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Social Impacts of Post-Covid-19: Resilience and Recover of Tourism in Portugal

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Abstract

This paper studies the great recover of the tourism in Portugal in the year 2023. One of the sectors which must suffer with Covid-19 is one which shows better resilience and recovery. We show the importance of tourism in the economy of some European countries and present key tourism indicators in Portugal.

Keywords

Social Impact, Covid-19, Tourism Recover, Portugal

1. Introduction

Probably the most significant global social event after WWII is the Covid-19 Pandemic. During approximately two years the world "shut down" (Han et al., 2022), countries closed frontiers, not only the international travelling but in some countries national mobility was also restricted. Several segments of society around world were hit in many aspects, education, commerce, transport, leisure, among others. This phenomenon has a huge economic impact in all countries (Kliger, 2021; Lopez et al., 2022), and also changes the routine and way of living in majority of society activities: Education (Chairunnisak et al., 2022; Campbell et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2022; Koh & Daniel, 2022), Work (Massar et al., 2022), Urban Behaviour (Long & Liu, 2021; Fujii et al., 2021; Saw et al., 2021), Medical Education (McKinley & Ghaffarifar, 2021), Psychology (Kollamparambil & Oyenubi, 2021), Healthcare (Gadi et al., 2022), among others. But probably the activity which certainly suffered most from this impact was the Tourism, "no travel, no tourists". All components of tourism have to adapt to a new normal to permit its return (Marques et al., 2020). This resilience was double-sided, both

the tourist and the tourism industry had to change (Han et al., 2022; Pforr & Hosie, 2008). The return is in force in this year of 2023, mainly in summer. The Ukraine war, the extreme hot temperatures and the rains do not avoid the great number of tourists and hotel occupations to hit numbers near a some even above those pre Covid 19 over all the world, in particular in Europe where this summer is considered one of the busiest. In this work we study the data of tourism in Portugal, comparing the situation before, during and after the Covid-19.

The World Tourism Organization (UNTWO) classifies its Tourism Statistics Database (World Tourism Organization, n.d.b) in the following key tourism indicators: 1-Inbound Tourism, 2-Domestic Tourism, 3-Outbound Tourism, 4-Tourism Industries, 5-Employment and 6-Macroeconomic Indicators. This follows the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics (IRTS 2008) (United Nations, 2008). In this work we focus mainly on 1, 5 and 6.

2. The Importance of Tourism in Economy and Business

Tourism has a great impact in economies of several countries, and it responds for a significant part of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in some of them. In EUROPE, countries like Croatia, Portugal, Spain and Italy, tourism contributes with more than 10% to the GDP and the number of jobs in the direct and indirect tourism related industries and activities surpasses 5% of global number. Italy, for example, more than 4.5% of the total of jobs are related to tourism. In **Table 1** and **Figure 1** we see the numbers of tourism in economy in some countries of European Community [EC27] in 2019 (World Tourism Organization, n.d.a).

In Europe tourism has a huge importance in over employment. Although many of the jobs are temporary due the season dependence, this creation of jobs has a very positive impact in economy. **Table 2** and **Figure 2** show the index in % of the direct tourist employment related to the total national employment and in **Table 3** and **Figure 3** we have the index of the indirect tourism employment also related to the total (Marques et al., 2020).

3. The World Tourism Barometer

UNWTO publishes periodically since 2003 the journal UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (World Tourism Organization, n.d.c), there are no fixed months nor fixed number of annual issues, but in general are 6 issues per year and the

Table 1. Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP (%) (2019).

Croatia	Portugal	Iceland	Greece	Spain	Hungary	Italy	Slovenia	Latvia	Netherlands
11.8	8.1	8	7.3	6.8	6.4	5.7	5.4	4.8	4.4
France	**Germany**	**Norway**	**United Kingdom**	**Romania**	**Switzerland**	**Lithuania**	**Finland**	**Denmark**	**Sweden**
4	4	3.6	3.6	3	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.4

