Brazilians

Who are we?

How many of us are there?

Where do we live?

What do we do?

How much do we contribute?

What is our future here?

Alvaro Lima
June, 2009

I. Introduction:

- This document has its origin in an observation made by a prominent Brazilian during the meeting "Brasileiros no Mundo" in South Florida last year:

  "… it is crucial for us as a community to know how many of us there are, who we are, and what we do…"

- Here we try to answer these questions using the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and our own research: Alvaro Lima & Pete Plastrik 2007; Alvaro Lima & Eduardo Sequeira 2007; Alvaro Lima, Eugenia Garcia-Zanello, & Manuel Orozco 2009;

- The document is organized into four sections:

  - ❑ How many of us are there and where do we live?
  - ❑ Who are we and what do we do?
  - ❑ How much do we contribute economically (both here and there)?
  - ❑ The current economic crisis and our future...

II. How many of us are there and where do we live?

- The 2000 U.S. Census counted 212,428 Brazilians living in the United States. 2007 data from the American Community Survey (ACS) put this number at 342,463 – a 61% increase;

- These estimates are likely to undercount the actual population of Brazilians since it fails to capture who did not answer the 2000 Census. The ACS small sample sizes have the same result;

- The question then is how many Brazilians there are in the U.S. The best way to answer this question is to use remittance data and "transform" it into population data;

- The important pieces of information to perform this calculation are:

  - ***2006 Remittances from the U.S. to Brazil:*** According to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Brazilians living in the U. S. sent $2.7 billion to Brazil;

- **Average *size of remittances sent by Brazilians from the U.S. to Brazil:* $300 to $400;**

- **Average *frequency of remittances sent by Brazilians from the U.S. to Brazil:* 10 to 12 times per year;**

- ***Proportion of the Brazilian population living in the U.S. that remit to Brazil:* 60% to 70%.**

Based on these numbers, we can estimate that in 2007:

803,000 to 1.4 million Brazilians lived in the U.S.

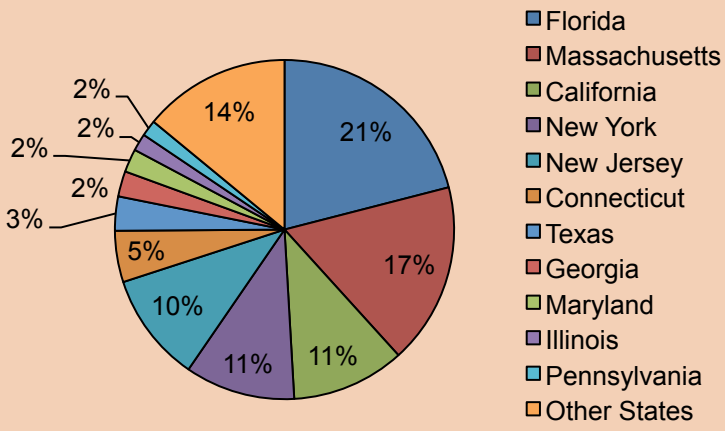
- **Florida with 21% of the Brazilian population, was the most popular destination for Brazilians in 2000;**

- **Today, Massachusetts has the largest concentration of Brazilians living in the U.S. (23%);**

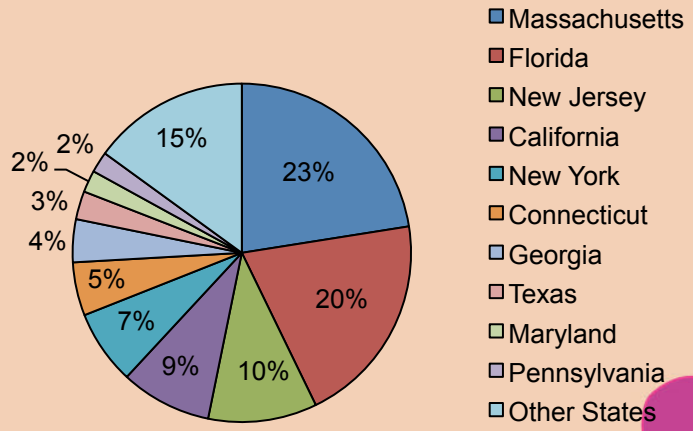
Florida: 324,000
Massachusetts: 250,000
California: 162,000
New York: 147,000
New Jersey: 147,000

- **During the last decade, the population of Brazilians in New Jersey surpassed that of California which in 2000 was home to the third largest Brazilian population:**

Share of Brazilians by State (2000)

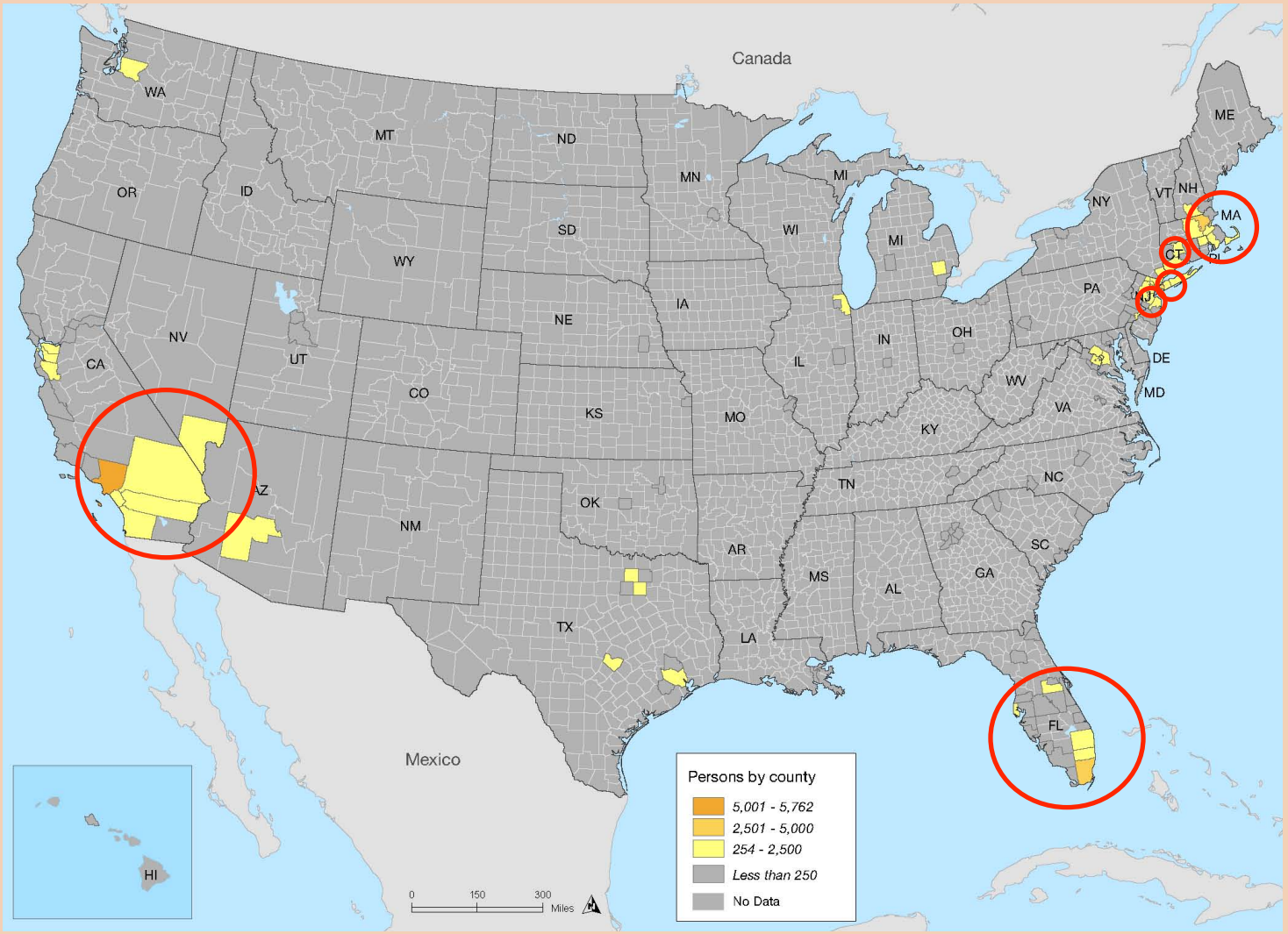


Share of Brazilians by State (2007)



