



23 November 2022

2021 Census

## 2021 CENSUS - FINAL RESULTS RELEASE

Today, November 23, 2022, Statistics Portugal releases the Final Results of the XVI General Population Census and VI General Housing Census – 2021 Census, referenced to April 19, 2021.

With the publication of these results, one of the fundamental goals of this census operation has been achieved: to return to Society a wide set of statistical data, allowing to improve the knowledge about the country by characterising the population and the housing stock.

Willing to fulfil the needs of so many different users, the Statistics Portugal's Official Statistics Website provides an area dedicated to the dissemination of the [2021 Census Final Results](#) with a diverse range of dissemination products.

### 2021 Census - Main Portugal trends in the last decade

#### Population

- The country registered a population decrease of 2.1% and the imbalances of the distribution of the population throughout the territory became worse;
- Due to the significant growth in the elderly population and its decrease in the young sector, the phenomenon of population ageing worsened;
- The percentage of the divorced population, as well as the population living in a "consensual union" status has increased;
- The foreign population living in Portugal grew by 37%;
- With the reinforcement of the population holding higher education and with secondary and post-secondary education, the overall educational level of the population increased significantly.

#### Households and family nuclei

- The average size of private households has decreased and the number of people living alone has increased;
- Growth in the number of one-parent families and reconstituted families.

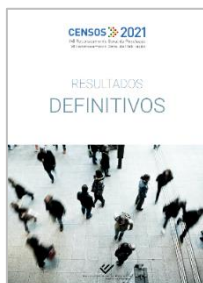
#### Housing

- Slight growth of buildings and dwellings for habitation purposes;
- Reinforcement of the relative importance of main residence dwellings versus secondary residences and vacant dwellings;
- Increase in the dwellings under lease contract.

2021 CENSUS – Final results



## 2021 Census Final Results dissemination products



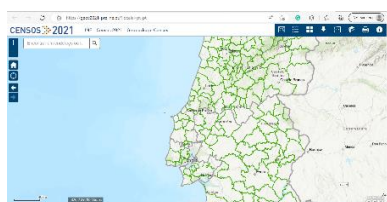
1-[Publication](#): with the analysis of the 2021 Census main results, mostly with NUTS II breakdown. The goal is to provide an overview of the main demographic, socioeconomic and housing characteristics of the country.



2-[Dissemination Platform - Census 2021](#) Dashboard that allows the visualisation and exploration of 2021 Census main indicators by subjects: Population, Households and Family Nuclei and Housing. Both charts and maps are available by NUTS II, Municipality and Parish breakdown. The data is organised by main subjects.



3-[Statistical indicators on Statistics Portugal's website](#) for the different statistical units: resident population, households, family nuclei, buildings and dwellings. Possibility of extracting information in various formats (up to the parish level).



4-[GeoCensus](#) geographical application that allows a set of data to be displayed on a map, using the Geographic Base for Referencing Information - BGRI 2021 (geographical sub-section and the GRID 1000mx1000m).



5-[Infographics](#) Summary of the main census subjects: population, households and families and housing



## What did we learn from the 2021 Census?

### Main trends identified in the 2021 Census

From the vast amount of information made available by the 2021 Census, which allows us to characterise the country in its various domains, the main trends that have occurred in Portugal in the last decade are here by summarised.

### POPULATION

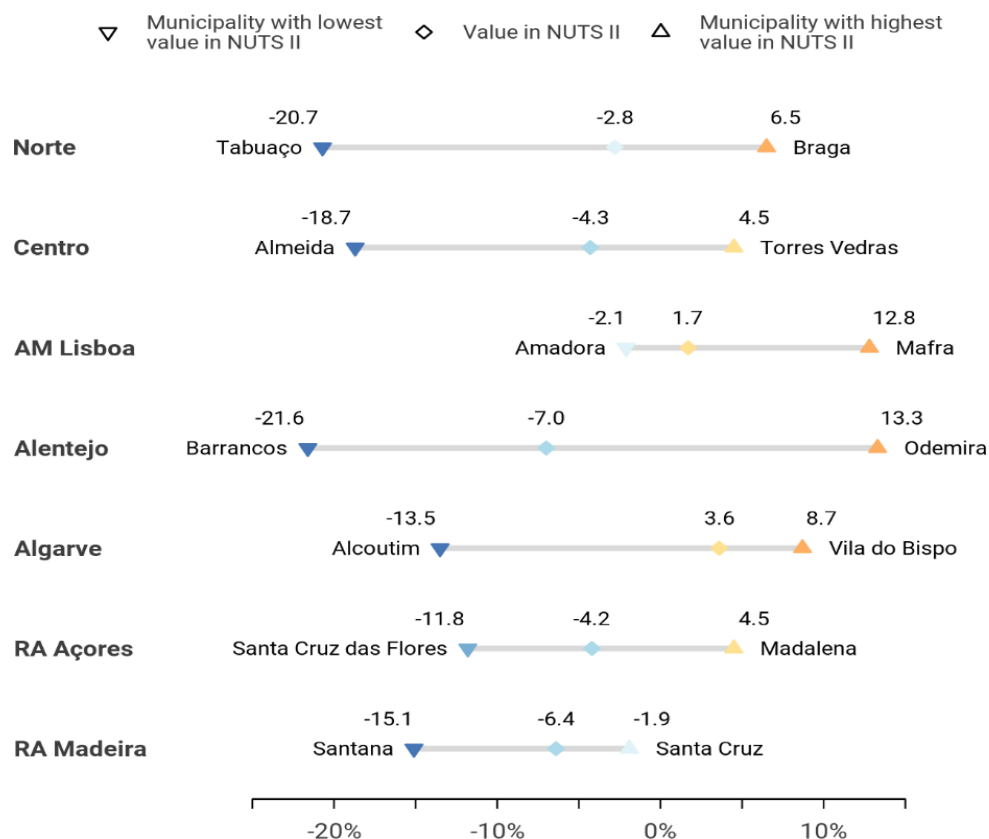
Portugal registered a population decrease of 2.1%, and the imbalances in the distribution of the population across the territory became more accentuated

According to the Final Results of the 2021 Census, at the census moment ( April 19, 2021), **10 343 066** people were living in Portugal (4 920 220 men and 5 422 846 women), which represents a decrease of 2.1%, when compared to 2011.

