

PORTUGAL

Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory

7th Annual Progress

Focal Area: Alentejo NUTS II Region Portugal

2025. Edition

Present Edition: 7th Annual Report (July 2025)

Previous Editions:

6th Annual Report (June 2024)
5th Annual Report (June 2024)
4th Annual Report (July 2022)
3rd Annual Report (March 2021)
2nd Annual Report (May, 2020)
1st Annual Report (May 2019)
Preliminary Report (November 2017)

Publisher | University of Évora, CIDEHUS, Tourism Lab, ASTO - Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory, Portugal.

Contact | asto@uevora.pt

Website | <http://asto.en/pt/app/index>

ASTO Team:

Jaime Serra, Maria do Rosário Borges, Maria Noémi Marujo & Joana Lima | **Editorial Board**

José Carola | **Staff Support**



INSTO

World Tourism Organization
International Network
of Sustainable Tourism
Observatories

TURISMO DE
PORTUGAL



alentejo
ribatejo

CIDEHUS

fct

Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

TOURISM
Lab

This research is funded with a grant from the FCT – National Funding Agency for Science, Research and Technology, under the project UID/HIS/ 00057/2020 CIDEHUS and Regfin from Turismo de Portugal, I.P.

Index

1. Executive Summary	4
2. Destination Profile of Alentejo Region.....	5
3. Process of Monitoring the Destination	7
4. Final Reflections	15
References.....	17
Appendixes	18

Index of Tables

Table 1 - Destination Profile of Alentejo Region	5
Table 2 - Local Satisfaction with Tourism: Checklist on the monitored issues	7
Table 3 - Destination economic benefits: Checklist on the monitored issues	9
Table 4 - Employment: Checklist on the monitored issues	9
Table 5 - Tourism seasonality: Checklist on the monitored issues	10
Table 6 - Energy Management: Checklist on the monitored issues.....	11
Table 7 - Water Management: Checklist on the monitored issues.....	11
Table 8 - Solid Waste Management: Checklist on the monitored issues.....	12
Table 9 - Climate Action: Checklist on the monitored issues.....	12
Table 10 - Individual Visitor Profile of the Tourist Office: Other indicators.....	13

Index of Figures

Figure 1 - Proportion of NUT III regions in relation to Alentejo NUT II in Guests, Overnight Stays, Available Beds and Tourism Establishments (2024)	6
--	---

1. Executive Summary

The [Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory \(ASTO\)](#) is a platform dedicated to supporting and monitoring the evolution and assessment of sustainable tourism development in the Alentejo and Lezíria do Tejo regions. Through a collaborative and inclusive approach, ASTO engages a broad range of stakeholders and contributes in an active form to the dissemination and sharing of information resulted by research processes, the development of indicators and the production of scientific knowledge and outputs. These efforts have made possible the elaboration of new projects, the implementation of new initiatives and strengthen the participation in academic and community activities to the residents within actions developed to different stakeholders.

ASTO has been a member of INSTO-UNWTO since 2018 and it is hosted by the University of Évora, which oversees the scientific coordination of present and future monitoring, studies and reports. This observatory is a platform managed and shared by several regional stakeholders, such the Regional Tourism Board of Alentejo and Ribatejo (Turismo do Alentejo e Ribatejo, ERT); the Regional Higher Education System (University of Évora; Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre and Polytechnic Institute of Santarém) and the National Tourism authority (Turismo de Portugal).

The purpose of this *7th Annual Progress Report* is to provide a comprehensive overview of the monitoring activities for each issue area, the operations, performance and lessons identified by ASTO during its seventh year of implementation, according to the Rules for the Operation and Management of the UNWTO-International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO). It also aims to showcase various projects coordinated by ASTO's team that align with the goals of the regional monitoring process. Based on the analysis of these projects' outcomes, we intend to share the results with the community and potentially develop new indicators. To pursue these objectives, the document begins with an update of the destination profile based on official data available for the year 2024 (where 2024 data is not yet available, the most recent data will be provided). This is followed by an overall description of the current monitoring process, structured around 11 mandatory themes: Residents' Local Satisfaction, Destination Economic Benefits, Employment, Tourism Seasonality, Energy Management, Water Management, Wastewater Management, Solid Waste Management, Governance, Climate Action, and Accessibility. Additionally, ASTO continues to monitor the profile of tourists visiting the Tourist Information Offices, focusing on the characterization of individual and group visitors, a domain managed by the municipalities. ASTO maintains its efforts in this area due to the public sector's recognition of the impact of this instrument—particularly linked to the use and specific features of the PISTA DIGITAL monitoring tool—on their daily operations and decision-making processes. The final section aims to identify ongoing activities currently being implemented as well as forthcoming initiatives that may be carried out in the coming years.

