
Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21st Century

FLAD

LUSO-AMERICAN
DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The Portuguese and Portuguese descendant community in the United States

Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21st century is a result of the Lusó-American Development Foundation (FLAD)'s will to deepen our knowledge of the current demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Portuguese and Portuguese descendant community in the United States. The purpose of the infographics presented here is to showcase the main findings of this study, which was carried out by six researchers under the coordination of Alda Botelho Azevedo (ICS-ULisboa). The study can be read, in full, on FLAD's website.

This is one more step within FLAD's mission to strengthen the Portuguese American community and bring the diaspora closer to Portugal.

This community currently has around 1.3 million people (five years and over), most of whom are Portuguese descendants. Being made up mainly of generations who were born in the United States does not imply that it is more distant, as it opens up unique opportunities.

Today, the community is fully integrated in the American society, present in different sectors of activity in the US, as this study shows, and every day it contributes to strengthening the ties with Portugal.

The study also shows the importance of the Portuguese language, which is key to FLAD's activity within the community. By analyzing the data within four groups – immigrants with and without US citizenship, and Portuguese descendants who speak and who do not speak Portuguese –, the study allows us to know the specific data for each group, while at the same time revealing the profile of the community as a whole.

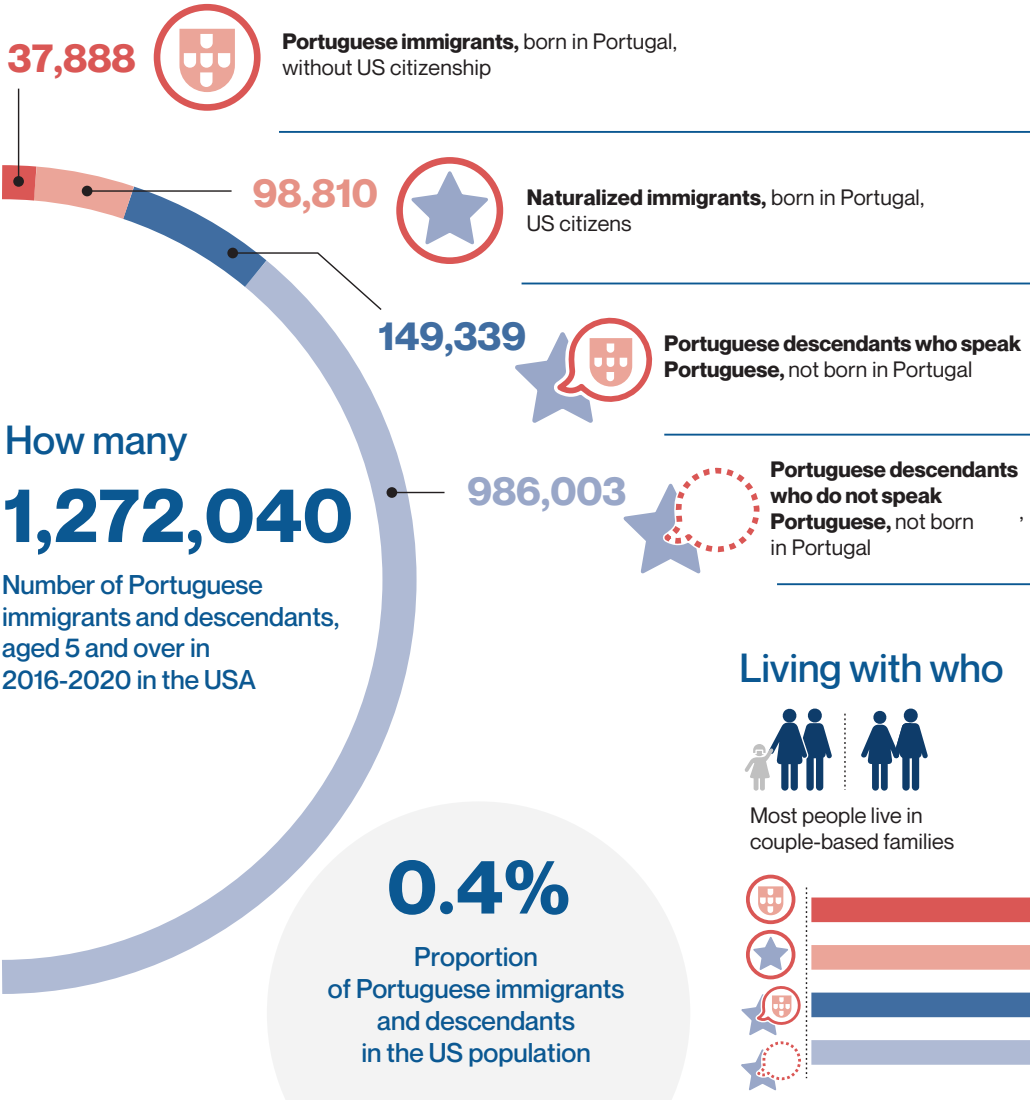
This allows us to learn, for instance, that the number of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is growing and that this group has a higher education level than the rest of the community. In this context, the use of the Portuguese language, together with the identification of ancestry, remain crucial elements in the preservation of a common cultural identity.

