

# IMPACTUR – Indicators for the **Monitoring and Forecasts of Tourism Activity** in Portugal

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**Objectives** | IMPACTUR results from a partnership between the Portuguese Tourism Board (Turismo de Portugal, IP) and the University of Algarve/International Centre of Territory and Tourism Research with the aim of promoting online region-based knowledge, interpretation and forecast of the main tourism supply and demand variables in Portugal, through the use of new information and management technology resources as support tools to planning and decision in tourism. The IMPACTUR - Indicators for the Monitoring and Forecasts of Tourism Activity is available on the following institutional websites: [www.impactur.pt](http://www.impactur.pt) and [www.ciitt.ualg.pt/](http://www.ciitt.ualg.pt/).

Cumulatively, with the output and regular publication of this vast process, the IMPACTUR development has as priority its national consolidation and international discussion and benchmarking experiences, which aim the enrichment and sharing of good practices with tourism entities who work in different destinations and products. In the additional value of complementarities between IMPACTUR, Proturismo and Tourism Satellite Account, the next steps of the IMPACTUR project intends to optimize:

- Methodological Developments;
- Consolidation of econometric models which bear the forecast component of IMPACTUR;
- Proposal of new indicators and forecast supportive methodologies;
- Changes in the internal technological architecture;
- Presentation of new routines and outputs;
- Internationalization.

**Methodology** | Based on the recommendations of the United Nations World Tourism Organization in models of competitiveness in tourism and in models of forecast in tourism, the IMPACTUR create and present a model with updated data that could be complemented with more additional information through the development of the study, and that enables to consult statistic information analyzed with the focus on the evolution of the activity.

Through the use of new information and management technology resources as support tools to planning and decision making in tourism, IMPACTUR is a dynamic process, generating a set of regular and region-based (NUT II) reports online which contain fixed and variable quarterly analysis (consisting of the last three months of data available), risk analysis and territorial competitiveness in tourist destinations of Portugal and demand forecasting according to source markets (UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain) in the main regional destinations in Portugal. Historical reports and an

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annual analysis is also provided. These reports present series of homologous variations of data analysis regarded to official sources, which covers hospitality figures, airport movements, golf and macroeconomic figures. This system is prepared to be improved with other analysis as soon as the information of input will be consistent and regularly updated.

**Main results and contributions** | The development of IMPACTUR is positioned in accordance with the different searches that have marked the identification of the target segments and respective information requirements. From a quick glance over the figures for the trimester or the front-page headlines, to the in-depth identification of sources, calculations and available options in the methodology report, IMPACTUR offers different levels of usefulness of the said information for the following users:

- Education and research;
- The business sector, including the hotel industry, travel agencies, food and beverage, entertainment, rent-a-car and others;
- Public administration bodies;
- Media.

Currently, in a universe of about 15,684 visits between October of 2007 and October of 2009, the IMPACTUR verify a total of 70,842 page views, an average of 4.53 page views by access. In the referred period the number of new visitors was 53.2%, and 26.6% of the access is made through Google search (using the key word IMPACTUR). The IMPACTUR displays the following information:

- Latest data: a range of information covering the last three available months (updated monthly);
- Quarterly analysis data: a range of information covering the closest classic quarter, including risk and competitiveness analysis;
- Annual analysis data: a range of information covering the previous year, including analysis of risk, competitiveness and seasonal aspects;
- Forecast: 12-month forecast on the behaviour of the main markets per region NUT II;
- Historical data: access to previous reports relation to past periods;
- Each of these reports presents a base series of between ten and twelve monitoring graphs featuring a range of key numbers, variables and indexes on the evolution of the sector's behaviour.

**Conclusions** | Despite the fact that in general the proposed methodologies for the analysis of tourism sector behaviour and forecasts are quite complex, fruit of tourism's multi-dimensional nature, a number of restrictions and limitations also emerge when seeking to adapt them to different destinations. The Porter theory during the 1980s, or the introduction of the specific point of view for tourism sector by Ritchie and Crouch in the 1990s, are two early examples of this challenge.

In fact, the lack of measurable and comparable indicators between different competitor destinations and even between different regions at national level, means that statistical procedures need to be adjusted, in a simultaneously effort of standardization and ability to capture the specification of the different regions. In this framework, the research investment made through IMPACTUR allows today to the diverse tourism actors and groups an on-line access to information and scientific analysis, which, promotes a measurable and comparable indicators between different regions at national level. The research team believe that the IMPACTUR model, adapted to all the NUTS II regions in Portugal, benefits the country's tourism and it is entirely possible that it could enrich its work by applying its methodology to regions outside Portugal, namely regions which compete with Portuguese tourist destinations, such as Andalusia, Canary or Balearic Islands and Madrid or Barcelona in the case of city destinations. It would thus be possible to establish a pattern of compared monitoring and competitiveness between the regions over regional territories in an international context.

The present project results from a interdisciplinary team composed by professors and researchers from the University of the Algarve and New University of Lisbon, namely: Pedro Gouveia (Forecast analysis), Ricardo Baptista (Data validation), Célia Ramos (Development of the Information System), Pedro Cascada (Development of the Web site), Pedro Laginha (Conception and Development of the Web site), Américo Caetano (Consultant in the Area of Systems of Information) and Paulo Rodrigues (Consultant in the Area of Forecast).