

# The Foreign-Born Population from Europe, 2016

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## Introduction

This poster presents general trends and characteristics of the foreign-born population from Europe using data primarily from the 2016 American Community Survey – both published data and tabulations from the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) – and previous Censuses. Data are based on an annual sample of the U.S. population. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/](http://www.census.gov/acs/).

## American Community Survey

**Purpose:** Provide timely data at national and extensive subnational geography levels.

**Universe:** U.S. resident population (sample size was 3.55 million for 2016).

**Frequency:** Yearly estimates; ACS data are collected continuously throughout the year; monthly samples are aggregated into period data.

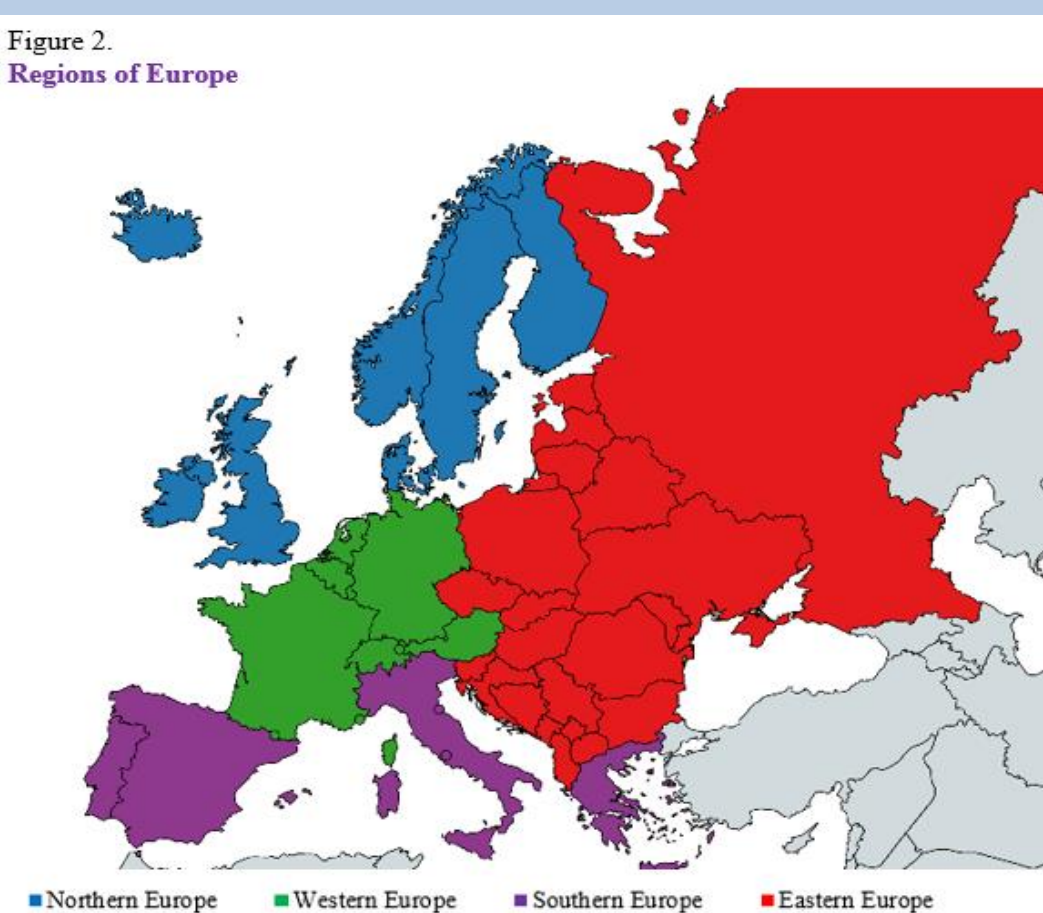
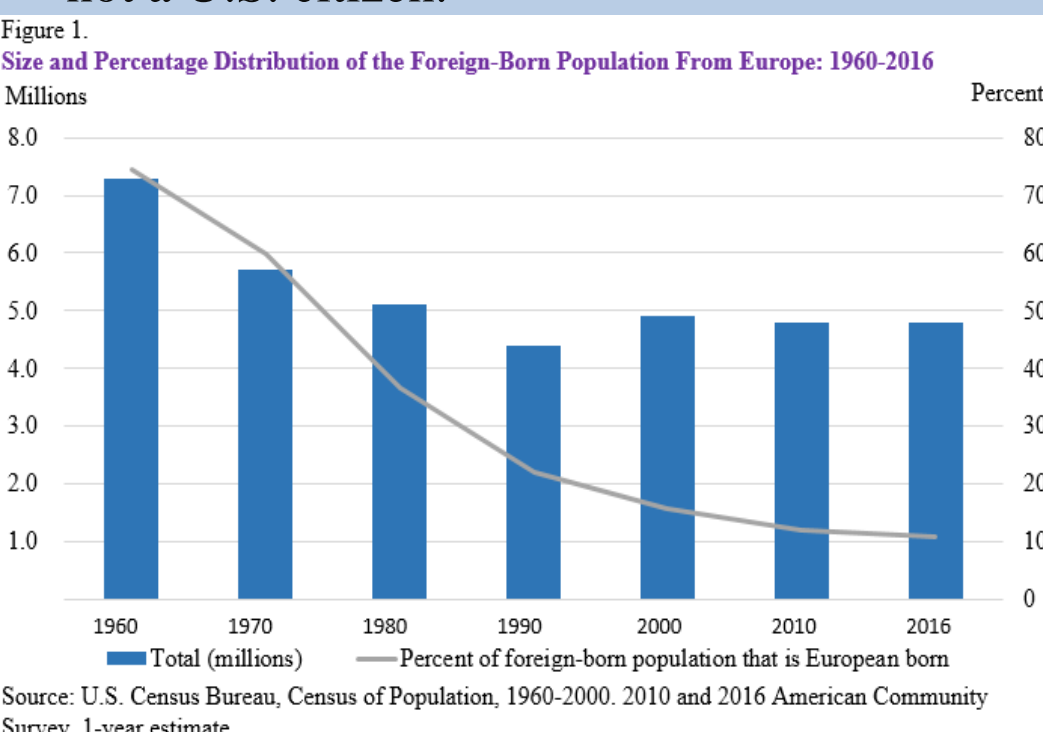
**Geography:** Nation, state, county, metropolitan area, and place.

