

LINKS TO STATISTICS AND EMBASSIES

Canadian census statistics:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/>

Portuguese embassy in Canada (Ottawa):

www.embportugal-ottawa.org

NOTE ON STATISTICS

According to Statistics Canada (StatsCan), in 2006, there were 410 850 Portuguese and Portuguese descents living in Canada, accounting for nearly 1.3% of the nation's total population. StatsCan Census collects data is based on ethnic origins and mother tongue. Under ethnic origins, responses may be given in a multiple fashion, permitting a statistical count of immigrant descendent origins as well as those possessing dual citizenship, for example.

MIGRATION HISTORY

Although Portuguese presence on what is today Canadian soil dates back to over 500 years, in the modern era, many refer to the date May 13th, 1953 as the day that commenced Portuguese emigration to Canada. It was this day that the ship 'Saturnia' brought the first group of Portuguese emigrants to that country beginning what would be a steady flow of Portuguese emigrants to Canada. Prior to the Saturnia's arrival, statistical data accounted for more or less 200 Portuguese individuals on Canadian soil. By 1957 this number had grown to over 8.100 individuals, the majority of whom had come from the Azores islands. Although many of the 1950s arrivals were recruited to work in rural and isolated locations in Canada, many would soon establish themselves in the larger cities of Toronto and Montreal. The late 1950s, heading into the 60s, and continuing on into the 1970s and 80s witnessed a continual growth that ran parallel with a steady territorial expansion. By 1962, 16.731 Portuguese were accounted for; by 1967, the number again rose to 32.473; by 1973, there were 54.200; and in 1984, 86.900 Portuguese were living in Canada.

Many immigrated to Canada during these years looking for better economic opportunities and wanting to escape poverty at home. Others sought to avoid military service during the colonial wars, while others claimed to be political exiles of the Salazar dictatorial regime. All were searching for better living conditions for themselves and their families. Those that came by themselves early on soon had their spouses, relatives and as well as fellow villagers join them as the sponsoring of family and friends become a common route for new arrivals. Most Portuguese in Canada, therefore, are the direct result of so-called 'chain migration' - the migration of individuals to areas where friends and families have already settled and where the latter could provide them with initial accommodations and various other forms of support. Still, also worthy of mention are those who entered Canada 'through the back door', that is, "illegally" in terms of official legislation. This especially became the case after 1967 with the Canadian government's introduction of the immigration policy known as the 'point system'. Assessed on a number of criteria, on the basis of a maximum of 100 points where independent candidates (without sponsors) should attain at least 50 points to be admissible, the point system made it harder for candidates to come to Canada. This led to an increased number of those opting to go to Canada undocumented.

Portuguese immigrants entering to Canada peaked at the start of the 1970s, reaching its climax in 1974. They had mainly come to Canada from the Azores, and from the northern,

interior and coastal regions of Portugal as well. Since then, however, Portuguese interest in Canada has waned, most likely because of the significant improvement in living conditions in post-dictatorship Portugal. Still, according to Canadian statistic, the presence of the Portuguese in Canada is ever-growing, not because Portuguese immigration into Canada continues at a high number, but because future generations born in Canada to Portuguese parents and grandparents keep adding numbers to this immigrant group statistics-wise.

When it comes to contemplating a return to Portugal, very much like Portuguese emigration to other countries, with the passing of time in Canada greater assimilation start to happen, thus the likeliness of a return taking place is lessened. For many, Portugal remains a memory. Physical contact, due to distance and travel costs, is not as frequent as it is for those Portuguese who emigrated to European countries, for example. Still, a distinction is worth making between those emigrants from continental Portugal and those from the Azores with the former having greater contacts with Portugal than the latter. The establishment of family roots in Canada is, however, the ultimate factor keeping many families from moving back to Portugal, this due to the fact that descendents, born and raised on Canadian soil, will, most often than not, outright reject a return plan with the majority not even contemplating it.¹

SOCIOGRAPHY

Portuguese immigrants in Canada are now well into the second and third generation. Those who arrived in Canada in the 1950s and 60s came from Portuguese rural areas, possessing very poor educational levels. In Canada, during this initial immigration phase, Canadian authorities selected jobs for these immigrants in line with the nation's needs. Thus, in the beginning Portuguese workers came to Canada as contracted manual laborers to work in resource industries, namely in the agricultural sector, as well as on railroad construction. By the end of the 1950s, however, these individuals were, for the most part, shifting towards the cities, especially Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Here they were able to find less physically strenuous work for higher wages. The most common jobs held by these immigrants were janitors, domestic cleaners, and kitchen, constructions and factory workers.

