

# UEFA Euro 2004 Visitors Analysis

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to establish the profile of the foreign visitor that attended the UEFA Euro 2004 Championship in Portugal, namely in the Minho region. Data were collected through a one-to-one inquiry carried out before the matches that took place in *Braga* and *Guimarães*. The survey instrument included aspects like the visitors' past consumption behaviour, media audience and live attendance sport habits.

The results we got show that sport event tourists living in countries with higher *per capita* income spent more in the UEFA Euro 2004. They also stayed in the country longer than other visitors. Other valuable information for both tourism operators and tournament managers we got is that most sport event tourists decided to overnight on sites with efficient and direct accesses to the matches. Otherwise, they may be characterised as usual sport consumers in terms of active and passive sport consumption behaviour.

The return of the visitors to the sites where the UEFA Euro 2004 took place remains unsolved. Future studies should concentrate on community reimbursement and mid/long term benefits.

**Key-words:** UEFA Euro 2004; economic impact of major sport events; sports tourism

JEL-classification: C42, R11, L83, O18

## **1. Introduction**

On the occasion of the World Tourism Day, celebrated worldwide on September 27<sup>th</sup>, the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) produced a joint message. In those messages, both enhanced the role of major and minor competition and leisure sports events in the improvement of “the tourism image of the host destination”. Sport and tourism stimulates the “investment in infrastructure such as airports, roads, stadiums, sporting complexes, hotels and restaurants”. The same infrastructure is as well “enjoyed by the local population”, they added, benefiting tourism and sport as factors of economic growth, employment and revenue as well as bringing people together and helping to “forge strong personal relationships”.

Historically speaking, sport has played a minor role in tourism supply opportunities and options. “Tourism has usually been studied in terms of travel patterns, typology, financial implications, general activity movements, as well as the demand-supply equation and service developments. Travel motivation studies often refer to pleasure, religion, culture, business and the like” (Zauhar 2004, p.6).

Sport tourism is a recent cultural phenomenon. Billions of Euro and many hundreds of thousands of visitors are involved every year in it. Sport tourism is one of the service industry elements that has shown best growth rates over the last decades. One of the most important reasons behind this fact is the increase of global interest and attention paid to sport events and mass media coverage. But, sport tourism events do not only fascinate tourists and spectators, they also have the potential of attracting “non-resident media, technical personnel, athletes, coaches and other sports officials” (Zauhar 2004, p.16).

As stated by Zauhar (2004), sport tourism can be divided into five different categories: (i) sport tourism attractions like parks, mountains, wildlife, museums or buildings with sport related activities as their principal focus; (ii) sport tourism resorts, which includes resort complexes with sports as their primary focus and marketing strategy; (iii) sport tourism cruises, that designates boat trips that have sports or sporting activities as their principal marketing strategy; (iv) sport tourism tours, that ranges from incentive travel with sport interest themes to sport team travel with chartered transportation and accommodation; (v) sport tourism events, which refers to those sports that attract tourists of which a large percentage are spectators.

Once the scientific community noticed the importance of sport tourism, several studies started to arise. The research lines approached its psychological, physiological, cultural, social, economic, climatic, entrepreneurial and political dimensions as well as visitors destinations and active and passive participatory practises.

The present major sport event, the UEFA Euro 2004, embraces at least two academic fields: sport and tourism. Both fields are studied by several research areas, namely: geography, economics, psychology, sociology, philosophy, history. As we need to look at sport tourism as a multibillion Euro business, the field of planning and management sciences also applies.

This paper focuses on the category of sports tourism events, spotlighting visitors as spectators with specific travel destinations and budgets, as well as individual passive participatory performance. The approach tries to contribute to the filling of the existing lack of knowledge about the profile of foreign visitor attendance and respective income import to the event region. According to this, the main purpose of the paper is to establish the profile of the foreign visitor attendance of the UEFA Euro 2004 in Portugal, namely in the Minho region, e.g. *Braga* and *Guimarães*. In order to reach that result, we have analysed (i) the visitor's socio-economic characteristics, (ii) their travel conditions and respective budgets, (iii) their regular sport consumption behaviour as well as (iv) the image they got about the event they attended and the country itself.

To profile of the foreign visitor was collected through a one-to-one inquiry. The survey instrument included innovating aspects, like visitors' nationalities and usual residence country, past consumption behaviour in terms of returning active, media audience and live attendance sport habits. We have also asked the visitors about their overall expenses to attend the event.