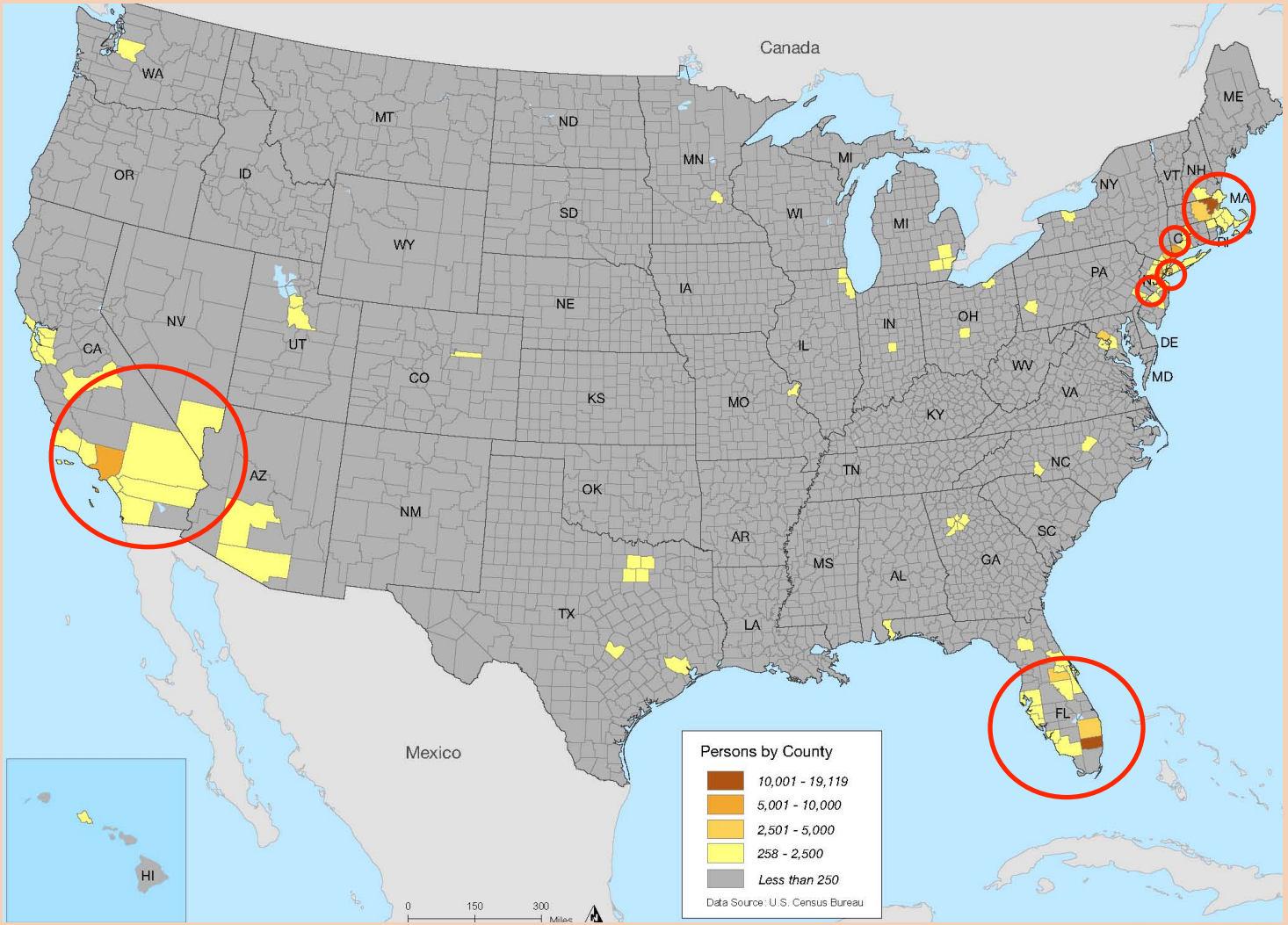
Source: 2007 American Community Survey

Largest Concentrations of Brazilians - 1990



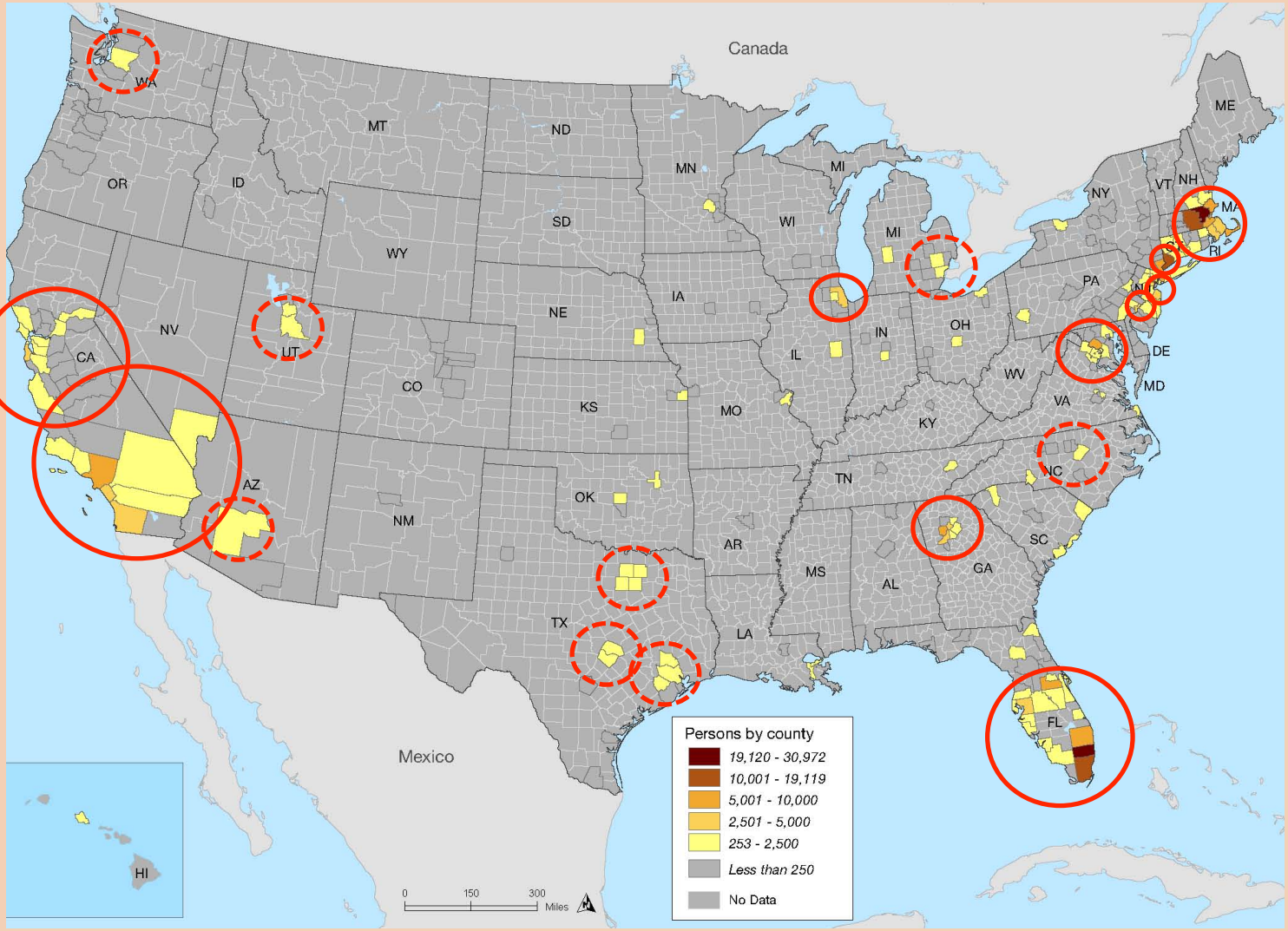
Source: 2000, U.S. Census

Largest Concentrations of Brazilians - 2000



Source: 2000, U.S. Census

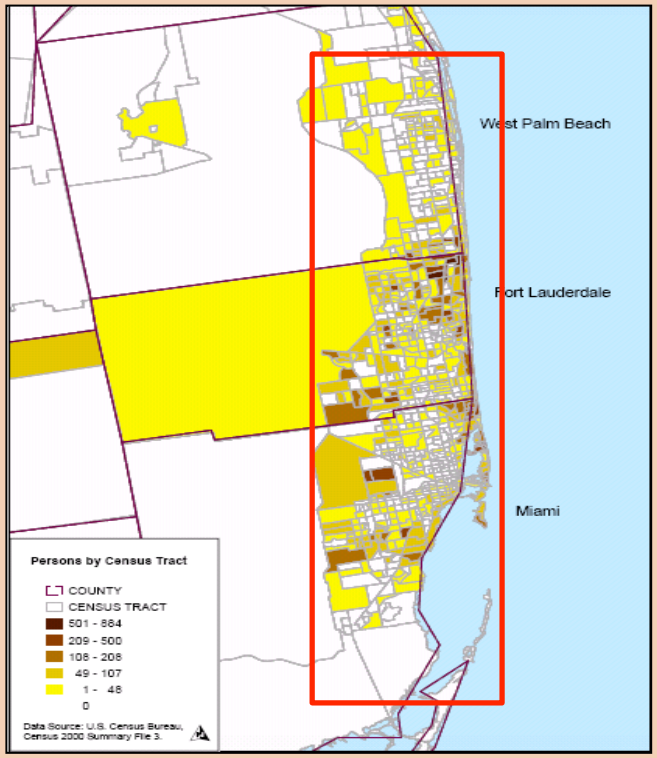
Largest Concentrations of Brazilians - 2007



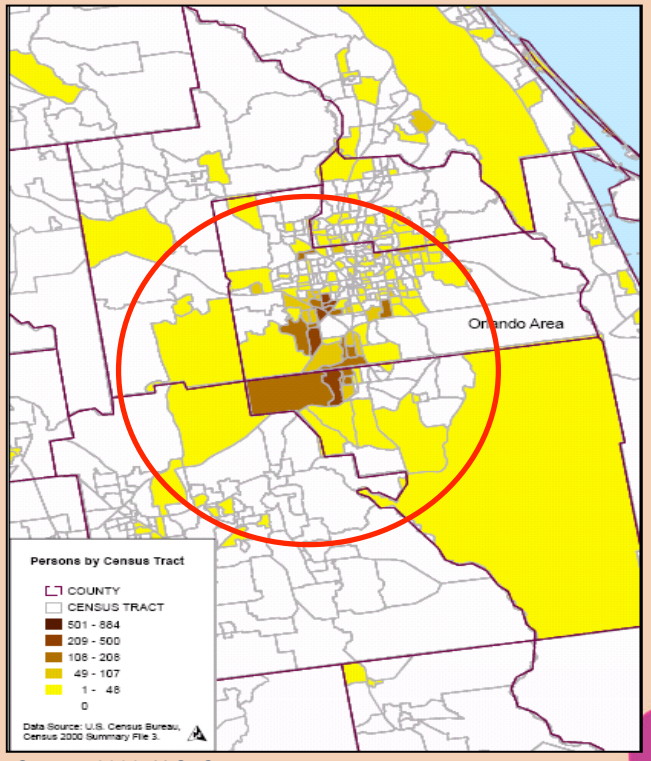
Source: 2000, U.S. Census

Florida's Top Settlement Areas:

- **Analysis of the Brazilian population living in Florida shows that there are two primary areas in which Brazilians are more likely to settle:**
  - ❑ **Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach; and**
  - ❑ **Orlando.**



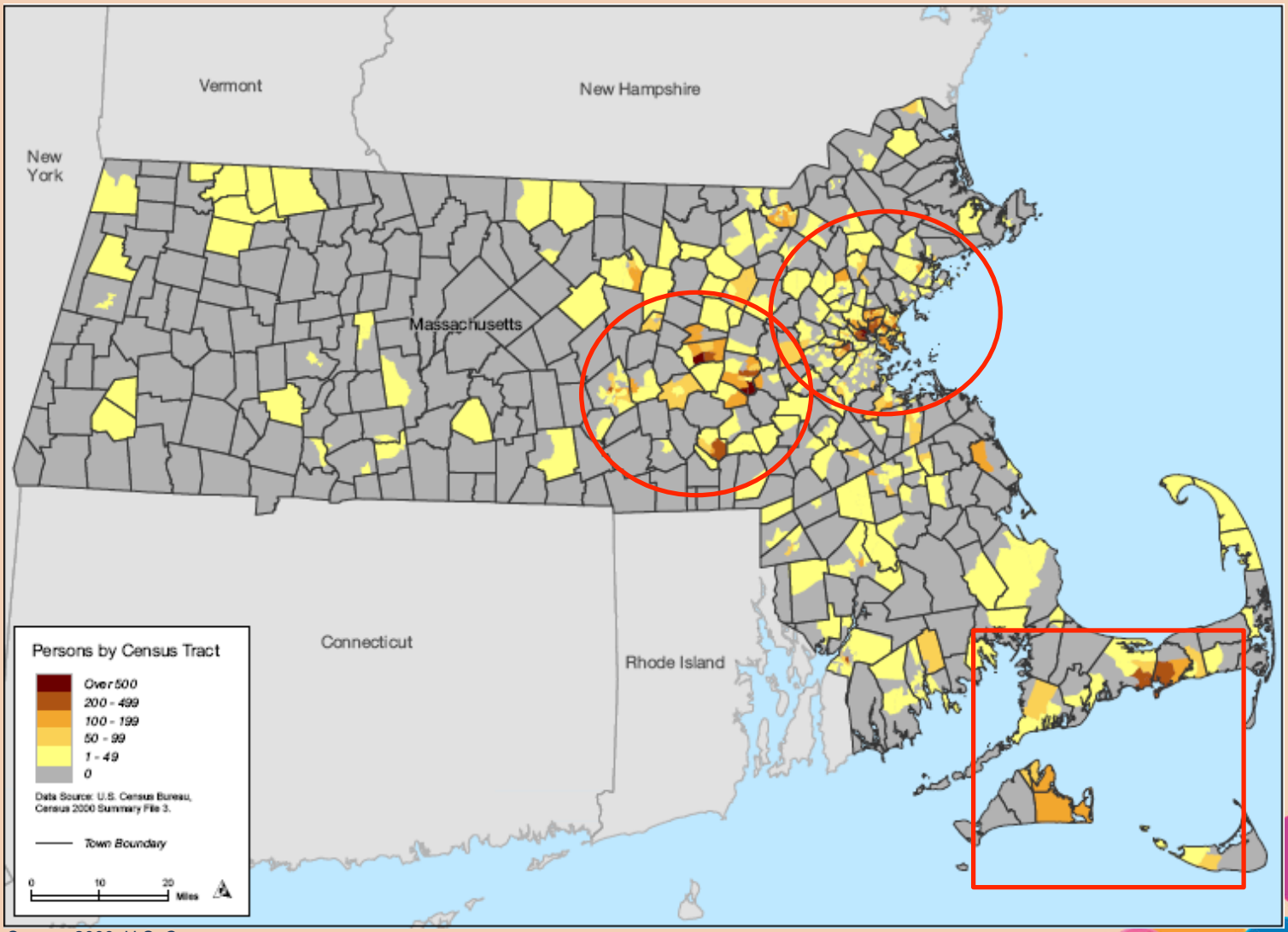
Source: 2000, U.S. Census



Source: 2000, U.S. Census

Massachusetts' Top Settlement Areas:

- **In Massachusetts, there are three areas in which Brazilians settle: Metro Boston, Metro West and Cape Cod & Islands**

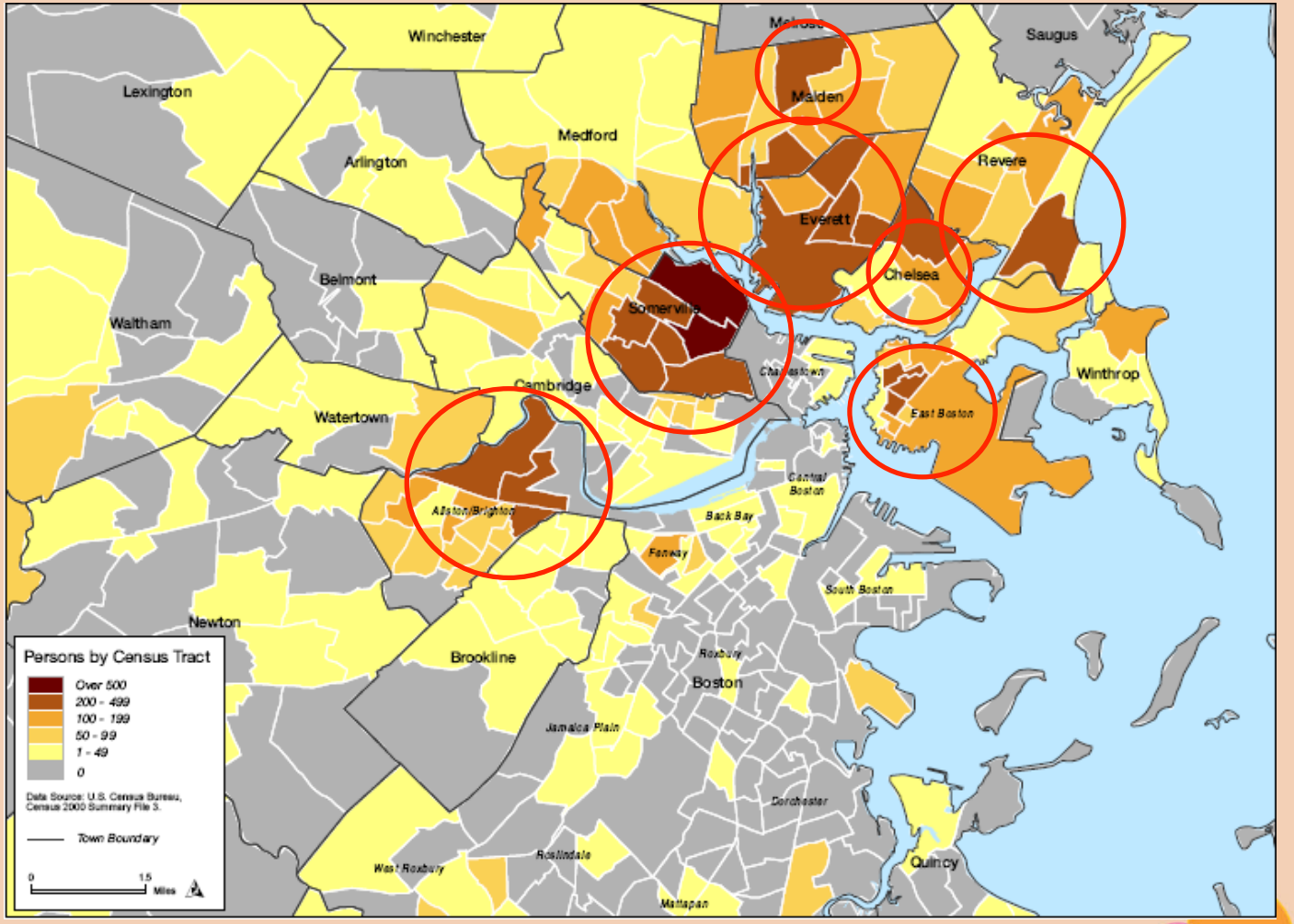


Source: 2000, U.S. Census

Massachusetts' Top Settlement Areas:

- **In Massachusetts, there are three areas in which Brazilians settle:**

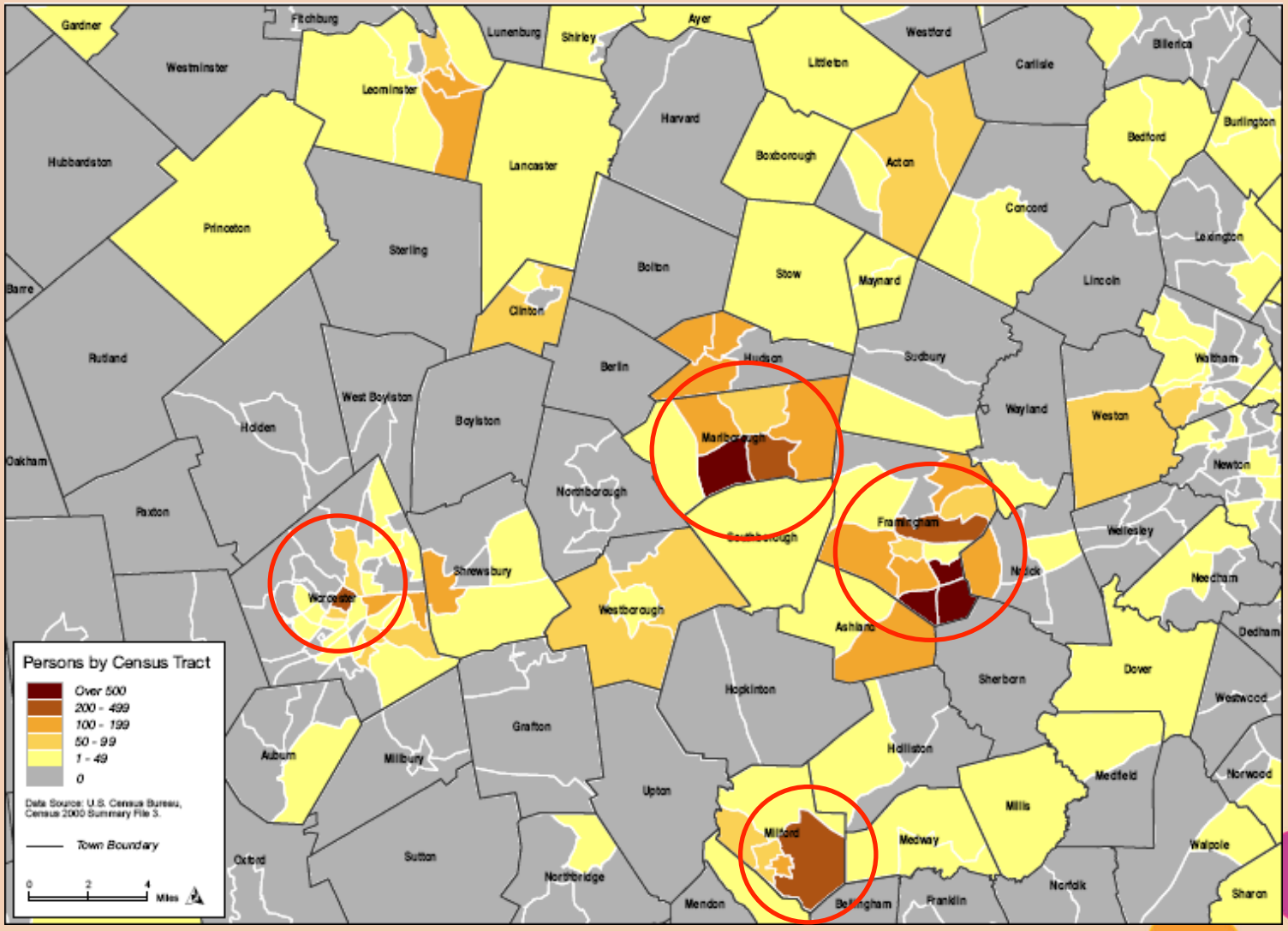
  - ❑ **Metro Boston (Allston/Brighton-East Boston-Somerville-Everett-Malden-Chelsea-Revere)**



Source: 2000, U.S. Census

Massachusetts' Top Settlement Areas:

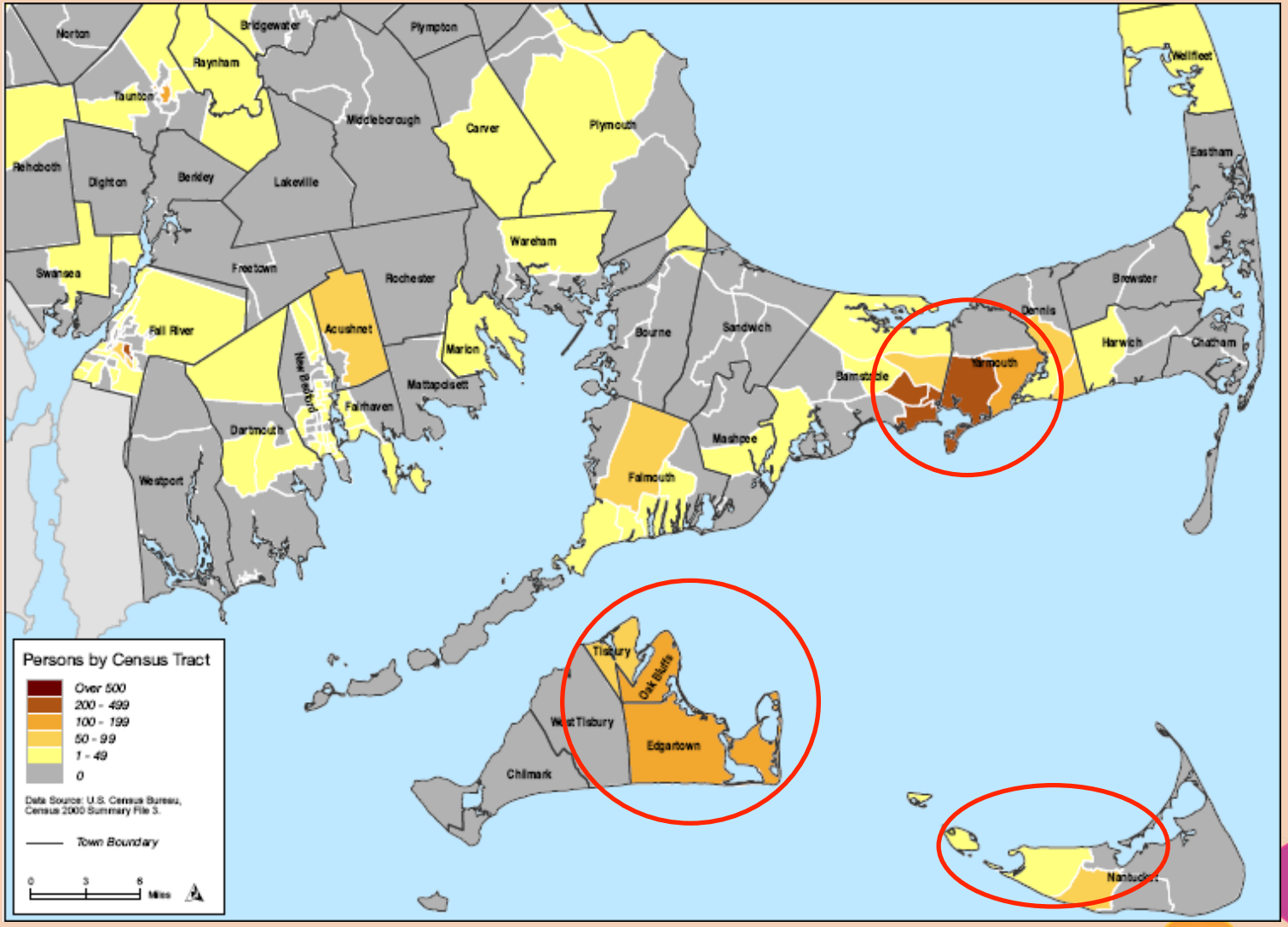
- **Metro West (Framingham- Marlborough–Worcester-Milford)**



Source: 2000, U.S. Census

Massachusetts' Top Settlement Areas:

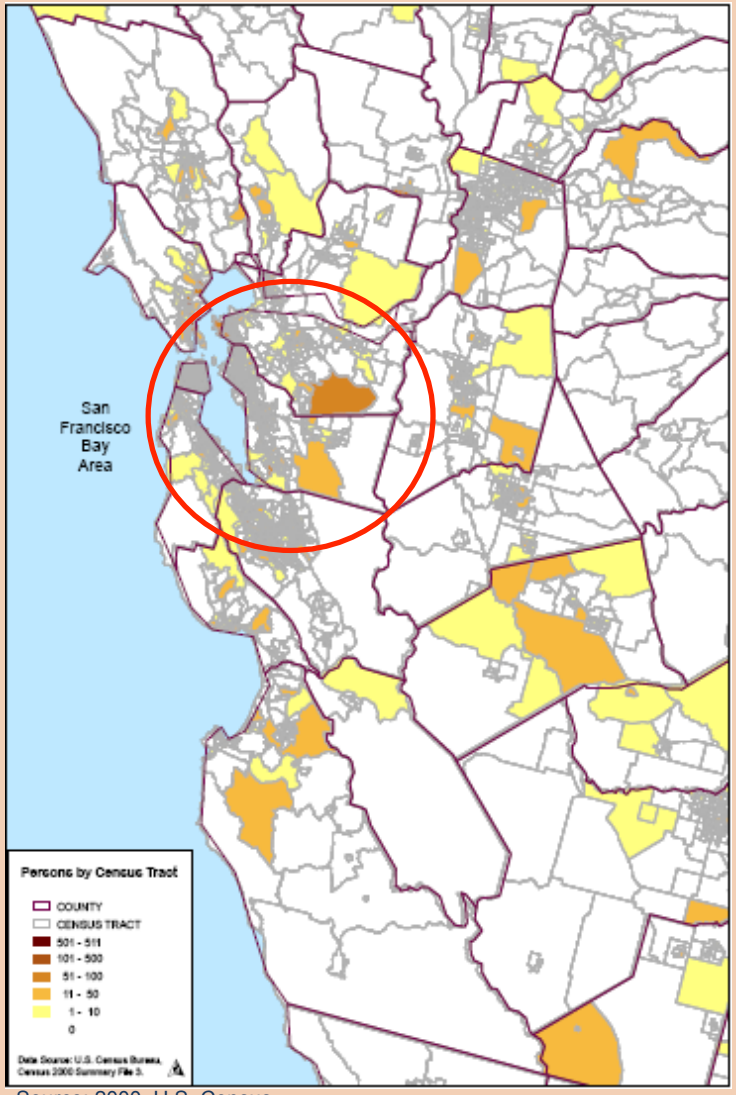
- **South Shore – Cape Cod and the Islands**



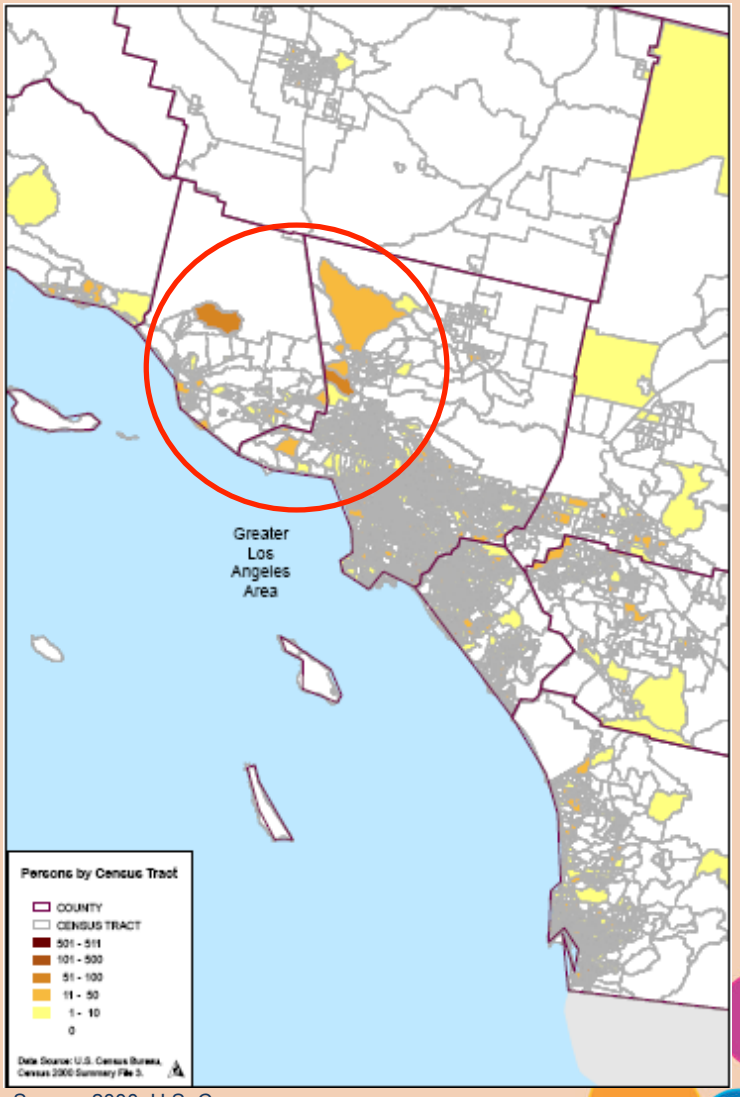
Source: 2000, U.S. Census

California's Top Settlement Areas:

- **Los Angeles and San Francisco are the two largest areas of Brazilian settlements in California:**



