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# Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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# Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## Getting to know the community

*Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* is a result of the Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD)'s will to learn more about the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Portuguese American community in the United States. The findings of this research, published in this report, are based on data from 2006 to 2020, studied in five-year periods.

FLAD's relationship with the United States, and especially with the Portuguese diaspora, is present in all our activity and is embedded in our existence.

We want to continue to work with the community to strengthen the relationship between our two countries and to increase its representation in the United States. This requires, first of all, that people from both sides are close to each other, to deepen the bonds that have been created over the centuries.

Now the way in which countries and institutions, including FLAD, relate to the community – and the way in which the members of that community relate to each other – depends, not only of us being close, but of the knowledge we have of that group as a whole and of its specific features.

Therefore, this study fits into FLAD's mission to promote initiatives that strengthen the Portuguese American community, encouraging its ability to organize itself, its civic training and engagement, and the political representation of its members. This is key to the community's ability to have its voice heard in the United States and to enhance the bond between our two countries.

We often say that the Portuguese community in the United States has a different profile, with higher levels of education. We also argue for the importance of the Portuguese language and affirm its continuity in the new generations. But, until now, this was not properly supported by data that went beyond the first few years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With this study, new opportunities open up for an increasingly deeper knowledge of this population, mostly made up of Portuguese descendants – both those who speak and those who do not speak Portuguese – and immigrants – both with and without US citizenship. Furthermore, this study shows the geographic dispersion of the community, the higher levels of education of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, the different activities in which the Portuguese immigrants and descendants work, their access to health care, the conditions in which they live, among other indicators.

It is not possible to act for and together with the members of the community if we fail to know how many they are, who they are, the conditions they live in, as well as the states and cities where they can be found.

This report is the result of the study carried out by six researchers, under the coordination of Alda Botelho Azevedo (ICS-ULisboa), to whom FLAD is grateful for the enthusiasm and dedication with which this work has been done up until its publication.

I am confident that this report will be a valuable working tool on both sides of the Atlantic.

**Rita Faden**

*President of FLAD*

May 2023

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# 1. Introduction

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## **Alda Botelho Azevedo**

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One hundred years past the largest wave of emigration from Portugal to the United States of America (USA), mainly from the Azores but also from Madeira, there is no characterization of the Portuguese-born immigrants and Portuguese descendants living in the USA today and little is known about their most recent dynamics. The latest studies on this population, published in Portugal or in the USA, are based on data from the very first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This study aims at addressing this gap, meeting the interest of the Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD) on having an up-to-date picture of the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties.

The history of Portuguese immigration in the USA (reviewed in section 2) gave rise to several coexisting groups with well-differentiated ties to Portugal and to the Portuguese language. As such, this study breaks down the population of Portuguese immigrants and descendants into different population groups by cross-referencing the information in the *American Community Survey*<sup>1</sup> on individuals' citizenship, place of birth, language spoken at home other than English, and ancestry (section 3). The combination of these variables resulted in four population groups: Portuguese immigrants, naturalized immigrants, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese. Section 4 looks at the evolution of these groups from 2006 to 2020. Their characterization and change over time, resulting from accelerated social changes and ever-increasing spatial mobility over the years, are based on the sociodemographic profiles of the four groups (section 5) and their distribution across the US territory (section 6).

The study further explores more detailed information for the most recent period, 2016–2020, around four topics. The first is household characterization and relationships between household members (section 7). The second topic is the groups' housing conditions (section 8). The third is the income and economic activities of working individuals (section 9). The fourth topic is health limitations and access to healthcare (section 10). A comparative approach is followed throughout the analysis whereby immigrants, both Portuguese and naturalized, are compared to Portuguese

<sup>1</sup> The *American Community Survey* is an annual survey, representative of the population living in the USA, which is the main source of detailed information on population and housing in the USA.

descendants, both Portuguese and non-Portuguese speaking, but also between these and a fifth group of other US residents composed of the rest of the US population, i.e., excluding the Portuguese immigrants and descendants. The last section summarizes the main results of the study.

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## 2. The Portuguese in the USA: a proposal for a short and guided bibliographic interpretation

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**Jorge Malheiros and Katielle Silva**

Onésimo Teotónio de Almeida (2009) notes that the bibliography produced on the Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the United States of America is vast and well established, with scientific and academic texts dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This includes the descriptive work of Henri Lang in 1892 on the Portuguese in New England, quoted by Ribeiro (2000), and the article by Frederic L. Hoffman 1899 which addresses some demographic and geographic elements on the Portuguese in the USA based on data from the 1890 US Census, along with other sources that provide information on mortality. A myriad of significant and diverse studies on the Portuguese and their descendants in the USA and its regions have been produced and/or published both in Portugal and in the United States. These range from the aforementioned concise works originally produced and made available in the USA to recent publications issued in the USA and Portugal in the last 10 years that address innovative themes such as the use of new technologies to access and transmit cultural resources (e.g. Ferreira 2009 or Holton 2016), transnational and translocal practices and their links to local dynamics (e.g. Feldman-Bianco 1992 and 2009), or that take a new look at “classic” themes in the study of the Portuguese in the USA, but are based on different data and perspectives (citizenship, identity reconstruction and positioning, culture).<sup>2</sup>

The bibliography produced on the Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the United States of America is vast and well-established, with scientific and academic texts dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It is unnecessary, if not unreasonable, to attempt to provide herein a complete and detailed state of the art on this vast body of work, given the nature and, above all, the main objective of the present study, namely to provide a short but dynamic characterization of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA for the current period, with a more detailed focus on its fundamental dimensions. Thus, we have chosen to summarize the relevant ideas produced in various studies oriented towards areas that we believe may assure a clearer understanding of the results obtained with

<sup>2</sup> A good synthesis of these (and complementary) themes can be found in Holton, K. C., & Klimt, A. (2009). *Community, Culture and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans along the Eastern Seaboard*.

the analysis of the *American Community Survey* data, namely: i) the debate on the categories of immigrants and Portuguese descendants in the USA (classification); ii) the fundamental migratory cycles (time); iii) the geography of the Portuguese communities in the USA (space); and iv) the sociodemographic characteristics (sociographies). These four entries will allow some relevant reflections to be incorporated on issues such as the identity of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants, the links to Portugal,<sup>3</sup> attitudes towards formal education, and social mobility processes. Other aspects, such as criminality and repatriation (Brilhante 2000), and digital interactions (Ferreira 2009), remain outside the scope of this section.

Those interested in obtaining a more developed and in-depth perspective of the studies on immigration, Portuguese immigrants in the USA and their descendants, can begin by exploring the book coordinated by Holton and Klimt (2009), whose Portuguese review by Graça Índias Cordeiro in *Sociologia – Problemas e Práticas* (No. 65, 2011) is a good starting point. The works by Rosalie Ribeiro (2000) and Onésimo Teotónio de Almeida (2009) also help provide an overview of Portuguese emigration to the USA and several related issues. We also consider it essential to consult, with the necessary critical eye, the seminal pioneering work of Leo Pap (1981), *The Portuguese Americans – the European Heritage of America*, and the various contributions of Eduardo Mayone Dias (1981, 1987, 2002), professor at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Finally, it should be emphasized that the bibliography referred to throughout the section is necessarily incomplete; it is an intentionally brief and non-exhaustive selection made by the authors of this study based on its relevance to the objectives pursued in the work.

## 2.1. The debate on *immigrant and Portuguese descendant categories in the USA (classification)*

While some studies classify people of Portuguese origin in the USA simply as immigrants (those born in Portugal and living in the US) and descendants (born in the USA), the so-called 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or more generations (depending on the ancestry of the person born in Portugal), others consider more complex criteria including ethnicity, socialization in the US context and even language (use and knowledge of Portuguese) to establish the perimeter of this population. This is relevant given that the size of the “Portuguese” population in the USA varies according to whether the criterion used is based on place of birth or self-identification as having Portuguese ancestry. Looking at the terminology used in some literature and the related debates (Ribeiro 2000), the terms “Portuguese” (Martins 2009) and “Luso-Americans” (Ribeiro 2000; Valente 2019) emerge as the most popular, although the designation “Portuguese community(ies)” is also found (Almeida 2009). Broadly speaking, the three terms designate an equivalent population group that corresponds to individuals of Portuguese origin (who assume their ancestral ties with Portugal), regardless of place of birth and nationality. However, a more refined approach, in line with the claims of Rosalie Ribeiro and Eduardo Mayone Dias, considers “Portuguese in the USA” to be those born in Portugal and their descendants, while the latter, as well as those who arrived as children and whose socialization was almost entirely in the US, correspond to Luso-Americans (and, therefore, a large subcategory of the “Portuguese in the USA”).

<sup>3</sup> This question, framed by the theoretical-conceptual framework of transnationalism since the early 1990s, was pioneered by Maria Beatriz Rocha-Trindade in 1976, when she studied the socio-spatial relations and processes of long distance social influence involving Mira de Aire and Hartford, in Connecticut. This is, in effect, an analysis of translocalism *avant la lettre*.



It should be noted that the language (of the country of origin) tends to be considered an important indicator not only of ethnic identity but, above all, of the prevalence of effective cultural links of ancestry; in fact, the question of its use is included in both the US census and the *American Community Survey* (Scott 2009).<sup>4</sup> Hence, it can be concluded that the crossing of self-identification of Portuguese ancestry with the use of the Portuguese language allows us to distinguish a kind of “Portuguese community” from a “distant ancestral community”. On the other hand, this question also refers to complex processes of historical construction and deconstruction of a Lusophone community in the USA, given that the Cape Verdean immigration to the USA initially took place in the framework of Portuguese colonialism (Halter 1993) and largely accompanied the migratory processes of Madeirans and, above all, Azoreans. Moreover, more recently, there are signs that Brazilian immigration to the USA has also overlapped and came into contact with Portuguese immigration, especially in various parts of the East Coast states of the USA (Lokensgard 2007). The Cape Verdean and Brazilian populations are obviously not included in this study, but it is important to make reference both to the historical process that produced formal and *de facto* identity and the relationship dynamics that expanded and reduced the notion of “being Portuguese”, as well as to strategies referring to another framework of community affirmation with a broader spectrum that goes beyond “the Portuguese” (as people with a connection to Portugal) and that involves Portuguese speakers and their claims; these seek to take advantage of the very classifications and processes of information collection in a census context (Cordeiro 2012).

The language of the country of origin tends to be considered an important indicator not only of ethnic identity, but above all of effective cultural links of ancestry.

Summarizing the above, the present work can justifiably consider an exclusively Portuguese population (*Luso ancestry*), although broadly defined, while introducing some segmentation according to the geographical origin (born or not in Portugal), crossed with the use of the Portuguese language. Even though the nationality criterion can be used, it is clearly less relevant, not only because it is devalued in the basic sources, but also because the American imaginary still sees immigration to the USA as something permanent, therefore justifying the adoption of US nationality sometime along the way. Thus, the central element refers to US citizenship and not to citizenship of other countries.

<sup>4</sup> The question on the language spoken at home, other than English, was asked for the last time in the 2000 Census and only in the long questionnaire applied to a subset of the population. Since then, this question has only appeared in the American Community Survey.

## 2.2. The fundamental migratory cycles (time)

Although there are references to Portuguese emigration to the USA from the seventeenth century, with emphasis on the Jews (Ribeiro 2000; Almeida 2009), several authors situate the identification of a logic of continuous emigration leading to the definition of phases as taking place in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century and associate it with the Azoreans who took advantage of the Azores' function as a port of call for American whaling ships (Almeida 2009). Using the two authors mentioned above as a reference, and reinterpreting the periodization they establish, we can consider five phases in Portuguese emigration to the USA. Three of these are historical, and Onésimo Teotónio de Almeida (2009) considers them to have been diluted in the framework of assimilation promoted by the State and US society; therefore, we believe they correspond mainly to communities of memory. The two most recent phases are associated with the flows that have taken place in the last 60–65 years.

According to Ribeiro (2000), the earliest phase of Portuguese emigration to the USA took place between 1800 and 1870 and was largely linked to the capture and processing of whales. It was not massive in character and initially involved the population of the Azores, a region that has since remained a major space of migratory links between Portugal and the USA. The main destinations of these immigrants, predominantly poor peasant populations with very limited education, were locations in New England (such as New Bedford and Nantucket in Massachusetts), although some places in California (Sacramento, Monterey) and Hawaii were also popular. It should be noted that, especially from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in addition to the whale processing industry, textile activities in the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island have also become significant in attracting new immigrants. In California, immigrants began to settle in predominantly agricultural areas, namely in the San Joaquin Valley.

The second phase corresponds to the period 1870/1880–1920 and is marked by an intensification of migratory flows to destinations such as Hawaii (to work on the sugar cane plantations), a cycle that would end in 1913 (Freitas 1930); the states of Rhode Island and Massachusetts (places like New Bedford, Fall River or Lowell), and California. Although the practice of agricultural and livestock activities was increasingly significant and visible in these places, especially in the San Joaquin Valley, immigration also occurred in urban areas like Salinas or Monterey. The Portuguese also moved to new places, due to some dynamics of economic recomposition (from the whale industry or textiles in certain areas of New England) and the urbanization process in the USA, and they began to develop communities in the states of Connecticut, New Jersey and New York (East Coast) and San Jose, California. Throughout this period, the Azorean origins continued to be predominant, maintaining the characteristics of labor immigration from rural areas with poor education. These immigrants faced very harsh living conditions in the USA, both in terms of housing and work in industry (Ribeiro 2000). Issues related to a certain closing off of the Portuguese community, the valorization of family and intra-group dynamics, and resistance to discrimination in the WASP<sup>5</sup> context began to emerge in this period.

The third and last historical phase took place between 1920 and the mid-1950s. In this period, the USA opted for a more restrictive approach to immigration (Baganha 1988) supported by a series of legal hurdles that limited the entrance of illiterate (most of

<sup>5</sup> Acronym used for the *White Anglo-Saxon Protestants*.

the Portuguese were in this situation) and non-white immigrants, establishing contingent processes based on quotas by geographical origin. After 1921, Portuguese emigration declined significantly. Several authors assume that the process of acculturation and assimilation of the Portuguese in the USA intensified during this phase. Despite an Americanization of this population, in many cases, they maintained a hyphenated identity that gave rise to the expressions *Luso-Americans* or *Portuguese-Americans*.

The two most recent phases, which may be considered contemporary *latu sensu*, correspond to i) the period from the mid-1950s to the mid-1980s; and ii) the period after 1985. The first is characterized by an upsurge in Portuguese immigration to the United States. Driven largely by the flow from the Azores, it also involved many people from various regions of the continent, such as Bairrada or Trás-os-Montes, and can be divided into two sub-phases. The first lasted until 1965 and was marked by the creation of exceptional conditions for the opening up of Portuguese emigration, which benefited from a clear increase in quotas on humanitarian reasons after the eruption of the Capelinhos Volcano in Faial in 1957. Initially supported by the *Azorean Refugee Act* of 1958 (*Public Law 85–892*), and subsequently by complementary legal diplomas in 1960 and 1961 that allowed the immigration of families from Faial, this situation quickly spread to the entire archipelago of the Azores, even reaching some mainland families (Lobão 2009). In this first period, there was a considerable increase in the flow, but the overall number of immigrants was quite modest, comprising a maximum of 5000 people (due to the humanitarian provisions following the eruption), to which a few hundred more would be added through general quotas. The influx of Portuguese into the USA only saw a significant increase in the second period, thanks to the general extension of the immigration quotas granted to Europeans and Asians in 1965. Approximately 180,000 Portuguese entered the USA between the early 1960s and 1985. Although the majority still originated from the Azores, an increasing number came from other regions of the mainland. Unlike the third historical phase and the fifteen years after World War II, the US insertion policy began to change in this period, replacing the assimilationist principle with ideas of pluralism. According to Almeida (2009), this opened the doors to bilingual education and respect for cultural diversity, allowing the recovery and enhancement of aspects of Portuguese identity sustained by flourishing ethnic media and vibrant Lusophone associations. In this period, Portuguese descendants benefited from programs of the federal government that promoted integration into American society, while embracing the maintenance of identity and ties to ancestral culture (Almeida 2009: 349).

The last phase in this chronography of Portuguese emigration to the USA spans from 1985 to the present day and is marked by a clear reduction in the flow, which went from about 3000 annual arrivals in the 1980s and 1990s to less than 1000 per year since 2007,<sup>6</sup> the successive crises in Portugal (financial austerity, pandemic and the effects of war in Ukraine) have not reversed this trend. Restrictions in US immigration policy, the entry into the then European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986 and the subsequent economic development registered between the late 1980s and early 2000s, linked to the possibility of free movement in the EEC space, help explain the reduction in the migratory flow.

<sup>6</sup> See data published by the Emigration Observatory (2022).

## 2.3. Notes on the geography of Portuguese communities in the USA (the space)

One of the characteristics that have been associated with the Portuguese communities is the geographical concentration in certain specific locations of the states with the largest presence, both on the East Coast (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey and, to a lesser extent, Connecticut), and in California (Ribeiro 2000; Scott 2009). Although the traditional places of concentration continue to register a relevant number of Portuguese, there was a trend towards greater geographical dispersion, especially from the late 1980s and early 1990s, which explains the marked growth in several southern states (Florida, Arizona, Nevada, and even Texas) and also in the West Coast states located north of California (Oregon and Washington) (Scott 2009). However, of these states with the highest relative growth, only Florida reached, in absolute values, a presence of people with Portuguese ancestry that, in the 2000 Census, already slightly exceeded the numbers of Connecticut or New York<sup>7</sup> (although still far from the numbers in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, or California).<sup>8</sup>

However, the issue of geographical concentration is particularly visible at the locality or neighborhood level. Although the neighborhood will not be addressed here, it is pertinent, however, to make a brief reference to some of the main places of concentration, where frequently the presence of Portuguese communities has been consolidated over many decades. Among the relatively comprehensive list provided by Ribeiro (2000), the following places stand out in California: the traditional settlement area of the San Joaquin Valley, together with the cities of Salinas and Monterey, and also a growing presence in the San Francisco Bay area, for example in San José. In New York, Worcester county seems to continue to be a space of over-representation, with an initial presence dating back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; in neighboring New Jersey, Newark is a point of reference for the Portuguese, although some are concentrated in neighboring localities. Several localities in Massachusetts continue to register significant numbers of Portuguese — the “historical” New Bedford,<sup>9</sup> Fall River, Taunton, Dartmouth, and Lowell, as well as Falmouth and Fairhaven; in Rhode Island, East Providence is a historical settlement, but Providence, Central Falls and Pawtucket also have an important Portuguese presence. Finally, in Connecticut, Hartford (mentioned in footnote 3) stands out, but other places of settlement have also been emerging.

We do not want to close this point without referring to two aspects that we consider significant: on the one hand, the geography of the Portuguese in the USA should be explored in more detail, moving towards a neighborhood scale and a dynamic analysis of urban socio-spatial segregation; on the other hand, it is important to understand the emergence of new settlement spaces, both at the state (new states of attraction) and local levels, particularly with regard to settlement in the middle-class suburbs of large cities. This gives rise to a second aspect, namely the need to test more explicitly the association mentioned in several papers (e.g., Scott 2009) between the increase in geographical dispersion, upward social mobility and the strengthening of Americanization.

<sup>7</sup>Despite the evidence of significant relative growth in the Portuguese population in several states of “non-traditional” settlement, the fact that this increase only led to absolute values that can now be considered relevant in Florida justifies the latter’s inclusion in section 6, dedicated to the contemporary geographical distribution in the states of higher concentration and its recent dynamics.

<sup>8</sup>See data published by the *Census Bureau* (2022a).

<sup>9</sup>According to Feldman-Bianco (2009), the revitalization strategies pursued by New Bedford since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century include an appreciation of cultural diversity and the cultural experiences of immigrants, highlighting the Portuguese presence and promoting the elements of ethnic identity associated with it.

## 2.4. Sociodemographic characteristics (basic sociographies)

To conclude this section, we will make only a brief reference to the fact that sociographies of the Portuguese population based on information from secondary American sources, namely censuses, have a long history dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As noted at the beginning of the section, Frederic L. Hoffman wrote a small article in 1899 based on the information from the 1890 Census and some complementary sources referring to residential concentration in California and Massachusetts. He also mentioned the areas of over-representation in Massachusetts, namely New Bedford (the most relevant, where the Portuguese made up around 7% of residents), but also Fall River and Taunton. The article also refers to an important presence of Portuguese in rural areas and farming activities in Massachusetts and identifies the Azores and Madeira as the main regions of origin. The supposed racial characteristics of the Portuguese are then addressed; they are considered good immigrants but result from a racial mix of Blacks (especially those originating from the Atlantic archipelagos) and Moors. In addition, he emphasizes that the Portuguese in the USA, especially those from the Azores and Madeira, have a much lower mortality rate compared both with immigrant groups from other origins, and also the regions of departure. He notes that the presence of African components not only had no harmful effects on the mortality rate, but that this low rate is largely due to the good morals of the natives of the Portuguese Atlantic archipelagos when compared, for example, with the morals of the black Americans.

This first reading, based on prejudices and also on the Eurocentric racial hierarchy that emerged at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, gave rise to various characterization processes of a very different analytical nature, which occurred later and were supported by censuses from subsequent decades. For example, Maria Ioannis Baganha (1988) uses data from the 1910 American Census to characterize the social dimensions and economic activities of the Portuguese in the USA and in some cities with a Portuguese presence in the states of California, Massachusetts, and Hawaii. Already in the 1970s, Sandra K. Wolforth (1976) uses data from the 1970 US Census to describe the distribution of the Portuguese and Portuguese descendants in the US states, showing that Massachusetts still had the largest number of residents in this population (about 108,000 people); this situation changed in the following decades and currently California has the largest number of Portuguese and Luso-American immigrants. Wolforth (1976) confirmed almost 50 years ago that Rhode Island was the state with the largest proportion of population of Portuguese origin, something that remained unchanged until today. Vicente (1998) also presents a demographic characterization of this population based on 1990 Census, with the ultimate goal of assessing the political weight of the Portuguese and Portuguese descendant community in the United States. He distinguishes between immigrants and Luso-Americans (descendants), pays attention to the knowledge of the Portuguese language, highlights the slight feminization of the community, and expresses concern over the low levels of schooling and naturalization. He also analyzes the geographic distribution, detailing the traditional settler states that registered the highest number of Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese-Americans at the time: Massachusetts, California, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Hawaii.

Finally, in a more recent work, Dulce Maria Scott (2009) uses data from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 American Censuses, complemented with statistical information from the 2005 and 2006 *American Community Survey*, to analyze the geographical distribution of the Portuguese-born population and its evolution in the period, the use of the Portuguese language, levels of education and income, professional structure, and ancestry. After analyzing this information, she concludes that the population of Portuguese origin is well integrated and assimilated into American society and that there has been an upward generational mobility in their educational and socioprofessional situation, even though the Portuguese have not yet reached the levels observed in other ethnic groups present in American society. She also referred to the trends of geographical dispersion underway in the traditional areas where Portuguese communities concentrate. She assumes that the assimilation of those who stay may be disqualifying; in contrast, those who leave to other regions position themselves in a framework of upward social mobility, but the resulting acceleration of integration and acculturation may lead to losses of elements of Portuguese identity. In this sense, Scott (2009) referred that their (Portuguese) identity may essentially be symbolic.

As far as we can ascertain, Dulce Scott's work, which seems to be the most recent on the characteristics of the Portuguese and Portuguese descendants, uses data from 2006. As populations are inherently dynamic in their volume, structure, and composition, as well as in their socioeconomic characterization, it is necessary to monitor their evolution in time and space. This is one of the main contributions of this study.

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# 3. Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the American Community Survey

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**Alda Botelho Azevedo, Nachatter Singh Garha and Pedro Moura Ferreira**

This study is based on the *American Community Survey (ACS)*, a survey administered annually since 2000 to about 15 million people and over 3.5 million households, representative of the US resident population at different geographical levels (Census Bureau 2020).

The ACS uses the long questionnaire previously applied in censuses, replacing it as the primary source of detailed population and housing information in the USA (Census Bureau 2017). A short version of the ACS, aimed at the collection of basic information on population and housing (e.g., age, gender, housing tenure) was used in the 2020 Censuses to determine the representation of the resident population in the US Congress (Census Bureau 2020). Being a systematically applied survey that provides reliable and up-to-date demographic, social, economic, and housing data annually (Census Bureau 2017), the ACS is a privileged source of information for this study.

This study uses three samples from the ACS *Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)*: 2006–2010, 2011–2015, and 2016–2020. Microdata allow multiple tabulations from the information collected, something that cannot be done with aggregated data. Since these data contain personal information (health status, for example), its anonymization is required to avoid the identification of respondents. A consequence of the anonymization process is that it limits the disaggregation of geographic areas to a minimum threshold of 100,000 people per *Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA)*. When greater statistical precision is required and the populations studied are small, as is the case for Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA, it is more appropriate to use microdata for five-year periods (Census Bureau 2020). Data for a five-year period include records for about 5% of the US population (1% for each calendar year).

In the first part of this study, dedicated to the main sociodemographic characteristics of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, the analysis covers three five-year periods over the period 2006–2020. This time span allows us to trace the evolution of the overall population, as well as the specific trends of each of the groups. In section 6, which focuses on the geographical distribution of the groups in the USA, the analysis focuses on the first and last five-year periods.

The second part, which addresses the most recent period (2016–2020), analyzes detailed information on households, housing conditions, income, and health limitations that was not available for the previous five-year periods. This analysis gives an up-to-date picture of the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties in the USA.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the four population groups used throughout the study resulted from the combination of four variables: citizenship, place of birth, other language spoken at home besides English, and ancestry. Due to children's learning process, ACS information on language is only available for individuals aged 5 and over. This means that children under 5 years of age cannot be classified using these categories and are excluded from the study. They are nonetheless considered for the purposes of family size and composition, and number of residents per dwelling. As this methodological option affects the indicators that depend on the age of the population (for example, the average age of the population), the indicators presented can only be compared across the population groups considered and not with sources outside this study. The alternative would be to renounce to the use of the Portuguese language to create the groups. In our view, this would be a greater limitation than the one that results from excluding children under 5 years of age given the pivotal role of the language in the affirmation of the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties.

Throughout the study, Portuguese immigrants and descendants are compared with other US residents, seen as a reference group.

Two notes on the presentation of the results. First, as the shares of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the whole US population are very small, the share of the other US residents coincides with the grand total of the US population up to the second decimal place. As a column with a grand total would not provide further information, it is not presented. Second, the differences presented are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level unless indicated otherwise.

Finally, it should be noted that all results are weighted, meaning that statistics representative of the resident population (e.g., means or proportions) are generated from the individual weights provided by the Census Bureau and included in the ACS database. By using the weights, each of the individuals in the sample is multiplied by the number of individuals required for the statistics to be representative of the US resident population in the year to which the data refer to.



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## 4. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: how many are they?

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**Pedro Moura Ferreira and Alda Botelho Azevedo**

It is not possible to directly or automatically identify the Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the ACS, as the information is not contained in a single variable. The Portuguese immigrants and descendants are identified through the combination of the replies to four different questions:

- a) US citizenship — “Is this person a citizen of the United States?” The survey identifies individuals who have US citizenship regardless of how it was obtained, i.e., by birth or naturalization; it does not report the citizenship of non-US residents.
- b) Place of birth — “Where was this person born?” The ACS identifies the respondents’ birthplace, even if it does not coincide with nationality.
- c) Language — “Does this person speak a language other than English at home? [If so,] Which language?” — the Portuguese language is one of the possible options. However, this information is only available for those aged 5 and over.
- d) Ancestry — “What is this person’s ancestry or ethnic origin?” The ACS question on the individual’s ancestry or ethnic origin allows the individual to identify the country of origin of his/her ancestors, regardless of language. Portugal is one of the possible options. The respondent can give more than one answer to this question, to a maximum of two.

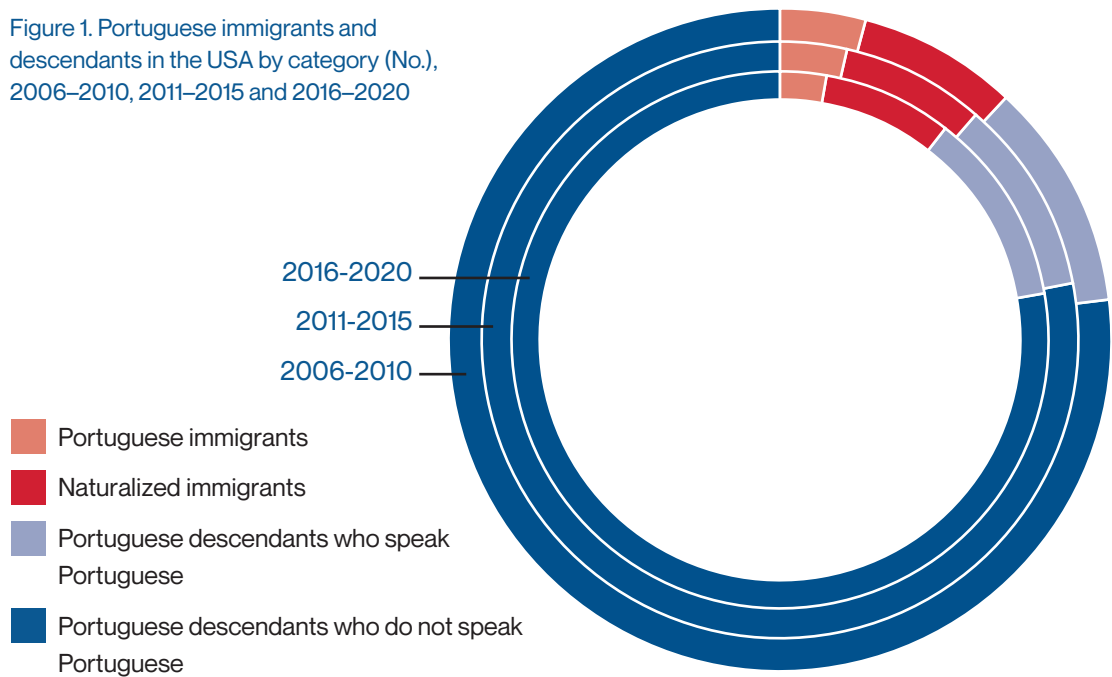
When defining US residents with ties to Portugal, it is useful to simultaneously consider several characteristics such as citizenship, place of birth, language spoken at home, and ancestry — not only the latter.

