



Boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative.

BACKGROUND

Land and Climate. Portugal is on the west coast of the Iberian Peninsula, which it shares with Spain. Covering 35,672 square miles (92,391 square kilometers), Portugal's total land area is about the size of Indiana. The Portuguese Republic includes the mainland, the Madeira Archipelago (west of Morocco), and the Azores (Açores) Archipelago (about 800 miles, or 1,290 kilometers, off the Atlantic coast).

The Tagus (Tejo) River, which leads from Spain to Lisbon, divides the country into two zones. Iberian mountain ranges, such as the Serra da Estrela, extend across the north. The climate is cool and rainy though summers may be warm. Seasonal temperatures vary by elevation. In the south, the terrain is less rugged, formed by hills and valleys. The southern climate is warmer and more moderate because of the influence of the Mediterranean Sea. Long dry seasons occur in some southern areas. About 26 percent of the land is suitable for agriculture; 36 percent is forested, some of which has been cultivated for timber.

History. Portugal has been inhabited since Paleolithic times. The Portuguese descend from the Iberians, who first settled the peninsula, and the Celts, who had invaded by the sixth century B.C. and mixed with the Iberians. Ancient Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Greeks also invaded and built colonies on Portugal's coast. In 27 B.C., the Romans took control of the area and made it a province. After the Romans, the Visigoths (who later became Christian) ruled until they were defeated by the Moors. The Moors (Muslims) governed from the eighth to the twelfth century. By 1143, Portugal was recognized as an independent nation under King Afonso Henriques. In the 14th and 15th centuries, Portuguese explorers claimed a huge overseas empire for Portugal. Its colonies included Brazil, Mozam-

bique, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Macau (a small territory near Hong Kong). Global trade routes were established, and Lisbon became a key European trading center. Phillip II of Spain ruled Portugal as Phillip I for a short time (1580–98) because Portugal's previous king had left no heirs and Phillip had defeated other hopefuls. Phillip's sons also reigned in Portugal, but independence was restored in 1640. Portugal's monarchy was eventually overthrown (1910), and a republic was established.

Political rivalries resulted in an unstable regime, and a military coup overthrew the democracy in 1926. From 1928 to 1968, António de Oliveira Salazar led an authoritarian dictatorship, denying the people basic civil rights. When he fell ill, Marcello Caetano succeeded him. Caetano tried to effect some reforms while maintaining the basic authoritarian government. In April 1974, a socialist military group, led by General António de Spínola, took control of the government. Democracy was restored and colonies were granted independence. In 1975, the military leadership held elections that led to the Third Republic. As politics shifted to the left, key industries were nationalized and some farmland collectivized.

The political situation remained somewhat unstable until the 1985 elections, when voters elected Mário Soares (Socialist) president, and Aníbal Cavaco Silva (Social Democrat) became prime minister. Under their leadership, the government began privatization efforts, joined the European Union (EU), and started a series of other reforms aided by EU funding. Prime Minister Silva's popular leadership led to his reelection in 1991. However, the Socialists returned to power in the 1995 parliamentary elections, and António Guterres became prime minister. Not permitted to serve a third term as president,

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Soares stepped down in March 1996.

Portugal was in the first round of EU countries to begin using the euro as its currency. In December of 1999, Portugal ceded Macau back to the People's Republic of China, bringing the last remnants of its colonial empire in Asia to an end.

THE PEOPLE

Population. Portugal has a population of about 10.1 million, which is growing by .17 percent. Unlike most industrialized countries, Portugal still has a relatively small urban population. Nearly one-third of the residents live in rural areas or small towns, though migration to urban areas is changing this. Most Portuguese are of ethnic Mediterranean stock; there is not much ethnic diversity. Black Africans, who began migrating to Portugal after decolonization, comprise less than 1 percent of the population. Immigrants and Roma (Gypsies) tend to live in poorer conditions than the rest of the population.

Language. The official language is Portuguese, which is derived from Latin. Portuguese is spoken by hundreds of millions worldwide. Many Portuguese speakers also understand Spanish because the languages are similar. Several regional accents can be distinguished on the mainland and in the islands. English and French, which are commonly taught in the schools, are understood and spoken by an increasing number.

Religion. Ninety-four percent of the population is Roman Catholic, but most Portuguese consider themselves nonpracticing. People tend to be far more religious in the northern part of the country, where Mass, confession, processions, and religious holidays are participated in more devoutly. Millions of Catholics from around the world make a pilgrimage to a holy site in Fátima, where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared several times to three young children. Throughout Portugal, Catholic weddings and baptisms are an important tradition. At baptism, an infant is given a *padrinho* and *madrinha* ("godfather" and "godmother") who are traditionally responsible for the child's spirituality and physical welfare in the event of the parents' death. Approximately 1 percent of Portuguese belongs to other Christian denominations. Some non-Christian religions are also practiced. Freedom of religion is guaranteed.