In the next section we refer to the theoretical framework. In section three we present the methodology used in the paper and the hypotheses to be verified. In section four we approach the sample characteristics and results we got. Finally, we draw a few conclusions and tourism marketing policy implications.

## 2. Theoretical framework

As stated by Barreto (1995, p.72, based upon the work of Wahab 1977), international tourism is a worldwide economic activity that has shown its irreplaceable role in international trade as an invisible export industry of goods and services.

Tourists are consumers and the “consumer’s action at any moment depends on his assets, his current and expected future income, and current and expected future prices and interest rates” (Duesenberry 1967, p.10). These are the economic factors that define how consumers behave. In the theory of consumer behaviour, however, consumer preferences are also taken into consideration, as the consumer has a set of preferences motivated by external factors – factors existing outside the strict rational assumptions and logical reasoning – that are related to culture, education and individual tastes, among other things.

Consumer preferences can be defined as a set of subjective individual tastes measured by the utility that each consumer attributes to a certain good <sup>1</sup> – as every manual of economic theory defines – and the term ‘utility’ is nothing else than the given satisfaction that a consumer gets from the consumption of a specific good. Even though preferences are independent of income and prices, the consumers are constrained in their individual choice by their budget and the prices they pay for the particular good and the other goods that form part of their consumer basket.

The different goods can be classified by the way consumer reacts to changes in his income and changes in the goods’ price. When the demand increases as a result of the increase of consumers’ income, the good is said to be a normal good. This is the general case for available goods, but not for all of them. There are other goods whose demand decreases when income increases. They are the so-called inferior goods. Those goods whose demand increases more than proportionally to the increase of the consumer’s income are called luxury goods.

Consumption is the use of resources, goods or services to satisfy people wishes and needs. Therefore, a tourist is a consumer of tourism, being tourism a good that satisfies consumers’ needs (e.g.) of leisure and recreation. In order to be a tourism consumer, individuals must have their basic (survival) needs fulfilled. So, there is only leisure and tourism consumption if some money has left after the individual accomplishment of his basic needs (Barreto 1995).

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<sup>1</sup> When referring to goods we are always referring to commodities and services.

Since the first one given in 1911 - by *Hermann von Schullern zu Schattenhofen* (Barreto 1995) - many definitions have been developed about what tourism consists in. According to Barreto (1995), all definitions focus some common aspects, like the time permanence, the non-profit purpose of the trip, and a less explored issue that is the pursuit of pleasure. The definition of tourism industry accepted by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) states that tourism is the “sum of relations and services that result of a temporary and voluntary change of residence motivated by reasons other than professional ones or business” (De la Torre 1992, p.19).

Quoting Zauhar (2004, pp.8-9), people are travelling more and more to “indulge and satiate in a sporting environment”. This phenomenon is noticed in all levels and ages. Sport seems to represent an “universal need” and there are several ways of satisfying this need, by practising sports, watching, reading or listening to sports, by live attending sports or by simply consume sports as a way of life (life style sport consumption or sport image culture consumption). Zauhar (2004, pp.12-13) states also that nowadays sport is looked as the “world’s largest social phenomenon” and assumes that tourism will become the world’s biggest industry. The same author states that the term “sport tourism” was used for the first time in order to better understand the use of sports as a “touristic endeavour”.

The role played by sport tourism events in promoting tourism worldwide has been remarkable. The importance of sport’s spectators is today much greater than it has ever been (MacPherson & Curis 1989, quoted by Zauhar 2004, p.9). Towns without public recognition as tourism destinations have taken the short cut sport events towards a global image and audience, as “recognition effects are often a major rationale for hosting such events” (Ashworth and Goodall 1988, quoted by Jones 2001, p.241). “The decision to host a mega event usually is a political one made by a governing authority and as such is not often subject to balanced analysis” (Jones 2001, p.242). Jones (2001, p.242) adds that “the construction of an objective view can be hampered by politic parties, conflicting interests within the host society and the potentially biased viewpoint of the event organisers and corporate sponsors”. Also according to this author (Jones 2001, p242, following the view of Ritchie 1984, Getz 1991, Hall 1993 and Roche 1994), “major events can have an impact upon the host in terms of the bidding process, social effects on residents, extra expenditure and revenue generation, infrastructure legacy, and longer term effects on tourism and economic activity via media exposure and return visits”.