2. Destination Profile of Alentejo Region

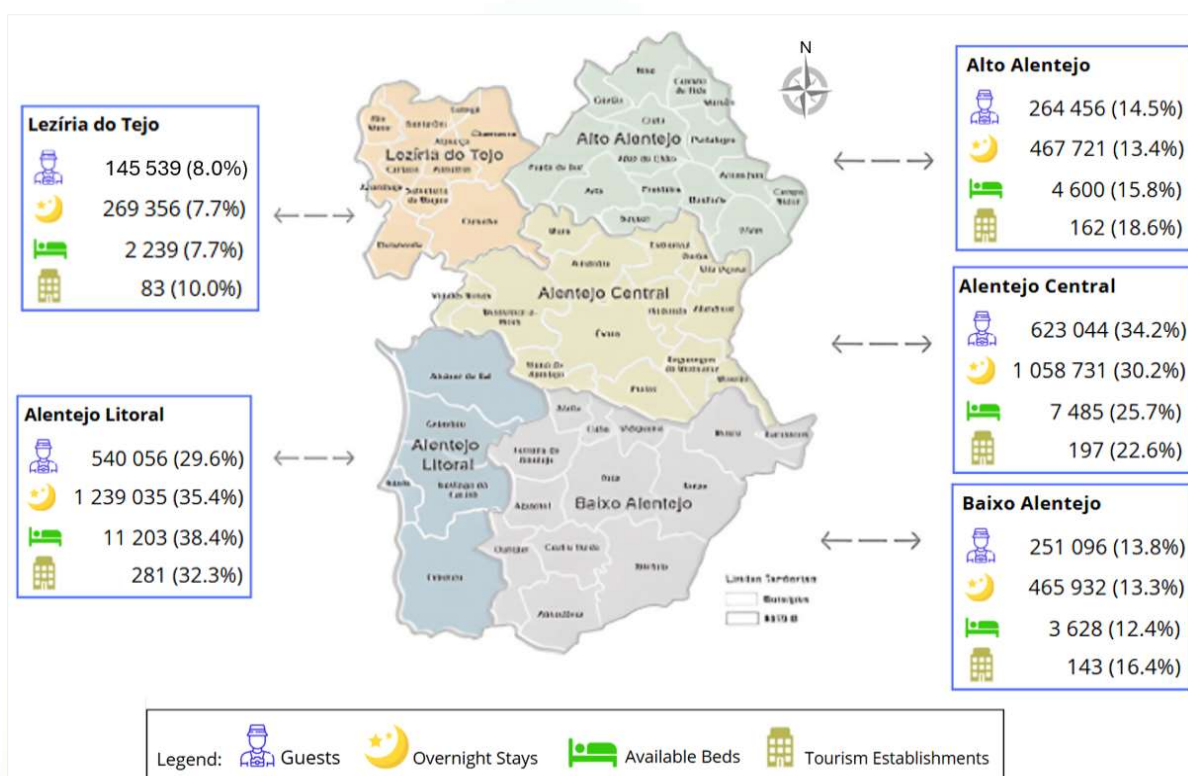
Table 1 describes the updated main destination profile indicators for tourism activity in the Alentejo region (NUT II), based on indicators available mostly from Turismo de Portugal – Travel BI.