Unless otherwise specified, data are sourced from 2016 1-Year ACS.

## How the Census Bureau Defines Native and Foreign Born

**Native** – The native population includes anyone who is a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes respondents who indicated they were born in the United States, Puerto Rico, a U.S. Island Area (such as Guam), or abroad of a U.S. citizen parent or parents.

**Foreign born** – The foreign-born population includes anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes respondents who indicated they were a U.S. citizen by naturalization or not a U.S. citizen.



In 1960, the foreign born from Europe numbered 7.3 million and comprised nearly three-quarters of the foreign-born population.

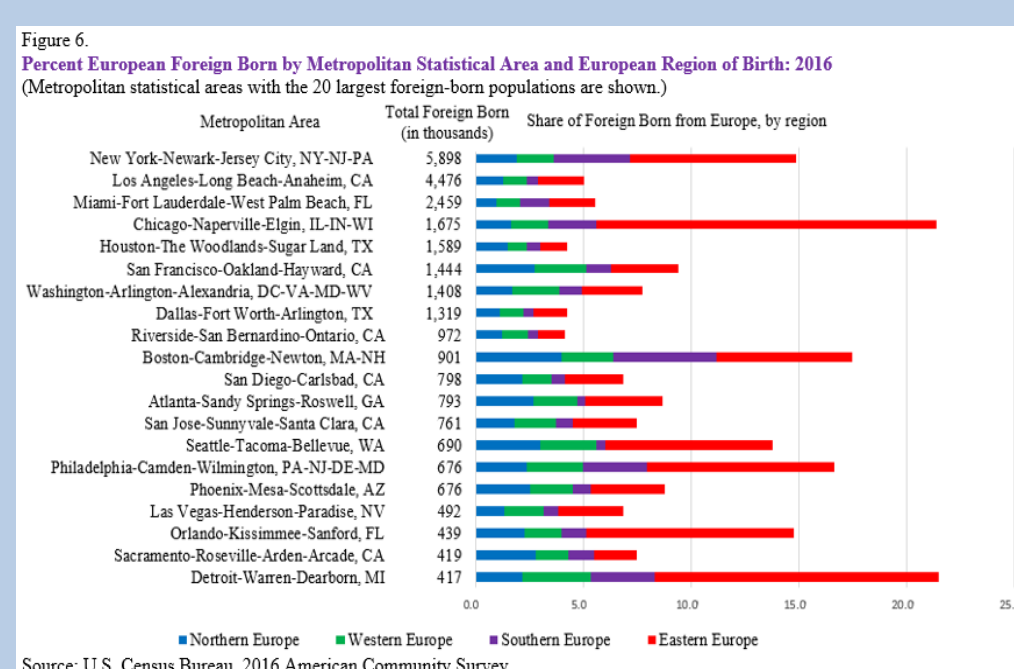
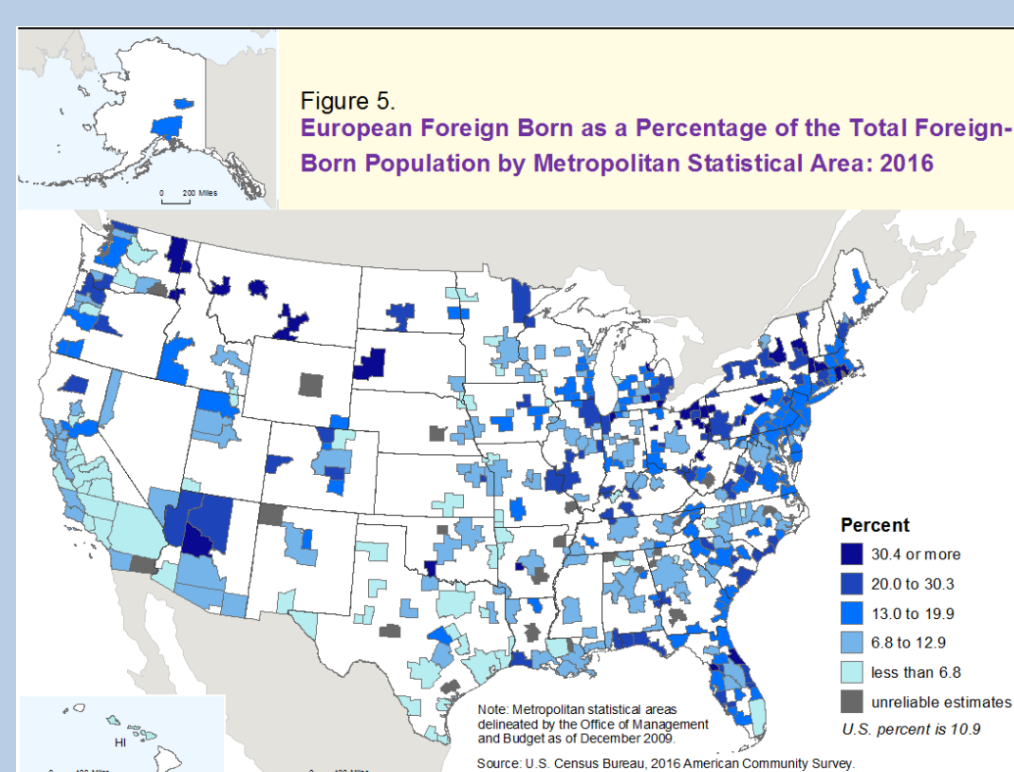
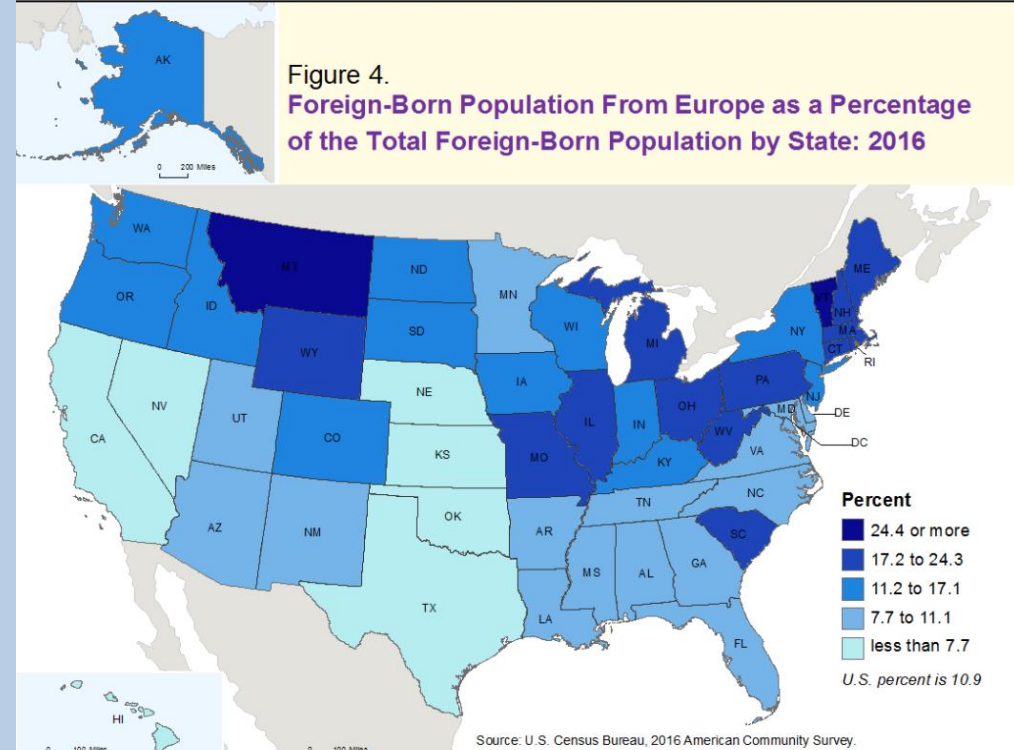
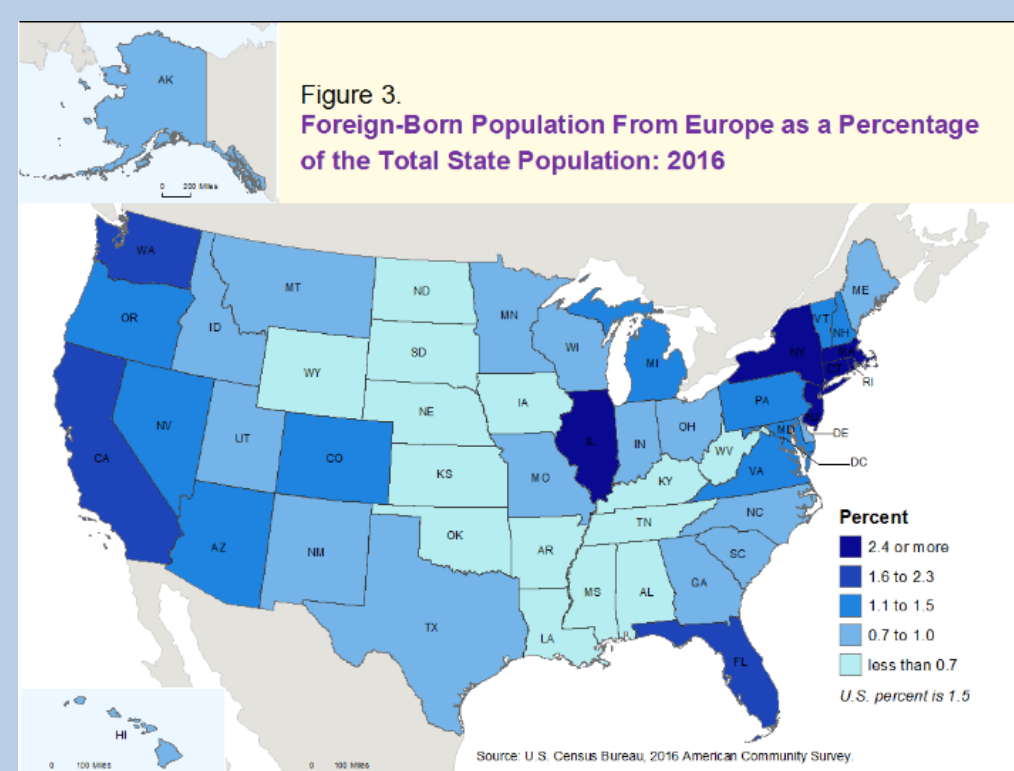
In 2016, the European foreign-born population, numbered 4.8 million and made up just 11 percent of the total foreign-born population.