“A major rationale behind the hosting of hallmark events is the longer term beneficial effect, additional to direct expenditure, which such events may bring. This is hypothesised to occur through both return visits by spectators and, more importantly, through the increased investment and tourism activity that such exposure brings” (Jones 2001, p.244, basing upon the National Heritage Committee writings of 1995).

Meanwhile, expenditure impact assessments must be careful to distinguish between attendance at an event by those who are resident within and without the defined region. “Only spending by the latter can be considered truly additional, unless significant numbers of local residents would otherwise have travelled elsewhere to see the same event, thus constituting a further event benefit”, i.e. resident expenditure leakages are avoided through hosting the event (Gazel and Schwer 1997, quoted by Jones 2001, p.248).

Of the few studies made on sport tourist characteristics, Nogawa conducted a survey on Japanese sport tourists participating in the Honolulu Marathon between 1988 and 1990. The author tried to determine the “characteristics of Japanese sport tourists and their economic impact on the event site, Oahu island” (Nogawa, Yamaguchi and Hagi 1996, p.47). This study analyses sport tourists participation in sport events, that is, not just as spectators.

McKercher and Wong (2004, p.171) also have studied tourism behaviour. They stated that there are two types of tourists visiting a defined destination: “first-time and repeat visitors”. On the other hand, destinations can also serve two roles: main or secondary destination. Quoting the work of Gitelson and Crompton (1984), the same authors stated that there are five reasons why people return to a destination: risk reduction; meeting the same kind of people; emotional attachment; explore the destination more widely; and expose the destination to others. While first time tourists establish their expectations on the basis of information obtained from external sources, such as tourism suppliers, travel intermediaries, or friends or relatives, repeat tourists set their expectations on the basis of previous experiences.

Some reasons have been identified to explain why tourists might take “multidestinational trips”. Following Mckercher and Wong (2004, p.172, quoting Lue, Crompton and Fesenmaier 1993), those reasons are: the complex pattern of interdependent behaviour between trip participants wanting different needs to be satisfied; the effect of visiting friends-and-relatives travel; the desire to seek variety; the belief that, by aggregating attractions and destinations, the risk of a poor trip can be minimized; and that a variety of destinations in different locations may accommodate better tourists wishes.

Once again referring exclusively to sport event tourists, the encountered situation is probably different from the ones presented before. That is, this kind of tourists is, perhaps, a more homogenous group, as their joint main purpose is to attend a major sport event. In this UEFA Euro 2004 visitor attendance, it would be expectable that the main destination would be directly connected with the sport event and that other destination choices were related to the satisfaction of other unrelated individual leisure needs.

### **3. Methodology and hypotheses**

The data allowing us to profile the foreign visitor attendance of the UEFA Euro 2004 championship that took place in Portugal, namely in *Braga* and *Guimarães*, were collected through personal interviewing.

The survey instrument used was settled departing from the following variables groups: socio-demographics (gender, age, nationality, residence country and marital status); sports consumption behaviour (physical activity practise, sport in the media and sport live attendance); travelling conditions (with whom and how many travelling mates, overnight accommodation, number of nights and reasons behind choice); budgets involved (amounts spent in the preparation of the trip and during the stay); image of Portugal (organization, number of previous trips to Portugal, country recommendation to best friends, intention of coming again).

The instrument used envisages bringing answer to major questions like: who attended the UEFA Euro 2004? Where did they choose to stay? What were the reasons behind the choice of their overnight location? What were their sport consumption behaviours? How much did they spend? What image they got of Portugal and of the event organisation? These questions should allow us to find answers to other more complex ones, like: what was the economic impact of the sport consumption behaviour of the visitors as participants on a major sport event?

Sport consumption can be approached by several ways. In our survey, we have approached sport consumption by defining physical activity involvement, media consumption of sport contents and sports live attendance in terms of hours per week spent. Since the tourists that we profile attended a major sport event, it was interesting to find out if they had regular habits of sport live attendance or if the perceived behaviour was an exception? Were they usually

just spectators or do they also used to have regular sport activities? In this case, they were live spectators but they could also be spectators of sports in the media. Were they?

What was the relation between nationality or residence country their travel budgets? As we underlined before, in order to consume leisure and tourism is necessary that individuals have fulfilled previously their basic needs. So, there is only leisure and tourism consumption if there is some money left after the individual satisfaction of their essential needs (Barreto 1995). Therefore, it would be expected that sport tourists were individuals with a relatively high income. On the other hand this would also mean that tourists with higher income were willing to spend more in sport tourism.