Table 1 - Destination Profile of Alentejo Region

1	Is/Are there Tourism Satellite Account/s (TSA) in the destination country, measuring the economic dimensions of tourism at national level?	☒ YES Last time national TSA was conducted: 2021 (Source: INE1, 2022)	☐ NO
2	Sector relevance: Contribution of (a)tourism and (b) other economic sectors to the national (and if available local) GDP or GVA (%) – latest figures N – National R – Regional (Alentejo NUT II)	a) Direct and indirect contribution of tourism to the National GDP (2024): 9.7% (Source: Turismo de Portugal) b) National and Regional % GVA (2022) (Source: INEa, 2024)	
		Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, transportation and storages, accommodation and food service activities	23.1 19.2
		Public administration and defense, compulsory social security, education, human health and social work activities	18.8 21.7
		Mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, water abstraction, purification and supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	16.5 23.7
		Real estate activities	12.1 11.3
		Agriculture, livestock production, hunting, forestry and fishing	2.2 10.3
		Professional, scientific technical and similar activities, administrative and support service activities	9.5 4.2
		Construction	4.8 4.3
		Financial and insurance activities	5.4 2.5
		Arts, entertainment and recreation, repair of household goods and other services	2.8 2.2
		Information and communication activities	4.7 0.6
3	Arrivals of inbound (non-resident) visitors for last three years (Thousands)	Overnight ¹ : 1.165.869 (2024); 1.106.608 (2023); 940.944 (2022); Same-day visitors: -- Total: --	
3.1	% of total annual arrivals of inbound (non-resident) visitors occurring in peak month and in peak quarter (indicate which month and quarter)	Peak month (August): 12.9% (2024); 13.9% (2023) 14.6% (2022); Peak quarter (Jul./Aug./Sep.): 36.4 % (2024); Peak quarter (Jul./Aug./Sep.) 36.9% (2023); Peak quarter (Jul./Aug./Sep.): 39.2% (2022)	
4	Trips of domestic visitors for the last three years (Thousands)	Overnight ¹ : 2 234,9 (2024) 2 236,3 (2023); 2 094,5 (2022); Same-day visitors: -- Total: --	
4.1	% of total annual trips of domestic visitors occurring in peak month and in peak quarter (indicate which month and quarter)	Peak month (August): 18.4% (2024); 16.4% (2023); 17.1 % (2022); Peak quarter (Jul./Aug./Sep.): 42.1% (2024); Peak quarter (Jul./Aug./Sep.): 39.9% (2023); Peak quarter (Jul./Aug./Sep): 40.3 % (2022)	
5	Tourism industries: accommodation forvisitors in hotel and similar establishments (Units)	Number of establishments: 870 (2023); 793 (2022) Total rooms: 13 384 (2023); 12 445 (2022) Total bed-places: 29 155 (2023); 27 076 (2022)	
6	Current top 5 primary source markets for the destination	Portugal, Spain, EUA, Germany, France (2024) Portugal, Spain, EUA, Germany, France (2023)	
7	Please describe experience with other monitoring initiatives/systems.	'Destination Watch: A network of Regional Sustainable Tourism Observatories', created in 2024 by Turismo de Portugal The OECD Tourism Committee has been working with Portugal, with support from the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) to provide 'Support to Portugal's Tourism Ecosystem: towards a more sustainable, resilient and digital tourism'.	
8	Are there strategies in place for sustainable development of the destination? ☒ YES Name of those of relevance	'Regional Program for Ecotourism and Sustainability in Tourism Alentejo and Ribatejo' published in 2023 (designed collaboratively with different stakeholders) National tourism plan for sustainability (since 2020), by Turismo de Portugal (Tourism Authority) Biosphere Certification at the level of destination, since 2016	
9	Specify if there are any other initiatives/projects of relevance for the Observatory in the destination (and which)? ☒ YES	The study of the 'Alentejo Visitor profile during the low season (Nov. 2024 to March 2025)' has been initiated. The study on 'Report on the evolution of tourism in the city of Évora (2013-2023): Support document for the discussion on the implementation of the tourist tax' (published in 2024) to support decision-making at the Évora City Council	
11	DMO(s) in monitoring area: Yes/No and year of establishment	☒ YES Year of establishment: 2008	

ASTO's monitoring area maintains the same administrative regions in Alentejo region (NUT II). It still integrates 5 NUT's III: Lezíria do Tejo; Alto Alentejo; Alentejo Central; Baixo Alentejo and Alentejo Litoral. Figure 1 summarizes the main indicators for these territorial units, highlighting the proportion each NUT III represents in the NUT II Alentejo.

Figure 1 - Proportion of NUT III regions in relation to Alentejo NUT II in Guests, Overnight Stays, Available Beds and Tourism Establishments (2024)



Source: INE (2025)

As illustrated in Figure 1, the Alentejo Central region stood out in the year 2024 for having had the highest tourism demand in terms of guests (34.2%), while Alentejo Litoral concentrated the highest number of overnight stays (35.4%) in the region NUT II, which represents an increase of 0.7% compared to the previous year. The Alentejo Litoral is the region with the highest tourism accommodation capacity, with 38.4% of available beds and 32.3% of tourism establishments, also registering an increase compared to previous years. Furthermore, despite the growth observed, Lezíria do Tejo still has the lowest tourism demand and the lowest accommodation capacity.

3. Process of Monitoring the Destination

This section is organised considering the guidelines presented by UNWTO to develop the Annual Report and the data available in the monitorization system through the PISTA Digital platform¹. All the indicators presented in the following tables remains permanently public available since the year respectively indicated for each one. Most of them are not available in English (only Portuguese).

To identify the Local Satisfaction dimensions (Table 2), based on how satisfied residents are with the development of tourism, a survey directed to the region's residents was designed, as detailed in previous reports. The survey methodology and some results have been presented at international scientific congresses and technical webinars since 2021. The [first report of the study](#) is still available on the ASTO's website and the collected data since 2022 is available at PISTA Digital.