Combining the replies to the four questions above, it was possible to create a typology of the communities born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties that contemplates four categories (figure 1):

- 1) **Portuguese immigrants:** individuals who were born in Portugal, speak Portuguese, but do not have US citizenship (despite living in the USA).
- 2) **Naturalized immigrants:** individuals who were born in Portugal, speak Portuguese, and have American citizenship.
- 3) **Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese:** individuals who indicate having Portuguese origins, who were not born in Portugal, and speak Portuguese.
- 4) **Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese:** individuals who indicate having Portuguese origins, who were not born in Portugal, but who do not speak Portuguese.

The country of birth and the use of the Portuguese language are used in the definition of the four groups. Then, while citizenship is used to create the first two groups, the last two use individuals' ancestry.

Figure 1. Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA by category (No.), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020



Note: 2006–2010: 1,318,032 individuals; 2011–2015: 1,273,379 individuals; 2016–2020: 1,272,040 individuals.  
 Source: *American Community Survey* microdata.  
 Authors' calculations.

The order of the groups according to their weight in the whole US population is the reverse of the one presented above. In fact, the share of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese is much higher than of the other three groups taken together. This order has remained unchanged since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In 2016–2020 there are an estimated 1,272,040 individuals in the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties, representing 0.41% of the total US population.<sup>10</sup> As mentioned above, the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese are the bigger group, with a total of 986,003 individuals, representing 77.51% of communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties; they are followed by the 149,339 Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (11.74%), the 98,810 naturalized immigrants (7.77%) and, finally, the Portuguese immigrants with 37,888 individuals (2.98%).

In terms of evolution over time, the most striking change is the one observed for the Portuguese immigrants, that decreased by 34.21% between 2006–2010 and 2016–2020.

<sup>10</sup> This estimate for Portuguese ancestry differs from that published by the Census Bureau (1.36 million in 2020 in the 5-year ACS), mainly due to the exclusion of individuals under the age of 5 for the reasons explained in section 3, but also due to the combination of variables used in the definition of each of the groups.

Table 1. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (No.), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020

	2006-2010 (no.)	2011-2015 (no.)	2016-2020 (no.)
Portuguese immigrants	57,589 (± 3244)	46,876 (± 3017)	37,888 (± 2920)
Naturalized immigrants	102,266 (± 3600)	99,153 (± 3941)	98,810 (± 4235)
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	145,987 (± 5098)	134,758 (± 4867)	149,339 (± 6584)
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	1,012,190 (± 16,272)	992,592 (± 21,475)	986,003 (± 22,032)
<b>Subtotal immigrants and Portuguese descendants</b>	<b>1,318,032</b>	<b>1,273,379</b>	<b>1,272,040</b>
Other US residents	282,528,818 (± 14,753)	295,365,688 (± 16,802)	305,678,442 (± 18,326)
<b>Total</b>	<b>283,846,850</b>	<b>296,639,067</b>	<b>306,950,482</b>

Note: margins of error with a 95% confidence level in brackets.

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

In 2016–2020, there were 1,272,040 Portuguese immigrants and descendants aged five and over residing in the USA.

Having said that, the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties, in general, have been in decline throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its population decreased by 3.49% (45,992 individuals) between 2006–2010 and 2016–2020, and the share of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the US population fell from 0.46% to 0.41%. The Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is the only group, among the four groups considered, that escaped this downward trend: it actually went up by 3,352 individuals from 2006–2010 to 2016–2020, notwithstanding a sharp fall (-7.69%) in the intermediate five-year period (2011–2015). Despite this, the number of overall Portuguese speakers in the USA has not increased because the modest rise in Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese was offset by the fall in the number of Portuguese immigrants and naturalized immigrants (down 19,701 and 3,456 between the first and last five-year periods, respectively), leading to a decrease of 19,805 individuals in the number of Portuguese speakers. As such, the presence of the Portuguese language in the USA is mainly due to Portuguese descendants – although more broadly considered, its preservation depends also on other immigrant groups not discussed in this study, the most significant of these being the Brazilians – whose number continue to rise.<sup>11</sup>

Portuguese-speaking descendants are on the increase, while all other groups are in decline.

In summary, the ACS data for the period 2006–2020 show two major trends. First, an increase in the Portuguese-speaking population; and second, the decrease in the Portuguese immigrant population.

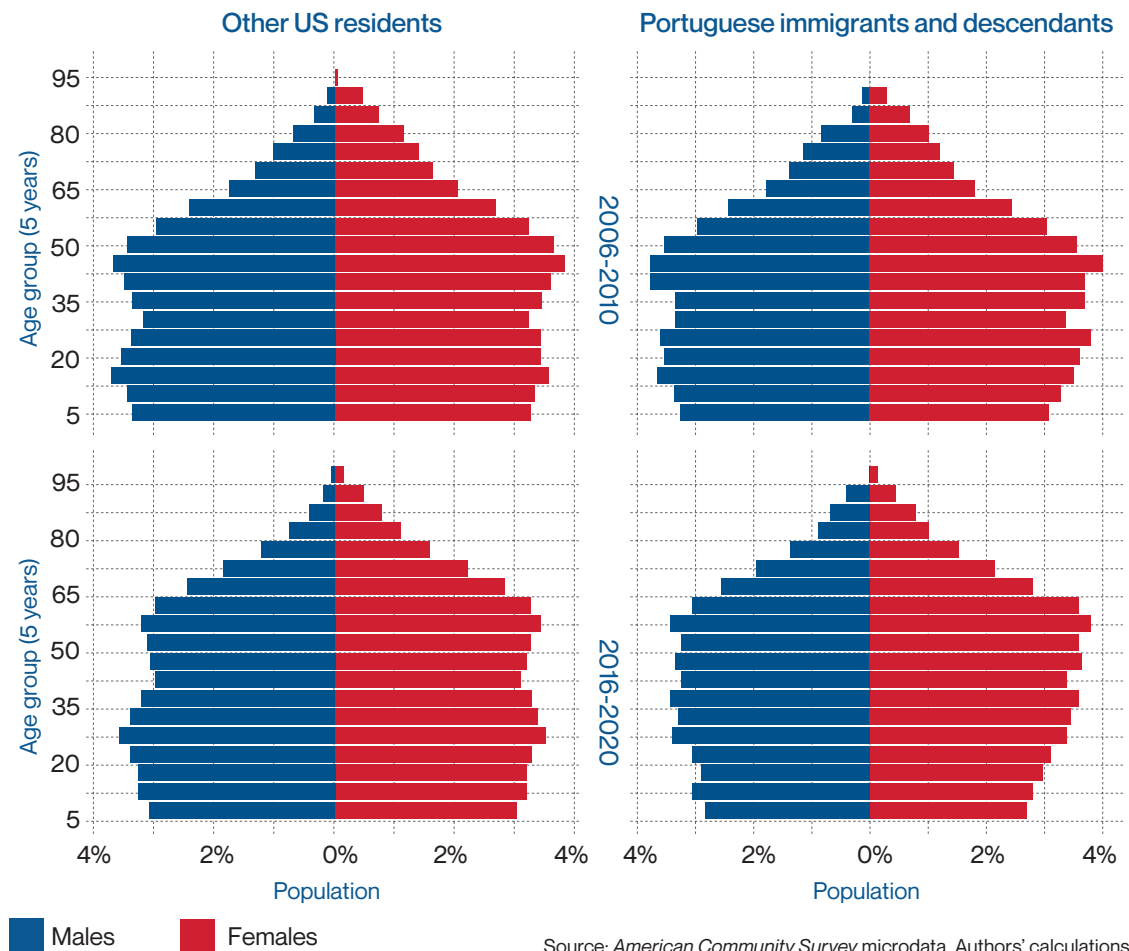
<sup>11</sup> See, for example, the text by Graça Índias Cordeiro (2012) on the claims about a stronger presence and identity based on the Portuguese language in some areas of the US, namely Massachusetts, strongly supported by the growing presence of the Brazilian Portuguese variant.

# 5. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: who are they?

Lara Patrício Tavares and Alda Botelho Azevedo

The decline in the Portuguese immigrant population is associated with its aging, which in turn results from declining immigration inflows and demographic aging. Although demographic aging, which is expressed in the narrowing of the base and the widening of the top of the population pyramid, is observed among all US residents, it was more accentuated in the population of Portuguese immigrants and descendants (figure 2), revealing an important change in its population structure.

Figure 2. Evolution of the population structures of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and the other US residents (%), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

The decline in the Portuguese immigrant population is associated with its aging, resulting from declining immigration inflows and demographic aging.

The average age of immigrants is higher than that of Portuguese descendants and other US residents (table 2) already in the first five-year period (2006–2010). This is largely explained by the specific characteristics of immigrant populations, for whom the relative weight of the working-age population is higher, and by the slowdown in the inflow of Portuguese immigrants to the USA. Whereas the average age of immigrants (Portuguese and naturalized) in that first five-year period places them at the end of the labor market prime age (25-54)<sup>12</sup> or beyond, Portuguese descendants and other US residents are still at an intermediate stage of the prime working age.

Table 2. Mean age of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (in years), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020

	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020
Portuguese immigrants	47.72	49.83	52.54
Naturalized immigrants	55.44	58.38	61.67
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	34.88	36.86	37.97
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	37.25	38.36	40.41
Other US residents	39.49	40.34	41.23

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

Already in 2006–2010, Portuguese and naturalized immigrants were, on average, at the end of the prime working age, while Portuguese descendants and other US residents were still at an intermediate stage.

The fact that the average ages of Portuguese descendants and other US residents are similar is not surprising considering that the former belong to the second, third, or later generations of Portuguese immigrants in the USA.

Since women have a longer life expectancy than men in almost all populations (Population Reference Bureau 2001), the more marked aging of immigrant populations is also reflected in a relatively larger increase in the proportion of women in these groups from the first to the last five-year period, when compared to Portuguese descendants (table 3).

The proportion of women among Portuguese and naturalized immigrants differs from that of other US residents. Whereas in the last five-year period the proportion of women among Portuguese immigrants is around 4 pp. lower than among other US residents, among naturalized immigrants is more than 4 pp. higher.

<sup>12</sup> Working people between the ages 25 to 54 are typically referred to as “prime-age” workers, meaning that most are old enough to be done with school but are too young to be retired.

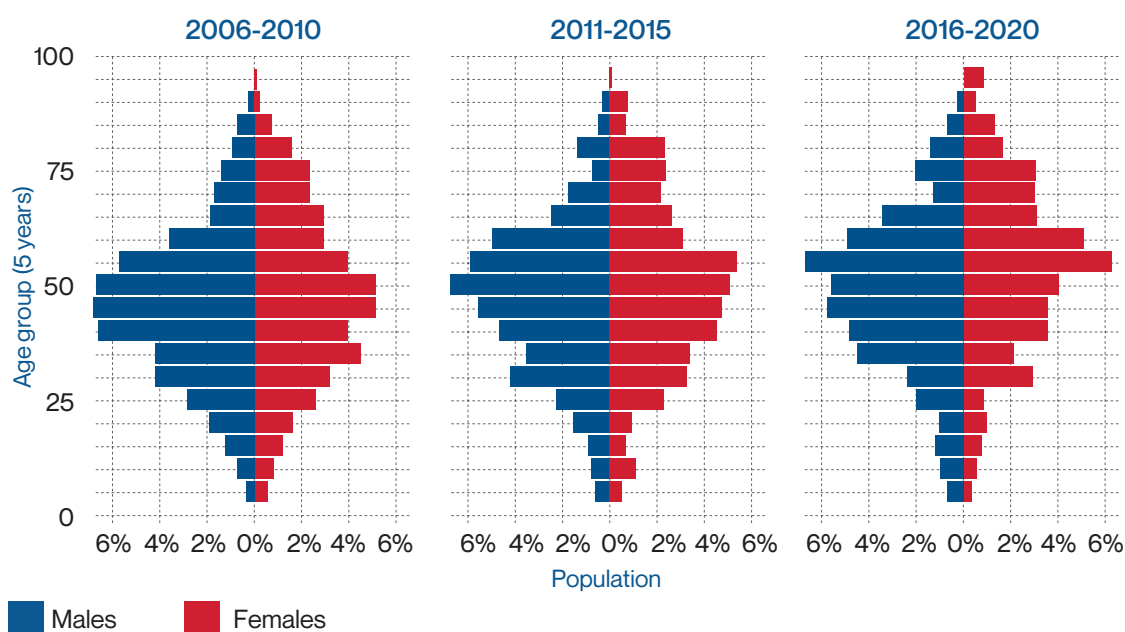
Table 3. Share of women among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020

	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020
Portuguese immigrants	45.76	48.94	46.94
Naturalized immigrants	53.80	53.85	54.99
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	52.66	53.19	52.57
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	50.89	50.69	51.24
Other US residents	51.01	50.92	50.88

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

The analysis of the evolution of the population pyramid of Portuguese immigrants over time (figure 3) provides evidence for the observation that the decline in its population is associated with its aging, which in turn results from declining immigration inflows and demographic aging. On the one hand, the female population of Portuguese immigrants has undergone a double aging process: not only has the proportion of women over 65 increased (from 8.92% to 14.11%), as that of females younger than 15 has decreased (from 1.36% to 0.98%). On the other hand, when we look at the proportion of the working-age population, we see a reduction in both female and male populations of Portuguese immigrants – though the fall is greater among males (from 46.12% to 41.32%). It is interesting to note that the proportion of young females (under 15 years) in the Portuguese immigrant population decreased, whereas that of males increased (from 1.36% to 1.86%).

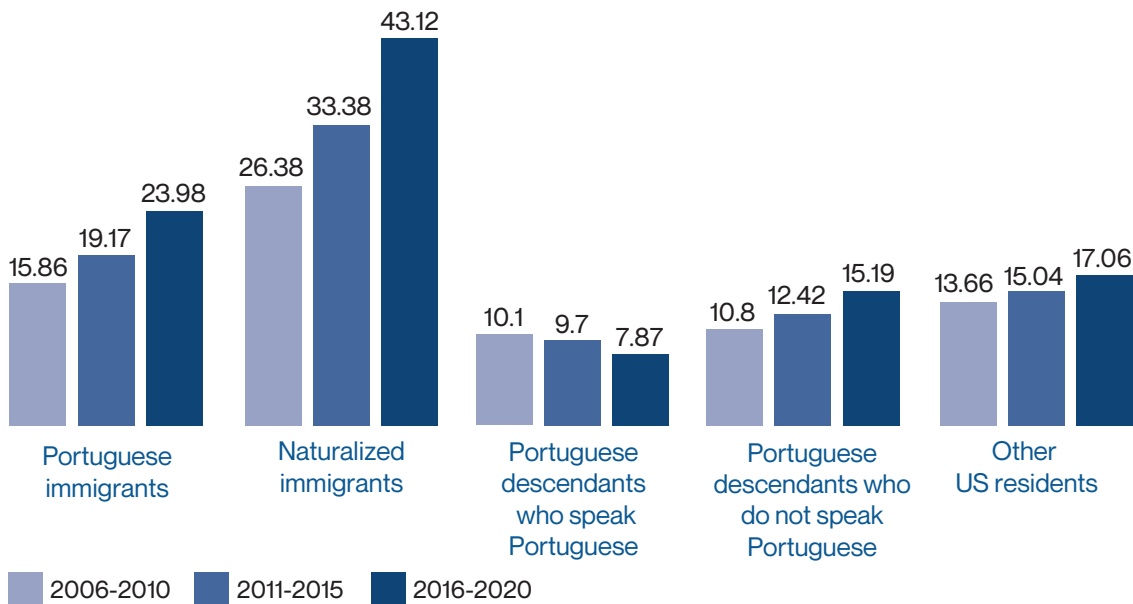
Figure 3. Evolution of the population structure of Portuguese immigrants in the USA (%), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020



Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

The proportion of individuals aged 65 and over also illustrates the aging of immigrant populations — especially that of naturalized immigrants (figure 4). As might be expected, the proportion of seniors in the group of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese is the closest to that observed for other US residents in all periods. However, the share of seniors among the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is lower than that of those who do not speak Portuguese and, therefore, of other US residents.

Figure 4. Proportion of seniors among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

A look at the proportion of young people (<15) in 2016–2020 shows the opposite: this proportion among the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is lower than of other US residents (11.36% vs. 13.40%), and much higher than that observed for immigrants, naturalized or not (0.27% and 2.84%, respectively). These figures once again illustrate the marked aging process of immigrants.

This is also clearly visible when looking at the evolution of the proportion of seniors over the whole period under analysis: it increased by 63.46% in the group of naturalized immigrants, and 51.2% in the group of Portuguese immigrants. In contrast, the proportion of seniors in the group of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese fell by 22.08%. In other words, the low figure observed for this group in the last five-year period results from its decrease over time, thereby creating a gap vis-à-vis and the proportion of seniors among Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese. In fact, this gap did not exist in the first five-year period (2006–2010), when the figures were 10.1% and 10.8%, respectively.

A final note on the evolution of the proportion of young people: although Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese are relatively young when compared to immigrants, the proportion of young people has been going down, the same happening for the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese. Whereas the proportion of young people among Portuguese descendants (whether or not they speak Portuguese) in the first five-year period was higher than among other US residents, in the last five-year period this only continues to be the case for Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese.

Looking at the proportion of people aged 65 and over, the population of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is aging the least, but its proportion of young people has been decreasing.

## 5.1. Education: percentage with higher education (BSc+)

Human capital, and in particular education, is an important mechanism of the intergenerational transmission of socioeconomic (dis)advantages (Tavares 2009), as it underlies higher or lower social mobility (Gregg and Machin 1999). Historically, the educational level of the Portuguese immigrants was very low (Baganha 1991), even when compared to the low educational levels of the Portuguese population in the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

However, given the education expansion in both Portugal and the USA, and the relevance of higher education qualifications in the labor market, this section examines the share of individuals who have at least four years of college. Taking this as corresponding to a Bachelor's degree (BSc) or higher qualifications, we will call this percentage, the percentage of individuals with higher education.

Looking at the percentage of Portuguese immigrants with higher education (table 4), we see that, despite being much lower than that of Portuguese descendants or other US residents (and/or also because of this), it presents the highest growth rate from the first to the last five-year period, rising from 6.99% to 11.98% (a variation of 71.39%). In other words, although this figure is little more than a third of that observed for other US residents, it converges over the period. This evolution is in line with Scott's (2009) observation about a greater presence of medium- to highly-skilled people (although apparently less than among other immigrant groups arriving in the USA like Brazilians or Greeks), mostly from urban areas, on the last phase of Portuguese emigration to the USA.

In turn, the gap is widening between Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese and both other US residents and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese: in 2016–2020, the percentage of Portuguese-speaking descendants with at least a bachelor's degree is almost 10 pp. higher than that of the other two groups. This result in the last five-year period is due to a strong growth in the percentage of individuals with higher education in the Portuguese-speaking descendants' group throughout the period — which is not observed for the other two groups.

The rise in the percentage of people with higher education was neither homogeneous across groups nor constant over time. In the case of Portuguese immigrants, for example, there was a marked decline in the percentage of people with higher education from the second to the third five-year period. Still, in 2016–2020 the percentage of Portuguese immigrants with higher education is higher than that of naturalized immigrants, which was not the case in 2006–2010. In contrast, the Portuguese-speaking descendants register the highest growth rate in the percentage of individuals with higher education between the second and third five-year periods (23.53%), which helps explain the high growth rate from the first to the last five-year period, surpassed only by Portuguese immigrants (55.21% and 71.39%, respectively).



Table 4 Individuals aged 18 and over with higher education (BSc+) among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020

	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020
Portuguese immigrants	6.99	10.66	11.98
Naturalized immigrants	8.43	10.02	10.70
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	25.54	32.09	39.64
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	22.87	26.12	30.58
Other US residents	25.47	27.11	30.25

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

It should be noted that the high educational level of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is a new finding. Scott (2009), as well as several other previous studies, notes that the educational level of Portuguese descendants is lower than that of the average Americans.<sup>13</sup> However, these studies do not differentiate between Portuguese-speaking and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, and the data used refer to a period prior to the one analyzed here. In fact, if we look at the first five-year period (2006–2010), we see that the number of non-Portuguese-speaking descendants with higher education is lower than that of the rest of US residents (22.87% vs. 25.47%). In contrast, the percentage of Portuguese-speaking descendants with higher education is very similar to that of other US residents (25.54% vs. 25.47%), and the gap between the two will increase from then on. In other words, it is the segmentation between Portuguese-speaking and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, compared to the US resident population, that allows us to uncover the higher percentage of Portuguese-speaking descendants with higher education in 2016–2020 (39.64%).

**In 2016–2020, 40% of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have higher education, a percentage almost 10 pp. above that observed for other US residents: a new finding.**

To glean a better understanding of the higher educational levels of Portuguese-speaking descendants, we analyzed the percentage of individuals with higher education by two major age groups, 18–64 and 65 and over (table 5). As expected, the percentage of individuals with higher education is considerably higher in all groups of working age (18–64). More interestingly, the largest difference between the two age groups is observed for the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese: 27.51% of individuals aged 18–64 vs. 11.73% of those aged 65 and over (in 2006–2010). In the last five-year period, 2016–2020, 40.85% of the working age Portuguese-speaking descendants have higher education, more than 10 pp. above that of other US residents. Note that this result is only observed for the working-age population, not for the older population. The larger percentages of individuals with higher education among Portuguese-speaking descendants vis-à-vis non-Portuguese speakers, considering the age groups, suggests that it is fostered by bilingualism. In line with Scott (2009), there seem to be important social mobility processes among Portuguese descendants, especially among Portuguese speakers.

<sup>13</sup> Regarding the relatively slow evolution of the formal education levels of successive generations of Portuguese and their descendants in the USA, it was initially thought that this was explained by the ethnic and cultural specificities of this population (the valuing of work over education, the focus on ethnic and family relations and business...). This has been deconstructed by recent studies (Sá and Borges 2009; Becker 2009; Martins 2009) that have shown how the material and immaterial constraints associated with the context (e.g. lack of access to good schools, lack of guidance to extend school paths, stereotyped and devaluing attitudes by the school community) are, in fact, fundamental explanatory factors for the deficits identified at the level of formal education, namely until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Table 5. Individuals aged 18 and over with tertiary education among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), by age group, 2006–2010, 2011–2015 and 2016–2020

	2006-2010		2011-2015		2016-2020	
	18-64	65+	18-64	65+	18-64	65+
Portuguese immigrants	8.03	1.75	12.64	2.72	14.96	3.05
Naturalized immigrants	10.45	2.83	12.48	5.17	14.43	5.83
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	27.51	11.73	33.93	17.98	40.85	26.64
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	24.38	13.39	27.44	18.96	32.25	23.22
Other US residents	26.56	20.80	27.78	24.14	30.76	28.31

Note: The following differences are not statistically significant at a 95% confidence level: Portuguese and naturalized immigrants, aged 18–64, in the five-year periods 2011–2015 and 2016–2020.

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

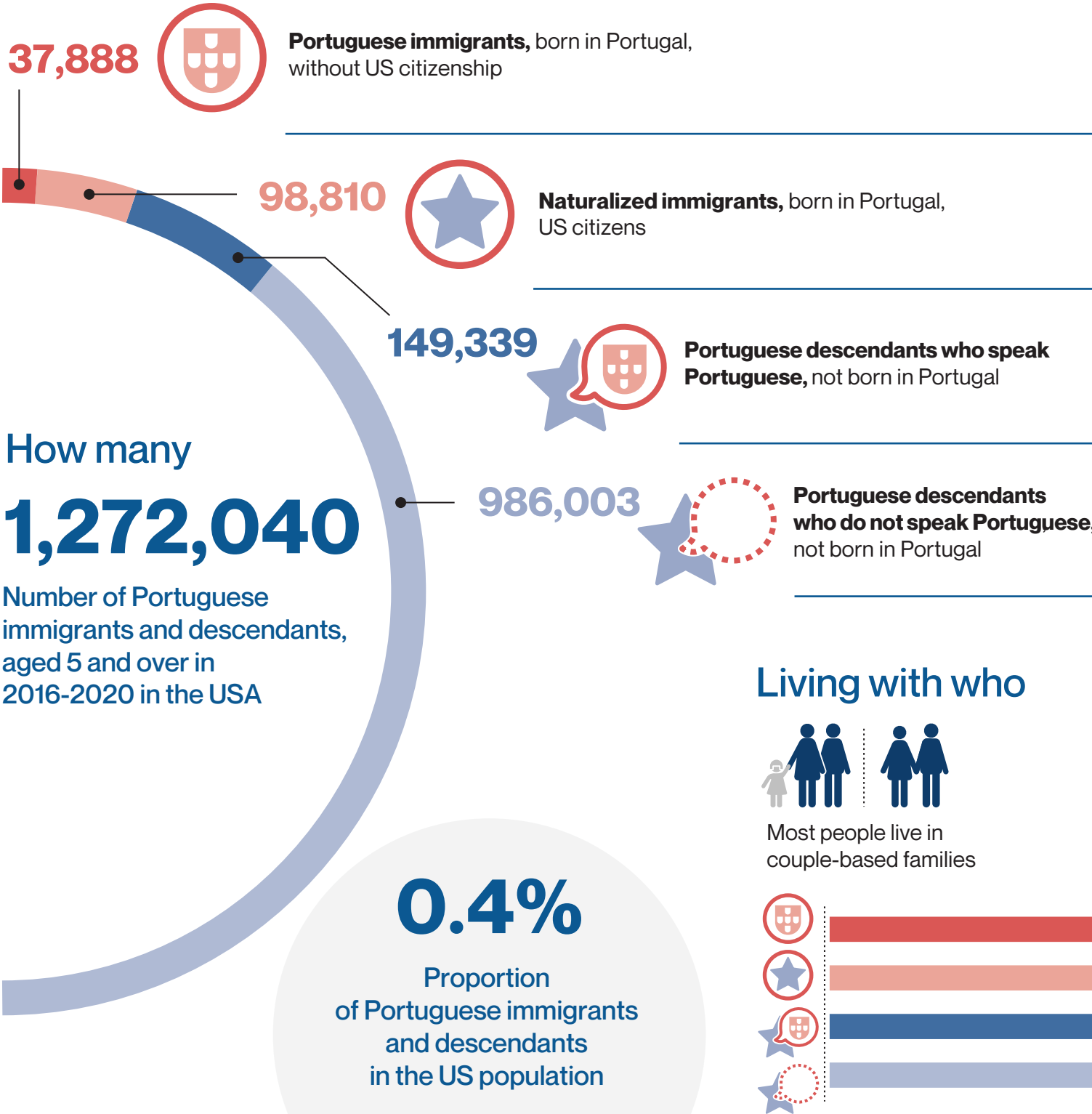
Although the percentage of working-age college graduates has risen much more in relative terms among the Portuguese immigrant and naturalized groups, it is still less than half that of non-Portuguese speakers or other US residents. It is worth noting, however, that the percentage of working-age college graduates among Portuguese immigrants is much closer to that of naturalized immigrants.

Interesting gender differences are found when looking specifically at working-age individuals and analyzing the percentage of those with higher education separately for women and men. Empirically, it is almost universally true that women in Western societies have higher levels of education than men, and this is reflected in a larger share of the population with higher education (Stoet and Geary 2020). As such, it is not surprising to find this result across all groups. More interestingly, this difference is particularly marked in the group of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese: in the last five-year period, the percentage of women is more than 5 percentage points higher than for men. Over 40% of female Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have a college education, more than 10 percentage points higher than that of other female US residents.

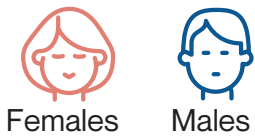


# Who they are

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.



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



### TREND

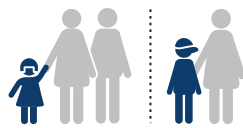
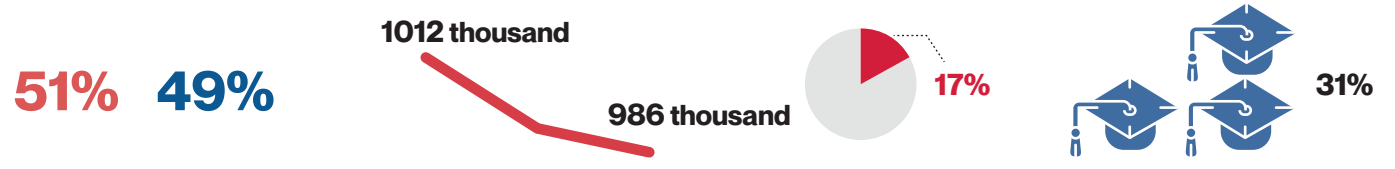
The population decreased in three of the four groups

### AGE

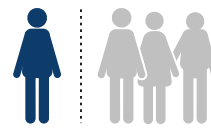
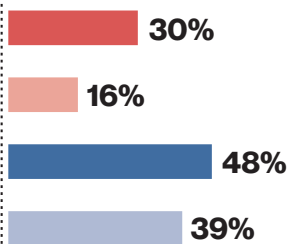
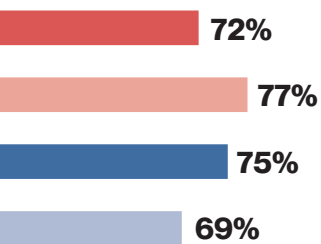
More elderly among immigrants

### EDUCATION

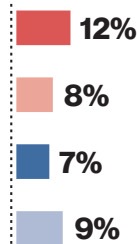
Population with higher education (BSc+), aged 18 and over



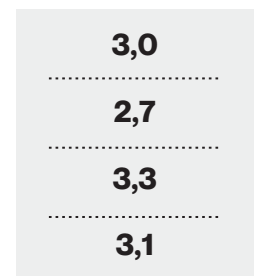
Living with children (<18 years) is more frequent among Portuguese descendants



Few live with relatives who are neither children nor partner



Average household size



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## 6. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: where are they?