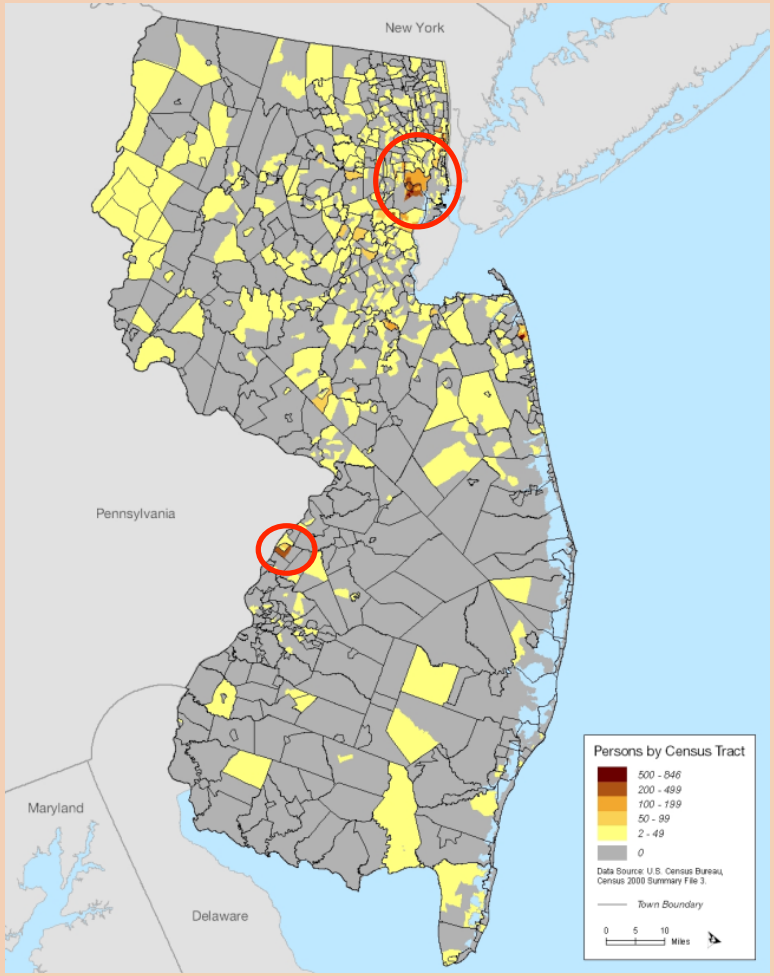
Source: 2000, U.S. Census



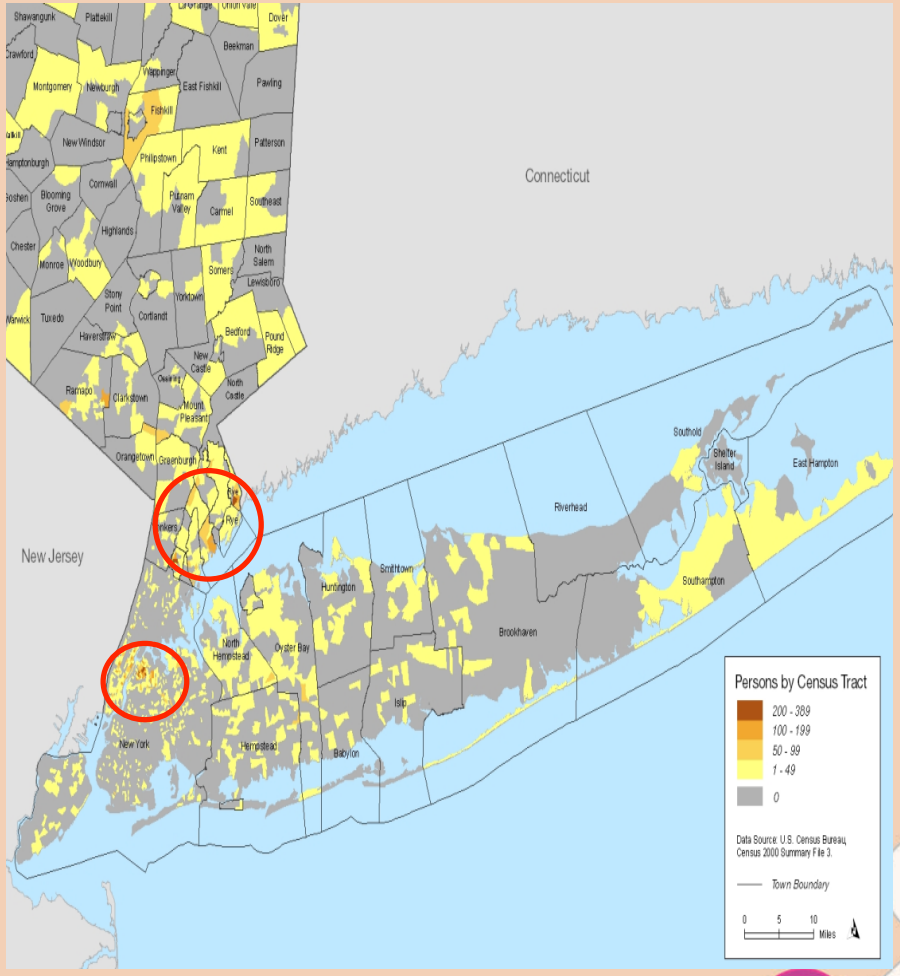
Source: 2000, U.S. Census

New York-New Jersey's Top Settlement Areas:

- **Areas of Brazilian settlement in New York-New Jersey include:**

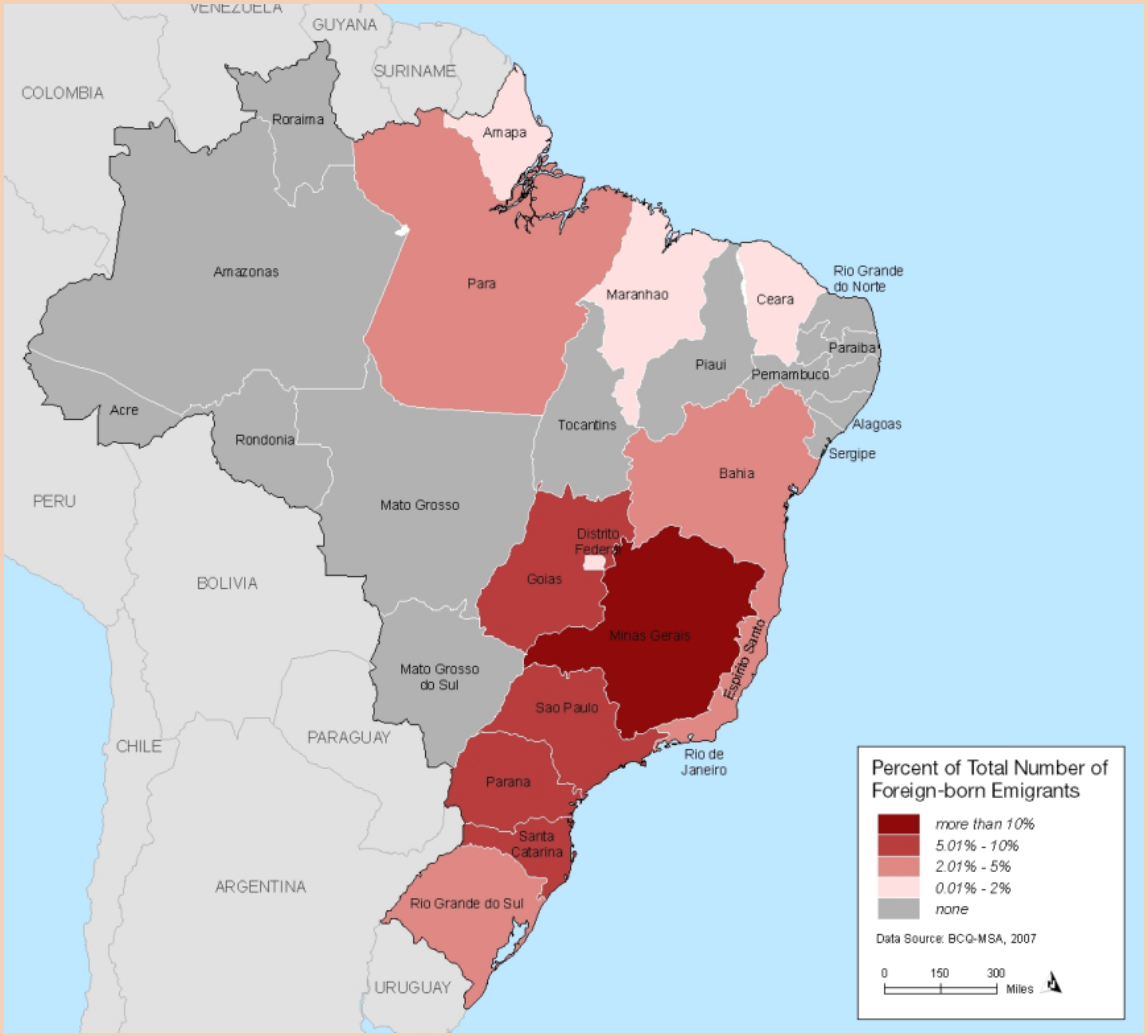


Source: 2000, U.S. Census



Source: 2000, U.S. Census

- **Although over 16 Brazilian states contribute to the migration stream, the four major Brazilian sending states are: Minas Gerais; Goias; Sao Paulo; Parana; and Santa Catarina:**

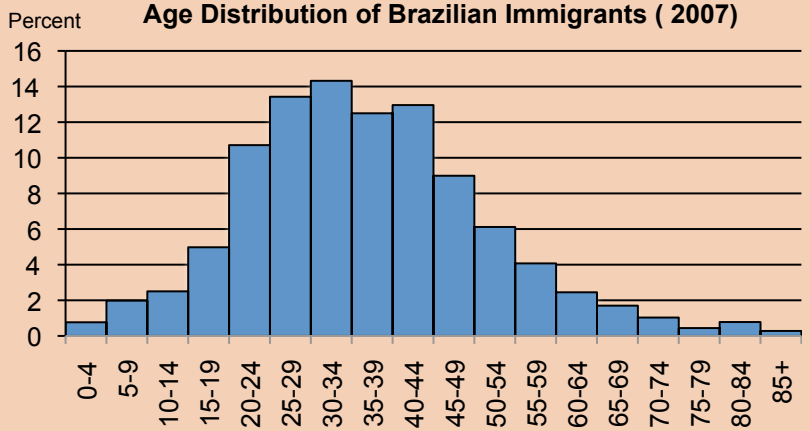


Source: Fazendo America, Alvaro Lima & Pete Plastrik, 2007

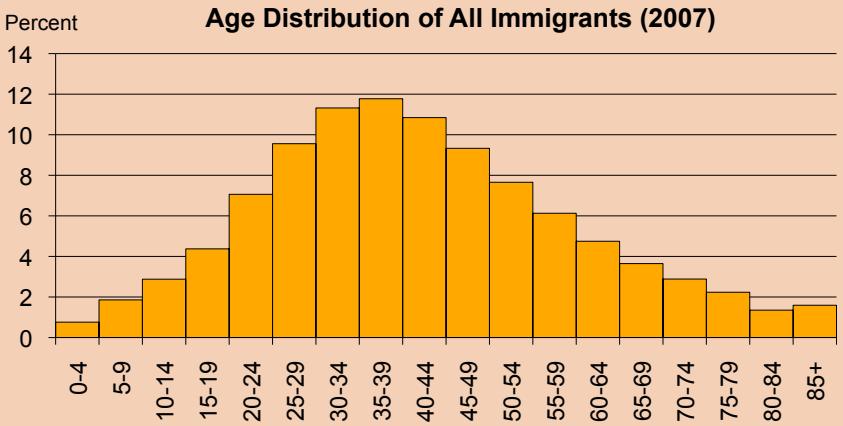
III. Who are we and what do we do?

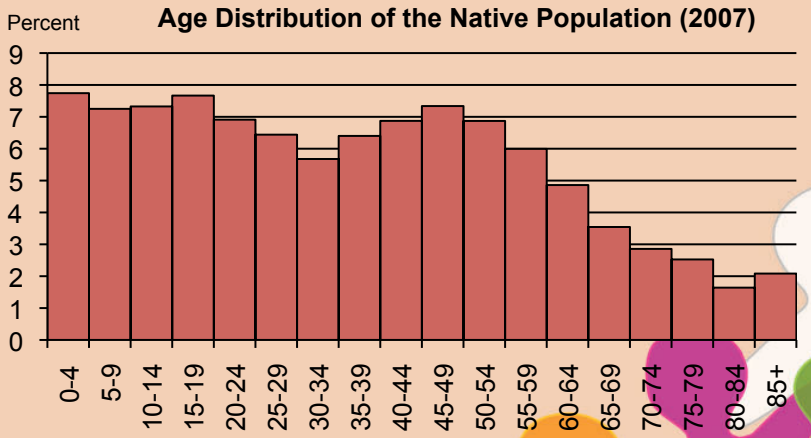
Age, Gender, and Marital Status

- As of 2007, the median age of Brazilian immigrants in the United States was 35.8 years - on par with the median age of natives and considerably lower than that of all immigrants (40.2 years);



- However, Brazilians' age distribution is more similar to that of all immigrants than to that of natives. The vast majority of Brazilians and of all immigrants are of working age:



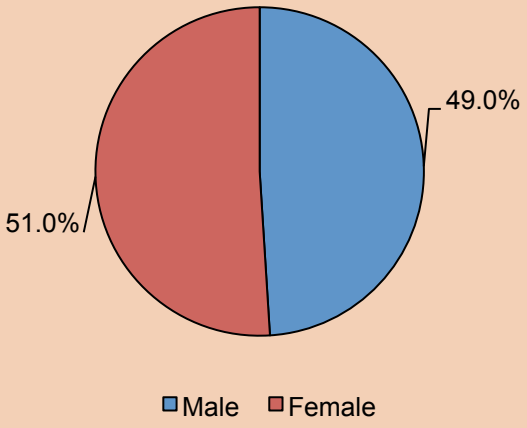


Source: 2007 American Community Survey

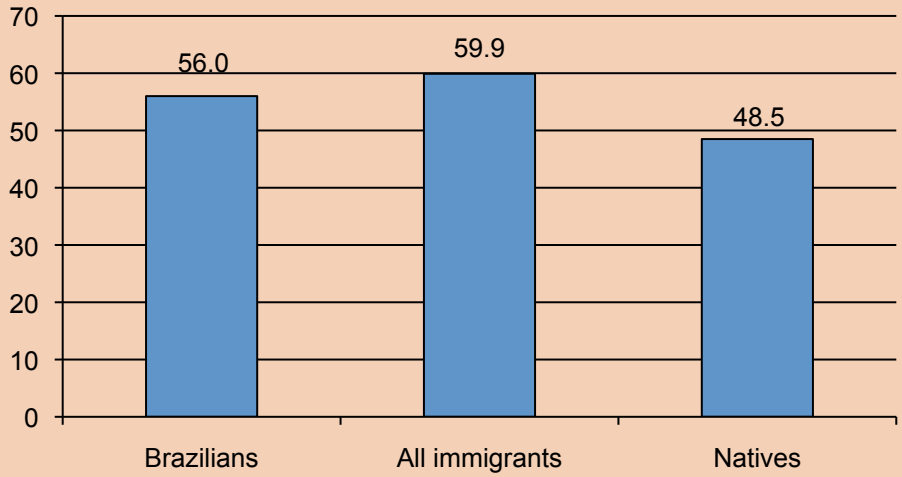
- **The breakdown by gender is nearly identical for all three groups. 50 percent of all immigrants and 51 percent of Brazilian immigrants and of native residents are women;**

- **Brazilian immigrants are more likely to be married than native residents but less likely than all immigrants: 56 percent of Brazilians are married, compared with 60 percent of all immigrants and 49 percent of natives:**

Gender Distribution of Brazilian Immigrants (2007)



Marital Status of Brazilian Immigrants, All Immigrants, and the Native Population, 2007 (share who are married)