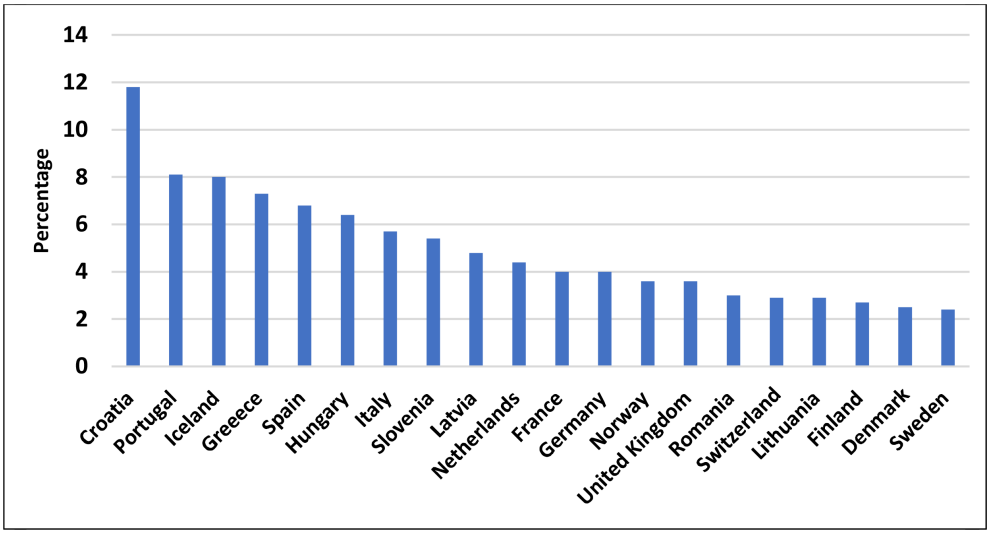

Figure 1. Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP (%) (2019).

Table 2. Tourism direct employment as a proportion of total employment (%) (2018).

Cyprus	Greece	Malta	Ireland	Austria	Croatia	Portugal	Luxembourg	Spain	Germany
6.2	4.9	4.7	3.7	3.3	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.1	1.8
Slovenia	**Netherlands**	**Italy**	**Sweden**	**Latvia**	**France**	**Denmark**	**Lithuania**	**Hungary**	**Finland**
1.6	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.2	1	0.8	0.8

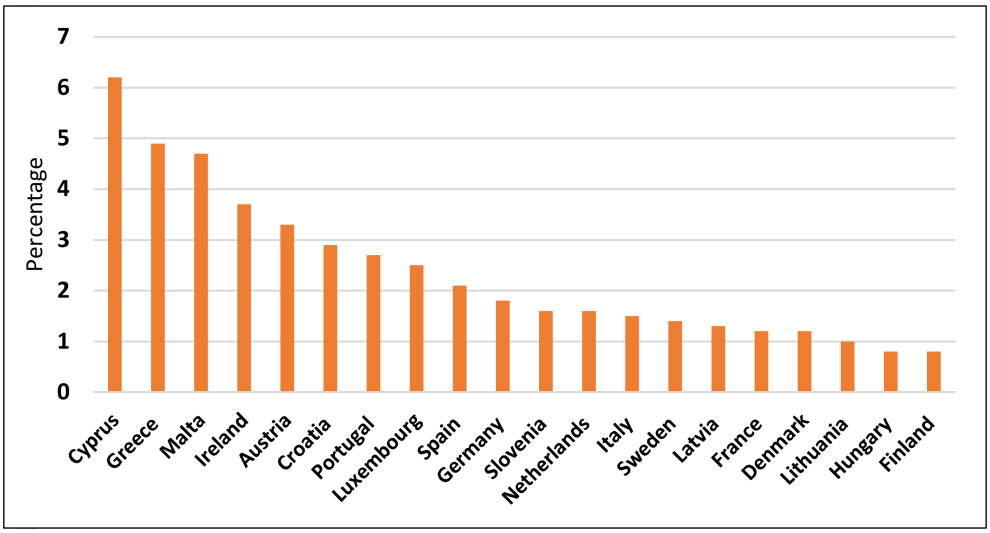

Figure 2. Tourism direct employment as a proportion of total employment (%) (2018).

Table 3. Tourism indirect employment as a proportion of total employment (%) (2018).

