



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

Social media users as place marketers

How foreign citizens living in Portugal promote the country
online

Inês Martins de Albuquerque

Católica Porto Business School

2023



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

Social media users as place marketers

How foreign citizens living in Portugal promote the country
online

Final Work in Academic Context presented to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to
obtain the Master degree in Management

by

Inês Martins de Albuquerque

under the orientation of
Professora Carla Carvalho Martins e Joana César Machado

Católica Porto Business School, Universidade Católica Portuguesa
September 2023

Acknowledgments

I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to my parents who believe and supported me throughout this journey, and to my family, whose help and understanding have been vital during this process.

To my friends who have consistently provided me support and help during the entire process, specially to Francisca, who acted as my personal cheerleader throughout difficult times, raising my spirits and making sure I kept on course. To all of you, your optimism and undying faith in me have truly changed everything.

I would also like to thank the Corvinus University of Budapest and the Católica Porto Business School. Both prestigious universities' expertise and views had a significant role in forming my worldview and enhancing my academic career.

Last but not least, I want to express my gratitude to Professors Joana César Machado and Carla Martins for the guidance, support, and ongoing feedback, they have been crucial to the success of this final work.

Resumo

Com a crescente relevância das redes sociais e dos *influencers*, a forma como um país é apresentado nas redes sociais pode influenciar a atitude dos residentes e futuros visitantes, bem com a sua intenção de visitar o país. Ainda que o fenómeno de *travel influencers* já tenha sido estudado, na literatura ainda não existe nenhum estudo que procure compreender o impacto que os residentes estrangeiros podem ter na promoção de um país nas redes sociais.

Este estudo teve como objetivo colmatar esta lacuna na literatura ao analisar o papel de pessoas estrangeiras que vivem Portugal como promotores do país, explicitar o tipo de conteúdo que produzem e como o país pode beneficiar desse tipo de promoção. Foi também explorado o tipo de consequências que resultam da atração e residentes para Portugal.

Este estudo permitiu concluir que as redes sociais são uma ferramenta bastante importante para promover o país e atrair turistas e residentes estrangeiros, e identificar os efeitos positivos e negativos desta atração, sendo os negativos ligados ao problema de turismo em massa. Ao mesmo tempo, foi demonstrado como as redes sociais ajudam no efeito da globalização e moldam as atitudes de outros perante o país em estudo, neste caso, Portugal.

Palavras-Chave: Redes Sociais, *Influencers*, *Influencers* de viagens, Turismo, Marca país, Imagem do país

Abstract

With the growing relevance of social media and social media influencers, the way a country is presented on social networking sites can shape the attitude of future visitors or residents and their intention to visit the country. Although the phenomenon of travel influencers has already been studied, to our knowledge, there are still no studies that try to understand the impact that foreign residents can have on the promotion of a country on social media.

This study aimed to fill this gap in the literature by analyzing the role of foreign people living in Portugal as promoters of the country, identifying the main types of content they produce and how the country can benefit from this type of promotion, including through the attraction of residents to Portugal.

The findings highlighted the relevance of social networking sites in the promotion of the country and in the attraction of tourism and foreign residents, as well as the positive and negative effects of this attraction, the negative ones being linked to the problem of mass tourism. Furthermore, this study demonstrated how social media influencers contribute to the effect of globalization and influence the attitudes of others towards a country, in this case, Portugal.

Keywords: Social Networking sites, Influencers, Travel Influencer, Tourism, Country Branding, Country Image

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	v
Resumo	vii
Abstract	ix
Index of Figures	xiii
Index of Tables	xiv
List of Abbreviations	xvi
Introduction	19
Chapter 1	23
Literature Review	23
2.1. Country Image	23
1.2. Country Branding	24
1.3. Travel Influencer	25
Chapter 2	28
Methodology	28
2.1. Research Approach	28
2.2. Data Collection and Analysis	28
Chapter 3	31
Results and Discussions	31
3.1. Demographic Characterization and main emerging categories	31
3.2. Motives to move to Portugal and adaptation to the country	32
3.2.1 Motivation to move	32
3.2.2 Adaptation process	34
3.3. Foreign citizens living in Portugal as place influencers.....	35
3.3.1 Reasons for social media use	35
3.3.2 Type of content produced.....	36

3.3.3 Public reaction and engagement.....	40
3.4. Consequences of Portugal attraction	40
Chapter 4.....	42
Conclusion.....	42
4.1. Main Conclusions	42
4.2. Theoretical Contributions	43
4.3. Managerial Implications	43
4.4. Limitations and Future Research.....	44
References	46
Appendix	51
Appendix 1 – Semi-structured interview script	51
Appendix 2 – Coding List.....	54

Index of Figures

Figure 1- The national brand molecule. Source: (Rojas-Méndez, 2013)	25
Figure 2-Instagram post from Mati Mata. Source: Instagram	37
Figure 3- TikTok post from Caitlin. Source: TikTok	38

Index of Tables

Table 1-Demographic characterization.....	32
---	----

List of Abbreviations

PCI – Product-country image

SMIs – Social Media Influencers

SNS– Social Networking sites

USA – United States of America

UGC – User-generated content

Introduction

The past few decades have seen the world turn its attention to Portugal, a nation distinguished by a rich tapestry of culture, breathtaking scenery, and enticing living circumstances. A sizable inflow of people has chosen to travel to or live in Portugal, as this small nation on the Iberian Peninsula has developed into a bustling metropolis that beckons both tourists and potential residents alike. There is a fascinating phenomenon at the core of this migration pattern, one that has been fueled by the digital influence of foreign who have made Portugal their new home. These people use social media platforms to share their experiences with Portugal with the world, indirectly influencing opinions and aspirations about Portugal (Xiang et al., 2017).

Nonetheless such significant changes in population dynamics always have a variety of potential side effects. These can have both positive and negative effects, with the former possibly straining infrastructure and changing the way of life. Positive effects include boosting the local economy and raising awareness of the country's rich legacy abroad. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important to fully comprehend and effectively handle these repercussions.

Interestingly, despite Portugal's appeal as a vacation spot and location for new inhabitants, there is a lack of academic studies thoroughly investigating the implications of this increasing popularity. More specifically, there is a lack of studies focused on exploring the role of digital influence, its dynamic interplay with global perceptions and attitudes towards the country, and its potential impact on individuals' decisions to visit or relocate there. This presents a significant and noticeable gap in the existing body of literature - a gap this thesis aims to address and fill, thereby enriching our understanding of this complex, multidimensional phenomenon. According to Neuhofer et al., (2015) the impact of digital media on travel and migration decisions is a generally recognized area

of study. Online reviews and the sharing of personal experiences on social media have been shown to have a significant impact on traveler behavior and destination preferences. However, research appears noticeably lacking when it comes to the specific intersection of these impacts in the context of specific countries.

This thesis will use an exploratory case, using a qualitative analysis, with semi-structured interviews to gather primary data, followed by a thorough assessment of current literature to develop a basic knowledge, analyze social media trends and material relevant to Portugal to identify digital impact patterns. Given the uniqueness of the study issue, this rigorous methodology will enable the thesis to delve into an under-researched area, providing a substantial contribution to the body of information about the impacts of digital influence on tourist and migration trends.

Ultimately, this thesis sets out on an academic quest to fill a gap in the literature by diving into a phenomenon that is gradually transforming Portugal's landscape in ways that are not yet completely understood or recognized. This thesis aims to provide a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of digital influence exerted by foreign citizens that choose Portugal and consistently use social media to show the experience of living in this country, by trying to answer the following research questions: What are the main motivations for foreign to move to Portugal? What type of content do they produce, and which platforms are used? Who is the target audience, how do they engage with them, and how does this audience react to it? What type of consequences do these social media users think will result from attracting tourists and potential residents?

