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Domestic and international creative tourists in Portugal: Insights for practitioners

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A great diversity of definitions of creative tourists exist, ranging from those who refer to visitors of dance, art, or handicraft workshops, to those who include people who take up temporary artistic residencies to practice their creative expression and develop their art forms. In recent decades, we have observed the emergence of a new generation of travellers.¹ These tourists are increasingly seeking co-creation processes, leading to more relational forms of cultural tourism, and active participation in creative experiences (Richards, 2020).

And yet, pinning down the diverse, niche-oriented creative tourist has been an ongoing challenge. Internationally, a number of studies have been conducted to profile the creative tourist (see Remoaldo *et al.*, 2020) but no overarching comparative framework has yet been developed, and in Portugal no study on the creative tourist had previously been conducted. Within the project CREATOUR® (Creative Tourism Destination Development in Small Cities and Rural Areas), we developed a detailed questionnaire for participants in the creative tourism pilot activities organized within the project, which was applied by the 40 participating organizations as they conducted their pilot activities in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

These activities were developed and situated in small cities and rural areas in the Norte, Centro, Alentejo, and Algarve regions of the Portugal mainland. They ranged from small-scale participatory cultural festivals to gastronomy workshops to handicraft, mosaic-making, and other hands-on workshops. The common thread was an aspiration to develop creative tourism activities adhering to the CREATOUR® approach to creative tourism, which incorporates active participation, learning, opportunities for creative self-expression, and connections to the local community.

The questionnaire enabled us to gain insights on socio-demographic characteristics, motivations, behaviours, experiences, and perceptions of the activities – providing a rich source of insights on the creative tourist in Portugal. In this chapter, we present highlights of these questionnaire results, segmented by place of residence (i.e. domestic or international visitors) and suggest some implications of these findings. A motivational analysis of creative tourist participants can be found in Remoaldo *et al.* (2020). Based on socio-demographic, travel behaviour, and motivation-based criteria, three clusters were found: novelty seekers, knowledge and skills learners, and leisure creative seekers.

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Developing a profile of creative tourists in Portugal

Questionnaire development and setting

In 2017, a detailed questionnaire was developed by CREATOUR® researchers based on the key dimensions in research on tourists and a literature review of creative tourism, tourist motivations, and cultural tourist profiles. The questionnaire consisted of 31 closed questions oriented to the participant's profile, motivations, perceptions, and evaluation of activities, as well as the impacts on the local economy (e.g. accommodation, meals, and local commerce). It was prepared in English, Portuguese, Spanish, and French, and distributed and applied by the 40 participating organizations as they conducted their creative tourism pilot activities in 2017, 2018, and 2019. A total of 814 individuals completed these questionnaires after they participated in one of the CREATOUR® creative tourism pilot activities. Completed questionnaires were returned to the in-region research centre involved in CREATOUR® to be entered into a central database and subsequently analysed.

Data analysis procedure

To analyse the data, a descriptive analysis was adopted, divided into two groups of analysis: (i) socio-demographic profile and (ii) travel behaviour and motivations. The criteria 'place of residence' was used to split the data into two groups in order to compare international and domestic participants. In order to identify differences among the two groups, T-tests were adopted to validate the statistical differences.

Who are the creative tourists in Portugal?

Both domestic and foreign tourists participated in the CREATOUR® creative tourism pilot activities and completed the questionnaires. Overall, 75% of the questionnaires were completed by domestic travellers. Both groups included all age segments, from children through to seniors (65 years and over) (see Table 4.1). In both groups, the largest age segment was 35–54 years. Domestic (Portuguese) creative tourists included most of the children reported, likely indicating families (see also the interview with Wolfram in Chapter 6). Overall,

Table 4.1. Sociodemographic profile of domestic and international creative tourists in Portugal. Source: CREATOUR (2019)

Variables	Categories	Domestic (%)	International (%)
Age	< 12 years old	8.4	0.5
	13–19 years	7.4	7.4
	20–34 years	21.2	27.5
	35–54 years	42.6	37.3
	55–64 years	11.7	19.1
	≥ 65 years	8.6	8.3
Marital status	Single	53.8	45.6
	Married	36.2	44.0
	Divorced	7.4	10.4
	Widow	2.7	0.0
Education	Primary education (up to 6 years of schooling)	10.6	1.5
	Secondary education (up to 9 years)	10.3	3.0
	Tertiary education (up to 12 years)	8.4	8.5
	Professional training (up to 12 years)	9.2	12.0
	Bachelor's degree	34.1	39.0
	Post-graduation/master's degree	22.4	27.0
	Doctoral degree	4.8	8.5
	Other	0.1	0.5
Socio-professional situation	Employed	62.2	67.5
	Student	20.4	17.0
	Retired	9.8	9.0
	Unemployed	5.9	4.5
	Domestic	1.7	2.0