Often relying on networks of community contacts in their search for employment, this often 'trapped' individuals in dead-end jobs, reducing the prospect of any sort of vertical mobility. This, in fact, is a phenomenon that has been inherited by the Portuguese-Canadian descendent population. Among the Portuguese in Canada, much is the concern in relation to the lack of academic success and underachievement of young Portuguese-Canadians, as this population possess one of the highest dropout rates among ethnic groups in Canada.²

SETTLEMENT & INTEGRATION

With the Portuguese settling in the larger Canadian urban centres, especially in Toronto and Montreal, over time, large Portuguese communities developed in these cities. Life in Portuguese enclaves or neighbourhoods had its obvious advantages. Portuguese businesses distributed throughout the community enabled immigrants with little or no knowledge of the official language to go about their daily chores in their own tongue. Portuguese communities in Toronto and Montreal had a very high degree of 'institutional completeness' as members of these communities could manage to get by with very little contact with the dominant Canadian community. There were Portuguese schools, banks, restaurants, bakeries, supermarkets, churches, organizations and a plethora of other services and organizations.

¹ See: OLIVEIRA, Armando and TEIXEIRA, Carlos. 2004. *Jovens Portugueses e Luso Descendentes no Canada: Trajectórias de Inserção em Espaços Multiculturais*. Oeiras: Celta Editora.

² See: NUNES, Fernando. *Portuguese-Canadians from Sea to Sea: A National Needs Assessment*. Toronto: Portuguese-Canadian National Congress.

The growth of the Portuguese population in Canada from the late 1950s onward also led to a greater territorial occupation as communities started to develop in western Canada, namely in Vancouver, Winnipeg as well as in rural Canada, as is the case with the Okanagan region in the province of British Columbia. Still, the great majority have settled in eastern Canada with the province of Ontario possessing 69 per cent of the Portuguese population in Canada, the French-speaking province of Quebec having 14 per cent. The most represented western province is that of British Columbia with 8 per cent.

With the aim of keeping Portuguese culture alive, associations have been created all over Canada, wherever Portuguese peoples reside. Through these organizations, members have established everything from schools, to churches, to 'ranchos', to football teams, not to mention gathering spaces where they organize parties, play cards or simply sit and talk. Many of these institutions also play important transnational roles, especially in the case of hometown or regional associations, key to keeping members closer to their territorial and social origins. Under the banner of Canadian Multiculturalist policy, ethnic associativism had been greatly supported in Canada, also contributing to the numerical growth of these organisations. A number of institutions giving a more noticeable face and voice to the Portuguese in Canada have been established, as have a series of websites constructed to collectively represent and serve the population. Some of these include:

- Congresso Nacional Luso-Canadiano - <http://www.congresso.ca/english/default.aspx>
- ACAPO - Aliança dos Clubes e Associações Portuguesas de Ontário - <http://www.portuguesealliance.com/>
- Federação de Empresários e Profissionais Luso-Canadianos - <http://www.fpcbp.com/>
- JOVENSvancouver - <http://www.jovensvancouver.com/>
- Portuguese Benevolent Society - <http://www.portuguesebenevolentsociety.com/>
- Aliança Portuguesa em Montreal - <http://www.aliancaportuguesa.com/>
- Portuguese-Canadians - <http://www.portuguese Canadians.com/>
- Força - <http://www.forca.ca/en/index>.
- A Diáspora - <http://www.adiaspora.com/>
- PT Virtual - <http://www.ptvirtual.com/>
- Agenda Lusa - <http://www.agendalusa.com/>

Furthermore, aiming to keep community members in touch with what is happening in their community, and to a lesser extent, with what is happening in Portugal, several newspapers have also been established:

- The Portuguese Sun / Sol Português - <http://www.solnet.com/>
- LusoPresse - <http://www.lusopresse.com/>
- Lusitânia - <http://www.lusitania.ca/lusitania/index.html>
- Nove Ilhas - <http://www.noveilhas.com/>
- A Voz de Portugal - <http://www.avozdeportugal.com/>
- Team Desportivo - <http://www.teamdesportivo.com/>
- Voice – Luso-Canadian Newspaper - <http://www.voicenews.ca/>
- The Portuguese Post
- Flash - Desporto e Cultura
- SATÚRNIA, Letras Luso-Canadianas - <http://manuelcarvalho.8m.com/SATURNIA.html>