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**Nachatter Singh Garha and Jorge Malheiros**

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### 6.1. Migratory cycles and original settlement areas

As mentioned in section 2, the current distribution of the Portuguese population in the United States is the result of different cycles of immigration from mainland Portugal and its Atlantic archipelagos (the Azores and Madeira). Since the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these have been characterized by levels of higher and lower intensity. For example, after a high intensity in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a significant reduction in the flow between 1920 and 1950. It starts to increase again in the late 1950s.

Historically, the main areas of Portuguese settlement in the USA were Massachusetts, California, and Hawaii. Until 1910, the Portuguese migration flow was largely composed of unskilled young adults from the Azores and Madeira. Upon arrival, they had fewer economic resources, lower literacy rates, and were more concentrated at the bottom of the socio-professional structure than other immigrant groups settled in the USA (Baganha 1991). The three settlement areas mentioned above offered very different economic opportunities to the newcomers, which affected their socioeconomic status and their spatial distribution in the United States.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the state of Massachusetts, in the New England region, was the nucleus of the American textile industry. Initially, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the textile industry attracted unskilled workers from Ireland and Canada. In the 1880s, a large number of indentured laborers from Poland, Italy, Greece, and other Eastern European countries also came to Massachusetts in search of jobs in the textile industry. Contrary to this trend, the Portuguese initially arrived in Massachusetts as crewmen for the whaling and merchant fleets in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1880s, like other new immigrant groups, the Portuguese benefited from the opening of low-skilled job opportunities in the region's textile mills (Baganha, 1991). The availability of unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in the textile sector allowed them to settle permanently in Massachusetts and the neighboring states of Rhode Island and Connecticut. These initial settlements functioned as centers of attraction for new Portuguese immigrants and began to grow at a rapid pace. From 1958 to 1990, under the Azorean Refugee Act, a new wave of immigration from Portugal arrived in southeastern Massachusetts due to the elimination of country-based immigration quotas and immigrants fleeing volcanic activity in the Azores.

On the other hand, Portuguese immigrants arrived in California in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century from the Azores. Many came to California to work in the fishing and agricultural industries, settling in the San Joaquin Valley and cities like San Francisco and San Jose. Available land was not immediately accessible to most Portuguese immigrants despite low prices. Nevertheless, through a process of renting followed by buying, the Portuguese managed to gain a foothold in two branches of agriculture: horticulture and dairy farming (Baganha 1991). This ability to buy land allowed them to settle permanently, and these initial settlements paved the way for new immigrants, who were often hired by their compatriots in the early stages of their business. During the last century, a large and thriving Portuguese-American community with a rich cultural and historical heritage that includes contributions to the state's fishing, agricultural, and cultural industries, established itself in California.

Hawaii was the third largest settlement area with a steady flow of immigrants in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mainly from the archipelagos of Madeira and the Azores. The arrival of many immigrants to this state was based on a hired labor system that reflected both the needs of the sugar economy and the desire of the Hawaiian political elite to curb the growth of immigration from the East (Chinese population) to the islands (Freitas 1930). From the outset, this Portuguese migratory flow differed substantially from the migratory flows to the US mainland. Subsidized by the sugar planters and the government, the contract usually involved the whole family unit. Work opportunities in Hawaii were also substantially different from elsewhere, with most immigrants recruited as agricultural workers under the "free passage" program. When this program came to an end in 1913, the arrival of Portuguese immigrants declined to insignificant numbers; this meant that, unlike in the other two large areas of traditional settlement (states of New England and California), there was a greater crystallization of the community originating from Portugal in this North American Pacific archipelago. In fact, the population of Portuguese origin in the state of Hawaii is almost entirely composed of non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, although they keep many traditions and cultural and religious practices of the Portuguese matrix alive and continue to engage in associative structures that refer to their ancestors' places of origin.

## 6.2. Recent changes in the main areas of residence of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

In addition to the key destinations outlined above, the Portuguese immigrants and descendant population in the United States began to show trends of greater territorial dispersion in recent decades, with new settlement spaces beginning to emerge. According to recent ACS data, 2016–2020, the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties in the USA decreased from 1.31 million in 2006–2010 to 1.27 million in 2016–2020. However, they are present in all US states (figure 5<sup>14</sup>). At the state level, California registered the highest number of Portuguese immigrants and descendants (309.96 thousand), followed by Massachusetts (258.23 thousand), Rhode Island (81.69 thousand), Florida (78.87 thousand), New Jersey (72.31 thousand) and Hawaii (47.04 thousand). On the other hand, the states of South Dakota and North Dakota had the lowest number of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in their population.

Over the last decade, the size of the population with Portuguese ties decreased in California (-35.89 thousand, 10.38%), Massachusetts (-30.69 thousand, 10.62%), Rhode Island (-11.61 thousand, 12.45%) and Hawaii (-10.05 thousand, 17.62%). Among the states with the largest number of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, New Jersey registered the smallest decline of -479 people. In contrast, the Portuguese population increased in Florida (+14.82 thousand, 23.13%), Texas (+9.34 thousand, 37.82%), Pennsylvania (+4.66 thousand, 29.84%) and South Carolina (+4.47 thousand, 99.42%). This trend shows that the states where most of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants settled in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are becoming less important, with their numbers decreasing due to natural causes (mortality associated with aging and non-replacement of generations) or migration to other states, especially Florida and to a lesser extent Texas.

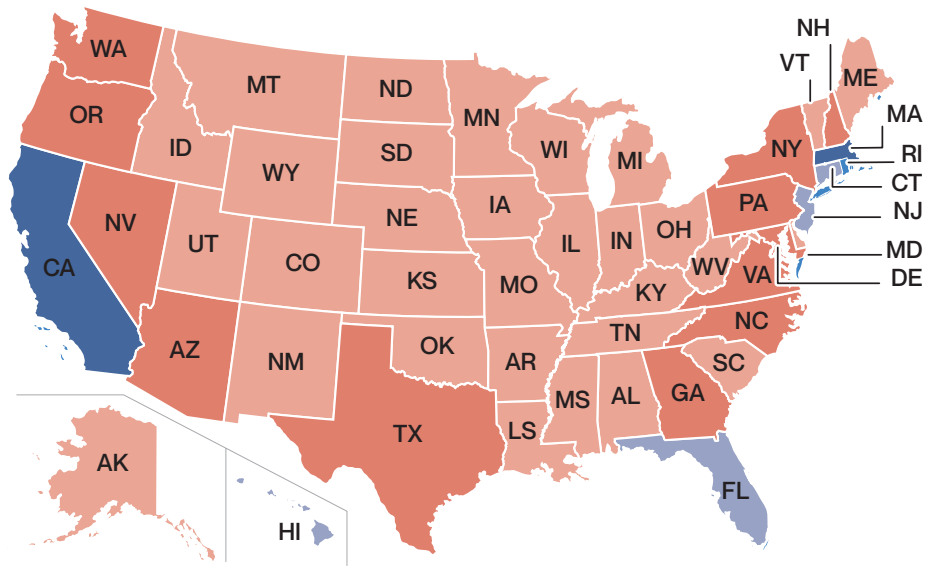
The Portuguese immigrants and descendants population is present in all states of the United States in the period 2016–2020.

<sup>14</sup> The following coding of the US states is used in the maps below: 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 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).

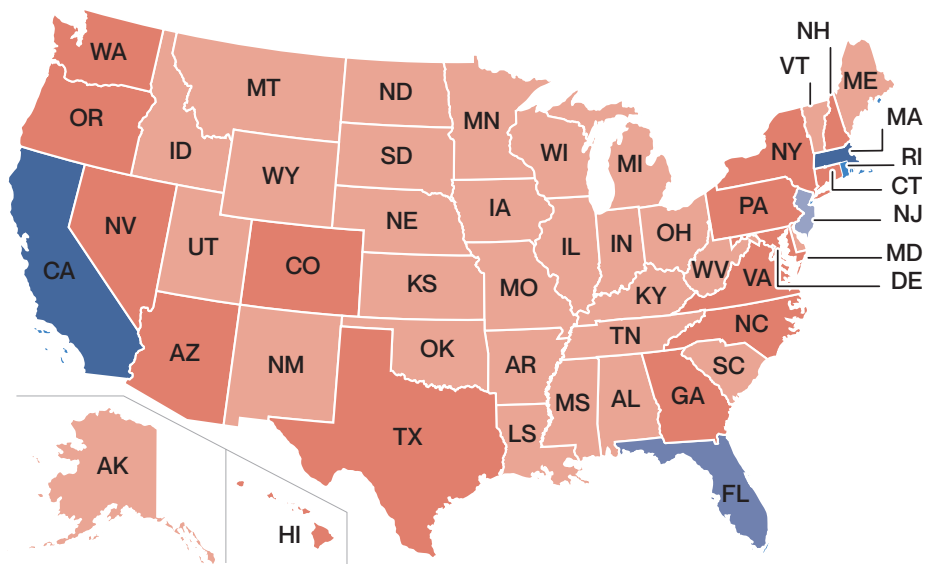


Figure 5. Distribution of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA (No.), by state, 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population ('000) 0-10 10-50 50-75 75-150 150-370

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

Portuguese immigrants and descendants are territorially more concentrated in the states of California and Massachusetts, with a notable presence in Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Florida, a state where there has been considerable growth over the last decades.

## 6.3. The geographical distribution of Portuguese immigrants and descendants

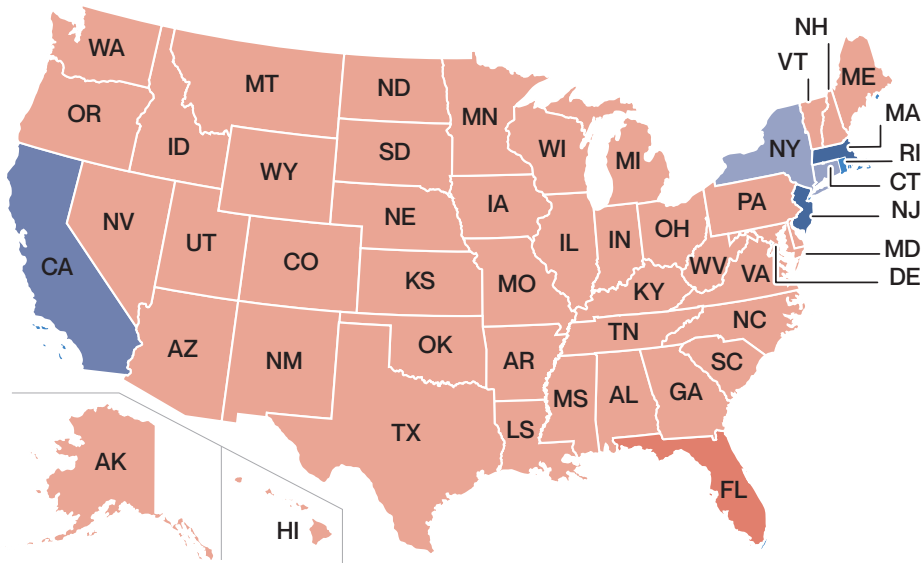
### **Portuguese immigrants**

Starting with the smallest group in terms of population size, Portuguese immigrants (figure 6) are very concentrated in the states of Massachusetts (11.34 thousand), New Jersey (6.93 thousand), California (5.19 thousand), Rhode Island (3.49 thousand) and New York (3.11 thousand).

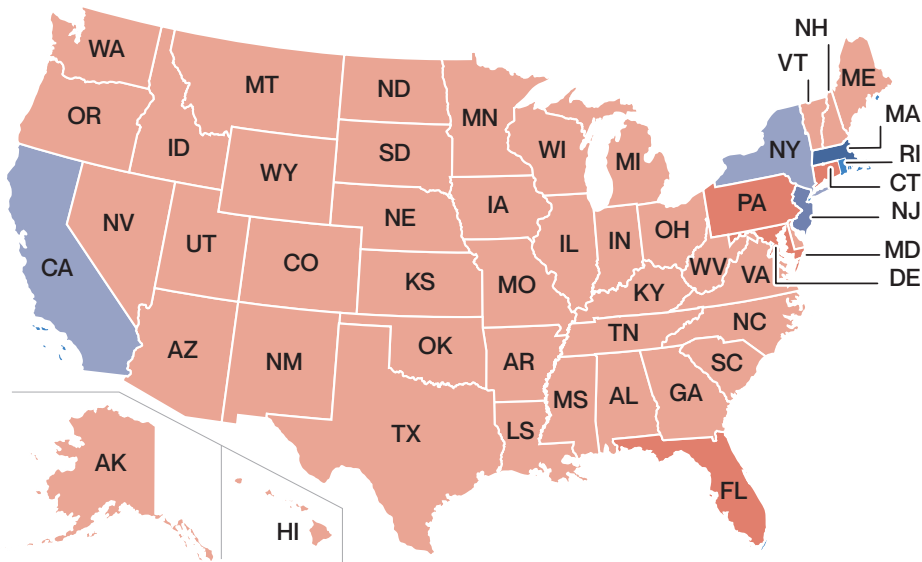
This is also the group with the sharpest decline over the period studied: from 57.6 thousand in 2006–2010 to 37.88 thousand in 2016–2020 (-34.21%). This reduction can be explained by a lower number of arrivals combined with the progressive acquisition of US citizenship by Portuguese immigrants. However, the fall in Portuguese immigrants may also be due to the effects of the population that is no longer in the country, either because they returned or died (it should be recalled that this is the second oldest subgroup of the four analyzed, after naturalized immigrants). The overall decline in this group is explained by sharp population losses in all their traditional settlements, namely New Jersey (-6.84 thousand), Massachusetts (-4.37 thousand), Connecticut (-2.61 thousand), New York (-2.18 thousand), Rhode Island (-1.82 thousand) and California (-1.43 thousand). Nevertheless, this is accompanied by population gains in some states, albeit less expressive: South Carolina (+0.4 thousand) and Texas (+0.2 thousand) (figure 6). This evidence of small increases in some southern states seems to confirm previous references to some changes of residence towards these spaces. In sum, there was a sharp decline in the number of Portuguese immigrants, and the volume of entries was lower than that of exits.

Figure 6. Distribution of Portuguese immigrants in the USA by state (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population ('000) 0-1 1-3 3-6 6-9 9-16

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

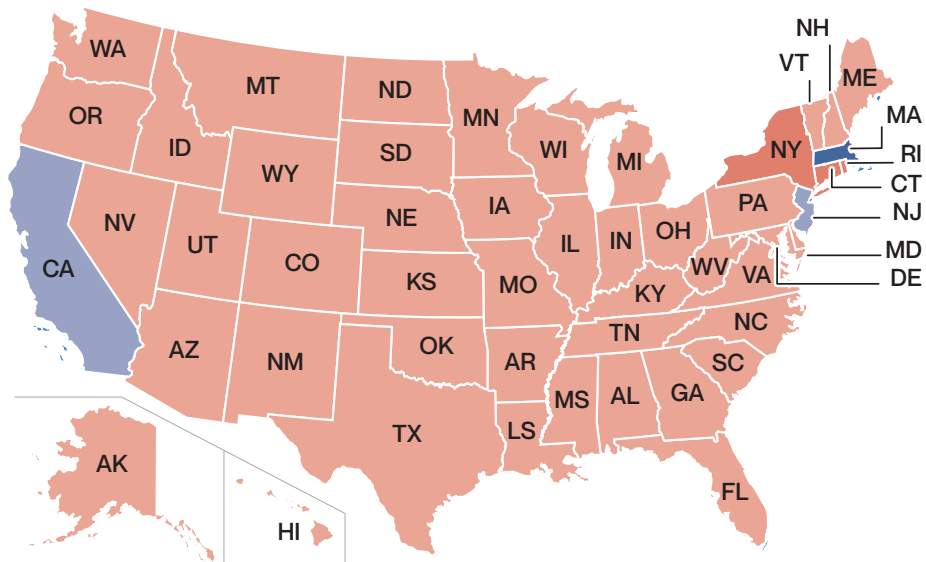
### Naturalized immigrants

The preferred locations of naturalized immigrants in 2016–2020 were the states of Massachusetts (34.49 thousand), New Jersey (18.55 thousand), California (14.09 thousand), Rhode Island (10.61 thousand), and Florida (5.48 thousand). The number of naturalized immigrants fell from 102.26 thousand in 2006–2010 to 98.81 thousand in 2016–2020 (-3.38%) (figure 7). The largest declines were in California (-3.06 thousand), New York (-2.75 thousand) and Connecticut (-1.91 thousand). Within this group, the states of Florida (+1,83 thousand) and Rhode Island (+0,94 thousand) recorded the most significant growth, which shows a movement of geographic dispersion that follows that of other populations in the USA and which favors the South, where Florida is located. Although also showing a downward trend, the group of naturalized immigrants seems

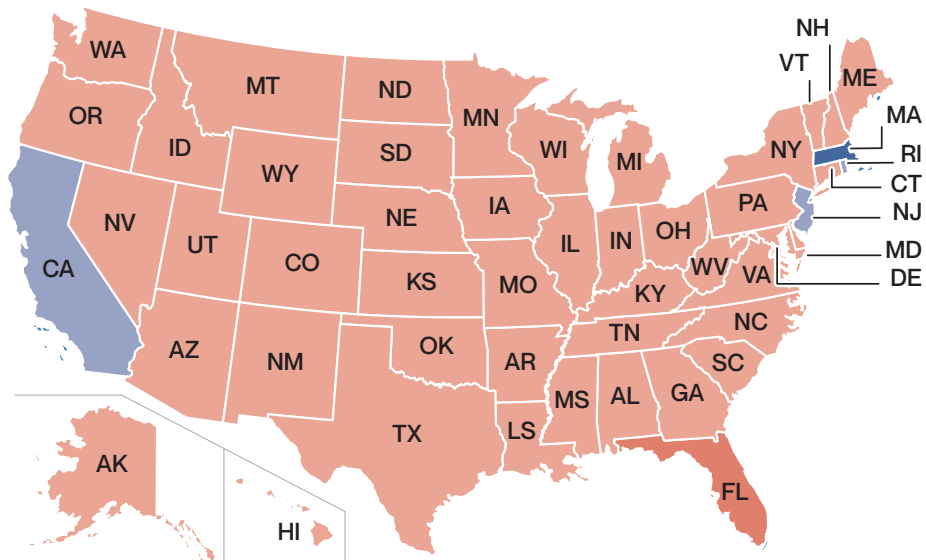
more resistant to the effects of time than that of Portuguese immigrants, possibly because the former is formed precisely from the group of Portuguese immigrants who have since acquired US citizenship.

Figure 7. Distribution of naturalized immigrants in the USA by state (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population ('000) 0-5 5-10 10-20 30-35

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

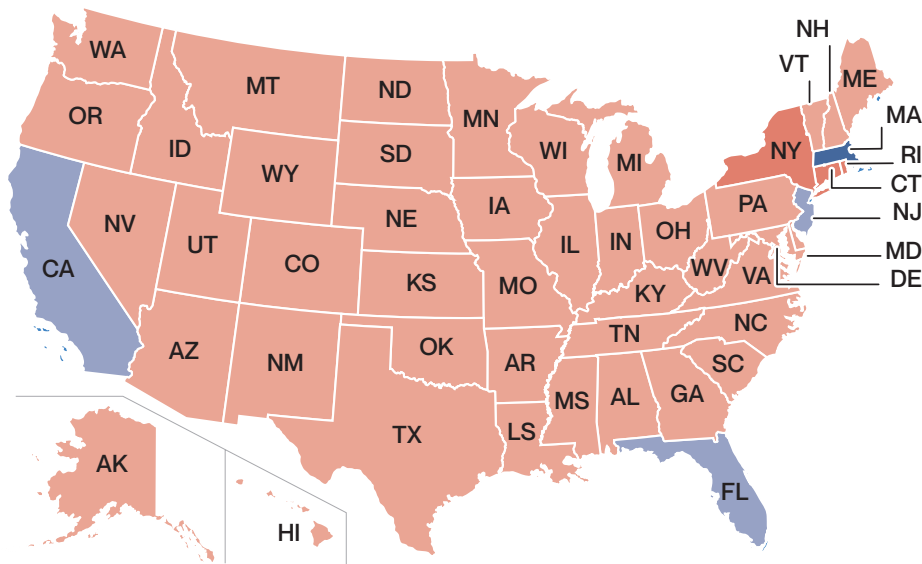
**Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese**

The group made up of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (figure 8) is the only one to observe population growth in the last decade: +3.35 thousand people, having increased from 145.99 thousand in 2006–2010 to 149.34 thousand in 2016–2020 (+2.29%). This group is mainly concentrated in the states of Massachusetts (35.36 thousand), California (21.18 thousand), Florida (19.45 thousand), New Jersey (17.43 thousand), and New York (9.44 thousand) (figure 8). In the most recent period, only North

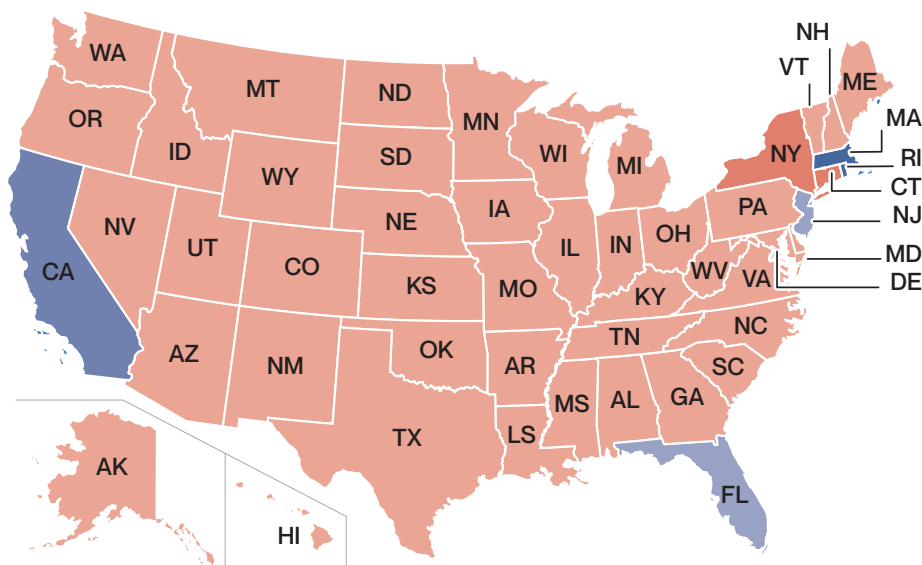
Dakota is not represented. This increase points to more dynamic demographic structures, possibly as a result of higher fertility levels, confirmed to some extent by the analysis of demographic structures in section 5.

Figure 8. Distribution of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese in the USA by state (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population ('000) 0-5 5-10 10-20 20-30 30-44

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

The largest increases were registered in the states of Florida (+8.12 thousand), Texas (+1.83 thousand), Georgia (+1.29 thousand) and New York (+1.09 thousand), providing a clearer example of the trend towards greater geographical dispersion of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, which is associated with an increase in the numbers of those settling in the Southern and South-eastern states. The fact that this population group is shrinking in several states where the Portuguese were traditionally settled in

the USA, namely Massachusetts (-7.96 thousand), Rhode Island (-3.04 thousand), Connecticut (-2.91 thousand), California (-1.63 thousand) and New Jersey (-1.08 thousand), also confirms this logic of greater territorial dispersion.

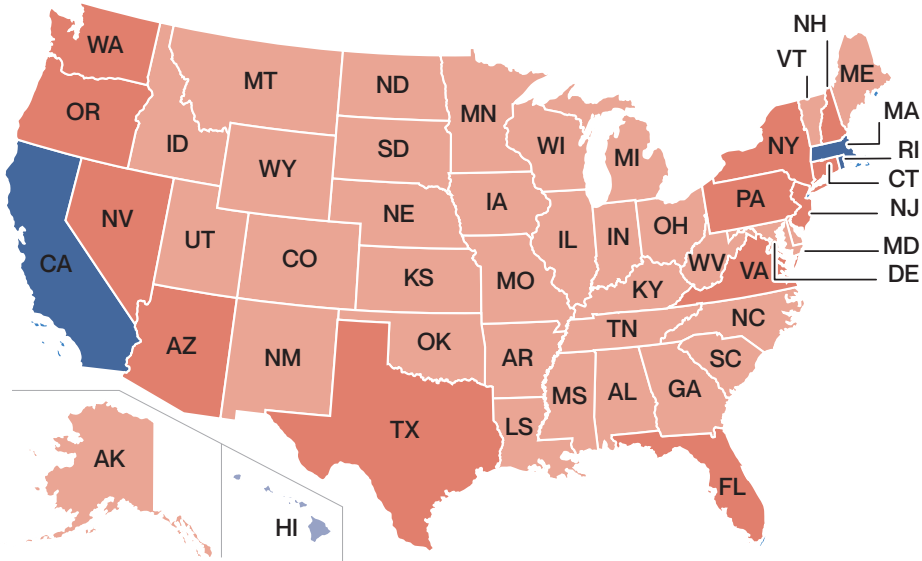
### **Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese**

Finally, the largest group, that of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, is represented in all US states (figure 9). As the most consolidated group and more distant from direct migratory waves, it best reflects the history of Portuguese immigration to the USA, with the states of California (269,5 thousand), Massachusetts (177,04 thousand), Rhode Island (60,45 thousand), Florida (52,28 thousand) and Hawaii (46,46 thousand) having the largest numbers.

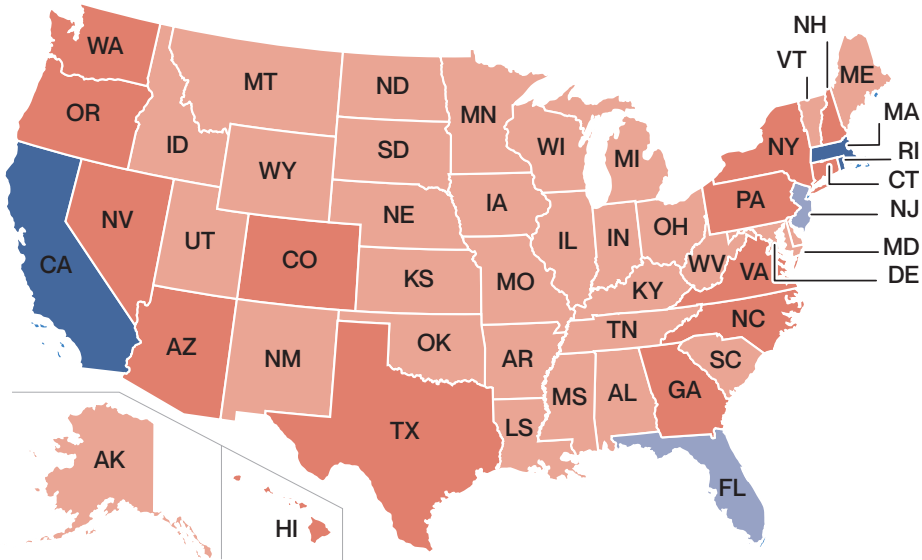
This group has lost population in the last decade: -26.19 thousand people, from around 1.01 million in 2006–2010 to 0.99 million people in 2016–2020 (-2.58%). This is not a surprise because there are more people in the group with weaker ties to Portugal. Therefore, when people die, their descendants are increasingly likely to be ethnically mixed, so they do not identify with or refer to their Portuguese roots. In terms of geographic distribution, the states with the largest populations of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese lost the largest number, e.g., California lost 29.77 thousand, Massachusetts lost 17.94 thousand, Hawaii lost 10.08 thousand, and Rhode Island lost 7.69 thousand residents (figure 9). Even though the population gains do not compensate for the losses, some states have recorded remarkable growth, such as Texas (+7.33 thousand), New Jersey (+6.80 thousand), Florida (+4.96 thousand), Pennsylvania (+4.01 thousand), North Carolina (+3.93 thousand) and South Carolina (+3.54 thousand). These trends are even more enlightening when we analyze the process of territorial dispersion of Portuguese descendants and its determinants. While the presence in the more traditionally Portuguese states decreased, it increased in the Southern and South-eastern states (Texas, South Carolina, and Florida); in the latter case, the displacement of retirees may have some weight, as already mentioned by Scott in 2009. Finally, New Jersey is the traditional state of settlement that continues to attract this population, which may be related to possible advantages in housing supply (lower real estate prices), more dynamic Portuguese networks in places like Newark, and the emergence of suburbanization logics in relation to New York. All this requires further confirmation, which justifies future studies on the actual residential mobility of Portuguese people at the local level.

Figure 9. Distribution of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese in the USA by state (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population ('000) 0-10 10-50 50-75 150-325

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

A comparison of the distribution maps of the four groups suggests that the geographic location of the population with Portuguese ties in the USA is increasingly dispersed. While Portuguese immigrants are more concentrated in some states and absent in others, Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, which supposedly includes individuals with a more consolidated ancestral presence in the USA,<sup>15</sup> not only showed their presence in new states, namely Florida, but is also dispersed throughout the American territory. It is worth noting that the geographical pattern of the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is quite similar to that of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese.

<sup>15</sup> This is well illustrated by the importance of Hawaii in this group.

