

*Research Paper***The integration of artisans into the tourism industry: the case study of Barcelos UNESCO Creative City***Submitted in 10, October 2022**Accepted in 16, November 2022**Evaluated by a double-blind review system***DANIELLE PIMENTEL DE OLIVEIRA^{1*}**
VÂNIA COSTA²**ABSTRACT**

Purpose: The study analyses the inclusion of artisans in the tourism business sector in the creative city of Barcelos. It also provides a complementary analysis of the development of tourism enterprises after the COVID-19 period.

Methodology: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with different Stakeholders, in-depth documentary analysis of the total number of active artisans in the municipality, complementing the study with the analysis of entrepreneurship indicators of the Municipality of Barcelos, before and immediately after the COVID-19 period, using the SABI database.

Findings: It has been possible to identify the evolution of the business fabric of companies related to the tourism sector in Barcelos in the period of 2019 and 2020, observing the integration of craftsmanship in the economic environment, and the decline at the global level. Furthermore, the extension of creative tourism, its impact in the COVID-19 period and its transcendence in the economic environment of the destination were verified.

Research limitations/implications: As it was not possible to verify the integration of active artisans in the tourism enterprises (through the SABI database), personal interviews were conducted with actors in the destination related to the development of creative tourism.

Originality/Value: This research provides data that facilitates the understanding of the development of local entrepreneurship, and the identification of new business opportunities in the region. The degree of integration of craft activities, which identifies Barcelos as a creative city, is recognised as a new tool for competitiveness and good governance policies. This study reflects that despite the fundamental role of crafts in the development of regional tourism, the crafts activity segment does not appear as an integral part of the tourism activity sector.

Keywords: Creative Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Tourism enterprises, Municipality of Barcelos, Portugal, COVID-19.

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1. Introduction

Although Portugal experienced a significant increase in the number of visitors in 2019, the benefit of these tourist flows is rather marginal (Remoaldo, 2020). Portuguese tradition and culture are important tourist attractions in general, but in particular, inland areas such as Barcelos do not fully perceive this boost that the country has been enjoying since mid-2014.

Portugal presented a growth of 7.9% in 2019, compared to the previous year, positioning itself as the 5th country with the highest balance (13.1 billion euros) in the European tourism balance. This meant a total of tourist arrivals, before the COVID-19 pandemic, of approximately 24.6 million in 2019 (INE, 2020b).

Events such as the pandemic in 2020 and its effects on the tourism sector, as well as the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, are undoubtedly factors of tension and uncertainty that may harm the economic recovery of tourism activities throughout Europe (UNWTO, 2022). Future scenarios are highly complex and unstable for the tourism sector if war breaks out at the European level.

Chaos theory (Russell and Faulkner, 1999) indicates that individual differences and random externalities have the potential to precipitate large readjustments in positive feedback processes, prevailing non-linear, self-organized and adaptive relationships, capable of generating new and emerging scenarios. In this sense, the processes of change or new scenarios in the tourism environment, seen through the prism of 'Chaos Theory', indicate disruptive processes of major readjustments, with the potential to generate new and emerging scenarios that can be promising for the sector.

After being recognised as a member of the 'Creative Cities Network' (UNESCO, 2014), Barcelos, a city located in the northern region of Portugal, began to bet heavily on this aspect of tourism, as one of the tools for the development of the territory, however, the arrival of the pandemic, changed the plans globally, also affecting inland destinations such as Barcelos that present local culture as one of its best attractions.

According to the literature, several studies state that after COVID-19, the tourism trend has changed, increasing the search for inland and proximity destinations, away from mass tourism, with experiences closer to the local autochthony (Pimentel de Oliveira et al., 2022; Remoaldo, 2020; Vargas Sanchez, 2020; Sintes González, 2020; Padrón Fumero & Hernández Martín, 2020; Vera-Rebollo & Ivars-Baidal, 2020; Couret, 2020; among others).