We also learn about the current geographical distribution of the community. While the largest population of Portuguese immigrants and descendants continues to live in New England, we are witnessing a geographic dispersion of the community and a growing trend in states such as Texas and Florida, where new opportunities for contact are emerging.

These are just a few examples of how reading this study can inspire action for and initiatives with the community, helping to identify both opportunities and areas that require our attention. Above all, we hope that this will be a tool at the service of all those who share with FLAD the goal of strengthening the Portuguese American community and, through it, the relationship between our countries.

Who they are

In 2016-2020, there were 1.3 million people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties (5 and over). These were divided in four different groups.





TREND

The population decreased in three of the four groups

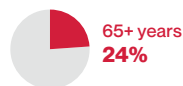
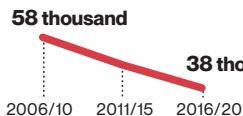
AGE

More elderly among immigrants

EDUCATION

Population with higher education (BSc+), aged 18 and over

47% 53%



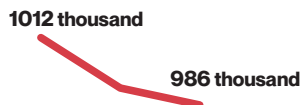
55% 45%



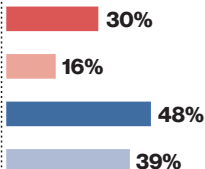
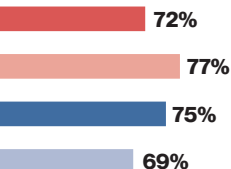
53% 47%



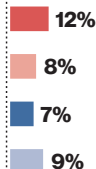
51% 49%



Living with children (<18 years) is more frequent among Portuguese descendants



Few live with relatives who are neither children nor partner



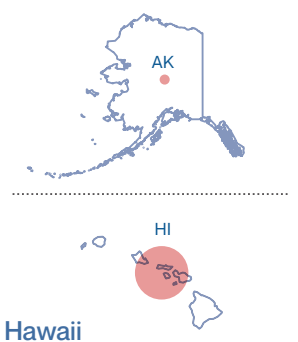
Average household size



PORTUGUESE IMMIGRANTS AND DESCENDANTS IN THE USA

Where they are

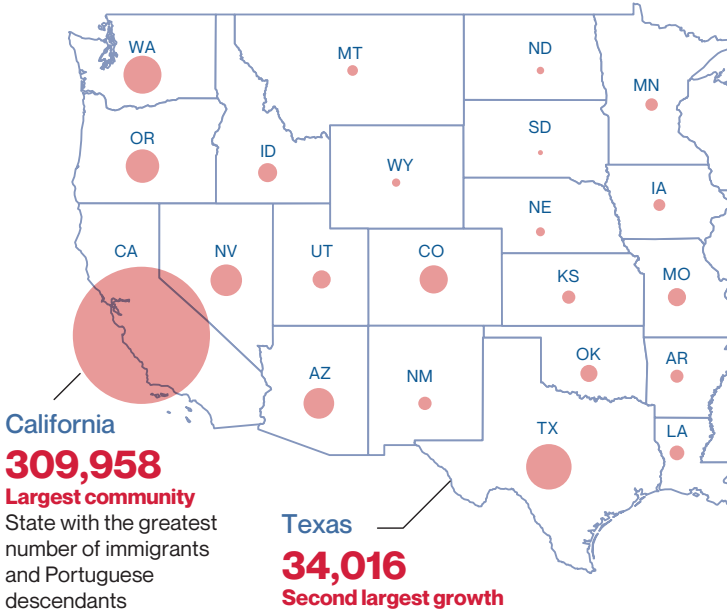
In 2016-2020, there were 1,272,040 Portuguese immigrants and descendants (aged 5+) living in the USA. They are present in all states, but their distribution is uneven



