The National Monuments in Portugal and Public Access: impacts resulting from COVID-19.

Executive summary

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The study was conducted by the OPAC and took place between the 17th of April and the 20th of June 2020.

The OPAC (Portuguese Observatory on Cultural Activities) is a research structure created in 2018 within the Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology (CIES-Iscte), a research unit of ISCTE-IUL, Lisbon.

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The research team salutes the directors, managers and technicians of the National Monuments surveyed for their collaboration in this study through the answers and clarifications provided, despite a particularly difficult context.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents the key findings concerning a survey conducted by the OPAC between 17th April and 20th June 2020, on the impact of the pandemic caused by the new Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the National Monuments in Portugal. The survey is a module of the study "From safeguard to valorisation: National Monuments in Portugal and Public Access".

A total of 152 National Monuments (NM) answered the survey (table 1). The survey holds two open questions that sought to identify what activities and measures were carried out by the National Monuments of Portugal, following their closure to the public (138 answers, see table 2), and what responses, measures, and policies can be anticipated in the face of the changes and challenges that will arise in the near future (116 answers, see table 3).

Table 1. National Monuments sample characterization
(% in columnn)

Variables	Category	%
Public Access (2019)	Open	91,4
	Closed	4,6
	Non-visitable	3,9
Guardianship system	Ministry of Culture	23,0
	Town Hall	28,9
	Other public	14,5
	Catholic Church	18,4
	Other private	15,1
Region	Norte	45,4
	Centro	27,6
	Área Metropolitana de Lisboa	7,9
	Alentejo	15,8
	Algarve	2,6
	Madeira	0,7
Visitor echelons	Very large	2,6
	Large	9,9
	Small	20,4
	Very Small	30,3
	Without visitor control	28,3
	Not applied	8,6
	Sample	**152**

Source: OPAC, IMNP, 2020.
Legend visitor echelons: Very Large – more than 500 thousand; Large – between 100 thousand and 499,9 thousand; Small – between 10 thousand and 99,9 thousand; Very small – under 9,9 thousand.
NB: No answers were obtained from NM in the Azores Region.

The response analysis is of a qualitative nature and organized taking into consideration an extended set of 14 themes. The quantification of the themes observed in each question are shown in tables 2 and 3.

According to the analysis grid obtained from the answers of the NM, considering different structure's investments depending on size and resources, and different combinations more comprehensive or more specific, the main results are the following.

Concerning the carried-out activities and taken measures (table 2)

- In the operation of the NM, a very strong use of multiple online services;
- To communicate with public, extended use of social networks, namely Facebook, Instagram and Youtube;
- Development of different types of digital contents, cultural and otherwise;
- Offline services and activities, mainly heritage maintenance, collections maintenance and inventories;
- Staff adaptation to the new scenario.

Table 2. Answers by thematic feature: online services during closing

Thematic feature	Number
Social networks	213
Online services	140
Without online services	38
Guardianship system	28
Non cultural services	10
Maintenance	6
Employees (situation)	5
Other	4
Answers to the question (n) (response rate)	**138** (91%)

Source: OPAC, IMNP, 2020.
NB: i) non-exclusive coding; ii) the data result from the coding of valid answers to open questions.

It was also verified, although in a less extent universe, other situations during the COVID-19 closure in NM:

- NM without online services;
- NM without independent online services, since they are subordinate to a guardianship institution.

Concerning future measures and policies (table 3)

- Preparation for the resumption of face-to-face activities;
- Reinforcement of online services after public opening;
- Implementation of approved and regulated security measures that include staff and visitors;
- Technological qualification of NM's staff and equipment;
- More focus on national and local audiences and communities adapting activities;
- More audience-oriented services, mainly educational ones;
- Battle for more public policies and support from the tourism and cultural sectors in order to make up for the loss of visitors and revenues.

Table 3. Answers by thematic category: measures to be adopted in the new situation

Variables	Number
Online services	97
Safety issues	65
Resources	30
Face to face activity	17
Audiences (foreign tourists)	15
Audiences services	10
Social networks	9
Public policies	8
Maintenance	7
Other	9
Answers to the question (n) *(response rate)*	**116** (76%)

Source: OPAC, IMNP, 2020.
NB: i) non-exclusive coding; ii) the data result is a product from the coding of valid answers to in open questions.

The results also put forward the relevance of NM in the promotion – or even creation in some cases – of inhouse online services, alongside the traditional operation; on the other hand the continuity of COVID-19 impact studies is also highlighted in face of an anticipated prolonged crisis.

Covid-19 impacts on cultural heritage will be further assessed by OPAC in upcoming studies.

Other outputs of the study

Neves, José Soares, Sofia Costa Macedo & Jorge Santos (2020), "Cultural Heritage Valorisation and the public access to National Monuments" in Amoêda, Rogério, Sérgio Lira & Cristina Pinheiro (edts.), *Heritage 2020 Proceeding of the 7th International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Developement*, Green Lines Institute for Sustainable Development, Barcelos, pp. 27-37.

Neves, José Soares (coord.), Sofia Costa Macedo, Jorge Santos & Ana Paula Miranda (2020), *Da Salvaguarda à Valorização: Os Monumentos Nacionais de Portugal e a Abertura ao Público em 2019*, Lisboa, Observatório Português das Atividades Culturais, CIES-Iscte, 15 pp.

Neves, José Soares (coord.), Sofia Macedo, Maria João Lima, Jorge Santos & Ana Paula Miranda (2020), *Os Monumentos Nacionais de Portugal e a Abertura ao Público: impactos decorrentes da COVID-19*, Lisboa, Observatório Português das Atividades Culturais, CIES-Iscte, 47 pp.

Neves, José Soares (coord.), Sofia Costa Macedo, Jorge Santos & Ana Paula Miranda (2020), *Da Salvaguarda à Valorização: Os Monumentos Nacionais de Portugal e a Abertura ao Público. Primeiros resultados*, Lisboa, Observatório Português das Atividades Culturais, CIES-Iscte, 4 pp.