In this sense, inland destinations, such as Barcelos, have great competitive advantages, as they are configured as quiet destinations with interesting tourist attractions based on local business initiatives, within the context of the Portuguese tradition.

According to Barr (1990), tourism development on Whitsundays Island in Australia shows that local-scale entrepreneurial initiatives can contribute to tourism development in the participatory phase. Snepenger et al. (2016) and Ferreira et al. (2018), find that new local businesses in an emerging destination are an important source of job creation and economic growth, stabilising the economies of tourism-dependent communities.

The government-supported academic initiative in New Zealand successfully implemented creative tourism and created new businesses related to bone carving, bronze casting, weaving and catering, among others (Richards & Wilson, 2007).

In this context, this article has as its object of study the tourism activity developed in the municipality, specifically in the context of the incorporation of artisans as an integral part of Barcelos' tourism sector enterprises. The importance of achieving the proposed objective is explained in the following paragraph: "The importance of recognizing this factor of inclusion of artisans, as part of the driving force of tourism in the municipality, will reinforce the reactivation of handicrafts, strongly affected by COVID-19".

As a complement, the study analyses the evolution of companies in the tourism sector based in Barcelos, as well as their development after the COVID-19 period. For this purpose, the entrepreneurship indicators of the 'Concelho de Barcelos' were analysed, before and immediately after the COVID-19 period, such as the total number of enterprises, the number of new enterprises, the rate of entry of new enterprises and the rate of 'mortality' of enterprises, as well as the survey of the total number of active artisans, who carry out the arts and crafts of the municipality.

The present study makes a reflection on the case study of Barcelos and the importance of handicraft as a tourist product and the development of Barcelos. The study also intends to reflect that despite the importance of handicraft in tourism, when we analyse the data of the tourism sector, the handicraft activity segment does not appear as an integral part of the tourism activity sector, so the statistical data of the tourism sector does not reflect the handicraft activity.

The research is organised into six sections: the first part deals with the introduction to the topic under study; the second part carries out an exhaustive review of the bibliography related to Creative Tourism, bringing the state of the art; the third part places Barcelos in the context of creative tourism and briefly presents its companies related to the tourism sector; then, the fourth part presents the methodology used, followed by the results and finally the conclusions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Creative Tourism

The disruptive process of tourism overgrowth occurs in the 1990s, from new tourism perspectives that begin to have more relaxed tourism, with local people and their culture as unique attractions (Richard et al., 1998; Mossberg, 2007). The change in mentality and the automation of tourism reached its peak around the 2000s (Richard, 2001) when tourists began to reject the 'MacCulturisation' of tourism (Ritzer, 2013) and to seek new experiences closer to the destination's autochthonousness, thus emerging the seed of creative tourism.

Creative tourism is then defined as tourism that allows visitors to develop creative potential through active participation in recreational activities, courses and experiences that in some way characterise the culture of the destination they visit (Richard & Raymond, 2000) through the co-creation of the tourism product.

The shift in tourism dynamics towards the introduction of creative tourism in the 1990s marks the beginning of major development within studies related to mass tourism (de Bruin & Jelinčić, 2016) and tourism in general.

This new perspective (and taking up the idea of chaos theory and positive feedback processes in situations of change), brought another approach to the tourism sector, which, according to Florida (2002), laid the foundation for creativity to be seen as "a major

driving force" in the development not only of small regions but of cities and even nations, thus giving rise to the "creative class".

Since then, local administrations and supranational institutions have made significant investments (European Commission, 2021a; European Commission, 2021b; UNESCO, 2014; Creative Tourism Network, 2017; Barcelos Cidade Criativa, 2017; Câmara de Barcelos, 2022; de Bruin & Noyes, 2014; UN 2010 in de Bruin & Jelinčić, 2016; Raymond, 2007; MICT, 2022, among others) in the direction of capitalising on local creativity. Richards (2011 in de Bruin & Jelinčić, 2016) argues that this trend puts culture and creativity through broader instrumentalisation processes leading to initiatives that in turn affect the tourism sector as a whole.