This paper is divided into four sections. The first section is dedicated to the literature review and the second to the presentation of the research methodology used in this study. In the third section the results are presented and discussed, finally, in the last section, the main conclusions of this research are outlined,

including the theoretical and managerial contributions, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

2.1. Country Image

Country image refers to all the descriptive, inferential, and informative ideas about a certain country (Ingrid M & Sevgin Eroglu, 1993). Carneiro & Faria, (2016); Roth & Diamantopoulos (2009) explain that the concept of a country image is divided into two aspects: a cognitive one that includes consumers' informational beliefs about a particular country, and an affective one that describes consumers' feelings or emotions toward the country and therefore the country's emotional value to the consumer. Furthermore, the cognitive dimension includes dimensions such as rich vs. poor, technologically advanced vs. not technologically advanced, high vs. low level of education, and hardworking vs. not hardworking individuals. Regarding the affective dimension, it evaluates whether a local person and the country itself are likable or unlikeable and if they are trustworthy (Laroche et al., 2005). Country image is related to another concept, namely, the *product-country image (PCI)*, which indicates opinions about nations based on the locations of head offices and the manufacturing and design facilities for certain product and brand categories (Nadeau et al., 2008).

Numerous studies analyze how the development of the destination's image can be influenced by the overall country image. Zhang et al., (2018, p.18) suggested that "country image mainly affects international tourists' evaluations of a country as a destination in a conditional indirect way, which is mediated by destination image, especially by psychological image, and moderated by familiarity. The conditional indirect effect of country image on tourists' destination evaluation decreases with increases in tourists' knowledge of the

country". Furthermore, the destination image is strongly influenced by the country's image, and the intention to visit the country is also positively influenced by both factors (Chaulagain et al., 2019).

1.2. Country Branding

The concept of country branding, also known as *nation branding* and *place branding*, correlates directly with country image, and it has been defined as the range of initiatives by national, regional, and local governments, as well as business associations, to promote the locations and industries they represent (Papadopoulos, 2004). Moreover, Papadopoulos, (2004, p.37) explains how "the intent of such efforts typically is to achieve one or more of four main objectives: enhance the place's exports, protect its domestic business from "foreign" competition (...), attract or retain factors of development and generally position the place for advantage domestically and internationally In economic, political, and social terms". Rojas-Méndez, (2013), using the concept of the national brand molecule (figure 1), explains how economy, geography and nature, tourism, culture and history, society, science and technology, and governance all have a significant role in determining a country's brand and are important factors to keep in mind.

Moreover, the residents of the country should be one of the starting points for the branding process. The public's belief in and support of the nation's branding elements will help the country create a sense of loyalty and retention among its citizens. Therefore, it is crucial for a nation to make sure that its inhabitants passionately foster country branding in their thoughts and emotions (Che-Ha et al., 2016).

A study made by Gilmore, (2022), one of the first in this area, analyzed the case of Spain as a success story of country branding. This study explained how the consistent use of the Spain logo throughout the world, the expansion of Spanish businesses abroad, and brand ambassadors, are evidence of a concerted effort on

the part of the Spanish government, citizens, and businesses to redefine Spain as a modern, vibrant young democracy as opposed to the isolated, impoverished nation it was under Francisco Franco's 36-year dictatorship. In fact, effective country branding helps countries achieve recognition among foreign audiences.

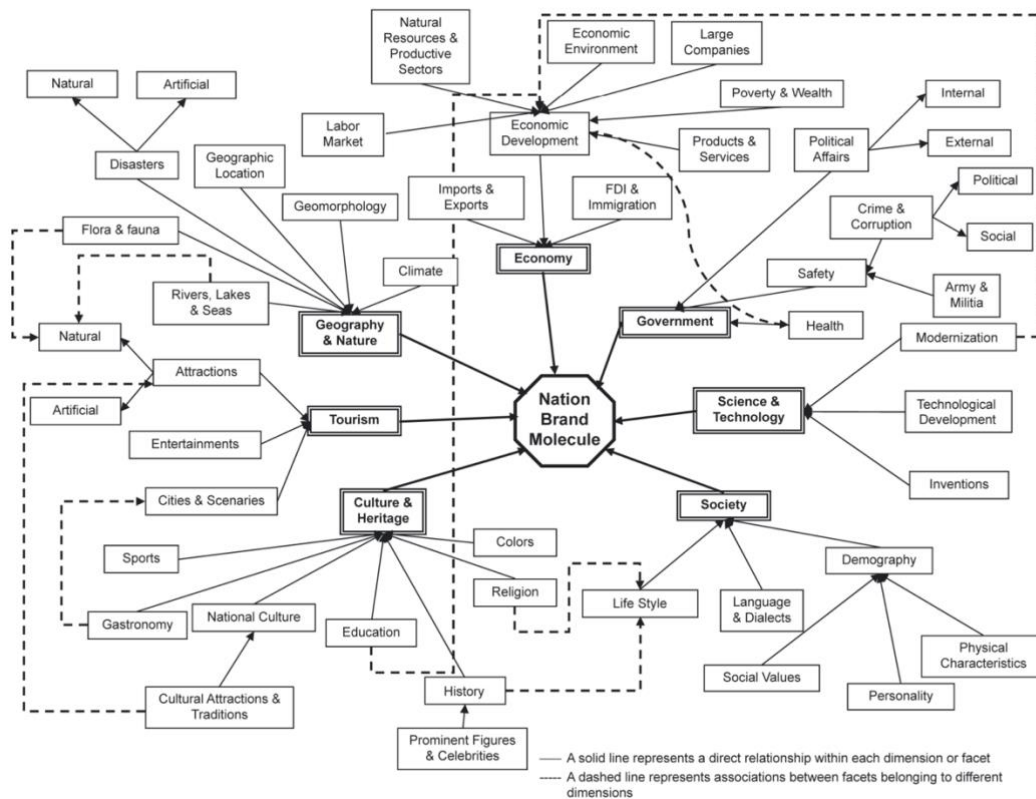


Figure 1- The national brand molecule. Source: (Rojas-Méndez, 2013)

1.3. Travel Influencer

To better understand the concept of travel influencer, it is necessary to understand first social media. Over the past ten years, social media has successfully wormed its way into people’s lives. Although it may have started out with the main objective of socially connecting people, it gradually expanded and evolved into connecting people to industries, companies, and brands. There are numerous definitions of social media but all of them tend to highlight a

similar overview: social media are Internet-based systems that support and facilitate the free flow of user-generated information (Hanna et al., 2011; Helal et al., 2018; Kietzmann et al., 2011; Luo & Zhang, n.d.; Safko & Brake, 2009). With the increasing use of social media, the phenomenon of social media influencers (SMIs) gained relevance. SMIs are regular, everyday Internet users who build a sizable audience on blogs and social media by textually and visually narrating their personal lives and lifestyles that engage with their audience in both digital and real-world settings and monetize their audience by including advertised content in their or social media post (Enke & Borchers, 2019).

