



INSTITUTO
UNIVERSITÁRIO
DE LISBOA

Is Portugal an accessible tourist destination? Factors that influence the perception of disabled people regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination

Andreia Filipa Castrelas Gomes

Master in International Management

Supervisor:

PhD Helena Maria Correia Neves Cordeiro Rodrigues, Invited Assistant Professor, ISCTE Business School

November, 2022



BUSINESS
SCHOOL

Is Portugal an accessible tourist destination? Factors that influence the perception of disabled people regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination

Andreia Filipa Castrelas Gomes

Master in International Management

Supervisor:

PhD Helena Maria Correia Neves Cordeiro Rodrigues, Invited Assistant Professor, ISCTE Business School

November, 2022

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my family for always encouraging me to achieve my goals. To my parents, my brothers Diogo and João, aunt Cláudia and grandfather José who have always been my biggest supporters and without whom I would not be the person I am today. Thank you for your love and dedication.

Also, I would like to thank my second family, Rosa, Pedro and José Miguel, for their advice, trust and presence throughout these 14 years. Another special thanks to my fiancé, João Pedro, who has been my true support and inspiration. I am truly grateful for the constant encouragement to always pursue my dreams and for having him in my life. I also have to thank my friends, especially Joana Oliveira, André Pataco and Miguel Couto, without whom life would not have the same meaning. I am a lucky girl to have so much love, understanding and support in all areas of my life.

Last but not least, a special acknowledgment to my supervisor, Professor Helena Rodrigues, for her advice and motivation during this journey. Her availability and engagement were fundamental to complete this academic chapter.

Resumo

O turismo é um sector em franco crescimento que se tornou, nos últimos anos, um dos mais importantes da economia mundial. Dada a sua relevância, há necessidade de tornar o turismo mais acessível, menos desigual e capaz de ser experimentado por todos os indivíduos. Estima-se que cerca de dois mil milhões de pessoas são afectadas, directa ou indirectamente, por algum tipo de deficiência. Assim, o Turismo Acessível surge não só como algo essencial para alcançar a igualdade, mas também como uma excelente oportunidade de desenvolvimento económico. Verifica-se, contudo, alguma falta de interesse por parte das empresas e dos governos em encontrar soluções para mitigar as múltiplas barreiras que as pessoas com deficiência continuam a encontrar na sua participação no turismo.

Esta dissertação tem como objectivo compreender (i) a percepção das pessoas com deficiência e seus cuidadores relativamente à acessibilidade do turismo em Portugal (ii) de que forma alguns factores impactam essa avaliação. Para este efeito, foi desenvolvido um questionário, adaptado da literatura, e foi utilizada uma metodologia quantitativa para analisar os resultados. Foram obtidas 136 respostas válidas, o que permitiu elaborar a análise descritiva dos resultados, bem como testar as hipóteses apresentadas através de uma regressão linear. Com base nas análises desenvolvidas, foi possível verificar que a percepção das pessoas com deficiência e seus cuidadores sobre Portugal como destino turístico acessível não é muito positiva e foi possível comprovar que as características do destino – Físicas, Segurança na Informação e Hospitalidade – têm impacto positivo na referida percepção.

Palavras-chave: Turismo com deficiência, Barreiras ao Turismo, Turismo Acessível, Turismo Acessível em Portugal

Classificação JEL:

O50 – Economywide Country Studies

Z32 – Tourism and Development

Abstract

Tourism is a fast-growing sector that has become, in recent years, one of the most important sectors in the world economy. Given its relevance, there is a need to make tourism more accessible, less unequal and able to be experienced by all individuals. It is estimated that about two billion people are affected, directly or indirectly, by some kind of disability. Thus, Accessible Tourism emerges not only as something essential to achieve equality, but also as an excellent opportunity for economic development. However, there is a lack of interest on the part of companies and governments in finding solutions to mitigate the multiple barriers that disabled people continue to encounter in their participation in tourism.

This dissertation aims to understand (i) the perception of people with disabilities regarding accessibility in tourism in Portugal (ii) how some factors impact this evaluation. For this purpose, a questionnaire based on Conceptual Work derived from the literature was developed and, subsequently, a quantitative methodology was used to analyze the results. A total of 136 valid answers were obtained, which allowed for the descriptive analysis of the results, as well as to test the hypotheses presented through a linear regression. Based on the developed analysis, it was possible to verify that the perception of people with disabilities and their caregivers about Portugal as an accessible tourist destination is not quite positive and it was possible to prove that the characteristics of the destination - Physical, Information Safety and Hospitality - have a positive impact on that perception.

Keywords: Disabled Tourism, Constraints to Tourism, Accessible Tourism, Accessible Tourism in Portugal

JEL Classification:

O50 – Economywide Country Studies

Z32 – Tourism and Development

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Resumo	vii
Abstract	ix
Table of Contents	xi
List of Figures	xiii
List of Tables	xiii
List of Acronyms	xv
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Context.....	1
1.2. Research Question	2
2. Literature Review	3
2.1. Disabled Tourism	3
2.2. Constraints to Tourism	4
First Tier: Constraints common to all tourists	5
Second Tier: Constraints faced by all tourists with disabilities	6
Third Tier: Constraints unique to specific disabilities	6
Fourth Tier: Individual impairment effects.....	7
2.3. Accessible Tourism	8
2.4. Accessible Tourism in Portugal.....	9
3. Methodology	11
3.1. Research Objectives	11
3.2. Research Hypothesis and Conceptual Framework	11
3.2.1. Research Hypothesis	11
3.2.2. Conceptual Framework.....	12
3.3. Research Approach.....	13
	xi

3.4. Questionnaire Conception	13
3.4.1. Macro-structure	13
3.4.2. Micro-structure	15
3.5. Target Population	15
3.6. Statistical Method	16
4. Results	17
4.1. Data Cleaning	17
4.2. Sample Characterization	17
4.3. Factor Analysis	20
4.4. Descriptive Analysis	21
4.4.1. Physical Accessibility	22
4.4.2. Information Safety and Recreation	22
4.4.3. Welcoming Atmosphere	22
4.4.4. Portugal – Accessible Tourist Destination	22
4.5. Scale Validity	23
4.6. Data Analysis	23
5. Discussion	25
6. Conclusions	27
6.1. Main Conclusions	27
6.2. Theoretical and Practical Contributions	28
6.3. Limitations	29
6.4. Future Research	29
References	31
Appendix	37
Appendix 1 – Questionnaire	37
Appendix 2 – Tables	42

List of Figures

Figure 3.1- Conceptual Framework, adapted from Figueiredo et al., (2012)	13
--	----

List of Tables

Table 4.1- Demographic Characterization	17
Table 4.2 - Psychographic Characterization	20
Table 4.3 - KMO and Bartlett's Test	21
Table 4.4 - Rotated Component Matrix	21
Table 4.5 - Scale Reliability Analysis	23
Table 4.6 - Linear Regression Analysis	23
Table A.1 - Questionnaire's Micro-structure	42
Table A.2 - Descriptive Analysis	44

List of Acronyms

- UNWTO - World Tourism Organization
SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

Tourism has become significantly relevant to Portugal's economy. According to the World Bank, the revenue generated by tourism represented in 2019 about 23.45% of total exports. It is a growing industry because of the globalization of the world we live in and because personal experiences are increasingly valued.

Along with the relevance that the industry is gaining around the world, the need for initiatives aimed at sustainability and social responsibility is also increasing. One of the main topics is the reduction of inequalities and exclusion of minority groups. And, in this regard, tourism can be fundamental for achieving equality.

It is in this context that Accessible Tourism emerges. Accessible tourism is defined as “a process of enabling people with disabilities and seniors to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universal tourism products, services and environments” (Darcy, 2006, p. 3).

According to the World Health Organization (2021), around 15% of the population lives with some form of disability, a percentage that tends to increase over the years. However, if we consider people who are indirectly affected by disability, such as caregivers, this percentage rises to 30% (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020). Therefore, the inclusion of people with disabilities in tourism is not only a fundamental right but also an excellent opportunity for business development.

Considering this, many countries have taken steps to integrate accessibility into tourism, particularly in terms of legislation and investment to promote projects aimed at integrating people with disabilities. Although there is still a long way to go, it was for the investment in this area that Portugal was distinguished by the World Tourism Organization as the Accessible Tourism Destination 2019 (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), n.d.a). However, according to the same organization, it is a recognition for the effort to increase the accessibility of the tourist destination and not a formal certification on its accessibility.

Therefore, this work aims to understand how people with disabilities and their caregivers perceive Portugal as an accessible tourist destination; and what factors influence this perception.

1.2. Research Question

The present study aims to answer the following research question:

***RQ:** What are the factors that influence the perception of people with disabilities regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination?*

To answer this question, it is necessary to understand the needs, barriers and motivations of people with disabilities, as well as how the tourism sector has evolved in order to improve and facilitate the integration of these people in the market.