Today, the scope of creative tourism has broadened considerably, with creative performances and spaces encompassing different groups among a large number of categories of creativity. This leads Banks and O'Connor (2009, in de Bruin & Jelinčić, 2016) to argue that the idea of "creative industries" may be outdated. Against this idea, they highlight the global financial crisis experienced between 2008 and 2009 which, to a large extent, was the driving force behind many opportunities within the economy, giving greater visibility to creative tourism. A situation also experienced with the pandemic crisis of 2020/2021, and very likely to be repeated with future tourism trends that will reinforce local and inland tourism if Russia's invasion of Ukraine spills over into a Europe-wide war (de Bruin & Jelinčić, 2016).

The term creative tourism has its roots in the EUROTEx project initiated in 1998, a programme that aimed at promoting cultural and craft tourism, also promoting nature travel among craft producers, designers and teachers in countries such as Finland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Japan, Portugal and Greece (Richard et al., 1998). In the EUROTEx project, the authors present the co-creation of experiences through the participation of tourists in activities that involve the local population in creative processes, related to their autochthonous, taking into account the resources available at the destination.

Mowinckel (2016:195) describes creative tourism as one "in which the visitor has an educational, emotional, social and participatory interaction with the place, its culture and its natives". HOSTELTUR (2020) reinforces that the "implementation of Creative Tourism facilitates the reduction of the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis, creating an environment that stimulates the deseasonalisation of the destination", as it focuses on the "co-creation" of unique experiences from the existing resources of the destination, through the participation of the local population in creative processes related to the nativeness of the tourist territory".

The interactions, conversations and co-creative experiences that occur through creative tourism are not only economically valuable, "but also stimulate the development of new ideas, products and services" (Creatour, 2017:2).

Creative tourism offers many possibilities for small destinations that have an attractive intangible heritage. According to the OCDE (2014) report, intangible heritage has become one of the most important aspects of tourism experiences. However, Richard (2019) warns that creative tourism is not a panacea and the experience of small cities that have wanted to copy the example of large 'creative cities' has largely been a negative experience (Lewis & Donald, 2009). Therefore, it is necessary to see creativity as a way to maximise the potential of the destination, increasing capacity development and

competitiveness (Porter, 1987), as attracting and retaining talent is a complicated challenge (Florida, 2002).

The amplifying and multiplying character of the tourism sector stems from its transversality towards the different sectors that make it up, which are linked, sometimes and at the same time, to culture and leisure, accommodation, catering and/or transport logistics. Because of this uniqueness, tourism must be linked to social aspects of local development which, "in addition to the economic component, must include the value and meaning it should have for the host communities" (Remoaldo, 2020:264). (Bucci et al., 2014:44), state in their theoretical model on endogenous growth, that "cultural investment has a positive impact on economic growth and income levels as long as the economy is sufficiently culture-intensive". In other words, cities such as Barcelos, which have administrative participation, through the development of cultural actions that involve the citizens, would have a significant economic impact in the short term.

By way of summary, Table 1 presents the facts surrounding creative tourism until the arrival of COVID-19 and the resumption of tourism in 2022.

Table 1. The passage of Creative tourism. Some significant events

Year	Fact
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disruptive process of tourism growth, search for more relaxed tourism; Shift in tourism dynamics towards the introduction of tourism activities related to local culture.
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eurotex Project - Roots of Creative Tourism (Richard et al., 1998)
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejection of "MacCulturisation"; Definition of Creative Tourism (Richard and Raymond, 2009).
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergence of the "Creative Class" (Florida, 2002); Several supranational institutions start to bet on Creative Tourism (European Commission, 2021a; European Commission, 2021b; UNESCO, 2014; Creative Tourism Network, 2017; Barcelos Creative City, 2017; Chamber of Barcelos, 2022; MICT, 2022, among others).
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Crisis, driver of many economic opportunities; Greater visibility for creative tourism.
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture and creativity as instruments for broader initiatives (Richard, 2011).
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Health Crisis; Total paralysis of tourism; Closure of many companies in the tourism sector; Confinement and closure of artisanal production.
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative tourism facilitates the reduction of the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis.
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible resumption of tourism.

