



April 27th 2022
VITAL STATISTICS 2021

NEGATIVE NATURAL BALANCE INCREASED IN 2021 AND REMAINED NEGATIVE IN ALL REGIONS

In 2021, there were 79,582 live births of mothers residing in Portugal. This figure represents a decrease of 5.9% (4,948 fewer children) compared to the previous year. Of the total live births, 60.0% were born outside marriage, meaning they were the children of unmarried parents.

There were 124,802 deaths of people residing in the national territory, an increase of 1.2% (1,444) compared to 2020.

The increase in the number of deaths and the decrease in the number of live births again determined a strong reduction of the natural balance from -38,828 in 2020 to -45,220 in 2021.

In 2021, there were 191 deaths of children under 1 year of age (14 fewer than in 2020), and the infant mortality rate remained at 2.4 deaths per thousand live births.

After a strong decrease in the number of marriages in 2020 (18,902; 43.2% less than in 2019), the number of marriages celebrated in 2021 increased to 29,057 (53.7% more). In about two thirds of marriages (66.2%), the spouses already cohabited before marriage.

Statistics Portugal releases on the portal – <http://www.ine.pt> – indicators on live births, deaths and marriages with information for 2021, by NUTS 1, 2 and 3, Municipalities and Parishes, based on the information registered in the Civil Register Offices until March 2022.

In the context of the COVID-19 disease pandemic, due to a greater gap between the moment of birth and the moment of registration, there were some delays on data transmission to Statistics Portugal. Thus, the data for 2020 were revised and allowed for the inclusion of 105 new records, of which 104 were of mothers residing in Portugal.

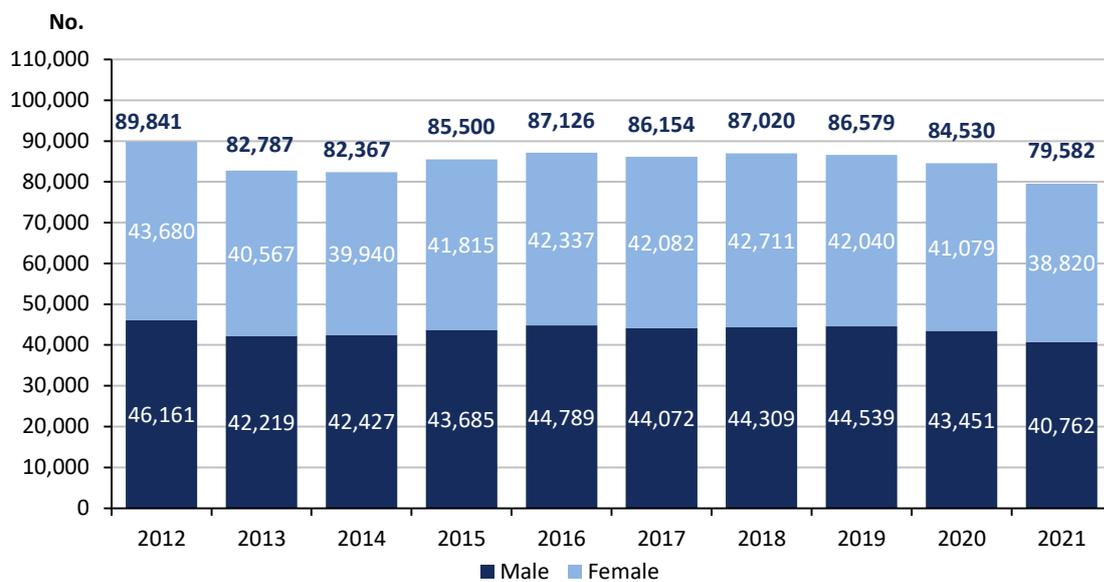
Likewise, the measures resulting from the containment of the pandemic had an impact on the lives of citizens, including mobility and social contact. Statistical data on marriages in 2020 and 2021 should be read in this context.

VITAL STATISTICS 2021

Number of live births decreased 5.9%

In 2021, 79,582 live births were born of mothers residing in Portugal, 5.9% less than in 2020 (84,530). Of the total live births, 40,762 were born male and 38,820 were born female, representing a sex ratio at birth of 105 (for every 100 females born, around 105 males were born).

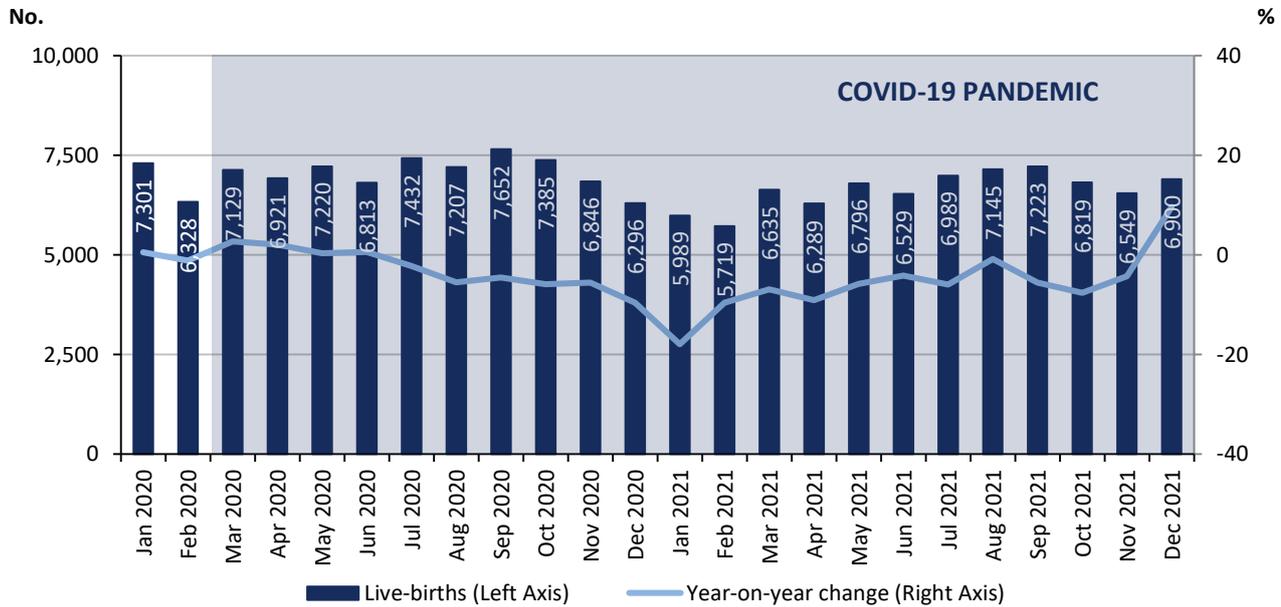
Figure 1. Live births by sex, Portugal, 2012-2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Live births.

As in previous years, also in 2021, September was the month in which the highest number of live births was registered. And despite the recovery in births from March 2021 onwards, until November 2021, the number of live births was lower than in 2020. From January to November 2021, the year-on-year change was always negative, with the biggest decline in January 2021 (18.0% less live births). December was the only month in which there was a positive year-on-year change (9.6% more live births).