Table 2 - Local Satisfaction with Tourism: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Resident perception regarding tourism development (%)	2022	PD	NUT II	ASTO (Alentejo's Residents Survey)	Evaluation of tourism development on the destinations based on the residents' perception
Resident perception regarding the social impacts of tourism (%)	2022	PD	NUT II	ASTO (Alentejo's Residents Survey)	Evaluation of the social impacts of tourism on local communities based on the residents' perception
Resident satisfaction regarding the economic impacts of tourism (%)	2022	PD	NUT II	ASTO (Alentejo's Residents Survey)	Evaluation of the economic impacts of tourism on local communities based on the residents' perception
Resident satisfaction regarding the cultural impacts of tourism (%)	2022	PD	NUT II	ASTO (Alentejo's Residents Survey)	Evaluation of the cultural impacts of tourism on local communities based on the residents' perception
Resident satisfaction regarding the environmental impacts of tourism (%)	2022	PD	NUT II	ASTO (Alentejo's Residents Survey)	Evaluation of the environmental impacts of tourism on local communities based on the residents' perception
Tourist Density	2017	PD	NUT II e III; Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Evaluation of the tourist pressure on the territory, through the relationship between the number of overnight stays in registered accommodation and the area of the territory, measured in km ²
Tourist Intensity	2017	PD	NUT II e III; Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Evaluation of the relationship between tourists and the resident population and the resulting impacts, based on the ratio between the number of overnight stays in registered accommodation and the number of residents

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

¹ PISTA Digital tool is a digital tool specifically developed to support the ASTO's monitoring process – <https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/>

The Residents' survey continues to cover a wide range of questions and remains openly available through the digital platform. This allows the comparison of the residents' perceptions evolution, including over time, as well as identification and engagement through the diversity of community's multiple interests and viewpoints. In 2022, 95.6% of respondents recognized tourism to develop economic activities and 89.2% agree with the economic positive impacts mentioned (PISTA DIGITAL/University of Évora, 2024a). Most of them revealed that they see tourism as a way for heritage conservation and environmental awareness (PISTA DIGITAL/University of Évora, 2024a). In 2023 and 2024, the residents who completed the online survey reported very similar perceptions to the ones evidenced in 2022. In 2024, among the positive impacts of tourism development in the Alentejo region, 82.7% of respondents stated that tourism contributes to heritage conservation and 97.2% claims it enables the creation of new services (PISTA DIGITAL/University of Évora, 2024a). This dimension reinforces the imperative of sustaining sustainability — particularly in its environmental dimension — as a foundational pillar of ASTO's strategic framework. The active participation and consultation of residents are essential mechanisms for assessing and monitoring sustainable development within the territory. These processes contribute to the production of relevant indicators that affirm the Observatory's role as a credible and valuable source of information, particularly for stakeholders in the tourism sector.

As described in the *6th Annual Report*, since 2022, the focus has been on the PISTA Digital tool, which helps stakeholders familiarize themselves with the system and offers daily monitoring for logistics and company operations. Additionally, it transfers knowledge to academic and civil communities, allowing the use of the generated information in a scientific context. The Tourism Barometer, available through the platform, is useful for forecasting the sector's future based on business owners' responses. ASTO has also been strengthening its presence and participation in activities within both the civil and academic communities, with the aim of transferring knowledge, fostering closer engagement with the realities of R&D, and promoting the involvement of students from different educational level. This approach seeks to break down scientific barriers and encourage more sustainable development based on the guiding principles of the observatory's work. Demonstrations of the PISTA Digital tool for students and the participation of ASTO's researchers in activities organized as part of school dynamics (Appendix 1) and the University of Évora's open days (Appendix 2) are some examples. This aligns with the strategy of promoting the involvement and participation of university students in supporting and implementing projects developed under the coordination of the Observatory, with the aim of providing them with direct exposure to the field of research.

In another thematic context, to monitor the destination economic benefits, secondary data made available by INE were identified (Table 3). Once again, it is important to note that ASTO has a survey designed to assess the impacts of tourism using the Tourism Satellite Account methodology (developed in 2012 as part of the previous 'Alentejo Tourism Observatory'). However, we still have not the resources to proceed with data collection in this area.

Table 3 - Destination economic benefits: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation Level	Source	Description
Total Revenue	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2025)	Total Income generated by tourist accommodation establishments
Lodging incomes (€) in tourist accommodation establishments	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2025)	Total Revenue generated by the sale of accommodation in tourist accommodation establishments
RevPar (€)	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2025)	Tourism accommodations' ability by dividing the total guestroom revenue by the room count and the number of days of the period being measured

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

For the Employment dimension (Table 4), it has been decided to use available secondary data, published by INE. Also, in 2024, the team from the University of Évora still collaborates with [KIPT – Knowledge to Innovate Professions in Tourism](#) (the first and, so far, the only Collaborative Laboratory in the tourism field in Portugal) to create synergies for data collection in this domain.

Table 4 - Employment: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Employed Population (No.)	2007	SD	NUT I and II	INE(2024)	Total employed population
Worker Population as an employee (No.)	2007	SD	NUT I and II	INE(2024)	Worker population as an employee
Average Monthly Base Salary (€)	2007	SD	NUT I and II	INE(2024)	Average value that workers receive as base salary
Average Monthly Base Salary (€) per year	2007	SD	NUT I and II	INE(2024)	Average value that workers receive as base salary by year
Average Monthly Base Salary (€) by class	2007	SD	NUT I and II	INE(2024)	Average value that workers receive as base salary by class

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

With regard to Employment data, INE has only updated the indicators pertaining to the Average Monthly Base Salary (€) within the accommodation, food, and beverage services sector. In the Alentejo region, a notable increase was recorded, with the average monthly wage rising from €745.32 in 2020 to €834.28 in 2024. The data for the remaining monitored indicators remains unchanged and are consistent with the figures presented in the previous report.