With the evolution of SMIs, travel influencers emerged, and they are described as individuals who regularly post information and reviews about travel and have a substantial number of engaged followers on social. Travel influencers use images, videos, comments, and descriptions to convey their experiences with a particular area; in the process, they often shift the perspective of their followers toward the location, which in turn affects their follower's travel decisions (Ho & Lee, 2015; Ríos et al., 2019). The impact of SMIs, particularly travel influencers, on the purchase decision-making process has been examined in the tourism industry and is demonstrated to affect follower's travel intentions, increasing the possibility that they would travel to a specific location (Pop et al., 2022). As the literature suggests, SMIs are linked with online word of mouth, a type of content that is provided by past users (the influencers). This content has an impact on how potential customers behave and, because it may be viewed at any time, from any location, and shared with other customers, it facilitates the spread of knowledge. As stated before, country image and branding are important, and trust in a location and travel intention is significantly influenced by online WOM and SMIs (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). According to Kracht & Wang, (2010), influencers on social media are being used as effective marketing tools to advance and shape the perception of a location.

Social networking sites (SNS) with their own distinctive characteristics and appeal, including TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, have become effective places for disseminating captive travel content. TikTok provides a single content format with up to 10-minute video, and a special ““For You”” algorithmic page that allows the content to go viral independent of user relationships (Jaramillo-Dent et al., 2022). Moreover, YouTube is a popular social media platform used by travel influencers, especially with travel vlogs showing where they are traveling to, how they go there, and how is there daily routine is, creating a significant impact on how and where people travel (Silaban et al., 2022). Regarding Instagram, it is a platform that influencers use because of the sense of immediacy it produces and the communities it creates (Rietveld et al., 2020).

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1. Research Approach

This study aims to understand the role of foreigners living in Portugal as promoters of the country, to identify the type of content they produce, identify the target audience for this content, what are the core motivations for foreigners to move to Portugal and the process related to their relocation to the country. Furthermore, it is important to explore in the perspective of this social media users, how do they engage with their target and, what type of consequences do these social media users might think it can appear from attracting tourist and potential residents. As this is considered a new phenomenon, that has not been previously studied, the research has an exploratory nature (Swedberg, 2020). This nature allows to have as a main goal of a phenomena or subject that is poorly understood in order to form an initial theory about it and advance to more focused research inquiries (Neuman, 2014).

A qualitative approach was adopted, as this kind of study allows a researcher to see and understand the context within which decisions and actions take place, which helps to understand the rationale behind the human behaviors and the phenomena itself, to better address the specific issue (Myers, 2013). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with foreigners living in Portugal.

2.2. Data Collection and Analysis

In-depth interviews were conducted to collect primary data, between the 27th of March 2023 and the 20th of April 2023 through the Zoom platform. In Appendix 1, it is possible to consult the semi-structured script. The semi-

structured approach, with open, and closed-end questions, was used for the interviews due to its versatility; although following a pre-written script, this approach allows the addition or elimination of questions based on the flow of the conversation, offering the researcher latitude to explore relevant ideas that may arise throughout the interview, which can further improve comprehension (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). All six interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants and transcribed without adding or modifying the content to examine the data gathered and avoid wrong interpretations or biased facts.

The selection of the interviewees was conducted by the method of purposive sampling, a participant's purposeful selection based on the traits they possess, being a nonrandom approach, not requiring underlying theories or a predetermined number of participants. Within this type of method, this study was based on a homogenous sample, as the candidates were chosen due to their similar traits, (Etikan, 2016), more specially because they are foreign citizens who live in Portugal and use social media platforms where they frequently portray Portugal. Secondary data was used to choose the interviewees. Indeed, we analyzed the profiles of travel influencers who fulfilled the predefined requirements, to understand the type of content they publish, what is their target public, what type of social media platforms they use, and if they adapt the content according to the different platforms. This analysis was crucial to guarantee that this research had total fit with the sample selection criteria.

Furthermore, after analyzing the transcriptions, coding was produced (appendix 2) with the aim of putting data into different groups based on the research questions. The method used for the coding was thematic analysis, more specifically inductive thematic analysis, attempting to produce an analysis from the ground up (the facts) being an analysis that is not influenced by preexisting theory (Braun Virginia & Clarke Victoria, 2013). Therefore, it is crucial to highlight that, regardless of the significance of the literature reviewed in chapter

2, the next sections will not directly address the analysis of relationships that may exist between data and existing theory. The focal point will center on understanding the information retrieved from the coding process.

Chapter 3

Results and Discussions

3.1. Demographic Characterization and main emerging categories

Table 1 depicts the demographic characterization of the participants, providing a clear and concise representation of each person's profile. All interviewees are women, between the ages 29 and 36, half of them originally from the USA, while the rest from Canada, Sweden, and Russia. Three of them have a bachelor's degree, two hold a master's degree and one has a PhD, being important to note that all are related to business and marketing areas. Related to city of residence, Lisbon area is the most preferred choice among participants, notwithstanding that all, apart from Abrantes, are part of the Lisbon region.

Interview Date ¹	27/03/2023	03/04/2023	04/04/2023	17/04/2023	18/04/2023	20/04/2023
Duration	30 minutes	18 minutes	31 minutes	33 minutes	23 minutes	32 minutes
Interviewees name	Caitlin	Linnea	VikaGlu	Yvonne	Mati Mata	Cara West
Age	32 years old	29 years old	34 years old	36 years old	35 years old	31 years old
Nationality	USA (Vermont)	Sweden	Russia (Moscow)	Canada	USA (NYC)	USA (Texas)
Education level	Master's degree in business management	Wintour - International Master on Wine Tourism Innovation	Bachelor's degree in social studies	PhD – Tourism and Business Development	Bachelor's degree in marketing and communication	Bachelor's degree
Social Media Platforms used to portrait Portugal	Tiktok	Instagram	TikTok	TikTok	TikTok and Instagram	TikTok and Instagram
Current city of residence	Setúbal	Torres Vedras	Lisbon	Abrantes	Lisbon	Sintra

Table 1-Demographic characterization

The process of coding resulted in the emergence of the following categories: a) Reasons to move to Portugal; a) Adaptation Process; c) Usage of social networking sites; d) Content produced on social networking sites; e) Public's reaction to the content produced; f) Engagement with followers; g) Consequences of residents and tourists' attraction. The categories were later grouped in wider categories regarding common issues. In the next section, the overall results for each category will be analyze, alongside with the discussion of each.

3.2. Motives to move to Portugal and adaptation to the country

3.2.1 Motivation to move

¹ The date format used is DD/MM/YYYY

In reference to the category of reasons to move to Portugal and adaptation to the country, five attributes were considered to be of importance: standard of living, easy visa process, familiarity with language, work opportunities and an external company that was facilitating the relocation, being perceptible that “standard of living” and “easy visa process” were the two most frequently mentioned attributes. The standard of living, as was emphasized by Linnea and Vikaglu – *“We have a remote job and we’re thinking about places that we could live in good comfort area and work in.” (Vikaglu)* – can highlight Portugal's image as an attractive location. Andereck et al., (2005) explains how quality of life and standard of living are key players concerning the intention on visiting a country. In relation to the easy visa process, both Matia Mata, Caitlin and Vikaglu mentioned it:

I actually wanted to go to Spain but the visa process was easier in Portugal, so I decided to come to Portugal with the D7 visa (...) (Caitlin), *“(...) the visa process is a lot easier here for me being American which definitely made it a helping factor when choosing Portugal (...)* (Mati Mata)

Besides Portugal's accessibility as a crucial element that attract them to Portugal, the familiarity with the language, which was specific for the case of Yvonne, introduces a unique element, fostering a sense of community:

I ended up marrying a Brazilian and I lived in Brazil and I learned Portuguese that way and when I was living. In Brazil, I was actually finishing up a PhD and we wanted to live in Europe because I also have Polish passport. So it's easy for me to come and live in Europe, we originally wanted to move to Portugal because it would just be easier for my husband and me since I speak the language (Yvonne).