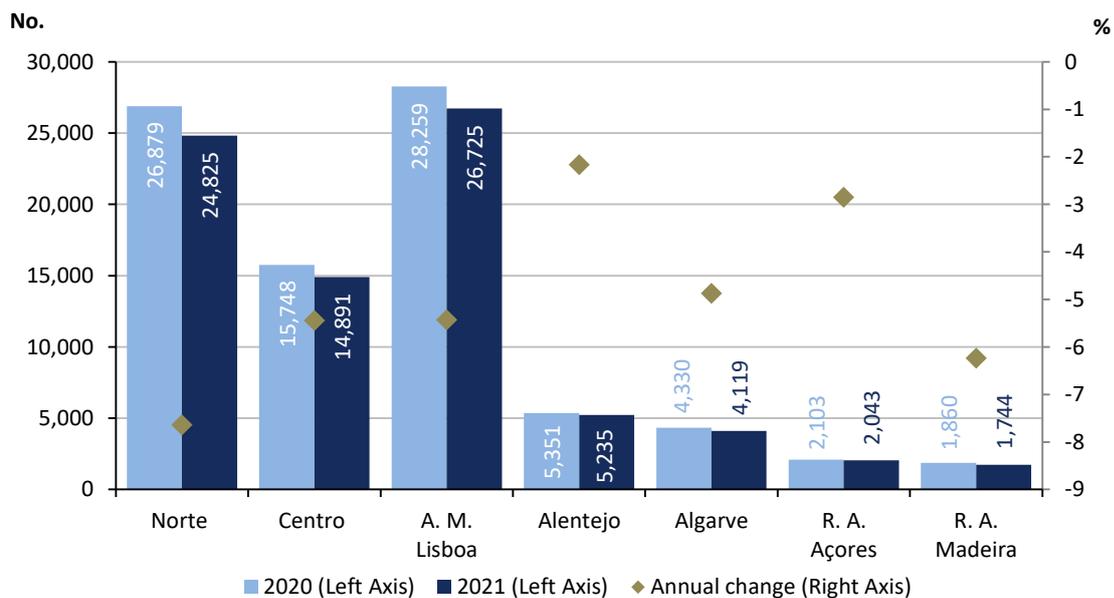
Figure 2. Live births and year-on-year change, Portugal, January 2020 to December 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Live births.

Births have decreased in all regions of the country, especially in the Norte (-7.6%) and in the Região Autónoma da Madeira (-6.2%). In the other regions, the decrease was lower than the national value (-5.9%), with Alentejo and Região Autónoma dos Açores registering the smallest decreases (-2.2% and -2.9% respectively).

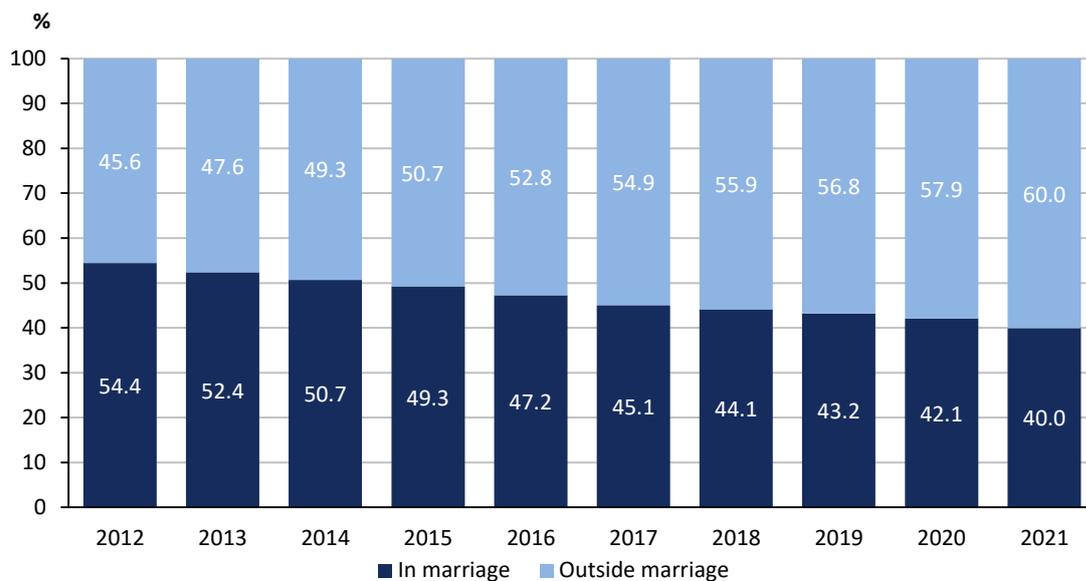
Figure 3. Live births and annual change, NUTS 2, 2020 and 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Live births.

In 2021, the proportion of live births born outside marriage, that is, children of unmarried parents, increased to 60.0%, representing, for the seventh consecutive year, more than half of the total births in Portugal.

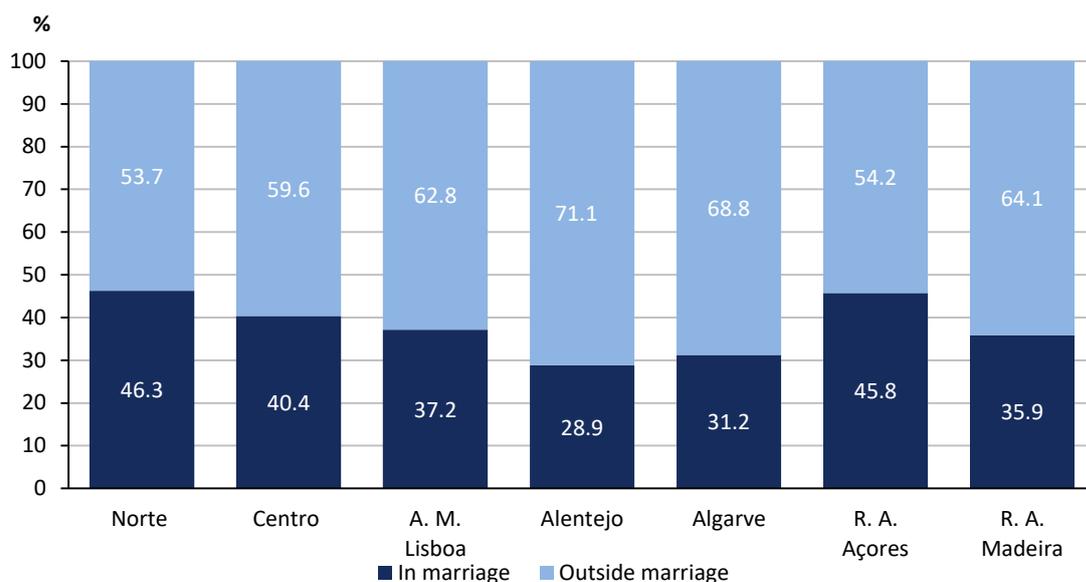
Figure 4. Live births by legitimacy status, Portugal, 2012-2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Live births.

All regions recorded proportions of live births outside marriage above 60% (national figure), except for Norte (53.7%), Centro (59.6%) and Região Autónoma dos Açores (54.2%).

Figure 5. Live births by legitimacy status, NUTS 2, 2021

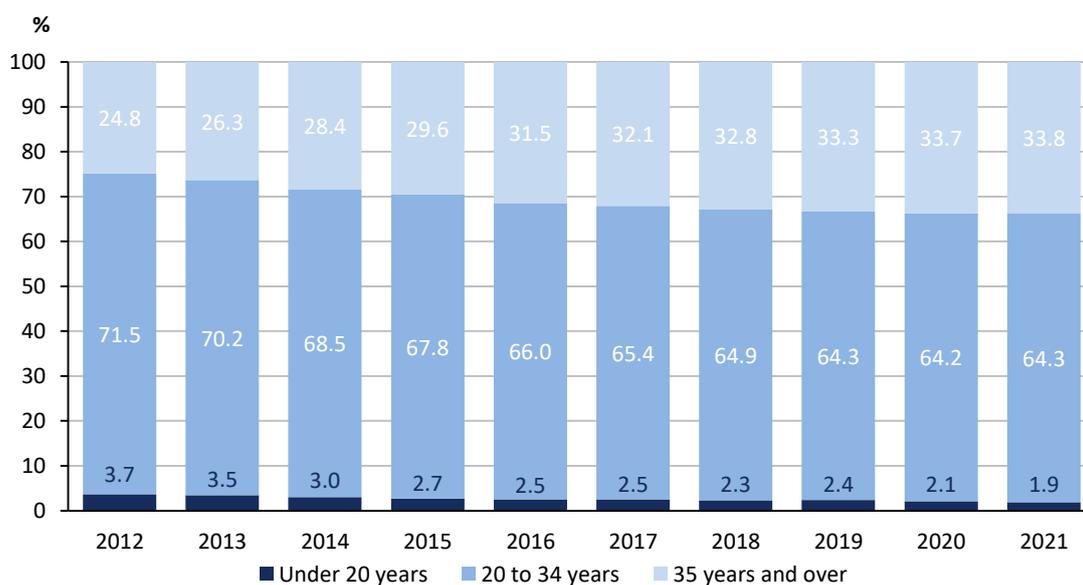


Source: Statistics Portugal, Live births.