The literature review helps set the concepts and helps contextualize tourism for people with disabilities with regard to accessibility. In addition, it focuses on the initiatives Portugal has undertaken to achieve accessibility in tourism and the international recognition it has had as a result. To further study the perception of people with disabilities towards Portugal as an accessible tourist destination, quantitative research is conducted through an online questionnaire.

2. Literature Review

According to the World Health Organization (2021), about 15% of the world population have some form of disability, which means around one billion people. The same organization states that this numbers tend to increase due to demographic trends, such as the rise in average life expectancy and consequent ageing of the population, and also the increase in chronic illnesses (World Health Organization & World Bank., 2011). This increasing number not only presents a social problem, but is also a business opportunity for the tourism industry (Var et al., 2011).

For many years, this valuable segment was ignored (Burnett & Baker, 2001) however due to its potential has been the subject of the most diverse studies in the last two decades (Domínguez Vila et al., 2015). Researchers are unanimous not only in stating that these consumers are willing to participate in tourism activities, but also in stating that people with disabilities face numerous restrictions to participate in these same activities (Lim, 2020). According to McKercher and Darcy (2018), in addition to barriers common to all tourists, people with disabilities face barriers and constraints common to all people with disabilities and furthermore face constraints specific to each type of disability. Consequently, their participation rate in tourism is lower compared to the general population (Özcan et al., 2021).

Considering not only the opportunity for the development of the industry but also the social issue associated with this theme, efforts have been made to promote accessibility in the industry. An example of this was what happened in 2006, in the Convention of the Rights of Person with Disabilities, where the United Nations recognized the right of people with disabilities to participate in leisure activities, which includes tourism (Cloquet et al., 2018), “with equal freedom, dignity and opportunity” (Lam et al., 2020, p. 1). Even though accessibility in tourism is on the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 2030 Agenda (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). n.d.b) and that there is increasingly more legislation to meet this target, the truth is that not all countries respond equally and companies operating in the tourism industry do the minimum to comply with the requirements (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020).

2.1. Disabled Tourism

The World Health Organization defines disability as "umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions, referring to the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's contextual factors (environmental and personal factors)" (World Health Organization & World Bank., 2011, p. 4). Hence, it is not solely a medical problem but also a social problem. According to the same

source, disability is "part of the human condition", every individual experience some kind of limitation, temporary or permanent, at least once at some stage in their lives (World Health Organization & World Bank., 2011).

As mentioned above, approximately 15% of the population suffer from some form of disability. However, if we also consider people indirectly affected by some form of disability, the number rises to double, approximately 30%, in other words, it affects around 2 billion people (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020). Disability has a higher incidence in low to medium-income countries (Rohwerder, 2015), where the living conditions of these individuals are substantially lower, including education and employment rates (World Health Organization, 2015).

For the purpose of this dissertation, it is important to highlight that disability is a complex and challenging term to study given the heterogeneity of the group under analysis. A disability may vary in type (physical, cognitive/mental, sensory, emotional) (Kong & Loi, 2017), as well as in severity or degree of that impairment, in its limitation with the environment and its relation with others (Figueiredo et al., 2012). The recognition of the heterogeneity existing in this group is key, as it will shape the way people with disabilities experience life, interact with others, as well as their barriers to tourism and their needs (Buhalisa & Michopouloub, 2011; Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020).

Notwithstanding the multiple barriers that people with disabilities face in their participation in leisure and tourism activities, they still have a desire to experience and live such activities (Figueiredo et al., 2012; Lim, 2020). Several scholars indicate that participation in tourism has a significant positive impact on the quality of life and on the well-being of both people with disabilities (McIntosh, 2020), and their caregivers. For this reason, it has been considered a primary social need (Agovino et al., 2017). Shi et al. (2012) identify the enhancement of self-esteem, independence and sense of accomplishment as the main motivations for disabled people to participate in tourism. Furthermore, the literature also identifies tourism as an activity which confers a sense of freedom and personal development, as well as representing an enabler for social inclusion (Moura et al., 2018).

2.2. Constraints to Tourism

Despite the increase in public awareness of the subject, a disabled person is still less likely to participate in tourism due to the many barriers they may encounter - "physical, environmental, economic and social and/or other barriers" (Agovino et al., 2017). Previous scholars have

focused strongly on these constraints, especially on the attitudes of service providers which ultimately cause discrimination and social exclusion (Lim, 2020; Özcan et al., 2021).

First and foremost, it is also important to understand that there are two perspectives on disability: the medical model and the social model. The medical model approaches disability only as the medical condition diagnosed to the individual, whereas the social model integrates the whole human dimension and the relationship with the social and environmental surroundings which involve the individual with disability (Kattari et al., 2017).

McKercher and Darcy (2018), adopted the social model to better explain the nature and effects of the constraints that people with disabilities face upon their participation in tourism activities. For that purpose they developed a framework that hierarchically categorizes such barriers into four tiers:

- First tier: constraints common to all tourists (structural, interpersonal, intrapersonal and interest);
- Second tier: constraints faced by all tourists with disabilities (ignorance, attitude, information, industry);
- Third tier: constraints unique to specific disabilities
- Fourth tier: individual impairment effects

First Tier: Constraints common to all tourists

All individuals have some barriers when participating in tourism and these barriers will also be shared by people with disabilities. The literature commonly divides the constraints to participation into three categories: intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural (Daniels et al., 2005).

Therefore, intrapersonal barriers are related to psychological factors, physical condition, preferences of the individual or perhaps even lack of interest (Crawford et al., 1991). On the other hand, interpersonal constraints are related to social interaction and the resulting attitudes towards others (travel partners, service providers, etc.). And, finally, structural barriers are related to the conflict that may exist between an individual's preferences and participation, most commonly material or physical. Some typical examples of structural barriers are lack of time, cost, lack of transport or lack of opportunity (Crawford et al., 1991).

Some of the barriers previously mentioned are even more severe when we talk about people with disabilities since, according to the very definition of disability, it involves a limitation in interaction with the individual and other factors. Therefore, their interaction with others and

with their environment may, depending on the cases, be more difficult than for a non-disabled person. For example, the economic factor or family management, according to the literature, a person with disability usually travels accompanied, which incurs significantly higher costs when compared to a non-disabled person (Kastenholz et al., 2015; Shaw & Coles, 2004).

Second Tier: Constraints faced by all tourists with disabilities

Although the target group is, as mentioned before, a heterogeneous group, there are also common barriers for all people with disabilities. Among them are ignorance, attitude, the trustworthiness of information, and problems of the industry itself (McKercher & Darcy, 2018).

Ignorance is one of the main and most impactful barriers that a person with disabilities may encounter while participating in tourism. It is highly related to the lack of training concerning disability by tourism agents (Daruwalla & Darcy, 2005), which often leads to service failures or misconduct on the part of these agents (Kim & Lehto, 2012).

As a result of lack of knowledge, negative attitudes often come, meaning discrimination of people with disabilities (McKercher et al., 2003a). Therefore, social discrimination culminates in social exclusion, one of the main constraints that people with disabilities face in their participation in tourism (Kastenholz et al., 2015), which often increases anxiety and significantly reduces the overall satisfaction of the experience (Darcy, 2012; Small et al., 2012)

Furthermore, another shared barrier among people with disabilities is the trustworthiness of information or the lack of information. This is considered one of the main barriers for people with disabilities when planning their holidays (Lee et al., 2012). Tsai (2011) reveals that the willingness of people with disabilities to participate in tourism activities increases with the elimination of barriers during the decision-making process.

Finally, ignorance of the industry reinforces individuals' sense of exclusion or feeling of inability to participate in tourism. McKercher et al. (2003) discuss the inability of the industry to adapt to people with disabilities, opting for low-margin large-scale products that need to be delivered in volume and at high speed, which do not fit the needs of this target group.

Third Tier: Constraints unique to specific disabilities

Considering the diversity of disabilities, it is necessary to address the barriers considering the heterogeneity of the group, its limitations and needs.

For people with physical and mobility disabilities, structural and architectural barriers, such as steps or bed height, can be an impediment to their participation in tourism (Darcy, 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012). For instance, a flight experience is a far more challenging experience for a wheelchair user than for any other type of disability, due to the width of aisles and distance between seats, as well as the toilet size (Poria et al., 2010).

However, people with visual disability do not have the same perceived need to overcome architectural barriers but rather to live more sensorial experiences beyond vision, through smell, taste and hearing (Figueiredo et al., 2012). Moreover, technology is essential for people with visual impairment, through screen readers, giving access to information, providing a sense of independence and security (Harris, 2010; Mountain, 2004).

Although for different purposes, people with hearing disabilities also need assistive technologies to overcome their barriers to tourism participation (McKercher & Darcy, 2018).