General Attitudes. The Portuguese generally are traditional and conservative. Change and innovation are only accepted after careful consideration, and then quietly. People and relationships are more important than time, so being late is often acceptable. Punctuality is becoming more important to city dwellers.

The Portuguese have an open, liberal society but place a greater emphasis on moral values than do those in other European nations. Hospitality, honesty, kindness, and being a good person are highly valued qualities. People tend to admire the achievements of others rather than their own. Social position and amassing land and wealth to leave as an inheritance are seen as important. The Portuguese are proud of their cultural heritage (especially its seafaring past), national identity, and economic progress. However, most people today avidly discuss soccer results and teams rather than political issues. The Portuguese are open and friendly to visitors from other nations. They believe friendships should be strong and should last a lifetime.

Personal Appearance. The Portuguese generally dress conservatively. Men wear suits to work, although sport jackets are also popular. Tattered clothing is improper. Leather dress shoes are worn for most occasions; tennis shoes are for recreation, not everyday wear. Clothing usually is ironed well;

wrinkles are considered sloppy. It is considered important to be well dressed in public. Young people dress casually and sometimes less carefully.

Each region of Portugal has a distinct costume that residents wear for festivals and special occasions. The costumes often are elaborate and very colorful. For women, most costumes include scarves for the head and/or shoulders and skirts with aprons. Men's costumes usually include a hat, vest, and scarf. After the death of a close relative, people wear black clothing for a certain period of time; it is considered part of the mourning process, particularly in rural areas. Some widows wear black the rest of their lives.

CUSTOMS AND COURTESIES

Greetings. A warm, firm handshake is an appropriate greeting for anyone, although some Portuguese prefer lighter handshakes. Friends often hug. Among relatives and friends—and sometimes even new acquaintances—men and women give other women *beijinhos* (little kisses) on each cheek, beginning with the right. Often when people give *beijinhos*, they brush cheeks and kiss the air. Children are expected to kiss adults in the extended family when greeting them. Touching is a common part of greeting because it shows friendship. Greeting strangers passing in the street is done in small villages but not in bigger towns or cities.

The person arriving is expected to greet first. Common greetings include *Olá* (Hello), *Bom dia* (Good day), *Boa tarde* (Good afternoon), and *Boa noite* ("Good evening" or "Good night"). *Adeus* (Good-bye), *Por favor* (Please), and *Obrigado* (Thank you) are also used. People use first names for friends, teens, and children. Otherwise, one addresses an adult by title and surname. Sometimes the title is combined with the first name rather than the last, depending on personal preference and the relationship between the speakers.

Gestures. Although the Portuguese are rather reserved, they use many physical gestures in conversation. To beckon, one waves all fingers with the palm facing up. It is impolite to point directly at a person with the index finger. Pinching the earlobe and shaking it gently while raising the eyebrows means something (a meal, for instance) is really good. Pulling down the skin just below the eye with the index finger can mean "You are perceptive" or "You are kidding me." Spreading the fingers, palm down, and rocking the hand, means "More or less." Rubbing the thumb against the first two fingers with the palm facing up signifies money. Touching the tips of all fingers to the tip of the thumb with the palm facing up signifies fear or cowardice. Making a "V" sign or "rabbit ears" behind someone's head constitutes a serious insult because it connotes a lack of morals.

Visiting. When visiting a family, guests wait outside the door until invited inside the home; likewise, guests do not let themselves out when leaving, but they let the hosts open the door. Guests are expected to wipe their feet before entering in order to keep the home clean. They usually avoid very personal questions. Hosts typically offer their guests refreshments; refusing them is impolite. Sincere compliments about the home and its decor are welcome. Most guests express appreciation by inviting the hosts for a visit at their home.

Socializing in the home is common, but business associates usually go to a restaurant. People also enjoy getting together at a café for casual conversation, sweets, and tea or coffee. Visiting relatives, especially those living in one's rural *terra* (homeland), is very popular. Urban Portuguese have strong

ties to their hometowns or native regions and try to visit as often as possible. Since visits may last several days, they are planned far in advance.

Eating. The Portuguese take time for conversation during the meal. They eat in the continental style, with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. When eating fish, one usually uses a special knife and fork. It is important to keep the hands above the table at all times. Stretching, particularly at the table, is impolite and implies one is tired or bored with the company. One covers the mouth when using a toothpick. Unless eating ice cream, adults generally do not eat while walking in public.

Breakfast (coffee or milk and toast or a sandwich) might be eaten at home, on the run, or (for children) at day care. Lunch, traditionally the biggest meal, is eaten about 1 p.m., though work pressures and travel are changing that. Dinner is eaten between 8 and 9 p.m. Taking a snack and coffee break around 4:30 p.m. is common. Lunch and dinner may consist of soup, a main dish that includes meat or fish and vegetables (cooked or in a salad), and fruit or sweets for dessert. *Bica*, a strong espresso-type coffee, is often served after the meal. In some areas of the north, *bica* is called *cimbalino*. On special occasions (or when guests are present), two main dishes may be served, in which case fish is served first.