What are the factors that can influence the return of the visitors of a major sport event to the event's host country or town? This has to do with the fact that one of the major motivations to host such kind of event is the additional expenditure expected from the return of the spectators (Jones 2001).

These reasoning led us to the formulation of the following seven main hypotheses groups:

H1. Visitors that usually reside in countries with higher *per capita* Gross Domestic Product (GDP) spend or are willing to spend more in the event's host country.

As previous underlined, it is expected that there is only leisure and tourism consumption after essential needs being satisfied (Barreto 1995). So, it would be expectable that individuals with higher income would be willing to spend more money in leisure, and therefore in sport tourism.

H2. Visitors that reside in countries far away from the host country spend more money preparing the trip, choose more than one overnight location and stay longer than the ones from closer origins.

One of the expenses individuals have to support when travelling is the one with transportation, e.g. flight tickets and, of course, the cost of it relates with the travelling distance. Mckercher (1998) argued that "the farther a person travels from the country of origin, the greater the number of destinations passed and the greater the likelihood of stopping". According to this guideline, it would be expected that visitors that usually reside in far away countries would stay over night in more than one location and for longer periods of time.

H3. The percentage of visitors with regular sport consumption habits is higher than the percentage of visitors who do not have usual sport consumption habits.



H3(a). The percentage of visitors who practise regular physical activity (e.g. *per week*) is higher than the percentage of visitors who, normally, do not practise regularly physical activity.

H3(b). The percentage of visitors who watch, read or listen to sports in the media is higher than the percentage of visitors who do not watch, read or listen to sports in the media.

H3(c). The percentage of visitors who usually attend sports alive is higher than the percentage of visitors who usually do not attend live sports.

H4. The percentage of visitors indicating the UEFA Euro 2004 tournament as being the main reason for choosing their overnight location is higher than the one indicating other reasons.

H4(a). The percentage of visitors justifying their overnight location by reasons like “halfway between the games I want to attend”, “was decided by the travel agency” or “to follow my team” is higher than those indicating reasons like “cheapest solution”, “I’ve got it recommended” or “to make tourism in the area”.

Quoting Nogawa, Yamaguchi and Hagi (1996), Kudo, Nogawa and Aida (1993) reported that sport tourists usually showed little interest in touristic activities such as sightseeing, souvenir shopping or city touring. They concluded that local business people should not treat tourists participating in sport events as typical tourists. So, it should be expected that sport tourists would make their decisions thinking only in the sport event and not in other visiting motives, as cultural ones.

H5. Tourists with an average active sport consumption habit of one hour or more *per week* have less potential to return to the UEFA Euro 2004 host country than those with an active sport consumption habit beneath one hour *per week*.

H5(a). The percentage of tourists that say they are willing to come again soon is higher within the tourists with usual active sport consumption habits beneath one hour *per week* than within the tourists with usual active sport consumption pattern of one or more hour *per week*.

H5(b). The percentage of tourists that will recommend to their best friend the visit to Portugal is higher within the tourists group of active sport consumption habit beneath one hour *per week* than within those tourists group with an usual active sport consumption pattern of one or more hour *per week*.

H6. Tourists with an usual passive sport consumption of media audience representing over one hour of their weekly time have less potential to return to the UEFA Euro 2004 host country than tourists with an usual passive sport consumption of media audience beneath one hour *per week*.

H6(a). The percentage of tourists saying they are willing to come again soon is higher within the tourists group with an usual passive sport consumption through media audience till one hour *per week* than within the tourists group with an usual passive sport consumption through media audience above one hour *per week*.

H6(b). The percentage of tourists that will recommend to their best friend the visit to Portugal is higher within the tourists group with an usual passive sport consumption through media audience till one hour *per week* than within the tourists group with usual passive sport consumption through media audience above one hour *per week*.

H7. Tourists with usual passive sport consumption through live attendance of one hour or more *per week* have less potential to return to the UEFA Euro 2004 host country than tourists with usual passive sport consumption through live attendance under one hour *per week*.

H7(a). The percentage of tourists stating they are willing to come again soon is higher within the tourists group with an usual passive sport consumption through live attendance under one hour *per week* than within the tourists group with an usual passive sport consumption through live attendance of one hour or more *per week*.