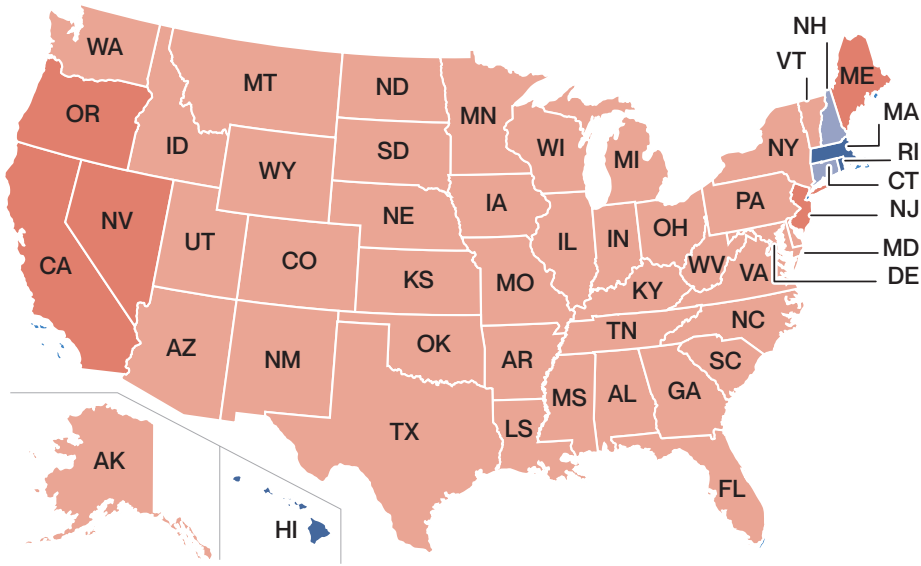
## 6.4. Weight of Portuguese immigrants and descendants who speak Portuguese in the population of the USA

At the national level, the share of the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties in the total US population was 0.46% in 2006–2010, falling to 0.41% in 2016–2020. However, due to the uneven distribution described above, the relative weight of Portuguese immigrants and descendants was much higher in some states than in others. In 2006–2010, Rhode Island topped the list with 9.35%, followed by Massachusetts (4.73%), Hawaii (4.73%), New Hampshire (1.5%), and Connecticut (1.41%). In contrast, the states of Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin had the lowest proportions of the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties (0.05%) in the total population (figure 10). In 2016–2020, the share of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the US population had decreased in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Hawaii to 8.14%, 3.96%, and 3.53%, respectively. This may be due to a combination of different factors, namely the decline in the number of new Portuguese immigrants, the effect of mortality and the emigration of Portuguese descendants (without their replacement in the population), or even a greater increase in migrations from other countries, which implies a reduction in the relative weight of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants. In contrast, this percentage increased in some states, including Florida, where it went from 0.37% in 2006–2010 to 0.39% in 2016–2020. This is mainly due to the growth in the number of Portuguese immigrants and descendants from other states, namely those that were traditionally settled on the East Coast of the USA. Although this is the US state with the most residents with ties to Portugal, these correspond to just 0.84% of the total population of California (figure 10). This percentage decreased between 2006–2010 and 2016–2020, possibly due to the combined effect of the decline of the population with Portuguese ties and the growth of groups of other origins, such as those from Latin America.

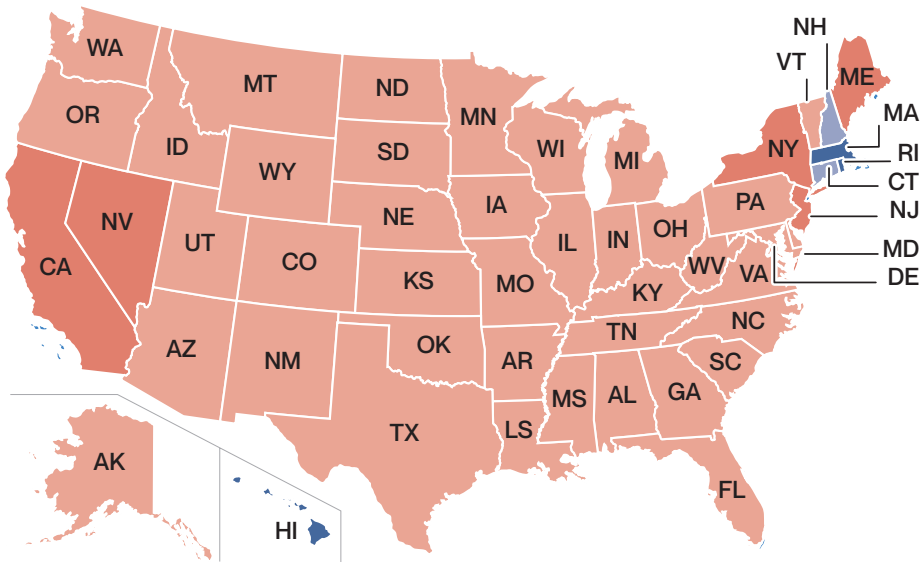


Figure 10. Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the US resident population, by state (%), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population (%) 0-0.5 0.5-1 1-2 2-4 4-10

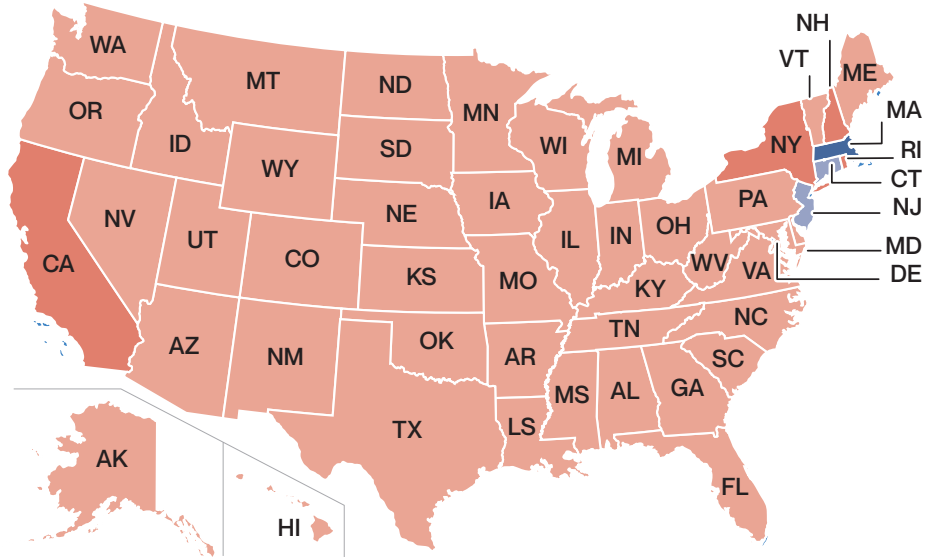
Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

The relative weight of Portuguese-speaking immigrants and descendants in the US population, groups that are expected to have a stronger relationship with Portugal since they are fluent in Portuguese, shows that Rhode Island appears at the top of the list in 2016–2020, with 2.52%. It is followed by Massachusetts (1.54%), New Jersey (0.62%), and Connecticut (0.61%) (figure 11). This shows that, despite the observed drop, traditional destinations continue to have the most significant proportion of Portuguese-born and Portuguese-origins population with the highest affinity to their country of origin, inferring that the community migratory networks continue to play a role in inducing movement, although this appears to be steadily eroding. Moreover, this state-level analysis conceals more evident relative concentrations in some localities, as we shall see

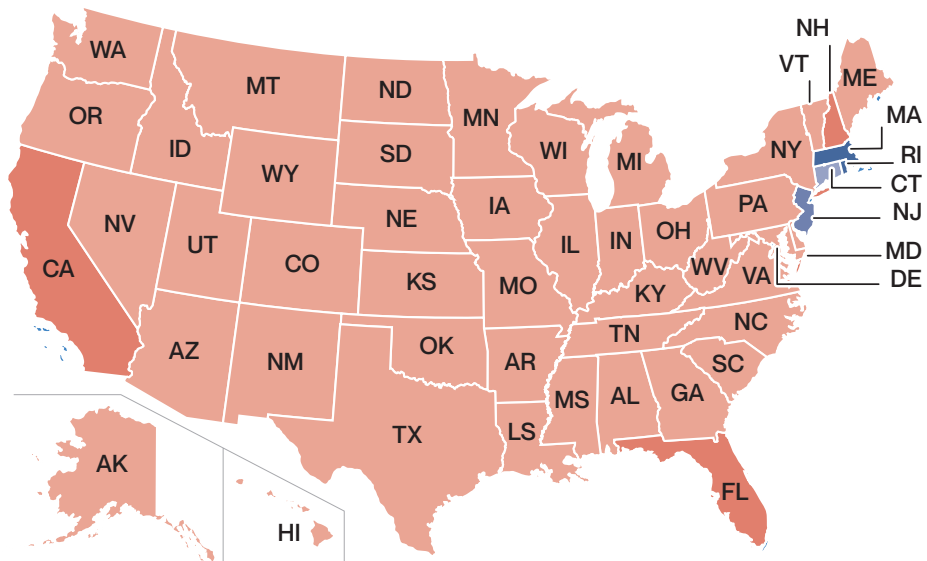
in the following subsection. Finally, it is worth noting that in the rest of the states, there is only a small percentage of people belonging to these groups (0.1% or less) (figure 11).

Figure 11. Portuguese immigrants and descendants who speak Portuguese in the US resident population by state (%), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

2006-2010



2016-2020



Population (%) 0-0.1 0.1-0.25 0.25-0.5 0.5-0.75 1-2.4

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

## 6.5. Main clusters of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA

The ACS data allow us to explore the distribution of the population groups below the state level, which, in this case, corresponds to the PUMA.<sup>16</sup> Thus, we determine the presence of the four groups in the PUMA that make up the five main territorial clusters of concentration of the Portuguese immigrant and descendant population (table 6). Note that almost three-quarters of this population in the USA is concentrated in these five clusters.

Table 6. Main territorial clusters of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA (No. and %), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

Territorial clusters		Total (n.º)	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants	
			Portuguese (%)	Naturalized (%)	Portuguese-speaking (%)	Non-Portuguese-speaking (%)
Massachusetts- -Rhode Island- -Connecticut	2016-2020	<b>383,002</b>	4.38	12.99	12.93	69.70
	2006-2010	<b>432,498</b>	5.88	11.82	14.61	67.69
California	2016-2020	<b>309,958</b>	1.73	4.51	6.76	86.89
	2006-2010	<b>345,852</b>	1.87	4.89	6.63	86.51
New York -New Jersey	2016-2020	<b>117,692</b>	8.46	19.31	22.82	49.41
	2006-2010	<b>122,175</b>	15.55	20.32	21.91	42.12
Florida	2016-2020	<b>78,875</b>	2.07	6.91	24.71	66.31
	2006-2010	<b>64,059</b>	2.63	5.74	17.81	73.92
Hawaii	2016-2020	<b>47,045</b>	0.00	0.01	1.01	98.86
	2006-2010	<b>57,104</b>	0.00	0.11	0.79	99.10

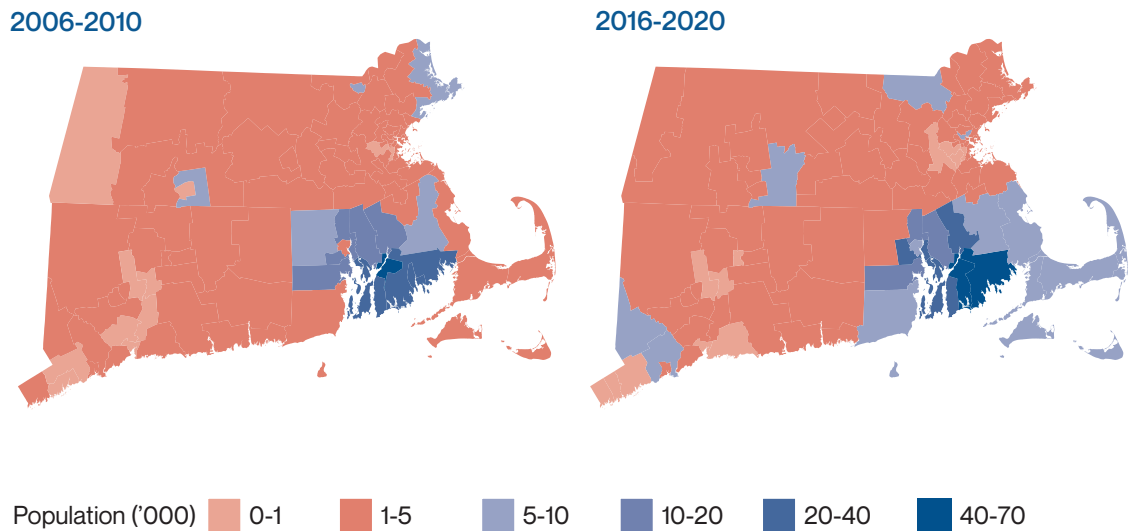
Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### Massachusetts–Rhode Island–Connecticut cluster

The Massachusetts–Rhode Island–Connecticut cluster, located in the northeastern region of the USA. In 2016–2020, it was the largest territorial conglomerate of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the United States with about 383 thousand people (30.11% of the total) (figure 12). In this conglomerate, 67.42% of the population with Portuguese ties lives in Massachusetts, 21.33% in Rhode Island, and 11.25% in Connecticut. Of the total population included in this cluster, 69.7% were non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, 12.99% were naturalized immigrants, 12.93% were Portuguese-speaking descendants and 4.38% were Portuguese immigrants. During the last decade, this territorial conglomerate experienced a decline in the Portuguese population (-49.49 persons, 11.41%). The largest decline between 2006–2010 and 2011–2016 was seen in the state of Massachusetts (-30.72 thousand), followed by Rhode Island and Connecticut (-11.61 thousand and -7.18 thousand, respectively). With regard to the population groups under study, the biggest reduction occurred in non-Portuguese-speaking descendants (-25.39 thousand), followed by Portuguese-speaking descendants (-13.92 thousand), Portuguese immigrants (-8.80 thousand) and naturalized immigrants (-1.38 thousand).

<sup>16</sup> PUMA is the acronym for *Public Use Microdata Area* (PUMA) and corresponds to the smallest spatial unit of the ACS. The list of PUMA used in this section — Census 2010 based PUMA map and Boundary files — as well as their boundaries, can be found at: <https://usa.ipums.org>.

Figure 12. Distribution of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the PUMA of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020



Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

An analysis of the distribution of the groups in the state of Massachusetts shows higher concentrations in the Grand Boston and Cape Cod area. Moving down to an even more detailed geographic level, in 2016–2020, the people with Portuguese ties were mainly settled in the PUMA of *Bristol County (Central) — Fall River City & Somerset Town* (with 40.72 thousand people), *Bristol County (South) — New Bedford City & Fairhaven Town* (34.14 thousand), *Bristol (Outside New Bedford City) & Plymouth (South) Counties* (29.43 thousand) and *Bristol County — Taunton City, Mansfield, Norton, Raynham, Dighton & Berkley Towns* (19.03 thousand) (figure 12). These data confirm the maintenance of high levels of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in specific locations of longstanding residential concentration in Massachusetts, which has been consolidated over time, as evidenced by the literature explored in section 2. In this regard, the *Bristol County (Central) — Fall River City & Somerset Town* PUMA serves as a good example, as it recorded the highest growth in the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties (+15.72 thousand) in the last decade. In contrast, the *Attleboro City, North Attleborough, Swansea, Seekonk, Rehoboth & Plainville Towns* PUMA saw the largest population decline (-37.21 thousand).

In 2016–2020, Portuguese immigrants and descendants in Rhode Island were mainly concentrated in the cities of East Providence and Pawtucket. They were mainly settled in the PUMA of *Southeast Rhode Island — Newport & Bristol Counties — Newport City* (21.31 thousand), of *Providence County (Southeast) — Cranston & East Providence Cities* (16.43 thousand), of *Northeast Rhode Island — Providence County — Pawtucket & Central Falls Cities* (14.42 thousand) and of *Central Rhode Island — Kent County — Warwick City* (13.07 thousand). Here too, Portuguese immigrants and descendants remain in spaces where they have been present for many decades. They are known for their strong community ties and cultural heritage, with several Portuguese-American organizations (e.g., Holy Ghost Beneficial Brotherhood in East Providence and Lusitanian Youth Club in Cumberland) and Portuguese cultural events in the state (e.g., Holy Ghost

Festivals in Bristol and Portugal Day Celebrations in Providence), which often refer to the Azorean ancestry of these Portuguese-Americans.

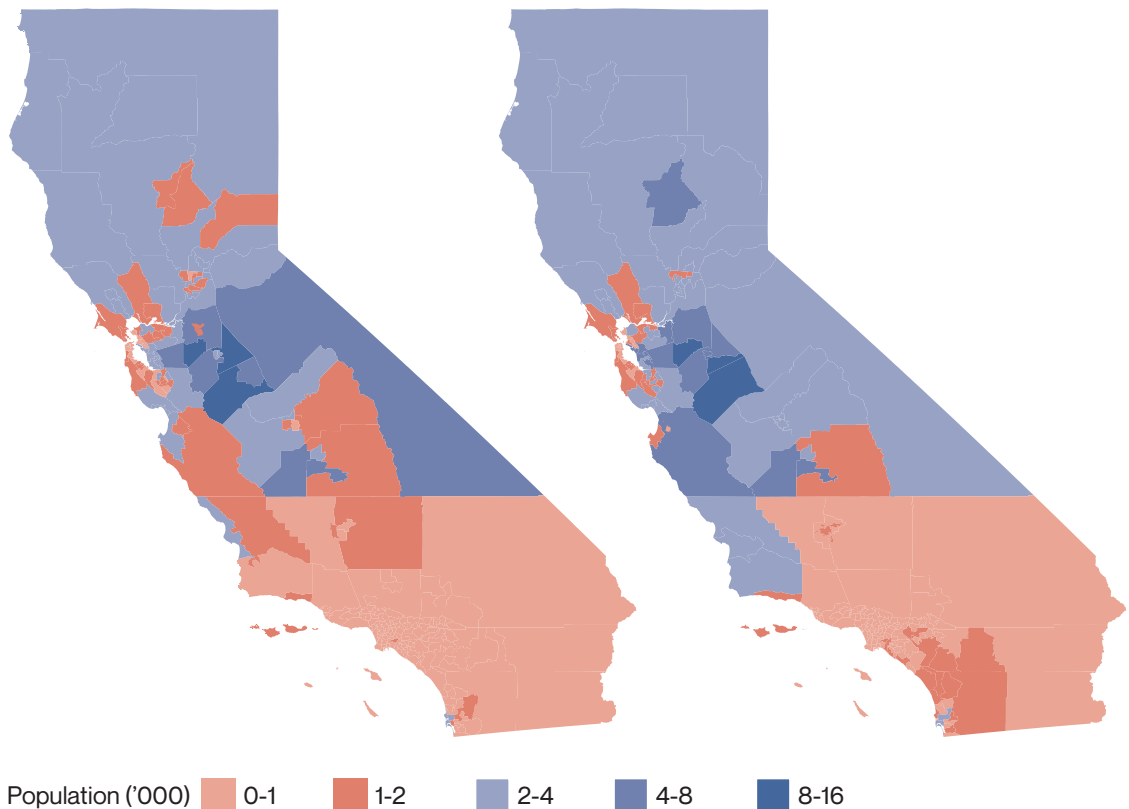
In Connecticut, in 2016–2020, Portuguese immigrants and descendants resided primarily in the *Danbury, Ridgefield, Bethel, Brookfield, New Fairfield, Redding & Sherman Towns* PUMA (4.12 thousand), *Stratford, Shelton, Trumbull, Newtown & Monroe Towns* (3.67 thousand), and *New Haven County (Northwest)* (3.23 thousand). Over the past decade, the most significant change was in the *Danbury, Ridgefield, Bethel, Brookfield, New Fairfield, Redding & Sherman Towns* PUMA, which saw a decline of 1.31 thousand people in the Portuguese immigrants and descendants population. It is also noteworthy that there are several Portuguese-American organizations in Connecticut, such as the Portuguese Cultural Center in Danbury and the Portuguese Club of Hartford; their activities are supported by the many residents of Portuguese origin who live in these locations and who promote Portuguese culture and heritage by providing resources and social and cultural support to the community.

### **California cluster**

The territorial cluster of California is located in the southwestern region of the USA. In 2016–2020, it was the second largest cluster of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA, with 309.9 thousand people. In the total clusters, 86.89% were non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, 4.51% were naturalized immigrants, 6.76% were Portuguese-speaking descendants and 1.73% were Portuguese immigrants (figure 13). During the last decade, this cluster showed a significant decline (-35.93 thousand, 10.38%). Among the groups, the largest decrease was registered by non-Portuguese-speaking descendants (-29.8 thousand), followed by naturalized immigrants (-3.1 thousand), Portuguese-speaking descendants (-1.6 thousand) and Portuguese immigrants (-1.4 thousand). However, in relative terms, the proportion of non-Portuguese speakers and Portuguese speakers increased by 0.21 and 0.43 pp., respectively.

At the PUMA level in California, in 2016–2020, Portuguese immigrants and descendants were mainly concentrated in the central region of the state, namely in *Stanislaus County (Northeast) — Turlock, Riverbank, Oakdale & Waterford Cities* (8.89 thousand), in *Merced County (West & South) — Los Banos & Livingston Cities* (8.4 thousand), in *San Joaquin County (South) — Tracy, Manteca & Lathrop Cities* (8.22 thousand), in *Kings County — Hanford City* (5.91 thousand), in *Alameda County (East) — Livermore, Pleasanton & Dublin Cities* (5.87 thousand), in *Merced County (Northeast) — Merced & Atwater Cities* (5.21 thousand), in *Stanislaus County (Southwest) — Ceres, Patterson & Newman Cities* (4.88 thousand), and in *Tulare County (West Central) — Tulare & Porterville Cities* (4.86 thousand). From 2006–2010 to 2016–2020, the most significant changes were in the PUMA of *Los Banos & Livingston Cities* (-4.92 thousand persons of Portuguese origin), *Tracy, Manteca & Lathrop Cities* (-1.83 thousand), and *Ceres, Patterson & Newman Cities* (-4.71 thousand persons).

Figure 13. Distribution of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the California PUMA (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020

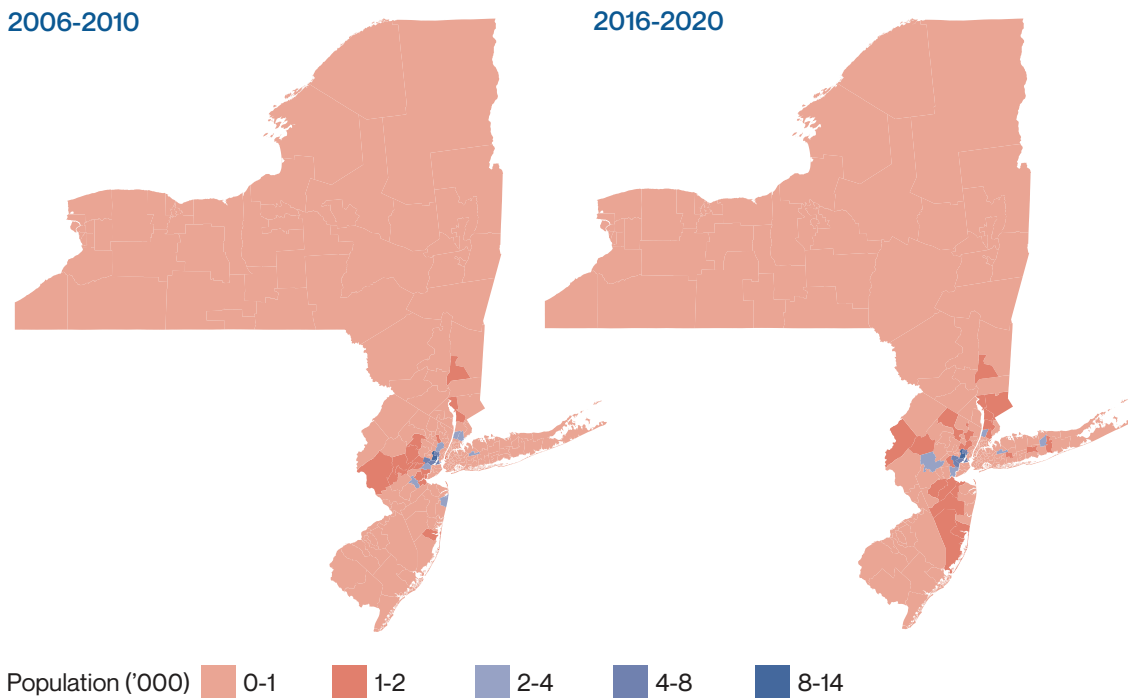


Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

### **New York and New Jersey cluster**

The New York and New Jersey cluster is located in the northeastern region of the USA. In 2016–2020, it was the third largest territorial conglomerate of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA, with 117.7 thousand people. In this conglomerate, 59.58% of the Portuguese people were settled in New Jersey and 40.42% in the state of New York, with a visible concentration in the most urbanized spaces and of higher demographic density located in the southern part (figure 14). Of the total number of Portuguese immigrants and descendants living here, 49.41% were non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, 19.31% were naturalized immigrants, 22.82% were Portuguese-speaking descendants, and 8.46% were Portuguese immigrants. This territorial conglomerate had the lowest proportion of non-Portuguese speakers and the highest proportion of naturalized immigrants and Portuguese immigrants; although this shows a capacity to attract recent migratory waves, it seems to be decreasing. In fact, between the first and last periods, this territorial cluster registered an overall decline in the population with ties to Portugal (-4.49 thousand), with the most significant reduction being in the group of Portuguese immigrants (-9.01 thousand), followed by naturalized immigrants (-2.12 thousand).

Figure 14. Distribution of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the New York and New Jersey PUMA (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

At the PUMA level, in 2016–2020, the main areas of residence for Portuguese immigrants and descendants in New Jersey were *Essex County (Southeast) — Newark City* (8.87 thousand), *Union County (North Central) — Roselle Park Borough* (6.37 thousand), *Union County (Northeast) — Elizabeth City* (4.41 thousand) and *Bayonne, Kearney and Harrison in South & West Hudson County* (4.08 thousand). Over the past decade, the demographic changes in *Newark* (-3.87 thousand people of Portuguese origin), *Roselle Park Borough* (-0.51 thousand), and *Hudson County (South & West) — Bayonne City, Kearney & Harrison Towns* (-1.81 thousand people) stand out.

In New York, the concentrations of Portuguese populations were less significant than in New Jersey, but the following PUMA stand out: *Nassau County (West Central) — North Hempstead Town* (2,31 thousand), *Westchester County (South Central) — New Rochelle & Mount Vernon Cities* (2,07 thousand) and *Westchester County (Southwest) — Yonkers City* (1,53 thousand). Over the study period, there was growth in *North Hempstead* (+1.08 thousand people) but declines in *New Rochelle & Mount Vernon* and *Yonkers* (-423 and -512 people respectively).

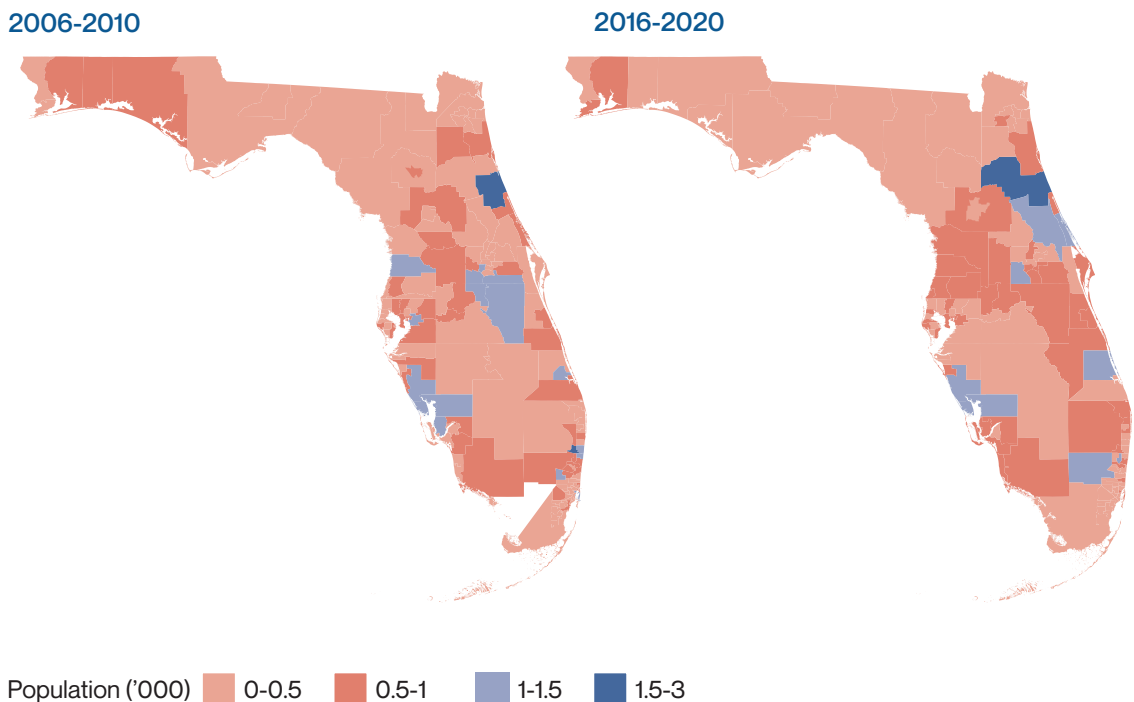
### Florida Cluster

The Florida cluster is located in the southeast region of the USA. In 2016–2020, it was the fourth largest territorial conglomerate of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA, with 78,900 people. Of the total resident groups in this cluster, 66.31% were non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, 24.71% were Portuguese-speaking descendants (the highest percentage among all the clusters under analysis), 6.91% were naturalized immigrants, and 2.07% were Portuguese immigrants. Between the two periods under observation, this is the only territorial cluster that recorded an increase

in immigrants and descendants (+14.82 thousand), which indicates the recent arrival of a significant number of people. Amongst the groups that make up the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties, the greatest growth was observed in Portuguese-speaking descendants (+8.08 thousand), followed by non-Portuguese-speaking descendants (+4.91 thousand). This dynamic confirms the trend towards a greater territorial dispersion of Portuguese descendants in the USA, with a displacement out of the traditional areas of residence, which, as we mentioned before, will involve some older population in the case of Florida.

