Portuguese emigration: trends and forecasts

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Portugal
History of Portuguese Emigration

Until 1974
- High volume of emigration

1974
- April 25th, interruption of emigration

1986
- European integration

The 80’s
- Substantial increase in immigration and stable emigration levels

Late 90’s
- Emigration mainly to Europe, integration into the Eurozone

Early 21st century
- 2008-2010: Interruption of emigration between 2008 and 2010, the years of the global financial and economic crisis

2013
- 120 thousand Portuguese citizens leaving and subsequent decline
Portuguese emigrated population in the main destination countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2000/01</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
<th>Absolute Variation</th>
<th>Relative variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>36 556</td>
<td>92 065</td>
<td>55 509</td>
<td>151,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>56 359</td>
<td>98 975</td>
<td>42 616</td>
<td>75,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>100 975</td>
<td>169 459</td>
<td>68 484</td>
<td>67,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>41 690</td>
<td>60 897</td>
<td>19 207</td>
<td>46,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>70 100</td>
<td>75 110</td>
<td>5 010</td>
<td>7,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>581 062</td>
<td>617 234</td>
<td>36 172</td>
<td>6,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>153 530</td>
<td>140 315</td>
<td>-13 215</td>
<td>-8,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>218 646</td>
<td>191 803</td>
<td>-26 843</td>
<td>-12,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>53 477</td>
<td>37 326</td>
<td>-16 151</td>
<td>-30,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>213 203</td>
<td>137 973</td>
<td>-75 230</td>
<td>-35,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The available data allow us to distinguish three sets of destinations, according to the different demographic profiles of the Portuguese populations that emigrated there:

**Old countries of emigration**
- Ageing
- Population decrease
(particularly on the American continent, such as Brazil, Venezuela, the USA and Canada);

**Old countries with new emigration**
- Ageing
- Slight population growth
(France, Germany and Luxembourg);

**New countries of emigration**
- Younger
- Fast population growth
(Switzerland, Spain and the United Kingdom).
+ Recently
(Nordic and Benelux countries)
In 2020 Portuguese emigration fell abruptly, to figures similar to those observed at the beginning of the 21st century, of around 45,000 departures.
Portuguese emigration in 2020

For the first time in this century, no destination registered more than 8,000 entries of Portuguese emigrants. The main destination, in 2020, was Switzerland, where 7,542 Portuguese entered its territory and was the country with the highest number.

Only to the United Kingdom there were 18 thousand less, which represents 51% of the total decrease. In other words, the reduction of Portuguese emigration to the United Kingdom will explain about half of the reduction of total Portuguese emigration in 2020.

Note: [AGO] Data from permanent emigration visas. Represented only 2019-2020 changes or, where data for 2020 are not available, 2018-2019 changes (marked with *).
In 2021 Portuguese emigration began to recover from the sharp drop recorded in 2020, due to the combined effect of the covid-19 pandemic and Brexit. At least around 60,000 Portuguese emigrated in 2021, 15,000 more than in the previous year.
Portuguese emigration in 2021

The main destination of Portuguese emigration in 2021 will have been, once again, the United Kingdom, followed by Spain (8,272), Switzerland (7,657) and Germany (5,510). This list of main destinations should also include France, in an unknown position due to delays in the release of data on foreign arrivals in 2021.

In flows to other countries, the recovery was, as already mentioned, quite uneven, ranging from only +1.8% in flows to Switzerland to over 80% in those going to the United Kingdom.

[AGO] Data on permanent emigration visas. [GBR] Estimated data for 2021. Only 2020-2021 changes or, where data for 2021 are not available, 2019-2020 changes are represented (marked with *).
However, in six cases, the recovery is complete, and the numbers of 2019 have even been exceeded. Scandinavia and Benelux were the regions where the figures were exceeded.

Patterns of Portuguese Emigration

Forecast

Fast population increase
- Benelux
- Nordic countries

Significant recovery
- UK
- Spain

Stabilising
- Germany
- Switzerland
- France (probably)
Thank you!

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