

# **EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN TOURISM: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SCHOOL OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY**

Manuel António Brites Salgado - ESTH/IPG (manuelsalgado@ipg.pt) e GOVCOPP, DEGEI, UAveiro

José Alexandre dos Santos Vaz Martins - ESTH/IPG (jasvm@ipg.pt)

Adélia Nunes Godinho - ESTH/IPG (angodinho@gmail.com)

Carlos Manuel Martins da Costa - GOVCOPP, DEGEI, UAveiro (ccosta@ua.pt)

## **Abstract**

The article focuses on the context of specific education and training area of Tourism. It appears that the Portuguese academic institutions have invested significantly in this area in the last two and a half decades, and after the Bologna Process it has led to significant changes in the philosophy and structure of degrees, including at a curricular level. So after a brief characterization of ESTH, we analyze the process of adapting the degrees according to the organizational curriculum models, through the collection and analysis of secondary information on key indicators of supply and demand of training degrees of HEI, which now has an institutional framework marked out objectively in Tourism and Hospitality. The purpose of our analysis aims to interpret and demonstrate the importance and contribution of ESTH within the network of regional and national higher education, as is the premise of the Law of the Education.

Keywords: Tourism; curriculum, higher education degrees in Tourism.

## **Introduction**

The implementation of the Bologna Process, the system of Higher Education (HE), was a paradigm shift that can be accompanied by a methodical and rigorous study of the educational reality, both at European and national level but also within each Higher Education Institution (HEI). In fact, in the European Union there is a growing tendency to define sectoral strategies common to several countries, as in the field of education and training.

In this context, the first section of the article proceeds to the theoretical framework of education systems and policies pursued in HE at European and national level. Furthermore, we analyse the areas that integrate education in tourism in Portugal, containing some data on the academic year of 2010/11 in order to understand the importance of this area in the current context of the HE, which is one of the goals of this work. Further, it also intends to interpret the relevance of the School of Tourism and Hospitality (ESTH) on a regional and national levels.

The methodology therefore relies on the literature review to contextualize the current paradigms of the HE system, to also determine the trends of policy, particularly as applied to the tourism industry of scientific knowledge in Portugal. In turn, the collection of secondary data allows us to interpret their relative importance in the country, so synthetic as well as give information about the evolution of the training offer of ESTH.

The empirical study of this work is initially based on the characterization of the educational project of ESTH in order to frame this HEI in the national network of HE in Tourism (Section 2). Following, we briefly analyse the evolution of supply and demand of this HEI (Section 3) to interpret trends and at the same time, understand its importance in the national context. In this context, we analyze the evolution of four primary variables (vacancies, enrolled for the first time, enrolled and graduates) in this HEI, to allow analysis of the evolution and make the diagnosis with the aim of analyzing its current context.

The hypothesis of this study thus aims to ascertain the existence of significant relationship between the growth of tourism education at the national level, and the development of the educational project of ESTH. It is an analysis that may be important to make several recommendations aimed at a more effective management of this HEI in the context of the network in the Central Region and Country, and thus respond to the growing international demands.

## **1. Education and Training in Tourism**

The theoretical framework provides a contemporary approach to the reality of Portuguese HE because it is intended to fit the conditions arising from the implementation of the Bologna Process. The

consistency of policies and educational practices is analyzed by several authors, who reflect on their impact on the national context, in order to interpret the importance of the tourism sector of a HEI (Sections 2 and 3).

The Law of the Education, Law 46/86 of October 14, art. 47. ° and number 6, refers that the curriculum development of the HE would establish curricular plans for each of the HE networks, according to the economic, social and cultural national and regional perspective of an integrated planning. The law allows the freedom to design the curriculum and implement courses, but also requires this type of planning. The present study highlights the need for planning network HEI to regional and national level in order to justify the full integration of educational projects and corresponding offers of HE. It is a work that justifies the present situation of lack of resources and the need for economies of scale at the national level, in order to improve strategies for joint and integrated operations. Currently, the configuration of the structures of HE is based on the binary system, in which there are university and polytechnic. This systemic solution has a historical basis dating back to the 60's (Simon et al., 2003). The HE must be designed on the logic of "education chain," according to Martins (1998: 75), "both the university and the polytechnic sector either in public or in private."