At the PUMA level, in 2016–2020, the Portuguese presence in Florida was quite dispersed, with no concentration of more than 3000 people in any PUMA region. The most significant number was recorded in the PUMA regions of *Flagler & Volusia (North Central) Counties*, with 2662 Portuguese immigrants and descendants, followed by *Palm Beach County (West of Boca Raton City)*, with 1.91 thousand, *Osceola County (East)*, with 1.3 thousand, *Broward County – Weston, Pembroke Pines (Northwest) Cities & Southwest Ranches Town* also with 1.3 thousand people (figure 15). The remaining PUMA in this cluster had less than 1.3 thousand people. It should be noted that between 2006–2010 and 2016–2020, the most populated PUMA were also those with the largest demographic increases, especially *Flagler & Volusia* with 0.84 thousand more people and the *West of Boca Raton City* with 1.45 thousand more people. This cluster may be facing a trend that will lead to a future strengthening of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants in Florida, as suggested by the comparison of the maps in figure 15.

Figure 15. Distribution of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the Florida PUMA (No.), 2006–2010 and 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.



## Hawaii Cluster<sup>17</sup>

The Hawaii cluster corresponds to an archipelago located in the Pacific that is approximately 3200 kilometers from the continental west coast of the USA. In 2016–2020, it was the fifth largest territorial cluster of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the United States, with 47.05 thousand people. In the total population of Portuguese origin in this cluster, 98.86% were non-Portuguese-speaking descendants. This is the territorial cluster with the highest percentage of non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, which shows that the vast majority of the Portuguese-related population in Hawaii is descended from old migratory waves. These people have moved away culturally and linguistically from their space of ancestry, and currently, there are no Portuguese immigrant arrivals.

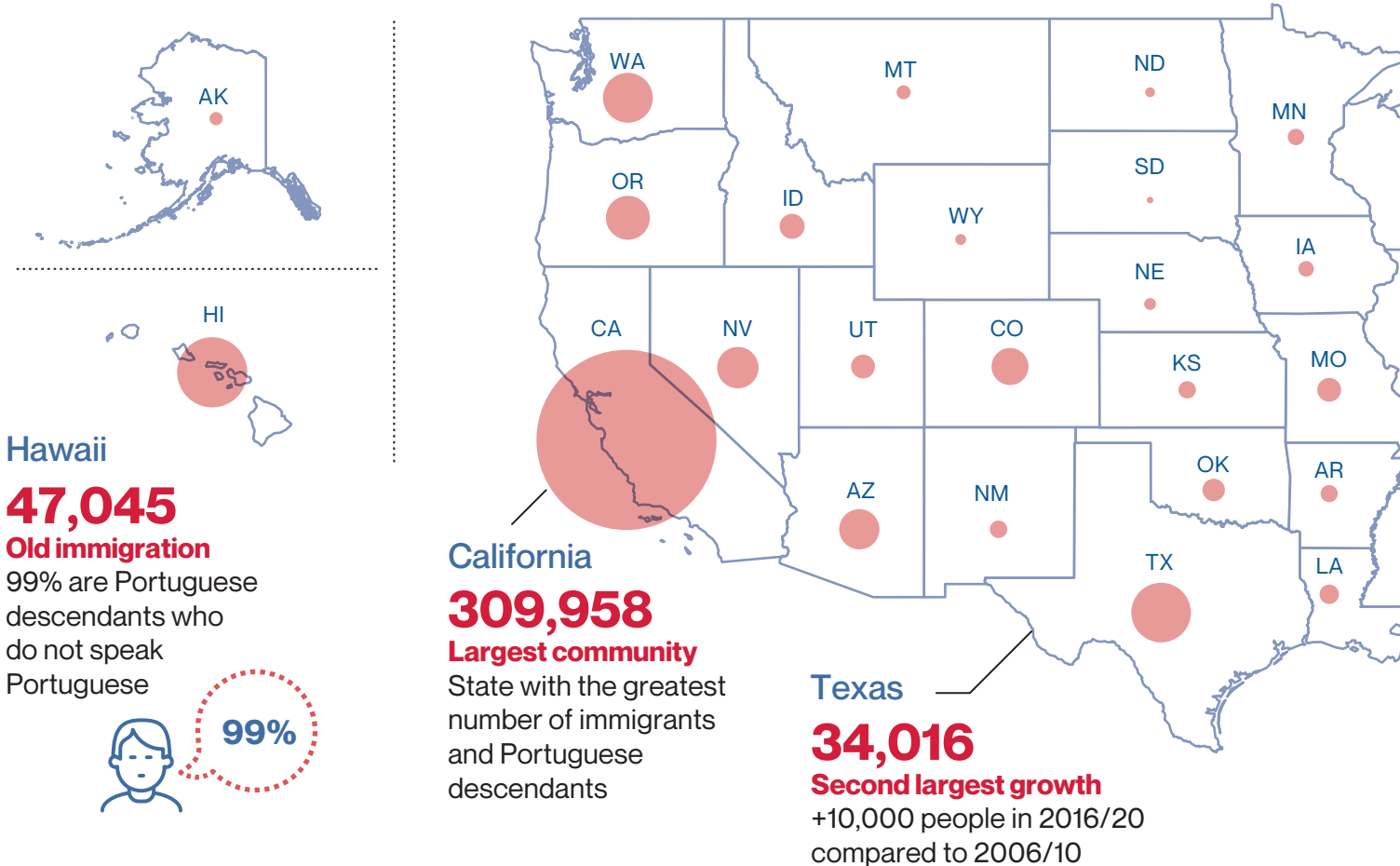
The Portuguese presence in Hawaii is mainly concentrated on the islands of Oahu, Maui and Hawaii. More specifically, the largest Portuguese community in Hawaii is found in the state capital, the city of Honolulu, on the island of Oahu, which has a rich cultural and historical heritage associated with ancient Portuguese immigration. In addition to Honolulu, important communities of Portuguese origin are also found in the cities of Hilo and Kailua-Kona, on the island of Hawaii, and in the city of Kahului, on the island of Maui. These communities are centered around Portuguese-American cultural and social organizations, churches, and festivals, and play an important role in preserving and promoting Portuguese culture and traditions in Hawaii.

As for PUMAs, in 2016–2020, Portuguese immigrants and descendants were most significant in *Hawaii County* (12.32 thousand), *Maui, Kalawao & Kauai Counties* (10.31 thousand), *Rural Oahu* (4.84 thousand), *Koolaupoko* (4.63 thousand) and *Central Oahu* (3.82 thousand); these last three PUMAs are in *Honolulu County*. Over the past decade, there have been widespread losses in groups of Portuguese origin in all these territorial units, but the declines in *Hawaii County* (-2.71 thousand), *Maui, Kalawao & Kauai Counties* (-3.56 thousand), *Rural Oahu* (-0.71 thousand), and *Koolaupoko* (1.23 thousand) are particularly noteworthy.

<sup>17</sup> For technical reasons inherent to the geographical units (PUMA) of Hawaii that prevents a clear reading of the phenomenon under analysis, it was decided not to include the map with the distribution of the Portuguese in this state.

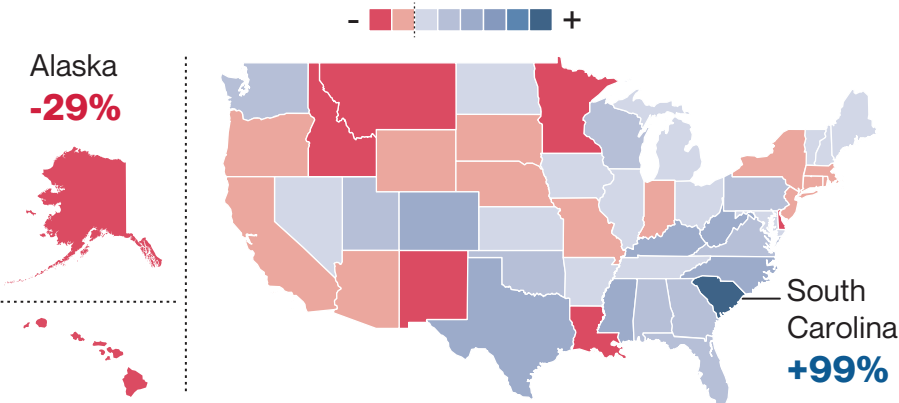
# Where they are

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



## Growth (%)

Between 2006/10 and 2016/20



## DETAILS BY GROUP



### Portuguese immigrants

Population decreased in most states

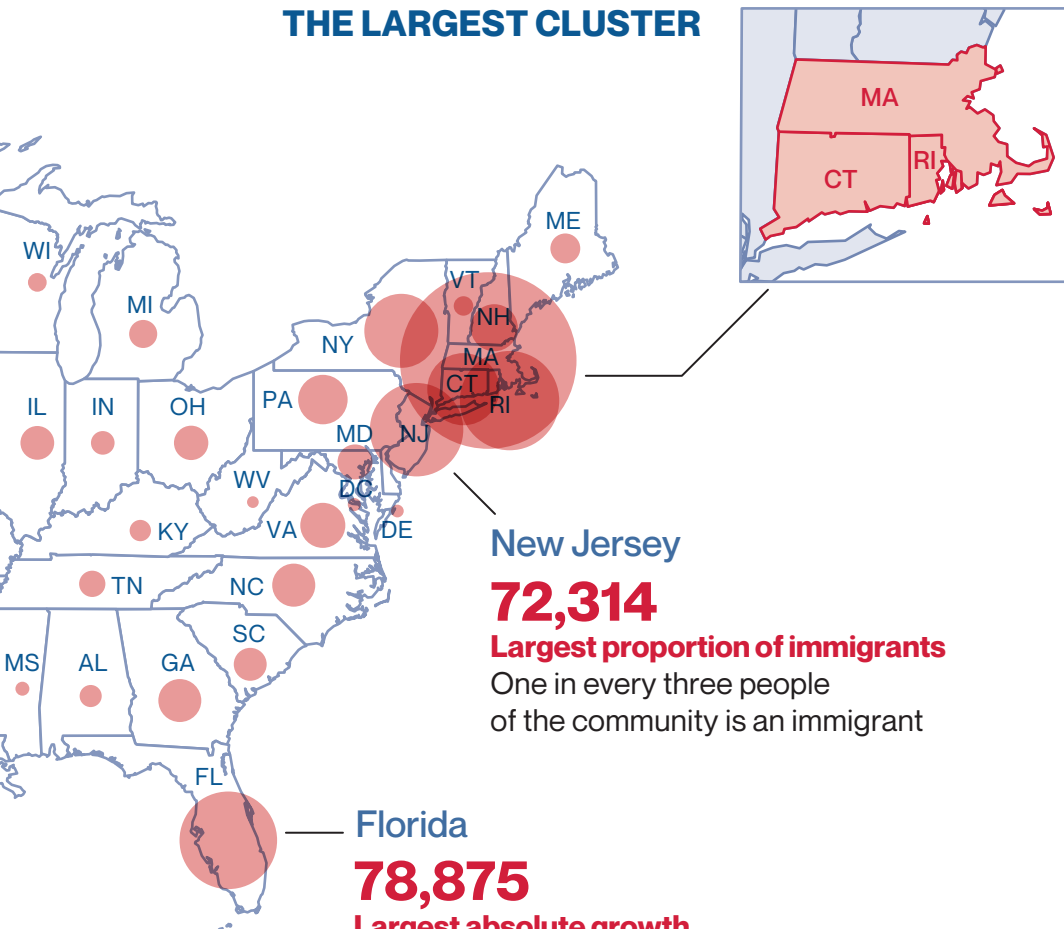
**+1,179**  
 in 16 states

**-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**

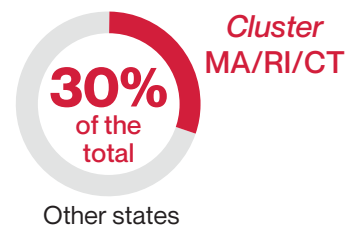
### New Jersey

**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



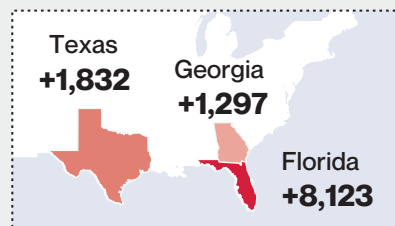
### Naturalized immigrants

**79%** live in four states



### 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).

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## 7. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: who do they live with?

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**Pedro Moura Ferreira**

Although families are the focus of this analysis, most of the information in the ACS is at the household level, and the two concepts do not always overlap: some households are not families, and some others comprise more than one family. The characterization of households and families is based on three variables: the household type, its composition, and its size. The first variable, household type, relates the household head to the other residents in the dwelling, according to whether they are family members or not. Household composition refers to the presence of subfamilies and generations in the household, i.e., to the greater or lesser complexity of the household. Finally, household size is assessed through the number of people registered in the ACS, including the number of children, thereby allowing to ascertain the importance of the parents-children relationships in different family contexts. As very often marriage is the base of household formation, the marital status description comes prior to the characterization of households and families. The section ends with a reference to endogenous and exogenous couples within the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties.

### 7.1. Marital status

The other US residents, who are the reference group for the Portuguese immigrants (naturalized or not) and descendants (Portuguese speakers or not), can be seen as the US population excluding those four population groups. Therefore, for simplification, we often refer to the other US residents as the US population. Table 7 shows that there are almost as many married people as singles in the USA (41.62% vs. 42.50%), these being the main marital status categories. By descending order, these are then followed by the divorced, widowed, and separated. Among married couples, there is a very low presence of absent spouses, below 2%, in both the other US residents and all other population groups considered except for Portuguese immigrants.

The comparison of the distribution of the population by marital status across the five population groups shows clear differences: Portuguese immigrants are quite distinct from the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and the other US residents, while Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have an intermediate position.

Immigrants have a much larger share of married people than the other groups, especially naturalized immigrants (73.46%), which is then reflected on a lower share of single people. This goes in line with the much higher average ages observed for the immigrant groups. Whereas the average age of Portuguese and naturalized immigrants is 52.54 and 61.67 years, respectively, in the other groups average ages are around 40

years old. These older age structures are also noticeable in the share of widows among immigrants, double that of other US residents.

Regarding the share of married, single, and widowed people, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese are closer to Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and the other US residents. Compared to the immigrants, these three groups have lower proportions of married and widowed, and a higher proportion of single people. Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese are more similar to immigrants regarding divorce, and in terms of separated people they are only significantly different from other US residents.

Finally, it is interesting to note that Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese have the highest percentages of divorced and single people of all groups.

Table 7. Marital status of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Married, spouse present	59.26	71.75	45.95	38.99	39.67
Married, no spouse present	2.11	1.71	1.66	1.16	1.95
Separated	1.33	1.39	1.30	1.35	1.60
Divorced	8.60	9.05	8.79	10.20	9.35
Widow/widower	10.66	9.82	3.39	3.93	4.93
Single	18.04	6.28	38.92	44.39	42.50
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note: The following differences are not statistically significant at a 95% confidence level: naturalized immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese married, spouse absent; four groups with Portuguese ties who are separated; Portuguese immigrants, naturalized immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese who are divorced.

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

## 7.2. Family type

The family type in ACS derives from the relationship between the household head and the other household residents. In the Census Bureau classification, households may be based in couples (married or cohabiting) or in one adult only, i.e., with is no spouse or partner living in the household. The latter is broken down into four categories: a) people living alone; b) adult living with children younger than 18; c) adult living with relatives, with no children younger than 18; d) adult living only with non-family members. We analyze each of these family types separately.

### People living in couple-based families

This is the most frequent family type among the other US residents (66.89%), with married couples (59.44%) largely surpassing cohabiting couples (7.44%). For both married and cohabiting couples, families without children under the age of 18 are more common (table 8).

The share of couple-based families is a very different among the immigrants' groups, the Portuguese descendants, and other US residents. Whereas the two immigrant groups show the lowest figures for married couples with children younger than 18, notably the naturalized immigrants (13.43%) — which cannot be detached from their older age structure relatively to the other groups — the Portuguese descendants who speak

Portuguese show the highest share of married couples with children under 18 (39.35%). Conversely, the two immigrants' groups stand out for their share of married couple-based families without children younger than 18, well above the other groups.

Looking at the two categories of married couple-based families together (with and without children under 18) it is possible to appreciate the relevance of marriage in the groups' family structure: the groups showing the highest shares are the two immigrant groups, particularly the naturalized immigrants (74.65%), and the group of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (68.88%). In both these groups the shares married couples-based families are well above those of the other US residents (59.44%).

The greater importance of marriage in the three groups with closer links to Portugal also shows in their lower shares of cohabiting couples, with or without children younger than 18. The low proportions of cohabiting couples with children under 18 among naturalized immigrants (0.43%), Portuguese immigrants (1.32%), and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (2.42%) stand out when compared to the other US residents (3.24%). Less marked, but still considerable, are the differences between immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese living in cohabiting couple-based families without children younger than 18 years old, and the other two groups.

Table 8. People living in couple-based households among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by type of couple, and presence of children under 18 years old (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
<b>Couples (total)</b>	<b>71.98</b>	<b>77.35</b>	<b>74.50</b>	<b>69.38</b>	<b>66.89</b>
<b>Married couples</b>	<b>67.47</b>	<b>74.65</b>	<b>68.88</b>	<b>60.02</b>	<b>59.44</b>
with own children <18 years old	24.39	13.43	39.35	28.34	28.79
no own children <18 years old	43.09	61.22	29.53	31.69	30.65
<b>Cohabiting couples</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>5.62</b>	<b>9.36</b>	<b>7.44</b>
with own children <18 years old	1.32	0.43	2.42	3.14	3.24
no own children <18 years old	3.18	2.27	3.21	6.22	4.21

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

Among both Portuguese and naturalized immigrants, and the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, there are very few cohabiting couples. The share of married couples with children younger than 18 is highest among Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese.

### People living alone

Single-person households are the second most common type of family: little more than one in ten people live alone. This household type is more frequent among women than men (table 9).

Naturalized immigrants stand out from the other groups as the ones with the largest difference between women and men living alone (8.16% vs. 2.95%). Given that at more

advanced ages, women outnumber men, this difference may reflect the older age structure of this group, older than any other.

Naturalized immigrants have the largest difference between men women living alone, which may reflect their higher average age.

Men living alone outnumber women only among Portuguese immigrants (5.70%) and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (4.73%).

Table 9. Single-person households among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by sex (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
<b>People living alone</b>	<b>10.52</b>	<b>11.11</b>	<b>8.92</b>	<b>11.40</b>	<b>11.46</b>
Women	4.82	8.16	4.19	6.13	6.32
Men	5.70	2.95	4.73	5.27	5.14

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### People living in households based on an adult living with children younger than 18

This family type is based on an adult living with at least one child younger than 18. Although other people (relatives or not) may also live in the household, for simplicity we call these families single-parent families. Using the other US residents as a reference group, this is the fourth more frequent family type. If this is not a very common family type among the other US residents (7.83%), it is even less common in the groups with Portuguese ties (table 10). The share of single-parent families varies between 2.24% among the naturalized immigrants, and 7.11% among the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese.

The much higher presence of women relative to men in these circumstances is observed for all groups. Except for naturalized immigrants the percentage of single mothers is four times higher than that of single fathers. For naturalized immigrants the ratio is two women for a man.

There are less single-parent families among immigrants, especially naturalized immigrants, than in other groups.

Table 10. People living in households not couple-based with children under 18 among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by sex (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
<b>Persons without spouse/partner and with children under 18</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>6.56</b>	<b>7.11</b>	<b>7.83</b>
Women	3.23	1.54	5.36	5.71	6.34
Men	0.90	0.70	1.20	1.40	1.49

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### People living in households based on an adult living with relatives and no children younger than 18

Only one in ten other US residents live in households formed by family relationships other than marriage or cohabitation, and without children younger than 18 years old. This means that this is the third more common family typology in the US population. This is also a more common family type among women, though with smaller differences than the ones observed for single-parent families: between two and three women for every man (table 11). Contrary to the other family types, in this case there are only minor differences between groups. There are more Portuguese immigrants living in households based on an adult living with relatives and no children younger than 18 (11.58%) and less Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (7.29%).

Table 11. People living with relatives other than the spouse or partner and without children under 18, among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by sex (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
<b>Persons without spouse/partner living with relatives and without children under 18</b>	<b>11.58</b>	<b>8.30</b>	<b>7.29</b>	<b>9.13</b>	<b>10.38</b>
Women	8.21	5.59	5.19	6.89	7.33
Men	3.37	2.71	2.10	2.23	3.05

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### People living in households based on an adult living with non-family members

This type of household is almost residual, representing just 3.44% of the other US residents (table 12). Its most distinctive feature is the difference between men and women, as unlike in the other three household types, in this case there are more men than women living with other adults who are not their family members.

In terms of the different population groups analyzed, it should be noted that, for both men and women, there are less immigrants living in households based on an adult living with non-family members. This suggests that being born in Portugal does not favor this type of household.



Table 12. People without spouse or partner living only with non-relatives among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by sex (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
<b>Persons without spouse/partner living only with non-relatives</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>3.44</b>
Women	0.30	0.45	0.81	1.38	1.48
Men	1.50	0.55	1.91	1.60	1.96

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### People living in households with subfamilies

Whereas the family typology, being based exclusively on the household head, says nothing about the presence of subfamilies in a household, these can be identified using another ACS variable. In the ACS, subfamilies are defined as families living in someone else's house and consist in either married-couples subfamilies or parent-child subfamilies.

In most households there are no subfamilies (table 13). There is one subfamily in every ten households among the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, the other US residents and the Portuguese immigrants. Among the other two groups, the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese and the naturalized immigrants, there is less than one subfamily in every ten households. Households with two subfamilies are residual in all groups.

Table 13. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by the number of subfamilies in the household (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
No subfamilies	89.63	92.15	91.88	88.98	89.02
1 subfamily	10.04	7.80	7.97	10.60	10.50
2 subfamilies	0.28	0.05	0.16	0.41	0.46
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### People living in households with one or more generations

It is important to know how frequent multigenerational households are and what are the relationship between them. Generations may be adjacent, if there is no generation gap between them, as in the case of parents and children; or non-adjacent, if there is a generation gap between them, like grandparents and grandchildren living together in the absence of the parents.

Two-generational households are the most common (table 14). Only naturalized immigrants escape this pattern, with more than one-half living in one-generation households. That is the case for less than 40% of the people in the other groups. The Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, who show the lowest share of people living in one-generation households (29.79%), are the group where living in

two-generations households is more common, more than in any other group (63.39%, at least 10 pp. more than for other groups).

Among the households with two generations living together, it is possible to distinguish between: a) households composed of an older and a younger generation (never-married individuals younger than 18); and b) households where two generations of adults older than 18 live together. Two adjacent adult generations are more common among the immigrants' households, while in the other groups, households with adult/child generations are more frequent. This result suggests that there is fewer young people and children in immigrant households, in particular in naturalized immigrants' households, which is consistent with their higher average ages.

### Two-generational households are more common among the Portuguese descendants, where the adults are younger.

Less than one in every ten people live in households composed of three or more generations. The highest figure is observed for Portuguese immigrants (10.01%) and the lowest for Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (6.82%). Finally, non-adjacent generations are residual in all groups, ranging from 0.63% among Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese and 1.34% among the other US residents.

Table 14. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by the number of generations in the household and link between generations (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
1 generation	40.43	52.45	29.79	39.09	38.19
2 generations	49.56	40.05	63.39	53.39	53.39
2 adjacent generations, adult-children	21.66	10.88	38.90	30.23	29.89
2 adjacent generations, adult-adult	27.11	28.37	23.86	22.07	22.16
2 nonadjacent generations	0.79	0.80	0.63	1.10	1.34
3+ generations	10.01	7.50	6.82	7.52	8.41
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

### 7.3. Household size

The average household size among the other US residents/US population is 3.30 individuals (table 15). The family size of the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is the one that comes closer to this number. As more than half of naturalized immigrants live in households with at most two people, they have the smallest average household size (2.72).

In contrast, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese live more often in households of three or four individuals, especially four, and have the lowest proportion of people living alone.

## Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese share with the other US residents the highest averages in household size, 3.29 and 3.30, respectively.

Although among the non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and the US other residents, one-person households is more frequent than in other groups, this is somehow compensated by the share of people living in large households.

Table 15. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by the number of persons in the household (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
1 Person	10.52	11.11	8.92	11.40	11.46
2 Persons	32.45	43.96	22.07	30.27	28.57
3 Persons	23.42	21.41	23.47	20.32	18.87
4 Persons	18.33	14.09	28.30	20.71	19.72
5 Persons	10.40	5.74	12.56	10.64	11.51
6 Persons	3.48	2.43	3.51	4.14	5.40
7 or + Persons	1.41	1.25	1.16	2.53	4.47
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>3.30</b>

Note: The following differences are not statistically significant at a 95% confidence level: Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese living in 6-person households; Portuguese immigrants and naturalized in households of 7 or + persons.

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

### 7.4. Number of children

The information on household type in the ACS allows us only to identify the presence of children younger than 18, but not their number. However, it is important to analyze the number of children to better assess parents-children relations.

The number of children living with at least one of their parents, regardless of the children's age and their parents' marital status, allows us to go beyond the scope of the never married and aged under 18 years children, and assess parents-children family relations.

More than half of the individuals, in all groups, does not live with children, that share being particularly high for the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and other US residents (table 16). Among immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, the share not living with children is at least 10 pp. lower than among the other US residents and the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese as in former living with one or two children is more frequent.

Not surprisingly, in all groups the percentage of those who do live with children declines as the number of children they live with increases. The percentage of people living with four or more children is very low, always below 2%, in all groups.

## Immigrants and Portuguese descendants are more likely to live with children than Portuguese who do not speak Portuguese or than other US residents.

The average number of children is below 1 in all groups, being higher among Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (0.7), followed by the naturalized immigrants (0.6), the other US residents (0.56), and the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (0.5) for whom the lowest average number of children in the household is observed. Altogether, these results suggest that the groups with closer Portuguese ties are more “family-oriented”.

Table 16. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US resident by the number of children living in the household (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
0 Child present	54.17	59.13	60.35	71.11	69.34
1 Child present	26.52	25.59	16.79	13.96	14.27
2 Children present	14.93	12.24	16.72	10.27	10.38
3 Children present	3.59	2.55	4.79	3.41	4.16
4 Children present	0.80	0.49	1.34	1.26	1.85
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.56</b>

Note: The differences between Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese living with 3 children are not statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

### 7.5. Endogenous and exogenous marriages

The concepts of endogenous and exogenous marriages used here are defined according to the use of the Portuguese language. The number of couples where both spouses speak Portuguese and that of the couples where only one spouse speaks Portuguese are very different across groups. Among the immigrant groups, marrying people who speak Portuguese is very frequent (table 17). Yet, more than one-fifth of marriages are exogenous, that is, with someone who does not speak Portuguese. This share goes up to three in five marriages for the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, which means that the numbers of endogenous and exogenous marriages are not so different as for the immigrants.

While slightly more than one-fifth of the immigrants and more than half of the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese marry someone who does not speak Portuguese their mixed marriages are residual when looking at their weight in the whole US population.

Although almost one-third of marriages are between Portuguese and non-Portuguese-speakers, their weight in the other US residents is residual. These results suggest that the weaker the ties to Portugal, the higher is the share of mixed marriages.

More than one in five marriages in the immigrants' groups is to someone who does not speak Portuguese. Among the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, that ratio goes up to three in five.

Table 17. Endogenous and mixed marriages among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Portuguese immigrant spouse or Portuguese descendant spouse who speaks Portuguese	78.12	77.43	40.20	1.05	0.05
Portuguese descendant spouse who does not speak Portuguese or another US resident spouse	21.88	22.57	59.80	98.95	99.95
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

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## 8. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: what are their housing conditions?

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**Alda Botelho Azevedo and Nachatter Singh Garha**

Both housing, which is meant to offer security, comfort and privacy, and the physical and social environment in which it is located play a central role in people's living conditions, opportunities and well-being (Azevedo 2016; Azevedo 2020). However, access to adequate housing is determined by household income and assets. Thus, housing costs exerts uneven pressure on households, with most economically vulnerable the most affected (Council of Europe Development Bank 2017).

The housing conditions of Portuguese immigrants and descendants are analyzed using the other US residents as a reference group. The analysis begins by looking at the residential context based on four variables of the ACS: metropolitan status, type of dwelling (private or institutional), and duration of residence in the dwelling. This is followed by an analysis of the main characteristics of the housing stock. Finally, we present housing costs by housing tenure status (homeowners and tenants).