In 2021, of the total live births, 64.3% were of mothers aged between 20 to 34 years; 33.8% to mothers aged 35 and over, and 1.9% to mothers under 20 years of age. Between 2012 and 2021, there were decreases in the proportions of live births of mothers under the age of 20 and of mothers aged between 20 to 34 years, respectively by 1.8 and 7.2 percentage points (pp). On the other hand, over this period, there was an increase of 9.0 pp in the proportion of live births of mothers aged 35 and over.

Figure 6. Live births by age of the mother, Portugal, 2012-2021

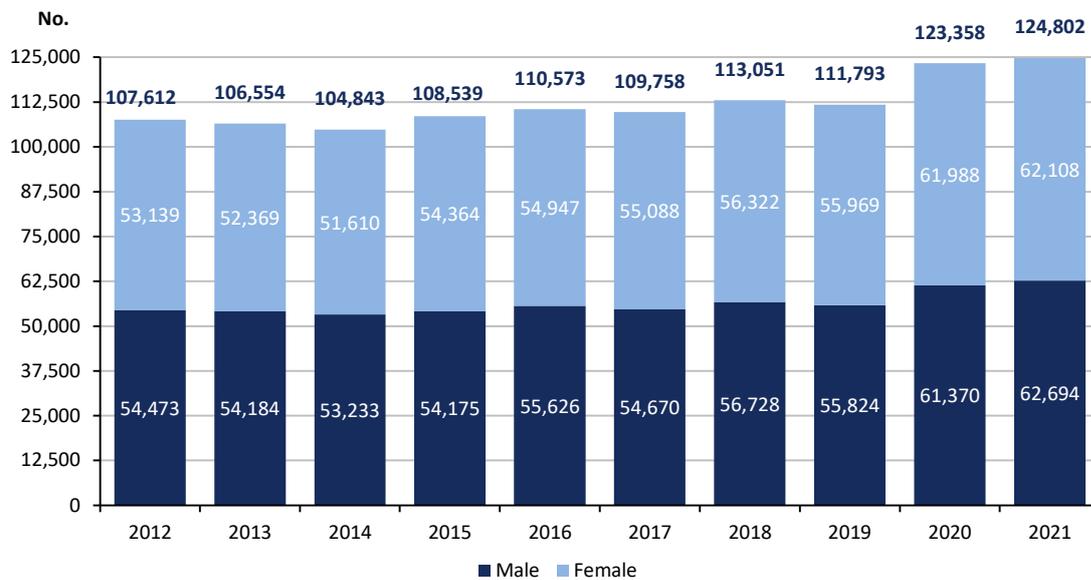


Source: Statistics Portugal, Live births.

Number of deaths increased 1.2%

In 2021, there were 124,802 deaths of residents in the national territory, an increase of 1,444 deaths when compared to 2020 (123,358), which represented a 1.2% increase. Of the total deaths recorded in 2021, 62,694 were of men and 62,108 were of women.

Figure 7. Deaths by sex¹, Portugal, 2012-2021

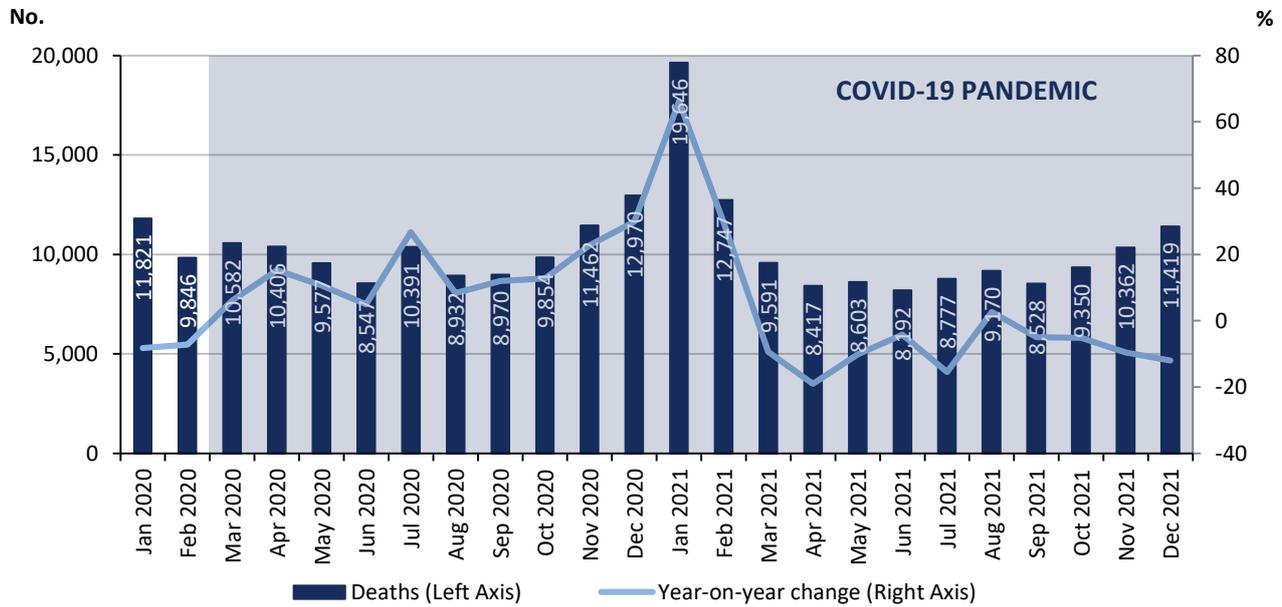


Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths.

¹The total number of deaths may not correspond to the sum of the partial figures by sex due to the existence of records with unknown sex.

January 2021 registered the highest number of monthly deaths since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (19,646), corresponding to an increase of 66.2% (7,825 more deaths) compared to the same month in 2020. In February, mortality began to decrease, however, continued in this month to register a number higher than the same month of 2020. Between March and December, except for August, in all months the number of deaths was lower than that observed in 2020. June was the month with the lowest mortality (8,192 deaths).