Through the years, the presence of the Portuguese in Canadian society has been somewhat unnoticeable, this due to the fact that the majority have kept to themselves without making themselves visible, this even though Canadian multicultural policy promotes ethnic maintenance and transmission. Although the Portuguese in Canada have maintained a

low political profile by now participating actively, be it voting or lobby-wise, younger generations are now beginning to invert this tendency. An example of this has come in the form of two current Portuguese-Canadian Members of Parliament: Mario Silva, who is of Azorean origin, and John Rodriguez, of Guyanese Portuguese descent.

FOOTBALL (SOCCER) & POPULAR CULTURE

For the Portuguese in Canada, a key factor that not only brings them close to the cultural roots, but also serves to identify them, is that of football (or soccer as it is known in Canada), not only as players but also as supporters of Portuguese emblems. The associations become the primary force behind Portuguese cultural activities, ranging from setting up 'ranchos' to the organisation of parties (*festas*), to the setting up of football games and tournaments. As well, many associations set up cable and/or satellite television in their clubhouses in order to receive Portuguese channels and show games from Portugal (e.g. RTPi). Many Portuguese bars and cafés do the same.

In Canada, as soccer is not a sport of great popularity or visibility, it is often associated with immigrant and ethnic groups, as it is mostly these individuals and their descendents that have a greater passion for the sport. Although no numbers exist, it's a matter of fact that large numbers of Portuguese and Luso-Canadian men and women of all ages play football at an amateur level in Canada.³ Many Portuguese teams are frequently created to play in city recreation leagues, something that is common among ethnic groups in Canada. Thus, besides the Portuguese, many teams have ties to other ethnic groups such as Italians, Croatians, Greeks, among others. Football, in fact, has also become an identification instrument that often pits ethnic groups against each other, this in a non-violent way, when it comes to claiming notoriety among Canada's multi-ethnic landscape.

Unsurprisingly, most Portuguese in Canada, no different from Portuguese elsewhere, support one of the big three Portuguese teams: FC Porto, Benfica or Sporting. Evidence of this lies in the presence of '*casas*' (affiliation homes) of these three clubs in the cities of Toronto and Montreal. As far as professional soccer played in Canada, only three teams exist (Toronto FC, Montreal Impact and Vancouver Whitecaps) all of which play in American based leagues. In the 1960 and 70, however, soccer did thrive in Canada, drawing some of Portugal's best known players to its teams. Eusébio, for example, played for Toronto Metros-Croatia in 1976, while former Belenenses great Matateu played for the Toronto team First Portuguese in 1970 and for Sagres Victoria, a team out of Victoria, British Columbia from 1972 to 1982. Most recently, two Portuguese managers have been at the helm of two of the three Canadian-based professional clubs: former Portuguese international Tony Fonseca coached the Vancouver Whitecaps for three seasons, from 2002 to 2004; while current Montreal Impact coach is a Marc Dos Santos. Currently, however, what is becoming more common is the coming of Portuguese descendents to play in Portugal. Some examples include: Fernando Aguiar (Nacional da Madeira, Beira Mar, Benfica, Penafiel, Gondomar) Steven Victoria (FC Porto, Olhanense, Sporting da Covilha) and Daniel Fernandes (Portuguese National Team).

Lastly, it is also worth highlighting that besides football, in recent years, Portuguese-Canadians have also contributed to establishing the Portuguese name in other realms of popular culture. The singer of Azorean descent Nelly Furtado is the most visible example of this. Within Canada's national sport, that of ice hockey, three Luso-Canadians are also contributing to putting Portugal on the 'North American ice hockey map': Manny Fernandez, Mike Ribeiro and John Tavares. This very example shows how the Portuguese in Canada have

³ Although not a sport of great popularity when it comes to viewership and professionalism, soccer is the sport with the highest number of participants at the amateur levels in Canada, out passing such North American team games as ice hockey, baseball, basketball and American football.

also adapted to Canadian life, dually adapting elements from Portuguese and Canadian culture. Participating in and the following of the two national sports of the respective countries thus serves as an example of the way identity formation and integration becomes a double-forked route for these individuals.