Greece	Luxembourg	Cyprus	Ireland	Spain	Portugal	Italy	Netherlands	Malta	Greece
11.5	7.5	7.4	6.6	6.5	6.1	5.8	5.5	5.4	11.5
Croatia	**Austria**	**Denmark**	**Latvia**	**Germany**	**Sweden**	**Lithuania**	**France**	**Slovenia**	**Hungary**
5.4	5.1	5.1	4.3	4.2	4.1	4	3.9	3.5	3.5

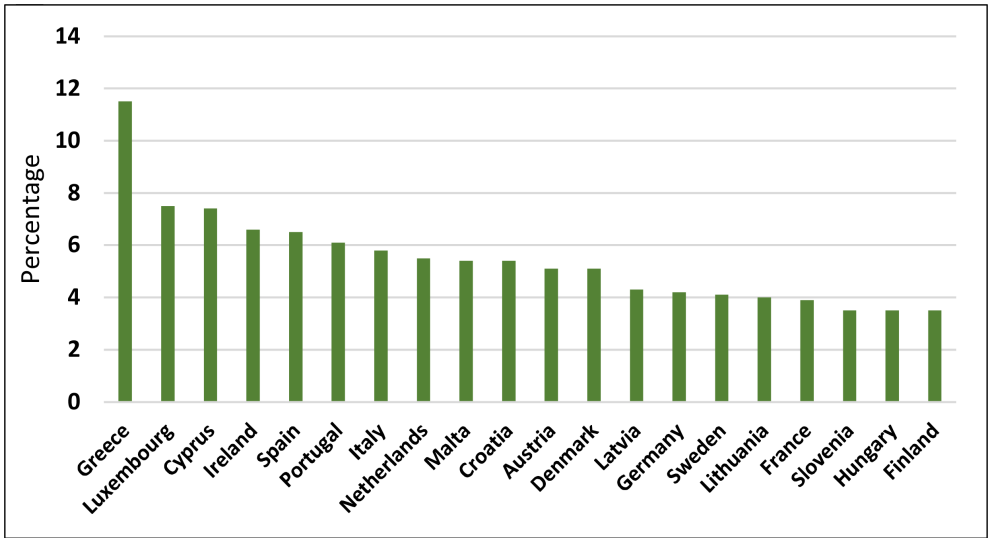

Figure 3. Tourism indirect employment as a proportion of total employment (%) (2018).

Table 4. International tourist arrivals (ITA) (millions) compared with the previous year.

Year	ITA	ITA (EU)	Growth (%)	Growth (%) (EU)	Forecast (%)	2019(%)
2017	1.333	636	7	7.4	-	-
2018	1.408	676	5.7	6.2	4 to 5	-
2019	1.464	742	3.7	4	3 to 4	-
2020	0.407	239	−72.2	−67.7	3 to 4	-
2021	0.458	301	12.5	12.6	-	−68.7
2022	0.969	595	211.5	197.7	30 to 78	−33.8
2023*	0.975	630	38	22	-	−13
2023	1.300	712	33	20	27 to 51	−10

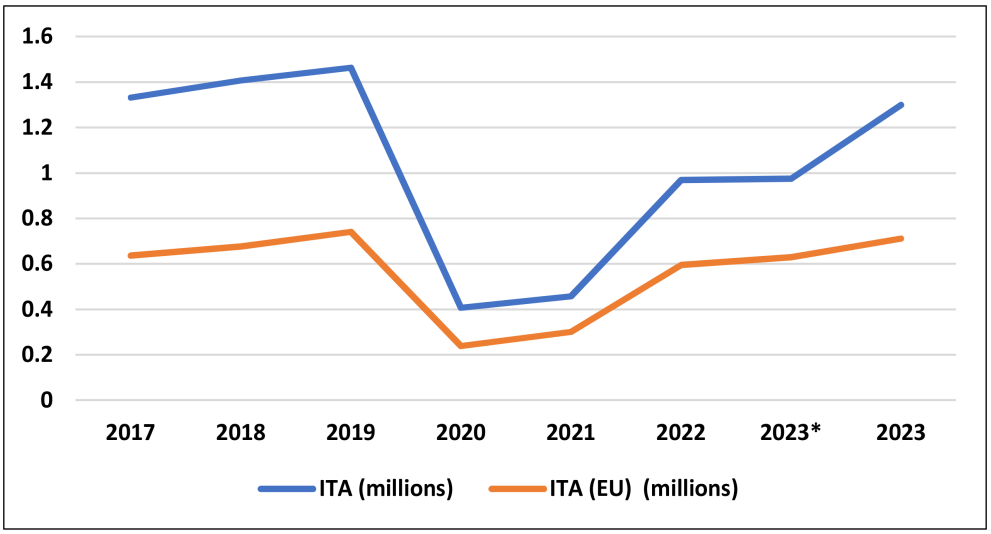

Figure 4. International tourist arrivals (ITA) (millions) compared with the previous year.

months following the relevant tourism numbers news, the main tourism growth measure is the International Tourists Arrives (ITA) or overnight stays. The growth is measured by the percent change at annual rate, that is a comparison with the previous year. The WTO annual publication, International Tourism Highlights (World Tourism Organization, 2021, 2023) also has a complete account and comparisons of the relevant world tourism data.