In restaurants, one summons the server with a raised hand. The bill usually does not include a service charge. People tip what they want to, according to the service and the kind of restaurant. Most people do not dine out often.

LIFESTYLE

Family. The nuclear family is the most common unit in Portuguese society. Urban couples tend to have one child. Nuclear families, particularly those in rural areas, are strengthened by a clan spirit that extends to aunts, uncles, cousins, and beyond. Children usually leave home only when they marry; they are expected to care for their parents in their old age. Single parents are becoming more common; divorced people tend to marry again. The husband is head of the family but shares authority with the wife. Women comprise a significant percentage of the labor force, but wives still do most of the housework. Families in urban areas enjoy most modern conveniences and have a faster-paced lifestyle, while people living in rural areas still lead fairly simple lives. Rural homes are small, and many luxury items are too expensive to buy.

Dating and Marriage. Young people often meet at school or college and tend to socialize in groups. Cafés, small parks, and beaches are popular gathering places. When they get older, the Portuguese pair off in couples and enjoy going for walks and to the cinema. Engagements are usually lengthy while the couple saves money for an apartment. Most people marry between the ages of 25 and 28; having children between the ages of 35 and 40 is not uncommon. Catholic ceremonies and civil marriages are commonly followed by a large party at a restaurant. It is not uncommon for urban couples to live together before getting married, but the practice is not accepted in rural areas, where society tends to be more conservative.

Diet. Food is extremely important to the Portuguese, whose average caloric consumption is among the highest in Europe. Staple foods in Portugal include meat, bread, fish, cheese, vegetables, and fruits. Soups such as *caldo verde* (made with potatoes, cabbage, and olive oil) are also a staple. One national dish is *bacalhau* (dried salt cod), which usually is served with potatoes and green vegetables and sometimes garbanzo beans and garlic. *Bacalhau* is eaten often and in a variety of ways.

Caldeirada (fish stew) is a favorite. The traditional Portuguese salad includes dark green lettuce, tomatoes, onions, vinegar, olive oil, and salt. Pork is a typical meat, with most parts of the pig still eaten. *Chouriços*, a salted or smoked sausage made from various meat pieces, is popular. Lamb, beef, chicken, and rabbit are also common. Chicken is eaten in many forms, such as *cabidela* (chicken with rice boiled in blood). Another popular dish is *cozido à Portuguesa*, a mixture of meats with potatoes, rice, and vegetables. Parsley and garlic are common seasonings. Sweets are popular, and Portugal has many pastry shops. Table wine is inexpensive and consumed at meals by adult family members. Countless regional varieties of wine and cheese and other foods are available.

Recreation. Soccer is by far the most popular sport in Portugal. Running and playing basketball are also favorite activities. During their leisure time, people like to listen to music or watch television, particularly soccer matches or Brazilian and Portuguese soap operas. Other activities include socializing at sidewalk cafés, going to movies, and dancing at nightclubs or discos. Local recreation clubs offer dances, games, and other events.

Families like to take walks, go to the park, and have picnics. Many see going to one of Portugal's beautiful beaches as an essential part of summer. During the summer, many Portuguese try to spend at least two weeks away from home either visiting relatives or camping. More Portuguese are beginning to travel abroad during vacations.

Portugal is known for its tradition with horses. Portuguese bullfights incorporate the graceful movements of the horse and rider with the charges of the bull; the bull is not killed as in other countries.

The Arts. Portuguese art has a long history and continues to flourish today. The country's architecture is modeled in cathedrals, castles, and palaces decorated in various ornamental styles, including the *Manueline*, a unique baroque style. A notable art form is the *azulejo* (glazed tile). *Azulejos*, often cobalt blue and white, decorate many buildings, from palaces to bars. *Fado* (fate) music, similar to the blues of North America, is very important to the Portuguese. Accompanied by guitars, it often portrays a sense of loss or sadness. Fado musicians commonly ad-lib lyrics, supporting their tone and volume in the throat rather than the diaphragm.

In recent years, Portuguese literature has gained international recognition. An increasing number of women writers has added variety to contemporary writing. *Revista* is a popular theater where politics or social issues are satirized.