H7(b). The percentage of tourists that will recommend to their best friend the visit to Portugal is higher within the tourists with an usual passive sport consumption through live attendance under one hour *per week* than within the tourists group with an usual passive sport consumption through live attendance of one hour or more *per week*.

The last three hypotheses are reasonable assumptions of the (sport) tourists' usual sport consumption habits, as the UEFA Euro 2004 sport event would have been their main purpose of attendance in Portugal. Sport tourists with no sport consumption habits, specifically sport live attendance, may have come to Portugal for other reasons but the UEFA Euro 2004 and, if they enjoyed their stay, they might come back, even when no sport event is hosted in the country.

The interviewing took place in the surroundings of the *Braga* and *Guimarães* stadia, between three and one hours before the UEFA Euro 2004 matches. To become interviewed, tourists had to confirm they had: (i) an individual ticket to the respective game; (ii) more than 14 years old; and (iii) no residence in Portugal. Generally speaking, our sample is representative, as the method used was random, meaning that everyone in the target group "foreigners attending" had the same probability of being chosen to be asked.

The sample was composed by 912 individuals and it represents the universe of all foreign spectators of the matches that took place in the *Minho* region.

A team of ten interviewers was organized. In each match, each interviewer had to carry out about 30 interviews in English. Four to five hours before the beginning of the competition (depending on the public transportation logistics for each stadium), a meeting was held within the field research team to settle final field research details, despite all the previous comprehensive training sessions all interviewers attended.

As a final methodological note regarding this paper, following Zauhar (2004, p.16) we should make clear that we consider 'sport tourism events' as "sports activities that attract tourists of which a large percentage are spectators", having the "the potential to attract non-resident media, technical personnel, athletes, coaches and other sports officials", When referring to sport tourists, we are referring to people who travel to a region (or country), other than they live in, to attend a sport event. In this case, the major sport event to attend was UEFA Euro Championship 2004.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. The sample**

In this section we will make a brief presentation of the sample characteristics, namely the tourists' nationality, gender, age, usual residence country and marital status. Data are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Sample characteristics**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Born in (n=912)</b>		
Denmark	298	<b>32,7%</b>
Netherlands	184	20,2%
Italy	181	19,8%
Bulgária	95	10,4%
Látvia	44	4,8%
England	20	2,2%
<b>Gender (n=904)</b>		
Male	744	<b>82,3%</b>
Female	160	17,7%
<b>Age (n=904)</b>		
14-19	24	2,7%
20-24	120	13,3%
25-29	231	<b>25,6%</b>
30-34	166	18,4%
35-39	97	10,7%
40-44	100	11,1%
45-49	56	6,2%
50-54	62	6,9%
55-59	24	2,7%
60-64	19	2,1%
65+	5	0,6%
<b>Usual Residence Country (n=909)</b>		
Denmark	285	<b>31,3%</b>
Netherlands	183	20,1%
Italy	136	15,0%
Bulgária	69	7,6%
Látvia	42	4,6%
England	40	4,4%
Switzerland	20	2,2%
Germany	19	2,1%
<b>Marital Status (n=911)</b>		
Single	424	<b>46,5%</b>
Married	331	36,3%
Living together	132	14,5%
Divorced	16	1,8%
Widow	4	0,4%
Separated	4	0,4%

Source: NIPE UEFA Euro 2004 Visitors Database

Notes: We only present representative nationalities and usual residence countries, considering representative when 'n' is at least equal 20. Exceptionally, we also consider Germany (n=19).

Other respondents born in: Germany (n=13), United States of America (n=10), Japan (n=10), China (n=9), Switzerland (n=8), Australia (n=8), United Kingdom except England (n=6), Canada (n=6), Portugal (non-residents in Portugal, n=4), Norway (n=3), France (n=2), New Zealand (n=2), Cyprus (n=2), Finland (n=2), Spain (n=1), Russia (n=1), Israel (n=1), Argentina (n=1) and Ireland (n=1).

Other usual residence countries: United States of America (n=16), France (n=12), Spain (n=11), Australia (n=11), United Kingdom except England (n=11), Japan (n=10), Canada (n=9), China (n=7), Belgium (n=5), Norway (n=5), Luxembourg (n=3), Sweden (n=2), New Zealand (n=2), South Africa (n=2), Cyprus (n=2), Finland (n=2), Hong Kong (n=1), Austria (n=1), Romania (n=1) and Ireland (n=1).