This value reflects an interruption in the trend of population growth witnessed in recent decades and represents the second population set back since 1864, when the first General Population Census was carried out. Considering the census series, Portugal had only registered a population reduction before, with the 1970 Census, as the result of the high level of emigration that took place in the 1960's. In the last decade, two regions registered a population growth: the Algarve region (3.6%) and the Área Metropolitana de Lisboa (1.7%). In the remaining regions the population decreased, with the Alentejo (-7.0%) and the Região Autónoma da Madeira (-6.4%) registering the most significant decreases.



Figure 1. Resident population, 2011 - 2021, NUTS II (%)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

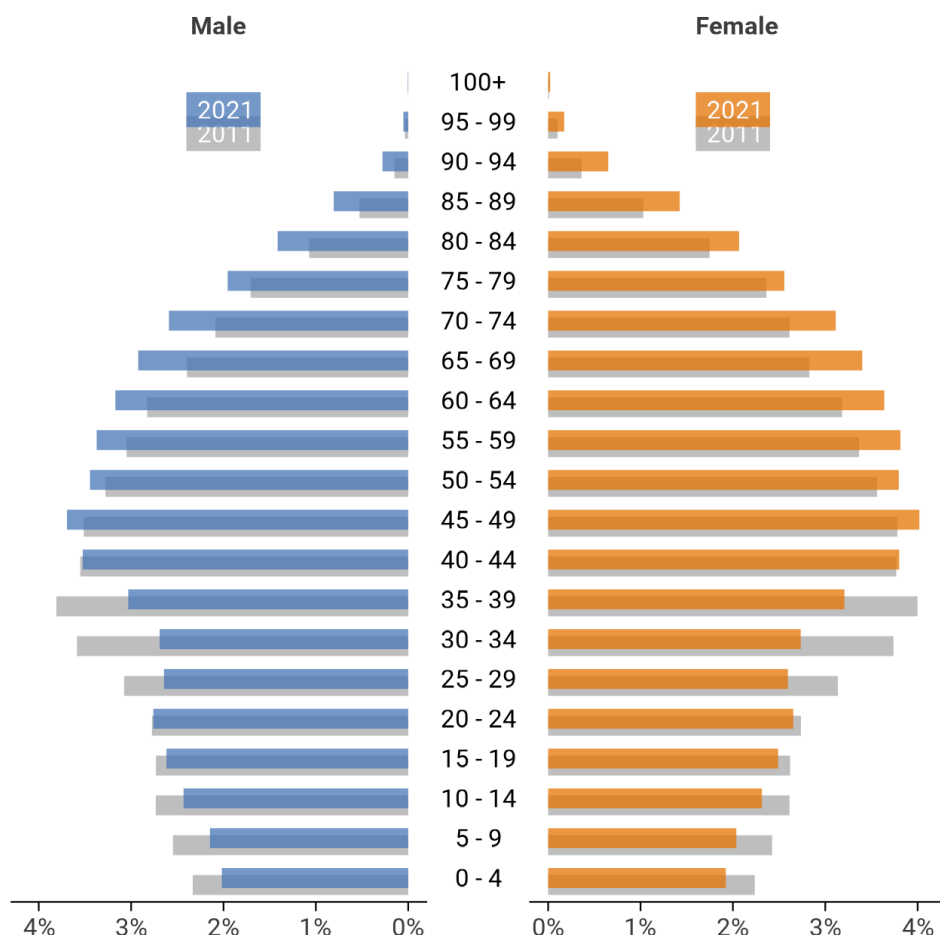
The country coastline pattern and the concentration of the population near the capital, has been reinforced in the last decade. Around 20% of the country's population is located in the 7 most populous municipalities, which cover an area of only 1.1% of the territory. On the opposite side, also representing around 20% of the population, we have the 208 least populated municipalities, which occupy 65.8% of the country's area.

**The ageing of the population has worsened: the young population has decreased and the elderly population has increased**

The low birth rate and the increase of population longevity that has occurred in recent decades, is reflected in the 2021 Census' age pyramid which, from 2011 to 2021, shows a narrowing of the age groups at the base and a widening at the most advanced ages at the top.



Figure 2. Resident population by age group and sex, 2011 - 2021 (%)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

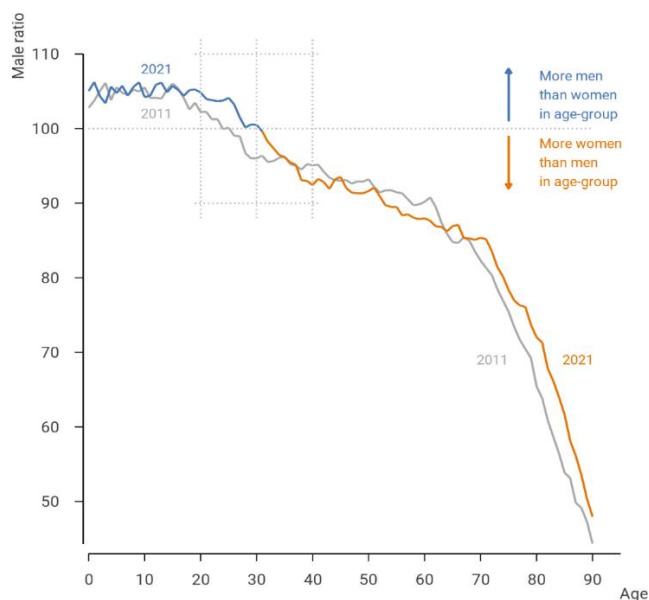
Between 2011 and 2021, in all age groups up to 39 years old, there was a decrease in the population, particularly in the group between 30 and 39 years old. On the other hand, all age groups above 44 years old increased their relative importance.

In 2021, the percentage of the elderly population (65 years old and over) represented 23.4%, while the youth rate (0-14 years old) was only 12.9%.

According to the 2021 Census, the male ratio was 91 men per 100 women. The number of men is higher than that of women at ages up to 30 years old, with the ratio reversing after that age. At older ages, the number of women is clearly higher than that of men, reflecting the higher mortality levels of the male population.



Figure 3. Male ratio by age, 2011 - 2021



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

In 2021, the average age of the population was 45.4 years, having increased by 3.1 years compared to 2011. The increase in the average age was common to all NUTS II regions. In 2021, the highest values were registered in the Centre (47.5 years old) and Alentejo (47.4 years old). The Região Autónoma dos Açores remained the region with the lowest average age (41.7 years old).