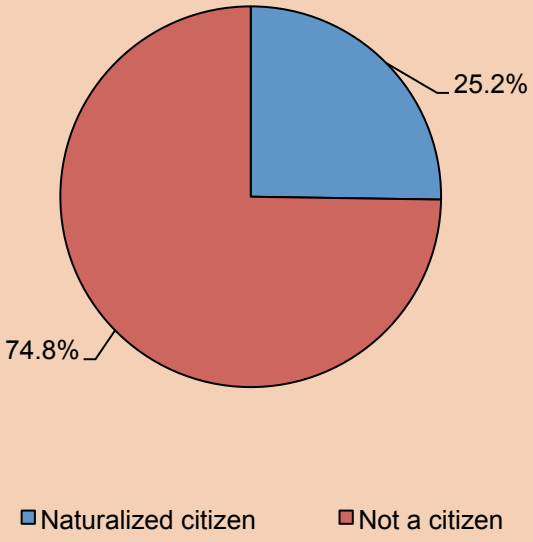


Source: 2007 American Community Survey

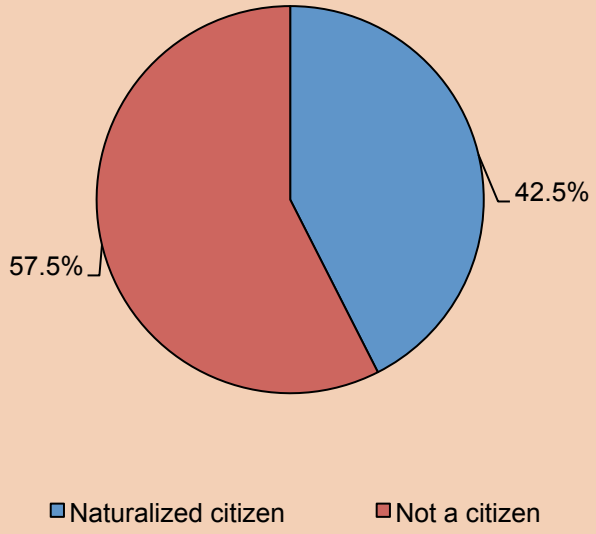
Citizenship and Duration of Residency

- **Brazilian immigrants are much less likely to be naturalized citizens compared with the total immigrant population. Only a quarter of Brazilian immigrants are U.S. citizens, while 43 percent of all immigrants are naturalized:**

Citizenship Status of Brazilian Immigrants (2007)



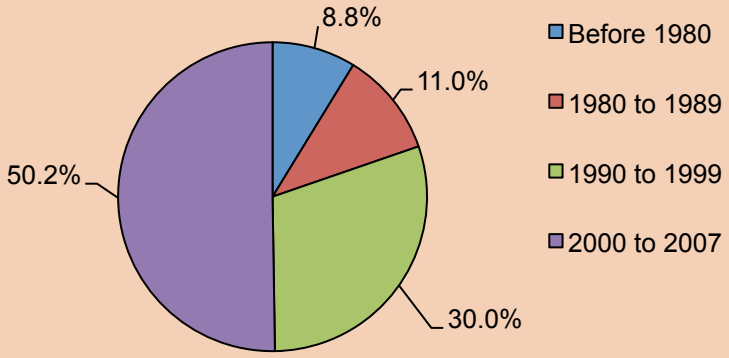
Citizenship Status of All Immigrants, 2007



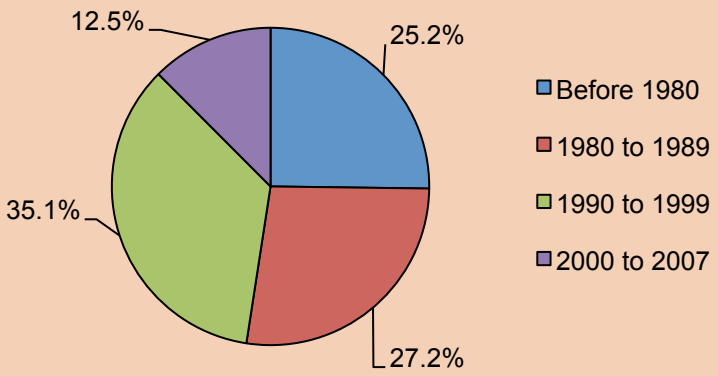
Source: 2007 American Community Survey

- **This is not surprising given the fact that many Brazilian immigrants arrived in the U.S. much more recently than immigrants from other countries;**
- **Only 9 percent of Brazilians and nearly a quarter of all immigrants came to the United States before 1980. In contrast, more than half of Brazilian immigrants and only 28 percent of all immigrants immigrated after 2000:**

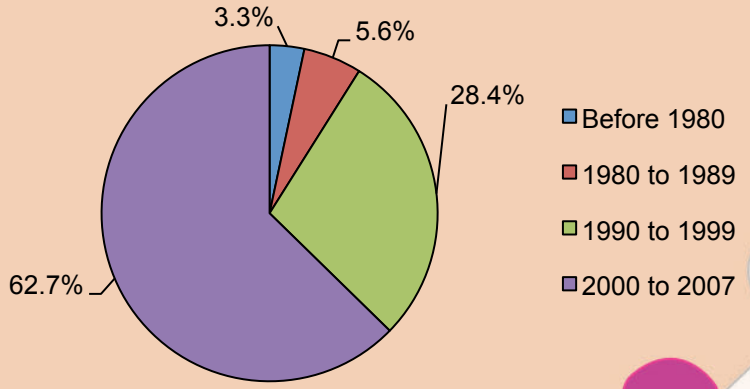
Period of Arrival of Brazilian Immigrants, 2007



Period of Arrival of Brazilian Immigrants Who Are Naturalized Citizens, 2007



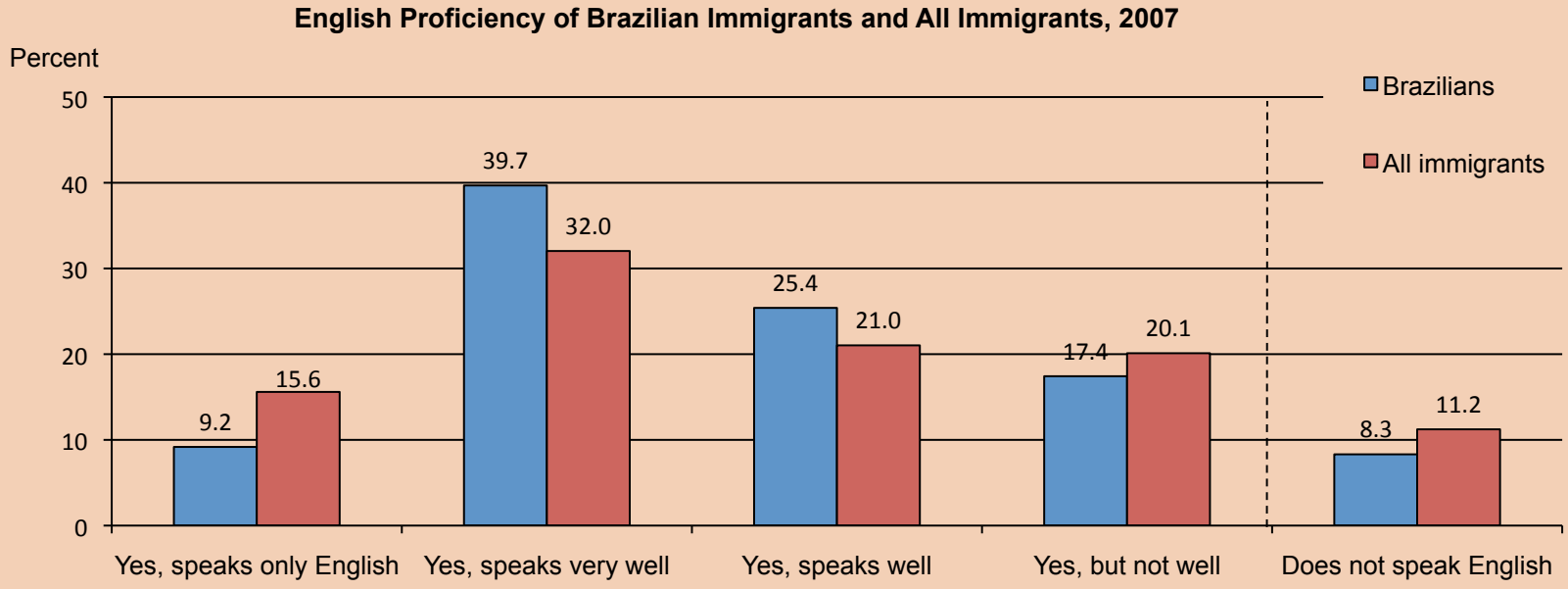
Period of Arrival of Brazilian Immigrants Who Are Not Naturalized Citizens, 2007



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

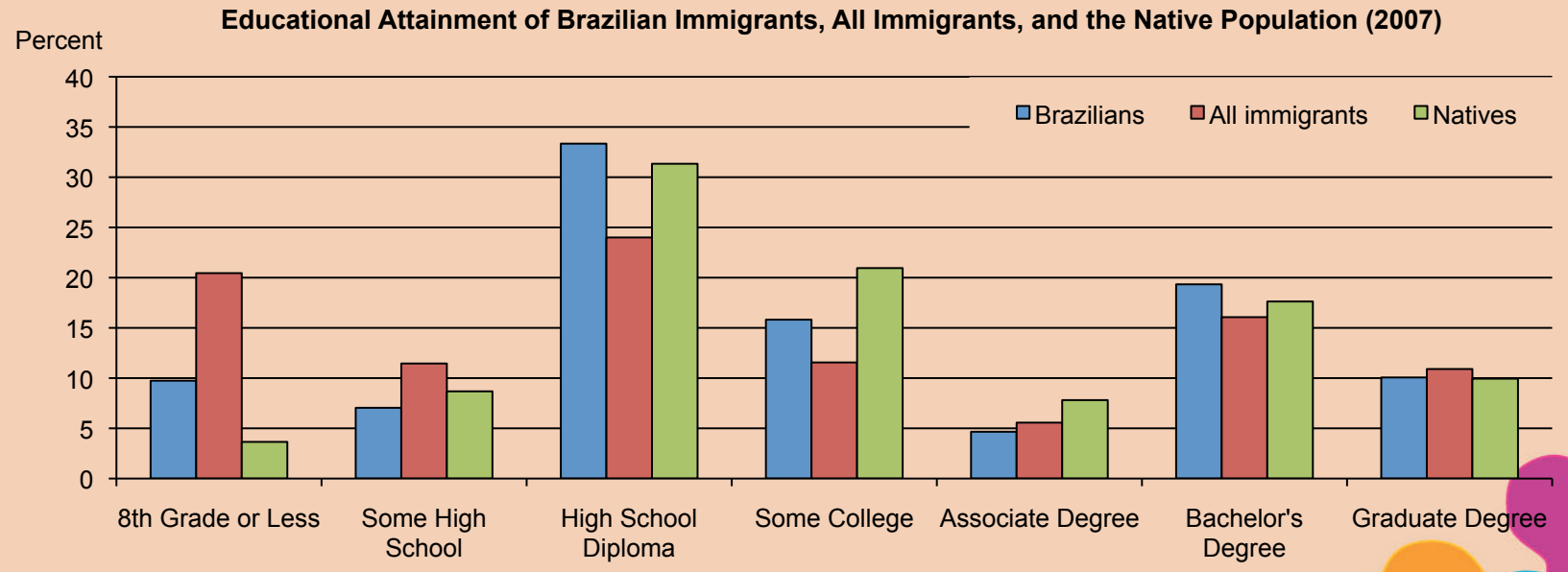
English Proficiency and Educational Attainment

- **Brazilians' command of English differs somewhat than that of all immigrants in the United States. Brazilians are slightly less likely to lack any English skills but they are also less likely to speak English only. At the same time, Brazilians are more likely to speak English well or very well: two thirds of them do, compared with 53 percent of all immigrants;**



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

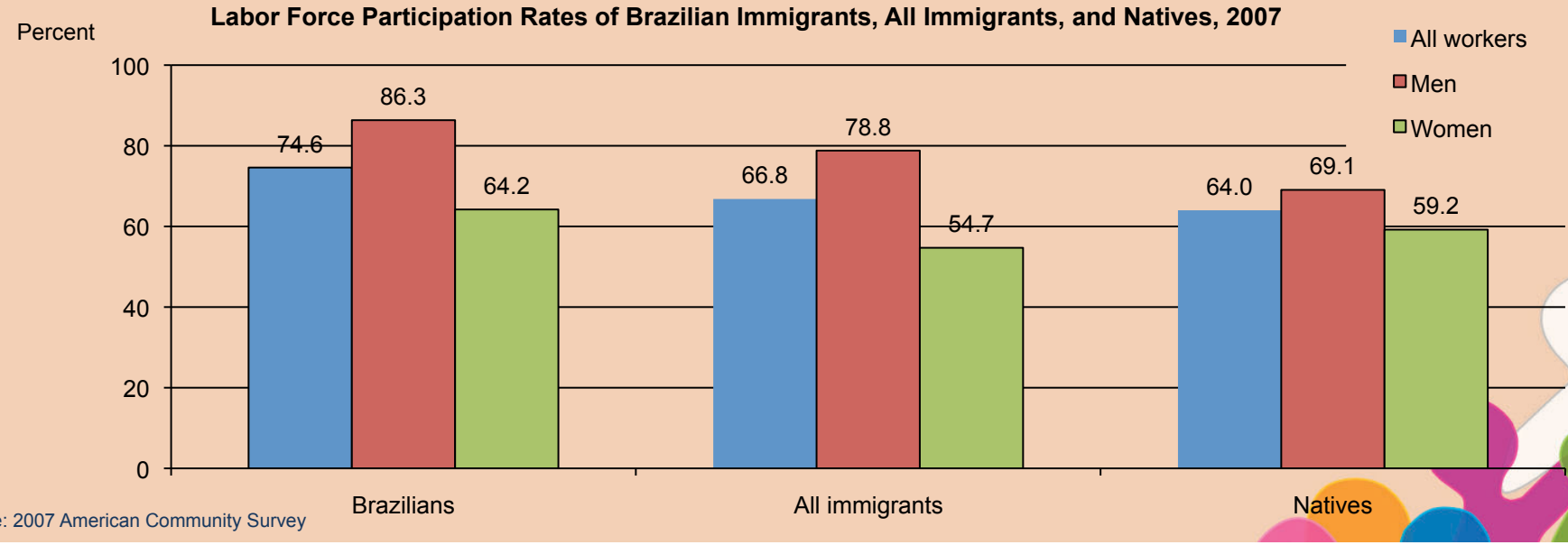
- **While 20 percent of all immigrants in the United States lack a high school degree, among Brazilians this share is only half as high, at 10 percent;**
- **A full third of Brazilians are high school graduates, compared with a quarter of all immigrants and 31 percent of all natives;**
- **Brazilians are also more likely to be college graduates than both immigrants and native residents. 19 percent of Brazilians have a bachelor's degree, compared with 16 percent of all immigrants and 18 percent of natives;**
- **Educational attainment at the graduate level is similar for all three groups: 10 percent of Brazilians and of natives as well as 11 percent of all immigrants hold advanced degrees;**