The evolution of the university in Portugal, according to Gago (1994), went through three phases: the first ends in 70's and represents the end of the traditional university; the second occurs in the 80's, when the university stands for research; in 90's we have the third phase, with major changes in the university in order to strengthen their connection to the industry. It is also stated in this context that education in tourism shows itself as a strategic vocational area in the Portuguese HE. In this change, Simon et al. (2003: 19) believe that "sovereignty is moving increasingly from the political and military to the scientific and cultural," a European dimension of the HE. This new sovereignty extends and faces risks arising from globalization, the loss of identity of the system itself and the institutions to the undervaluing the face of the Portuguese language and the subordination of Portugal as a peripheral country. Thus, it is interesting to understand the binomial HE and Knowledge Society as a challenge to the identity of the national academy.

The increasing openness of the academy requires a redefinition of the relationship between university/polytechnic with the companies, according to Simon et al. (2003: 62-64), focusing on "organizational and financial aspects, so it can accurately clarify the limits of freedom of research and exploitation of results and their confidentiality." HEI can preserve the "independence of mind in the knowledge society, if they are able to perform the important task of putting at the forefront of social change (...)". In Portugal, the transition from industrial to knowledge society is only possible with selective investments in human resources development and research and development, particularly in tourism education, which we believe is the path that ESTH is taking by restructuring its institutional framework (see section 2).

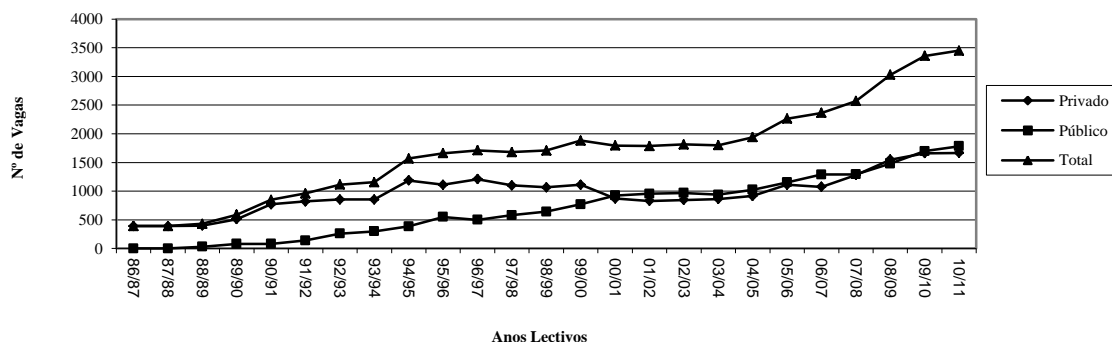
The process of internationalization of education systems tend to generate a respective globalization on educational policy (Seixas, 2003). International organizations contribute decisively to the globalization of education policies. Given the growing importance of the market, and the heavy weight of the state, it is recommended the increase of community intervention in the regulation of education systems. For Seixas (2003, 19-37), the growing international economic competition exerts strong pressures on education systems, but the importance of human capital gives education a key role in national economic and political development. In this context, p Bologna Process is a good example of the pressures (European) on national systems of HE, with a view to its internationalization.

## **1.1 Higher Education in Portugal**

Under the Bologna Process, the articulation of degrees conferred in HEI led to a simplification of the system in force in Portugal, leading to three cycles of study: graduation (1st cycle), Masters (2nd cycle) and doctoral (3rd cycle). This nomenclature is defined by Decree Law 74/2006, which clarifies the granting of degrees, certificates and diplomas. This is the educational prospect in which mainly characterizes the degree of graduation in Tourism (see chart 1).

