, he was a member of the Cultural Cooperative "SEXTANTE," located on the island of São Miguel, which was famous for its active civil opposition to the dictatorship of Salazar and Marcelo Caetano, who ordered the political police PIDE/DGS to close it.

His inclination towards politics comes from a family tradition that led, among others, his great-uncle, Manuel Augusto César, to actively participate in the Socialist Party as well as in labour movements during the First Republic. The latter was also the director of newspapers such as "O Proletário," the weekly paper of the Workers' Federation, the "Protesto," a body of the Antero de Quental Socialist Centre and the "Protesto do Povo," the socialist fortnightly newspaper, all published in Ponta Delgada.

In the years immediately preceding April 25, his civic formation was deeply influenced by his brother Horácio do Vale César, a journalist, and by other important figures in the school and opposition movements in Ponta Delgada during that period, such as Jaime Gama, Mário Mesquita and Medeiros Ferreira, all of whom studied at the Antero de Quental Secondary School.

In 1973, at the age of 17, he integrated the Steering Commission of the C.D.E. (Electoral Democratic Centre) in Ponta Delgada. On April 26 1974, a day after the "Carnation Revolution," which restored freedom to the Portuguese people, he founded the Students' Association of the Antero de Quental Secondary School and the Socialist Youth (JS) in the Azores a month later. He was a member of the first elected Secretariat of the Ponta Delgada section of the Socialist Party and of the Azores Delegation for the 1st National Congress of PS and the National Congress of the Socialist Youth.

In 1975, he began his studies at the Faculty of Law of the University of Lisbon, having been elected for the Board of the Students' Association and for the management bodies of that university institute. He was also the national coordinator of the JS for higher education until 1980.

He integrated the Organising Commission for the first celebration of the Student's Day in Portugal after April 25 and he was one of the founders of the then recently created National Union of Portuguese Students. He also worked in Lisbon as coordinator of a Documentation and Cultural

Cooperative.

Throughout these years, he was always the national leader of JS, member of its National Commission and, later on, of its National Executive Secretariat. In 1986, when president of the National Congress of that autonomous organisation of PS, he was proclaimed Honorary Member of the National Socialist Youth.

He was Deputy Secretary of State for Public Administration of the II Constitutional Government. On his return to the Azores, he became member of the Regional Assembly in January 1981. Shortly after, he integrated the Board of the Parliamentary Group of PS as well as various parliamentary commissions, and he chaired the Committee of Economic Affairs. He was later elected Vice-President of the Regional Assembly, being the member of the Parliament who held this position for the longest period of time.

From 1983 to 1985, he was the leader of the Socialist Party (PS) in the Azores. Between December 1988 and December 1989, he was a member of the Assembly of the Republic, for which he had been elected in 1987. He was then a member of the Board of the Parliamentary Group, at the invitation of António Guterres. He also integrated the Committees of National Defence, Youth and of Rights, Freedom and Guarantees. He was a member of the Municipal Assembly of Ponta Delgada. From 1993 to 1997, he was the president of the Parish Assembly of Fajã de Baixo. On October 30, 1994 he was elected chairman of the azorean Socialist Party (PS/Açores) at the National Congress with 92% of the votes cast by secret ballot. In addition to being a member of the National Committee and of the National Political Committee of PS, he was elected for the National Secretariat in 1995, of which he remains a member. He has presented several lectures at seminars and conferences in the Azores, Mainland Portugal and abroad and he has a wide range of publications in the regional press. He also collaborated as a regular political commentator in RTP/Açores.

In the regional elections of October 13, 1996 while being candidate of the Azorean socialists for the Presidency of the Government, he eliminated a difference of over 20% which separated PS from PSD (Social Democrat Party), winning the election with 46% of the votes. He was sworn in as President of the VII Regional Government of the Azores on November 9, 1996. He won again the regional legislative election of October 15, 2000 by 49.5% of the votes, electing 30 of the 52 parliament members.

He was sworn in on November 15 for a new four-year term. On October 17, 2004 he won again the elections for the Regional Legislative Assembly of the Azores by absolute majority, defeating a coalition led by the two major opposition parties – PSD and CDS/PP. The Socialist Party won by 57% of the votes, electing 31 of the 52 parliament members. He won the majority of the parliament mandates, electing 30 of the 57 seats in the elections of October 19, 2008.

He is a member of the State Council, the National Defence Council, the Internal Security Council and of the Civil Protection Council. From October 2003 to September 2004, he was the president of the Conference of Presidents of the Outermost Regions of the European Union.

From 2008 to 2010 he was vice-president of the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions on behalf of the Portuguese Delegation.

He is a member of the Commission of Natural Resources (NAT) and the Commission of Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX) of the Committee of the Regions.

Carlos César was unanimously elected President of the Islands Committee of the European Union Peripheral Maritime Regions Conference in May 2010, position for which he was reelected, also by unanimity, in May 2011.

He is a member of the Political Bureau of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe and a permanent member of the Regional Committee of the European Union, the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities and of the Assembly of European Regions, among other international entities.

He is an honorary member, by resolution of the respective boards, of the Associação Portuguesa de Sainte Thérèse, the Casa dos Açores do Québec in Canada, the Association of Immigrants in the Azores and the Casa dos Açores do Rio de Janeiro.

He is an honorary member of the Casa dos Açores do Norte (Porto) by proposal of the Board and decision of its General Assembly.

He is an honorary member of the Volcano and Geothermal Activity Observatory of the Azores, under proposal of the Board and decision of its General Assembly.

Carlos César is an honorary citizen and Golden Medal recipient of Vila Franca do Campo, under unanimously approved proposal of the Municipal Parliament and City Hall.

He has been awarded with the following distinctions, among many others: “Personality of the Decade” of 90 by the newspaper “Expresso das Nove”; “Politician of the Year” in 2001 by the magazine “Saber Açores”; Medal of Merit of Rio Grande awarded by the Government of the State of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil; Francisco Dias Velho Merit Medal awarded by the Municipal Prefecture of Florianópolis in the State of Santa Catarina in Brazil and the “Açorianidade 2003” trophy awarded by the Centre of Azorean Studies of the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Brazil and received the Medal of Merit from the World Council of Azorean Houses (September 2010).

Carlos César has been married to Luísa Maria Assis Vital Gomes do Vale César since November 1977, who holds a degree in History and a postgraduate degree in Archival Sciences. Their only child, a son, was born on November 11, 1978.

<http://www.azores.gov.pt/Portal/en/entidades/pgra/Biografia.htm>