Alongside with the dimension above mentioned, work opportunities were also important in specific for Yvonne, specifically the opportunity to become a university professor, something that was crucial in making her decision. Lastly, the role of external companies in facilitating the relocation process, as indicated by Cara West – *“We were there for the past three months with a company called*

Boundless Life and we spent three months in Sintra” (Cara West) – suggesting that the presence of supportive mechanisms is enhancing the attractiveness of Portugal.

Moreover, Cara West identifies Portugal as a hotspot for expatriate communities, especially people of color, as she explains that it is gaining popularity as a living destination because it is seen as a safe space that provides a sense of community, resources, and representation for people of color:

I have a lot of women of color in my followers and I think that the one thing people really like about Portugal is that it is becoming an established black expat community, and so what’s really important for women of color who are looking to live abroad and settle somewhere is do they have community, and do they have resources available to them? And there’s not a lot of European countries that have that right now, but Portugal is one of them (...) To see the representation in the country, and I think that that’s why Portugal is really appealing to a lot of a lot of people of color right now. (Cara West).

3.2.2 Adaptation process

In this subcategory, testimonies reveal both easy and hard experiences. For the specific case of Linnea, she mentions the following: *“(...) feeling very welcomed and I was exploring a lot like trying typical food and like typical wine, typical beer, I was introduced to many typical things, and I got to enjoy those things and adapt a bit to those” (Linnea)*, illustrating how besides having an easy adaptation to the country, she was able to embrace the culture in a positive way. In consideration to the easy adaptation, both Yvonne and Mati Mata disclose how having the language knowledge, a supportive network (in the specific case of Yvonne) and having experience in living in a country with a similar culture (in the case of Mati Mata) were beneficial for them during the process. In similar manner, Cara West, arrived to Portugal with a specific company that only works on helping families to relocate to different parts of the world, providing all necessary assistance

(accommodation, transportation, schooling) and integrating them in a community, made the process very easy and smooth:

I think that what we experienced is very different (...) we were able to kind of have a trial period to see how living in the country would look and feel (...) it allowed for us to have a much better experience and also understand completely if this was something that we truly wanted to do. (...) we showed up, we had transportation from the airport, we had a furnished apartment, we had community already available to us with the other families we were traveling with. Our kids got to go to school and so we really just kind of got to plug in what it's like to live there. And to experience everyday life versus being on vacation. (Cara West).

In contrast, Vikaglu and Caitlin had different experiences from the one's above mentioned, where the coldness of locals, difficulties with language and bureaucracy made both pass through a harder adaptation process. Vikaglu explain that before arriving to Portugal, all the information she found online about moving here pointed how locals were friendly, creating a sense of surprise when that did not happen to her.

It was medium hard at first. A little bit depression maybe because people here were so cold to me. I mean that when I start speaking with someone in a coffee shop, I was like, really nice and nothing from them. But then I'm on YouTube or Internet and hearing that Portugal so much friendly and I was surprised with that, they are friendly, but not so much. (Vikaglu).

3.3. Foreign citizens living in Portugal as place influencers

3.3.1 Reasons for social media use

In this subcategory, it is tracked why interviewees use social media and the type of income they generate. It is important to mention that Linnea is not a social media influencer, therefore, she was not contemplated in this category. Vikaglu started a TikTok account in Portugal to connect with locals and expats, while

Caitlin started using it before coming to Portugal but with the purpose of explain how the visa process was. Cara West, in 2022 created an account specific to broadcast living and traveling abroad, similar to Mati Mata, while Yvonne considers herself as being a travel blogger on and off for the last 10 years. Overall, all of them had related reasons on why they start using social networking sites, as well as the one's they use, being mentioned TikTok, Instagram and Youtube.

Digital content creation generates income but it is a just a complement to participants' wages. Mati Mata's acknowledges that a third of her income is from social media, mainly by creating partnerships with companies, Yvonne considers her content as UGC content:

I've done some UGC content. So that's, you know, like a brand slot video and they're like, oh, hey, can you create some videos for us because we really like your vibe (...) it's more for the fun and to complement a bit of your day-to-day job. (Yvonne).

Cara West does mainly brand sponsorships:

Probably back in 2021. I really started getting serious content creation and working with brands. I already had a really great following and I just started to take more seriously (...) the income that's generated is typically through brand sponsorships. So you know, brands want to work with me on marketing their products and services and then that income is in complement to my full time job. (Cara West).

3.3.2 Type of content produced

For this category, content produced that includes Portugal, perspective of their own content and target audience were the three subcategories created.

The content produce is wide-ranging and focuses on several aspects of Portugal, from food and wine to cultural nuances, living costs and the real estate market. Even though Linnea is not a social media influencer, she explains the following:

I am very like promoting Portugal, let's say among my friends and my family (...) Unconsciously, it's becoming a promotion for other people too, I think I am becoming

like a little Portugal ambassador (...) wine is an important part of the Portuguese culture, so of course it's something that I share and it's something that I think I want to highlight, something that I want people to know about the wine in Portugal" (Linnea).

Mati Mata states "I think my main thing is itineraries, recommendations for food so all types of food in Portugal, I recommend restaurants, experiences, hotels, things like that and it is doing well, it's been received. Well, I I've also been able to really make it grow." (Mati Mata). Figure 2 is an example of an Instagram post from Mati Mata recommending a restaurant in Lisbon. Caitlin, after finishing the visa process and content related to that, as moved into sharing food to try, where to go in Portugal, as well as videos about differences I habits between Portugal and America. Figure 3 is a TikTok post explaining how the process of heating houses is in Portugal.