The diversity of subjects that contribute to the study of tourism, such as scientific field, also reflect the variety of academic qualifications and work experiences of educators. As a result, the curricula assume the character of a particular college or specialized school. Many courses have a vocation in Tourism Economics and Management or their foundation in the social sciences. It should be noted, therefore, that the diversity of types of HEI where they are taught these courses, reflecting different philosophical orientations. The analysis in higher education under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, are distributed and organized by scientific areas of education and training (*Diário da República*, 2005). The National Classification of Fields of Education and Training includes a general area called Services (8), which includes the Personal Services (81), including the areas of Hospitality and Restaurant (811) and Tourism and Leisure (812). There are also Tourism courses in the area known as Management and Administration (345).

Currently, graduation courses in tourism are implemented in university and polytechnic subsystem. In this context, we present a series systematizing statistical data relating to a relevant indicator (vacancies) to interpret the evolution and importance of tourism by 2010/11. The appropriateness of higher education to the Bologna Process has led to the offer of 81 degree courses in Tourism (31 and 50 in the private sector in public), and three more courses (+3.7%) in 2010/11. This offer represents a total of 3,449 jobs, slightly higher than in public places in 1784 (see chart 1). It is also important to note that the Tourism Studies continue to predominate in the polytechnic subsystem (67 courses) from the university (14 courses). There is a strong growth trend of this variable in the teaching of tourism. At first it may be noted the essential role of private, but the two sectors have different growth trends, because the public constantly and considerably increases the number of places available.



**Chart 1 - Tourism Jobs in Portuguese higher education (own elaboration)**

As a place for analysis, this article aims to function as a working tool that intends to design the future of the academic community ESTH, which revolves around tourism, as supported by a study that analyzes the evolution of higher education in our country in order to rethink the current model of education through qualitative changes in the curriculum and education in Tourism (Salgado, 2007). This study presents the appreciation of the principles and concepts inherent in the organization of the training system at regional and national (network), which could be considered in the model and restructuring of the Portuguese education system, which is now in rapid transformation in order correspond to the various challenges facing Europe.

## 2. The ESTH

The ESTH is an organic unity of teaching and research in the areas of Tourism and Hospitality located in Seia, part of the Polytechnic Institute of Guarda (IPG), on the western slope of the Serra da Estrela. Thus, it is a public HEI in the service of society, for the production and dissemination of knowledge creation, transmission and dissemination of culture and knowledge of a professional nature, science, technology and the arts, through the joint study, teaching, research and experimental development oriented. Their mission takes the training of professionals with the emphasis on "knowing", the "know how" and "how to be" stimulating regional development.

The ESTH was created in 1999 under the name School of Tourism and Telecommunications of Seia, such as integrated organic unity in IPG (DR, 1999). In 2004, this HEI is operating in a modern and well equipped building built from scratch.

The adequacy of the degree courses in Tourism and Leisure, Information Technology for Tourism and Hotel Management in 2006 occurs. In 2008 are created technological specialization courses in Management Touristic Entertainment and Restaurant Techniques, which work with the first classes in 2009/10. It is also this year that the institution changes the name to ESTH and starts the operation of the degree in restaurant and catering (2008/09). In 2010 begins the cycle master's degree in Management and Sustainability in Tourism, as a result of a partnership between ESTH/IPG and the School of Tourism and Technology of the Sea (ESTM) Polytechnic Institute of Leiria. Thus, with regard to the degree of HE, ESTH assigns degrees of graduate and master, and also confers degrees in technological expertise. Accountability, openness and responsibility in the relationship between the educational community of ESTH is present in the acronym - ESTHAR - representative of Excellence, Solidarity, Transparency, Humanism, Openness, and Rigor.

The ESTH seeks to maintain a privileged relationship with professionals from the Tourism, hospitality and restaurants, allowing students to carry out internships in Portugal and abroad, in order to

consolidate the training received in courses, and meets requirements to prepare their students for different occupations, providing good conditions for teaching and learning.

### 3. Supply and demand of training in the ESTH

The characterization of the evolution and framework of supply and demand of training ESTH, and description of the characteristics of this route, as well as the interpretation of the contribution of HEI within the Portuguese Tourism HE, relies on analysis of data on the number of vacancies on the HEI, the number of students enrolled in the courses and the number of graduates over the last decade.