### 8.1. Residential context

#### **Metropolitan Status**

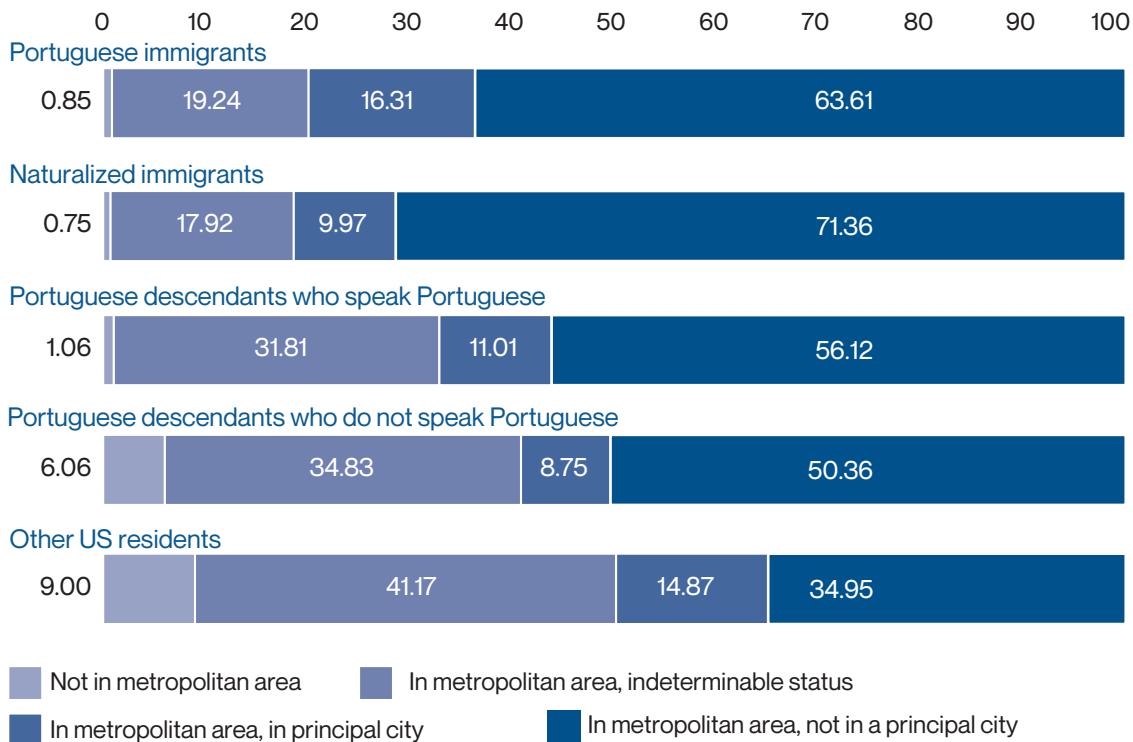
In 2016–2020, most of the US population resided in metropolitan areas (figure 16).<sup>18</sup> However, this percentage hides heterogeneity across population groups. The percentage living in metropolitan areas is highest among naturalized immigrants, followed by Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, and lowest among Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and the other US residents. Whereas living in a metropolitan area outside a major city<sup>19</sup> is noticeably common for naturalized and Portuguese immigrants (71.36% and 63.31%, respectively), it is less so for Portuguese descendants, among who only about half live in this context, and even less for other US residents with one-third living in a metropolitan area outside a major city. It should be noted, however, that a large share of other US residents lives in a metropolitan area for which there is no additional information on their status (41.17%). Lastly, 16.31% of the Portuguese immigrants and 14.87% of the other US residents live in a principal city of a metropolitan area.

Therefore, only a population minority lives in a non-metropolitan context. This is more common among the other US residents (9%), followed by the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (6.06%). The percentages for the other three groups living in a non-metropolitan area are residual (less than or equal to 1%).

<sup>18</sup> A metropolitan area is a region consisting of a large urban center and surrounding communities with strong economic and social integration with the urban center.

<sup>19</sup> The metropolitan areas and major cities defined for the period 2016–2020 are based on the 2013 definitions of the US Office of Management and Budget.

Figure 16. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by metropolitan status of the area of residence (%), 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

### Duration of residence in the dwelling

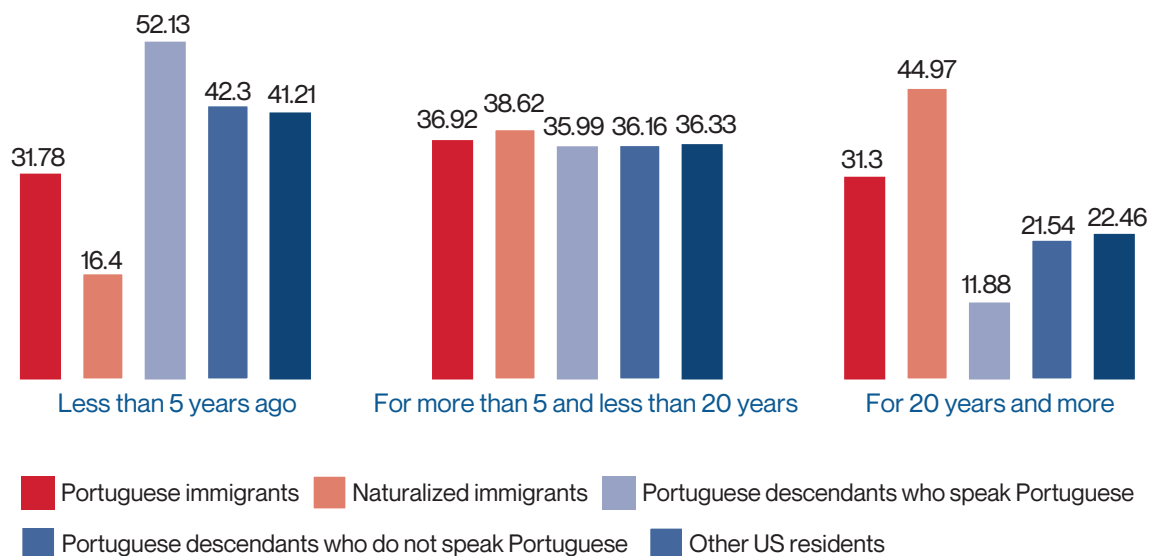
The ACS provides information on the number of years the household head has been living in the dwelling. Although this information is not available for all residents, it can be taken as a proxy to the time of the household in the dwelling and, thus to the residential mobility. Figure 17 shows marked differences across the groups in the first (less than 5 years) and last (more than 20 years) categories.

The most striking difference refers to the residential immobility of the immigrant groups vis-à-vis the other groups. Both Portuguese and naturalized migrants have a much larger presence in the more-than-20-years category (44.97% of the naturalized immigrants and 31.3% among the Portuguese immigrants). The opposite is observed for Portuguese descendants and other US residents: more than half of the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese and more than two in every five Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and other US residents live in a dwelling that has been occupied by the household head for at most five years. For the Portuguese and naturalized immigrants' groups that percentage is only 31.78% and 16.4%, respectively. The Portuguese immigrants are the ones showing a more balanced distribution of years of the household head in the dwelling: approximately one third of the cases in each time length.

All in all, three groups stand out for having a different pattern regarding the household heads' time of residence in the dwelling. On the one hand, the two Portuguese descendants' groups have the highest concentrations of cases in the category of less than five years, and a low presence in the category of more than 20 years. On the other hand, the naturalized immigrants have a small percentage of household living in the dwelling for less than five years and the highest share in the

category of more than 20 years. These results may be due, at least in part, to the different age structure of the groups, younger for the Portuguese descendants and older for the naturalized migrants.

Figure 17. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by years of residence of household head in the dwelling (%), 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

### Annual family income

Section 9 analyzes in detail the income of working Portuguese immigrants, descendants and other residents in the USA. However, given the strong relationship between income and housing conditions, it is worth to briefly look at the average annual family income in this section as well. Three population groups have average household incomes of over USD 100,000/year (table 18): in descending order, the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (USD 121,193), the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (USD 118,718) and the other US residents (USD 103,674). Portuguese immigrants and naturalized immigrants have the lowest incomes: USD 92,969 and USD 99,253, respectively. The average income of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is 30.36% higher than that of Portuguese immigrants.

Table 18. Average household incomes of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (in USD), 2016–2020

	Média
Portuguese immigrants	92,969
Naturalized immigrants	99,253
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	121,193
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	118,718
Other US residents	103,674

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations



Taking the average annual household income of other US residents as the reference group, Portuguese descendants have higher incomes and immigrants have lower incomes.

### Type of dwelling

While most people in the USA live in private households, some live in group living quarters or institutional housing. Group living quarters are more common among the other US residents (2.63%) and less among naturalized immigrants (0.77%) (table 19). Considering the specific features of group living quarters, and the limited information available about them, the characterization of the housing conditions focuses exclusively on residents in private households (97.37% of the universe).

Table 19. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by housing type (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Private households	98.43	99.23	98.36	98.11	97.37
Group living quarters	1.57	0.77	1.64	1.89	2.63
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note: the differences between the proportions of Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants are not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

## 8.2. Characteristics of the housing stock

Although the state of repair of the buildings is not captured by the construction period — because interventions in the buildings or the dwellings are not considered — it is clear that the immigrants live in an older segment of the housing stock (table 20). While immigrants live mostly in pre-1969 buildings, most Portuguese descendants live in post-1969 buildings, a pattern more similar to that of the other US residents. It is important to note that, on the one hand, these refer to national level figures, and therefore do not consider regional and metropolitan differences, and that, on the other hand, the average age of the buildings in the housing stock is closely related to the urbanization phases of the territory.

Table 20. Portuguese immigrants and descendants and other US residents by construction period of the buildings where they live (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Before 1939	25.47	22.12	16.15	14.06	11.66
1940-69	33.97	30.79	26.05	26.32	25.35
1970-99	31.88	34.62	37.45	41.30	41.82
2000 or later	8.68	12.46	20.35	18.32	21.17
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

The buildings where most immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, live are older than the ones where Portuguese descendants and the other US residents live.

Regarding the type of buildings where the households live, we observe that single-family dwellings are very common (table 21), which is explained by the characteristics of the US housing stock, namely the fact that it is mostly horizontal. This is particularly the case for three groups: Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, other US residents, and naturalized immigrants. Although these figures are much lower among Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese and Portuguese immigrants, single-family dwellings is nonetheless the most frequent dwelling type. The second most frequent building type is small buildings, for 2 to 4 families, which are more common among Portuguese and naturalized immigrants than among the other groups. Finally, living in large buildings, for more than 20 families, is more common among Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, Portuguese immigrants, and the other US residents than among the other two groups.

In all groups, singlefamily dwellings, followed by small buildings, are the most common building types where Portuguese immigrants and descendants live.

Table 21. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by type of buildings in which they live (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Mobile or equivalent	1.79	1.16	0.71	3.02	5.51
Single-family dwellings	54.53	72.22	65.55	76.43	73.97
2-4 families	29.92	20.91	16.00	9.19	6.85
5-19 families	6.40	3.56	8.60	6.18	7.13
20+ families	7.35	2.15	9.14	5.18	6.54
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

When looking at the number of rooms per dwelling, there is an interesting difference despite the small difference between the maximum and minimum averages (0.27 rooms): Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and other US residents have more space (table 22). They are followed, in descending order, by naturalized immigrants, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese and Portuguese immigrants.

Table 22. Average number of rooms in the dwellings where Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents live, 2016–2020

	Average number of rooms
Portuguese immigrants	2.75
Naturalized immigrants	2.97
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	2.94
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	3.02
Other US residents	3.01

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

Combining the number of rooms in a dwelling with the size and composition of the family, it is possible to offer a measure for adequate occupancy of the dwelling, under-occupation and overcrowding. Using the ACS data, adequate occupancy has been defined as living quarters with one living room, one bedroom per couple, one bedroom for children under 18, and one bedroom for each other resident in the dwelling. Under-occupied dwellings have more bedrooms, and overcrowded dwellings have fewer bedrooms than would be required.

The results show that less than one-third of the families live in dwellings with an adequate number of rooms, according to the definition used (table 23). Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have the higher shares of dwellings with the adequate number of rooms, followed by the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, the other US residents, and the naturalized immigrants.

The share of people living in under-occupied dwellings is highest among naturalized migrants (72.38%). Only slightly over half the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, Portuguese immigrants, and the other US residents, live in under-occupied dwellings. Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have the lowest share of people in under-occupation, but even this share is high (45.15%).

The highest share people living in overcrowding dwellings is observed for the other US residents (27.51%). They are followed by the Portuguese descendants, Portuguese-speaking or not, and the Portuguese immigrants. The lowest share is found among the naturalized immigrants (9.47%).

Table 23. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by occupancy dwelling status (%), 2016–2020

	Adequate occupancy	Underoccupied	Overcrowded
Portuguese immigrants	29.63	52.08	18.30
Naturalized immigrants	18.15	72.38	9.47
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	29.55	45.15	25.30
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	24.41	52.71	22.87
Other US residents	22.19	50.29	27.51

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

The housing tenure status sets the naturalized immigrants apart from the other groups. Although homeownership is the most frequent housing tenure, namely ownership with a mortgage or loan (table 24), naturalized immigrants have particularly high rates of homeownership (83.23%) and with an almost even distribution between with and without mortgage. The differences between the outright homeowners and homeowners with mortgage are much more pronounced in all other groups.

Homeownership rates are lower among Portuguese immigrants (58.05%), in which tenancy is the highest of all groups (41.95%).

It is also worth noting the low percentage of tenants with no cash rent, a category that includes rent as a salary or in exchange for agricultural products (among other equivalent situations). Even though it is rare, it is higher among immigrants, especially Portuguese immigrants (2.4%).

These results suggest a specific profile of the Portuguese immigrants. Rather than indicating different housing tenure preferences, these results probably reflect the additional constraints faced by immigrants in access to housing, given their lower accumulated wealth and greater difficulty in the access to mortgages. This interpretation is supported by result according to which Portuguese and naturalized immigrants have a lower average family income.

Table 24. Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents by housing tenure status of dwelling in which they live (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Property without mortgage	21.26	41.33	15.97	17.54	21.74
Property with mortgage	36.79	41.90	45.92	51.90	45.03
Tenant, no cash rent income	2.40	1.62	1.20	1.40	1.52
Tenant, with cash rent	39.55	15.15	36.90	29.17	31.71

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

Still regarding housing mortgages, it is worth to point out that although most homeowners have only one mortgage on their dwelling, a non-negligible share have two. The shares of homeowners with two mortgages are higher among Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and among naturalized immigrants, and the lowest among Portuguese immigrants (table 25).

Table 25. Mortgages among immigrant owners, Portuguese descendants and other US residents (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
1 mortgage	91.36	83.70	87.06	83.59	86.69
2 mortgages	8.64	16.30	12.94	16.41	13.31
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

The ACS also asks about the value of the dwelling if it were to be put up for sale – naturally it is a subjective value based on a hypothetical scenario. Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese homeowners value their dwellings the highest (USD 445,901), followed by the Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (USD 436,713). The remaining groups value their dwellings below USD 400,000. Naturalized immigrants value their houses in USD 392,235, on average, Portuguese immigrants in USD 375,296, and the other US residents in USD 336,496. The position of Portuguese immigrants in this ranking stands out, suggesting that once the eventual

obstacles in access to homeownership are overcome (and perhaps because of that), they tend to value their houses higher than the other US residents, on average.

### 8.3. Housing costs

#### Owners

Given the large share of homeowners with mortgage, it is worth looking at the average cost of the mortgage(s). Regarding the first mortgage, the Portuguese descendants who speak and who do not speak Portuguese, are the two groups paying the highest average amount (table 26). As already mentioned, these are also the groups with the highest average annual household income. In descending order, next come the two immigrants' groups, followed by the other US residents, who pay the lowest average amount for the first mortgage. In the cases where there is a second mortgage over the dwelling, the amount is more or less one-third of the value of the first mortgage.

In addition to mortgages, loans, or equivalent debts on the property, the monthly costs of homeowners include taxes, insurance, utilities, and fuel. Where applicable, condominium costs or fixed costs of mobile homes are also included in these costs. On average, the Portuguese descendants have the highest costs, followed by the Portuguese immigrants. Other US residents and naturalized immigrants have the lowest monthly costs averages, with similar amounts.

Table 26. Average housing costs of owner-occupied dwellings where Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents live (in USD), 2016–2020

	Average amount of 1 <sup>st</sup> mortgage	Average amount of 2 <sup>nd</sup> mortgage	Average monthly costs
Portuguese immigrants	1653	451	1708
Naturalized immigrants	1599	485	1536
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	1936	462	2103
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	1736	491	1917
Other US residents	1491	469	1565

Note: the differences between the average amounts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> mortgage are not statistically significant, with a confidence level of 95%.  
Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations

#### Tenants

In the ACS, tenants' housing costs are measured in the average amount of cash rent and in the gross monthly rent (which includes utility and fuel costs plus rent). The average amount of tenants' cash rent exceeds USD 1000 in all groups. Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have the highest average rent, and naturalized immigrants the lowest (table 27). On average, people in the former group pay 47.14% more for their rent than people in the latter group.

The gross monthly renting cost is, to some extent, comparable to the monthly costs of owners. Therefore, it is not surprising that the descending order of tenants' costs is the same we have seen for homeowners. Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have the highest average costs, followed by those who do not speak Portuguese, Portuguese immigrants, other US residents, and finally, the naturalized immigrants.

Table 27. Average housing costs of rented-occupied dwellings where Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents live (in USD), 2016–2020

	Average rents	Average gross monthly costs
Portuguese immigrants	1184	1358
Naturalized immigrants	1014	1194
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	1492	1675
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	1300	1489
Other US residents	1143	1330

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations

Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have the highest housing costs, followed by those who do not speak Portuguese, the Portuguese immigrants, the other US residents, and finally, the naturalized immigrants.

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# 9. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: what is their income and what do they work in?

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**Lara Patrício Tavares**

In a market economy, income determines access to goods and services and, therefore, people's well-being. In a context like the USA, where inequality is high — in 2021, almost one-fifth of all wealth was concentrated in the top 1% of the population, while the poorest half owned 14% (World Inequality Database) — it is particularly relevant to study the labor market situation of Portuguese immigrants and their descendants, both in terms of their income and economic activity. Given that for the vast majority of people income comes mainly from work (Piketty 2017), we will analyze the income of those who work.

As the working-age population is composed of individuals aged 15 or over, those making up the employed population (a subset of the working-age population) are expected to be at least 15 years old. Therefore, and considering data availability in the ACS<sup>20</sup>, this section focuses on a specific subset of the population of Portuguese immigrants and descendants: individuals aged 16 and over who reported having worked for wages or salary in the year prior to the survey. This subset represents 50% of the US population in 2016–2020. For simplicity, we will refer to this subset of individuals as working individuals.

Unlike the rest of this study, the income analysis does not focus on the entire population. Therefore, it is important to begin by characterizing the subset of individuals whose income will be analyzed, as their characteristics may differ from those of the entire population. For example, they are likely to have higher levels of education than individuals who do not participate in the labor market and therefore, do not belong to this specific subset.

After characterizing Portuguese immigrants and descendants who work and how they differ from the total population studied, we proceed to the analysis of their income, how many hours they work and in which economic activities, as well as their occupational status.

## 9.1. Who are the working Portuguese immigrants and descendants?

The distribution of the 162,922,133 working individuals<sup>21</sup> among the different groups of the US population (table 28) is almost identical to that of the overall population in 2016–2020 (see table 1, section 4). The only differences observed are in the proportion of naturalized immigrants, which is slightly lower, and in the proportion of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, which is slightly higher (table 28, second column).

<sup>20</sup> In the ACS, only individuals aged 16 and over are asked the question on employment status. The selection of individuals who have worked for wages or salary in the year prior to the survey results from the fact that the employment situation is only known for the week before the survey and that the information on labor income relates only to work for wages. This does not exclude the possibility of these individuals having other income sources, notably from self-employment.

<sup>21</sup> This corresponds to 50% of the population.

This is in turn reflected in the lower and higher percentages of working individuals in the total population of each group, respectively (table 28, fourth column). These differences stem from the different age structures of the two groups. From the results obtained in section ‘who are they?’ (section 5), we know that, while the mean age of naturalized immigrants in the overall US population is higher than that of the others (see table 2) — indicating that many have already left the labor force, the group of the descendants is younger. For all groups of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, the percentages of working women are lower than the percentages of all women, especially for the group of Portuguese immigrants (34.60% vs. 46.94% of the total population)<sup>22</sup>, suggesting a lower female labor market participation rate.

Table 28. Individuals with labor income in the USA: Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (No. and %), 2016–2020

	No.	%	% of all immigrants and Portuguese descendants	% of their respective group of the total population
Portuguese immigrants	19,742	0.01	2.79	52.11
Naturalized immigrants	45,864	0.03	6.47	46.42
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	89,611	0.06	12.64	60.01
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	553,456	0.34	78.10	52.41
<b>Subtotal immigrants and Portuguese descendants</b>	<b>708,673</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>52.81</b>
Other US residents	162,213,460	99.57		49.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>162,922,133</b>	<b>100.00</b>		<b>49.89</b>

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors’ calculations

Table 29 shows that, for all groups, the proportion of individuals with tertiary education among the individuals with labor income<sup>23</sup> is about 5 pp. higher than that observed for the same groups in the US population (table 29 Cf. table 4). In qualitative terms, the results are similar, that is, the group of Portuguese descendants has the highest percentage of individuals with higher education (45.28%) — about 10 pp. more than the other US residents; the Portuguese and naturalized immigrants have the lowest percentages of individuals with higher education, the lowest being that of naturalized immigrants (15.61%). The only difference with respect to the results for the total US population is the improvement in the position of immigrants vis-à-vis that of the other groups — for example, while the percentage of naturalized immigrants with higher education in the total population was about a quarter of that observed for Portuguese-speaking descendants, in this sample it is one-third. In other words, there is an overrepresentation of immigrants with higher education among the subset of working individuals, suggesting that they are more likely to participate in the labor market.

Table 29. Individuals with higher education (BSc+) among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have labor income (%), 2016–2020

	%
Portuguese immigrants	17.36
Naturalized immigrants	15.61
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	45.28
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	36.70
Other US residents	35.59

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors’ calculations

<sup>22</sup> Of which 51.04%, 47.91%, 49.85% and 47.86% are for naturalized immigrants, Portuguese-speaking descendants, non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, and other US residents, respectively.

<sup>23</sup> In this case, only the population older than 17 is considered as individuals with a BSc or higher levels of education are 18 years old and over.



The employment status variable shows that 94% of the subset of individuals with labor income in the previous year were part of the labor force (more than 90% were employed, and the rest unemployed) in the week prior to the survey. In other words, 6% of those who had earned income in the past year were not in the labor force in the week prior to the survey.<sup>24</sup>

Analyzing employment status (in the week prior to the survey) by groups, we observe that the percentage of non-Portuguese-speaking descendants who were employed is lower than that of the other groups (table 30). Conversely, the highest percentage of employed individuals is found in the group of immigrants, reflecting lower percentages of unemployed immigrants and immigrants who were not in the labor force in the previous week.<sup>25</sup>

Table 30. Employment status among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have labor income (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Employed	95.25	94.86	93.00	90.29	90.98
Unemployed	1.57	1.47	3.01	3.67	3.03
Not in the workforce	3.18	3.67	3.99	6.04	5.99
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note: The following differences are not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level: in the employed and unemployed, between Portuguese immigrants and naturalized immigrants; in those not in the labor force, between non-Portuguese speakers and other US residents.

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations

As expected, the distinction of workers between wage earners and self-employed shows that the vast majority of individuals worked for wages (96%) and only 4% were self-employed.<sup>26</sup> The interpretation of these results must take into account that the distinction between someone who works for wages and a self-employed does not refer to the previous year but to the last week, or alternatively to the last five years.<sup>27</sup> Thus, a worker who had worked for wages in the previous year could also have been self-employed more recently.

Although there are only a few self-employed workers in the subset analyzed — that of individuals who had labor income in the previous year — the results reflect what is observed for the total US population.<sup>28</sup> Table 31 shows that the share of self-employed among Portuguese-speaking descendants (6.3%) is higher than among other US residents (4.44%) or among non-Portuguese-speaking descendants (4.13%). The group of naturalized immigrants has the second highest proportion of self-employed workers (5.55%). There are no statistically significant differences between Portuguese immigrants, non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, and other residents.

Among wage earners, who represent the vast majority in all groups, relevant differences are also observed (table 31). While the percentage of individuals who work for wages in the private sector is higher for immigrants (Portuguese and naturalized) and Portuguese-speaking descendants than for other US residents (75.05%), the opposite is observed for non-Portuguese-speaking descendants (72.79 %). These differences are reflected in the lower percentages of the first three groups in federal, state, and local government jobs. The percentage of Portuguese immigrants employed in local

<sup>24</sup> This week could have been any week over the 2016–2020 five-year period.

<sup>25</sup> The fact that there are 3% unemployed among other US residents, for example, does not necessarily mean that the unemployment rate of the population is 3%, since we are looking at individuals who only had labor income in the last year. When we examine the employment status of the whole population (for which there is such information), the percentages of unemployed (in the last week) of the various groups are quite similar (1.97%, 1.11%, 4.17%, 3.75% and 3.39% respectively); however, as might be expected, the percentages of those not in the labor force are much higher (26.55%, 32.95% and 36.79% respectively).

<sup>26</sup> Once again, it is worth pointing out that the subset under analysis is composed of individuals who earned some labor income in the last year.

<sup>27</sup> The question is: "Which one of the following best describes this person's employment last week or the most recent employment in the past 5 years?"

<sup>28</sup> When we analyze the whole population for which there is information on being self-employed or employed (192,163,556 observations), the percentages of self-

government is much lower than that of naturalized immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants. The percentage of Portuguese-speaking descendants employed in state government is almost the same as that of other US residents, with non-Portuguese-speaking descendants having a slightly higher (but statistically significant) percentage than those other two groups. In the case of local government employment, the percentage of Portuguese-speaking descendants' employees is lower than that of non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and other US residents, and the difference between these two groups is also statistically significant in favor of non-Portuguese speakers.<sup>29</sup>

Table 31. Type of worker among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have labor income (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
Self-employed	4.45	5.55	6.30	4.13	4.44
Works for wages/salary	95.55	94.45	93.70	95.87	95.56
<b>Among those working for wages</b>					
Wage/salary, private sector	83.82	79.25	78.10	72.79	75.05
Wage/salary, non-profit	9.22	9.14	8.48	9.46	8.96
Federal Government employee	1.20	1.54	2.06	3.34	3.38
State government employee	2.30	3.62	4.63	5.05	4.78
Local government employee	3.36	6.19	6.41	9.07	7.58
Unpaid family worker	0.10	0.25	0.31	0.29	0.26
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note: The following differences are not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level: for the self-employed and wage earners, Portuguese immigrants vs. Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese and Portuguese immigrants vs. other US residents; for the federal government employees, non-Portuguese speakers vs. other US residents.

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

employed are 9.97%, 12.78%, 14.44%, 9.64% and 9.79% for Portuguese immigrants, naturalized immigrants, Portuguese speakers, non-Portuguese speakers, and other US residents, respectively.

<sup>29</sup> The percentages of federal, state, and local government employees among wage earners are very similar to those observed for the total population because these are individuals who are employed.

<sup>30</sup> Income from employment may correspond to income from more than one job.

## 9.2. What are the incomes of working Portuguese immigrants and descendants?

Since this section focuses on Portuguese immigrants and descendants who have income from work for wages, we start by analyzing the total individual income received as an employee. Next, since individuals may have income from other sources, we analyze the total individual income, which in turn allows us to determine what portion comes from work for wages. Then, we will look at the other income sources, such as pensions and capital income. Finally, as most individuals do not live alone (see section 7), we analyze the total income of the household to which the individual belongs. All income analyzed is gross income, that is, before taxes.

### Total individual income received as wage and salary

The income received as wage and salary by Portuguese immigrants and descendants is higher than that of other US residents (table 32)<sup>30</sup>. On average, Portuguese-speaking descendants earn 22.28% more than other US residents; for naturalized immigrants, Portuguese immigrants and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, the difference is 11.8%, 8.89% and 7.33%, respectively — the difference between the average income of these last two groups is not statistically significant.

It should be noted that, although both Portuguese and naturalized immigrants have much lower percentages of individuals with higher education, they have higher average incomes than other US residents and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants.

According to the lifetime earnings profile, earnings from work are lower at the start of the career, rising thereafter (Thornton et al. 1997). To the extent that Portuguese and naturalized immigrants were, on average, at or beyond the late prime working age, this may help explain why the average earnings of immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, are higher than those of the other groups. However, this does not explain the higher average earnings of Portuguese descendants, who are, on average, at an earlier stage of prime working age.

Table 32. Total gross income received as an employee among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have labor income (in USD), 2016–2020

	Average	As % of income of other US residents
Portuguese immigrants	56,616.45	108.89
Naturalized immigrants	58,130.59	111.80
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	63,581.34	122.28
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	55,804.90	107.33
Other US residents	51,995.96	100.00

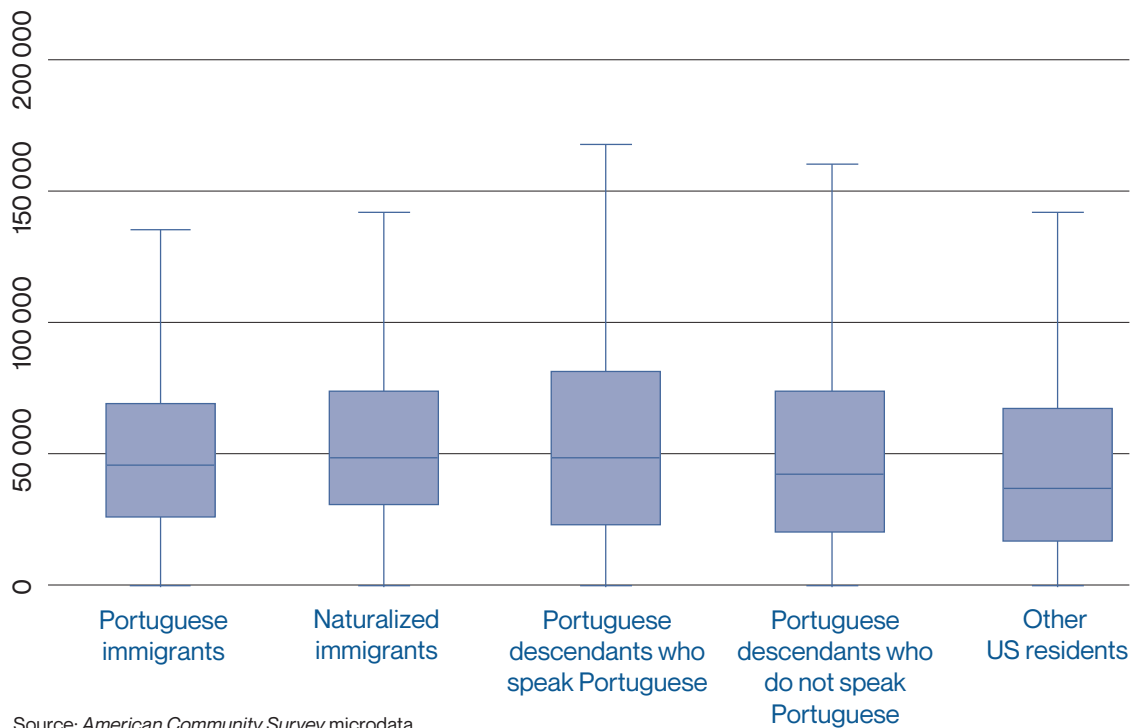
Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations

On average, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese receive an income as wage and salary that is more than 20% higher than that of other US residents.