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

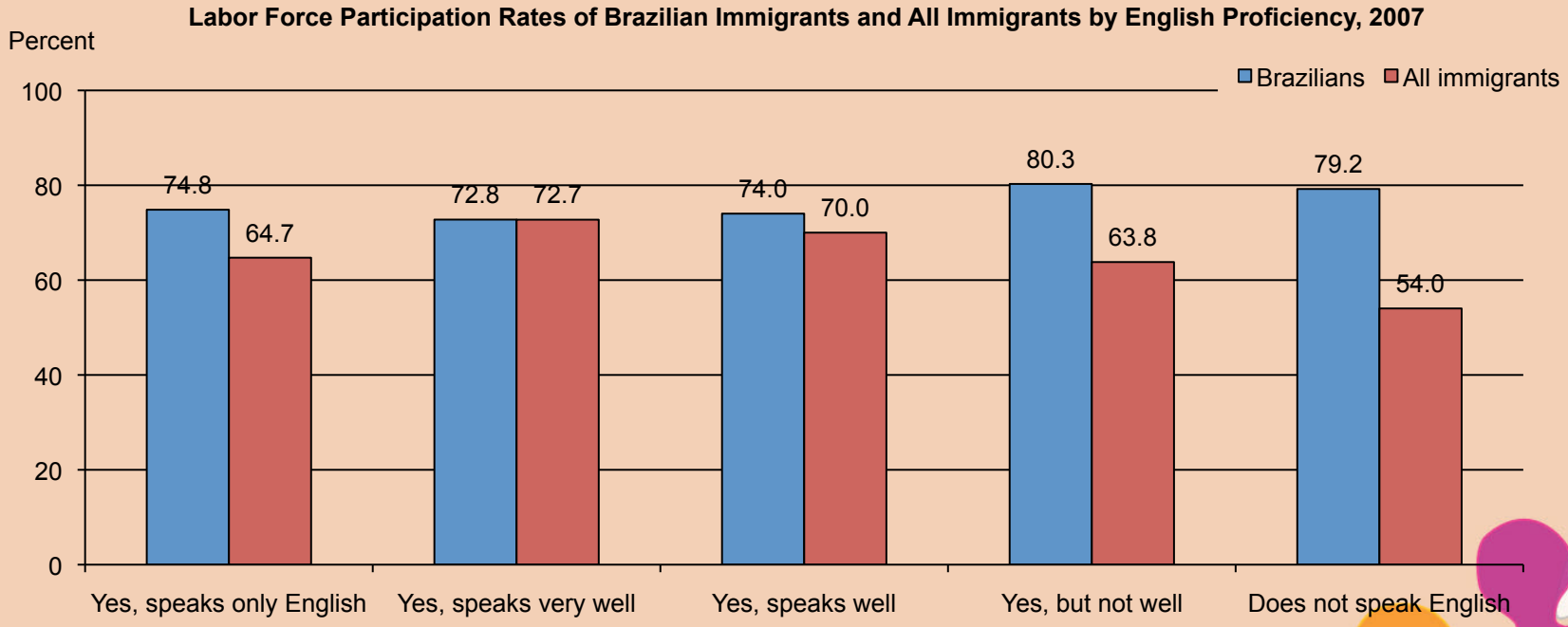
Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

- **Brazilian immigrants are more likely to participate in the labor force than are both natives and immigrants:**
  - **Three quarters of Brazilians over the age of 16 are in the labor force, compared with two thirds of all immigrants and 64 percent of natives;**
  - **Men's labor force participation rates for the three groups are higher: 86 percent of Brazilian men, 79 percent of all immigrant men, and 69 percent of native men are in the labor force;**
  - **The labor force participation rate for Brazilian women is 64 percent, compared with 55 percent for all immigrant women and 59 percent of native women;**



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

- **Brazilian immigrants at all levels of English proficiency have higher labor force participation rates than the total immigrant population;**
- **These discrepancies are particularly large for workers with limited English skills:**
  - **Among immigrants who do not speak English well, 80 percent of Brazilians and 64 percent of all immigrants are in the labor force;**
  - **Similarly, 79 percent of Brazilians and 54 percent of all immigrants who do not speak English at all are either employed or actively seeking work;**



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

- **The unemployment rate of Brazilians in 2007 was only 3.8 percent, compared with 5.5 percent for all immigrants and 6.5 percent for natives;**

- **Similar comparisons hold by gender as well. Brazilian men's unemployment rate, at 3.6 percent, is almost half the unemployment rate of native men (6.7 percent);**

- **The unemployment rate of Brazilian women is somewhat higher at 4.6 percent. However, they are still less likely to be unemployed than are all immigrant and native women, whose unemployment rates are 6.4 and 6.3 percent, respectively;**

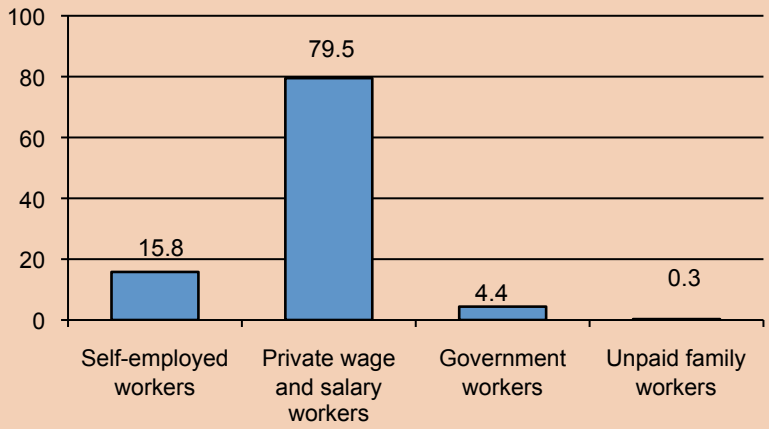
Source: 2007 American Community Survey

Class of Worker

- **Brazilian immigrants are more than twice as likely to be self-employed as are all immigrant and native workers. Nearly 16 percent of Brazilians work at their own non-incorporated businesses, compared with only 7.5 percent of all immigrant workers and 6.6 percent of natives;**

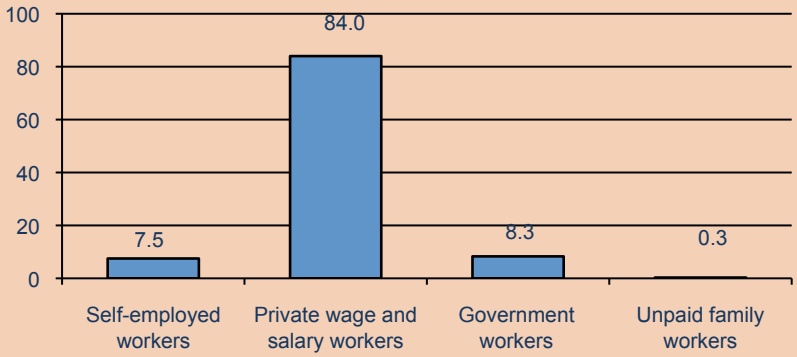
- **Almost 80 percent of Brazilians work at private employers – a share lower than the 84 percent of all immigrants but higher than the 78 percent of natives;**

Employed Brazilian Immigrants by Class of Worker, 2007

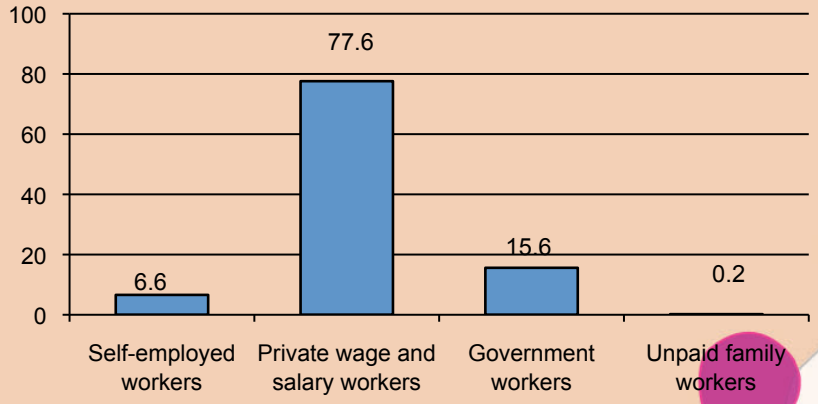


- **Brazilian immigrants are less likely to be government workers than both natives and all immigrants. Four percent of Brazilians work in the public sector, compared with 8 percent of all immigrants and 16 percent of native workers:**

All Employed Immigrants by Class of Worker, 2007



All Employed Natives by Class of Worker, 2007

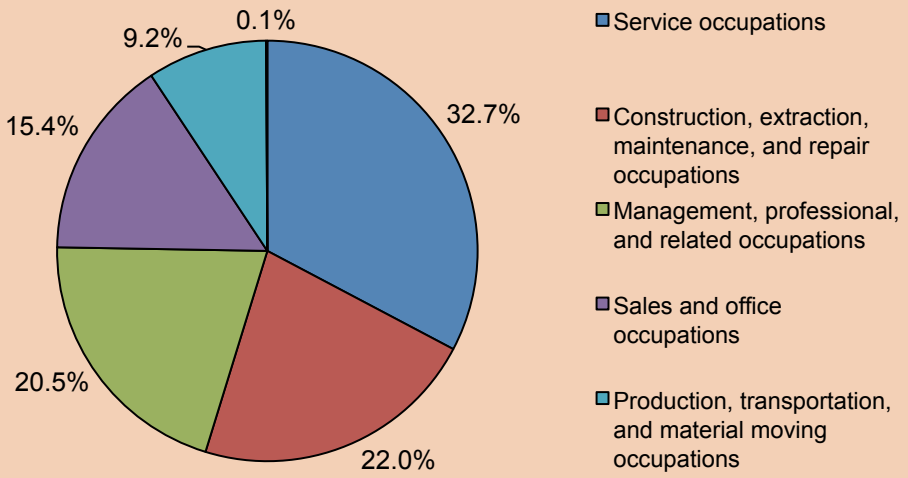


Source: 2007 American Community Survey

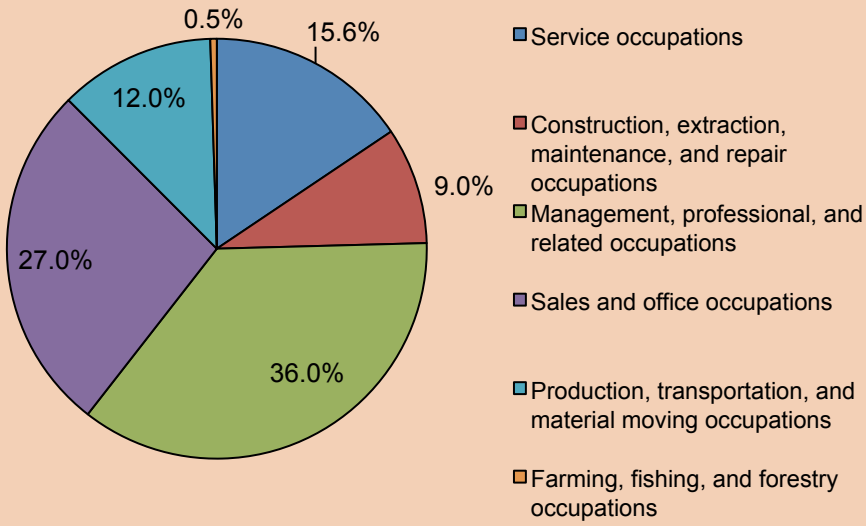
Employment by Occupation

- **Over 90 percent of all Brazilian workers are concentrated in four occupations - service; construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair; management and professional occupations; and sales and office-related occupations;**
- **This distribution is somewhat different from the occupation breakdown of all immigrants and of native workers:**

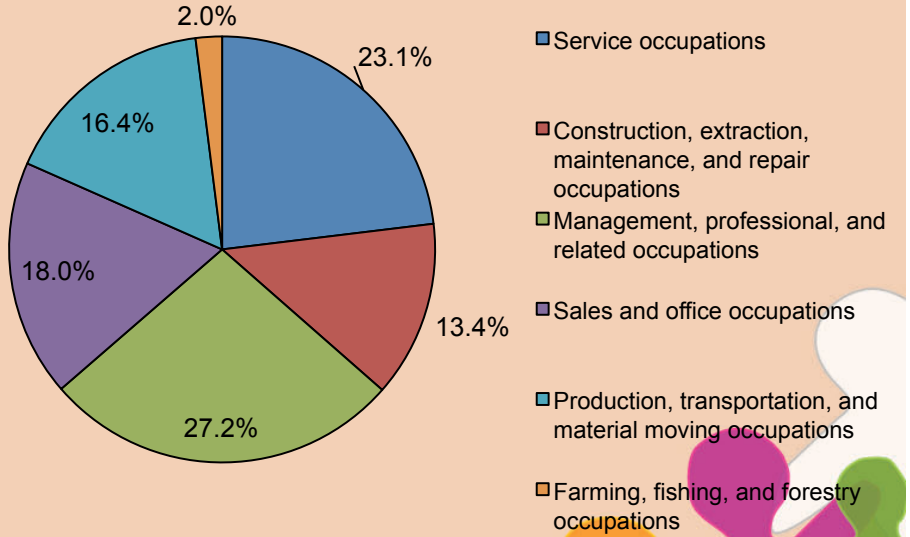
Employment by Occupation of Brazilian Immigrants, 2007