Source: Own elaboration

2.2. Creative Tourism in Barcelos

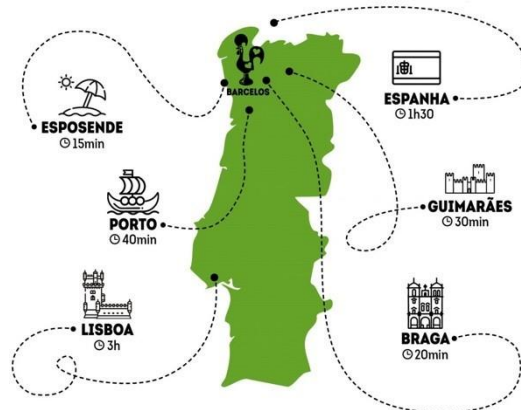
The Municipality of Barcelos is located in the north of Portugal, in the district of Braga, has a population of approximately 117 thousand inhabitants (INE, 2021) and has 61 districts (municipalities) with the city of the same name as its capital.

A city belonging to a region that presents a cultural and ethnological heritage significantly rooted and with a relevant potentiality due to the variety of arts and crafts (Ferreira et al. 2021). Therefore, the study focuses its research on this municipality, seeking to respond

to the integration of artisans in the tourism industry, in a unique enclave for Portuguese handicrafts.

Its privileged location, only 40 minutes from Porto airport and one and a half hours from Spain, provides it with the necessary access to become an inland tourist destination par excellence, as it is also very close to emerging destinations such as Braga, Guimarães, Porto and Lisbon (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Barcelos Location



Source: IPCA (2020)

Barcelos is a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UNESCO, 2014) and has been certified as a Creative Friendly Destination by the Creative Tourism Network (2017b), being awarded in 2019 as a Sustainable Cultural Tourism Destination. Its candidature to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network is based on the existence of a local creative community with national recognition.

The nomination aimed to value and support the region's creative workshops and traditional artisans. In addition to seeking to promote and encourage artistic and creative projects, stimulate cooperation with other external poles, promote creative tourism and encourage the emergence of new businesses, thus structuring a new development paradigm, betting on international networking to give sustainability to the local creative reality (Barcelos Cidade Criativa, 2017a).

This type of tourism has been established in Barcelos for almost two decades, built and strengthened around the traditional arts and crafts of clay, embroidery, looms, wood, iron, choir and wicker that promote tourist experiences, where the tourist co-creates, being part of the Barcelos tradition. In this environment, the handicraft workshops stand out, with painting workshops of the Gallo de Barcelos, the basketry workshop, and the 'crivo' embroidery workshop, among others. In addition to crafts, there is also a firm commitment on the part of the local administration to the revitalisation of intangible heritage, through culinary arts programmes, with traditional gastronomy workshops as a base; promotion of local wine, with interaction in the vineyard activity, grape harvest and wine and chocolate tasting, with a chocolate factory that is over 100 years old; visits to the olive and olive oil cycle, nature tours and equestrian experiences, in addition to events such as medieval markets and craft fairs (Creative Tourism Network, 2017a).

In terms of creative tourism, Barcelos is a benchmark for innovation within the new paradigm of tourism, based on the solid foundation of its cultural tradition.

According to the authorities belonging to the 'Barcelos Creative City Team', "this factor constitutes a highly positive and differentiating element, in a cluster (that of creative tourism) that is still little exploited in the country and, therefore, is synonymous with unique business opportunities" (Creative Tourism Network, 2017b:1).

