

PORTUGUESE TOURISM SCHOOLS ATTRACT MORE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



Portuguese tourism schools attract more and more foreigners. This academic year, it is estimated that there will be an increase of about 20% in the number of international students enrolled in the network of schools. This reflects the rise in the number of candidates that skyrocketed 52% during one year.

The number of international applicants to tourism training schools of Turismo de Portugal has been increasing. This school year, the network of schools received 862 foreign applicants through the special regime of access and admission of international students, **an increase of 52% compared to the 570 candidates in the previous academic year and 79% compared to two years ago, when the schools received 479 applications.**

Most international students (75%) in Portuguese tourism schools come from Portuguese-speaking countries like Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Brazil. 12% of students are from Asian countries, mainly Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. The remaining 13% come from diverse origins, such as South America (Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador), USA, Canada, the Middle East, and some North African countries (Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt).

Portuguese Tourism Lacks Professionals

Tourism is a significant sector of the national economy, but it needs more than 40,000 professionals to meet the estimated growth in this industry. To tackle this issue, the government has set a goal to increase the number of workers in this field by 20% to 350,000 by 2026. Additionally, an investment of 20 million euros has been announced between 2024-2027 to enhance the tourism school network.

Portuguese Tourism Schools - Online and Face-to-Face Education

In 2022, the school network had 2,582 students enrolled. However, in 2023, this number was reduced to 2,182. A significant increase in the number of professionals in training largely offset this decrease in students. In 2022, the number of professionals in training was 17,871. By July 21, 2023, this number had risen to 37,714. These professionals participated in continuous and executive training activities, both online and face-to-face.

Executive education is experiencing strong growth, with an increasing demand for online and face-to-face training in diverse areas. Since 2020, the continuous and executive training offer has grown by more than 200%. This is in terms of the number of people trained, the number of hours taught, and the number of new programs available.

Continuous training in Portuguese tourism schools has recently significantly improved people management, business management, finance, marketing, behavioral areas, and innovation, such as computer applications and artificial intelligence. Additionally, digital technologies, marketing, sustainability, and people management have increased substantially.

Quality Training Needed

According to a recent survey conducted by Turismo de Portugal, better professional training can lead to easier integration into the labor market. The survey was organized on the Schools Portal and received over 400 responses. Among the students who completed their training in Portuguese tourism schools, 94% could secure a job immediately or strengthen their training. **Among them, 76% were employed, a 2% increase from the previous year.** The remaining 18% chose further training.

After six months of graduation, 89% of the employed graduates work in tourism, with 38% in the hotel industry, 48% in catering, and 4% in tourism segments. Most employed graduates (86%) of Portuguese tourism schools have fixed-term employment contracts, while 8% work under a professional traineeship and 4% provide services independently.

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