The comparison of the dispersion of total individual labor income (figure 18) between groups shows that the group with the highest average income — the Portuguese-speaking descendants — has the highest income dispersion. The blue rectangles show the range of values between the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile (bottom of the blue rectangle) and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile (top of the blue rectangle). The 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles indicate the value for which 25% or 75% of individuals, respectively, receive an income below that value. The horizontal line inside the blue rectangle represents the median, i.e., the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Thus, figure 18 shows that half of the Portuguese descendants who receive incomes between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles have more heterogeneous incomes than the other groups. At the other extreme, Portuguese immigrants are the group with the lowest income dispersion, although this is not the group with the lowest average income. On the other hand, it is also worth noting that the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile and the median wage-earning income of Portuguese immigrants are higher than those of other US residents and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants. This means that lower income Portuguese immigrants receive higher incomes than low-income non-Portuguese-speaking descendants or other US residents.

Figure 18. Dispersion of total gross labor income of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (in USD), 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata.  
Authors' calculations.

The average labor income of Portuguese immigrants is higher than that of other US residents. Even low-income Portuguese immigrants have relatively higher income than low-income US residents.

### Total individual income

ACS respondents are also asked about their total gross individual income, i.e., income from all sources. Once again, all groups have a higher average total individual income than other US residents, with Portuguese-speaking descendants once again standing out: their average total individual income is 18% higher than that of other US residents (table 33)<sup>31</sup>. Naturalized immigrants have the second highest average total individual income, which is significantly higher than that of other US residents — a difference of 14 pp.. Note that these differences are smaller than those observed when we analyze only labor income, except in the case of naturalized immigrants. This result may reflect a higher share of non-labor income in the total individual income of naturalized immigrants.

<sup>31</sup> When respondents are asked about their total individual gross income in the previous year, they may also report losses. However, as expected, the percentage of individuals reporting losses is very low (less than 1%). This analysis considers only positive income, corresponding to 162,894,254 individuals.

Table 33. Average total individual income of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have labor income (in USD), 2016–2020

	Average	As % of income of other US residents
Portuguese immigrants	59,033.3	104.46
Naturalized immigrants	64,539.47	114.20
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	66,993.91	118.55
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	60,469.33	107.00
Other US residents	56,513.37	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

As expected, the share of wage earnings in total individual income is very high for all groups — always above 90% — but it is particularly high for Portuguese descendants (94.90%) and Portuguese immigrants (95.09%). This suggests that these two groups receive less income from other sources (pensions or capital income, for example).

### Other income components of working Portuguese immigrants and descendants

The ACS distinguishes between social security pensions, survivor's benefits, or permanent disability insurance, as well as U.S. government railroad retirement insurance payments (table 34, first column) and retirement, survivor, and disability pension income, other than Social Security (table 34, second column). The reported values are the averages of these pensions for each group, while the percentage in the group is the percentage of individuals in the group (Portuguese immigrants, for example) with labor income who also received pensions.

Table 34. Pension income of Portuguese immigrants and descendants and other US residents who have labor income (in USD), 2016–2020

	Social security pensions, survivors' benefits, and other insurance payments	Retirement, survivor, and disability pension income
Portuguese immigrants	14,672.63	15,788.34
<b>% in group</b>	<b>3.93</b>	<b>2.08</b>
Naturalized immigrants	15,222.15	15,692.72
<b>% in group</b>	<b>9.35</b>	<b>4.93</b>
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	14,322.15	15,680.74
<b>% in group</b>	<b>1.40</b>	<b>1.96</b>
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	15,735.82	23,375.54
<b>% in group</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>4.87</b>
Other US residents	15,560.05	22,531.42
<b>% in group</b>	<b>5.38</b>	<b>4.56</b>

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

For all groups except the naturalized immigrants, the percentage receiving social security pensions, survivors' benefits and other insurance payments was lower than that observed for other US residents — in particular, Portuguese immigrants and descendants. The higher value observed for naturalized immigrants (9.35%) may be related to the greater share of individuals aged 65 and over in this group: 11.35% vs. 3.98%, 1.89%, 5.14% and 6.02% for Portuguese immigrants, Portuguesespeaking and non-speaking descendants, and other US residents, respectively. This result seems to partially confirm the earlier finding that naturalized immigrants received more non-labor

<sup>32</sup> These calculations were performed by analyzing only those individuals who had a positive total individual income.

income than the other groups. Even if the average value of these income components is similar across groups, the differences between both non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and other US residents, on the one hand, and the other groups on the other, are statistically significant, as well as between naturalized immigrants and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese.

Regarding retirement, survivor, and disability pension income, naturalized immigrants are the ones showing the highest percentage of individuals receiving them. However, in this case, this percentage is only slightly higher than that of non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and other US residents — even though naturalized immigrants are older, i.e., this group has a higher percentage of individuals aged 65 and over (50.82% vs. 35.5% and 41.23%, respectively). These data also show that the non-social security pensions received by immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, and Portuguese-speaking descendants are around 30 percent lower than those of other US residents (with no statistically significant differences between them). It should be emphasized that regardless of the group, the individuals receiving these pensions are still working. On the other hand, their labor income is lower than the average income of all individuals with labor income, especially in the case of immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized (74.01% and 82.74%, respectively).

### Capital income

Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese receive less capital income<sup>32</sup> than other US residents, and except for naturalized immigrants, less than 10% of the individuals in each group earn capital income (table 35). Naturalized immigrants also stand out in terms of the average amount of capital income they receive: 34% higher than that of other US residents. This result also helps explaining why the total individual income of naturalized immigrants is 14 pp. higher than that of other US residents (table 33).

Table 35. Capital income of Portuguese immigrants, descendants, and other US residents, who have labor income (in USD), 2016–2020

	Average	% in respective group	As % of income of other US residents
Portuguese immigrants	10,217.02	6.66	69.23
Naturalized immigrants	19,784.65	14.72	134.06
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	14,582.21	9.30	98.81
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	13,467.27	9.81	91.25
Other US residents	14,757.88	8.99	100.00

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.

Among working individuals, the capital income of naturalized immigrants is 34 percentage points higher than that of other US residents.

<sup>32</sup> Gross income from interest, dividends, royalties and from property, estates, or trusts.

## Total family income

As most people live in a family rather than alone, family income (and not only individual income) also matters for their well-being. The analysis of the average total family income<sup>33</sup> shows a similar pattern to that found so far, but with one important difference (table 36): the average total family income of Portuguese immigrants is lower than that of other US residents. Since family income depends on the number of family members, this result could partially be due to the fact that Portuguese immigrants live in smaller families, namely living alone. However, as the results of the section ‘Who do they live with?’ show that this is not the case, this result suggests instead that the relatives of these Portuguese working immigrants tend to have lower incomes than the relatives of the other working US residents.

The average total family income of naturalized immigrants and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese are statistically similar — both significantly higher than that of other US residents.

Table 36. Total gross family income of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have labor (in USD), 2016–2020

	Average	As % of income of other US residents
Portuguese immigrants	105,774.7	97.80
Naturalized immigrants	120,200.1	111.14
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	126,253.4	116.74
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	119,453.9	110.45
Other US residents	108,150.9	100.00

Source: American Community Survey microdata.  
Authors' calculations.

## 9.3. How many hours do they work and in which economic activities?

Table 37 shows the average number of hours individuals usually worked, per week, in the year prior to the survey. The results show that Portuguese immigrants work more hours than naturalized immigrants who, in turn, work more hours than Portuguese-speaking descendants. Non-Portuguese-speaking descendants work the fewest hours, less than other US residents.

Table 37. Hours worked per week by Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, who have income from work, 2016–2020

	Average
Portuguese immigrants	40.27
Naturalized immigrants	39.52
Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese	39.23
Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese	38.08
Other US residents	38.51

Source: American Community Survey microdata.  
Authors' calculations.

Interesting differences across groups emerge from the analysis of the economic activities in which individuals work<sup>34</sup>. A higher share of Portuguese and naturalized immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants work in construction when compared to other US residents, and the difference is particularly striking in the case

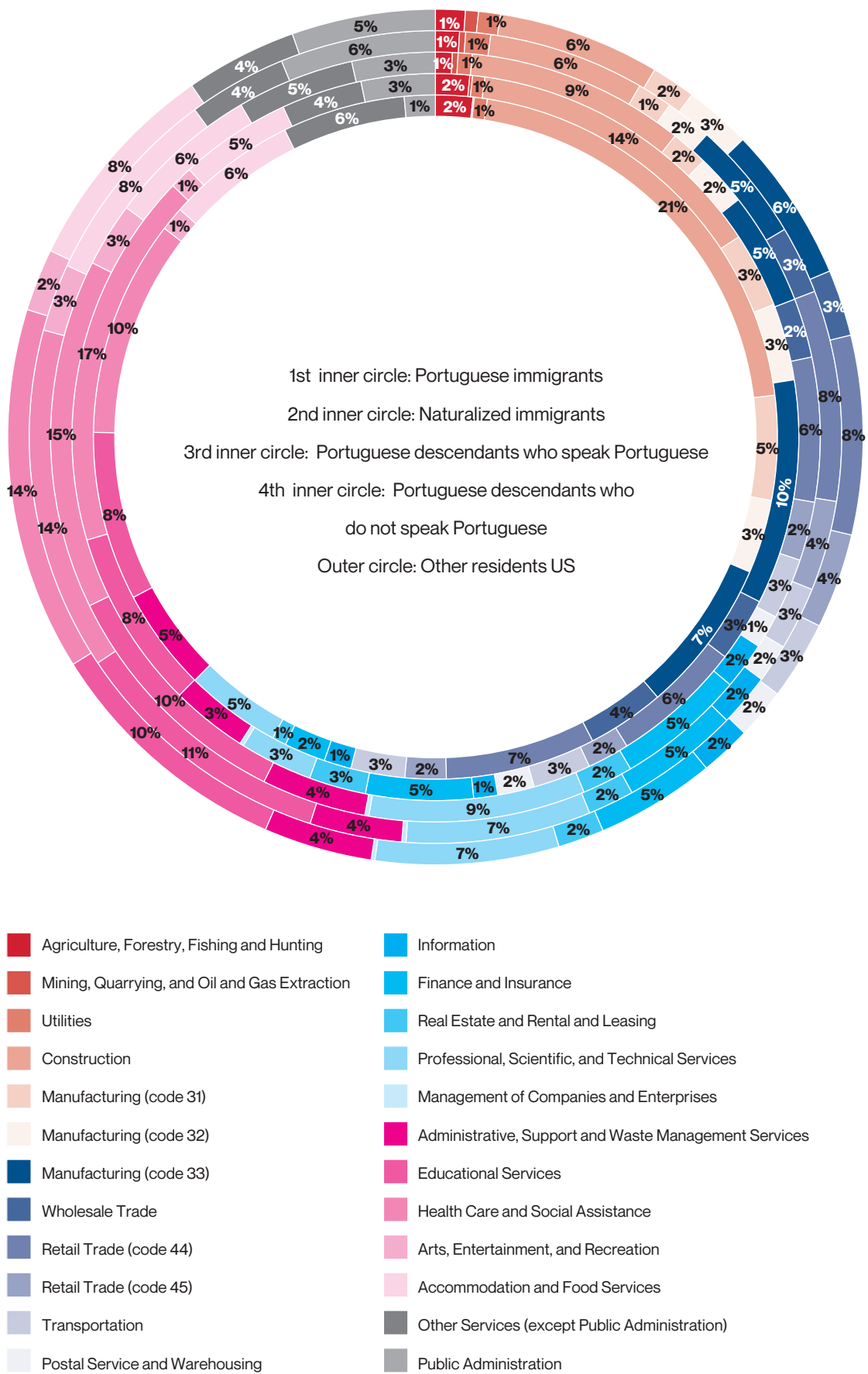
<sup>33</sup> In this variable, there are 4% missings. We only have positive values for the total family income for 159,425,187 individuals.

<sup>34</sup> The economic activities used in this section correspond to the 2017 Industry Code List used by PUMS in the five-year period 2016–2020.

of Portuguese immigrants — one in five Portuguese immigrants works in construction (figure 19). It should also be noted that this result is observed for Portuguese-speaking descendants but not for the non-Portuguese-speaking descendants. Although to a lesser extent, a greater presence of Portuguese immigrants is observed in *manufacturing* when compared to other US residents (differences of 6 and 7 pp.). On the other hand, Portuguese descendants are less concentrated in *manufacturing* than other residents in the US. Also striking is the lower presence of both immigrants' groups in *professional, scientific, and technical services*. Having said that, it is also important to note the difference between them: although the Portuguese immigrants have a similar percentage of individuals with higher education to that of naturalized immigrants (table 29), they have a higher percentage of workers in *professional, scientific, and technical services* than naturalized migrants do. It should also be noted that Portuguese descendants, particularly the Portuguese-speaking, have a higher percentage of workers in *professional, scientific, and technical services* than other US residents. The immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, are also less represented in *accommodation and food services*.



Figure 19. Distribution of workers with labor income by economic activity, Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2016–2020

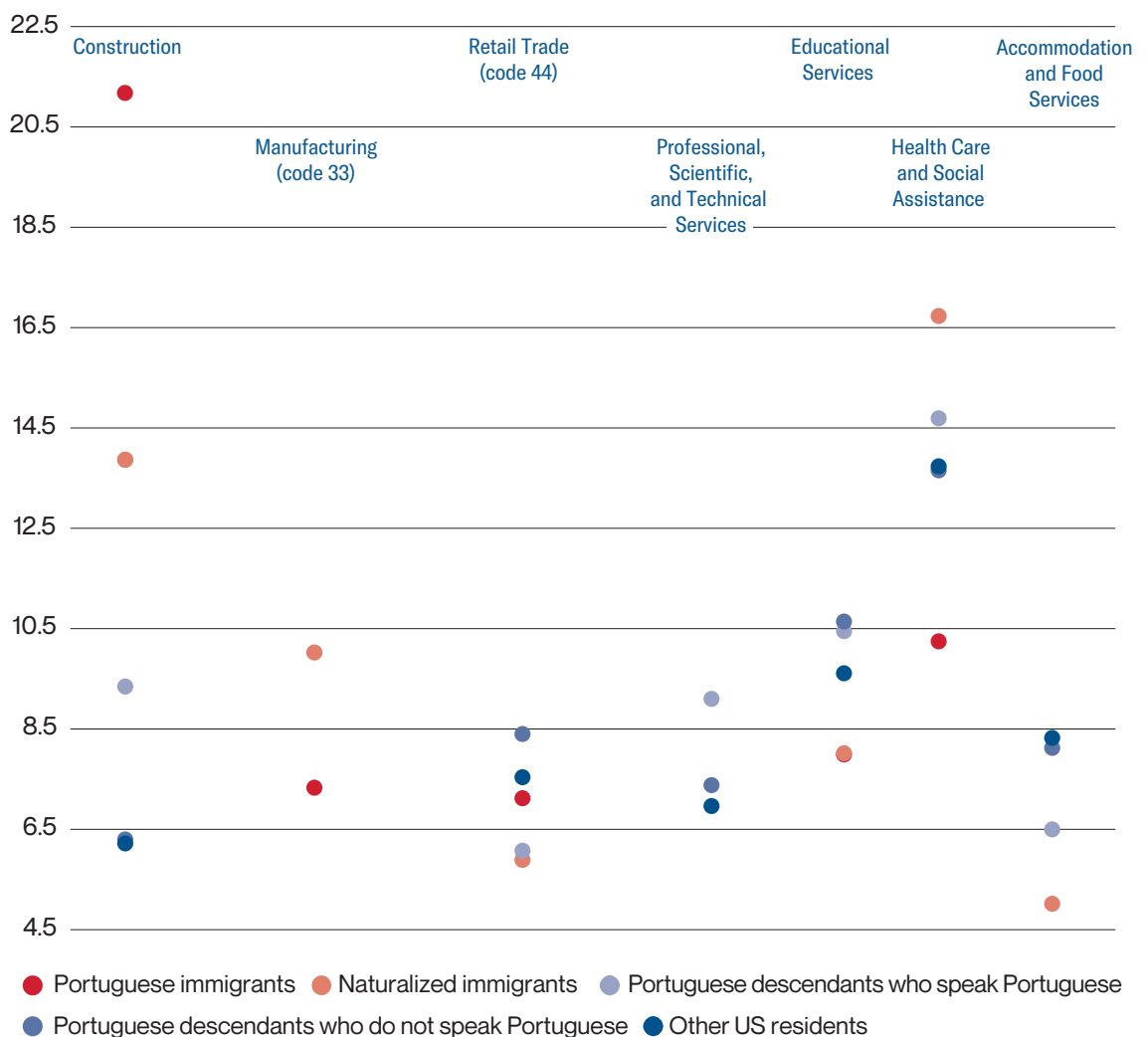


Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

One in five Portuguese immigrants works in construction. Portuguese descendants, particularly those who speak Portuguese, have a higher percentage of workers in professional, scientific, and technical services than other US residents.

The same information can be used to indicate the economic activities where the most workers in each group are concentrated. In descending order and limiting the analysis to the economic activities that, in each group, concentrate at least 50% of the workers, we observe that some economic activities show a high concentration of workers across groups. This is the case for *manufacturing, retail trade, education, and health care and social assistance* (figure 20). On the contrary, the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese concentrate more in *professional, scientific and technical services* than the other residents in the US, especially those who speak Portuguese.

Figure 20. Distribution of workers with labor income in the economic activities where most workers, in each group, are concentrated (%), 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

## 9.4. What is their socioeconomic position?

The myriad of different occupations makes the analysis of occupational status very complex, leading to the use of numerical indicators. Here we will use an indicator based on income (*Occupational Income Score*), another based on education (*Occupational Education Score*) and, finally, one based on both income and education (*Nam-Powers-Boyd Occupational Status Score*).

### **Occupational Income Score**

The *Occupational Income Score* is a continuous measure of occupation (80 being the maximum value), which corresponds to the total median income of all people who had that specific occupation.<sup>35</sup>

Immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, are more concentrated than any other group in occupations with lower median income (table 38). Given that the wage-earning income of Portuguese and naturalized immigrants is, on average, higher than that of other US residents, this result suggests that Portuguese and naturalized immigrants have higher incomes than other individuals in the same occupations, even though they are relatively more concentrated in typically lower-paid occupations. It is also worth noting that the share of Portuguese descendants in these lower-paid occupations is smaller than that of other US residents, which can be explained by their larger share of individuals with tertiary education.

**Immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, are relatively more concentrated in lower-paid occupations but have higher incomes than other individuals in the same occupations.**

When considering the occupations that have scores in the upper half of the ranking (above 40), the Portuguese-speaking descendants clearly stand out from all the other groups, and the difference from the other US residents is striking. However, when considering the occupations with the highest median income (between 61 and 80), the percentage of Portuguese-speaking descendants is lower than that of other US residents (1.22% vs. 1.34%). This happens even though Portuguese-speaking

Table 38. *Occupational Income Score* of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, with income from work (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
0–20	36.10	29.05	23.72	22.88	25.58
21–40	46.65	53.40	49.08	55.61	54.49
41–60	17.14	17.18	25.97	20.54	18.59
61–80	0.11	0.37	1.22	0.97	1.34
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata.  
Authors' calculations.

<sup>35</sup> For the purposes of comparability across years, the total median income of the Occupational Income Score is measured in hundreds of 1950 USD and corresponds to the total median income of all persons who had that particular occupation in 1950, i.e., the 1950 classification scheme is used.

descendants have, on average, a higher wage-earning income than other US residents and a substantially higher percentage of individuals with tertiary education.

### **Occupational Education Score**

The *Occupational Education Score* is a measure indicating the percentage of people in the respondent’s occupational category who have one or more years of college education.<sup>36</sup>

When using the occupation score based on educational attainment, the results are somewhat different from those obtained when the score is based on income. When using the *Occupational Education Score*, Portuguese-speaking descendants are slightly more concentrated than other US residents in occupations in which the share of people with one or more years of college education is lower (table 39) — despite having a higher share of individuals with tertiary education. While it would be interesting to explore this result to understand whether it is due to some kind of discrimination, such an analysis is beyond the scope of this study.

Table 39. Occupational Educational Score of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents with income from work (%), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
0–20%	3.45	1.67	1.27	0.41	0.74
21–40%	52.94	38.17	23.27	23.69	28.71
41–60%	16.79	24.75	20.31	24.23	23.19
61–80%	13.33	22.09	24.27	23.69	20.87
81–100%	13.49	13.32	30.88	27.98	26.48
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note: The difference between Portuguese-speaking and non-Portuguese speaking descendants in the 21-40% category is not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors’ calculations.

## Over 30% of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have occupations associated with a highly educated workforce.

It is also worth noting the much higher concentration of Portuguese immigrants, vis-à-vis the other groups, in occupations where the percentage of people with one or more years of higher education is relatively low (between 21 and 40%). The difference is particularly noticeable when comparing them to the Portuguese descendants or to the other US residents.

Portuguese descendants and other US residents are more or less evenly distributed in the categories in which the share of people with one or more years of college education is above 20%; for all three groups, this percentage is slightly higher in occupations where the share of people in the respondent’s occupational category who have one or more years of college education is quite high (above 80%). This is particularly the case for Portuguese-speaking descendants: more than 30% have occupations in which more than 80% of the people have one or more years of higher education. This partially explains the fact that Portuguese descendants who speak

<sup>36</sup> This variable has missings, which means that the data presented in table 11 refer to a total of 161,763,177 individuals. The 1990 occupation classification scheme is used in this indicator.

Portuguese have occupations associated with median incomes higher than those of the occupations of the other groups, namely other US residents.

It should be noted that although the percentage of Portuguese immigrants in occupations where the percentage of people with one or more years of higher education exceeds 60% (26.82%) is much lower than for the other groups, they are well represented in occupations with relatively high median incomes (score above 40). This suggests that a significant proportion of Portuguese immigrants are in relatively well-paid occupations that do not require high education levels. However, there are no differences among immigrants in the last category (81-100%).

A considerable share of Portuguese immigrants seems to be in occupations that offer relatively high wages despite not requiring high levels of schooling.

### **Nam-Powers-Boyd Occupational Status Score**

This indicator assigns a score to each occupation (using the 1990 occupation classification scheme) based on median earnings and the median educational attainment associated with each category.<sup>37</sup>

Table 40. *Nam-Powers-Boyd Occupational Status Score* of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, with labor income (no.), 2016–2020

	Immigrants		Portuguese descendants		Other US residents
	Portuguese	Naturalized	Portuguese-speaking	Non-Portuguese-speaking	
0–20	19.45	16.53	9.98	10.24	13.14
21–40	43.93	33.14	28.13	28.80	30.69
41–60	15.98	24.59	16.60	19.50	17.79
61–80	6.22	11.45	14.93	16.84	14.95
81–100	14.43	14.28	30.35	24.62	23.43
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note: The following differences are not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level: Portuguese-speaking descendants vs. non-Portuguese speaking, for the 0-20 category; Portuguese immigrants vs. Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, for the 41-60 category; Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese vs. other US residents, for the 61-80 category; Portuguese immigrants vs. naturalized immigrants, for the 81-100 category.

Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

The *Nam-Powers-Boyd Occupational Status Score* shows that immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, are more concentrated in the lowest category (0 to 20) than other US residents, while the opposite is true for Portuguese descendants, be they Portuguese-speaking or not – in fact, no statistically significant difference is observed between them (table 40). A comparison of this result with that in table 39 shows that, while Portuguese-speaking descendants (and immigrants) are more concentrated in the lowest category when only educational attainment is taken into account (when compared with other US residents), the same is not true when both median income and median educational attainment are considered. This result suggests that the few Portuguese-speaking descendants with occupations associated with low educational attainment (1.27%) have higher earnings than other US residents with the same type of occupation. Moreover, whereas Portuguese descendants are less represented than other US residents in the

<sup>37</sup> This variable has missings, which means that the data presented in table 11 refer to a total of 161,763,177 individuals.

low and intermediate categories (0 to 60), they are equally represented in the 61 to 80 category (no statistically significant difference is observed) and are more represented in the highest category of Nam-Powers-Boyd Occupational Status.

On the other hand, naturalized immigrants have a lower share than other US residents in the highest categories of the *Nam-Powers-Boyd Occupational Status Score*, despite having a higher share in occupations associated with high educational attainment (22% are in occupations where between 61 and 80% of people in the respondent's occupational category have one or more years of higher education). This suggests that these immigrants are in occupations in which most of their colleagues have higher levels of education but earn lower incomes than they do. This result may reflect discrimination. Only a more detailed analysis, which is beyond the scope of this study, would allow us to test this hypothesis.

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# 10. Portuguese immigrants and descendants: what health care coverage and health limitations do they have?

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**Katielle Silva, Jorge Malheiros and Pedro Moura Ferreira**

The health status of individuals is essential not only to their quality of life, but also for their inclusion in society. The literature on the health of Portuguese immigrants in the USA is relatively scarce, but has been growing since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> Having said that, there is one paper that analyzes the mortality of the Portuguese, specifically those born in the Azores and Madeira, dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hoffman 1899). This is one of the first academic works on this population.

When analyzing the health status of immigrants, it is worth mentioning the so-called *Healthy Migrant Effect*, according to which the general health of immigrants is, on average, better than that of the native population. This effect is due to a self-selection process that leads to an overrepresentation of people of working age, who tend to be in better health. However, this advantage not only differs between immigrant groups, but also tends to disappear over time due to the specific vulnerabilities of the immigrant population and their exposure to risk factors, such as having more dangerous or risky jobs or living in precarious and deteriorated housing.

Economic conditions are extremely important in the access to health care, which obviously conditions health status. The most vulnerable groups often suffer multiple socioeconomic disadvantages that hinder access to health care, e.g., not having public or private health insurance. Note that health insurance is particularly relevant in societies with liberal welfare state models, where national health systems provide less universal and more limited responses. In addition, physical, mental and/or emotional disabilities and difficulties also condition access to health care and a healthy life. Although these constraints do not stem solely from the age factor, the relationship between health limitations and population aging cannot be ignored. The most established immigrant communities, as is the case of naturalized migrants, have high shares of older people, even more so when the migration influx decreases and there is no renewal of the immigrant population. Thus, lower incomes, lack of health insurance (public or private), health limitations and physical, mental and/or emotional disabilities, as well as aging, may point to cumulative vulnerabilities that have an impact on the health status of the four groups studied, particularly the two immigrant groups.

Based on the information provided by the ACS on health insurance and disabilities, two dimensions related to health are analyzed: access to health care, which makes it possible to identify the barriers that limit or condition the provision of such care; and

<sup>38</sup> For example, the work on Portuguese descendants addressing issues such as mental health (James et al. 2009; Trombka et al. 2021), tobacco consumption (Dos Santos et al. 2011), and access to health care (Pavão, Gunn and Golden, 2021).

the disabilities and health difficulties of the population groups, taken as a “barometer” of health status.

The first dimension specifically examines the information provided by respondents on whether they have health insurance coverage at the time of the interview and whether it is private or public. The second dimension examines health status limitations, namely *cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, independent living difficulty, vision difficulty and hearing difficulty*. From these variables, we defined three types of difficulties: (i) cognitive difficulties; (ii) motor difficulties, which includes ambulatory, self-care, and independent living difficulties; and (iii) vision and hearing difficulties.

## 10.1. Access to health care

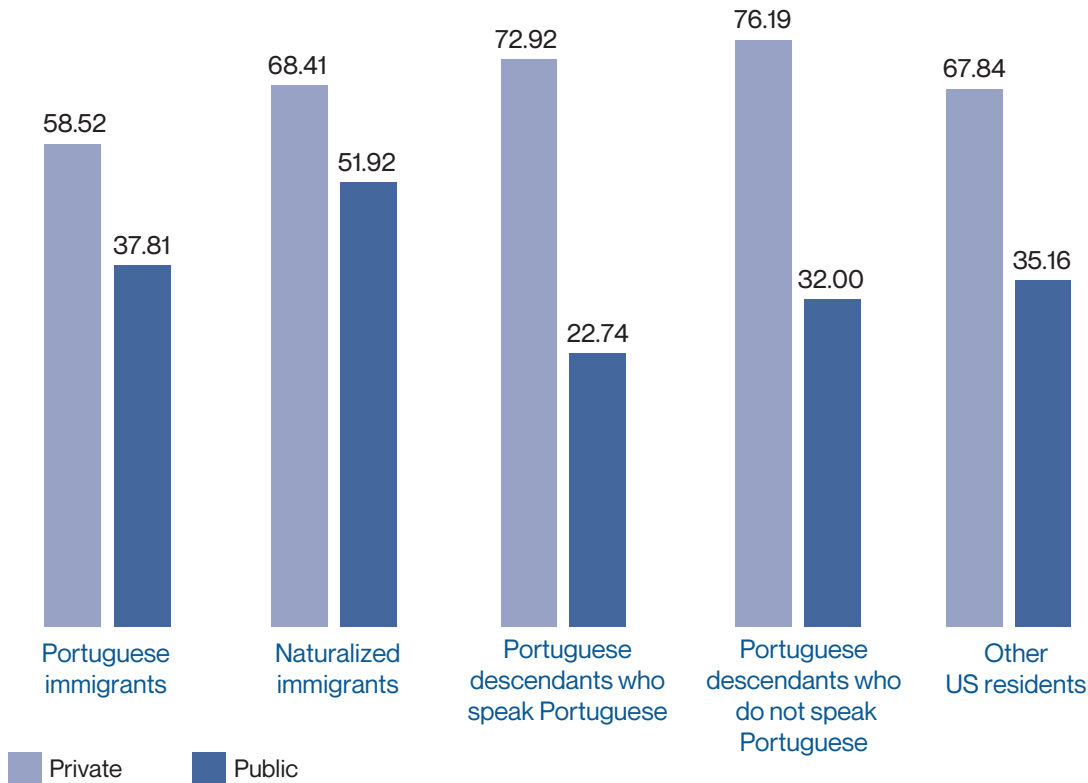
Access to health care is analyzed in terms of health insurance coverage. In the ACS, a person is considered to have health coverage if he or she is protected by at least one of the listed types of insurance, private or public. Private coverage includes employer or union-provided insurance, insurance purchased directly by individuals, and TRICARE or other military health care. Public coverage includes Medicare, Medicaid, or other government health care and medical assistance programs. Individuals may be covered by more than one health insurance, private or public.