| Northern Europe       | Southern Europe       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| United Kingdom        | Greece                |
| Ireland               | Italy                 |
| Denmark               | Portugal              |
| Norway                | Spain                 |
| Sweden                | Other Southern Europe |
| Other Northern Europe |                       |

| Western Europe       | Eastern Europe         |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Austria              | Lithuania              |
| Belgium              | Albania                |
| France               | Moldova                |
| Germany              | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Netherlands          | Bulgaria               |
| Switzerland          | Romania                |
| Other Western Europe | Russia                 |
|                      | Croatia                |
|                      | Czechoslovakia         |
|                      | Ukraine                |
|                      | Hungary                |
|                      | Other Eastern Europe   |
|                      | Latvia                 |

## Geographic Distribution



The foreign born from Europe make up 1.5 percent of the U.S. population.

Measured as a percentage of a state's total population, the relative size of the European-born population is among the greatest in New York, where the European born comprise 4 percent of the state population.

It is smallest in Mississippi, where the European born are 0.2 percent of the state population.

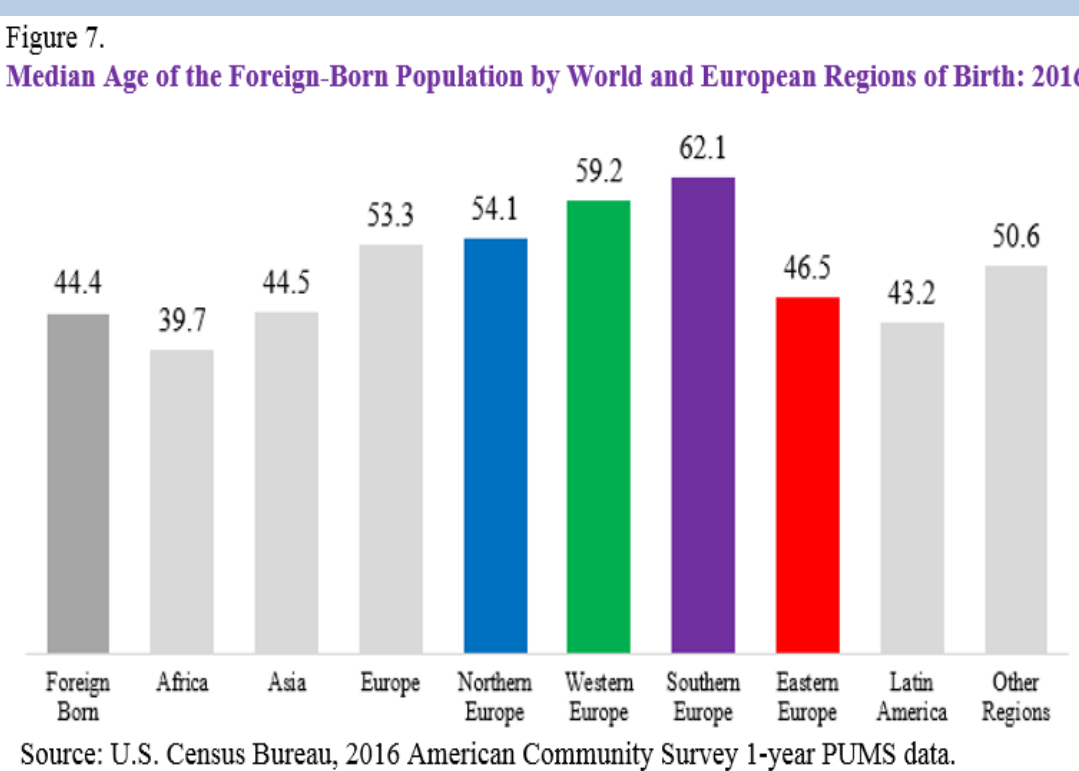
Measured as a percentage of a state's foreign-born population, the relative size of the state-level European-born population is among the largest in Montana, where European born make up about one-third of the state's foreign-born population.

It is smallest in Hawaii and Texas, where the European born are about 4 percent of each state's foreign-born population.

Relative to the total foreign-born population, one of the highest percentages of the European-born population is in the Cleveland metropolitan area in Ohio, where 40.4 percent of the foreign born are from Europe. McAllen metropolitan area in Texas, at 0.4 percent, has one of the smallest.

Of the 20 metropolitan areas with the largest foreign-born populations, the Detroit and Chicago metropolitan areas have the highest percentages of foreign born from Europe (both about 21.5 percent). Boston metropolitan area has the most Southern Europeans and among the most Northern Europeans (4.8 and 4.0 percent, respectively); Detroit metropolitan area, the most Western Europeans; and Chicago metropolitan area, the most Eastern Europeans.