3. Methodology

The methodology applied to this research is based on primary and secondary data collection. For the research objectives that are consistent with the methodology, a qualitative literature review study and, on the other hand, a quantitative analysis was carried out.

In the first phase, the bibliographic analysis was based on an academic review of articles published in scientific journals and productions, and in the Web of Science database, seeking to prioritise scientific rigour and the level of demand (Garrigos-Simon et al., 2018; Merigó & Yang, 2017).

Subsequently, and continuing the qualitative analysis, personal interviews were conducted (Kallio et al., 2016; Komppula, 2014), with semi-structured focus interviews, providing greater flexibility to the study. The choice of this methodology facilitates accurate information about the research allowing the interviewee to express themselves spontaneously, since according to (Janesick, 2015), it is through the questions and answers, that the construction of meanings regarding a particular topic is reached.

The selection criteria of the interviewees took into account the relevance of their businesses in the tourist environment, their location on specific routes (such as the Camino de Santiago) and the tradition and link of their business with crafts or creative tourism.

Interviews were conducted with the associations, the technicians of the tourist information office and different traders of the area linked to creative tourism.

In a second phase, already in the qualitative field, the dataset of the Portuguese hotel and tourism industry was analysed, considering the classification of activities of the tourism sector of the 'Banco de Portugal' (2016), focusing on the Portuguese companies collected in the SABI database.

Thus, to perform a case study of the tourism sector companies in the territory under study, economic and financial information was collected from the balance sheets and financial reports of 589 tourism sector companies in the Barcelona region in the pre-pandemic period (the year 2019) and the pandemic period (the year 2020).

Based on the Simplified Corporate Information (IES) of the Central Balance Sheet Database of the Bank of Portugal and to analyse the different aspects of corporate dynamics we use the methodology proposed in Eurostat (European Commission, 2007). According to the proposed methodology, regarding the entry of firms, the following indicators are highlighted: total firms, through the number of firms registered at the end of the year; new firms, through the number of new firms registered during the year; rate of entry of new firms, with the ratio of new firms to total firms. As for enterprise deaths, the number of "dead" enterprises is considered, namely enterprises in dissolution, liquidation and insolvency.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Artisans in Barcelos

With the data provided by the municipal tourism strategic planning, specifically, the "Posto de Turismo de Barcelos", the Barcelos tourism office, this research was able to identify and quantify the number of active artisans in 2021. According to this source and from data and information provided in the interview held with the institution, the period of COVID-19, between 2019 and 2020, saw the total closure of activities. Table 2 shows the list of activities related to local crafts, with the total number of active artisans.

Table 2. Active artisans in 2021

Traditional arts and crafts of Barcelos	No. of active artisans	Locations
Wood	19	Palme, Vila Cova, Silva, Lijó, Galegos S.Martinho, Ucha S.Romão, Martin, Barcelos, S.Pedro, Barcelinhos, Gilmonde, Carvalhal, Milhazes, Barqueiros, Courel, Carreira
Olaria	39	Roriz, Oliveira, Galegos S.Maria, Galegos S.Martinho, Lama, Ucha, Areias S.Vicente, Areias de Vilar
Embroidery and Weaving	12	Igreja Nova, Alheira, Galego S.Martinho, VF. S. Pedro, Gilmonde, Airó, Góios, Carreira, Cambeses
Figures "Figurado"	50	Barcelinhos, Chavão, Alvito S.Pedro, Panque, Balugães, Alheira, Aguiar, Fragosos, Roriz, Oliveira, Galego S. Maria, Martim, Arcozelo, Galego S.Martinho, Manhete, Abade de Neiva, Areia de Vilar, Gilmonde, Pereira, Lama, Rio Corvo S. Eugénia, Durrães, Cambeses, Tregosa, Bastuço, Cossourado, Tamel, S. Veríssimo, Areias S.Vicente, Alheira, Barqueiros, Monte de Fralães,
Total	120	

Source: Data provided by the Barcelos Tourist Information Office (Barcelos Cidade Criativa, 2017b).