Figure 2-Instagram post from Mati Mata. Source: Instagram

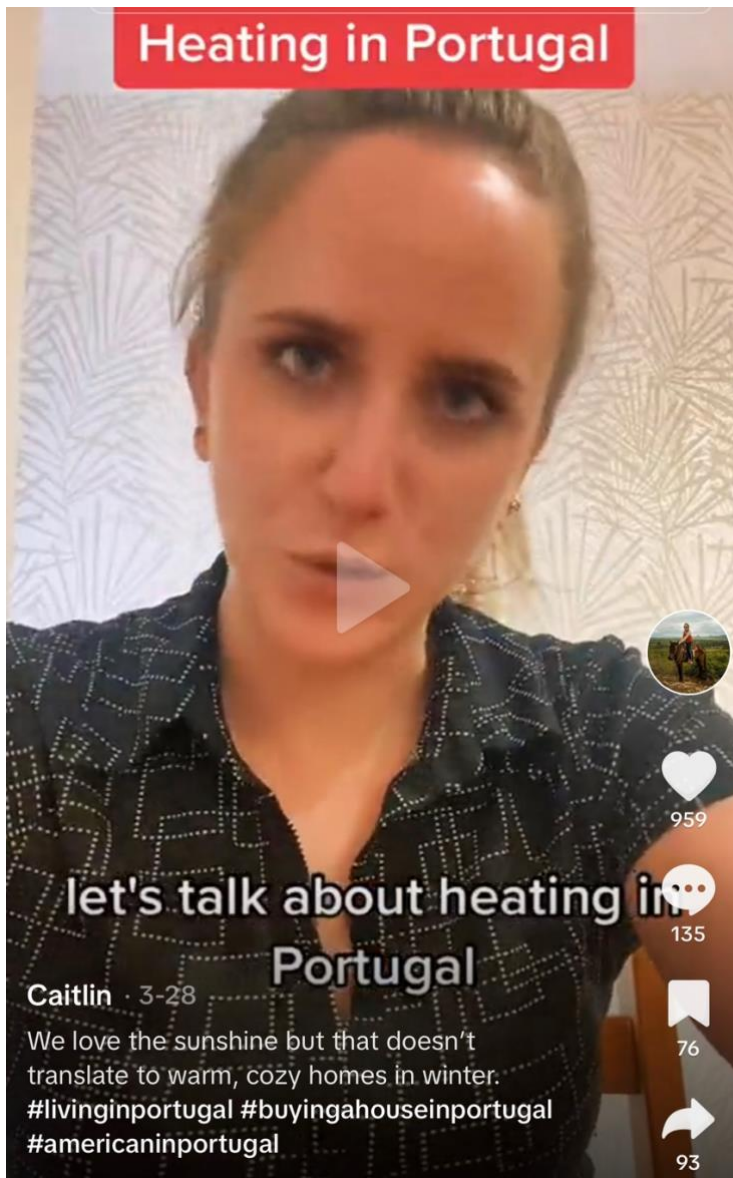


Figure 3- TikTok post from Caitlin. Source: TikTok

In general, the interviewees perceive their content a realistic, community-focused, and informative, aiming to shed light on the lesser-known aspects of Portugal and share their unique experiences, as Cara West explains:

I think, for me, my favorite type of content to post about is just getting people to see the sides of Portugal that we don't get to see in the States because up until very recently, I don't think that a lot of people really considered Portugal because there's so much people see about France, Italy and Spain like those are the countries that get all of the glory here in the US, and no one really talks about Portugal up until like the

past couple of years, and one of the things that I feel like people also miss out on, they just think Lisbon. But I'm like... there's so many amazing cities in Portugal and no one talks about how incredible the people are and you know, just the kindness and I really wanted that to show through because I think that's something that we truly lack here in America is this sense of community and collectivism and I just really wanted to bring that to the forefront of, like... you know, yes if you want to move here, great, but also the people are just incredible and just think of them and just try to be as responsible as ethical as possible and we all walk this fine line and I just, I took so much away from just meeting the Portuguese people and all of my interactions with them and just really like left an imprint on my heart for sure. (Cara West).

As for target audience, the target audience varies from interviewees, Vikaglu focus on two different target audiences. For Instagram is only Russian-speaker's followers, as her account is only in Russian, women aged between 25 to 40 years old, while on TikTok is English speakers, mainly American expats, ages between 20 to 35 years old. Cara West attracts mainly women aged between 24 and 35, with special interest from women of color who are looking to leave the US. Mati Mata describes her audience as *"(...) millennial kind of traffic that you know have jobs and have some extra money to play with, they come to my page for some like, you know, fun stuff to do, not necessarily like on a budget"* (Mati Mata). Yvonne audience is the only one that also includes locals, as well as Portuguese people living abroad:

I would say that it's Portuguese people in Portugal and also living abroad, a lot of Canadian Portuguese people are watching my content, and then foreigners that are wanting to move to Portugal and it's millennial, so it's like my age, I would say 30s and 40. (Yvonne).

3.3.3 Public reaction and engagement

In term of this category, positive and negative reactions were mentioned. Positive reaction includes only a statement, being it from Linnea, who is not a social media influencer, where she explores the phenomenon of more people visiting Portugal and contacting her for tips. The negative reaction arises from the disagreement with the interviewee's portrayal of Portugal among local Portuguese citizens. This negative feedback, as demonstrated by Cara West, Caitlin, Vikaglu and Yvonne mainly occurs when the content they produce address the challenges and struggles of being foreigner in Portugal, Vikaglu, Mati Mata and Yvonne shared how the sentence "why don't you go back to your country" is commonly used.

For engagement with followers, only the attribute of what tools are used to engage with followers was created. Three types of interaction were exemplified, all of them, excluding Linnea, engage via comments, being that Cara West also mentions using Instagram's direct messaging for more personal conversation with followers and Caitlin video responses only when the question is more complex.

3.4. Consequences of Portugal attraction

Only Cara West openly discussed the dual nature of the impact of country attraction. Four important topics were mentioned. First, duality of tourism, on one hand, tourism helps boost the local economy but, on the other hand, over-tourism can lead to inflation in housing prices and cost of goods. This situation has been exacerbated in cities by the growth of web-based accommodation platforms such as AirBnB, which it is argued are not only competing for residential units with residents, but also allowing and tacitly encouraging illegal and unlicensed rental of accommodation, sometimes with anti-social

consequences. Second, she mentions ethical and responsible tourism, aligned with the third topic, moving somewhere just because it's cheaper isn't the right reason to move:

Well, it's affordable for you on a US salary. That doesn't mean that it's affordable for the locals (...) it can't just be the affordability, because if you're moving because things are cheaper, then you should not move. You should be moving for the right reasons, and affordability isn't one of them (...).

She ends with a distinction made between digital nomads and remote workers, suggesting that digital nomads are less likely to inflate prices than remote workers, explaining how they tend to settle down, integrate into the local housing market, applying for visas, whereas remote workers often use vacation rentals and Airbnb's, thereby contributing more significantly to housing price inflation.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

4.1. Main Conclusions

Portugal is an increasing relevant tourism and living destination among foreigners. In this context, the present research has helped to understand foreigners who moved to Portugal and use social media platforms and how they engage with their followers. They provide a deeper, more authentic viewpoint, when compared to travel influencers, as they have spent more time immersed in the country's culture and people, instead of just capturing more superficial parts of their travels. A significant insight from the study is that these social media users were drawn to Portugal not by the allure of its job market, but rather by its quality of life, blending both its friendly environment and affordability. This contributes to a positive country image, as explained in the literature review, especially regarding the affective dimension, which evaluates the good and/or negative emotional connotations that people have with certain countries (Vijaranakorn & Shannon, 2017). However, they have a double effect. On the one hand, these stories foster cross-cultural dialogue, bolster regional economies, and enhance Portugal's favorable international reputation. Though, the increased attention they attract has led to problems like over tourism, demonstrating the need for sustainable ways to control this influx.

Social networking sites were crucial in the dissemination of knowledge and shaping of opinions about life in Portugal. Foreigners' first-hand social media posts of their experiences in Portugal, provided vivid details about their daily life, making it possible for new visitors and residents to get a full picture of the

nation, and influencing their decision to travel or settle there. Foremost, they have created online communities by actively engaging with their audience, providing a more personal, down-to-earth representation.

All things considered, foreign nationals who choose to live in Portugal and post about their experiences on social media have a considerable influence on the country's reputation and its appeal as a travel destination or a place to live, directly impacting Portugal country branding. In addition, this impact has the potential to have both good and negative effects, including over tourism and resource depletion as well as beneficial results, like economic growth and cultural enrichment.

4.2. Theoretical Contributions

From a theoretical point of view, the current study is one of the few research projects on the implications that can result from attracting foreigners to travel and live in a country, in this specific case, Portugal. This study contributes to the literature through the identification of the key factors that attract visitors and residents, shedding light on how social networking sites play a critical role in shaping global perceptions of the country, giving the examples of how UCG provides, not only vivid details about the daily life in Portugal, but also influences the decision-making process of potential visitors or residents. Thus, findings underline how important it is for countries to develop growth strategies adapted to the new trends.