And finally, for intellectual or physically disabled children, the constraints they face are so many and so severe that they further limit their participation in tourism (Mactavish et al., 2007). Often, the deviation from the routine and known environment is often a reason for discomfort and consequent increase of stress, not only for people suffering from this type of disability but also for their companions (Figueiredo et al., 2012).

Fourth Tier: Individual impairment effects

Finally, the fourth level acknowledges the individual barriers of people with disabilities taking into account not only the nature of the health condition but also the degree, age and psychological conditions of each individual (McKercher & Darcy, 2018). The severity of the form of disability suffered by the individual determines their level of ability and need to participate in tourism (Darcy, 2010).

Furthermore, sometimes some people with disabilities suffer from not just one but multiple disabilities, which form the fourth level of barrier to their participation in travel, as the range of solutions in the provision of services they require become even more specific and complex (Darcy, 2010).

Understanding the complexity and extent of the constraints of people with disabilities in tourism participation is essential and will be taken into consideration during this study.

2.3. Accessible Tourism

Accessible Tourism is increasingly becoming the focus of countless literature due to the growing need for social integration of people with disabilities, the increase in their economic capacity and, furthermore, the recognition of its importance in the development of the tourism industry. However, according to the UNWTO, there is no internationally accepted definition for the concept of Accessible Tourism as it has evolved substantially in recent decades. This is due to the fact that there are multiple synonyms that are used in different countries, as well as the fact that each expert has their own definition making it difficult to reach international agreement on a definition accepted by all (World Tourism Organization, 2016). Moreover, Devile (2009) also reinforces the idea of comprehensiveness and complexity in defining accessibility, considering that accessibility in tourism is not easy to achieve in its full potential.

Darcy and Dickson (2009) define accessible tourism as an enabler for “people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services, and environments”. Since it is already considered a basic human need (McCabe & Diekmann, 2015), Accessible Tourism recognizes the urgent need for the removal of barriers that allow people with disabilities to participate in tourism (Agovino et al., 2017).

Since the tourist experience starts in the travel planning process and finishes only when the tourist returns back home, it is necessary that accessibility is present in all these phases of the journey (Devile, 2009). Once again, given the complexity of the concept, as well as the specificity of everyone’s disability and preferences, it may be difficult to be perceived in the same way by all individuals.

Despite the difficulties in achieving it, Accessibility in Tourism is essential. Primarily for ethical and social reasons, since people with disabilities have the same rights as any other individual to leisure, culture and entertainment. And, on the other hand, for economic reasons since demographic data and the enhancement of this market segment in the industry point it as a lever for the development of the tourism sector (Devile, 2009).

The literature mentions that the different agents operating in tourism (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020), are limiting themselves to fulfilling the minimum legal requirements to be able to operate depending on the countries and the legislation in place (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020). The focus of companies is profit. Costs associated with accessibility are high and companies do not recognize this segment as a potential profit generator (Kastenholz et al., 2015).

As mentioned previously, the number of people who have some form of disability and therefore have needs aiming tourism accessibility is increasing. Moreover, the demographic data presented in the literature indicates that this number tends to rise in the coming years, therefore more than a market niche, people with disabilities already represent an important market segment. Furthermore, people with disabilities are not only willing to travel but are more willing to travel when their needs are met (Pagán, 2015), which further increases the urgency of turning the tourism industry more accessible to all.

Furthermore, scholars reveal that even though this group faces more economic constraints, people with disabilities are willing to pay more for more accessible products and would travel more if they had more accessible solutions when participating in tourism (Devile, 2009). Moreover, another factor that makes disabled tourists an attractive market segment for the tourism industry is the fact that they have a higher overall expenditure than non-disabled people (Figueiredo et al., 2012; Var et al., 2011), not only because they tend to prefer longer stays, but also because they are usually accompanied by a relative or friend (Buhalisa & Michopouloub, 2011). Devile and Kastenholz (2018) also notes that they are very loyal customers when their needs are fulfilled, in other words, when the services or products available meet their expectations. This is especially important for managers, especially for those who are responsible for the marketing departments of companies and organizations related to the tourism industry.

Hence, taking into consideration the growing social concern for the inclusion of people with disabilities but also the economic importance of the segment, the countries that, through legislation, education, and investment, manage to differentiate from other countries in the experience and perception of tourists with disabilities regarding Accessibility in Tourism can have a competitive advantage.

2.4. Accessible Tourism in Portugal

Portugal has about 10 million inhabitants and about 1.4 million people suffer from some form of disability, the most prevalent being physical (motor) and visual disabilities. Moreover, about 30% have accessibility requirements due mainly to the ageing population (Kastenholz et al., 2015).

Tourism in Portugal has had a significant evolution in recent years and is already one of the main pillars of its economy (Almeida Garcia, 2014). In 2019, approximately 27 million tourists

visited Portugal and, therefore, the exports of travel and tourism represented more than €18 million (Calheiros, 2020).

As it is a fundamental piece to its economy, Portugal has been thinking strategically about how to develop its tourism, giving particular attention to Accessible Tourism. Since 2016, with the launch of “All for All” program, Portugal has been investing in programs aimed at accessibility and inclusion in the country's tourism. "Accessible Beach - Beach for All!", considered a best practice (Santana-Santana et al., 2021) imposed the requirement for there to be at least one accessible beach per municipality in Portugal. Furthermore, the "Festivals + Accessible" program was also created, which consists of allowing people with some accessibility limitations to be part of the concerts and festivals that are very common in the country during the summer. As previously mentioned, access to information is essential when planning trips a platform "Tour4All" has been created to search and find all the accessible tourist offer in Portugal (Calheiros, 2020).

Due to the effort and investment that Portugal has been making in order to make its tourism more accessible, the UNWTO recognized Portugal with the Accessible Tourism Destination 2019 award. However, according to the entity itself, it is a recognition for the effort to increase the accessibility of the tourist destination and not a formal certification on its accessibility (World Tourism Organization, 2020).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Objectives

As previously mentioned, this study intends to answer the research question: *“What are the factors that influence the perception of people with disabilities regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination?”*

To do so, it is necessary to understand the needs and constraints that people with disabilities face when participating in tourism in Portugal, not only while planning their vacations but also during their stay.

3.2. Research Hypothesis and Conceptual Framework

3.2.1. Research Hypothesis

People with disabilities experience additional challenges than people without disabilities before and during their participation in tourism (Yau et al., 2004). However, their desire to participate in tourism is equivalent to that of non-disabled people and the benefits associated with their involvement in leisure activities are considerably higher (Pagán, 2015). On the other hand, Lee et al. (2012) suggest that the perception of travel constraints has a negative effect on the intention to travel. For this reason, the literature suggests that if barriers were removed and participation in tourism was a positive experience, the participation rate would increase (Yau et al., 2004). Therefore, destination attributes are extremely relevant to this market, the accessibility of spaces and activities being fundamental features (Israeli, 2002).

United Nations, (2017) suggests that searching for more accessible solutions is often frustrating, costly and time consuming. Among some of the constraints people with disabilities face, United Nations cites: “untrained professional staff capable of informing and advising about accessibility issues; inaccessible booking services and related websites; lack of accessible airports and transfer facilities and services; unavailability of adapted and accessible hotel rooms, restaurants, shops, toilets and public places; inaccessible streets and transport services; unavailable information on accessible facilities, services, equipment rentals and tourist attractions”.

According to this, the first hypothesis is:

H1: The perceived physical accessibility has a positive impact on the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

Although physical barriers can be very constraining, people with disabilities need more than just removing physical barriers to be able to participate in tourism activities (Hua et al., 2013). According to the literature, lack of information is one of the main barriers that people with disabilities encounter when planning their vacation (Lee et al., 2012). One of the main functions of destinations and tourism providers is to provide reliable information that allows tourists to make informed decisions according to their requirements (Darcy & Dickson, 2009).

Beyond access to information, people with disabilities encounter many barriers in their participation in outdoor activities, although there are several studies supporting the existence of numerous benefits for people with disabilities participating in outdoor activities (Bianchi et al., 2020). Therefore, the second hypothesis is:

H2: The perceived accessibility in terms of information reliability and recreational activities has a positive impact on the perception of Portugal.

Also, it is important to note that people with disabilities are often the victims of negative attitudes from tourism agents (McKercher et al., 2003). McKercher et al. (2003) state that these negative attitudes are a reflection of lack of empathy resulting from lack of exposure to people with disabilities and lack of knowledge on how they should behave. The main outcomes of negative attitudes are overt and subtle discrimination, which ultimately increases stress and reduces the overall satisfaction (McKercher & Darcy, 2018).