Demographic ageing in Portugal is reflected in the various demographic indicators:

Demographic indicators	2021	2011
Ageing index (elderly per 100 youth)	182	128
Working age population renewal ratio (population aged 20-29 years old per 100 people aged 55-64 years old )	76	94
Potential sustainability index (population aged 15 to 64 years old per 100 people aged 65 years old and over )	272	347

Between 2011 and 2021, the sustainability and renewal of the active population worsened. The working age population renewal ratio in 2021 was 76, meaning that, potentially, for every 100 individuals leaving the labour market, only 76 would enter. This value was 94 in 2011, which is already below the value that ensures the replacement of the working age population (rejuvenation is considered to exist whenever the value of this index is greater than 100).



## In the last 10 years the relative importance of the divorced population has increased

The 2021 Census indicates that approximately 43.5% of the resident population in Portugal was single. The group of the population with married civil status represented 41.0%, while the remaining categories of civil status, divorced and widowed, corresponded to 8.0% and 7.5%, respectively.

In comparison with 2011, the most significant changes are the loss of relative importance of the married population (by 5.6 p.p., along with the reinforcement of the divorced population (2.4 p.p.). The divorced population is now higher (8.0%) than the widowed marital status population (7.5%).

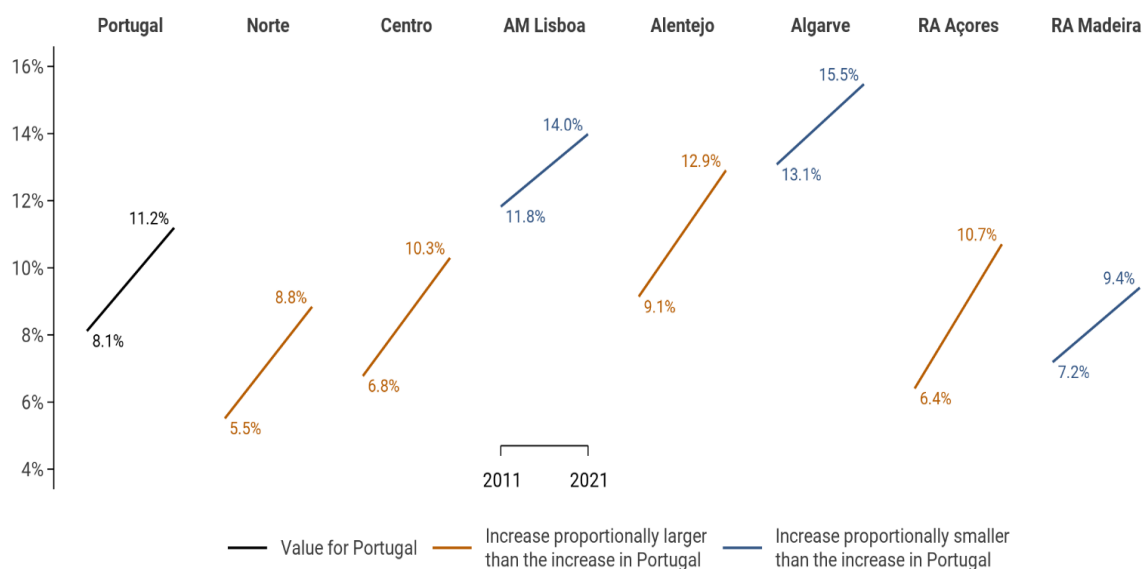
## Increase in the proportion of unmarried couples in the forms of marital status

According to the 2021 Census, the number of individuals living in a consensual union was 1 008 604, which represents an increase of 38.2% compared to 2011. In 2021, the percentage of the population living in a consensual union was 11.2%, compared to 8.1% in 2011.

By regions, the difference between North and South of Portugal was clear, with consensual union status assuming greater relevance in the South; the Algarve stands out as the region with the highest proportion of consensual unions (15.5%) and the north as the lowest (8.8%).



Figure 4. Population in consensual union, NUTS II, 2011 -2021, (%)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

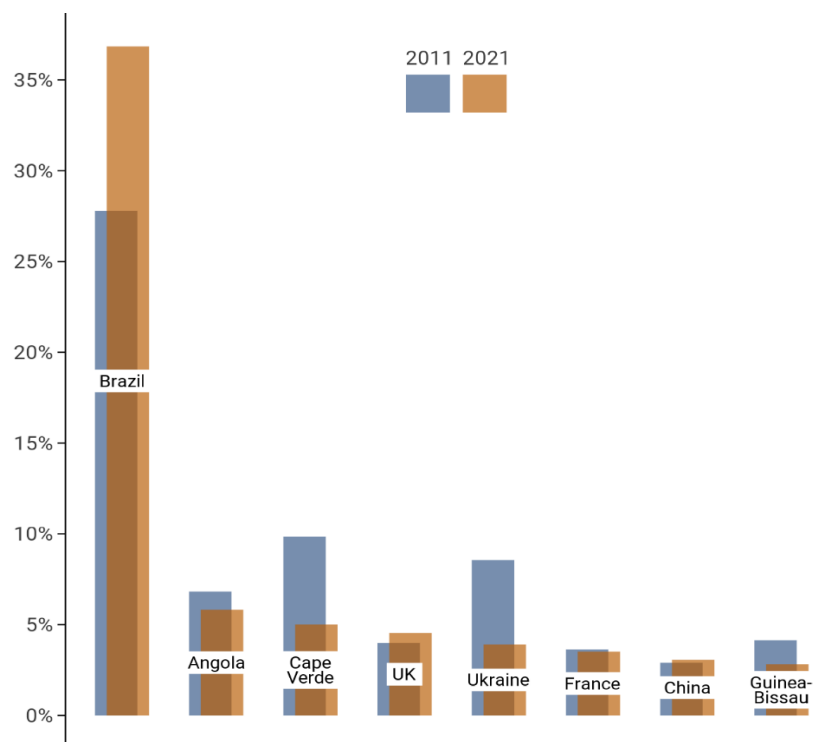
## In the last decade, foreign nationality population has increased

At the 2021 Census day moment, 542 314 people of foreign nationality were living in Portugal, representing 5.2% of the total population, up from 3.7% in 2011.

The largest foreign community living in Portugal was the Brazilian one, with 199 810 individuals (about 36.8%), followed by the Angolans, with 31 556 individuals (5.8%). Those from Cape Verde, were the third most represented in Portugal, with 27 144 individuals (5.0%), followed by citizens from the United Kingdom with 24 609 individuals (4.5%).