Another part of the research concerns short interviews with some actors in the field of tourism who are related to local and indigenous cultures.

In an interview with a representative of the Association of Artisans of Barcelos, it was stated that between 2019 and 2020, in the middle of the COVID-19 confinement period, most of the artisans had no other source of income, due to mobility restrictions that made it impossible for tourists to come to the destination. In addition, the interviewee reinforced that this was "a very difficult period for the artisanal sector economically and psychologically".

In other interviews, conducted as part of this research with different local traders, it was confirmed that although a higher number of tourists were observed in 2019, as indicated in the quantitative data provided above, the sector failed to have an impact in certain areas of the Borough, which reinforces the hypothesis presented that the benefit of these tourist flows is rather marginal (Ribeiro & Remoaldo, 2019).

4.2. The Agenda 2030: 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Although the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (ONU, 2016) was adopted in September 2015, it is clear that there is still a long way to go in terms of its recognition and implementation in the tourism environment and within the local population.

As it has been observed in this research, Barcelos is an inland destination, however, attentive to tourism trends, bearing in mind its current certification as a UNESCO Creative City (Barcelos Cidade Criativa, 2017a). However, establishing a transformative

vision towards economic, social and environmental sustainability requires more than certifications, it demands the involvement of its stakeholders and the implementation of the objectives outlined by the UN in a more every day and assumable way by the population.

In the interviews conducted with local actors, it was found that 85.71% of respondents stated that they do not know or have not heard of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (17 SDGs). Of the remaining respondents who claim to have heard of the 17 SDGs, 100% claim not to know with which objective the handicraft or its commercialisation would be aligned, to maintain at least one of the dimensions of sustainability (economic).

This check serves as a management tool for the local administration, as the guarantor of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (ONU, 2016).

4.3. Entrepreneurship in the tourism sector in the Municipality of Barcelos

According to the Theory of Economic Development, developed by Schumpeter (1934), the concept of entrepreneurship is closely linked to innovation, i.e. the introduction of new products, new services, new production or organisational processes, as well as new market niches.

As a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UNESCO, 2014), Barcelos presents factors related to innovation in the field of tourism, which favours local entrepreneurship, facilitating the identification of lucrative opportunities by the local population (Conceição & Costa, 2017).

After analysing the data obtained through SABI Database, it was found that at the beginning of 2019, the number of companies in the tourism sector in the Municipality of Barcelos was composed 281 companies, rising to 261 by the end of the same year (Table 3).

Table 3. Deaths and births of companies in Barcelos 2019-2020

Tourism Activity Segment	Number of enterprises					
	2019			2020		
	Beginning year	%	End year	%	End year	%
Accommodation	24	8.5%	23	8.81%	24	8.7%
Travel Agencies	12	4.3%	11	4.21%	11	4.0%
Performing Arts Activities	3	1.1%	3	1.15%	3	1.1%
Physical Wellness Activities	3	1.1%	3	1.15%	4	1.5%
Amusement parks and theme park activities	2	0.7%	2	0.77%	2	0.7%
Recreational and cultural activities	3	1.1%	3	1.15%	3	1.1%
Management of sports facilities	1	0.4%	1	0.38%	1	0.4%
Organisation of tourist entertainment activities	4	1.4%	4	1.53%	7	2.6%

Other amusement and recreation activities n.e.c.	10	3.6%	9	3.45%	9	3.3%
Catering	187	66.6%	172	65.90%	181	65.8%
Transport and logistics	32	11.4%	30	11.49%	30	10.9%
Total	281		261		275	

Source: Own elaboration based on SABI database.

This decline represents 7.12%, a survival rate that is in line with the data provided by the Bank of Portugal for the period 2019 (Cofina Media, 2021). According to the annual economic-financial indicators of non-financial companies of the Bank of Portugal, updated for 2020, there was a decrease in the profitability of companies, penalised by the pandemic, in the order of 9.7%. A more accentuated decrease in the services sector, more focused on accommodation and catering (-4.17% and -8.02%, respectively). Of these totals, 20 companies died in the Barcelos region in 2020 (Table 4).