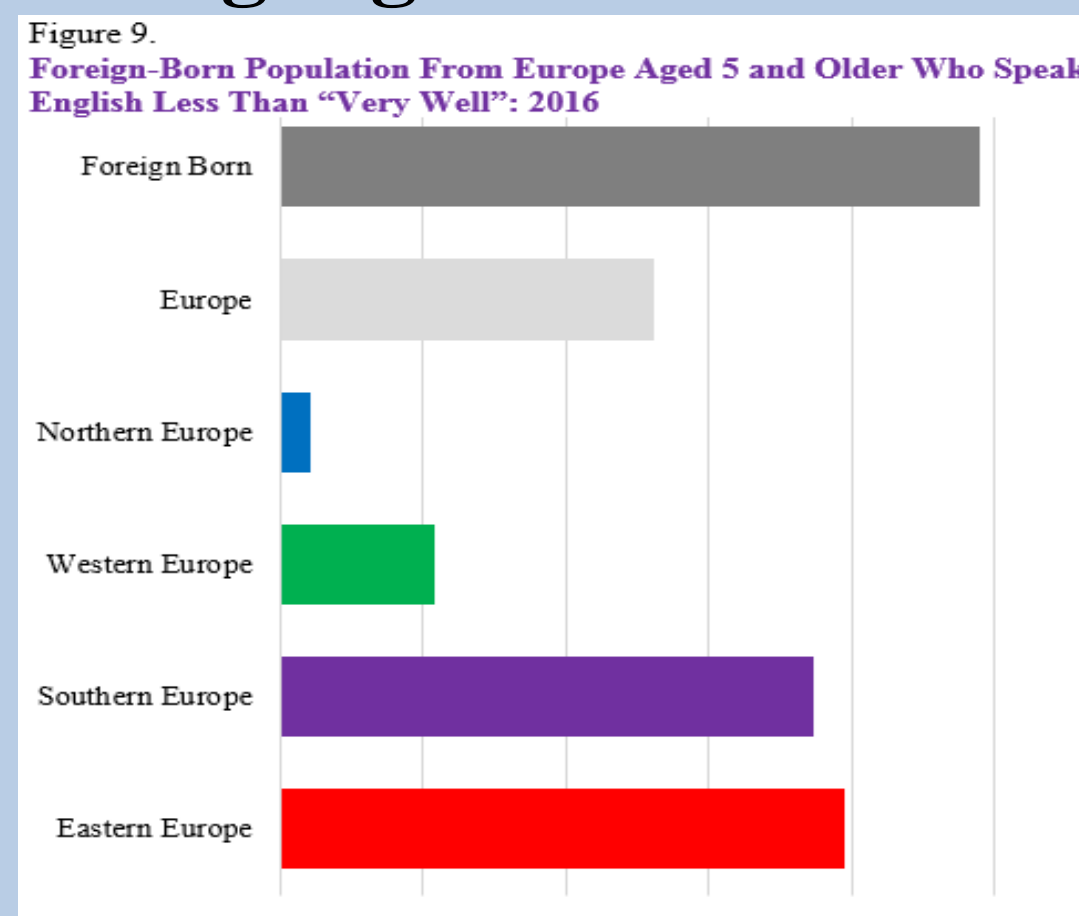
## Age



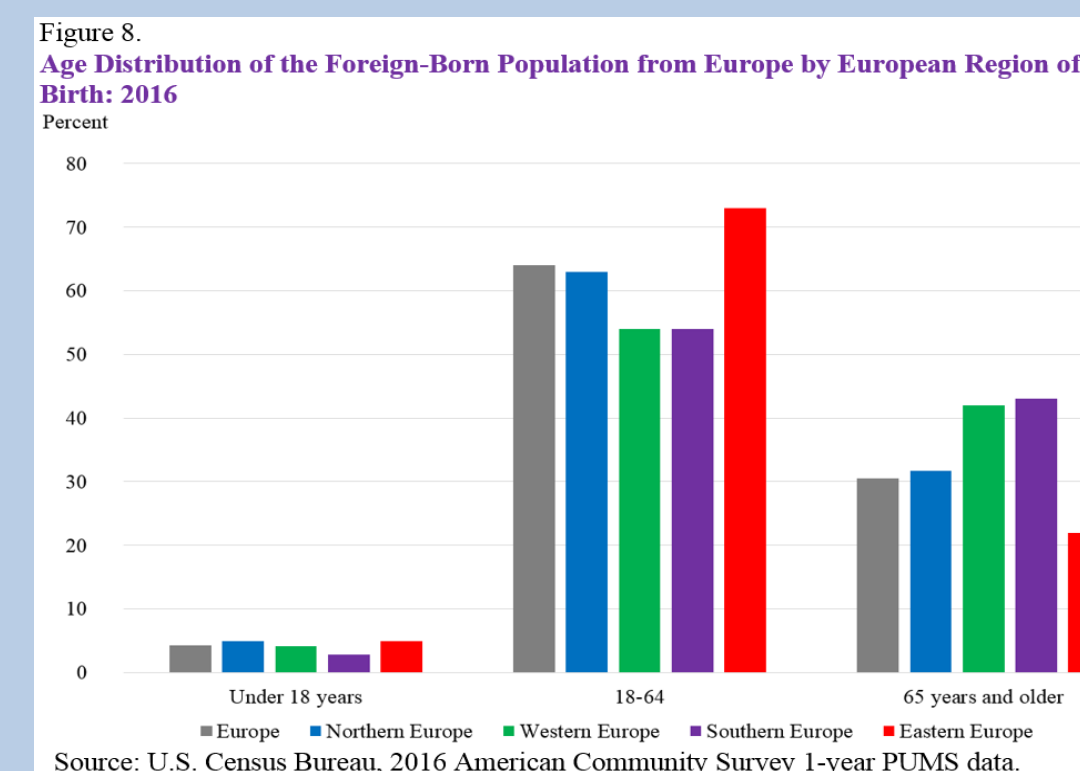
The typical European born is older than the typical foreign born, no matter the world region of birth.

Foreign born from Southern Europe tend to be oldest, with a median age of 62 years. Those from Eastern Europe tend to be the youngest, with a median age of 47 years.