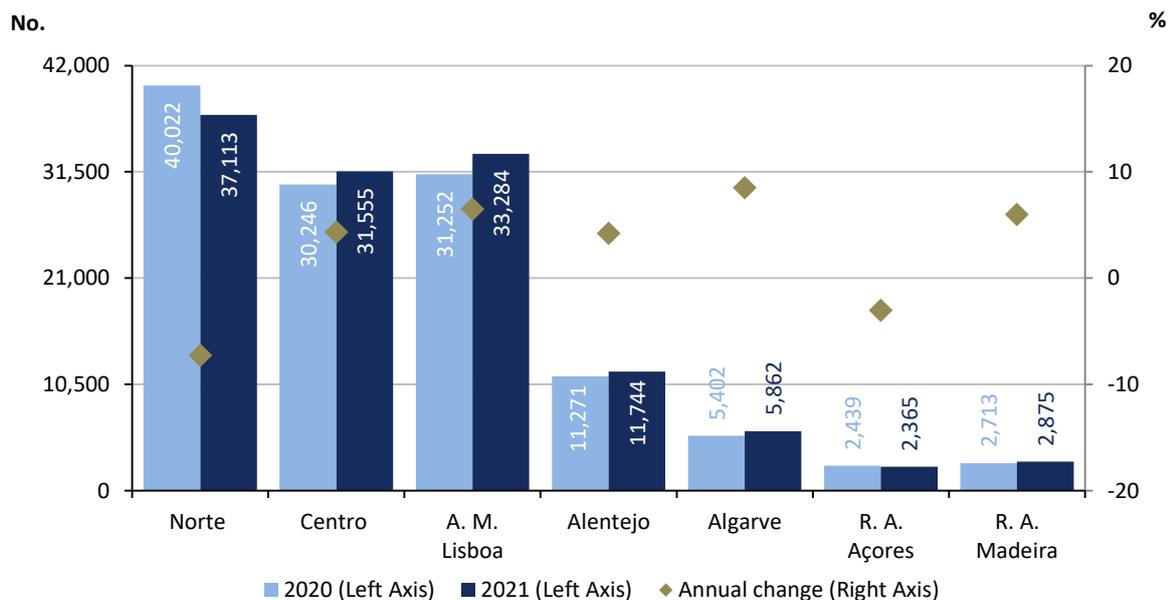
Figure 8. Deaths and year-on-year change, Portugal, January 2020 to December 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths.

In 2021, mortality increased in all regions, except for Norte region and Região Autónoma dos Açores which registered reductions of 7.3% and 3.0%, respectively. The highest increase was registered in Algarve (+8.5%), followed by Área Metropolitana de Lisboa (+6.5%) and by Região Autónoma da Madeira (6.0%).

Figure 9. Deaths and annual change, NUTS 2, 2020 and 2021

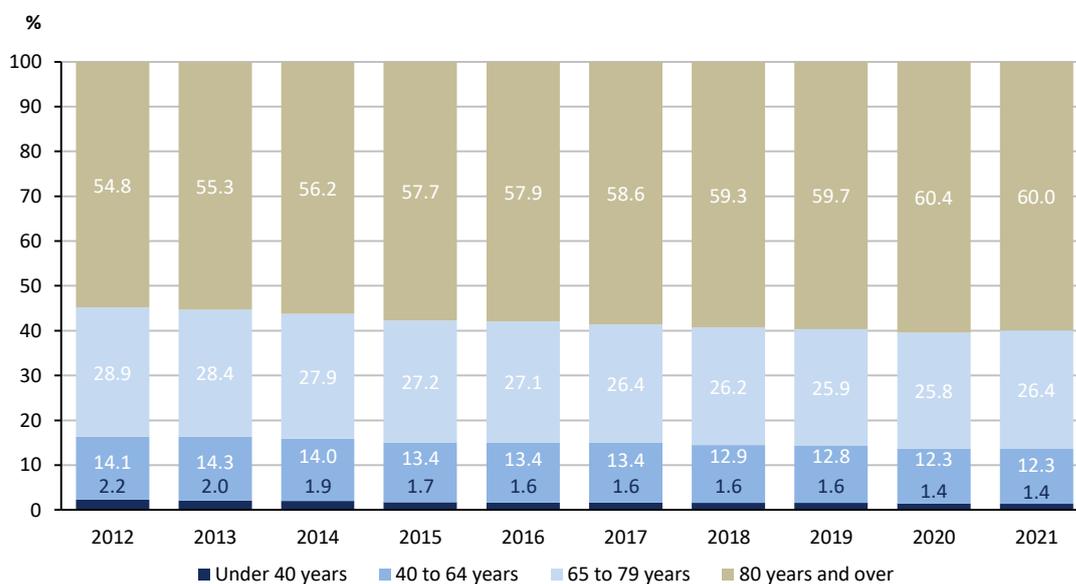


Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths.

Most deaths occurred at older ages: 86.4% were of people aged 65 and over and more than half (60.0%) occurred at ages 80 and over.

Between 2012 and 2021, there were decreases in the proportions of deaths under the age of 65 and between the ages of 65 and 79, respectively of 2.7 and 2.5 pp. On the other hand, there was an increase of 5.2 pp in the proportion of deaths over the age of 80.

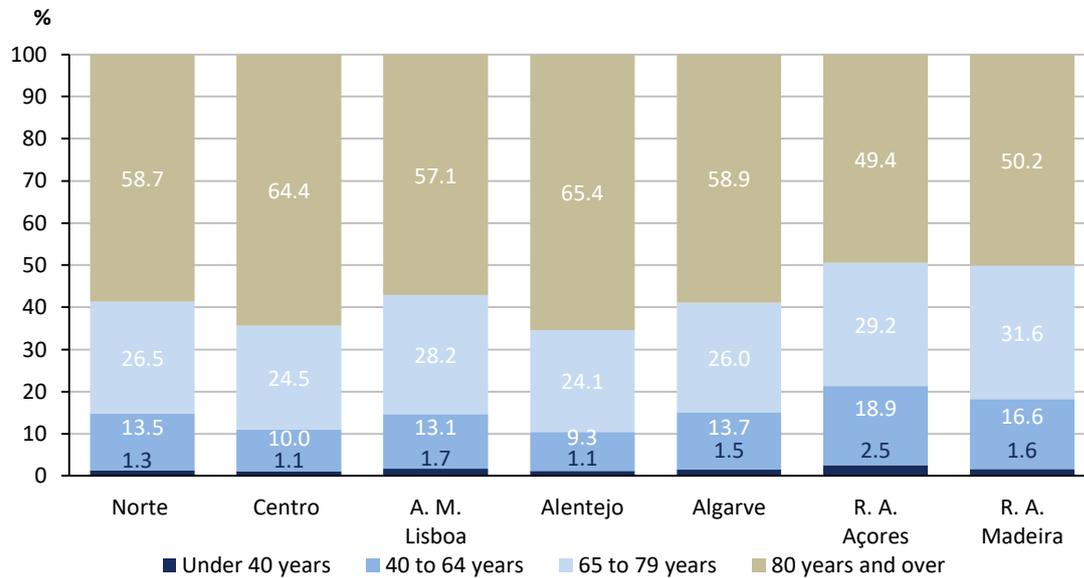
Figure 10. Deaths by age group, Portugal, 2012-2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths.

In line with what was observed for the country, in 2021, also in the NUTS 2 regions the highest proportion of deaths occurred in the age group of 80 and over, representing more than 50% of mortality in all regions, except for the Região Autónoma dos Açores (49.4%). In the regions Alentejo and Centro, the proportion of deaths in this age group was higher than the national average (65.4% and 64.4%, respectively, against 60.0%).

