

Post-pandemic tourism and public policies: Rhetoric of touristification in Lisbon

FILIPA FERNANDES¹

¹Centro de Administração e de Políticas Públicas, ISCSP - Universidade de Lisboa

Contacting author: filipafernandes1@gmail.com

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Objectives | The goal of this work is to analyse a set of national and local public policies related to tourism, focusing on its development and application in post-pandemic contexts. The specific objectives are: 1. examine existing policies and interventions related to overtourism, with a focus on responsible tourism practices; and 2. understand the rhetoric of touristification centred on the city of Lisbon.

Methodology | This exploratory work is based on qualitative research carried out between 2022-2023. To achieve the proposed objectives, the author utilized documentary and ethnographic research. The materials analysed were collected on institutional websites and comprise political-normative instruments, namely: 2023 and Multiannual Investment Plan 2023-2027 of the Lisbon City Council (s.d.), the Lisbon Strategic Charter – 2010-2024 (2009), Strategic Tourism Plan for the Lisbon Region 2020-2024 (s.d.), and, finally, the Tourism Strategy 2027 (2017). In addition, observation was used (Bernard, 2006) to map places and products of representation of tourist spaces, apprehending what is associated with them: dynamics, activities, and social actors, as well as informal conversations with residents, individuals participating in the tourism industry, public and private agents.

Main results and contributions | As this is a work in progress, there are no definitive results. However, some topics can be shared. Hall et al (2020) state that the pandemic could be a transformative moment to generate new opportunities in the tourism sector, while Gössling et al (2021) see it as an opportunity to critically reconsider the growth of the tourism trajectory. What can be seen is that after the pandemic and the natural period of recovery, there is continuous questioning about the massification of tourism present in the city of Lisbon. Platform capitalism, tourist gentrification, and the monoculture of tourism are present, as well as real estate speculation and rising rents. It is known that tourism is a vulnerable sector as well as its associated services (Gössling & Schweiggart, 2022), however, this post-pandemic tourism needs to be more sustainable and more responsible in meeting the SDGs. Regarding rhetoric, narratives were

identified by various social actors, namely, residents and representatives of the tourism sector. In addition, there is a narrative around the benefits of tourism conveyed by the UNWTO, Turismo de Lisboa, and the municipality. Some narratives mention the implications for the post-pandemic future of tourism, namely, the idea of the tourist city, 'Disneyfied' with or without tourists and its disadvantages, and how to overcome the installed dependence on tourism. Finally, it is important to highlight the responses of the Lisbon municipality's policies for tourism.

Limitations | As it is a work based on an exploratory nature and is still in progress, there will be topics to analyse and reflect on. The research work, which is still ongoing, may highlight other aspects.

Conclusions | In view of the existing public policies, their interventions and actions related to tourism in Lisbon, and their relationship with sustainability, this work aims to contribute to the knowledge of the rhetoric associated with the phenomenon of touristification, based on political and research agendas that show a change in the political economy of tourism.

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