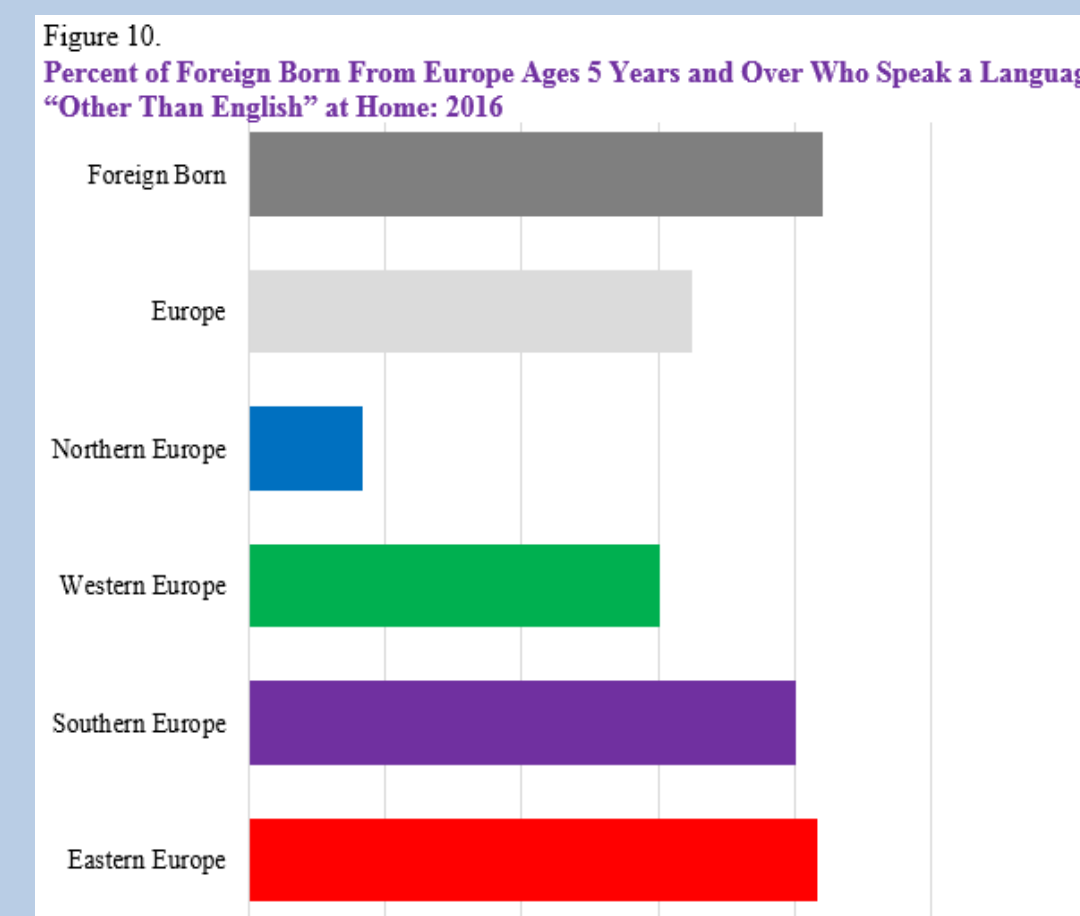
## Language



The foreign born from Europe tend to have greater English-speaking ability than most foreign born. Only a small share of foreign born from Northern and Western Europe report speaking English less than very well. By contrast, more than 35 percent of Southern and Eastern European born report the same.



Compared to their European regional counterparts, the Eastern European born have the largest percentage of working-age population. Nearly three-quarters of the Eastern European born are between 18 and 64 years of age, compared to over half of Western and Southern European born and 63 percent of Northern European born. The Southern European born have the largest share of retirement age.