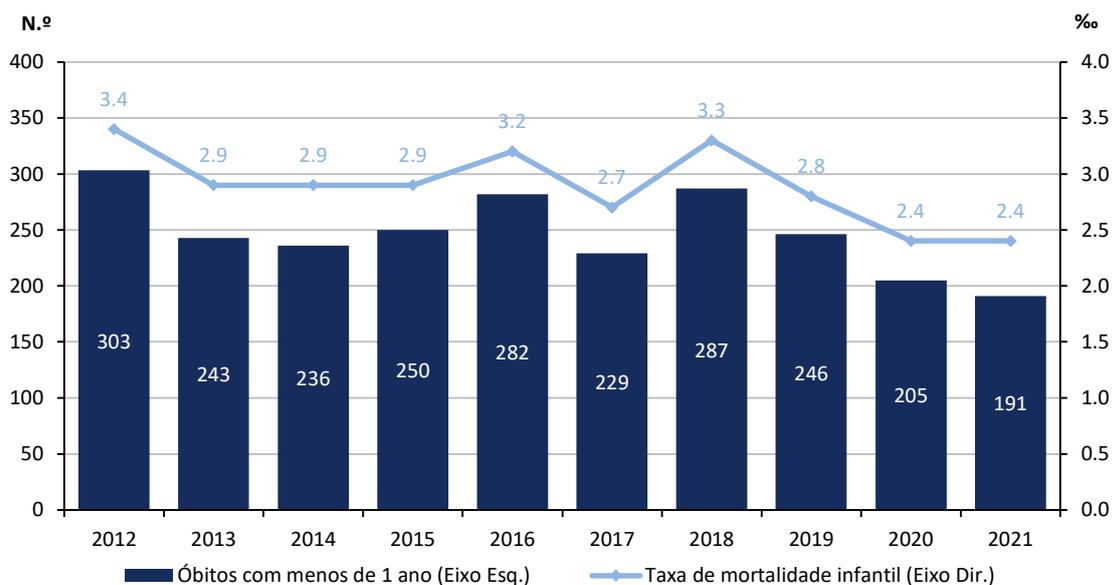
Figure 11. Deaths by age group, NUTS 2, 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths.

In 2021, there were 191 deaths of children under 1 year of age (14 fewer than in 2020). The infant mortality rate maintained its 2020 value (2.4 deaths per thousand live births), matching the lowest value ever recorded in Portugal.

Figure 12. Infant deaths and infant mortality rate, Portugal, 2012-2021

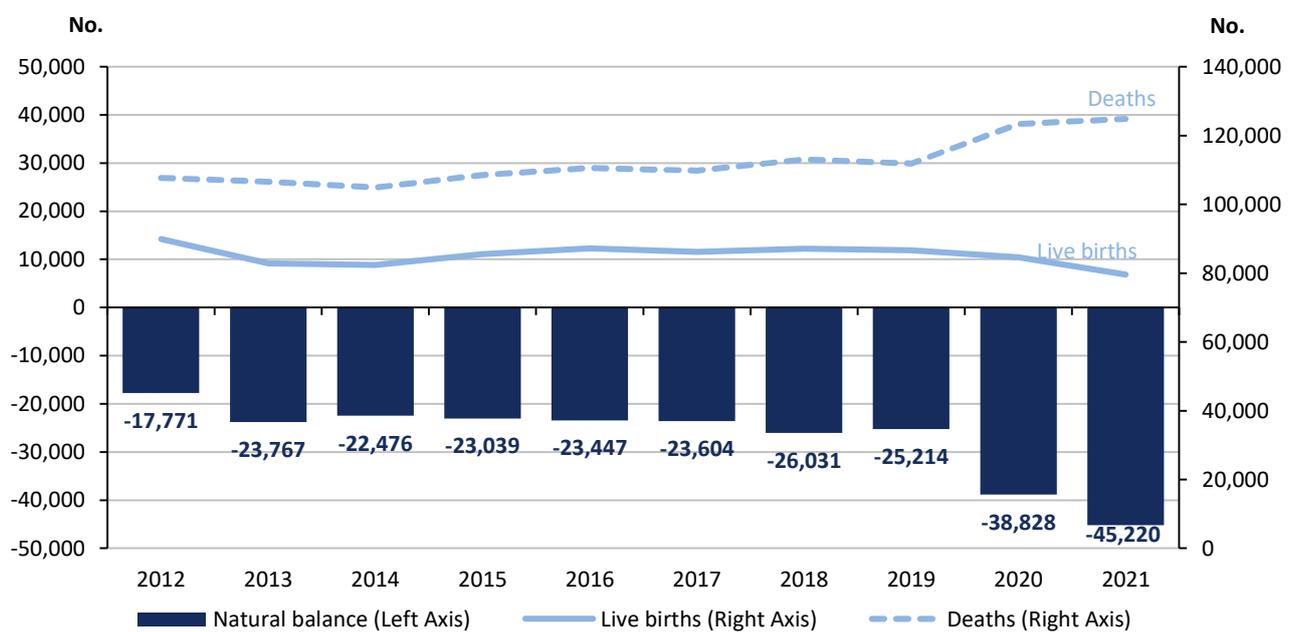


Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths.

Negative natural balance increases

The increase in the number of deaths, to which mortality due to COVID-19 contributed, as well as the decrease in the number of live births, once again resulted in a strong reduction of the natural balance from -38,828 in 2020 to -45,220 in 2021. Portugal has had a negative natural balance for the last 13 consecutive years.

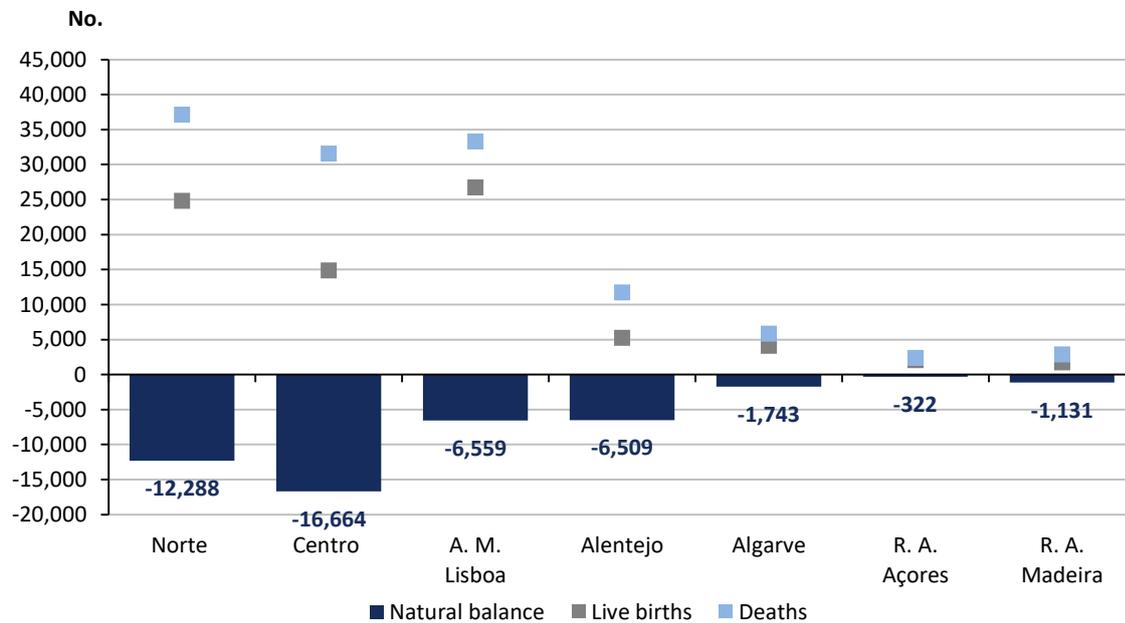
Figure 13. Live births, deaths and natural balance, Portugal, 2012-2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Live-births, Deaths and Demographic Indicators.

In 2021, all NUTS 2 regions again recorded a negative natural balance. The region Centro was the one with the most accentuated negative natural balance (-16,664) and the Região Autónoma dos Açores registered the least negative value (-332).