4.3. Managerial Implications

From a managerial point of view, destination marketers can use the findings to develop a more effective communication strategy. Indeed, results

indicate that destination marketers should strengthen the relationships with travel influencers and take advantage of the power of their own storytelling, which can provide genuine preview, closing gaps between the virtual and actual information, providing a “phygital” travel experience. Furthermore, given the emphasized concerns about over-tourism, managers can educate potential tourists about ethical tourism while exploiting Portugal’s attraction. A comprehensive plan that combines the attractiveness of the “laid-back Portuguese way of life” with the essence of sustainable tourism will ensure that both the tourist/living experience and the preservation of local resources are optimized.

Moreover, the relevance of social media in knowledge dissemination, highlights that brand managers and CMOs should invest in this critical branding platforms. By doing so, they may acquire a potential competitive advantage by closely monitoring how tales about Portugal emerge online and identifying the traits and qualities that appeal best to consumers. Additionally, this study provides a framework for businesses to examine how they compare to competitors, mainly by bringing fresh narratives or experiences that haven’t previously been fully explored and by identifying what traits are currently driving views.

4.4. Limitations and Future Research

The present study is subject to some limitations, which suggest directions for further research. In first place, since it is an exploratory study, there is still no significant literature available on the topics studied to ground this research. Therefore, it would be beneficial to continue to study this phenomenon, not only in the case of Portugal but worldwide, to contribute to the development of a sound theoretical framework. Secondly, and in accordance with was said above, since there is not many literature available, it was more challenging to develop the literature review and propose a research model, and, thus, future research

should further develop this study. The samples size and composition are also limitations. At this respect we should mention sociodemographic variables, such as age and gender, as all 6 interviewees are females and belong to the same age cohort, moreover, they are not significant differences either regarding their level of education. Hence, future research should use a larger and more diversified sample of travel influencers. Moreover, this study still was not able to fully portrait all type of consequences of this phenomenon for national citizens.

References

- Abubakar, A. M., & Ilkan, M. (2016). Impact of online WOM on destination trust and intention to travel: A medical tourism perspective. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 5(3), 192–201. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.12.005>
- Adeoye-Olatunde, O. A., & Olenik, N. L. (2021). Research and scholarly methods: Semi-structured interviews. *JACCP Journal of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy*, 4(10), 1358–1367. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jac5.1441>
- Andereck, K. L., Valentine, K. M., Knopf, R. C., & Vogt, C. A. (2005). Residents' perceptions of community tourism impacts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(4), 1056–1076. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2005.03.001>
- Braun Virginia, & Clarke Victoria. (2013). *Successful qualitative research a practical guide for beginners* (Michael Carmichael, Vol. 1). Sage Publications.
- Carneiro, J., & Faria, F. (2016). Quest for purposefully designed conceptualization of the country-of-origin image construct. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(10), 4411–4420. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.12.075>
- Chaulagain, S., Wiitala, J., & Fu, X. (2019). The impact of country image and destination image on US tourists' travel intention. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 12, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2019.01.005>
- Che-Ha, N., Nguyen, B., Yahya, W. K., Melewar, T. C., & Chen, Y. P. (2016). Country branding emerging from citizens' emotions and the perceptions of competitive advantage: The case of Malaysia. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 22(1), 13–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766715586454>
- Enke, N., & Borchers, N. S. (2019). Social Media Influencers in Strategic Communication: A Conceptual Framework for Strategic Social Media

- Influencer Communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(4), 261–277. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1620234>
- Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Gilmore, F. (2022). A country — can it be repositioned? Spain — the success story of country branding. *Journal of Brand Management*, 9(4–5), 281–293.
- Hanna, R., Rohm, A., & Crittenden, V. L. (2011). We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 265–273. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2011.01.007>
- Helal, G., Ozuem, W., & Lancaster, G. (2018). Social media brand perceptions of millennials. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 46(10), 977–998. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-03-2018-0066>
- Ho, C. I., & Lee, P. C. (2015). Are blogs still effective to maintain customer relationships? An empirical study on the travel industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 6(1), 5–25. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-01-2015-0005>
- Ingrid M, M., & Sevgin Eroglu. (1993). Measuring a Multi-Dimensional Construct: Country Image. *Journal of Business Research*, 28(3), 191–210.
- Jaramillo-Dent, D., Contreras-Pulido, P., & Pérez-Rodríguez, A. (2022). Immigrant Influencers on TikTok: Diverse Microcelebrity Profiles and Algorithmic (In)Visibility. *Media and Communication*, 10(1), 208–221. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i1.4743>
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2011.01.005>
- Kracht, J., & Wang, Y. (2010). Examining the tourism distribution channel: Evolution and transformation. In *International Journal of Contemporary*

- Hospitality Management* (Vol. 22, Issue 5, pp. 736–757).
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111011053837>
- Laroche, M., Papadopoulos, N., Heslop, L. A., & Mourali, M. (2005). The influence of country image structure on consumer evaluations of foreign products. *International Marketing Review*, 22(1), 96–115.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/02651330510581190>
- Luo, X., & Zhang, J. (n.d.). *Social Media and Firm Equity Value*.
<http://ssrn.com/abstract=2162167>Electroniccopyavailableat:<http://ssrn.com/abstract=2162167><http://ssrn.com/abstract=2162167>Electroniccopyavailableat:<http://ssrn.com/abstract=2162167>
- Myers, M. (2013). *Qualitative Research in Business & Management* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Nadeau, J., Heslop, L., O'Reilly, N., & Luk, P. (2008). Destination in a country image context. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(1), 84–106.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2007.06.012>
- Neuhofer, B., Buhalis, D., & Ladkin, A. (2015). Technology as a Catalyst of Change: Enablers and Barriers of the Tourist Experience and Their Consequences. In *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2015* (pp. 789–802). Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-14343-9_57
- Neuman, W. L. (William L. (2014). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches* (Neuman Lawrence W, Ed.; Seventh). Person New International Editon.
- Papadopoulos, N. (2004). Place branding- Evolution, meaning and implications. In *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* (Vol. 1, pp. 36–49).
- Pop, R. A., Săplăcan, Z., Dabija, D. C., & Alt, M. A. (2022). The impact of social media influencers on travel decisions: the role of trust in consumer decision journey. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 25(5), 823–843.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2021.1895729>

- Rietveld, R., van Dolen, W., Mazloom, M., & Worrying, M. (2020). What You Feel, Is What You Like Influence of Message Appeals on Customer Engagement on Instagram. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 49, 20–53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2019.06.003>
- Ríos, S. A., Aguilera, F., Nuñez-Gonzalez, J. D., & Graña, M. (2019). Semantically enhanced network analysis for influencer identification in online social networks. *Neurocomputing*, 326–327, 71–81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neucom.2017.01.123>
- Rojas-Méndez, J. (2013). The nation brand molecule. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 22(7), 462–472. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2013-0385>
- Roth, K. P., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2009). Advancing the country image construct. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(7), 726–740. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.05.014>
- Safko, Lon., & Brake, D. K. (2009). *The social media bible : tactics, tools, and strategies for business success*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Silaban, P. H., Chen, W. K., Nababan, T. S., Eunike, I. J., & Silalahi, A. D. K. (2022). How Travel Vlogs on YouTube Influence Consumer Behavior: A Use and Gratification Perspective and Customer Engagement. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4432977>
- Swedberg, R. (2020). *Exploratory research. The production of knowledge: Enhancing progress in social science*.
- Vijaranakorn, K., & Shannon, R. (2017). The influence of country image on luxury value perception and purchase intention. *Journal of Asia Business Studies*, 11(1), 88–110. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JABS-08-2015-0142>
- Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2017). A comparative analysis of major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. *Tourism Management*, 58, 51–65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.10.001>

Zhang, J., Wu, B., Morrison, A. M., Tseng, C., & Chen, Y. C. (2018). How Country Image Affects Tourists' Destination Evaluations: A Moderated Mediation Approach. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 42(6), 904–930. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348016640584>

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Semi-structured interview script

Hello! My name is Inês Albuquerque, I'm 23 years old. I'm a student currently doing a double degree in management in CPBS and Marketing at the Corvinus University of Budapest and doing my thesis on Expatriates as place marketers – How foreign citizens living in Portugal promote the country online. The aim of this thesis is to explore the potential consequences in the attraction of tourists and residents to Portugal and examine the phenomenon of digital influence exerted by foreign citizens that choose Portugal consistently use social media to show the world how is the experience of living in this country.