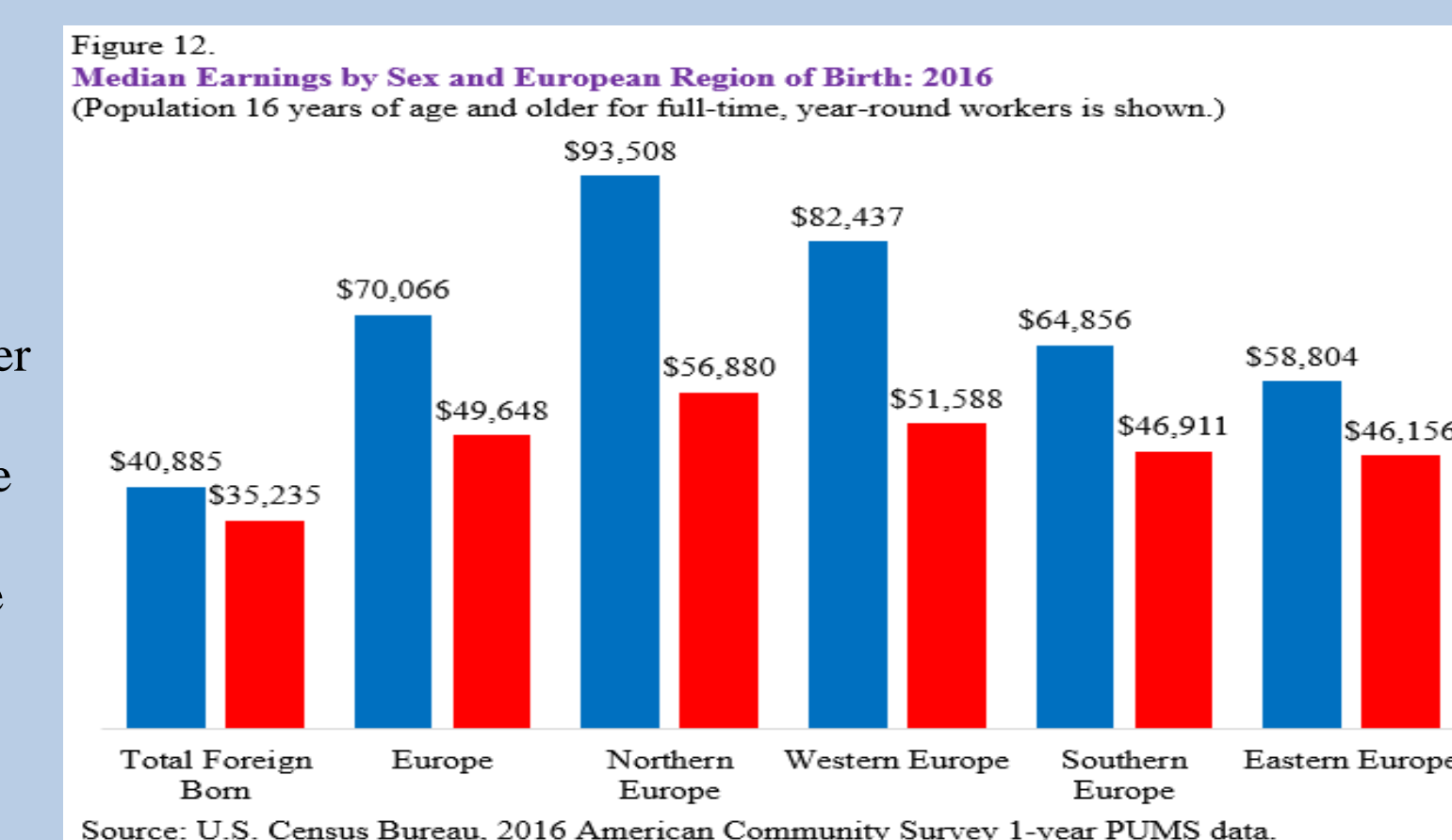
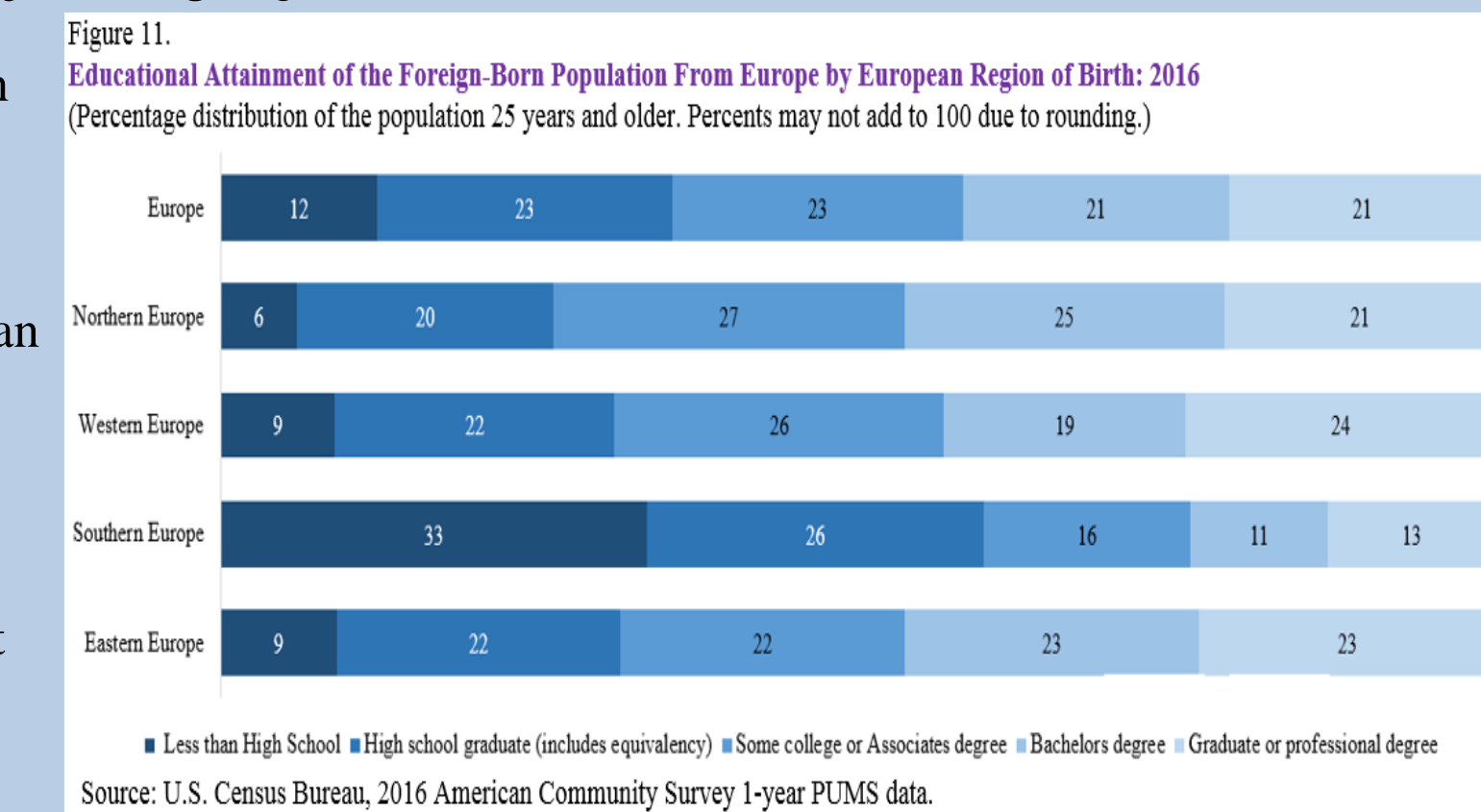
The European born are less likely than other foreign born to speak a non-English language at home, but there are regional differences. Foreign language use among Eastern and Southern European born is comparable to levels among the total foreign-born population. By contrast, only 17 percent of Northern Europeans speak a non-English language at home.