Hawaii

47,045

Old immigration
99% are Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese



California

309,958

Largest community
State with the greatest number of immigrants and Portuguese descendants

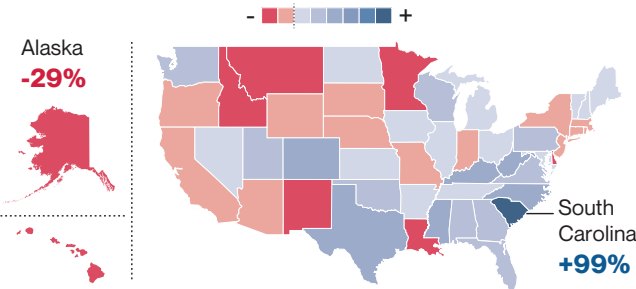
Texas

34,016

Second largest growth
+10,000 people in 2016/20 compared to 2006/10

Growth (%)

Between 2006/10 and 2016/20



DETAILS BY GROUP



Portuguese immigrants

Population decreased in most states

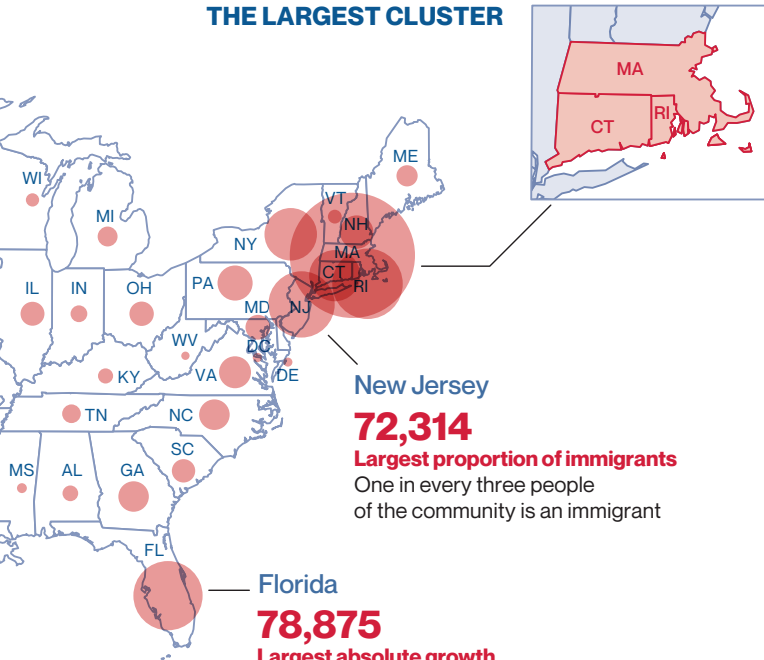
+1,179
in 16 states

-20,880 in 28 states

Alabama (AL), Alaska (AK), Arizona (AZ), Arkansas (AK), California (CA), Colorado (CO), Connecticut (CT), Delaware (DE), District of Columbia (DC), Florida (FL), Georgia (GA), Hawaii (HI), Idaho (ID), Kansas (KS), Kentucky (KY), Louisiana (LA), Maine (ME), Maryland (MD), Massachusetts (MA), Michigan (MI), Minnesota (MN), Mississippi (MS), Missouri (MO), Montana (MT), Nebraska (NE), New

SOURCES: American Community Survey, from Azevedo, A. (coord.) (2023), *Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21st Century*, FLAD, Lisbon