Figure 5. Resident population of foreign citizenship, 2011-2021, (%)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

It should be also highlighted the strong growth of some foreign communities, namely nationals from Nepal (from 959 individuals in 2011 to 13 224 in 2021) and from Bangladesh (from 853 individuals in 2011 to 9 150 in 2021).

### Portuguese population who have lived abroad

According to the 2021 Census, the number of Portuguese who have lived abroad and returned to Portugal was 1 608 094 people.

It is in North interior and Centre regions, as well as in the Região Autónoma da Madeira, that the Portuguese who have already lived abroad are most represented.

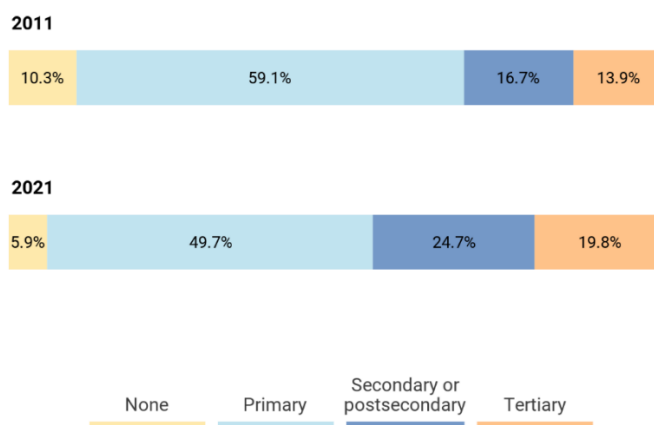
The most representative countries of origin are France (23.2%), Angola (14.0%), Switzerland (8.1%), Brazil (7.2%), Mozambique (6.5%) and Germany (6.3%).



## In the last decade, the level of schooling of the residente population has increased

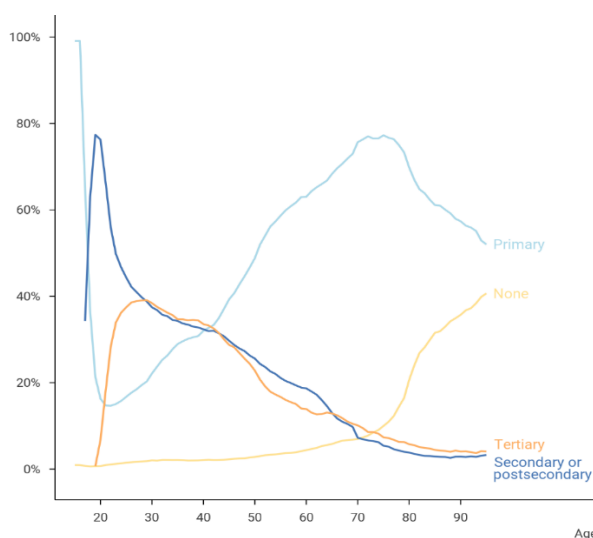
In the last decade, the population level of education has increased significantly, with the reinforcement of the population with higher and with secondary and post-secondary education. The 2021 Census shows that the population with higher education is 1 782 888 individuals, representing 19.8% of the population aged 15 years old or over (13.9% in 2011). In the last decade, the population with secondary and post-secondary education evolved from 16.7% to 24.7%.

Figure 6. Resident population by complete level of education, 2011-2021.



Source: Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

Figure 7. Resident population by complete level of education and age, 2021



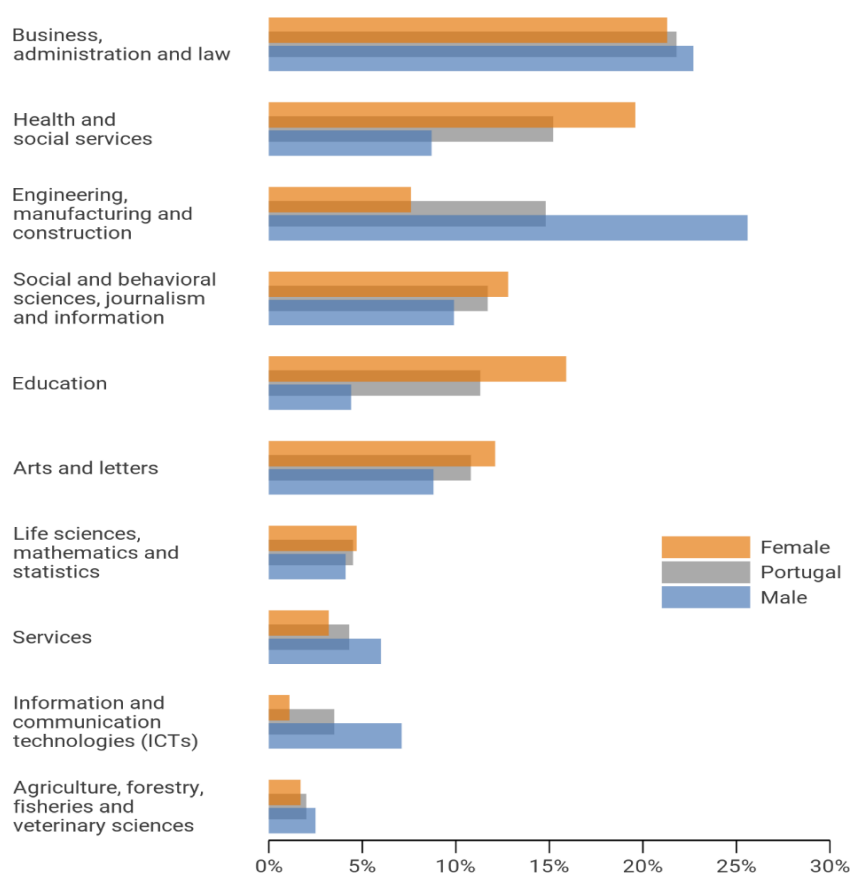
Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses



## "Business, administration and law" preferred field of study in higher education

The 2021 Census shows that the preferred areas of study in higher education were 'Business, administration and law' (21.8%) and 'Health and social services' (15.2%). In contrast, the study area "Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary sciences", was the least pursued, representing only 2% of the population with higher education.

Figure 8. Population with tertiary education by field of study and sex, 2021



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

An analysis regarding sex shows that men opted predominantly for the areas "Information and communication technologies (ICTs)" (80.5%) and "Engineering, manufacturing and construction" (68.3%). In what concerns to women, the preference was for the areas of "Education" and "Health and social services", with a proportion of 84.4% and 77.2%, respectively.