Table 4. Deaths of companies in the tourism sector COVID-19 Period 2020

Reason for corporate death	2020
Dissolution	14
Liquidation	1
Temporarily dormant	5
Total deaths	20

Source: Own elaboration based on SABI database.

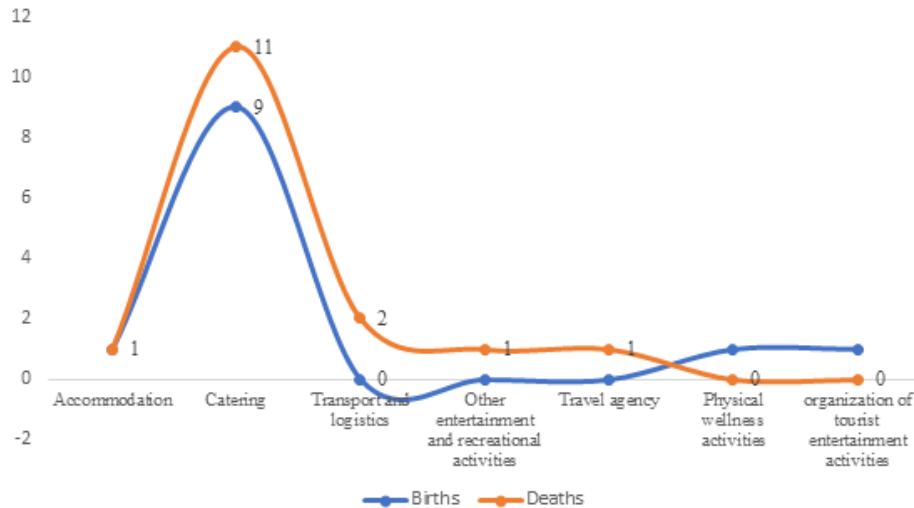
Of the total number of dead companies, 11 of them were dissolutions related to the catering sector, 1 referred to travel agencies, 1 was assigned to other entertainment and recreation activities and 1 last company was assigned as a transport and logistics company.

Regarding liquidations, the company listed in the table was a transport and logistics company.

The temporarily inactive enterprises are 4 in catering and 1 in accommodation.

The total number of business births in 2020 was also surveyed, reaching 14 births in total.

Figure 2. Ratio of business births to deaths in 2020



Source: Own elaboration based on SABI database.

Within the field of creative tourism, i.e., the sector's activities linked to the local autochthony, some companies offer accommodation with typical or charming facilities, in rural areas as well as in urban areas.

In this sense, according to data from the Statistical Yearbook of Portugal 2019 (INE, 2022), in the accommodation category, Barcelos had a total of 4.9 accommodations per 1000 inhabitants (571 tourist accommodation establishments), of which a total of 58,796 overnight stays were reported in 2019 (INE, 2019). Of this amount, 10 referred to tourist accommodation in rural areas, within the line of creative tourism.

Another category linked to creative tourism is gastronomy, within this broader scope, data from (INE, 2020a), report a total of 172 catering establishments, 125 of which are characterised as typical restaurants, within the line of creative tourism. The SABI database analysis found that in 2020, a total of 5 companies were born in this sector.

In terms of total employment generated or lost between 2019 and 2020, the data analysis reported that an average of 12 jobs have been lost, with the area of catering showing the highest variability (6%), as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Jobs in the services sector, generated in 2019 and 2020

Area	Number of employees		
	2019	2020	Var.
Accommodation	32	35	3
Travel Agencies	12	6	-6
Performing Arts Activities	5	6	1
Physical Wellness Activities	1	0	-1
Activities of amusement parks and theme parks	32	35	3
Management of sports facilities	1	2	1

Source: Own elaboration based on SABI database.