The data analysis shows that the relative weight of ESTH vacancies nationally rose steadily until 2004/2005 (from 2.79% to 4.9%). However, the relative weight has been falling consistently since then (up 3.02% in 2010/11), but not by reducing its absolute weight, which was "frozen" institutionally, but by increasing the number of vacancies at a national level. This seems to be against a census, it appears to represent a notable lack of coordination and serious thinking about the size of the network of HE at the national level in the teaching of tourism.

Thus, as shown in chart 2, the number of vacancies has grown steadily until 2005/2006, height from which, as a rule superior set, the number of vacancies to the general scheme remains within 104 vacancies. Obviously, the number of vacancies and their distribution among courses, it also reflects the vicissitudes of ESTH, the creation (described in section 2) and evolution of several courses as well as the policy of IES trying to tailor your training supply with demand students of the HE, which features a character increasingly volatile and unpredictable.

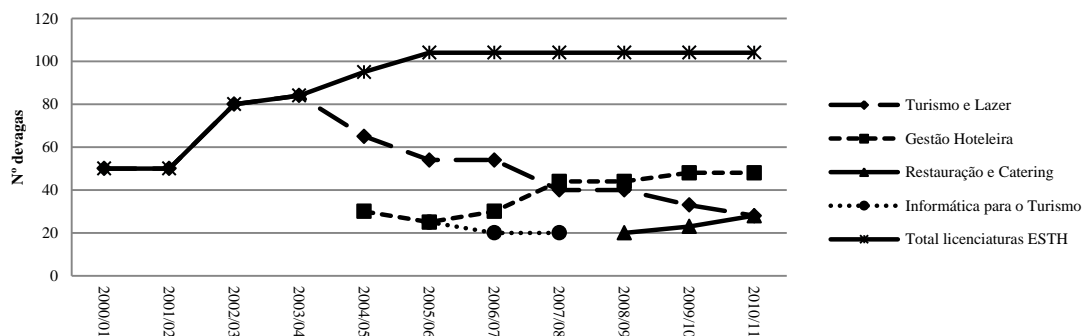


Chart 2 - Jobs for the course of the general and total (own elaboration)

In chart 3 we can observe the evolution of the number of people enrolled for the first time in the courses at ESTH. Thus, these values include, in addition to the general system subscribers, also the special system subscribers. The chart shows the failure to fill any vacancy in the course of Information Technology in Tourism in the year 2005/2006, the forerunner of course of Informatics for Tourism, as well as a number of subscribers below the vacancies to the general system available in 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 in the graduation in Informatics for Tourism. Since then, some of the general places that have not been met by its competition, have been offset by the special arrangements, having been reached a certain stability in the number of students enrolled for the first time in ESTH, however on the various courses are some variations.