Hence, Daruwalla and Darcy (2005) suggest that tourism agents and hospitality students should be trained to create awareness and foster more positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Taking this into consideration, the final hypothesis is:

H3: The perceived accessibility in terms of hospitality and welcoming atmosphere has a positive impact on the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

3.2.2. Conceptual Framework

The current study is based on a model (Figure 1) adapted from Figueiredo et al. (2012), to study the above-mentioned hypotheses and to understand the perception of people with disabilities regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

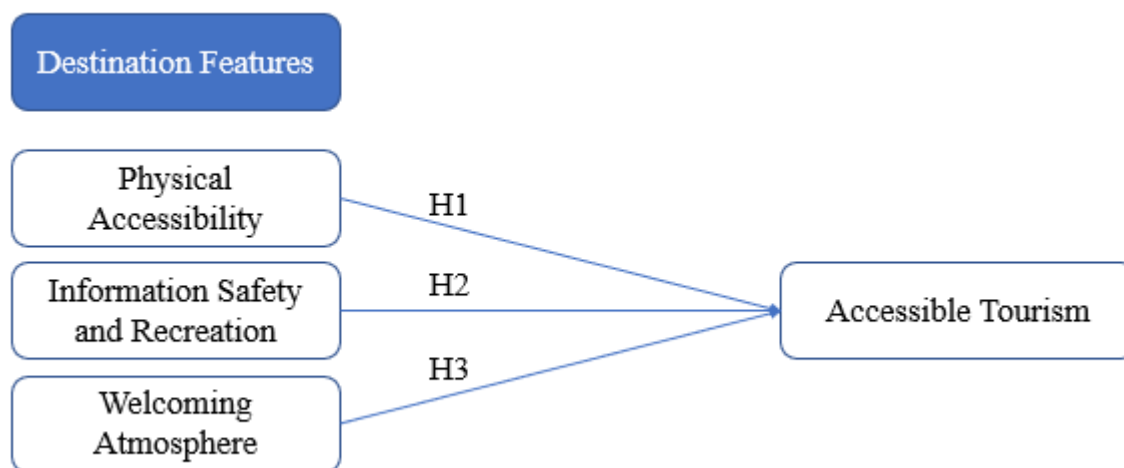


Figure 3.1- Conceptual Framework, adapted from Figueiredo et al., (2012)

3.3. Research Approach

To conduct this study, a quantitative method was chosen. This approach involves the collection of primary data so that information may be submitted to statistical treatment, allowing conclusions to be reached through the generalization of results obtained through the sample of the population under analysis (Williams, 2007). Furthermore, quantitative research method allows the comparison of variables and simplifies the processing of a large amount of data (Basias & Pollalis, 2018).

The data were obtained through an online questionnaire, which allows direct access to the respondents of the questionnaire, as well as reliable results obtained faster and at lower costs.

The questionnaire was created and shared through Qualtrics, as it is one of the best platforms for creating an online questionnaire and allows the results to be downloaded directly into the data processing program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.4. Questionnaire Conception

3.4.1. Macro-structure

In terms of Macro-structure, the questionnaire was divided into five dimensions. The questionnaire starts with two screening questions, in order to identify some characteristics of the respondents and, consequently, to know if they belong to the target population. Then, the

characteristics of the tourist destination are addressed, followed by an assessment of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. The fourth and fifth dimensions focus on the demographic and psychographic characteristics of the sample, respectively.

The dimensions that form part of the structure of the questionnaire are as follows::

- Group I – Screening Questions
- Group II – Destination Features
 - Physical Accessibility
 - Information Safety and Recreation
 - Welcoming Atmosphere
- Group III – Portugal as an accessible tourist destination
- Group IV – Demographics
 - Type of disability
 - Disability level
 - Mobility level
 - Movement Assistance
 - Filling Assistance
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Occupation
 - Educational level
 - Nationality
- Group V – Psychographics
 - Traveling Partner
 - Traveling Preferences
 - Traveling Type

In order to measure destination features and Portugal accessibility, a 5-point Likert Scale was used, which ranges from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Thus, respondents were able to answer according to their level of agreement with the proposed statements. Scale items were defined and developed on previous research articles found in literature.

3.4.2. Micro-structure

The questionnaire was divided into 5 groups, with a total of 29 questions. The first group aims to identify whether the respondents are part of the sample population that is intended to be analyzed.

The second group of the questionnaire seeks to analyze people's perception regarding accessibility in Portugal. This dimension is divided into three variables, namely Physical Accessibility, Information and Recreational Activities and Welcoming Atmosphere adapted from Figueiredo et al. (2012).

The third group focuses on trying to understand the overall perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. This group of questions also aims to understand the awareness that people who visit Portugal (disabled people or caregivers) have about Portugal's accessible tourism initiatives.

The last two dimensions aim to analyze the demographic and psychographic profile of the respondents and both were retrieved from Figueiredo et al. (2012). The demographic analysis of the sample is composed of ten variables while the psychographic one is composed of three variables.

3.5. Target Population

This research aims to understand people's perception of accessible tourism in Portugal and which destination features influence such perception. Hence, the target population will be all the people who directly or indirectly benefit from accessible tourism: people with disabilities and their caregivers.

In order to ensure that only people who correspond to our target population answered the questionnaire, two screening questions were designed. These questions aimed to confirm that the respondent had any kind of disability or that he/she was a caregiver and also that he/she had already visited Portugal. To continue the questionnaire, both questions had to be positive, otherwise the respondent would be automatically redirected to the end of the survey.

The final questionnaire was sent to people belonging to the target population through previously contacted institutions and associations that work with people with disabilities. In addition, the questionnaires were also distributed among the different Facebook groups formed by people with disabilities, enabling the collection of responses from Portuguese and foreign tourists.

3.6. Statistical Method

To ensure the accuracy of the statistical model, it is important to obtain a minimum number of participants. According to Pestana and Gageiro (2014), the minimum number of answers should be 5 times the number of variables. Since the questionnaire was composed by 16 variables, the number of responses should be greater than 80, which was achieved.

Statistical analysis was performed with SPSS version 28 for Windows. First the data was treated, by cleaning missing values and identifying possible outliers. Then, a Factor Analysis and a Scale Reliability Analysis were performed to identify the number of factors that form the model and the internal consistency of each variable, respectively.

Within the scope of the study, a characterization of the sample was also performed and, finally, the hypotheses were tested through Linear Regression. Thus, we were able to understand the impact that Physical Accessibility, Information Safety and Recreation and Welcoming Atmosphere factors have on people with disabilities perception Portuguese accessible tourism.

4. Results

4.1. Data Cleaning

The questionnaire was available online for three months, between 2nd June and 2nd September, and it was closed with a total of 213 responses. However, some of those entries did not meet the requirements, as they missed screening questions or were incomplete, therefore such responses were excluded from the analysis.

Following this first selection, it was necessary to validate the existence of outliers in the sample through Multivariate Outlier Analysis. After calculating the Mahalanobis Distance for each of the participants, no outlier was identified since no length of responses was lower than p-value 0.001, and consequentially there were a total of 136 valid responses.

Taking this into consideration, it can be concluded that the sample approaches a normal distribution, according to the Central Limit Theorem.

4.2. Sample Characterization

In order to characterize the sample, descriptive statistical measures were performed (absolute and relative frequency, as well as mode).

For the purpose of this study, not only general demographic questions were asked, but also questions related to the respondents' clinical information, as it was intended to understand their degree of limitation (see Table 1).

Table 4.1- Demographic Characterization

Variables	Category	Frequency		Mode
		Absolute	Relative	
Type of Disability	Hearing	20	14.70%	
	Mental	20	14.70%	
	Physical	81	59.60%	X
	Visual	15	11.00%	

Table 4.1- Demographic Characterization (cont.)

Variables	Category	Frequency		Mode
		Absolute	Relative	
Disability Level	Less than 75%	61	44.90%	
	Equal or higher than 75%	75	55.10%	X
Mobility Level	Reduced	65	47.80%	
	Somewhat reduced	71	52.20%	X
Movement Assistance	Yes	60	44.10%	
	No	76	55.90%	X
Filling Assistance	Yes	20	14.70%	
	No	116	85.30%	X
Age	18 to 25	17	12.50%	
	26 to 35	29	21.30%	
	36 to 45	36	26.50%	X
	46 to 55	29	21.30%	
	> 55	25	18.40%	
Gender	Male	54	39.70%	
	Female	80	58.80%	X
	Non-binary / third gender	2	1.50%	
Occupation	Student	14	10.30%	
	Employed	45	33.10%	
	Unemployed	51	37.50%	X
	Retired	26	19.10%	
Education Level	Middle School or equivalent	5	3.70%	
	High School	41	30.10%	X
	Some college	31	22.80%	
	Undergraduate	33	24.30%	
	Graduate or more	26	19.10%	

Table 4.2- Demographic Characterization (cont.)