Figure 14. Live births, deaths and natural balance, NUTS 2, 2021

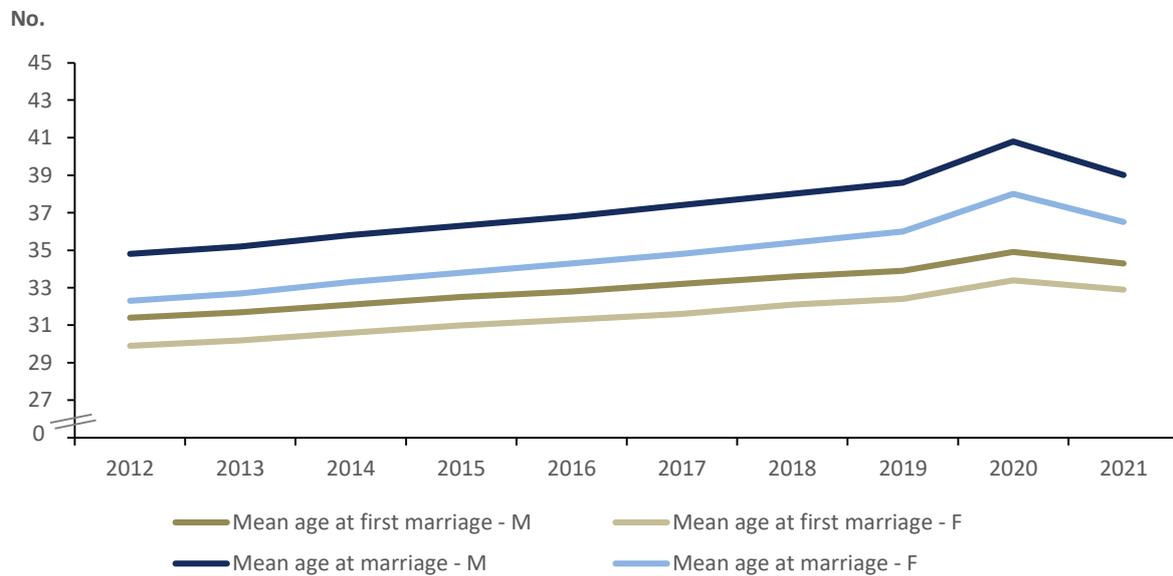


Source: Statistics Portugal, Live-births, Deaths and Demographic Indicators.

Number of marriages increased 53.7%

In 2021, 29,057 marriages were celebrated in Portugal, 10,155 more than in the previous year, representing an increase of 53.7%. The mean age at marriage was 39.0 years for men and 36.5 years for women; the mean age at first marriage was 34.3 years for men and 32.9 years for women, resuming the evolution of the mean ages registered until 2019. Between 2012 and 2021, there was an increase of about 4 years in the mean age at marriage and around 3 years in the mean age at first marriage, for both sexes.

Figure 15. Mean age at marriage and mean age at first marriage by sex, Portugal, 2012-2021

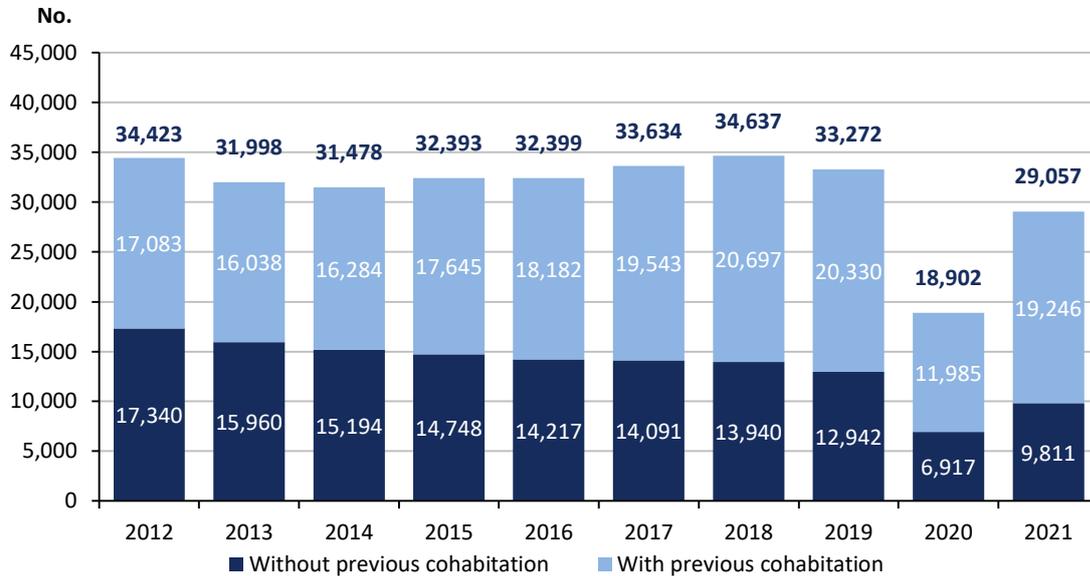


Source: Statistics Portugal, Marriage Statistics.

Of the celebrated marriages, 28,508 were opposite-sex marriages (18,457 in 2020) and 549 were same-sex marriages (445 in 2020), of which 287 marriages between men and 262 marriages between women (236 and 209, respectively, in 2020).

In more than half of the marriages held in 2021, spouses already cohabited (19,246 marriages). This proportion has grown considerably over the recent years, with an increase of 16.1 pp since in 2013 it exceeded for the first time 50% (50.1% in 2013 against 66.2% in 2020).

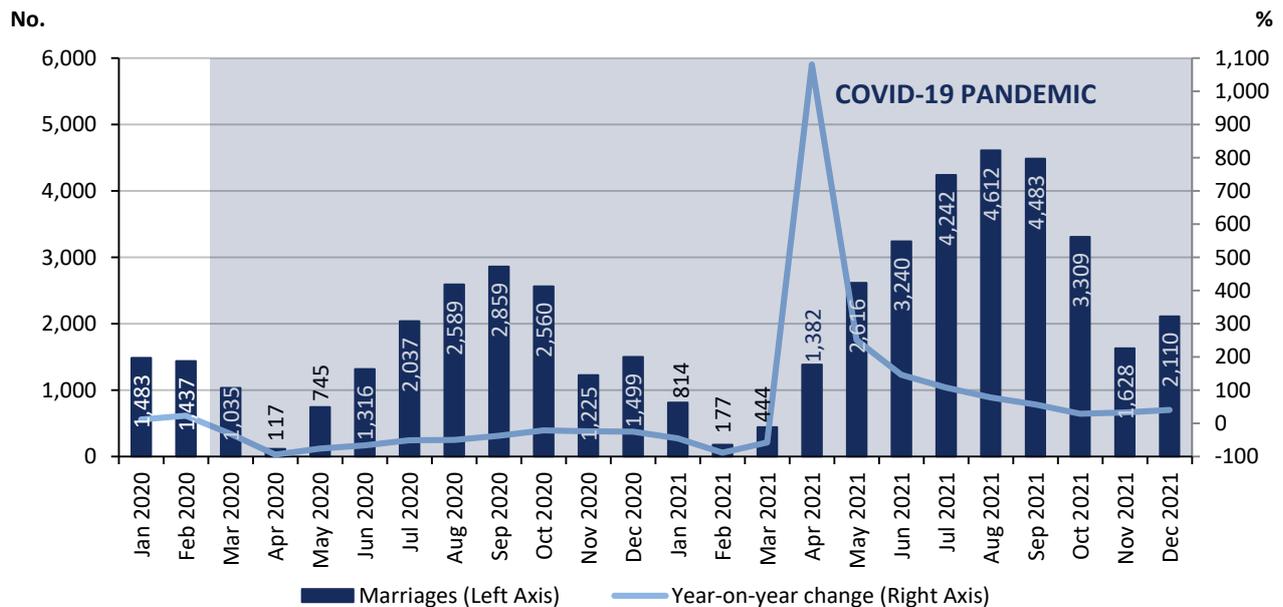
Figure 16. Marriages, with or without previous cohabitation, Portugal, 2012-2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Marriage Statistics.

In April 2020, there was the lowest number of marriages since there are records (117). From May 2020 onwards, the number of marriages celebrated has always increased. However, until March 2021, the year-on-year change was always negative, with 87.7% fewer marriages celebrated in February 2021 compared with February 2020 (1,260 less). April 2021 was the month with the highest growth (1,499 more marriages celebrated). As of this month, the number of marriages celebrated has always been higher than in the corresponding months of 2020.