As described in the previous reports, seasonality indicators monitored by ASTO (Table 5) are based on secondary data concerning guests and overnight stays, and disaggregated by NUTS III and municipal levels. These indicators are automatically incorporated into the system, where the application of the relevant calculations generates composite indicators such as the Seasonality Rate, as well as monthly and annual variations, thus enabling comparative analyses. In 2024, Alentejo registered a relative variation of 5.0 % of guests (PISTA DIGITAL / University of Évora, 2025_g) mostly residing in the country, with an increase of 4.1% in the overnight stays compared to

2024, and corresponding to a seasonality rate of 38.5%, following the downward trend observed since 2020 with an increasingly pronounced decline (PISTA DIGITAL/University of Évora, 2025_g).

Table 5 - Tourism seasonality: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	Sub-Indicators	1st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Average Length (by year)	Average Length's Absolute Change by year	2018	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2024)	Relationship between the number of overnight stays and the number of guests, in the reference period
Overnight Stays (No.)	Overnight Stays (No.) by residents	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2024)	Overnight Stays (Nº) in tourist accommodation establishments
	Overnight Stays (No.) by Non-Residents	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2024)	Overnight Stays (Nº) in tourist accommodation establishments by residents
Guests (No.)	Guests by residents (No.)	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2024)	Guests (Nº) in tourist accommodation establishments
	Guests by non-residents (No.)	2017	SD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	INE (2024)	Guests (non-residents) in tourist accommodation establishments by residents
Seasonality Rate (SR)	SR in tourist accommodation establishments, according to the municipality by typology	2020	PD	NUT I, II and III; Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/University of Évora	Relative weight of tourist demand in the months of highest demand, relative to the annual total, measured through the number of overnight stays in registered accommodation
	SR in tourist accommodation establishments, according to the municipality by market	2020	PD	NUT II and III; Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/University of Évora	Relative weight of tourist demand in the months of highest demand, relative to the annual total, measured through the number of overnight stays in registered accommodation by typology

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

As explained in the last report, ASTO was committed to create a tailor-made solution to gather primary data. For that, digital surveys are available on PISTA Digital platform. The indicators for monitoring the environment presented in the following three tables (tables 6, 7 and 8), result from a cooperative work with the stakeholders of the accommodations located in the Alentejo NUT II destination. This dynamic was supported with the dissemination of a [toolkit](#) (developed by ASTO and permanently available on the official website) aimed at helping the region stakeholders to quickly adopt more environmentally sustainable practices. In the platform, they can access a personalized private digital area (a free tool, available on the PISTA Digital), where they can insert data and see the performance results on dashboards, using international reference values that resulted from the benchmark carried out. The data collection of primary data in this Environmental dimension (Water, Energy Management and Solid Waste), started in 2024. Currently, even though not all the participants are registering data in a regular base, the established network of accommodation partners includes 21 accommodation facilities.

Table 6 - Energy Management: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Total Energy consumption per month (kWh/h)	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Energy consumption recorded per month, measured in kWh/h, in tourist establishments
Total Energy Consumption per year (kWh/h)	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Energy consumption recorded per year, measured in kWh/h, in tourist establishments
Average Energy Consumption by available room per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Energy consumed per month/number of rooms available per month, in tourist establishments
Average Energy Consumption by occupied room per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Energy consumed per month/number of rooms occupied per month in tourist establishments
Average Energy Consumption by available room per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Energy consumed per year/number of rooms available per year, in tourist establishments
Average Energy Consumption by occupied room per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Energy consumed per year/number of rooms occupied per year, in tourist establishments

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

Table 7 - Water Management: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Water Consumption per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Water consumption recorded per month, measured in m ³ in tourist establishments
Water Consumption per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Water consumption recorded per year, measured in m ³ in tourist establishments
Average Consumption by available room per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Water consumed per month/number of rooms available per month in tourist establishments
Average Consumption by occupied room per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Water consumed per month/number of rooms occupied per year in tourist establishments
Average Consumption by available room per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Water consumed per year/number of rooms occupied per year in tourist establishments
Average Consumption by available room per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Water consumed per year/number of rooms available per year in tourist establishments

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

Table 8 - Solid Waste Management: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Available Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Volume of waste per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Waste consumption recorded per month, measured in Kg, in tourist, establishments
Volume of waste per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Waste consumption recorded per year, measured in Kg in tourist, establishments
Average volume of waste per available room per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Waste produced per month/number of rooms available per month in tourist establishments
Average volume of waste per occupied room per month	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Waste produced per month/number of rooms occupied per month in tourist establishments
Average volume of waste per available room per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Waste produced per year/number of rooms available per month in tourist establishments
Average volume of waste per occupied room per year	2024	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Waste produced per year/number of rooms available per year in tourist establishments

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

As mentioned in the previous report, the Environmental dimension is related to the direct involvement of organisations in the development of actions that mitigate climate change and consequently fulfil the 2030 sustainable development goals. So, a space has been created in the professional area of PISTA Digital platform with the purpose of accommodation partners to register the frequency of events and actions in this regard, following a set of indicators (Table 99), that allows measure the average number of actions in which one of them.