Variables	Category	Frequency		Mode
		Absolute	Relative	
Nationality	Brazil	11	8.10%	
	Denmark	2	1.50%	
	France	1	0.70%	
	Italy	2	1.50%	
	Poland	7	5.10%	
	Portugal	82	60.30%	X
	Spain	13	9.60%	
	United Kingdom	10	7.40%	
	United States of America	8	5.90%	

Regarding the type of disability, physical disability has the highest frequency (59.6%), while visual impairment the least frequent disability representing only 11% of the sample. About 55% of the respondents either have or care for someone who has a disability level above 75%, while only 47.8% declared to have or care for someone who has reduced mobility. Most respondents do not need help to move around (55.9%) and a majority also did not require help when filling out the questionnaire (85.3%).

Since the sample is composed not only of people with some form of disability but also of caregivers, the frequency of answers is similar among the different age groups. Nevertheless, about 26.5% of the respondents are between 36 and 45 years old. As far as gender is concerned, the majority is female (58.8%), with most respondents being unemployed and having "High School" as their education level. Although the vast majority of the sample is Portuguese (60.3%), it was also possible to obtain answers from tourists of foreign nationalities (39.7%), namely tourists from Spain (9.6%), Brazil (8.1%), United Kingdom (7.4%), USA (5.9%), Poland (5.1%), Denmark (1.5%), Italy (1.5%) and France (0.7%).

The last group of the questionnaire aimed to understand the behavior and the travel preferences of the sample (see Table 2).

Table 4.2 - Psychographic Characterization

Variables	Category	Frequency		Mode
		Absolute	Relative	
Travelling Partner	Family	84	61.80%	X
	Friends	36	26.50%	
	Alone	9	6.60%	
	Other	7	5.10%	
Travelling Preferences	Beach	50	36.80%	X
	Countryside	31	22.80%	
	Mountain	18	13.20%	
	City	27	19.90%	
	Hot Springs/ Thermal Spas	10	7.40%	
Travelling Type	Domestic	111	81.60%	X
	International	25	18.40%	

When it comes to their travel style, the vast majority of respondents usually travel with their family members (61.8%) and choose to go on vacation in their own country (81.6%). Only a few individuals venture to travel alone (6.6%) or participate in international journeys (18.4%). Moreover, 36.8% of the sample confirmed that the beach is their favorite destination (36.8%), followed by trips where they can enjoy the calm of the countryside (22.8%).

4.3. Factor Analysis

The analysis of the relational structure of the scale items was performed through an exploratory factor analysis on the correlation matrix. The validity of the factorial analysis was measured through the KMO (0.808) and Bartlett's test ($\text{sig} < 0.001$), which indicate acceptable values for the analysis to proceed (see Table 3). The factorial analysis converged to a solution with 3 principal components explaining 69.6% of the total variance: Physical Access, Information Safety and Recreation and Welcoming Atmosphere (see Table 4).

Table 4.3 - KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
0.808	1039.516	91	<.001

Table 4.4 - Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
Physical_Access_1	0.888		
Physical_Access_2	0.871		
Physical_Access_4	0.845		
Physical_Access_3	0.788		
Physical_Access_5	0.767		
Welcoming_Atmosphere_1		0.909	
Welcoming_Atmosphere_5		0.800	
Welcoming_Atmosphere_2		0.772	
Welcoming_Atmosphere_4		0.762	
Welcoming_Atmosphere_3		0.761	
Info_Recreation_1			0.915
Info_Recreation_3			0.843
Info_Recreation_4			0.826
Info_Recreation_2			0.811

4.4. Descriptive Analysis

For a better understanding of the pattern of responses to the 16 variables under study, a descriptive analysis was performed. Table A.2 resumes the Mean, Median, Standard Deviation and the minimum and maximum values for each of the factors under analysis.

4.4.1. Physical Accessibility

This factor is composed of five items with mean values below the other factors, taking into consideration that all five items have mean scores below 3 (see Table A.2). Nevertheless, of the five items, the one regarding the ease of finding parking spaces for people with disabilities (PHY_4) was the one with the highest mean (2.98). On the other hand, the item with the lowest mean (2.74) concerns how respondents evaluate accessibility in restaurants, stores and other services (PHY_5).

4.4.2. Information Safety and Recreation

Regarding the four items that compose the Information Safety and Recreation variable, the one that addresses the feeling of safety during the stay in Portugal (INF_3) has the highest mean (3.31). However, the remaining mean values are quite similar, varying between 3.16 and 3.18, regarding information reliability (INF_1), accessibility in recreational activities (INF_2) and training of people working in tourism (INF_4).

4.4.3. Welcoming Atmosphere

The third variable is composed by five items, all of them with a relatively high mean (above 3.5). The item with the highest mean (3.78) is the one that evaluates the lack of discrimination and inclusiveness, not only by tourism agents but also by the local community (WEL_3). The second highest mean (3.74) concerns the item that evaluates how safe people with disabilities feel as a result of the medical support that is available in Portugal (WEL_1). Lastly, with the lowest mean but still above 3.5, the item that addresses the possibility of the participants being accompanied by the guide dog throughout their trip (WEL_2).

4.4.4. Portugal – Accessible Tourist Destination

The last variable is composed by only two items (see Table A.2). And although none of them presents a high mean, the one regarding the respondents' perception of the accessibility of tourism in Portugal (PT_1) is the one with the highest mean (3.16). Regarding their awareness of all the initiatives Portugal has taken in this domain (PT_2), they evaluate this item with lower values, accounting for a mean of 3.03.

4.5. Scale Validity

In order to validate the internal consistency of the analysis, the Scale Reliability Analysis was performed. Using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient - which measures the correlation between responses in a questionnaire by analyzing the profile of answers given by respondents - it was possible to verify that the factors found all obtained a reliability level above the acceptable minimum (>0.70 , Kocak et al., 2014).

Table 4.5 - Scale Reliability Analysis

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Physical Access	0.890	5
Info Recreation	0.876	4
Welcoming Atmosphere	0.862	5

4.6. Data Analysis

After the Reliability and Factor Analysis, the hypothesis testing proceeded through a Linear Regression. For this, three new variables were computed as a mean of all the items composing each component shown in Table 6 (Avg_PHY, Avg_INF, Avg_WEL). Hence, it was possible to assess the impact of each of the components (independent variables) on the evaluation that people with disabilities and their caregivers gave to Portugal regarding Accessible Tourism.

Table 4.6 - Linear Regression Analysis

	Model Summary	ANOVA	Standardized Coefficients		
	Adjusted R-square	Sig.	Unstd. Beta	Sig	VIF
Avg_PHY	0.184	<0.001	0.192	0.003	1.021
Avg_INF			0.201	0.002	1.026
Avg_WEL			0.227	0.004	1.007

As shown in Table 6, it is possible to verify that 18.4% of the evaluation of the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination is explained by the characteristics of the

destination (Physical Access, Info Recreation and Safety and Welcoming Atmosphere). Moreover, through the A-NOVA test it can be confirmed that the model has explanatory power since p-value is less than 0.05 (95% confidence level).

Furthermore, considering the values present in the table above, it is possible to confirm that satisfaction with physical access (Unstd. Beta = 19.2%, p-value = 0.003), recreational information (Unstd. Beta = 20.1%, p-value = 0.002) and welcoming atmosphere (Unstd. Beta = 22.7%, p-value = 0.004) are significant predictors of the opinion that Portugal is an accessible tourist destination. In other words, since the regression coefficients are positive, this means that the higher the levels of satisfaction with physical access, recreational information and welcoming atmosphere the higher the consideration of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

5. Discussion

This study aims to understand what is the perception of people with disabilities and their caregivers regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. Thus, in the scope of this research, the following results were obtained. According to the data presented in Table A.2, it can be stated that the accessibility of tourism in Portugal is not evaluated in a very favorable way, considering that the variable PT_1 has a mean score of 3.16. This research confirms what is mentioned in the literature that there are far less affordable options in the European tourism market compared to other markets, namely USA and Australia (Stumbo & Pegg, 2005). The second variable PT_2 also has an evaluation that is not so positive (mean score of 3.06), being even lower than PT_1, that is, the average response to the statement "I am aware of all the initiatives Portugal has taken in the domain of accessible tourism (All for All, Beach for All, Tour4All)" is neutral.

In addition, this study also aims to understand how the three factors impact the perception of tourists with disabilities and their caregivers towards Portugal as an accessible tourist destination through a model adapted from Figueiredo et al. (2012)

H1: The perceived physical accessibility has a positive impact on the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

According to the Linear Regression test presented in Table 6, it can be stated that physical characteristics have an impact on the perception of respondents regarding Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. Thus, H1 is accepted. However, with an Unstandardized Beta of 0.192 it is found that there is an impact although not highly significant. This result is confirmed by the literature. According to Lyu (2017), the elimination of physical barriers is one of the attributes most valued by tourists with disabilities when participating in tourism. The valuation is such that they are even willing to pay more for more accessible accommodation and transportation. Chang and Chen (2012), also corroborate the importance of providing services, including transportation, that comply with universal design standards.