Two years before the Covid-19, the world was in an ascending economic situation and tourism reflected this. The year of 2017 was the strongest year since 2010 with a worldwide ITA of 1.32 billion representing an annual increase of 7%. This situation continues in 2018 with 1.4 billion ITA an annual increase of 6%, a number above the forecast of 4% to 5% in the beginning of the year, 2019 was also a good year for tourism, the increase of 4% matched the forecast. The great change come in 2020, in January the forecast appointed to a growth also of 4%, but in the first months with the spread of Covid-19, the world shuts down an at the end of the year the fall was 74%, this decline represents fewer 900 million international arrives compared with 2019. The tourism analysts agreed that the recovery could last some years. The year 2021 was still very weak with a global increase of 8%, in Europe this number was bit better with 19%. The year 2022 was a good year with a growth of 225% much ahead of a forecast of 30% to 78%, but the numbers were still far from those of 2019, −37%. The 2023 is being very good for tourism, in the first nine months the numbers points to 935 million international arrives an increase of 38% over the same months of 2022, in Europe this numbers are better reaching 94% of the pre Covid-19 situation. In some EU countries like in Portugal, ITA are still better, including above of the pre pandemic levels. In Table 4 and Figure 4 we have an account of those numbers.

4. The Tourism in Portugal

After the entrance in EU in 1985 Portugal lost much of its traditional industries capability due the concurrency of new emergent market of Asian countries. Sectors like textile does not could compete with those countries. On the other hand, due to the EU investment in transport, infrastructures, like roads and airports together with hotels, inns and guesthouses, the tourism became a major economy actor, which now is responsible for more than 5% of the GDP.

In Table 5 and Figure 5 we have the ratio in % tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP, we observe the growth since 2010 to 2019, Portugal follows the international trend. In 2020 and 2021 years of recession this proportion drops showing that tourism was one of economic areas which suffered more with Covid-19.

Table 5. Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP in Portugal (%) (2008-2021).

2008	2009	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
6.0	5.5	5.5	6.5	6.7	7.0	7.7	8.0	8.1	4.8	5.8

Next, we make a comparison of tourism's key indicators, before, during and after Covid-19. The data gathering here is available in the database of Tourism of Portugal (Turismo de Portugal, 2023). We use the classification: 1) *Guests*, is the total number of tourists arrivals, national and international (or ITA); 2) *Value added*, to represent the money earned by all the accommodations establishments, 3) *Overnight stays*, to count the night's stay for single tourist.

We observe in **Table 6** and **Figure 6** that in 2023, both national and mainly international (ITA) have a historic maximum (reached before in 2019). This result is common to Mediterranean countries this year. The available data is until to October, we indicate this with an "*", for the total we estimate a scenario base in the ratio between the values of the first ten months and the total year observed in recent years, we use this same approach in the other statistics present here.