Table 9 - Climate Action: Checklist on the monitored issues

Indicators	1 st Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Carbon Footprint offsetting action	planned	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Actions to neutralise the carbon footprint associated with hotels 'operations
Awareness Actions Involving the Customers	planned	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Actions aimed at increasing employees' awareness about climate issues
Awareness actions involving the employees	planned	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Actions aimed at increasing employees' awareness about climate issues
Average number of shares per entity	planned	PD	NUT II	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Évora	Average participation of stakeholders in relation to climate changes

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

Regarding the Governance and the Accessibility indicators, there is no relevant information to report since the previous report.

ASTO implemented a system for the primary collection of data on the profile of individual and group visitors to Tourist Offices in the Alentejo region. The corresponding indicators are presented in Tables 10 and 11. Only data duly authorized by the respective municipalities is publicly accessible through PISTA Digital. The dashboards presented in this section of the platform for 2024 is based on data provided directly by the Tourist Offices of 27 municipalities currently integrated into the network. At present, 29 municipalities are members of the user network, with five additional municipalities in the process of joining. The information available on the dashboards corresponds to 33 Tourist Offices, as some municipalities—particularly in the Alentejo Litoral subregion—operate more than one Tourist Office for tourists and visitors. Several of these offices function on a seasonal basis, adjusting their activity in response to territorial demand.

Table 10 - Individual Visitor Profile of the Tourist Office: Other indicators

Indicators	1 st Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Total number of individual visitors	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Number of individuals who visit the tourist offices to obtain tourist information or other services
Usual Residence	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Usual residence of tourist offices' visitors
Age	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Age groups of individual visitors who seek the tourist office
Gender	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Rate of male and female visitors in tourist offices
Education Level	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Education level profile of the visitors

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

Table 11 - Group Visitor Profile of the Tourist Office: Other indicators

Indicators	1 st Year	Type of Data	Administrative Disaggregation's Level	Source	Description
Total number of group visitors	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Number of visitors in group who enter in the tourist offices to obtain tourist information or other services
Group Characterization	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Characterization of the group
Usual Residence	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	Tourist Offices in Alentejo	Geographical origin (country) of the group
Gender	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Rate of male and female visitors in tourist offices
Nights number (No.)	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Number of nights which group stay in the municipality
Length of stay (part of the day) in the municipality	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Length of stay of the group in the municipality during the day (morning, afternoon, full day)
Reason for visiting	2021	PD	NUT II and Municipalities	PISTA DIGITAL/ University of Evora	Reason for choosing the visit to the municipality

Legend: SD - Secondary data; PD - Primary data

In 2024, a total of 52,149 individual visitors were recorded, with the majority residing in Portugal (43.7%) and falling within the 55–73 age group (PISTA Digital/University of Évora^h, 2024). Spain remained the leading international source market, representing 20.3% of all international visitors. Regarding group visitor, in 2024, the majority of group visitors were residents of Portugal (65.4%) and fell within the 55–73 age group (PISTA Digital & University of Évoraⁱ, 2024). Female visitors accounted for 41% of the total. The United States of America stood out as the main country of origin among international group visitors, representing 9.4% (PISTA Digital & University of Évoraⁱ, 2024).

As highlighted in the previous report, the Tourist Information Offices remain notable examples of the Observatory's engagement with its activities, particularly through the use of PISTA Digital. This platform was created to support and enhance local-level operations by recording valuable primary data for each municipality, while simultaneously contributing to the development of the Alentejo region monitoring through the information generated by the system, which consolidates and integrates this data. This is demonstrated in various reports and initiatives, where it is evident that the platform facilitates the execution of activities and the optimization of resources. Some municipalities continue to use the information available on the dashboards to share insights with entrepreneurs via newsletters. Efforts are also made to monitor platform usage by tourism technicians and stakeholders, ensuring the ongoing provision of technical support and clarification. To facilitate this, several meetings and activities have been organized, enabling direct interaction to address queries, consider suggestions, and collect valuable feedback from participants. Tourist Information Offices represent a key stakeholder in advancing the Observatory's initiatives and other projects related to clarifying and analysing the visitor profile in the region.

The 'PACTUAL Project: Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Alentejo' finished in December 2024. This study focused on the profile of Portuguese cultural visitors to the region, and the most important findings are disseminated via the official website, conferences and scientific papers.