H2: The perceived accessibility in terms of information reliability and recreational activities has a positive impact on the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

Secondly, through the use of the same Linear Regression test (see Table 6) it was possible to confirm that information reliability and participation in recreational activities have

a positive impact on the overall perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. Therefore, similarly to the previous hypothesis, H2 is accepted. This finding is in agreement with the literature. Tsai (2011) and Yau et al. (2004) reinforce the importance of providing reliable information in the scope of accessible tourism. This factor is particularly relevant when people with disabilities and their family members are at the stage of planning their vacations.

H3: The perceived accessibility in terms of hospitality and welcoming atmosphere has a positive impact on the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination.

The linear regression test confirms the positive impact that hospitality and a welcoming environment have on the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. Therefore, H3 is accepted. This variable is the one with the highest Unstandardized Beta (0.227), although it is also considered low. As mentioned before, people with disabilities are often discriminated by travel agents, which reduces their overall satisfaction (McKercher & Darcy, 2018). Hence, it can be deduced that a welcoming atmosphere has indeed a positive impact on the overall perception of a destination as an accessible tourist destination.

Despite the fact that a positive impact of the three factors is verified and the three hypotheses are accepted, it should be noted that the impact is low. This may result from the fact that there are other factors that influence the accessibility of a country or tourist destination that have not been considered in the current study. Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 2, it is important to take into consideration the heterogeneity of the group when addressing barriers to participation in tourism. As can be seen through the analysis of the psychographics of the sample, although the vast majority of respondents have or care for someone with physical disability (59.6%), the remaining 40.4% of respondents have other forms of impairments and it is possible that other types of barriers or needs exist that were not addressed in the questionnaire but that impact the overall perception of accessibility.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Main Conclusions

When it comes to the accessible tourism market there are few studies that aim to understand what is the perception of tourists with disabilities and their caregivers about the accessibility of tourism in Portugal, along with the factors that influence this perception. Moreover, most studies on this market aim only towards understanding motivations and needs of people with disabilities, ignoring the motivations and needs of their caregivers. However, it is known that caregivers are an extremely important market segment, often neglected, however playing a major role in the decision making process particularly when dealing with intellectual disabilities (Lehto et al., 2018; Mactavish et al., 2007). Thus, this study aims to understand the perception about Portugal as an accessible tourist destination, as well as the factors that impact this perception, not only by people with disabilities, but also by their caregivers. To do so, it was necessary to understand the accessible tourism market and identify the needs and barriers that this group encounters in their participation to tourism.

In order to address the research question, a quantitative method was chosen through the development and application of an online questionnaire. The online questionnaire was developed based on the model adapted from Figueiredo et al. (2012) and closed with a total of 136 valid responses. Based on the respondents' answers and using SPSS it was possible to test the hypotheses through a linear regression test.

After performing the analysis it is possible to conclude that the respondents' perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination is not particularly positive, which means that there is a high potential for improvement. This conclusion confirms what is mentioned in the literature that there are fewer accessible options in European tourism compared to other countries, namely USA and Australia. Another possible conclusion from the mean of variable PT_2 (3.06) is that Portugal could be more effective in the communication and dissemination of its initiatives concerning accessibility in tourism. Finally, it is also possible to conclude that Physical Access, Information Safety and Recreation and Welcoming atmosphere have a positive impact on the perception of people with disabilities and their carers about Portugal as an accessible tourist destination. However, according to the current study, the impact is relatively low.

6.2. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The results of the present study allow us to address the question concerning the perception of tourists with disabilities and their caregivers regarding accessible tourism in Portugal. In other words, it allow to understand if the recognition that Portugal obtained in 2019 by the UNWTO is, in fact, valued and perceived in the same extent by this market segment. Moreover, the current study also contributes to future research since it includes not only people with disabilities but also their caregivers. This peculiarity of the present study is crucial since caregivers are also key to the development of the disabled tourism market.

With regard to practical implications, the present study aims to highlight the importance of accessible tourism for the further development of tourism, not only in terms of sustainability, but also from an economic point of view. In fact, the results of the study provide valuable insights for tourism stakeholders and organizations responsible for tourism development in Portugal. It also allows us to conclude that there is still a long way to go regarding the development of the accessible tourism market in Portugal and despite all the effort, it is still not reflected in the desirable degree by people with disabilities and their carers.

Furthermore, it also allows guiding the Marketing departments of institutions responsible for tourism in Portugal to better communicate and promote the initiatives they have implemented in the field of accessible tourism. Therefore, a marketing and communication strategy for all the initiatives carried out by Portugal is recommended. In this scope, one of the initiatives that could be developed would be to promote tourism in Portugal with images where people with disabilities and their families are included, since the vast majority of people with disabilities do not travel alone, according to the analysis of the psychographic characteristics of the sample. This type of initiative gives a sense of belonging and normality that people with disabilities value (Stumbo & Pegg, 2005).

Second, incentives should be given to tourism providers to develop loyalty programs. Loyalty allows for repetition and association. It is thereby one of the most important success factors for a brand, product or service. Developing loyalty programs targeting a market segment that is very devoted to those who respond to their needs (Devile & Kastenholz 2018), could be an excellent lever for growth and improving the perception of Portugal as accessible tourism.

In addition, since Physical Access is the factor with the lowest evaluation in the present study, one of the recommendations would be to create benefits for hotels, restaurants and other services that comply with the necessary requirements for accessibility in tourism, across all types of disabilities. And finally, improving websites so that finding accessible options for

people with disabilities and their caregivers, especially when planning a trip, becomes easier and more reliable.

6.3. Limitations

Although this study allows us to arrive at some important conclusions, it is also important to point out some limitations encountered during the course of it.

First, it is necessary to consider that the sample is relatively small, so that a larger sample could possibly lead to more accurate conclusions that could more easily be extrapolated. Secondly, the fact that the study was carried out through an online questionnaire, did not allow the response from people with disabilities with a higher degree of disability, who should also be considered in the context of this research. Furthermore, the online questionnaire leads to closed questions and therefore fails to consider all the factors that impact the perception of Portugal as an accessible tourist destination among people with disabilities and their caregivers.

Finally, it would be important to have more statistical data, namely regarding the number of disabled tourists participating in tourism in Portugal, not only national tourists but also foreign visitors, as well as their preferences and behavior during their stay (number of days of stay, places to visit, etc...).

Considering the above, one has to be cautious concerning the extrapolation of the findings, despite of its importance.

6.4. Future Research

Despite having been the subject of several studies in the last two decades, the truth is that there is still a long and recognized path to follow, namely in Portugal. Given this situation, some lines of research are still open as a consequence of the present study.

First, focus groups could be conducted in order to better understand which additional factors influence the evaluation of accessibility in a given country, as well as their level of significance. In this way, the accuracy of the model presented in this study could be improved.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the heterogeneity of the group, it would be interesting to further understand if these factors differ depending on the type of disability and try to segment the target population accordingly. Then the conclusions could be more reliable and lead to more concrete and effective action plans depending on the segment.

Finally, an additional route of research that would be complementary to the present study could cover the perception of tourists with disabilities and their caregivers across the different

sectors of tourism activity (hotels, restaurants, tourism agencies, etc...). In this way, initiatives could be taken according to the areas that need further development.

References

- Agovino, M., Casaccia, M., Garofalo, A., & Marchesano, K. (2017). Tourism and disability in Italy. Limits and opportunities. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 23, 58–67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2017.05.001>
- Almeida Garcia, F. (2014). A comparative study of the evolution of tourism policy in Spain and Portugal. In *Tourism Management Perspectives*, (Vol. 11, pp. 34–50). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2014.03.001>
- Basias, N., & Pollalis, Y. (2018). Quantitative and Qualitative Research in Business & Technology: Justifying a Suitable Research Methodology. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 7(1), 91–105. <http://buscompress.com/journal-home.html>
- Bianchi, P., Cappelletti, G. M., Mafrolla, E., Sica, E., & Sisto, R. (2020). Accessible tourism in natural park areas: A social network analysis to discard barriers and provide information for people with disabilities. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(23), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12239915>
- Buhalisa, D., & Michopouloub, E. (2011). Information-enabled tourism destination marketing: Addressing the accessibility market. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14(2), 145–168. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683501003653361>
- Burnett, J. J., and H. B. Baker (2001). “Assessing the Travel-Related Behaviors of the Mobility-Disabled Consumer.” *Journal of Travel Research*, 40(1): 4-11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004728750104000102>
- Calheiros, F. (2020). Inclusive tourism: a priority for Portugal. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 12(6), 715–717. <https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-07-2020-0067>
- Chang, Y. C., & Chen, C. F. (2012). Meeting the needs of disabled air passengers: Factors that facilitate help from airlines and airports. *Tourism Management*, 33(3), 529–536. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.06.002>
- Cloquet, I., Palomino, M., Shaw, G., Stephen, G., & Taylor, T. (2018). Disability, social inclusion and the marketing of tourist attractions. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 26(2), 221–237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2017.1339710>
- Crawford, D. W., Jackson, E. L., & Godbey, G. (1991). A hierarchical model of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, 13(4), 309–320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490409109513147>
- Daniels, M. J., Drogin Rodgers, E. B., & Wiggins, B. P. (2005). “Travel Tales”: An interpretive analysis of constraints and negotiations to pleasure travel as experienced by persons with