Holidays. National holidays in Portugal include New Year's Day, Easter (including Good Friday), Anniversary of the Revolution (25 Apr.), Labor Day (1 May), Corpus Christi (in June), National Day of Portugal (10 June), Assumption (15 Aug.), Proclamation of the Republic (5 Oct.), All Saints' Day (1 Nov.), Independence Day (1 Dec.), Day of the Immaculate Conception (8 Dec.), and Christmas. All Saints' Day is an occasion to commemorate dead friends and relatives by decorating graves with flowers. On National Day, the poet Luís de Camões is honored and the Portuguese communities scattered abroad are remembered. Throughout the year, local festivals honor patron saints or celebrate such events as the harvest. *Carnaval*, the festivities of the five days preceding Ash Wednesday, includes locally sponsored parades, children dressing up in costumes, and dances at clubs and recreation halls.

Commerce. People in urban areas buy their basic goods from

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supermarkets or large stores. The number of smaller shops is diminishing due to competition. But most people can still buy fresh food at indoor and outdoor markets and other goods from small shops. Business hours vary from place to place, but the traditional workday is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 to 7 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. Government offices close around 4:30 p.m. Banks remain open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Shopping centers are open later and do not close for lunch. Many businesses close on Sundays.

SOCIETY

Government. The Portuguese Republic is divided into eighteen districts and two autonomous regions. Portugal's president (currently Jorge Sampaio) is chief of state. He can veto approved laws, dissolve parliament, and set the date for new elections, if necessary. The prime minister (currently José Manuel Durão Barroso) serves as head of government and is usually the leader of the legislature's dominant party or coalition of parties. Portugal's unicameral Assembly of the Republic has 230 members, all of whom are directly elected. The voting age is 18.

Economy. Economic development since 1990 has helped urban areas more than rural areas, but the entire country has benefited from a more stable government and brighter prospects for its future. Inflation and unemployment are low, and more people are prospering economically. Although Portugal remains one of the poorest EU members, participating in Europe's monetary union has been a top priority for the country. Government reforms, wide support, and favorable economic trends enabled Portugal to meet EU requirements and help launch the euro in January 1999.

However, high interest rates, taxes, bureaucracy, and debt loads in key sectors are obstacles to continued growth. To increase productivity and become competitive in the European market, Portugal must modernize its markets, industry, workforce, and infrastructure.

Textiles, leather shoes, cork, timber, canned fish, wine, machinery, and tourism are important industries. Fishing and agricultural sectors are partially subsidized by the EU to lower production. Ten percent of the labor force is engaged in agriculture, but Portugal still imports much of its food. Main crops include grains, potatoes, olives, and grapes. The currency, formerly the *escudo*, is now the euro.

Transportation and Communications. Automobiles are the most common form of transportation, and Portugal has a good network of paved roads. Although EU subsidies have led to drastic improvements, few roads are as modern as those in other EU countries. Driving can be hazardous. Traffic accidents are a leading cause of death and injury in Portugal. In urban areas people use taxis, buses, and trains, which connect most areas. Lisbon has a good ferryboat system and a growing subway network; a new beltway and train link to suburbs south of the Tejo are being completed to help resolve serious traffic congestion. Porto's metro is also growing.

The communications system is good, although phone calls are more expensive than in other EU countries. Mobile phones are increasingly common. Television is the principal source of information, followed by radio. Portugal has four television

DEVELOPMENT DATA

Human Dev. Index* rank	23 of 175 countries
Adjusted for women	23 of 144 countries
Real GDP per capita	\$18,150
Adult literacy rate	95 percent (male); 90 (female)
Infant mortality rate	6 per 1,000 births
Life expectancy	72 (male); 79 (female)

channels (two are private) and many radio stations. Six major daily newspapers are published countrywide. Forty percent of the population uses the internet.

Education. Many children are enrolled in day care from a young age. Education begins at age six and is compulsory through the ninth grade. Private schools and free public schools are available. After elementary school, students may attend three years of high school and three years of college preparation, or two to four years of vocational schooling that also incorporates some college preparatory courses. There are 18 universities in Portugal. Public universities charge a small tuition, but admission is limited and access to vocations such as medicine is highly competitive. The University of Coimbra, founded in the 13th century, is one of the oldest in Europe.

Health. The government subsidizes health care. The national health system includes a network of health centers, hospitals, and private clinics. Public facilities are in high demand and are generally adequate, though service is inefficient. Private clinics provide service for those who are able to pay more.

AT A GLANCE

Events and Trends.

- In February 2004, EU officials criticized Portugal's prison system for being the worst in the union. A report said Portuguese prisons were dirty and overcrowded, while the criminal system had too few alternatives to imprisonment. The government has pledged improvements.
- Huge forest fires in August 2003 led the government to declare a national calamity. All told, an area the size of Luxembourg was burned, and damages were estimated at one billion euros.
- Manuel Durão Barroso, a Social Democrat, became prime minister following early general elections in March 2002. Durão Barroso formed a coalition government with the conservative Popular Party, promising to strengthen the economy and reduce public spending. However, his strict economic reforms prompted a general strike in November 2002. Most of the protesters were government employees, who comprise 15 percent of the Portuguese workforce.

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