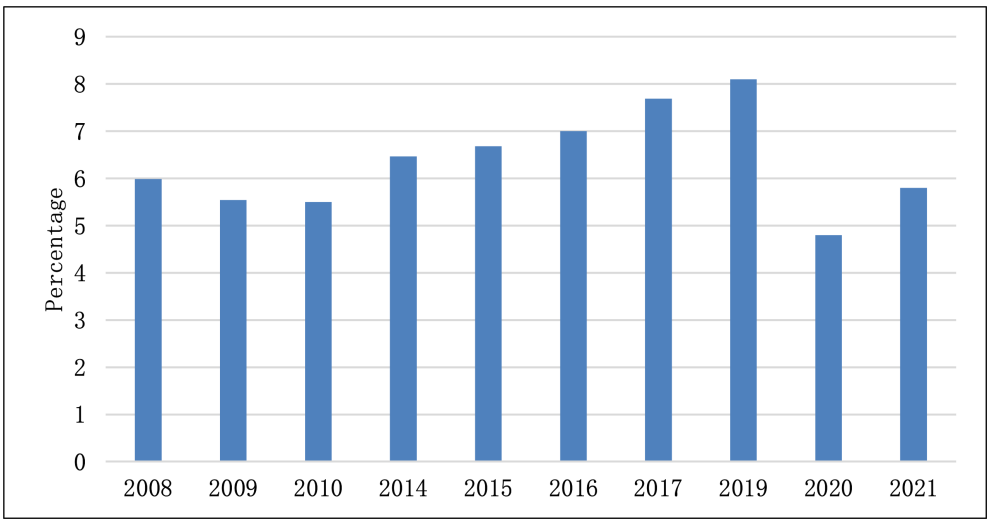

Figure 5. Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP in Portugal (%) (2008-2021).

Table 6. Guests in Portugal (millions) (2014-2023).

Year	National	International	Total
2014	7.397	9.904	17.301
2015	8.092	11.068	19.161
2016	8.691	12.561	21.252
2017	9.364	14.589	23.953
2018	9.941	15.308	25.249
2019	10.732	16.410	27.142
2020	2.317	8.113	10.430
2021	8.544	5.917	14.462
2022	11.196	15.322	26.519
2023*	10.102	16.240	26.343
2023	11.719	18.575	30.294

We have in Table 7 and Figure 7 the *Value added* by the accommodations establishments also shows a great increase in 2023, of course in the great change of this total revenue, the rise of all prices must be considered, but these accounts are beyond the scope of this article.

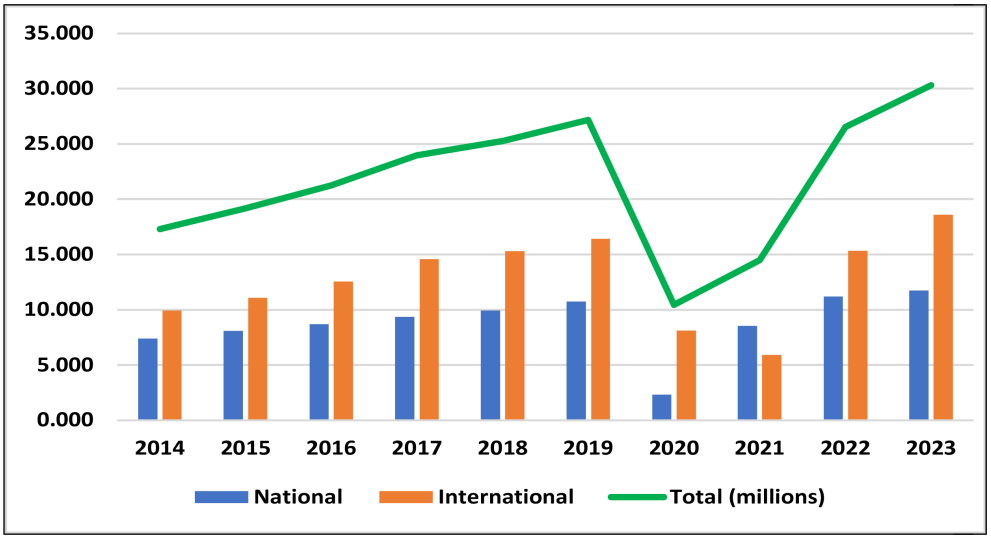

Figure 6. Guests in Portugal (2014-2023).

Table 7. Value added in Portugal (millions) (2014-2023).

2014	2015	2016	2017	2019
2285	2627	3103	3681	3986
2019	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023***
4295	1445	2330	5014	5401
2023				
6265				