It has not been possible to identify the degree of openness of the enterprises about the artistic potential of the population; however, the previous sections demonstrated that handicrafts are part of a significant fragment of the Concelho, which must be cared for and maintained.

4.4. Discussion

The enterprises in the tourism sector in Barcelos, as well as those in other localities, suffered the impact caused by the health crisis experienced between 2019 and 2020. However, it can be observed that in the Barcelos district, 2020 shows a certain tendency towards stability in terms of the number of companies that disappeared, gradually recovering the dynamics of the last years before COVID-19.

In terms of employment, a positive variation can be observed in some sectors such as accommodation, amusement and theme park activities and management of sports facilities.

Meanwhile, it is striking that the restaurant sector did not experience the same positive variation, perhaps reflecting a trend in the US that is beginning to be seen as a global phenomenon, known as the "Great Resignation". This phenomenon, identified in data from a study commissioned by Microsoft, reveals that "more than 40% of the global workforce is evaluating the possibility of changing employers" (Bermúdez, 2021:2), due to job burnout, epiphanies or being able to structure the working day by working remotely.

On the other hand, the research was able to collect data on artisans who resumed their activities in 2021. Although without data before 2019 and without data in the SABI database, since artisans mostly fall into the category of self-employed workers and therefore are not included in the figures of the Enterprise Balance Sheet Analysis, the count of the total number of artisans, as well as their geographical distribution throughout the Municipality of Barcelos, shows the importance of crafts in the region, in terms of the distribution of the economy.

5. Conclusion and future research

The main objective of this study is to identify the integration of craftsmen in the economic sphere, reviewing their trajectory before and after the pandemic crisis and with a comparative analysis of the evolution of the business fabric of the tourism sector in the Municipality of Barcelos. Another objective of the study was to highlight the artistic potential existing in the territory.

With the analysis of data from the SABI database and the collection of information provided by the Barcelos Tourist Information Office, together with interviews with local actors, both objectives were achieved.

It has been possible to draw the evolution of deaths and births of companies in the covid-19 period, showing that the SARS-CoV-2 health crisis, experienced in 2019 and 2020, had an impact on the profitability of companies, penalised by the pandemic, forcing the

closure of a significant number of companies in the most affected sector, the tourism sector.

Various techniques were used to gain knowledge, including the use of data from the SABI database and its interpretation, as well as interviews with local actors related to the trade and arts environment.

As enterprises related to creative tourism, it has been observed that the catering sector, with typical gastronomy, is starting to restructure, with the birth of new enterprises.

From the point of view of the tourist destination, the importance of Barcelos' certification as a Creative City by UNESCO is evident. Following this process, the planning and strategy of the tourist destination, guided by the Barcelos Tourism Information Office, has provided the artisans, the entire local population and tourists with the possibility of co-creation, through participative processes. In this study, we conclude that it is essential to maintain, promote and develop the processes carried out so far, however, the implementation, as well as the promotion and identification of the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda to all its actors, is still pending.

This research constitutes an advance in knowledge as it presents factors related to innovation in the field of tourism, favouring knowledge of the development of local businesses, identifying new opportunities and the existence of entrepreneurial characteristics in the region.

The analysis of the data obtained through the SABI database showed that the business fabric of Barcelos, between 2019 and 2020, suffered a slight decline. This is a trend that has been observed throughout the tourism sector worldwide.

As a limitation of the research, it was not possible to identify the degree of openness of the companies to the artistic potential of the population, since the artisans are not included in the data of the SABI database. However, the use of the interviews filled this information gap, reinforcing the fact that handicrafts are part of an important economic fragment of Barcelos Municipality, which must be cared for and maintained.

As future research, two interesting lines of research are recommended, the first of which would be related to profiling the existence of artisans as a significant part of the economy and the possibility of this integration being reflected in study databases such as the SABI database. The second, tool for destination management, would be to address the 17 SDGs in the tourism environment, thus advancing the knowledge of the local population.

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