THE LARGEST CLUSTER



Massachusetts

258,238
Second largest community

Historical destination for Portuguese immigrants, now in decline

Rhode Island

81,685
Largest share in resident population

One in every 12 residents is either a Portuguese immigrant or a descendant

Connecticut

43,079

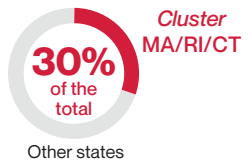
New Jersey

72,314
Largest proportion of immigrants

One in every three people of the community is an immigrant

Florida

78,875
Largest absolute growth
 + 15,000 people between 2006/10 and 2016/20



Naturalized immigrants

79% live in four states



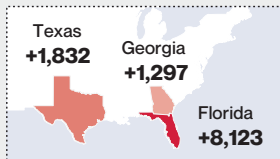
Massachusetts
 New Jersey
 California
 Rhode Island

Others



Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese

States with largest growth



Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese

50+1

Group present in all states and District of Columbia

Hampshire (NH), New Jersey (NJ), New Mexico (NM), New York (NY), North Carolina (NC), North Dakota (ND), Ohio (OH), Oklahoma (OK), Oregon (OR), Pennsylvania (PA), Puerto Rico (PR), Rhode Island (RI), South Carolina (SC), South Dakota (SD), Tennessee (TN), Texas (TX), Utah (UT), Vermont (VT), Virginia (VA), Washington (WA), West Virginia (WV), Wisconsin (WI), Wyoming (WY).

