

Portugal

Facts and Statistics

Location: Southwestern Europe, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, west of Spain

Capital: Lisbon

Population: 10,524,145 (July 2004 est.)

Ethnic Make-up: homogeneous Mediterranean stock; citizens of black African descent who immigrated to mainland during decolonization number less than 100,000; since 1990 East Europeans have entered Portugal

Religions: Roman Catholic 94%

The Portuguese Language

The 10-million population of Portugal speaks Portuguese, a Romance language which derived from Vulgar Latin. Galician and Mirandese, which are technically classed as separate languages, are spoken by a few thousand people in the north of the country, along the Spanish border.

Portuguese Society & Culture

The Family

- . The family is the foundation of the social structure and forms the basis of stability.
- . The extended family is quite close.
- . The individual derives a social network and assistance from the family.
- . Loyalty to the family comes before other social relationships, even business.
- . Nepotism is considered a good thing, since it implies that employing people one knows and trusts is of primary importance.

Formality

- . Portuguese are traditional and conservative.
- . They are a people who retain a sense of formality when dealing with each other, which is displayed in the form of extreme politeness.

Appearances Matter

- . In Portuguese society appearance is very important, especially in the cities.
- . People are fashion conscious and believe that clothes indicate social standing and success.
- . They take great pride in wearing good fabrics and clothes of the best standard they can afford.

Hierarchy

- . Portugal is a culture that respects hierarchy.
- . Society and business are highly stratified and vertically structured.
- . Both the Catholic Church and the family structure emphasize hierarchical relationships.
- . People respect authority and look to those above them for guidance and decision-making.
- . Rank is important, and those senior to you in rank must always be treated with respect.
- . This need to know who is in charge leads to an authoritarian approach to decision-making and problem solving.
- . In business, power and authority generally reside with one person who makes decisions with little concern about consensus building with their subordinates.