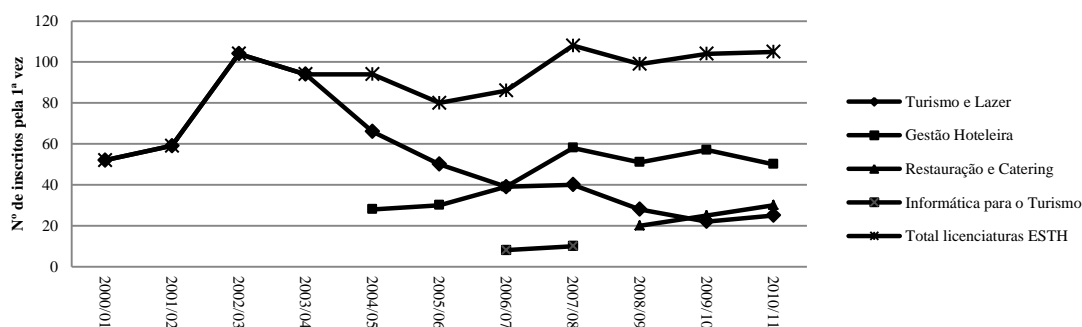
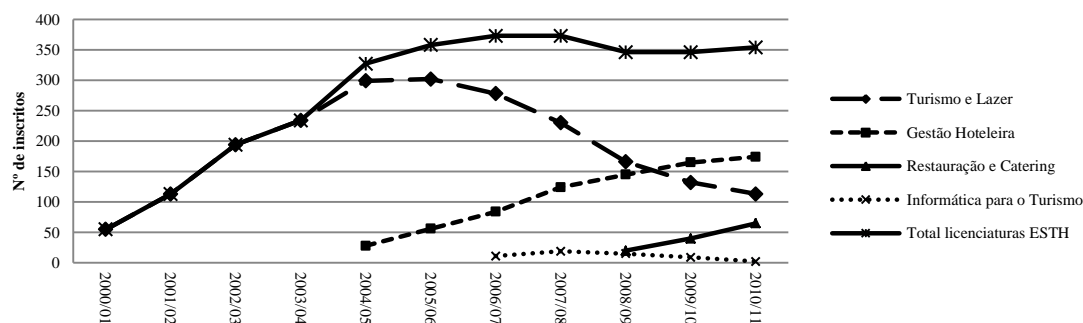


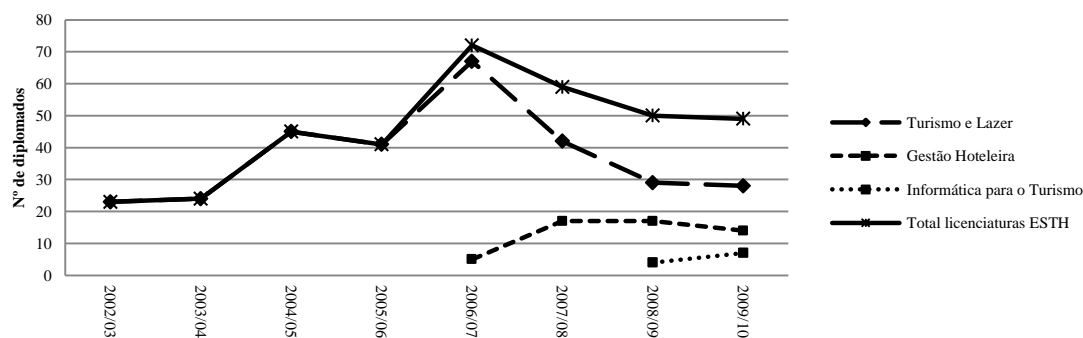
Chart 3 - Subscribers for the 1st time per course and total (own elaboration)

An obvious observation from chart 4, shows that the ESTH saw an increase with the peak in 2006/2007 and 2007/2008, the period from which ceases to exist a bi-tápic degree due to the implementation of the Bologna Process and this slight decrease. The last three years have seen a stabilization in total subscribers. On the other hand, it is visible in chart 4 that the ESTH reaches a certain overall balance, but in a trend the composition of the various groupings of subscribers by HEI, the area loses the predominance of Tourism and Leisure, to the detriment of Hospitality and Restaurant, due to the degree in Hotel Management and Restaurant and Catering. The course Informatics for tourism, for different constraint, namely the lack of demand by students and budget issues, no longer has assigned spaces (in 2007/2008) and therefore no longer have students enrolled, despite its suitability to the institution philosophy.



**Chart 4 - Subscribers per course and total (own elaboration)**

In terms of the value of graduates (bachelors and graduates), and according to the reading of chart 5, we can see an evolution in the number of graduates of ESTH with its peak in 2006/2007, mainly due to the confluence of graduates of the two-step degree in Tourism and Leisure and the first graduates in the 1st cycle in Tourism and Leisure, followed by the adequacy of the course due to the Bologna Process. The total number of graduates in the period between 2002/2003 and 2009/2010 was 363. Of these, the vast majority (82%) graduated in Tourism and Leisure and Tourism. In turn, the course of Hotel Management has already reached 15% in this variable and Informatics for Tourism representing the remaining 3%. Only in this school year will the first graduates in Restaurant and Catering be graduated.