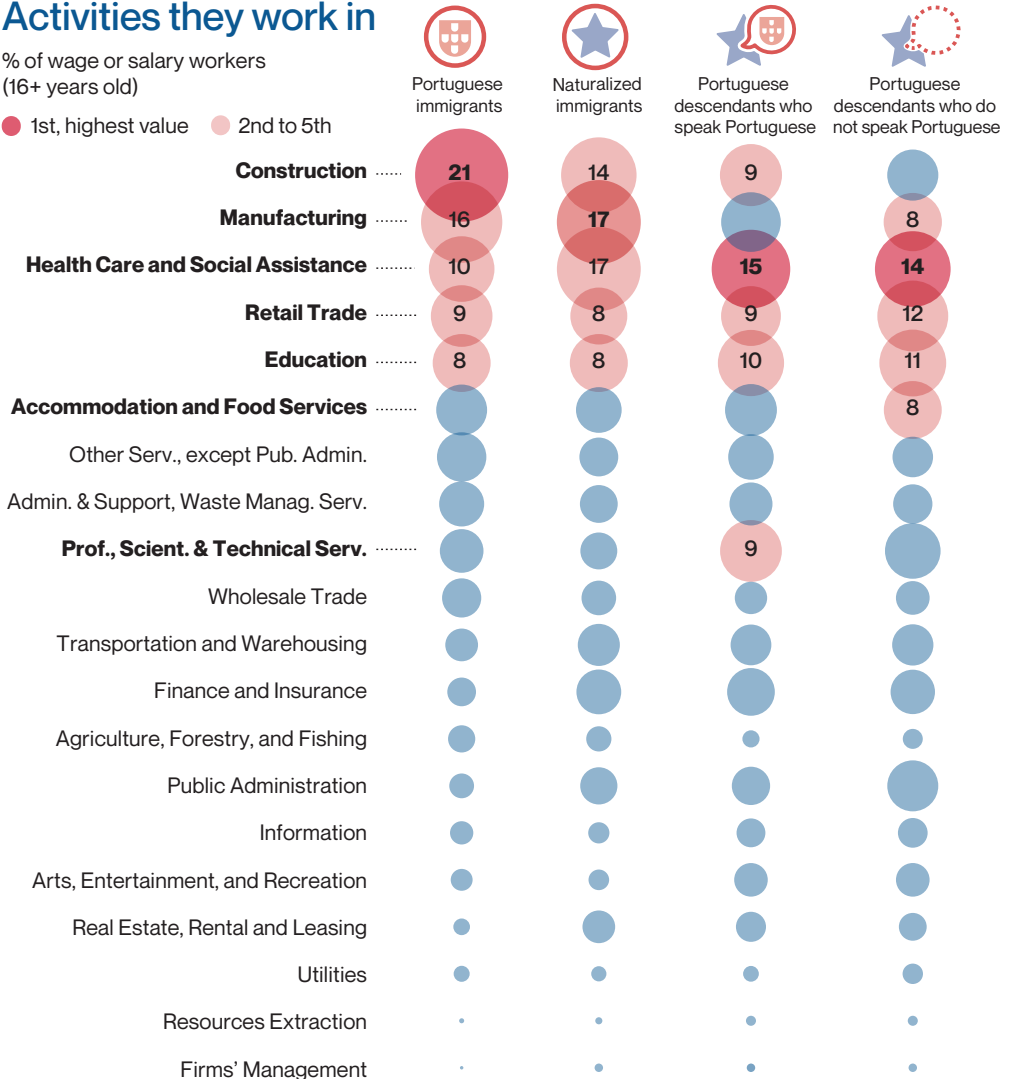
How they live

A snapshot from 2016-2020 of some aspects of the daily lives of Portuguese immigrants

Activities they work in

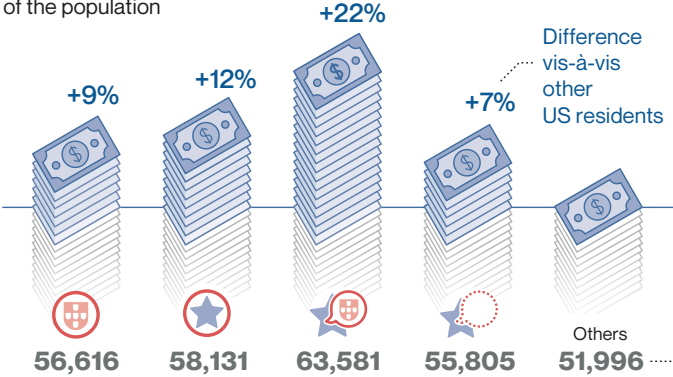
% of wage or salary workers
(16+ years old)

● 1st, highest value ● 2nd to 5th



WAGES

Portuguese immigrants and descendants earn more than the rest of the population



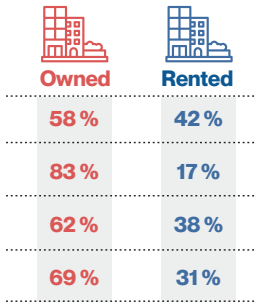
>30%
of the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese work in activities associated with higher education levels



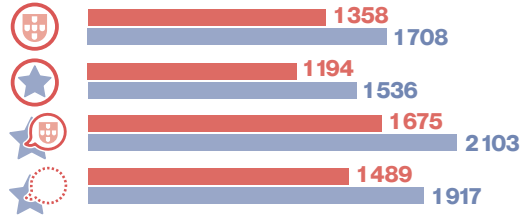
Average annual labor income
US dollars

HOUSING

% of population by tenure status



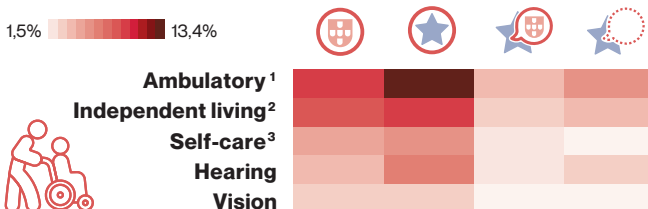
Monthly housing costs
US dollars



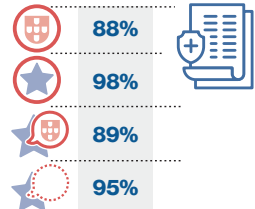
HEALTH

% with disabilities and health difficulties: higher among immigrants, who are older

1,5% 13,4%



With health insurance



Difficulties: ¹physical, such as walking; ²outdoor activities; ³getting dressed, taking a shower

These infographics are based on the study *Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21st Century*, 2023

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Access to the full study at flad.pt

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