Employment by Occupation of Natives, 2007



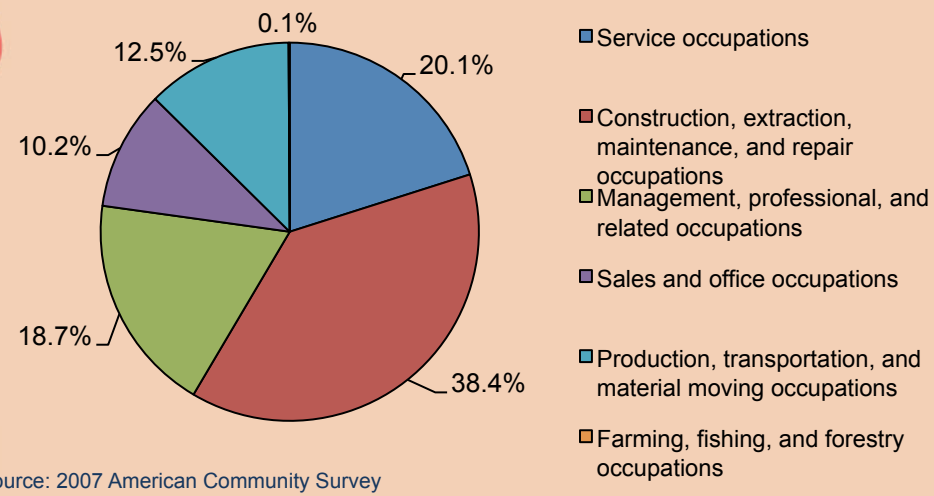
Employment by Occupation of All Immigrants, 2007



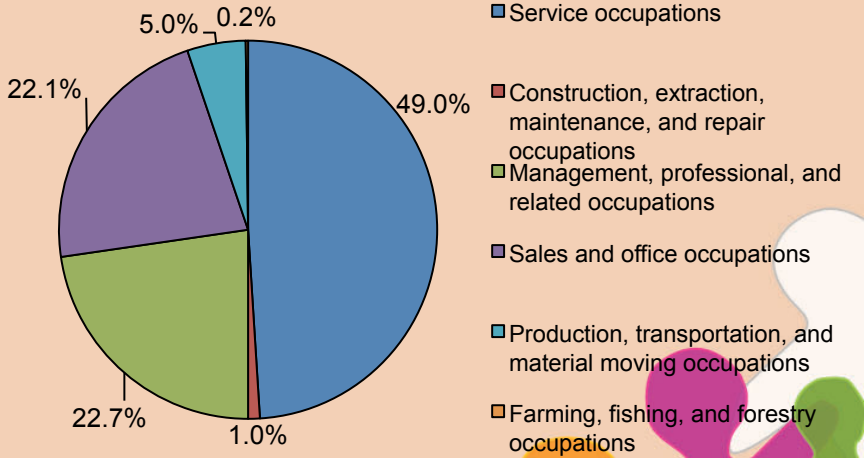
Source: 2007 American Community Survey

- **Not surprisingly, Brazilian men and women make very different occupation choices;**
  - **Construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair-related jobs are the most popular occupation group for Brazilian male workers, employing over 38 percent. Service occupations are the second most popular group among Brazilian male workers;**
  - **In contrast, service occupations are by far the best represented occupation group among Brazilian women: half of all Brazilian female workers hold service-related jobs. Management and professional, and sales and office-related jobs are the next two most popular occupation groups, each employing just over 22 percent of Brazilian female workers;**

Employment by Occupation of Male Brazilian Immigrants, 2007



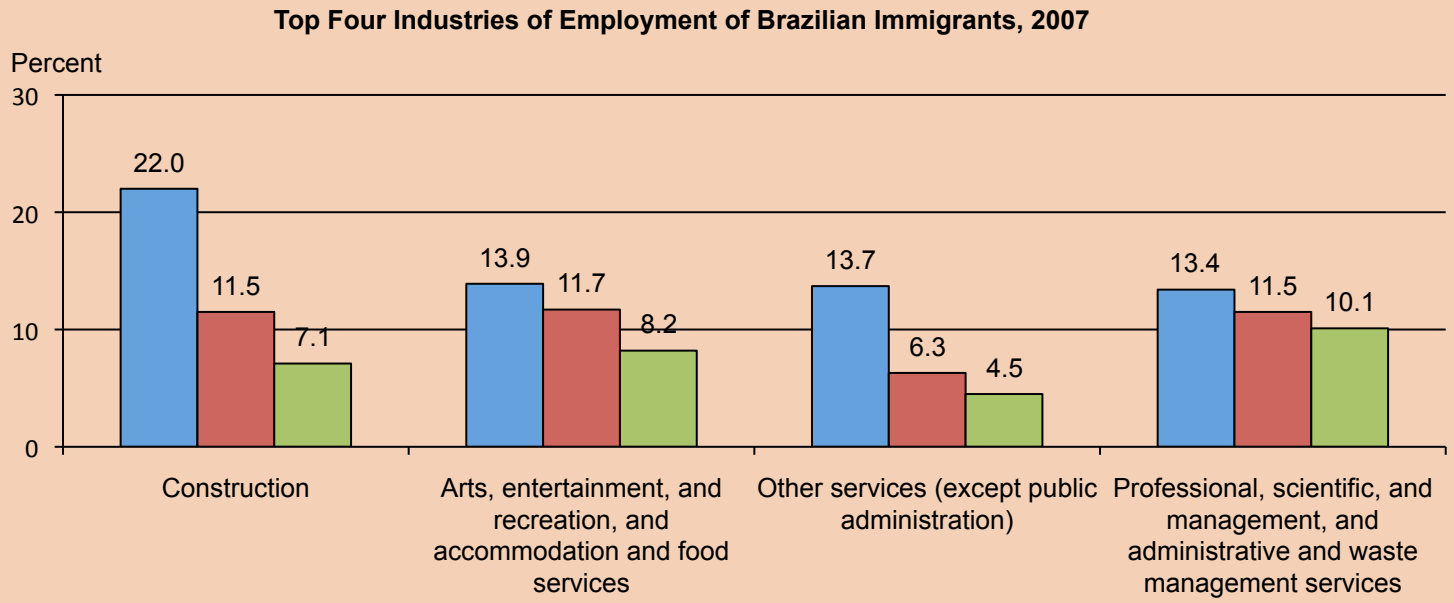
Employment by Occupation of Female Brazilian Immigrants, 2007



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

Employment by Industry

- **The four most popular industries among Brazilian workers in the United States are Construction; Arts, entertainment, recreation; accommodation and food services; Other services; Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services:**

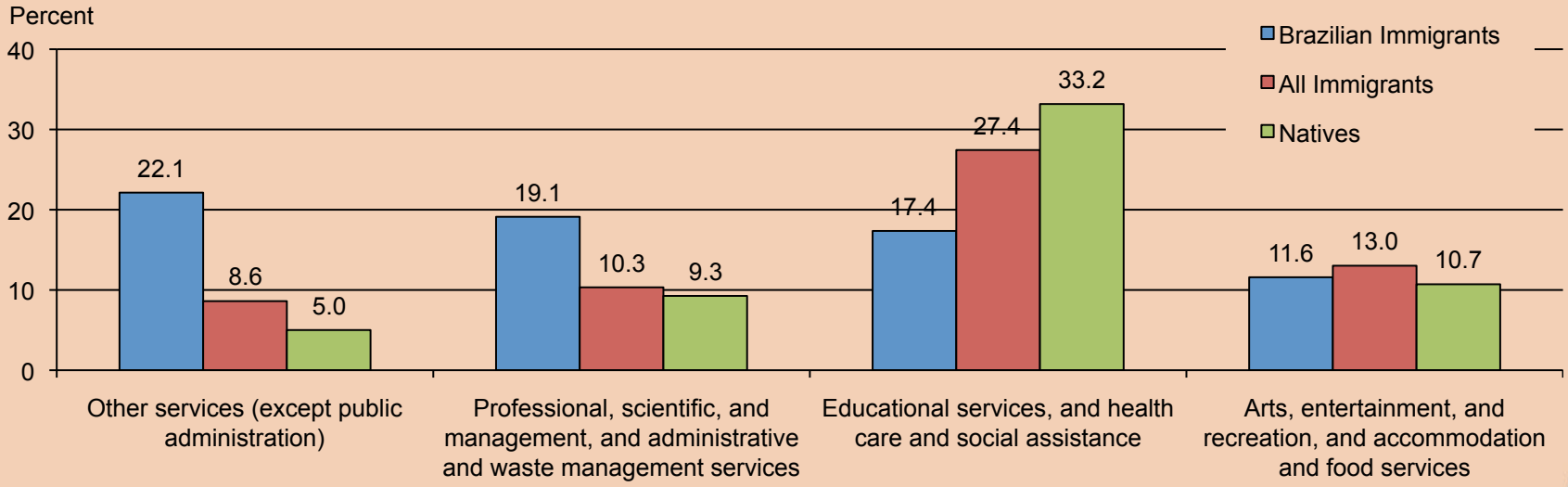


- **The industry breakdown of Brazilian immigrants differs from that of both all immigrant and all native workers. The most popular industry for the latter two groups is education and health care, which employs 17 percent of all immigrants and 22 percent of all native workers;**

Source: 2007 American Community Survey

- **As with occupations, the industry breakdown of employed Brazilian men and women also differs. Brazilian women are best represented in Other services, which employs just under a quarter of them. Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services employ 19 percent of Brazilian female workers and constitute the second most popular industry for their employment.**

Top Four Industries of Employment of Brazilian Immigrants, All Immigrants, and the Native Population (WOMEN), 2007

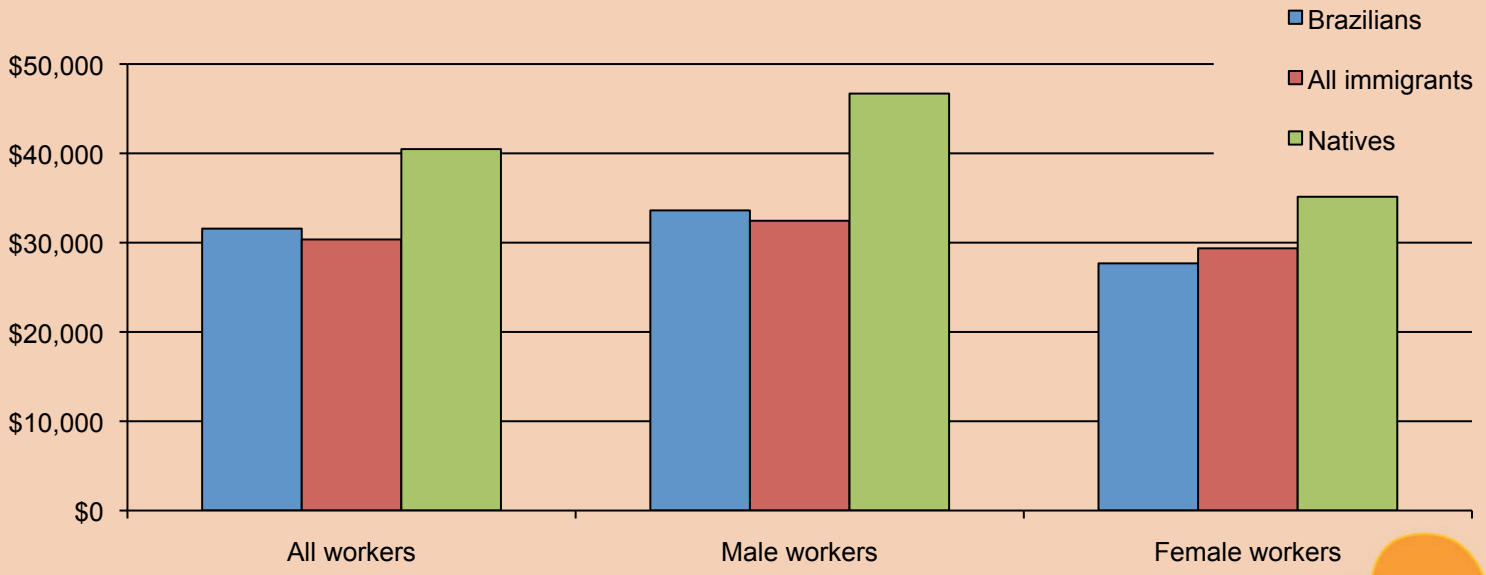


Source: 2007 American Community Survey

Median Earnings

- **In 2007, among full-time year-round workers, the median earnings of Brazilian immigrants ($31,571) were slightly higher than those of all immigrant workers ($30,357) but substantially lower than those of native workers ($40,476);**
- **A comparison of the median earnings for male workers yields very similar results: while Brazilian male workers out-earn immigrant men, they make only three quarters of the median native male earnings;**
- **Brazilian women, in contrast, earn not only less than native women, but also less than all immigrant female workers:**

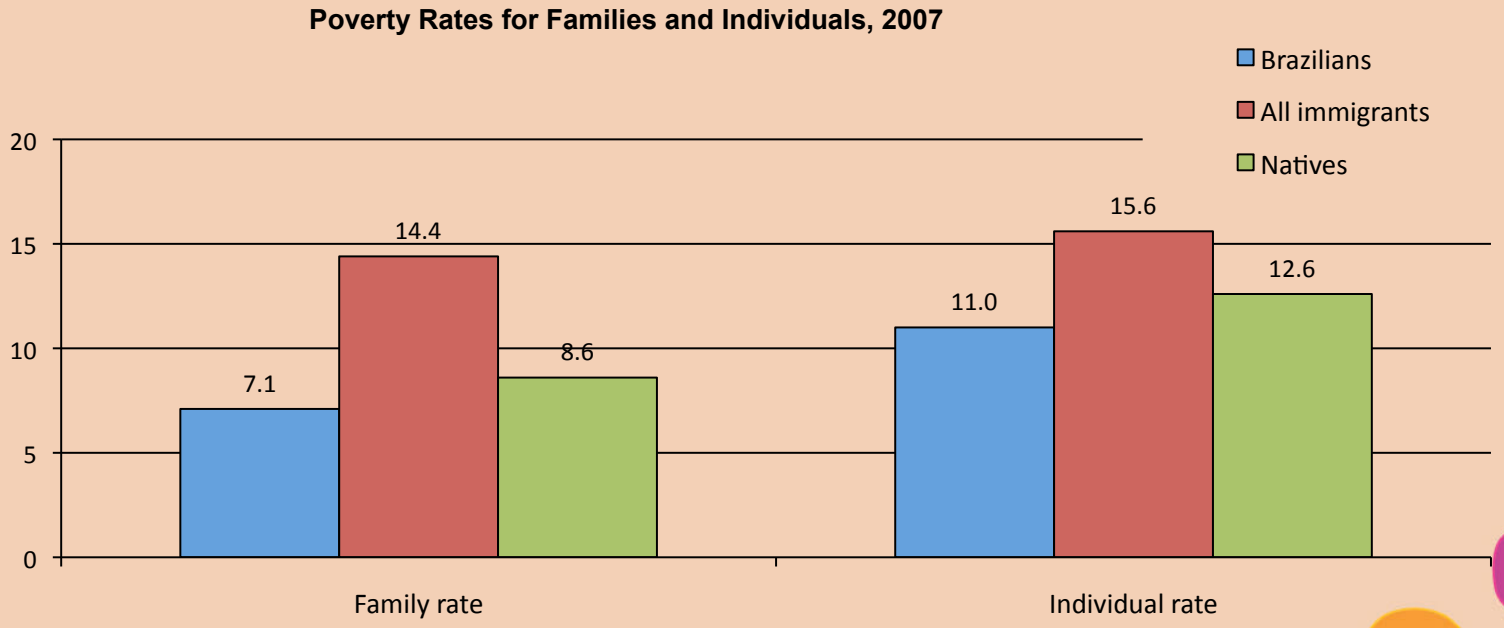
Median Earnings of Brazilian Immigrants, All Immigrants, and Natives, 2007