Most of the population in the four groups analyzed have some form of health insurance. The figures exceed 88%, ranging from 88.23% (Portuguese immigrants) to 97.79% (naturalized immigrants). Between these two, that of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (95.44%) is similar to that of naturalized immigrants, while that of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is similar to that of Portuguese immigrants (89.03%). The latter two groups are similar to other US residents (90.53%).

As expected, private insurance coverage is much higher than public insurance coverage, although there are differences between the different groups (figure 21). Portuguese descendants have the highest private insurance coverage (76.19% for non-Portuguese-speaking and 72.92% for Portuguese-speaking descendants). Just over two-thirds of naturalized immigrants have private insurance coverage (68.41%). This figure is close to that of other US residents (67.84%), but significantly higher than that of Portuguese immigrants, who have the lowest proportion of private insurance coverage (58.52%). It should be noted that the average total individual income (of those with labor income) of other US residents is lower than that of any other group of Portuguese immigrants or descendants (see table 33).



Figure 21. Health insurance coverage of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by sector (%), 2016–2020



Note: The combination of the values may exceed 100% because there are people who are covered by both.  
 Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

Naturalized immigrants are the ones who benefit more from public insurance, while Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese are at the other extreme.

Although all groups have less public than private health coverage, the differences in public health coverage between groups are considerably higher. Naturalized immigrants have the highest levels of public coverage (51.92%), while the group of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese is at the other extreme (22.74%). In between these two groups, we find Portuguese immigrants (37.81%), followed by other US residents (35.16%) and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (32%).

## 10.2. Disabilities and health limitations

Cognitive, ambulatory, personal care, independent living, vision and hearing difficulties were classified into three groups: (i) **cognitive difficulties** — physical, mental or emotional conditions that makes it difficult to learn, remember, concentrate and/or make decisions; (ii) **motor difficulties**, which include ambulatory problems that limit physical activities, such as climbing stairs, walking, lifting or carrying weights, self-care difficulties, which refer to physical or mental conditions that make it difficult to perform activities such as dressing, moving around, bathing, and independent living difficulties which are physical, mental or emotional conditions that hinder or prevent activities

outside the home; and (iii) **vision and hearing impairments** that are permanent, such as an enduring condition of blindness or serious difficulty seeing even with corrective lenses or an enduring condition of deafness or serious hearing difficulties. While vision and hearing difficulties are understood to be permanent conditions, other disabilities or limitations may not be. In this study, we only considered the latter if they persist for at least six months.

### **Cognitive difficulties**

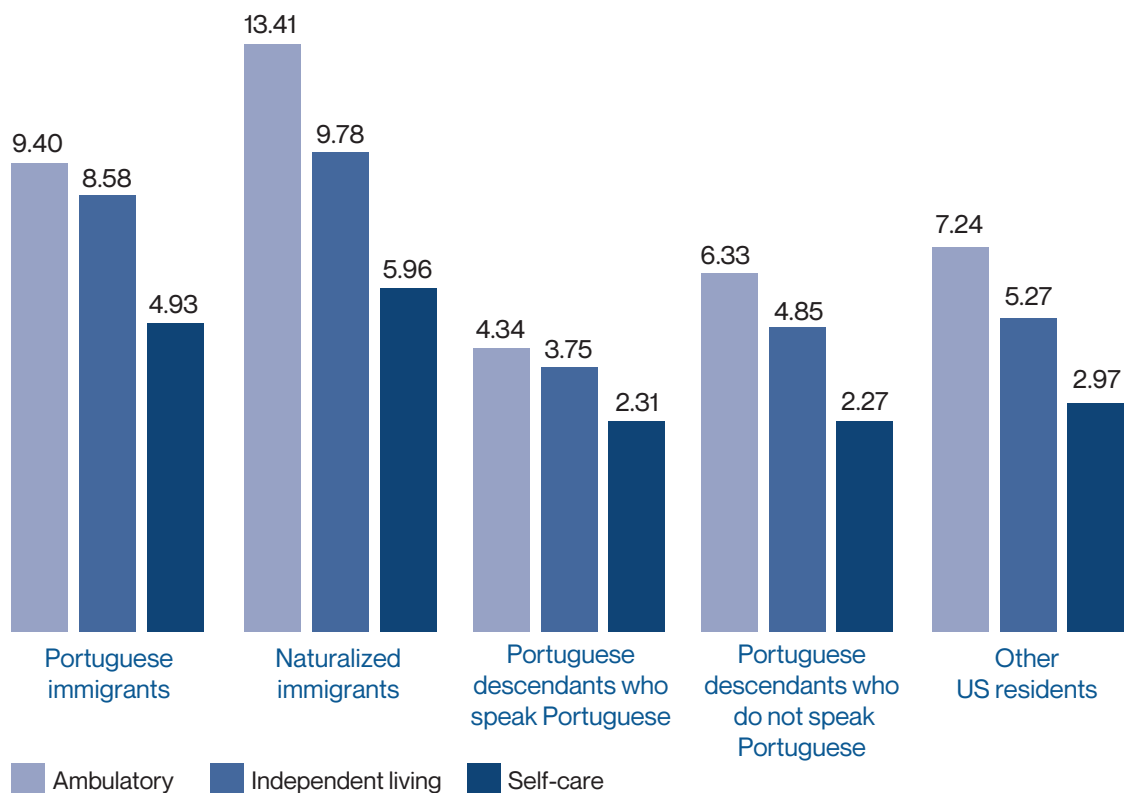
The ranking of the four groups according to the percentage of individuals with cognitive disabilities is as follows: first are naturalized immigrants (6.75%), followed by Portuguese immigrants (5.99%). In third place are Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (5.58%), followed closely by other US residents (5.49%). Finally, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese have the lowest prevalence of cognitive difficulties (3.32%).

### **Motor difficulties**

Outpatient difficulties are the most widespread in all population groups, although with a different prevalence across groups. In descending order: naturalized immigrants (13.41%), Portuguese immigrants (9.40%), other US residents (7.24%), Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese (6.33%) and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese (4.34%).

The ranking is the same with regard to difficulties in leading an independent life. More specifically, in descending order, the highest prevalence is observed among naturalized immigrants (9.78%), followed by Portuguese immigrants (8.58%). Other US residents (5.27%) appear in an intermediate position between the highest and lowest prevalence; the group of Portuguese descendants presents the lowest prevalence, with lower values for Portuguese speakers (3.75%) compared to non-Portuguese speakers (4.85%) (figure 22).

Figure 22. Prevalence of motor difficulties among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents, by type (%), 2016–2020



Source: American Community Survey microdata. Authors' calculations.

Difficulties in self-care are the least frequent motor health limitation in all population groups. Since difficulty in performing tasks such as dressing, moving around and bathing is related to age, the highest values are found in the oldest age groups, namely naturalized immigrants and Portuguese immigrants (5.96% and 4.93%, respectively). The prevalence in the two groups of Portuguese descendants and other US residents is very similar.

It should be noted that, while Portuguese and naturalized immigrants register the highest prevalence in all the mentioned motor difficulties, the group of Portuguese descendants register the lowest prevalence, close to that of the other US residents. These differences are probably related to the fact that Portuguese immigrants and naturalized immigrants are the two older population groups, and Portuguese descendants are, on average, relatively younger.

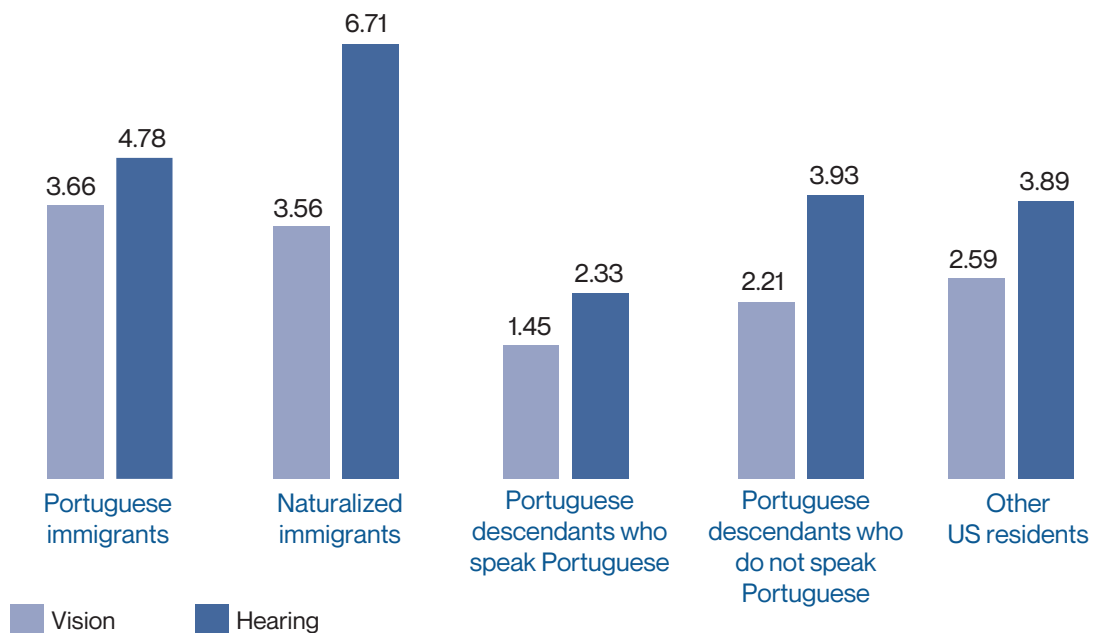
### Vision and hearing difficulties

Portuguese immigrants and their descendants are significantly more affected by difficulties related to hearing than to vision. Naturalized immigrants have the highest prevalence of hearing difficulties (6.71%), followed by Portuguese immigrants (4.78%). Portuguese descendants differ from immigrants. Portuguese speakers having the lowest prevalence (2.33%), followed by non-Portuguese speakers (3.93%). Other US residents have the same prevalence as Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese.

## The prevalence of disabilities is lower among Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, regardless of the type of disability.

The ranking of the groups in terms of prevalence of vision difficulties is essentially the same as that of hearing difficulties. The difference is that the prevalence rate of Portuguese immigrants is very close to that of naturalized immigrants (3.66% and 3.56%, respectively), thus reversing the positions observed for hearing difficulties. In general, the pattern is the same: while both Portuguese and naturalized immigrants present higher prevalence levels, the prevalence in the groups of Portuguese descendants is lower and in line with that of other US residents (figure 23).

Figure 23. Prevalence of vision and hearing difficulties among Portuguese immigrants and descendants, and other US residents (%), 2016–2020



Note: The differences obtained for visual impairment between Portuguese and naturalized immigrants are not statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

Source: *American Community Survey* microdata. Authors' calculations.



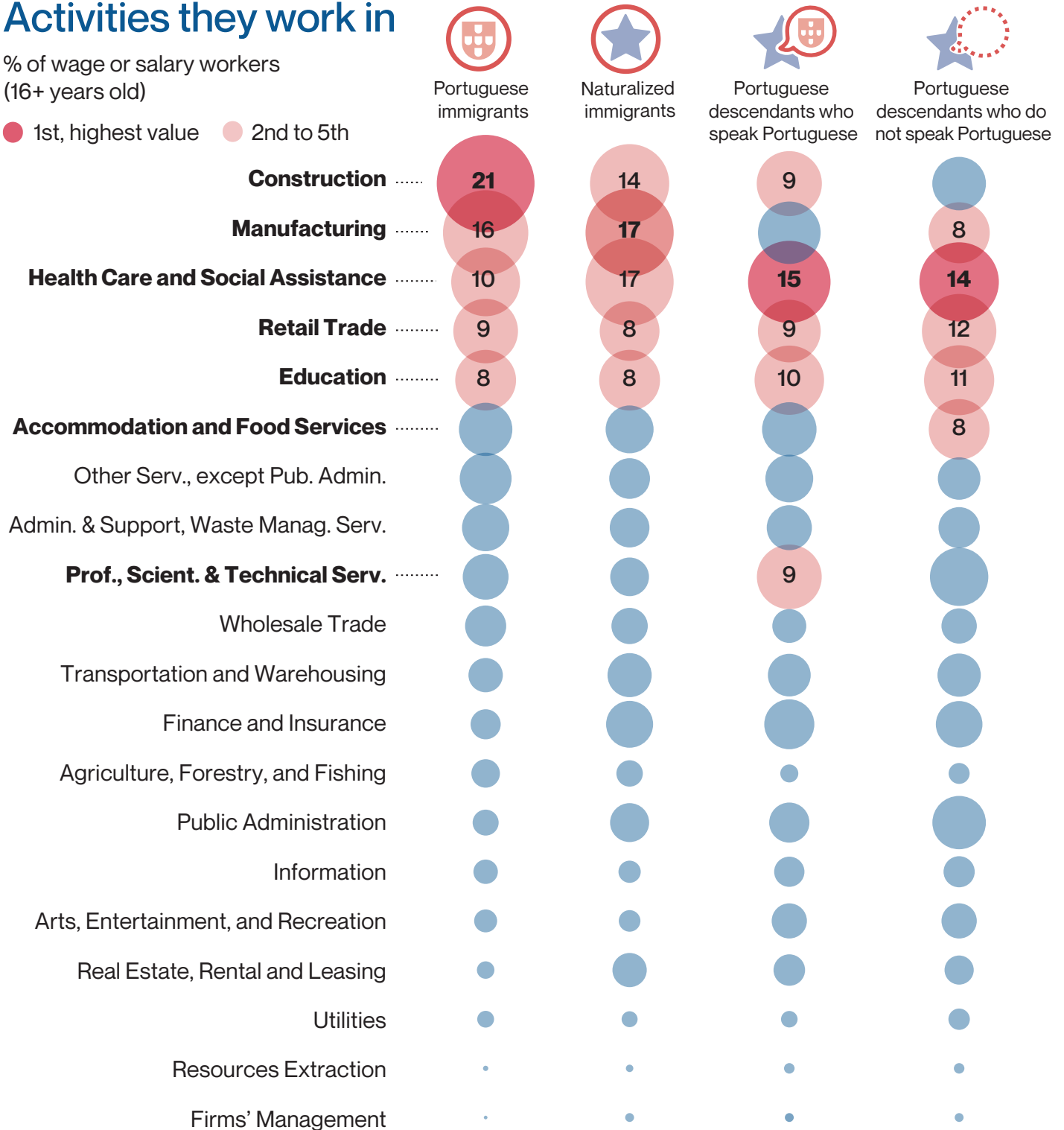
# How they live

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)

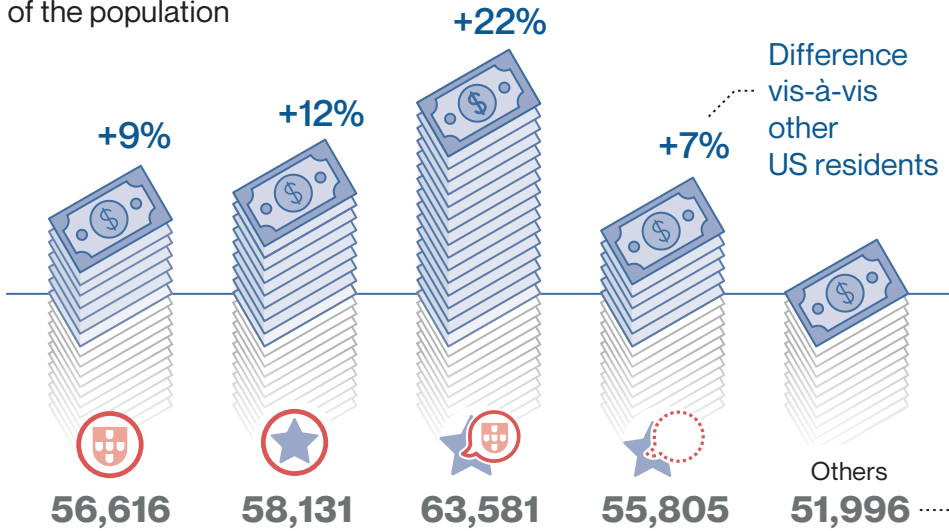
● 1st, highest value ● 2nd to 5th



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

## 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

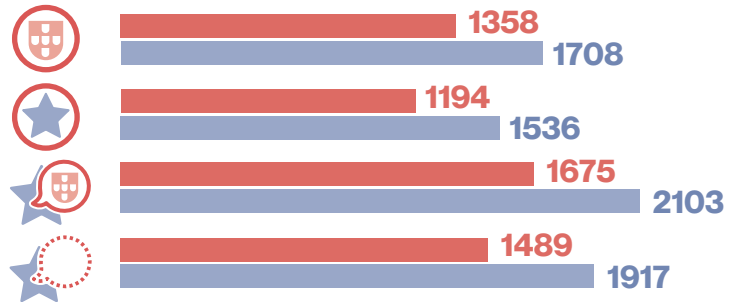
Average annual labor income  
US dollars

## HOUSING

% of population by tenure status

	Owned	Rented
Portuguese	58%	42%
US-born	83%	17%
Portuguese descendants	62%	38%
Other US residents	69%	31%

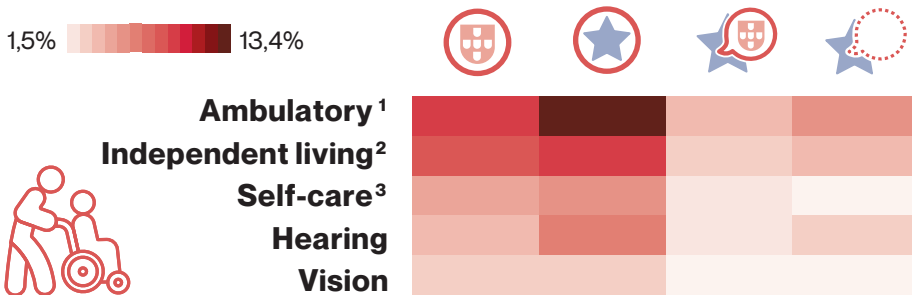
Monthly housing costs  
US dollars



## HEALTH

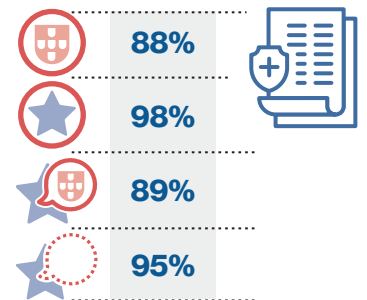
% with disabilities and health difficulties: higher among immigrants, who are older

1,5% 13,4%



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

With health insurance



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# 11. Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA: main results

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**Pedro Moura Ferreira, Lara Patrício Tavares and Alda Botelho Azevedo**

This study has two main contributions. The first consists in advancing a conceptual distinction between the people of Portuguese origin or with Portuguese ties living in the USA. Those born in Portugal, even if they later obtained US citizenship, are part of a long-standing emigration flow to the USA. The Portuguese ancestry results from this migration outflow and concerns different chronological and cultural depths. Assuming that the Portuguese language is a cultural differentiator and element of identity affirmation, the conceptual proposal consists of a distinction of Portuguese descendants based on their use of the Portuguese language. Thus, we proposed the designation of *communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties* to refer to Portuguese immigrants and descendants, dividing the latter into those who speak Portuguese and those who do not.

The second contribution relates to the in-depth incursion into the *American Community Survey (ACS)*, exploring its micro-data with a view to studying the Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Using four ACS variables, *place of birth, US citizenship, language, and ancestry*, it was possible to operationalize the conceptual proposal into a typology of four groups: Portuguese immigrants, naturalized immigrants, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, and Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese. Then, the richness of the ACS microdata allowed for a detailed picture of Portuguese immigrants and descendants in the USA, where it is possible to appreciate the differences across the four groups, as well as to compare them to the other residents in the USA.

## Portuguese immigrants and descendants: how many are they?

The analyses of the ACS data for the period between 2006 and 2020 uncovered changes in the four population groups over time, allowed the identification of continuities and discontinuities, and pointed to what future trends might be. The results of this analysis answered the question *How many are they?*

- In 2016–2020, there were 1.27 million US residents, aged 5 and over, born in Portugal or with Portuguese ancestry.
- Of these, more than a fifth (22.49%) used Portuguese at home, thereby contributing to the preservation of a Portuguese cultural identity.
- The Portuguese immigrant population in the USA has been declining since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, falling 34% from 2006 to 2020. In the period 2016–



2020, the Portuguese immigrant population stood below 40,000 individuals.

- Contrary to what was observed for Portuguese or naturalized immigrants, the population of Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese increased to almost 150,000 individuals in the period 2016–2020.

## Portuguese immigrants and descendants: who are they?

The four population groups are not homogeneous in terms of their sociodemographic profiles and are subject to differentiated impacts resulting from accelerated social changes. The ACS micro-data provide insights into the demographic structures of the different groups and their evolution, as well as the social positioning of the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties in the American society, measured by the educational level. The results helped answering the question *Who are they?*

- The immigrant population is particularly aged. This stems from a low population replacement through immigration and demographic aging.
- Population aging impacts on the proportion of women in the population. The more marked aging in the immigrant population resulted in a more significant increase (in relative terms) in its share of women from 2006–2010 to 2016–2020 than that observed for the Portuguese descendants.
- The female population of Portuguese immigrants experienced a double aging process: while the proportion of women over 65 increased, the proportion of women under 15 decreased.
- Although the proportion of young people is lower among Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese than among other US residents, it is still much higher than among immigrants, naturalized or not. But it is decreasing.
- In 2006–2010, while immigrants (Portuguese and naturalized) were already at or beyond the prime working age (25–54), the Portuguese descendants and other US residents were still at the middle of the prime working age.
- In 2016–2020, four out of ten Portuguese-speaking descendants have higher education. This percentage is almost 10 pp. above of that observed for other US residents. This is a new result, emerging from the segmentation between Portuguese-speaking and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and its comparison with the US resident population.
- The Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese experienced a strong growth in the percentage of individuals with tertiary education throughout the whole 2006–2020 period— which is not observed in the other groups.

## Portuguese immigrants and descendants: where are they?

In addition to describing the changes in the size of the immigrant groups, Portuguese and naturalized, and that of Portuguese descendants, it was important to observe their distributions in the USA. For historical reasons, the population is rooted and concentrated in certain regions or states, and even if it has expanded more recently to other places, it is not evenly distributed throughout the territory. Describing these concentrations, their phases of contraction and expansion, is of clear interest, both for

the US political system and for Portuguese-American relations. The distribution of the Portuguese immigrant and descendant population was subsumed in the question *Where are they?*

- In 2016–2020, Portuguese immigrants and their descendants living in the USA can be found in all 50 US states.
- In the same period, three out of four Portuguese immigrants and descendants (74.25%) lived in one of the following five US states: Massachusetts, New Jersey, California, Florida, and Rhode Island.
- The ‘traditional’ settlement centers for Portuguese immigrants have been losing population in the last decade.
- A process of geographical dispersion based on internal mobility of Portuguese descendants may explain their growth in states such as Texas, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and, above all, Florida.
- At the *Public Use Microdata Area* level, five major clusters are identified, of which Massachusetts–Rhode Island–Connecticut is the largest.
- Over the past decade, Florida is the only cluster for which there was an increase in the population with Portuguese ties.
- The New York-New Jersey cluster has the highest relative weight of Portuguese immigrants, naturalized immigrants, and Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese in the population. It is the most diverse cluster in terms of the population with Portuguese ties.
- The Hawaii cluster is composed almost exclusively of Portuguese descendants who do not speak Portuguese, a sign of an old and consolidated immigration, with no Portuguese immigrant flows in recent decades.

### Portuguese immigrants and descendants: who do they live with?

The characterization of households, i.e., the families *lato sensu* with whom the Portuguese immigrants and descendants live, was based on a typology centered on the household head. This characterization answered the question *who do they live with?*

- Although Portuguese-speaking descendants differ from immigrants in several respects, more generally the division is determined by the use of Portuguese, with the Portuguese-speaking groups, on the one hand, and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and other US residents, on the other, showing different trends.
- Compared to non-Portuguese-speaking descendants and other US residents, immigrants tend to live more often in couple-based families, and with adult children. Immigrant families are also likely to be smaller and without subfamilies. Immigrants are even less represented among cohabiting couples, with or without children, single-parent households, and households based on non-family members. Only in the case of single-person households a divergent trend can be observed: Portuguese immigrant men and, above all, naturalized immigrant women have a very strong presence in the group of people living alone. This is at least partly due to naturalized immigrant women’s higher average age, which also explains their high proportion of widows/widowers. Finally, marriage tends to be endogenous, although there is some opening up beyond the Portuguese community.

- Portuguese-speaking descendants and immigrants are somewhat alike in terms of household type. Like immigrants, they are also more likely to live in married couple-based families, rather than cohabiting, and to have children, although contrary to immigrants these are predominantly younger than 18. In households where Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese live, subfamilies as well as households with non-family members are less frequent than in other groups, the same happening for immigrants' households. However, Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese differ from immigrants regarding household size, tendentially larger among the former, and regarding the number of generations living together. It is more common to observe one generation living together among Portuguese-speaking descendants. They are also the group least likely to live alone and most likely to marry non-Portuguese speakers.
- In comparison with other US residents and with the non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, the Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants are more "family-oriented" and, in the case of immigrants, somewhat traditionalist with regard cohabitation or single-parenting.

## Portuguese immigrants and descendants: what are their housing conditions?

Housing conditions are an important component people's living conditions, shaping opportunities and and the quality of life. From the analysis of the residential context and the main features of the housing conditions of Portuguese immigrants and descendants, the following results stand out:

- The proportion living in metropolitan areas is greater among immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants than for the rest of the US population, for whom it is already high.
- Residential mobility of naturalized immigrants is significantly lower than the one observed for other groups. This group also has a particularly high share of under-occupied dwellings. Although their higher average age may contribute to this result, it is very unlikely to be the only explanation.
- While immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, occupy the oldest segment of the housing stock, most of the Portuguese descendants and other US residents live in more recent buildings.
- Less than one-third of the families in the USA live in dwellings with an adequate number of rooms, according to the size and composition of the family. Adequate occupancy rates are higher among Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants.
- Housing costs are higher among the Portuguese descendants than among immigrants. The former group also has a higher annual family income than the latter.

## Portuguese immigrants and descendants: what is their income and what do they work in?

In a market economy, income determines access to goods and services and, therefore, people's well-being. In a high inequality context like the USA, where the top 1% of the population concentrates almost one-fifth of all wealth, it is particularly relevant to study the labor market situation of Portuguese immigrants and their descendants, both in terms of their income and economic activity. The following results helped answering the question *what is their income and what do they work in?*

- Half of the population living in the US in 2016–2020 worked for wages in the previous year. The percentage is 60% for Portuguese-speaking descendants.
- In relative terms, more Portuguese-speaking descendants are self-employed than non-Portuguese speakers or other US residents.
- The average income of Portuguese immigrants is higher than that of other US residents. Despite having a lower education level, Portuguese immigrants are at a later stage of their working life (where incomes are typically higher), which may contribute to this result.
- The wages/salary of Portuguese-speaking descendants are, on average, 20% higher than those of other US residents. Given that Portuguese-speaking descendants are at an earlier stage in the prime working age (25-54), this result cannot be attributed to a favorable position in terms of the age-income profile.
- Even the low-income Portuguese immigrants have a relatively higher income than the low-income US residents.
- Among working individuals, the capital income of naturalized immigrants is 34 percentage points higher than that of other US residents.
- One in five Portuguese immigrants works in construction. Portuguese descendants, particularly the Portuguese-speaking, have a higher percentage of workers in *professional, scientific, and technical services* than other US residents.
- Immigrants, Portuguese and naturalized, are relatively more concentrated in lower-paid occupations but have higher incomes than other individuals in the same occupations.
- Over 30% of Portuguese-speaking descendants have occupations associated with a highly educated workforce.
- A significant proportion of Portuguese immigrants seem to be in occupations that offer relatively high remuneration despite not requiring high levels of schooling.

## Portuguese immigrants and descendants: what health care coverage and health limitations do they have?

Lastly, some information on the access to health and health limitations of the population groups allow for the identification of impairments that impact people's quality of life. Regarding access to health care through health insurance, the analysis shows that:

- As expected, private insurance coverage is much higher than public coverage. More than 88% of the Portuguese immigrants and descendants are covered by some type of health insurance.

- The lack of health insurance is more common among naturalized immigrants and non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, being less common among Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese-speaking descendants.
- Portuguese immigrants have the lowest coverage from private insurance, while descendants have the highest.
- The percentage of beneficiaries of public health insurance is higher among naturalized immigrants and lower among Portuguese-speaking descendants.

Regarding the results on health impairments, the main results are:

- The prevalence of disabilities is lowest among the Portuguese descendants who speak Portuguese, regardless of the disability type.
- Non-Portuguese-speaking descendants, like other US residents, have the second lowest prevalence of people with some health limitations.
- Immigrants have the highest prevalence rates of health limitations, specially naturalized immigrants.
- Ambulatory difficulties, one of the indicators for disability and motor impairment, show the highest prevalence levels, particularly in the two immigrant groups, which is in line with their higher average ages.

A final word of recognition is due to FLAD for the initiative to promote this study, thus contributing to research on Portuguese emigration to the USA, and on the visibility and impact of links to Portugal substantiated in the communities of people born in Portugal or with Portuguese ties.



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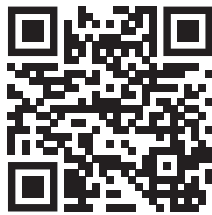
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