**Chart 5 - Number of graduates per course and total in each year (own elaboration)**

The preliminary conclusions drawn from data analysis allow us support with some certainty, the discussion and the thesis of the strong relationship between training and education project of HEI with the development of tourism at national and regional levels. In fact, the current policy discussion on possible administrative decentralization and regionalization reinforce the importance of the regions defined in terms of NUTS II. It reinforces the hypothesis that a strategy leading to a networking organization in the Central Region HE, including the institutions of public and private subsystems, and behold, also the interaction of ESTH in these networks.

### Conclusions

Education in Tourism follows successfully the environment changes that occur worldwide. The Bologna Process seeks to "put the house in order" at European level, so that these changes occur with some

order nationally and in every HEI. If we do not fit the necessary changes in education in Tourism, followed by a proper monitoring, HE Portuguese risks losing competitiveness in an essential area of science for Portugal.

In the regional context we suggest several recommendations, such as: promote good cooperation and communication between all HEI in the Central Region (eg. ESTH and ESTM - network implementation of the Master in Management and Sustainability in Tourism, which began in 2009/10 in each class with an HEI); streamline and integrate network systems HE public and private, polytechnic or university; establish the link between education levels, particularly with regards to training content and professional skills; implementing HE in deprived areas of hospitality, entertainment and restaurant; provide greater dignity created to all tasks created in this sector, especially the hotels and restaurants; manage human and financial resources better in order to dignify the formations at a professional and above level.

A brief description of the situation of the Central allows some considerations, especially when comparing overall, the public HE (41.7% of vacancies) with the private sector (7.5% of vacancies), we find substantial differences, particularly the predominance of the first in this region. This translates into a substantial difference to the entry level of students in the education system and, consequently, in personal and professional skills of graduates. A more objective analysis to the 23 public higher education courses also reinforces the tendency of the utmost importance of this subsystem.

In fact, the priority in the implementation of new courses should be based on the existing qualitative diagnosis of the weaknesses, which may naturally have an impact on economic and social development of the country and its regions, because of the crucial importance of the success of the tourism sector. It is obvious that this school year, the scientific area of tourism faces challenges because we are convinced that the demonstration of quality is increasingly a decisive factor for the success expected in each HEI. It is believed that, to provide a quality tourist service, training is a key factor. Hence the characterization of the HE system in this area, with particular focus on ESTH, which allows to conclude on the adequacy and stability of their educational project and courses.

## References

- Diário da República (1986), Lei 46/86 de 14 de outubro, *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo*, INCM, I Série, N.º 237, pp. 3067-3081.
- Diário da República (1999), Decreto-Lei n.º 264/99 de 14 de julho, *Criação da Escola Superior de Turismo e Telecomunicações de Seia, integrada no Instituto Politécnico da Guarda*, I Série-A, N.º 162, pp. 4395-4397.
- Diário da República (2005), Portaria n.º 256/2005 de 16 de março, *Classificação Nacional das Áreas de Educação e Formação*, INCM, I Série-B, pp. 2281-2313.
- GAGO, J. M. (ed.) (1994), *Prospetiva do Ensino Superior em Portugal*, Lisboa: Instituto de Prospetiva.
- MARTINS, G. O. (1998), *Educação ou a Aposta na Relevância*, Debates Presidência da República (ed.), *A Educação e o Futuro*, Lisboa: INCM, pp. 71-79.
- SALGADO, M. A. B. (2007), *Educação e Organização Curricular em Turismo no Ensino Superior Português*, Tese de Doutoramento, Aveiro: Universidade de Aveiro.
- SEIXAS, A. M. (2003), *Políticas Educativas e Ensino Superior em Portugal: A Inevitável Presença do Estado*, Coimbra: Quarteto.
- SIMÃO, J. V., Santos, S. M., Costa, A. A. (2003), *Ensino Superior: Uma Visão para a Próxima Década*, Lisboa: Gradiva.