

Chapter 10

Profile of the Local Residents and Visitors of the Historical Villages of a Portugal Network: An Exploratory Study

Maria Manuela Santos Natário

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5983-8399>

Polytechnic of Guarda, Portugal

Carlos Santos

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9728-8538>

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Ana I. Melo

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Augusta Ferreira

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1659-3309>

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Dalila Dias

Historical Villages of Portugal, Portugal

Gonçalo Gomes

Turismo Centro de Portugal, Portugal

Graça Azevedo

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6346-4035>

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Paula Rocha

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Ricardo Biscaia

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Ruben Duarte

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Rui Pedro Marques

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8449-0526>

University of Aveiro, Portugal

ABSTRACT

This chapter presents the results of the exploratory study regarding the profile of local residents and visitors of the Historical Villages of Portugal Network (nHVP). This network integrates 12 villages located in low density territories in the center of Portugal. It is important to conduct this study in order to conceive strategies and policies that will contribute to reversing the desertification tendency and to retaining resources and surpluses that would otherwise leave the region. The authors concluded that the local residents present a medium/high level of satisfaction in terms of the impact of tourism in their villages and also with the association of their village with the nHVP brand. However, the local residents'

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-3889-3.ch010

Profile of the Local Residents and Visitors of the Historical Villages of a Portugal Network

participation in the activities and touristic events is low, which is in part due to the high age of most local residents. Regarding the visitors of the nHVP, they are generally satisfied or very satisfied with several points. The lowest level of satisfaction relates to the public transportation, the communication networks, and the medical care available in the territory.

INTRODUCTION

The Historical Villages of Portugal Network (nHVP) includes 12 historical villages located in Portugal's central region (i.e., Almeida, Belmonte, Castelo Mendo, Castelo Novo, Castelo Rodrigo, Idanha-a-Velha, Linhares da Beira, Mêda, Monsanto, Piódão, Sortelha, and Trancoso), part of three municipal communities (i.e., Beiras and Serra da Estrela, Beira Baixa, and the Coimbra region).

The nHVP villages are located in sparsely populated territory, but have great potential. From the perspective of touristic attractiveness, they are distinguished by having interesting and diversified cultural, historical, and built heritage as well as by an assembly of endogenous products from diversified landscapes of a thousand colours and by mineral water springs. They are also distinguished by the different river valleys, from the Águeda, Côa, Douro, Erges, Mondego, and Tejo rivers to the Zêzere, and by the mountainous landscapes of Açor, Gardunha, Marofa, and Penha Garcia.

Each village has its own specific characteristics; some have more Jewish heritage, others are located closer to the border, and others are equipped with thermal spa treatments. Yet they all have vast, diversified, and rich built heritage in common, ranging from castles, forts, and churches to other monuments. These villages have a history dating back to the Middle Ages. However, they have lost much of their population, mainly young people and working age population, resulting in a sparsely populated region.

The nHVP was created to enhance and promote the region's realities in a joint and integrated way and to raise the potential for a joint common identity based on history, culture, and heritage as valued elements of these territories. The promotion of the nHVP is assumed to be a factor in the promotion and development of these territories, contributing to enhancing their attractiveness and retaining resources and surpluses that tend to leave the region.

In turn, tourism is renowned as one of the key sectors in the development of all countries and an important source of income and employment; it also plays a vital role in the creation of wealth while having implications at the social and environmental level. In addition, it fulfils a larger role in image promotion and international perception while also influencing internal policies. It is assumed to be a factor of competitiveness for countries and regions (Dupeyras & Maccallum, 2013).

According to Petrevska and Gerasimova (2012), tourism and regional development are closely linked. In fact, in many regions, the tourism industry is one of the greatest sources of economic growth and job creation. Thus, the regional development of tourism can trigger general economic growth by creating a new dynamic. In low-density territories, tourism is a strategic factor for the development of these regions; a producer of different social, cultural, and economic effects; and a generator of competitive factors (Ramos & Fernandes, 2016).

In the case of the nHVP, tourism assumes an anchoring characteristic in its sustainability and development. However, the presence of tourism and visitors in these villages affects the lives of the recipient communities, so the study of their satisfaction with the impact of this economic activity is important.

The Historical Villages of Portugal must provide attractiveness, whether for the residents or those visiting the area. In this context, this study about the region's residents and visitors is important to iden-

28 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/profile-of-the-local-residents-and-visitors-of-the-historical-villages-of-a-portugal-network/294317

Related Content

Salvaging Responsible Consumption and Production of Food in the Hospitality Industry: Harnessing Machine Learning and Deep Learning for Zero Food Waste

Bhupinder Singhand Christian Kaunert (2024). *Sustainable Disposal Methods of Food Wastes in Hospitality Operations* (pp. 176-192).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/salvaging-responsible-consumption-and-production-of-food-in-the-hospitality-industry/341568

Essential Financial Management Skills for Tourism Enterprises: An Application Case of a Tourism Enterprise in Izmir

Seda Süer (2020). *Industrial and Managerial Solutions for Tourism Enterprises* (pp. 147-164).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/essential-financial-management-skills-for-tourism-enterprises/251178

Medical Nomads: An Emerging Arm of Medical Tourism

Hitoshi Noguchi (2015). *Current Issues and Emerging Trends in Medical Tourism* (pp. 110-121).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/medical-nomads/133640

Risk Perception and Tourist Types: A Study Among International Tourists

Deepti Jogand Nandakumar Mekoth (2019). *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Digital Age* (pp. 22-43).

www.irma-international.org/article/risk-perception-and-tourist-types/231523

The Effect of Room Service, Comfort, and Reservation Process on The Performance Dimension Evaluation: The Case of Grand Mercure Hotel Gajah Mada Jakarta

Adilla Anggraeniand Meyliza Thorina (2017). *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Digital Age* (pp. 42-52).

www.irma-international.org/article/the-effect-of-room-service-comfort-and-reservation-process-on-the-performance-dimension-evaluation/189744