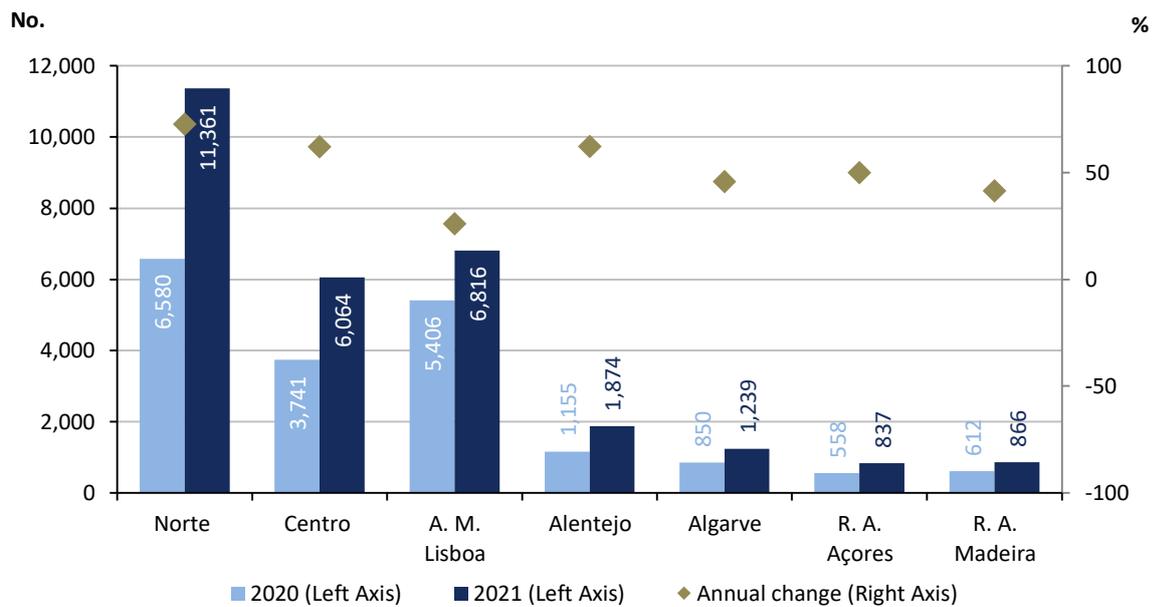
Figure 17. Marriages and year-on-year change, Portugal, January 2020 to December 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Marriage Statistics.

All NUTS 2 regions followed the national upward trend in the number of marriages in 2021. However, this increase was only higher than the national figure in Norte (72.7%), Alentejo (62.3%) and Centro (62.1%). Área Metropolitana de Lisboa registered the smallest increase (26.1%).

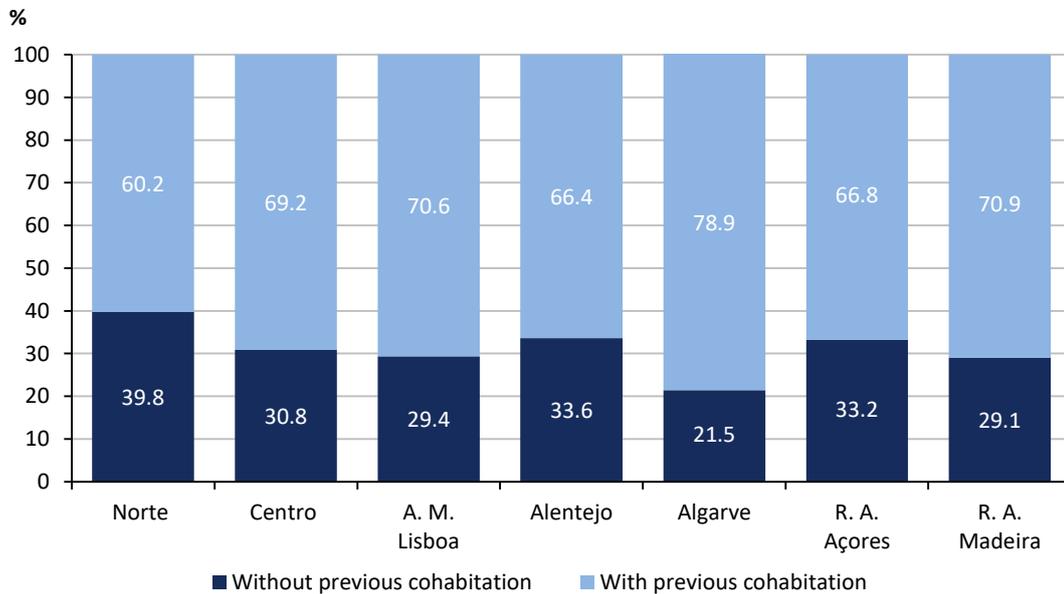
Figure 18. Marriages and annual change, NUTS 2, 2020 and 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Marriage Statistics.

Likewise, in all NUTS 2 regions, more than 50% of the spouses already cohabited before marriage, and in Algarve that proportion reached 78.9%. Only in the Norte region the figure was below the value registered for Portugal (60.2%).

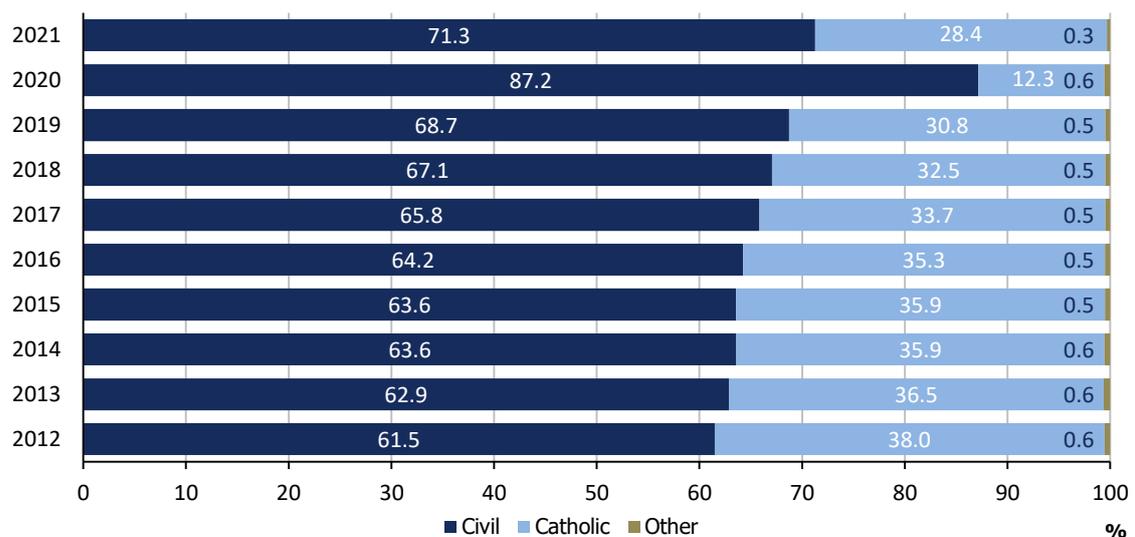
Figure 19. Marriages, with or without previous cohabitation, NUTS 2, 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Marriage Statistics.

Of all opposite-sex marriages celebrated, 28.4% (8,097) were Catholic marriages, 71.3% (20,317) were civil marriages only, and 0.3% (94) were celebrated according to other religious ceremonies.