- physical disabilities. *Tourism Management*, 26(6), 919–930.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2004.06.010>
- Darcy, S. (2006). *Setting a Research Agenda for Accessible Tourism. January 2006*. ISBN: 1920704973
- Darcy, S. (2010). Inherent complexity: Disability, accessible tourism and accommodation information preferences. *Tourism Management*, 31(6), 816–826.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.08.010>
- Darcy, S. (2012). (Dis)embodied air travel experiences: Disability, discrimination and the affect of a discontinuous air travel chain. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 19(1), 91–101. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jht.2012.9>
- Darcy, S., & Dickson, T. J. (2009). A whole-of-life approach to tourism: The case for accessible tourism experiences. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 16(1), 32–44.
<https://doi.org/10.1375/jhtm.16.1.32>
- Daruwalla, P., & Darcy, S. (2005). Personal and societal attitudes to disability. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(3), 549–570. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2004.10.008>
- Devile, E. (2009). Visualização de O desenvolvimento do turismo acessível_ dos argumentos sociais aos argumentos de mercado. *Revista Turismo e Desenvolvimento*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34624/rtd.v0i11.13485>
- Devile, E., & Kastenholz, E. (2018). Accessible tourism experiences: the voice of people with visual disabilities. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 10(3), 265–285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2018.1470183>
- Domínguez Vila, T., Darcy, S., & Alén González, E. (2015). Competing for the disability tourism market - A comparative exploration of the factors of accessible tourism competitiveness in Spain and Australia. *Tourism Management*, 47, 261–272.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.10.008>
- Figueiredo, E., Eusébio, C., & Kastenholz, E. (2012). How Diverse are Tourists with Disabilities? A Pilot Study on Accessible Leisure Tourism Experiences in Portugal. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 14(6), 531–550.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.1913>
- Gillovic, B., & McIntosh, A. (2020). Accessibility and inclusive tourism development: Current state and future agenda. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(22), 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su12229722>

- Harris, J. (2010). The use, role and application of advanced technology in the lives of disabled people in the UK. *Disability and Society*, 25(4), 427–439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687591003755815>
- Hua, K. P., Ibrahim, I., & Chiu, L. K. (2013). Sport Tourism: Physically-disabled Sport Tourists' Orientation. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 91(2004), 257–269. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.08.423>
- Israeli, A. A. (2002). A Preliminary Investigation of the Importance of Site Accessibility Factors for Disabled Tourists. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(1), 101–104. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287502041001012>
- Kastenholz, E., Eusébio, C., & Figueiredo, E. (2015). Contributions of tourism to social inclusion of persons with disability. *Disability and Society*, 30(8), 1259–1281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2015.1075868>
- Kattari, S. K., Lavery, A., & Hasche, L. (2017). Applying a social model of disability across the life span. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 27(8), 865–880. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2017.1344175>
- Kim, S. E., & Lehto, X. Y. (2012). The voice of tourists with mobility disabilities: Insights from online customer complaint websites. In *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* (Vol. 24, Issue 3, pp. 451–476). <https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111211217905>
- Kocak, C., Egrioglu, E., Yolcu, U., & Aladag, C. H. (2014). Computing Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Fuzzy Survey Data. *American Journal of Intelligent Systems*, 4(5), 204–213. <https://doi.org/10.5923/j.ajis.20140405.03>
- Kong, W. H., & Loi, K. I. (2017). The barriers to holiday-taking for visually impaired tourists and their families. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 32, 99–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2017.06.001>
- Lam, K. L., Chan, C. S., & Peters, M. (2020). Understanding technological contributions to accessible tourism from the perspective of destination design for visually impaired visitors in Hong Kong. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100434>
- Lee, B. K., Agarwal, S., & Kim, H. J. (2012). Influences of travel constraints on the people with disabilities' intention to travel: An application of Seligman's helplessness theory. *Tourism Management*, 33(3), 569–579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.06.011>

- Lehto, X., Luo, W., Miao, L., & Ghiselli, R. F. (2018). Shared tourism experience of individuals with disabilities and their caregivers. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 8, 185–193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.04.001>
- Lim, J. E. (2020). Understanding the discrimination experienced by customers with disabilities in the tourism and hospitality industry: The case of Seoul in South Korea. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(18). <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU12187328>
- Lyu, S. O. (2017). Which accessible travel products are people with disabilities willing to pay more? A choice experiment. *Tourism Management*, 59, 404–412. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.09.002>
- Mactavish, J. B., MacKay, K. J., Iwasaki, Y., & Betteridge, D. (2007). Family caregivers of individuals with intellectual disability: Perspectives on life quality and the role of vacations. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 39(1), 127–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2007.11950101>
- McCabe, S., & Diekmann, A. (2015). The rights to tourism: Reflections on social tourism and human rights. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 40(2), 194–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2015.1049022>
- McIntosh, A. J. (2020). The hidden side of travel: Epilepsy and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2019.102856>
- McKercher, B., & Darcy, S. (2018). Re-conceptualizing barriers to travel by people with disabilities. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 26, 59–66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2018.01.003>
- McKercher, B., Packer, T., Yau, M. K., & Lam, P. (2003). Travel agents as facilitators or inhibitors of travel: Perceptions of people with disabilities. *Tourism Management*, 24(4), 465–474. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(02\)00107-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(02)00107-3)
- Montenegro, M., Costa, J., Rodrigues, D., & Gomes, J. (2014). The image of portugal as a tourist destination – an international perspective. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 6(5), 397–412. <https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-09-2014-0022>
- Mountain, G. (2004). Using the Evidence to Develop Quality Assistive Technology Services. In *Journal of Integrated Care* (Vol. 12, Issue 1, pp. 19–26). <https://doi.org/10.1108/14769018200400005>
- Moura, A. F. A., Kastenholz, E., & Pereira, A. M. S. (2018). Accessible tourism and its benefits for coping with stress. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 10(3), 241–264. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2017.1409750>

- Özcan, E., Topcu, Z. G., & Arasli, H. (2021). Determinants of travel participation and experiences of wheelchair users traveling to the bodrum region: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(5), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18052218>
- Pagán, R. (2015). The contribution of holiday trips to life satisfaction: the case of people with disabilities. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18(6), 524–538. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.860086>
- Pestana, M. H.; Gageiro, J. N. (2014). Análise de dados para ciências sociais: a complementaridade do SPSS. 6ª ed. rev., atual. e aumentada. Lisboa: Edições Sílabo, ISBN: 978-972-618-775-2
- Poria, Y., Reichel, A., & Brandt, Y. (2010). The flight experiences of people with disabilities: An exploratory study. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(2), 216–227. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287509336477>
- Rohwerder, B. (2015). Disability inclusion: Topic guide. *Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham*.
- Santana-Santana, S. B., Peña-Alonso, C., & Pérez-Chacón Espino, E. (2021). Assessing universal accessibility in Spanish beaches. *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 201. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2020.105486>
- Shaw, G., & Coles, T. (2004). Disability, holiday making and the tourism industry in the UK: A preliminary survey. *Tourism Management*, 25(3), 397–403. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(03\)00139-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(03)00139-0)
- Shi, L., Cole, S., & Chancellor, H. C. (2012). Understanding leisure travel motivations of travelers with acquired mobility impairments. *Tourism Management*, 33(1), 228–231. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.02.007>
- Small, J., Darcy, S., & Packer, T. (2012). The embodied tourist experiences of people with vision impairment: Management implications beyond the visual gaze. *Tourism Management*, 33(4), 941–950. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.09.015>
- Stumbo, N. J., & Pegg, S. (2005). Travelers and tourists with disabilities: a matter of priorities and loyalties. In *Tourism Review International* (Vol. 8). www.cognizantcommunication.com
- Tsai, C.-Y. (2011). The physical disabilities' travel behaviors. In *Global Journal of Business Management* (Vol. 5, Issue 5). www.internationalscholarsjournals.org

- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Disability. 2017. Retrieved March 20, 2022, from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/promoting-accessible-tourism-for-all.html>
- Var, T., Yeşiltaş, M., Yayli, A., & Öztürk, Y. (2011). A study on the travel patterns of physically disabled people. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(6), 599–618. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2011.610143>
- Williams, C. (2007). View of Research Methods.pdf. *Journal of Business and Economic Research*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.19030/jber.v5i3.2532>
- World Health Organization. (2015). *WHO Global Disability Action Plan, 2014-2021: better health for all people with disability*.
- World Health Organization (2021). Retrieved March 20, 2022, from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>.
- World Health Organization., & World Bank. (2011). *World report on disability*. World Health Organization.
- World Tourism Organization. (2016). Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: Principles, Tools and Best Practices – Module I: Accessible Tourism – Definition and Context, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284418077>
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (n.d.-a). Retrieved March 20, 2022, from <https://www.unwto.org/unwto-and-fundacion-once-deliver-international-recognition-of-accessible-tourist-destinations-at-fitur>.
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (n.d.-b). Retrieved March 20, 2022, from <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-in-2030-agenda>.
- Yau, M. K. Sang, McKercher, B., & Packer, T. L. (2004). Traveling with a disability - More than an Access Issue. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(4), 946–960. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2004.03.007>

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Dear participant,

Thank you in advance for answering my invitation to take this survey.