At the end of 2024, the implementation of the survey for the study on the 'Visitor Profile of Alentejo during the Low Season', commissioned by the Regional Tourism Authority (ERT), commenced. The report was requested to support decision-making regarding investment options within the scope of development strategies defined by market (for example, international communication strategy). "Survey teams conducted fieldwork in selected municipalities according to a predefined methodological protocol. Tourist Information Offices played a fundamental role in coordinating the scheduling of these visits by providing essential information regarding event calendars and sites of significant tourist interest, as well as contextualizing the tourism dynamics of each municipality. Additionally, this study exemplified stakeholder engagement, with tourism students volunteering periodically to administer surveys (see Appendix 7). The data collected will be processed into relevant indicators and integrated into the PISTA Digital platform to support the continuous monitoring and management of the destination. To date, only the results report is available, and it is necessary to request services to make the data accessible on the digital platform.

4. Final Reflections

Considering the actions planned in the last report, ASTO continued to develop the following tasks/activities:

- 1) The ASTO website and social media channels continued to be maintained throughout 2024; however, the pace of updates fell short of initial expectations due to the unavailability of full-time human resources assigned to communication tasks.
- 2) The Resident Perceptions' Survey remains permanently open on the platform, continuously collecting data that is publicly accessible. Some of the results have been presented in the context of webinars and scientific conferences. However, the level of participation in this survey remains significantly below expectations, highlighting the need for strengthened dissemination strategies and engagement mechanisms to increase public involvement.
- 3) The continuous monitoring and support for the implementation of the system for collecting primary data on the profile of individual and group tourists visiting Tourist Information Offices in the Alentejo region, in close partnership with the municipal councils. In this regard, several constraints were encountered, particularly related to the (technical) functionality of the platform, requiring significant effort to ensure proper operation, responsiveness, and user engagement.
- 4) The survey on the Alentejo region's visitor profile survey (conducted in multiple locations through direct interaction with tourists) in low season began in 2024, spanning for the first three months of 2025. The results were presented in a report, and the questionnaire will be refined for use in the upcoming high season study.
- 5) The reinforcement of the networking with the Regional Tourism Authority in order to find solutions that increasingly meet the real needs related to information management.
- 6) Punctual individual meetings with the strategic tourist agents (at national, regional and local level) occurred in 2024 to plan further data collection (mainly regarding the available secondary information).
- 7) The PISTA DIGITAL website (<https://pista.hpc.uevora.pt/en>), so far has been serving as an interface to develop the technological system for managing and sharing information on the indicators identified by ASTO. The objectives are to continuously update the information on the main indicators and move forward with addressing other areas; to keep close contact with our partners and specialists in the field of sustainable tourism to find new strategies and pathways to achieve the UNWTO-INSTO main goals.
- 8) Presentation of the PISTA Digital platform to tourism students at the first edition of Tourism Zapping initiative in University of Évora, February 23th 2024.
- 9) An online workshop was held on November 27th 2024 with the technicians and the division heads of the Tourist Information Offices to provide a new demonstration of the platform's features, address any questions, and gather suggestions.
- 10) ASTO's team members recorded an episode for the [CIDEHUS Podcast – A conversation with Tourism](#), featuring an interview with the project's coordinator of PACTUAL project, available online for civil society outreach, released September 24th, 2024 (Appendix 3).
- 11) ASTO's researchers participated in European Researchers' Night | NEI 2024 Évora, in September 27th, 2024, featuring games to raise awareness about sustainability and territorial

valorisation, including the Heritage

Game created in PACTUAL's project tourism and the game "Long Live the Goals", dedicated to 17 SDG (Appendix 4).

- 12) Researchers presented 5 communications at International Conferences on Tourism, regarding the results obtained in the different surveys conducted. These communications focused on the residents' perceptions, the tourist experience of domestic visitors in Low-Density Destinations (Alentejo) and diverse aspects of tourism destinations' governance (Appendix 5).
- 13) The ASTO's team conducted a study on the evolution of tourism development in Évora for the Municipal Council during 2024, aimed at supporting decision-making regarding tourism tax.
- 14) The ASTO's team hosted the "Tourism and Cultural Heritage Conference: Visitor Experiences and Motivations" as part of the PACTUAL project, which took place on November 8th, 2024. The event served as a platform for sharing and disseminating the work carried out on the experiences and motivations of cultural visitors and tourists in Alentejo region, assembling a group of experts (Appendix 6).
- 15) In 2024, some researchers of ASTO joined a regional team that will monitor the evolution of wine tourism activities in the destination across multiple dimensions. This project – ENOTUR – Enoturismo do Alentejo e Ribatejo – has the support of the PROVERE Alentejo 2030.
- 16) In July 2024, ASTO participated in the official launch of 'Destination Watch: Network of Regional Sustainable Tourism Observatories', managed by Turismo de Portugal. On this occasion, ASTO presented the path it has followed in recent years, as well as the challenges and constraints experienced to date, and those anticipated in the medium to long term.
- 17) Permanent effort of the ASTO team to anchor new projects under the themes motorized by ASTO, to minimize, to some extent, the scarcity of financial and human resources exclusively and permanently dedicated to ASTO, and to avoid stopping the ASTO's work.