The *STEM* - *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics* study areas have a weight of 22.8%, being higher among men (36.9%) than women (13.4%).

### Illiteracy rate in 2021 was 3.1%

In 2021, 292 809 individuals aged 10 years old or more, could not read or write, which corresponds to an illiteracy rate of 3.1% - a decrease of 2.1 p.p. from 2011, when the rate was 5.2%.

Regionally, the decrease in the illiteracy rate was reflected all over NUTS II. However, the Alentejo remained the region with the highest value (5.4%) and the Área Metropolitana de Lisboa the region where the illiteracy rate was the lowest (2.0%).

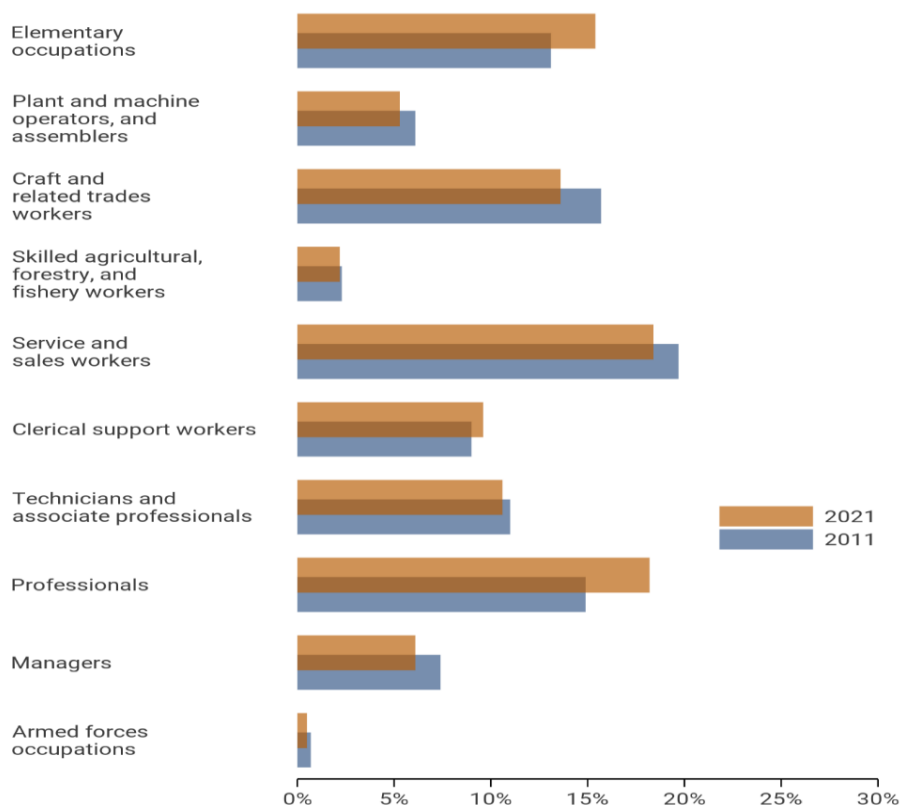
### In the last decade, the occupational group "Professionals" has increased its relative importance

In the last decade, the occupations that grew most belong to "Professionals" (3.3 p.p.). On the other hand, the largest decrease has been observed in the group of "Craft and related trade workers" (-2.1 p.p.).

Thus, in 2021, "Service and sales workers" (18.4%) and "Intellectual and scientific specialists" (18.2%), were the groups with the largest share in the employed population



Figure 9. Employed population by occupation (1 digit), 2011-2021 (%)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

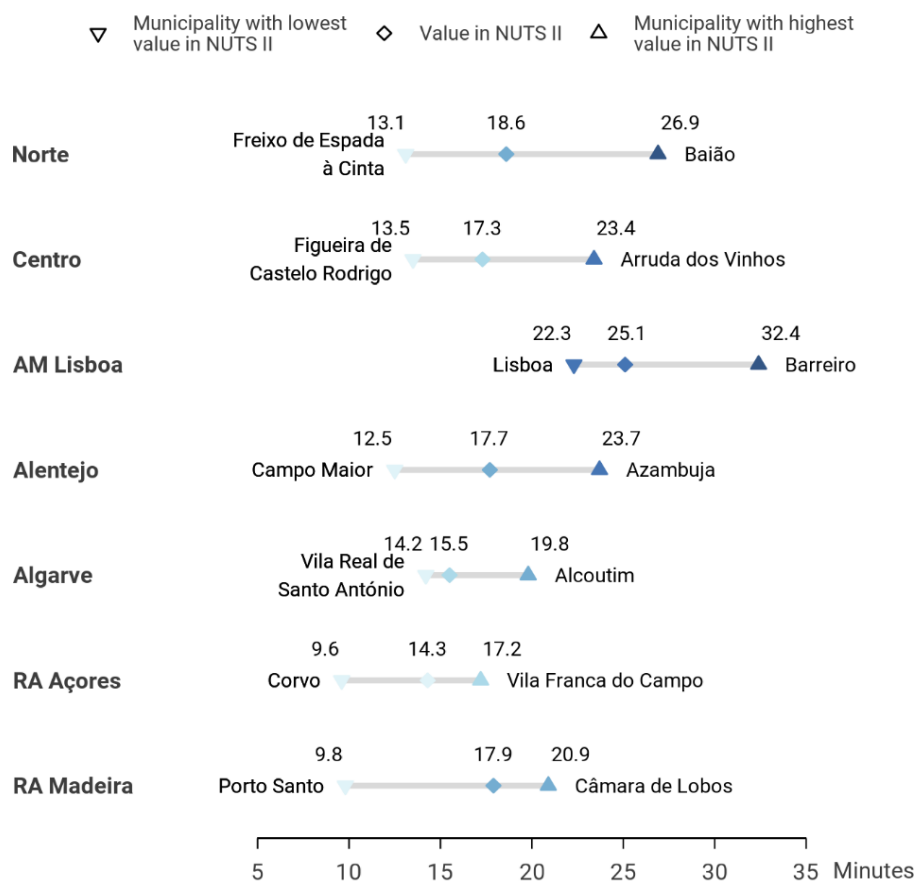
### The average daily time spent commuting to work or study was 19.9 minutes

In 2021, the average daily time spent commuting to work or study was 19.9 minutes, a value identical to that registered in 2011 (20.0 min).