1. Since when do you live in Portugal? And where in Portugal do you live?
2. Why have you decided to move to Portugal (which were the main reasons behind your decision)?
3. How was the adaptation process to Portugal (and depending on the city they are based in)? Did you find it easy?
4. How did you find Portugal as your living destination? (In terms of coming on their own, without having a company supporting this move)
5. When did you start using social media in a way to show more of your life? (Was it before coming to Portugal or only here)
6. What was the turning point that made you realize that you were becoming a content creator? Could you explain it?
7. Concerning social media, which social networking sites (SNS) do you use more often to share your content?
8. Do you have any income from your social media activity?
9. If yes, in what ways is that income generated? When it comes to social media, do you use it as your only source of income for “fun” or do you complement your regular job with the income from social media?

10. Which SNS do you specifically use to promote Portugal? Why?
11. How many followers do you have on the different SNS that you use?
12. How would you define your target audience (if necessary, give some hints: in terms of age, nationality, and purpose...)? Does this target audience vary according to the SNS that you use?
13. When promoting Portugal on your social media, on which themes do you usually focus? (Examples as a day in the life of a foreigner living abroad/showing Portugal, posting their daily routine which combines showing pictures of Portugal because is part of the day, making travel guides – recommending different spaces in terms of food, where to stay, which cities to visit in Portugal, etc.; making videos about the differences between the country the “influencer” is from and Portugal; making videos about how much they’re spent living in Portugal))
14. Is there any difference between the themes that you use on SNS A, SNS B, or SNS C?
15. How regularly do you post content related to Portugal on your different SNS?
16. Do publications about Portugal usually generate engagement in terms of likes, comments, and shares?
17. From the different types of content that you publish (in question 14 the interviewee identified the different types of content), which are the ones that you think generate more interest in your followers?
18. Regarding the different contents, are there any that create more negative reactions? Which type of followers do you perceive as being more prompt to react negatively?
19. Which type of content do you prefer to publish about Portugal? Why?
20. How do you interact with your followers? Is there any specific SNS where you invest more strongly in engaging with your followers (for example by answering to questions or doing live streams)?

21. Could you please tell me your age, educational level, and where are you originally from (apenas perguntar caso ainda não tenha indicação através do decorrer da entrevista).
22. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External company was facilitating the relocation process • Safe space for different communities 	<p>"We were there for the past three months with a company called Boundless Life and we spent three months in Sintra" (Cara West)</p> <p>"I have a lot of women of color in my followers and I think that the one thing people really like about Portugal is that is becoming an established black expat community, and so what's really important for women of color who are looking to live abroad and settle somewhere is do they have community and do they have resources available to them? And there's not a lot of European countries that have that right now, but Portugal is one of them (...) To see the representation in the country, and I think that that's why Portugal is really appealing to a lot of a lot of people of color right now." (Cara West)</p>
--	--	---

<p>Adaptation process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know Portuguese traditions • Easy adaptation 	<p>"(...) feeling very welcomed and I was exploring a lot like trying typical food and like typical wine, typical beer, I was introduced to many typical things, and I got to enjoy those things and adapt a bit to those." (Linnea)</p> <p>" (...) I'm kind of coming to a point where it has been very easy up until now, like I have been feeling very welcome, very like, you know, people are open and helpful." (Linnea)</p> <p>"(...) it's a little bit easier just because my husband is brazilian and he speaks Portuguese, so that is a lot easier because he was the one that usually ended up calling people or doing like the bureaucracy stuff, looking online, making sure all of the appointments were done. So it I think that really made it easier for us" (Yvonne)</p> <p>"I think I was able to adapt easier than maybe other Americans because I was living in Spain and there are some similarities with the way of living" (Matia Mata)</p>
---------------------------	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy adaptation due to coming with a company • Hard adaptation 	<p>" I think that what we experienced is very different (...) we were able to kind of have a trial period to see how living in the country would look and feel (...) it allowed for us to have a much better experience and also understand completely if this was something that we truly wanted to do. (...) we showed up, we had transportation from the airport, we had a furnished apartment, we had community already available to us with the other families we were traveling with. Our kids got to go to school and so we really just kind of got to plug in what it's like to live there. And to experience everyday life versus being on vacation." (Cara West)</p> <p>"It was medium hard at first. A little bit depression maybe because people here were so cold to me. I mean that when I start speaking with someone in a coffee shop, I was like, really nice and nothing from them. But then I'm on YouTube or Internet and</p>
--	---	--

		<p>hearing that Portugal so much friendly and I was surprised with that, they are friendly, but not so much" (Vikaglu)</p> <p>"Since I have lived in other countries before, it was not that hard, the language and bureaucracy were the worst part" (Caitlin)</p>
<p>Usage of social networking sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons to start using them 	<p>"TikTok, I started here in Portugal because I want to connect with Portuguese people with expats and others here in Portugal and Europe. (Vikaglu)</p> <p>"I start using TikTok before coming to Portugal to show how the process of getting the visa was" (Caitlin)</p> <p>"So I'm a marketing manager. I've been doing marketing for the last 10 years. On top of that, I've been a travel blogger on and</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social networking sites used 	<p>off for the last 10 years, so I've actually been experimenting with social media since the beginning" (Yvonne)</p> <p>" (...) so when I was in Barcelona, I decided to start my TikTok just to kind of like, share dining experiences would say Barcelona with TikTok." (Mati Mata)</p> <p>"TikTok account specifically dedicated to living and traveling abroad, I started it last year in 2022." (Cara West)</p> <p>"Instagram and TikTok, I'm active and in both of them" (Vikaglu)</p> <p>"(...)it's just primarily TikTok."(Yvonne)</p> <p>" (...) initially I was using TikTok more, I just enjoyed the app more than Instagram. But I'm now using Instagram as well." (Mati Mata)</p>
--	--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generated income 	<p>"(...) I feel like primarily it would be TikTok and Instagram, We also have our YouTube channel." (Cara West)</p> <p>"Mainly TikTok, Instagram is more for personal use and share content about wine." (Caitlin)</p> <p>"(...) in Barcelona with TikTok I started understanding like OK, I have some videos go like really viral and then I started getting emails from companies and now I would say maybe a third of my income comes from social media." (Mati Mata)</p> <p>"(...) probably back in 2021. I really started getting serious content creation and working with brands. I already had a really great following and I just started to take more seriously (...) the income that's generated is typically through brand sponsorships. So you know, brands want to work with me on marketing their products and services and then that income is in complement to my full time job." (Cara West)</p>
--	--	---