Figure 20. Marriages between opposite-sex couples, by celebration type, Portugal, 2012-2021

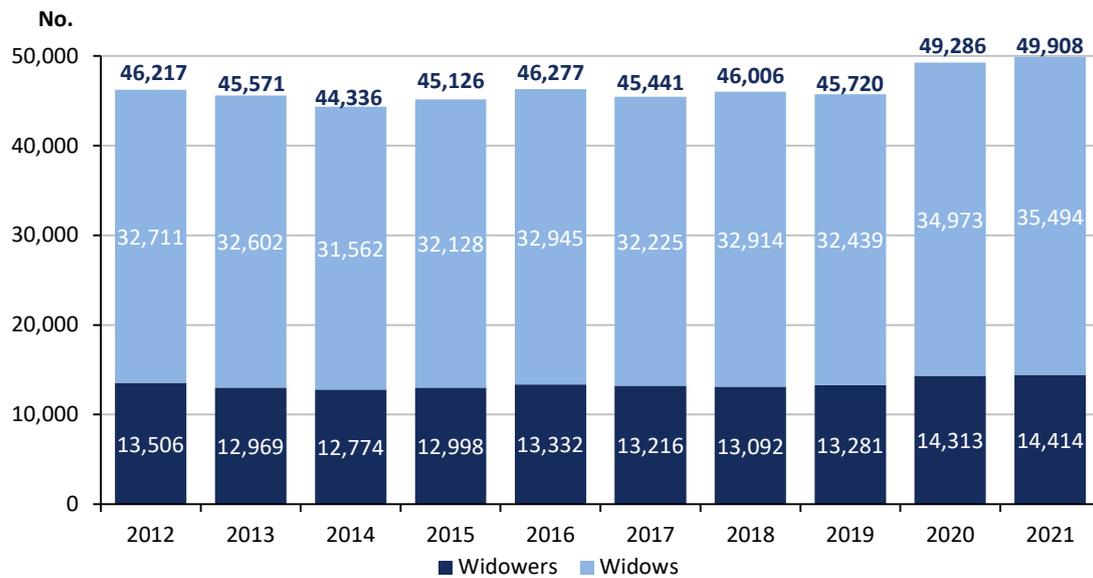


Source: Statistics Portugal, Marriage Statistics.

1.3% more dissolution of marriages due to the death of one of the spouses

In 2021, there were 49,908 marriages dissolved by death of a spouse, which represented an increase of 1.3% compared to 2020 (49,286 dissolutions), of which resulted 14,414 widowers and 35,494 widows.

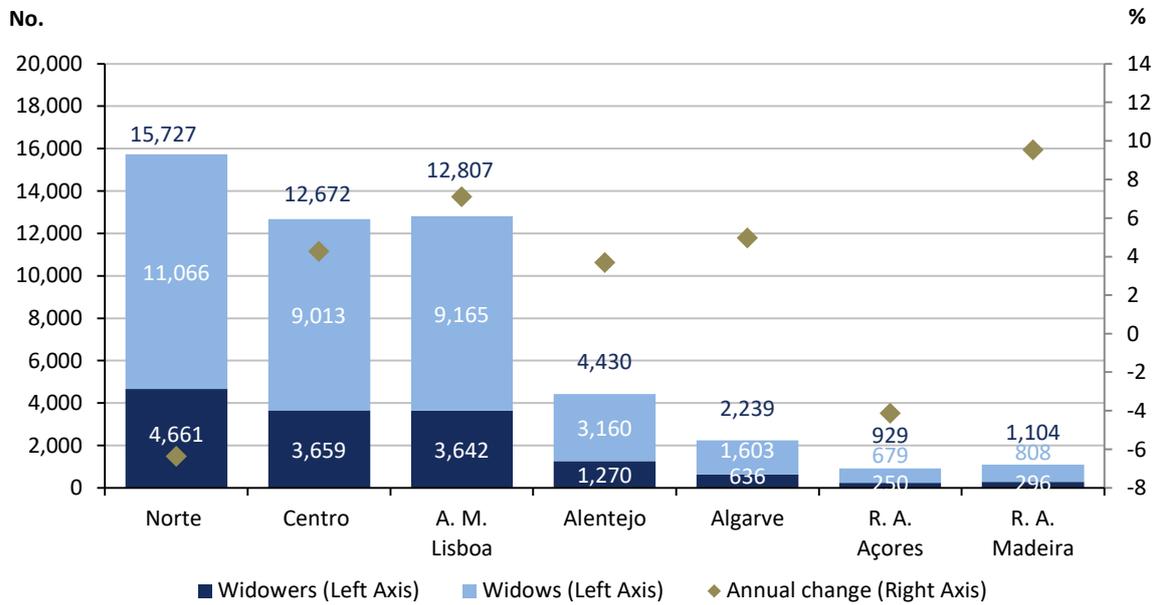
Figure 21. Dissolved marriages by death and surviving spouses, Portugal, 2012-2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Demographic Indicators.

Both in Portugal and in the NUTS 2 regions, the number of widows was always higher than the number of widowers, reflecting the greater life expectancy of women.

Figure 22. Dissolved marriages by death and surviving spouses, and annual change, NUTS 2, 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Demographic Indicators.



TECHNICAL NOTE

Statistics Portugal releases indicators on live births, deaths, and marriages with information for 2021, by NUTS 1, 2, 3, Municipalities and parishes geographical breakdowns, based on the information registered in the Civil Register Offices until the end of March 2022. In the context of the COVID-19 disease pandemic, due to a greater gap between the moment of birth and the moment of registration, there were some delays on data transmission to Statistics Portugal. Thus, the data for 2020 were revised and allowed for the inclusion of 105 new records, of which 104 were of mothers residing in Portugal. Revisions of mortality data may occur after the codification of the causes of death recorded in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Data on live births, deaths and marriages are obtained from statistical operations of direct and exhaustive collection of information on these demographic events that occurred in Portuguese territory using facts that are subject to compulsory civil registration (birth, death, and marriage) in the Sistema Integrado do Registo e Identificação Civil (SIRIC).

In addition to administrative information obtained from Civil Register Offices, Statistics Portugal collects still an additional set of variables identified as statistically pertinent to the National Statistic System (NSS) and the European Statistical System (EES).

Data are recorded and sent electronically, in compliance with the requirements set out by Statistics Portugal and laid down in liaison with the Instituto de Registos e Notariado (IRN) and the Instituto de Gestão Financeira e Equipamentos da Justiça (IGFEJ).

DEFINITIONS

Marriage: Contract signed by two persons that intend to start a family in full partnership and cohabitation according to legislation. Note: marriage can be held between persons from different or same sex.

Mean age at marriage: The mean age of women (or men) when they get married, during a given period, usually a calendar year.

Mean age at first marriage: The mean age of women (or men) when they first get married, during a given period, usually a calendar year.

Live birth: This is the complete expulsion or extraction from the mother's body, irrespective of the duration of the pregnancy, of a product of fertilization that, after separation, breathes or shows any other signs of life, such as a beating of the heart or umbilical cord or actual contraction of any muscle subject to voluntary movement, whether the umbilical cord has been severed or not and whether the placenta is retained or not.

Infant mortality: Deaths of live-born children aged less than one year.

Death: The permanent disappearance of vital functions.

Natural balance: The difference between the number of live births and the number of deaths during a given period, usually a calendar year.

Sex ratio at birth: Ratio between male and female live births in a certain period (usually expressed as 100 female live births).



Infant mortality rate: The ratio of the number of deaths of children under one year of age during a specific period, usually a calendar year, to the number of live births in that period (usually expressed as the number of deaths of children under one year of age per 1000 (10^3) live births).

Annual change: The annual change compares the level of a variable between two reference years (year t and year $t-1$).

Year-on-year change: The year-on-year change compares the level of a variable between the reference month and the same month of the previous year.

Detailed methodological information available at: www.ine.pt, option Products, Metadata system.

Detailed statistical information available at: www.ine.pt, option Products, Statistical data, database, theme Population.