By NUTS II, the residents from Área Metropolitana de Lisboa spend the longest time to travel (25.1 minutes). In the Região Autónoma dos Açores, the journey from home to workplace or home to studyplace takes 14.3 minutes, which makes it the region where the average is the lowest.



Figure 10. Average commuting time, NUTS II, 2021



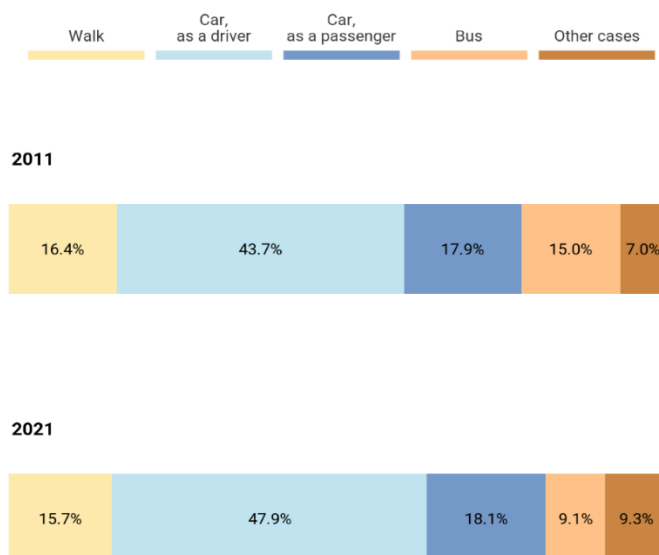
Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

### Car is the preferred means of transport used to commute to work or school

For the population that commutes daily for work or study, the car (as driver or as a passenger) was the preferred means of transport. According to the 2021 Census, 47.9% of resident population travelled by car as a driver and 18.1% travelled as a passenger, figures above those verified in 2011 (43.7% and 17.9%, respectively).



Figure 11. Mode of transport used for commuting, 2011-2021 (%)



Source: Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

## HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILY NUCLEI

**In the last decade, the average household size has decreased and the number of people living alone has increased**

In 2021, the average size of private households was 2.5 persons, which decreased by 0.1 from 2011.

One-person private households have increased their share, representing now 24.8% of the total. In contrast, the larger households have been losing importance, with households with 4 people representing 14.7% and those with 5 or more people, representing 5.6% (16.6% and 6.5% in 2011, respectively).

**The number of single-parent families has increased in the last decade**

In 2021, 579 971 (18.5%) single-parent family nuclei were registered - 3.6 p.p. more than in 2011.

Single-parent households consisting of a mother with children were predominant, 496 342 (85.6%), while the number of single-parents households consisting of a father with children were 83 629 (14.4%).

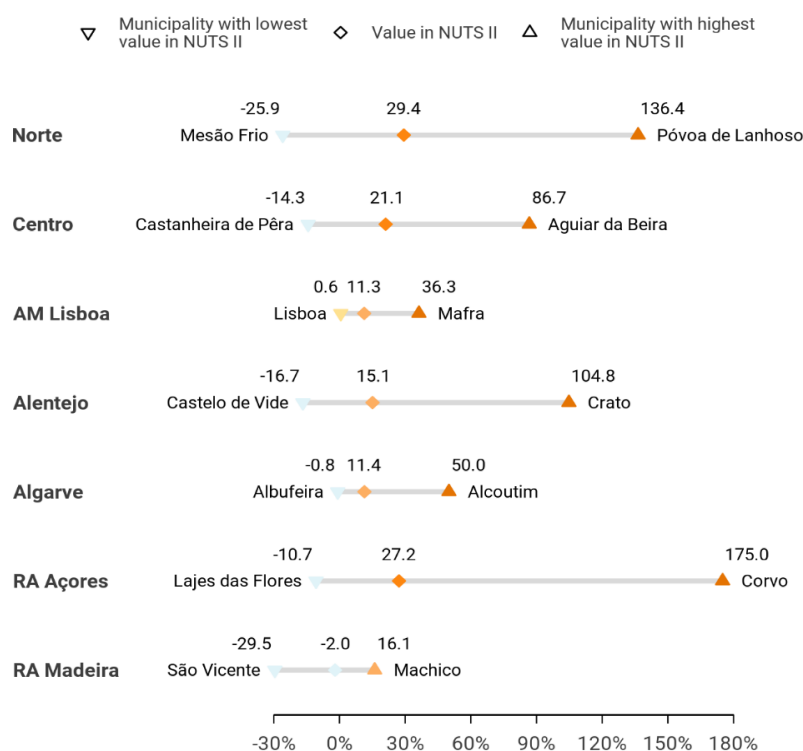
2021 CENSUS – Final results



## More family nuclei of reconstituted couples

In 2021, the number of reconstituted couple family nuclei (family nuclei with, at least, one unmarried child) was 124 717, representing 8.8% of all couple family nuclei with children. This type of family organisation increased its importance by 2.3 p.p. in relation to 2011.

Figure 12. Reconstituted family nuclei variation, NUTS II, 2011 - 2021 (%)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