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

Poverty Rates

- **Both Brazilian immigrant families and individuals tend to be less poor than the immigrant and native populations;**
- **In 2007, the poverty rate for families headed by Brazilians was 7.1 percent, compared with 14.4 percent for all immigrant families and 8.6 percent for native families;**
- **Similarly, the individual poverty rate for Brazilians was lower (11%), compared with 15.6 percent for all immigrants and 12.6 percent for all native individuals:**



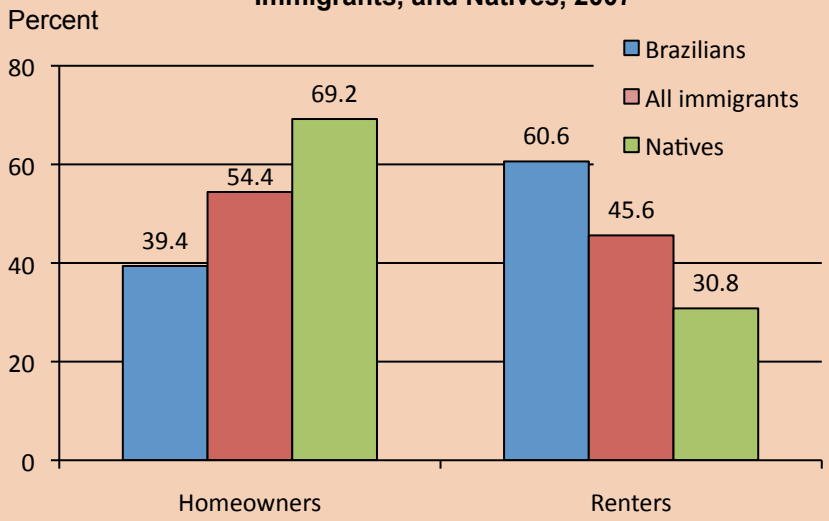
Source: 2007 American Community Survey

Homeownership Status

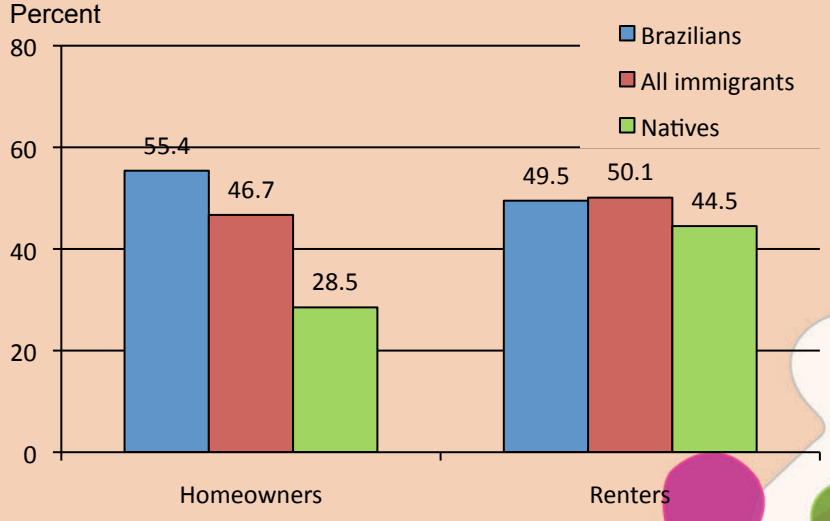
- **The ownership status of Brazilian immigrants differs from that of all immigrants and natives. Brazilians are much less likely to own their home than the two groups – 39 percent of Brazilians are homeowners, compared with 54 percent of all immigrants and 69 percent of natives;**

- **Brazilians homeowners and renters appear to be burdened by housing costs to a higher degree than immigrant and native homeowners. Over 55 percent of Brazilian homeowners 49 percent of renters have housing costs that would be considered burdensome (monthly housing costs equal or exceed 30 percent of their household income):**

Homeownership Status of Brazilian Immigrants, All Immigrants, and Natives, 2007



Housing Cost Burdens of Brazilian Immigrants, All Immigrants, and Natives, 2007



Source: 2007 American Community Survey

IV. How much do we contribute economically (both here and there)?

Total Contributions to the U.S. Economy:

- 628,000 direct and indirect jobs created by Brazilian spending and Brazilian businesses;
- $58 billion in direct contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP);
- $7.5 billion paid in direct Federal and State taxes.

Total Contributions to the Brazilian Economy:

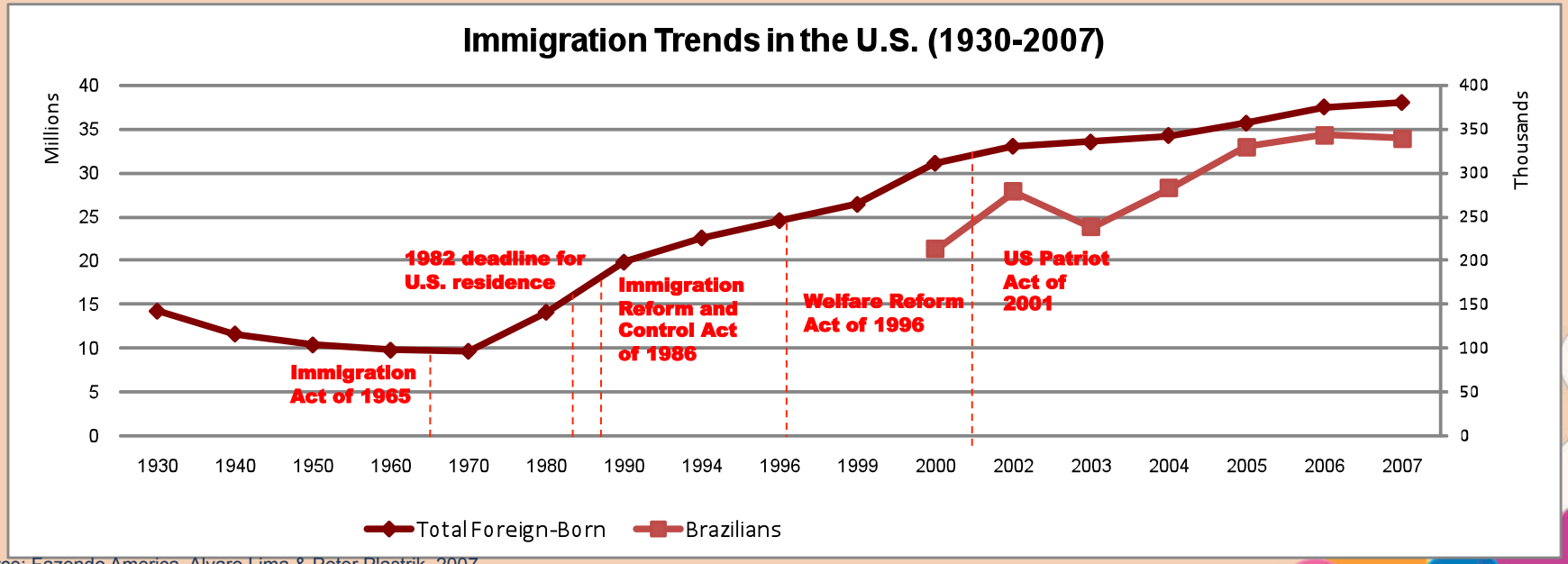
- $2.7 billion in remittances from the U.S. to Brazil;
- $7.1 billion in remittance-related development impact (3x multiplier).

Source: Fazendo America, Alvaro Lima & Peter Plastrik, 2007

V. The current economic crisis and our future...

is the dream over?

- Between 2005 and 2006 U.S. immigration increased 3.8% while the number of Brazilians increased 4.3%;
- During the next period, 2006-2007, the number of Brazilians decreased slightly (-1.1%) while the total foreign born population increased by only 0.7%.



Source: Fazendo America, Alvaro Lima & Peter Plastrik, 2007

The "exodus" story…

The New York Times

Brazilians Giving Up Their American Dream

Sylwia Kapuscinski for The New York Times

Elisabeth Borges, left, her daughter, Marianna, husband, Jose Osvandir Borges, seated, and son, Thiago, right, with Jose Silva, a family friend.

By NINA BERNSTEIN and ELIZABETH DWOSKIN

Brazilians Giving Up Their American Dream

Fausto Da Rocha, executive director of the Brazilian Immigrant Center, said the weak dollar is just one of several reasons Brazilians are returning home. Brazilians are the second-fastest growing group of illegal immigrants in the United States, and many were deeply disappointed last summer when Congress failed to pass a bill that would have given millions of immigrants a chance to apply for legal residency.

Brazil's expats see value in going home

With the dollar falling and the economy in Brazil booming, Brazilian immigrants in the United States are returning home by the thousands. Dan Grech reports.

AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA

Brazilians getting one-way ticket home

"In Brazil the economy is booming," said Fausto Da Rocha, executive director of the Brazilian Immigrant Center based in Allston. "There are 160,000 new jobs every month and the cost to live in the United States is too high."

- Recently, the "exodus" has become a little more difficult to explain. Why?

  - ***Economic downturn in the U.S.*** – **the economic downturn makes it more difficult for immigrants to find well-paying jobs:**
    - **the economic downturn in the U.S. may imply a downturn in Brazil, particularly in Brazilian immigrant-sending cities. On the other hand, a "boom" in Brazil may not touch those areas. Middle-class jobs, particularly in Brazilian immigrant-sending cities, continue to be hard to find;**

  - ***Inflation in the U.S.*** - **the rise in prices of food and fuel make life more expensive and reduces the capacity of immigrants to send money home:**
    - **Inflation in the U.S. does not imply a return to Brazil, because despite the fast depreciation in real terms, the U.S. informal wages paid to foreign workers exceeds the legal minimum and the wages for semi-skilled workers in Brazil;**

  - ***Value of the dollar*** - **the appreciation of the Brazilian real against the dollar reduces the value of remittances:**
    - **Depreciation of the dollar forces Brazilians to work longer or harder to remit the same amount as before. Moreover, the value of the dollar fluctuates frequently and does not explain the decision to return;**

  - ***Aggressive immigration enforcement*** – **aggressive enforcement reduces immigrants' ability to find jobs and therefore to send money home:**
    - **Aggressive immigration enforcement may force Brazilians to leave but the decision is not as simple as it appears, particularly for undocumented immigrants.**

The ”diaspora” story is changing as the dollar appreciates against the real and the crisis spreads to Brazil…

- **Curiously enough, the recent article (October 14, 2008) on the right features Silvana Soares, the Director of Communications for a center in Governador Valadares, in a interview with the MetroWest Daily News of Framingham explaining how difficult it is for family members left behind while their loved ones work overseas… NOT HOW THE EXODUS HAS DEVASTED THE COMMUNITIES IN VALADARES…**

Help from home: Center in Brazil helps emigrants and their families

Photos

By Liz Mineo/Daily News staff
MetroWest Daily News
Posted Oct 14, 2008 @ 12:09 AM

Life is hard for family members left behind while their loved ones work overseas. Wives often suffer from anxiety and depression, children feel abandoned and don't perform well in school and parents live with broken hearts after years of separation.

The plight of emigrants' families is often forgotten, but an organization in Governador Valadares is working to change that. The southeast Brazilian city has sent many of its sons and daughters to work in Framingham.

Silvana Soares, the organization's communications director, came to Massachusetts yesterday to visit the second-largest concentration of Brazilians in America and spread the word about the group's work.

"We discovered that many families of emigrants suffer a lot," said Soares. "The most common ailment is depression."

Anna Julia Toschi
Silvana Soares, communications director for a center in Governador Valadares, Brazil, toured Boston and MetroWest yesterday, speakling to emigrants from her country. The organization she works for helps those emigrants and their families.

- As shown before, some Brazilians have left, but there is no exodus. The reasons Brazilians emigrated are still presentç

- The actual economic crisis cut both ways as the recent article in the Milford Daily News below attests:

THE MILFORD DAILY NEWS

In 2003, when he came here, the rate was $3 real (Brazil's currency) for every dollar, and in August, when he thought it was better to leave for good, the exchange rate was $1.5 real for every dollar.
But after the dollar's value went up in Brazil this past week, a result of the worldwide financial crisis that pushed its price up, Vidal decided to stay.
When the markets closed on Friday, the exchange rate was $2.3 real for every dollar.
"I'm not going back now," said Vidal, 27, who works in construction. "I'll stay one or two more years, but I may change my mind depending on what happens. I know two friends of mine who have canceled their trips back home because the dollar went up."

Hardships in Mass. spur Brazilian exodus The Boston Globe

Reference:

- U.S. Census Bureau – 2000 Decennial Census, 2000.
- U.S. Census Bureau – 2005-2007 American Community Survey (ACS), 2007.
- Alvaro Lima & Peter Plastrik – A Profile of Brazilian Remitters in Massachusetts, 2007.
- Alvaro Lima & Peter Plastrik – Fazendo America, 2007
- Alvaro Lima & Eduardo Sequeira – Brazilians in the U.S. and Massachusetts: A Demographic and Economic Profile, 2007.
- Alvaro Lima, Eugenia Garcia-Zanello & Manuel Orozco – Brazilians in the U.S.: A Look at Migrants and Transnationalism, 2009.