Despite considerable progress, certain information that we planned to develop and that exists in databases remains unavailable on the PISTA Digital indicators platform. The year of 2024 was particularly challenging due to persistent technical (informatic) issues affecting the digital platform's functionality, which resolution lies beyond the scientific competencies of the ASTO research team and led to the analysis of different companies for assisting the technical evolution of the platform. We also maintain close collaboration with other researchers associated with observatories for monitoring the development of sustainable tourism in the destinations. We remain fully committed to strengthening partnerships and pursuing funded projects with various national and international partners (e.g., Horizon, Alentejo 2030, PROVERE, Turismo de Portugal) across multiple domains to ensure the sustainability of the Observatory and the PISTA Digital initiative.

References

- INE (2024). *Anuários Estatísticos Regionais*, available at:
https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_doc_municipios
- INE₂ (2022). *Conta Satélite do Turismo 2021. Informação à Comunicação Social*, available at:
https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaquas&DESTAQUESdest_boui=540830193&DESTAQUESmodo=2, accessed July 2022;
- INE₁ (2022). *Estatísticas do Turismo: 2021*, available at:
https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_publicacoes&PUBLICACOESpub_boui=22122921&PUBLICACOESmodo=2, accessed July 2022;
- INE (2025),
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_a (2025). *Satisfação dos Residentes*, available at:
<https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/indicadores/satisfacao-dos-residentes>, accessed March 2025
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_b (2025), *Taxa de Sazonalidade nos estabelecimentos de alojamento turístico, segundo o município por Tipologia*, available at:
https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/indicadores/sazonalidade#nav_tabs_content_1659091958623_174, accessed March 2025
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_c (2025). *Ação Climática*, available at:
<https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/indicadores/acao-climatica>, accessed March 2025
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_d (2025). *Perfil do Visitante Individual*, available at:
<https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/postos-de-turismo/individual>, accessed March 2025
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_e (2025). *Postos de Turismo – Perfil do Grupo*, available at:
<https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/postos-de-turismo/grupo>, accessed by March 2025
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_g (2025), *Taxa de Sazonalidade nos estabelecimentos de alojamento turístico, segundo o município por Mercado*, available at:
https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/indicadores/sazonalidade#nav_tabs_content_1659091958623_174, accessed by March 2025
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_h (2025). *Perfil do Visitante Individual*, available at:
<https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/postos-de-turismo/individual>, accessed July 2024
- Pista Digital/University of Évora_i (2025). *Postos de Turismo – Perfil do Grupo*, available at:
<https://pistadigital.uevora.pt/postos-de-turismo/grupo>, accessed July 2024
- Turismo de Portugal (2022). *TravelBI – taxa de sazonalidade*, available at:
<https://travelbi.turismodeportugal.pt/sustentabilidade/taxa-de-sazonalidade/>, accessed July 2022
- Turismo de Portugal (2022). *TravelBI – despesas em ambiente por 1000 habitantes*, available at:
<https://travelbi.turismodeportugal.pt/sustentabilidade/despesas-em-ambiente-por-1000-habitantes/>, accessed July 2022
- Turismo de Portugal_c (2022). *TravelBI - Desempenho Ambiental do Alojamento em Portugal 2019 Boas Práticas nos Estabelecimentos Hoteleiros, Aldeamentos e Apartamentos Turísticos*, available at: <https://travelbi.turismodeportugal.pt/sustentabilidade/desempenho-ambiental-do-alojamento-em-portugal-2019/>, accessed July 2022
- Turismo de Portugal_d (2022). *Registo Nacional de Turismo*, available at:
https://rnt.turismodeportugal.pt/RNT/Pesquisa_ET.aspx?FiltroVisivel=True, accessed July 2022

Appendixes

Appendix 1 | Participation in an awareness-raising activity aimed at primary school students, held in the context of World Environment Day and the SDG (Photo)



Appendix 2 | ASTO's activity dedicated to SDG as part of Open Day 2024 at University of Évora (Photo)



Appendix 3 | Cover design for the CIDEHUS Podcast – “À Conversa com o Turismo” | Episode #2: Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Alentejo”, featuring an interview.



Appendix 4 | Participation in Évora NEI 2024 - “Heritage Game” and “Long Live the Goals! Game” (Photo)



Appendix 5 | Panel on the Conference *Enrichment of the tourist experience through the enhancement of cultural heritage*, on October 25th, 2024 (Photo)



Appendix 6 | Presentation moment in the Conference *Tourism and Cultural Heritage Conference: Visitor Experiences and Motivations*, November 8th, 2024 (Photo)



Appendix 7 | Survey application for the study about Visitor's Profile of Alentejo in Low Season (Photo)