## The majority of the population does not experience difficulties in carrying out daily activities

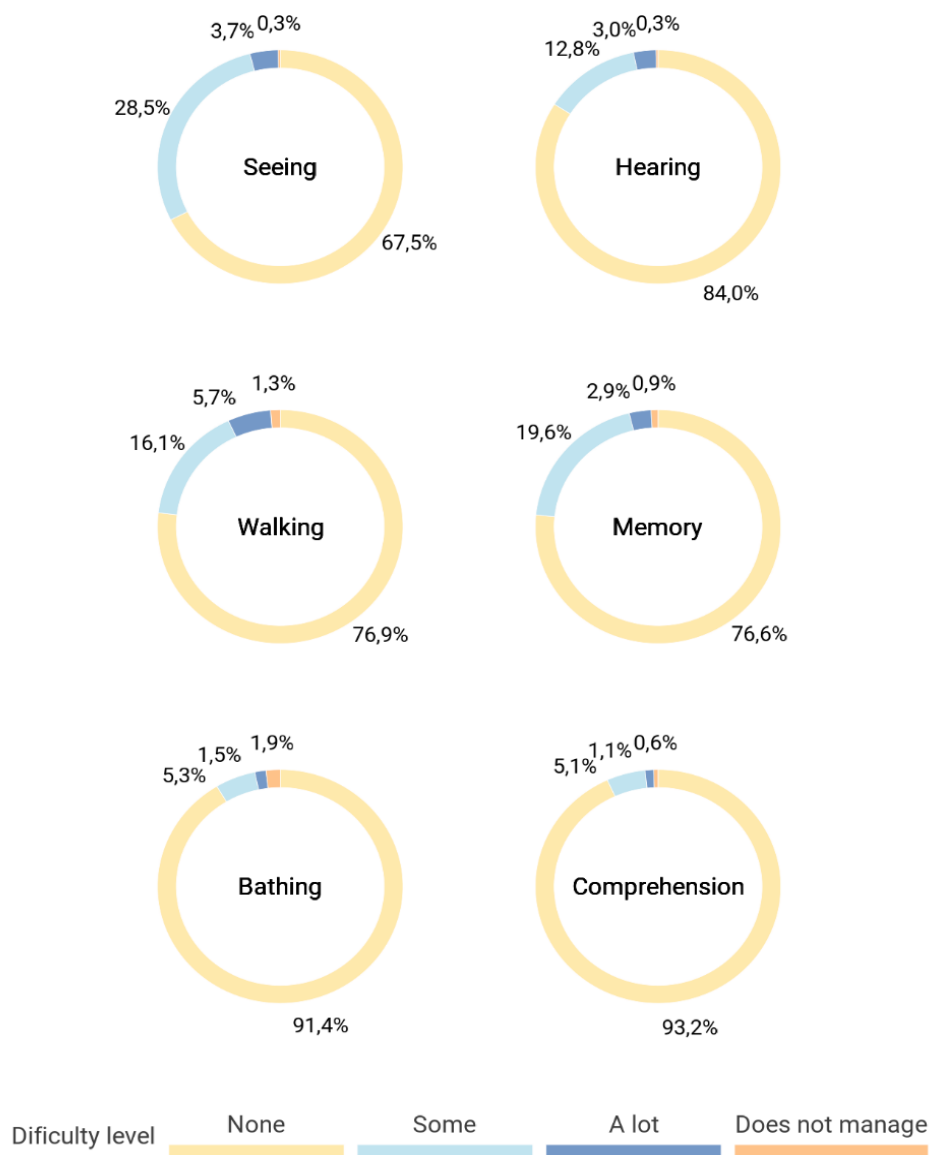
For the population aged 15 years old or over that declared having some difficulty, the main limitation is related to vision, with 28.5% reporting having some difficulty, 3.7% a lot of difficulty and 0.3% not being able to see.

This is followed by difficulties related to memory and walking, with, respectively, 23.4% and 23.1% of the population aged 15 years old or over experiencing difficulties with these activities.

2021 CENSUS – Final results



Figure 13. Population aged 15 years old and over, by type and degree of difficulty and age (%), 2021



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses



## Housing

Portugal has recorded a growth in the number of housing buildings and dwellings, although at a much slower pace than in previous decades

According to the 2021 Census results, the number of buildings for housing purposes was 3 573 416 and the number of dwellings 5 981 482, which represented an increase of 0.8% and 1.7%, respectively, compared to 2011. The growth in the housing stock between 2011 and 2021 is significantly lower than in the previous decade, when the figures were around 12% for buildings and 16% for dwellings.

In the last decade the proportion of usual residences has increased slightly as opposed to secondary residences

Portugal has recorded a growth in the number of buildings and dwellings for habitation, although at a much slower pace than in previous decades

The Área Metropolitana de Lisboa was the region with the highest percentage of dwellings of usual residence (79,6%). The Algarve region, with 38,6%, stands out as the region with the highest proportion of secondary residences. Regarding vacant dwellings, the Alentejo region registered the highest percentage (16.5%), in opposition to the Norte region, which had the lowest proportion of vacant dwellings (10.3%).

The number of rented dwellings has increased by 16% in the last 10 years

Although the vast majority of usual dwellings are owner-occupied (70.0%), rented dwellings increased their importance by 2.4 p.p. in relation to 2011, and now they represent 22.3% of the total occupied dwellings. By NUTS II, the Centro has the highest proportion of owner-occupied dwellings (77.3%), along with the lowest proportion of rented ones (15.8%). The Área Metropolitana de Lisboa stands out as the territory where the rented dwellings occupancy status had the greatest expression, with 29.2% of those occupied by tenants.



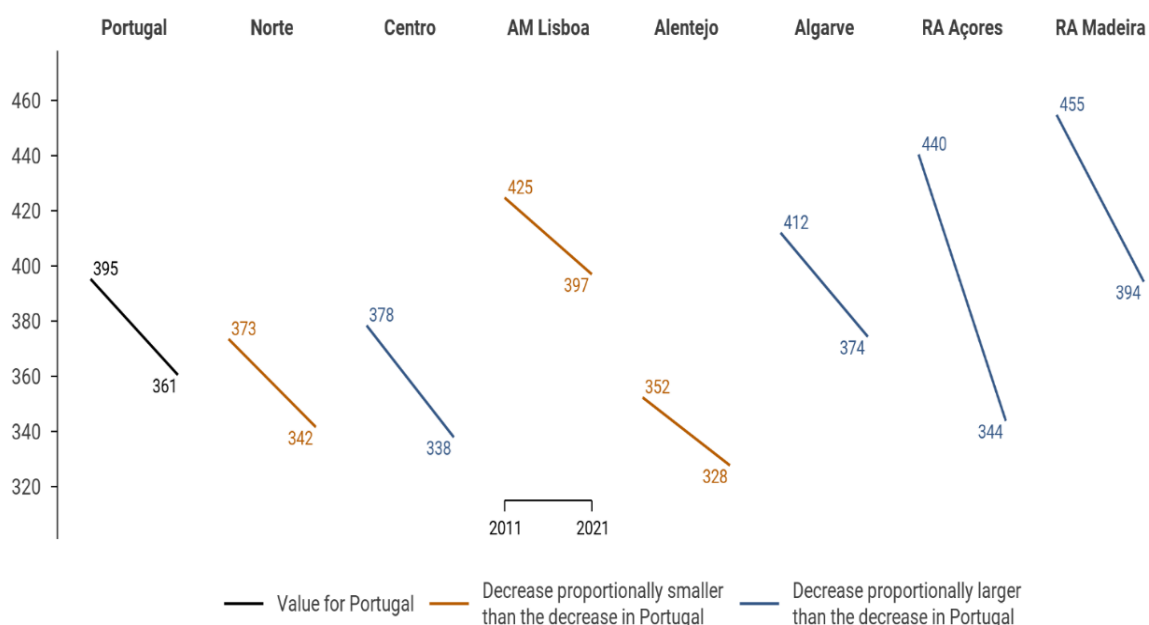
## Most owners have no financial burden related to housing purchase

Regarding to owner-occupied dwellings, the majority (61.6%) had no charges related to housing purchase. In the 38.4% of the ones with purchase expenses, the average monthly value of the charges was 360.5 euros, a value that decreased in comparison to 2011.