This is a questionnaire for a dissertation for Masters in International Management of IBS – ISCTE Business School. The research objective is to better understand the perceptions regarding accessible tourism in Portugal. Your answers, as a crucial part of the data gathering process, will be used only for the purpose of this project.

The overall time to complete the survey should be less than 6-7 minutes. You are kindly asked to answer all the questions. Your responses will be anonymous and will be treated confidentially.

Your participation is highly valued and appreciated. If there are any questions, feel free to contact me through mail: afcgs@iscte-iul.com

Thank you for your participation.

Group I – Screening Questions

Do you have a disability? (If the answer is “No”, the questionnaire will end)

- Yes

- No, but I am a carer of a person with disability

- No

Have you ever visited Portugal? (If the answer is “No”, the questionnaire will end)

- Yes

- No

Group II – Destination Features

What is your level of agreement with the following statements?

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

Physical Accessibility

1. Most public toilets in Portugal are accessible and adapted to people with disabilities.
2. I had no difficulty in travelling because there is adapted or suitable transportation for people with disabilities.
3. Tourist attractions in Portugal are accessible and meet the needs of people with disabilities.
4. Whenever I travelled by car, I found a parking space reserved for people with disabilities.
5. Stores, restaurants and other destination services I visited were accessible and responsive to the needs of people with disabilities.

Information Safety and Recreation

6. I was able to find reliable information quickly and adapted to my disability while planning and during the whole trip.
7. I was able to participate in recreational activities (cultural and nature) as they are accessible to people with disabilities.
8. I felt safe while visiting Portugal.
9. I consider the personnel qualified and trained in the field of accessible tourism.

Welcoming Atmosphere

10. I felt safe in Portugal as I knew there was good medical support if needed.
11. I was always able to be escorted by my guide dog during the whole trip.
12. I have never felt discriminated against or negatively treated by travel agents and/or the local community.
13. I believe that Portugal is a value for money destination.

14. I felt supported and welcomed throughout my trip

Group III – Portugal as an accessible tourist destination

What is your level of agreement with the following statements?

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

15. Overall, I consider Portugal to be an accessible tourist destination.

16. I am aware of all the initiatives Portugal has taken in the domain of accessible tourism (All for All, Beach for All, Tour4All).

Group IV – Demographics

17. What is the type of your disability or the disability of the person you take care of?

- Hearing
- Mental
- Physical
- Visual

18. What is the level of your disability or the disability of the person you take care of?

- Less than 75%
- Equal or higher than 75%

19. What is your mobility level or the mobility level of the person you take care of?

- Reduced
- Somewhat reduced

20. Do you or the person you take care of need help to move?

- Yes

- No

21. Did you require assistance to fill this questionnaire?

- Yes
- No

22. How old are you?

- <18
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- >55

23. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say

24. What is your occupation?

- Student
- Employed
- Unemployed
- Retired

25. What is your higher educational level?

- Middle School or equivalent
- High School
- Some college
- Undergraduate

- Graduate or more

26. What is your nationality? (show the list of countries)

Group V – Psychographics

27. With whom do you usually travel the most with?

- Family
- Friends
- Alone
- Other

28. What kind of activities do you prefer?

- Beach
- Countryside
- Mountain
- City
- Hot springs/thermal spas

29. What kind of trips do you usually do?

- Domestic
- International

Thank you again for your participation!

If you have any comments or suggestions, feel free to send me an email: afcgs@iscte-iul.com

Appendix 2 – Tables

Table A.1 - Questionnaire's Micro-structure

Dimensions	Variables	Item	Sources
Screening Questions	Sub-screening questions	Do you have a disability?	(Figueiredo et al., 2012)
		Have you ever visited Portugal?	(Montenegro et al., 2014)
Destination Features	Physical Accessibility	Most public toilets in Portugal are accessible and adapted to people with disabilities.	(Figueiredo et al., 2012)
		I had no difficulty in travelling because there is adapted or suitable transportation for people with disabilities	
		Tourist attractions in Portugal are accessible and meet the needs of people with disabilities.	
		Whenever I travelled by car, I found a parking space reserved for people with disabilities.	
		Stores, restaurants and other destination services I visited were accessible and responsive to the needs of people with disabilities.	
	Information Safety and Recreation	I was able to find reliable information quickly and adapted to my disability while planning and during the whole trip.	
		I was able to participate in recreational activities (cultural and nature) as they are accessible to people with disabilities.	
		I felt safe while visiting Portugal.	
		I consider the personnel qualified and trained in the field of accessible tourism	
	Welcoming Atmosphere	I felt safe in Portugal as I knew there was good medical support if needed	
		I was always able to be escorted by my guide dog during the whole trip.	
		I have never felt discriminated against or negatively treated by travel agents and/or the local community	
		I believe that Portugal is a value for money destination.	
		I felt supported and welcomed throughout my trip	

Table A.1- Questionnaire's Micro-structure (cont.)

Dimensions	Variables	Item	Sources
Portugal as an accessible tourist destination	Portugal as an accessible tourist destination	Overall, I consider Portugal to be an accessible tourist destination.	(Calheiros, 2020)
		I am aware of all the initiatives Portugal has taken in the domain of accessible tourism (All for All, Beach for All, Tour4All).	
Demographics	Type of Disability	What is the type of your disability or the disability of the person you take care of?	(Figueiredo et al., 2012)
	Disability Level	What is the level of your disability or the disability of the person you take care of?	
	Mobility Level	What is your mobility level or the mobility level of the person you take care of?	
	Movement Assistance	Do you or the person you take care of need help to move?	
	Filling Assistance	Did you require assistance to fill this questionnaire	
	Age	How old are you?	
	Gender	What is your gender?	
	Occupation	What is your occupation?	
	Education Level	What is your higher educational level?	
	Nationality	What is your nationality? (show the list of countries)	
Psychographics	Travelling Partner	With whom do you usually travel the most with?	(Buhalisa & Michopouloub, 2011)
	Travelling Preferences	What kind of activities do you prefer?	(Figueiredo et al., 2012)
	Travelling Type	What kind of trips do you usually do?	

Table A.2 - Descriptive Analysis

Dimension	Variable	Item	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Destination Features	PHY_1	Most public toilets in Portugal are accessible and adapted to people with disabilities.	2.93	3	1.090	1	5
	PHY_2	I had no difficulty in travelling because there is adapted or suitable transportation for people with disabilities.	2.84	3	1.034	1	5
	PHY_3	Tourist attractions in Portugal are accessible and meet the needs of people with disabilities.	2.77	3	0.958	1	5
	PHY_4	Whenever I travelled by car, I found a parking space reserved for people with disabilities.	2.98	3	0.962	1	5
	PHY_5	Stores, restaurants and other destination services I visited were accessible and responsive to the needs of people with disabilities.	2.74	2	1.068	1	5
	INF_1	I was able to find reliable information quickly and adapted to my disability while planning and during the whole trip.	3.18	3	1.069	1	5
	INF_2	I was able to participate in recreational activities (cultural and nature) as they are accessible to people with disabilities.	3.17	3	0.978	1	5
	INF_3	I felt safe while visiting Portugal.	3.31	3	0.865	1	5
INF_4	I consider the personnel qualified and trained in the field of accessible tourism.	3.16	3	0.990	1	5	

Table A.2- Descriptive Analysis (cont.)

Dimension	Variable	Item	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Destination Features	WEL_1	I felt safe in Portugal as I knew there was good medical support if needed.	3.74	4	0.966	1	5
	WEL_2	I was always able to be escorted by my guide dog during the whole trip.	3.60	4	0.782	2	5
	WEL_3	I have never felt discriminated against or negatively treated by travel agents and/or the local community.	3.78	4	0.908	2	5
	WEL_4	I believe that Portugal is a value for money destination.	3.72	4	0.814	1	5
	WEL_5	I felt supported and welcomed throughout my trip.	3.73	4	0.839	1	5
Portugal - Accessible tourist destination	PT_1	Overall, I consider Portugal to be an accessible tourist destination.	3.16	3	0.680	2	5
	PT_2	I am aware of all the initiatives Portugal has taken in the domain of accessible tourism (All for All, Beach for All, Tour4All).	3.03	3	0.760	1	5