## Educational Attainment

Northern, Western, and Eastern Europeans have similar, very high levels of educational attainment, while Southern Europeans stand apart. Less than a quarter of the foreign born aged 25 years or older from Southern Europe have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to at least 40 percent among the foreign born from other regions.

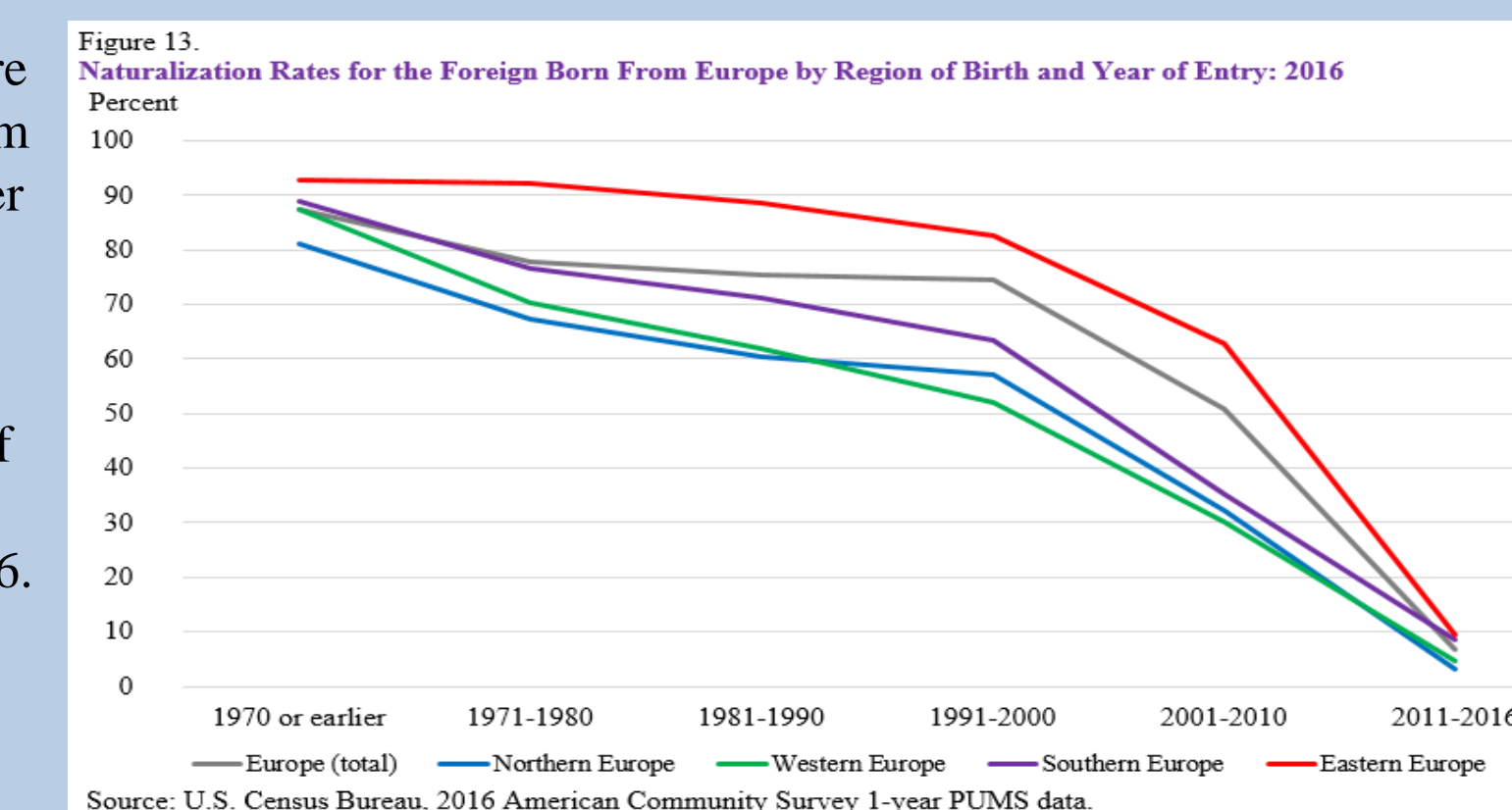
## Earnings

Foreign-born men from Europe earned 75 percent more than foreign-born men overall. The difference in earnings was less dramatic for females. The gender gap in earnings for Northern Europeans shows a male-female earnings differentials of more than \$35,000. The male-female earnings gap for Eastern Europeans is about \$12,000.



## Naturalization Rates

The naturalization rates for more recent foreign-born arrivals from Europe are lower than for earlier arrivals. Compared to foreign born from other European regions, those born in Eastern Europe have the highest rates of naturalization in each year of entry group except 2011 to 2016.



## Conclusion

Today's European-born population is older, more highly educated, and more likely than the typical foreign-born individual to report speaking English very well. A closer look reveals that there are substantial differences between the European born based on region of birth. Together, these findings paint a multifaceted picture of the European-born population, reminding us of the diverse historical, political, and economic circumstances in the societies immigrants leave and where they settle.

*This poster is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion. Any views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.*