By NUTS II, the Área Metropolitana de Lisboa holds the higher average house purchase costs (397 euros). This is followed by the Região Autónoma da Madeira (394 euros) and the Algarve (374 euros). The remaining regions showed average values below the national average, with the Alentejo standing out with the lowest value (328 euros).

The decrease in home purchase expenses was noticed in all the regions, especially in the Região Autónoma dos Açores (the decrease in the average monthly expenses was 21.9%) and the Região Autónoma da Madeira.

Figure 14. Housing purchase average expenditure, NUTS II, 2011 - 2021 (EUR)



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

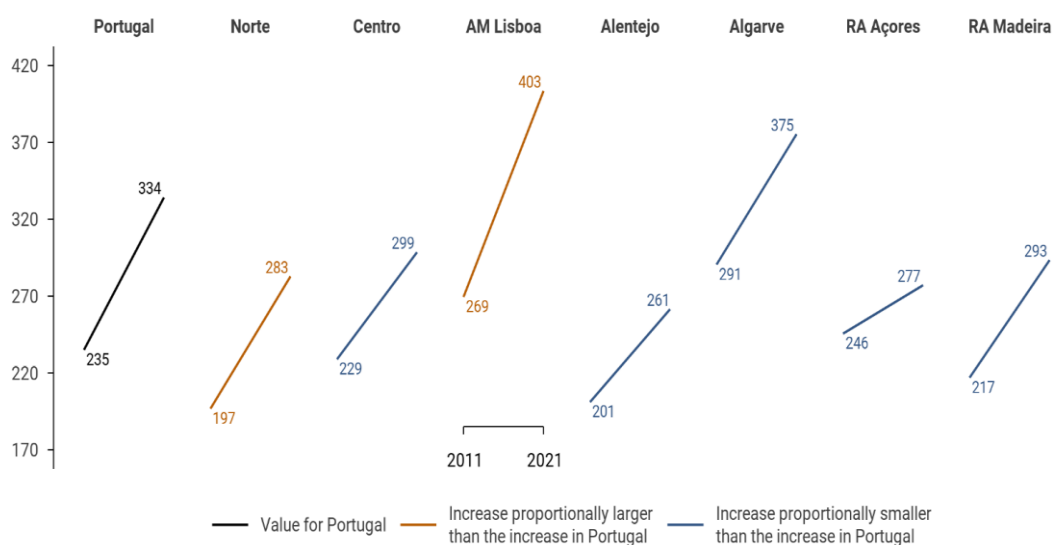


## Increase in the average monthly housing rental value in the last decade

In what concerns to rented dwellings, the average monthly rental value in 2021 was 334 euros, which represents an increase of 42.1% in relation to the value registered in 2011 (235 euros). This increase was verified in all the NUTS II regions.

It is in the Área Metropolitana de Lisboa that the rents are higher (average monthly value of 403 euros). It should also be noted, that it is in the Alentejo where this value is the lowest, with an average monthly rent of 261 euros.

Figure 15. Average monthly rental value, NUTS II, 2011 – 2021



Source : Statistics Portugal, Population and Housing censuses

## By 2021, most buildings in Portugal would not need repairs

According to the 2021 Census, 64.5% of residential buildings were not in need of repair. Out of the buildings that needed repairs, 21.8% needed light repairs, 9.4% medium repairs and 4.6% major repairs.

By NUTS II, there were no great discrepancies: the Algarve region has the highest percentage of buildings in need of repair (70.7%). The housing stock with the least favourable state of conservation was the Região Autónoma da Madeira, with 43.0% of the buildings in need of some intervention.



# DIÍSTAQUE

INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ESTATÍSTICA  
STATISTICS PORTUGAL

press release

## METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The 2021 Census continues the longest and most consistent national statistical series on population and housing and was conducted through an exhaustive survey over the entire population, using a predominantly digital information collection process.

During the period in which the Census 2021 was conducted, Portugal was subject to restrictions of public health measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant impact on the preparation of the operation and on the general activity of INE as well. In this epidemiological context and after a rigorous analysis and evaluation of the feasibility of its implementation by INE, a Contingency Plan have been defined in order to ensure the quality of the Census implementation and to safeguard the risks for the population and for the data collection crews.

In this context, the success of this census operation is inseparable from the citizens extremely high level of collaboration, who, through the eCensos APP, responded significantly using the Internet, which registered 87.5% of the total number of responses. This result rises to 99.3% if we add the responses that were supported by the enumerators or sent using the *eBalcões* located in the Parish Councils. Response using paper questionnaires or the telephone helpline were residual, representing only 0.7% of responses.

Under the Statistical Confidentiality Policy, Statistics Portugal incorporates in its statistical production process a set of practices and methods, in order to ensure the protection of the data collected, processed and disseminated. Their purpose is to protect data confidentiality and consists in the application of statistical methods which minimise the risk of individuals identification and in the adoption of technical and organisational measures to ensure information security in all phases of the statistical process (from data collection to data dissemination).

In the 2021 Census, in order to safeguard the privacy of individuals and to ensure that their identity and characteristics are not obtained from the released data, a statistical method of data disclosure control (or commonly known as statistical confidentiality treatment), called "Targeted Record Swapping", was applied. This method is based, at first, on the referencing of individuals who may be more easily identified because they present certain uncommon characteristics in the respective territorial unit. Then, their identification is protected by exchanging them with other individuals with identical basic characteristics, located in another dwelling and in a nearby territorial unit. It should be noted that the application of this method ensures that the total resident population and its main characteristics remain unchanged for the different geographical

2021 CENSUS – Final results



breakdowns. Even so, it may lead to detailed adjustments in the "population portrait", but these have no significant statistical impact on the results made available by this statistical operation, keeping both its integrity and consistency.

“Targeted Record Swapping” has been indicated as a good practice at international level, and specifically recommended as an appropriate and robust statistical secret handling method for censuses data within the European Statistical System.

Detailed methodological information is available at [www.ine.pt](http://www.ine.pt), option “Products, Metadata System”.