		<p>“I have some affiliate links, where I get a commission every time a customer purchases the product through my link (...)” (Caitlin)</p>
<p>Content produced on social networking sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content produced that includes Portugal 	<p>"I've done some UGC content. So that's, you know, like a brand slot video and they're like, oh, hey, can you create some videos for us because we really like your vibe (...) it's more for the fun and to complement a bit of your day-to-day job" (Yvonne)</p> <p>"I am very like promoting Portugal, let's say among my friends and my family (...) Unconsciously, it's becoming a promotion for other people too, I think I am becoming like a little Portugal ambassador (...) wine is an important part of the Portuguese culture, so of course it's something that I share and it's something that I think I want to highlight, something that I want people to know about the wine in Portugal" (Linnea)</p>

		<p>"(...) Tiktok account, I make the videos about my thoughts about Portugal, for example, I react to posts to real estate market. (...) On instagram is for basics aspects of my life here, for example, about food costs in supermarkets, real estate market too, and differences between Russia and Portugal (...) My videos are my version of why immigrants need to know about Portugal before moving to this. Country and it's a really, I think it's a really important thing because when I wanted to move to Portugal, I never seen videos about cons, I've seen only it's perfect place. It's the perfect country for you, and no one said about the prices, bureaucracy (...)" (Vikaglu)</p> <p>"I like some of the controversial ones where I talk about like you shouldn't come to, you shouldn't move to Portugal, it's like I'm not saying it because I don't want to live there. I'm just saying, like, hey, guys, you know, don't listen to all of these, like Forbes and all of these New York Times are saying, like, yeah, it's so cheap. Like, everyone should come. And I'm like, no, I don't</p>
--	--	---

		<p>think so (...) I really like to talk about opinions and conversations and and having those kinds of conversations. So for me, I really like those videos. They are usually the More controversial (...)" (Ivonne)</p> <p>"I think my main thing is itineraries, recommendations for food so all types of food in Portugal, I recommend restaurants, experiences, hotels, things like that and it is doing well, it's been received. Well, I I've also been able to really make it grow." (Mati Mata)</p> <p>" I like to do a day in my life as a digital nomad so people can kind of see what we're up to and how our days look like (...) I like to show what the day-to-day looks like in Sintra, because I also want to show people a realistic day of like, you know, not every day is a cool travel day (...) I like to show how Portugal is in Europe and in general, like how amazing of a home base this is for us, because we love that we can travel throughout the country really easily and we can travel to all the different countries within</p>
--	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspective of their own content 	<p>the EU unlike America (...) So it's it's really cool and I love to be able to show people those benefits of being able to have a home base in Portugal." (Cara West)</p> <p>"After the visa process, is more like different food to try, where to stay, which cities to visit in Portugal, also making videos about the difference between Portugal and America, how much I'm spending living here" (Caitlin)</p> <p>" I think for me my favorite type of content to post about is just getting people to see the sides of Portugal that we don't get to see in the states because up until very recently, I don't think that a lot of people really consider Portugal because there's so much people see about France, Italy and Spain like those are the countries that get all of the glory here in the US, and no one really talks about Portugal up until like the past couple of years, and one of the things that I feel like people also miss out on, they just think Lisbon. But I'm like, there's so many amazing cities in</p>
--	--	--

		<p>Portugal and no one talks about how incredible the people are and you know, just the kindness and I really wanted that to show through because I think that's something that we truly lack here in America is this sense of community and collectivism and I just really wanted to bring that to the forefront of, like, you know, yes if you want to move here, great, but also the people are just incredible and just think of them and just try to be as responsible as ethical as possible and we all walk this fine line and I just, I took so much away from just meeting the Portuguese people and all of my interactions with them and just really like left an imprint on my heart for sure." (Cara West)</p> <p>" (...) you know, Russia is a really close country, many people don't have opportunity to travel and don't have money for that, and that's why I'm showing them a reality from my world." (Vikaglu)</p>
--	--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Audience 	<p>" (...) it's different on TikTok I have a connection with English speakers, many American expats and on Instagram I have only Russian language and I have audience from I think 25 to 40 years old, more women and on my TikTok account is more younger audience, 20 to 35 I think (...)" (Vikaglu)</p> <p>"I would say that it's Portuguese people in Portugal and also living abroad, a lot of Canadian Portuguese people are watching my content, and then foreigners that are wanting to move to Portugal and it's millennial, so it's like my age, I would say 30s and 40." (Yvonne)</p> <p>"Mainly Americans (more because of my visa process content), around 30 years old." (Caitlin)</p> <p>" I attract mainly women ages between 24 and 35, and also to a lot of women of color who are looking to leave the US for their safety." (Cara West)</p> <p>" I think I'm more millennial kind of traffic that you know have jobs and have some extra money to play with, they come to my</p>
--	---	--

		<p>page for some like, you know, fun stuff to do, not necessarily like on a budget." (Mati Mata)</p>
<p>Public's reaction to the content produced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Reaction • Negative Reaction 	<p>"A lot of people are contacting me about wanting to go to Portugal so I can also see this, that it's becoming popular to come here." (Linnea)</p> <p>(...)" Yeah, I would say the content that typically has I would say a mixed response, positive and negative, talking about being a digital nomad in Portugal because there are so many issues and this isn't just, you know, unique to Portugal." (Cara West)</p> <p>" The most unwelcomed is from Portuguese people on tik tok (...)" (Caitlin)</p> <p>"(...) What TikTok people say are not personally about me, they said about my thoughts. For example, you are wrong (...)</p>

		<p>when I start started my TikTok people wrote me something like go away, go to Russia, I was really sad about that (...)" (Vikaglu)</p> <p>"(...) I have gotten, like, a lot of comments saying, like, go home or why are you always so negative if you hate it here so much like go home (...)" (Yvonne)</p> <p>"If I share my opinions and it's not in the best light towards Portugal, you know, it's just my experience in something, it's always like, oh, why don't you just go back to America then." (Mati Mata)</p> <p>"(...) Yeah, I would say the content that typically has, I would say mixed response, positive and negative is really talking about being a digital nomad in Portugal because there are so many issues and this isn't just, you know, unique to Portugal." (Cara West)</p>
--	--	--

<p>Engagement with followers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tools are used to engage with followers 	<p>"In TikTok, I answered just in comments, not in private message." (Vikaglu)</p> <p>" I only interact in the comments." (Yvonne)</p> <p>"I try to answer comments." (Mati Mata)</p> <p>"I love replying to comments with videos. that's one of my favorite ways to connect with community (...) Great conversations come from Instagram, and if people are interested enough on TikTok, a lot of times they'll find me on Instagram and they'll send me a direct message and that way I can really have a more personal conversation with them versus like going back and forth." (Cara West)</p> <p>"I usually respond in the comments, only in videos if is a more complex question." (Caitlin)</p> <p>"</p>
----------------------------------	--	--

<p>Tourism in Portugal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The duality of tourism 	<p>The locals are being penalized for it because the cost of housing has risen, the cost of goods has risen. And so it's this really intricate and delicate balance (...) There's duality in all things, and this is definitely one of those things that carries a lot of duality with it. Tourism is good, but over tourism is at the detriment to the locals and it's like how do you walk that fine line of making sure you're doing it ethically and responsibly (...) Well, it's affordable for you on a US salary. That doesn't mean that it's affordable for the locals. And one of the things that we have really been able to achieve in our three months abroad living in Portugal is like it can't just be the affordability, because if you're moving because things are cheaper, then you should not move. You should be moving for the right reasons, and affordability isn't one of them. (...) I find that it's really not the digital nomads driving up the price, but remote workers. And I think that those two are very different. Because the digital nomads are the people who are actually applying for the visas, they are settling into</p>
----------------------------	--	--

		housing, they're paying the cost, but the remote workers are the ones fueling the vacation rental, and the Airbnb industry." (Cara West)
--	--	--