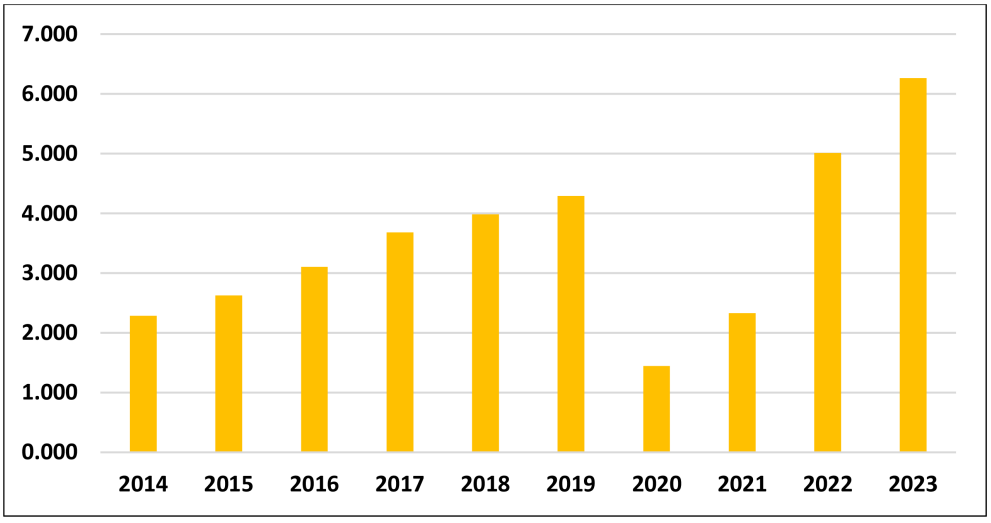

Figure 7. Value added in Portugal (millions) (2014-2023).

Table 8 and Figure 8 show the *Overnights stays*, this is also meaningful to compare the year of 2023 with previous years. We observe that the ratio of the total between 2023 and 2022 is 1.14, a value that matches the same for those of Table 7 describing the tourist *Guests*, fact that confirms the amazing tourism numbers of the present year of 2023.

5. Conclusion

In this work we make a comparison of the world tourism situation in the last years which had been marked by a great epidemic. In the year 2020 tourism tried a dramatic change, with the Covid-19 pandemic spreading all around the world (Sharfuddin, 2020). Safety rigid protocols had been adopted by national and international public transport, the situation was the same in commercial stores,

Table 8. Overnight stays in Portugal (millions) (2014-2023).

Year	National	International	Total
2014	14.939	33.772	48.711
2015	16.158	36.915	53.074
2016	17.351	41.770	59.122
2017	18.595	46.789	65.385
2018	19.889	47.772	67.662
2019	21.107	49.051	70.158
2020	13.598	12.199	25.798
2021	18.671	18.660	37.332
2022	22.888	46.805	69.694
2023*	20.455	48.072	68.527
2023	23.728	57.640	79.492

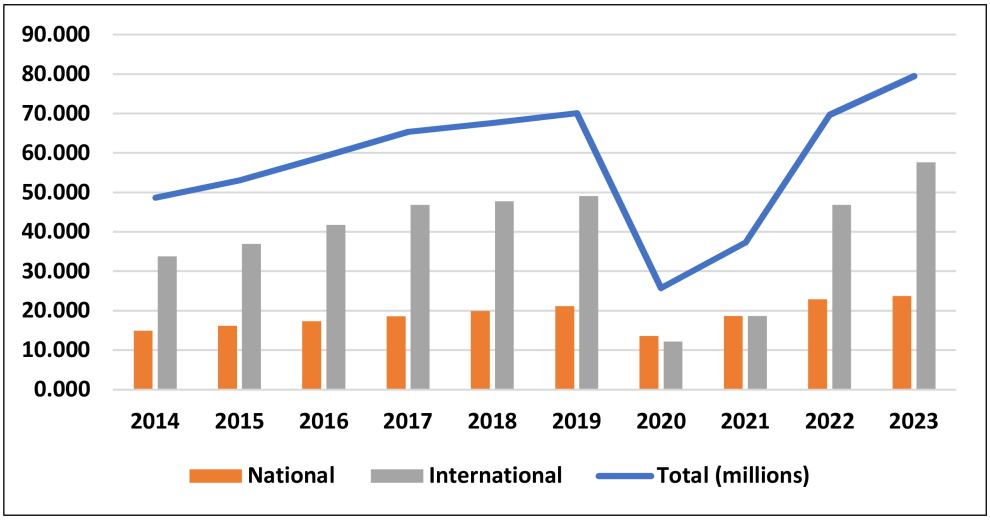

Figure 8. Overnight stays in Portugal (2014-2023).

schools, hospitals, and any public place restricted people circulation, some of them stopped their activities. The situation in the year 2021 did not change. A slow comeback starts in 2022, with a new normal the world has changed forever (Phillips, 2022). Tourism was one of the activities which suffered most, it had to adapt in all aspects to permit, give safety, confidence to all its participants, and this worked. The amazing resilience of the tourists and the tourist's industries led to a recovery, and in Portugal this recovery was more than remarkable.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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