As table 1 shows, Danish, Dutch, Italian, Bulgarian, Latvian and English tourists represented about 90% of the tourists attending the UEFA Euro 2004 matches in these two cities. This had largely to do with the national teams which were competing in the *Minho* towns. The most

frequent nationality is the one of the team playing in both *Braga* and *Guimarães*, namely, Denmark.

Regarding the tourists gender, the difference between male and female tourists is remarkable: male foreign tourists having an incidence of 82,3%. When analysing the tourists age, 25,6% of them had ages between 25 and 29 years, and 79% were between 20 and 44 years old.

In relation to “residence country”, Danish are again the most frequent, representing 78,5%. Bulgarian tourists represented 10,4% of the total represented nationalities, nevertheless, Bulgaria as residence country only represents 7,6%, meaning that a significant percentage of Bulgarians didn't come from Bulgaria. The opposite happens with English tourists: while 2,2% of the sport event tourists were English, twofold as many sport tourists attending the event were usually living in England. This is possibly connected to the fact that England is a typical European immigrant country.

When looking at the tourists' marital status, singles and married represented 97% of the total: singles represent 46,5%, married 36,3% and sport event tourists in a 'living together' marital relationship 14,5%.

#### **4.2. Regular sport consumption behaviour**

Sport consumption can be measured in several ways. In this section, we analyse the tourists' sport consumption behaviour through the analysis of their weekly spent number of hours.

Interestingly, despite the general assumption that regular sport fans must be the great majority of the total number of attendants of a major sport event, 30,4% of the respondents to our questionnaire stated that, normally, they did not attend alive sport events. 9,3% of all respondents, even declare they did not practise regularly any physical activity.

Within the representative nationalities group, Latvian tourists were those with the highest mean in hours spend *per week* in regular physical activity. English sport event tourists were the ones that usually spend more time, in average, watching, reading or listening to sports in the media; Considering the sample, Danish sport event tourists were the ones spending more time in sport live attendance.

#### **4.3. Travelling Settings**

Regarding travelling arrangements, it is noticeable that only 3,9% of UEFA Euro 20004 sport tourists travelled alone and the absolute majority defined their travel mates as 'friends'. The

size of the travel group is also an interesting aspect to consider: when travelling with relatives, in 91,9% of the cases the travel groups did not get bigger than four additional mates; nearly 50% travelled with only one single relative; if travelling with friends, the situation was quite different - only 36,7% travelled with a single relative and 67,4% travelled with 4 mates. The remaining 32,6% visitors refers to groups bigger than six elements.

The overnight analysis shows that only 22,7% of all sport event tourists stayed more than one night in the same location. The large majority of sport event tourists visiting the cities of *Guimarães* and/or *Braga* in order to attend the four UEFA Euro 2004 matches did not overnight in these cities. In fact, only 21,6% considered transforming *Guimarães* and/or *Braga* into their primary overnight location, and 12% chose *Braga* as their secondary overnight location.

The cities capitalising more sport event tourists after *Guimarães* and *Braga* together (21,6%) were *Porto* (19,2%), *Vigo* (9,5%) and Lisbon (6,6%), for the primary overnight location and Lisbon (26,5%) and *Porto* (24%), for the secondary overnight location. It is also remarkable that only 33,4% of the sport event tourists have chosen their primary overnight location within cities of the *Minho* region.

If we change once again our mode of analysis and regard the overnight in terms of its sea proximity – that is, if the respective city has an direct access to the sea – 61,5% of the cities chosen as primary overnight locations had a direct sea access. This percentage is even greater when looking at the secondary overnight location decisions of the sport event tourists: in 81,7% of the cases sport event tourists chose overnight locations within cities having a direct sea access.

#### **4.4. Involved budgets**

The individual budgets needed to prepare the trip were quite similar to the one sport event tourists intended to spend during their stay. Analysing the average amounts spent in the residence countries to prepare the trip, we verify that tourists usual living in Bulgaria were the ones that spent more (1.175,80 Euro), followed closely by the those living in Denmark (941,22 Euro), in Latvia (929,76 Euro) and in England (926,38 Euro). Considering the average amount the tourists spent or were willing to spend during their stay, the tourists living in England were the ones that spent or were willing to spend more (1.239,38 Euro), followed more closely by the tourists residing in Denmark (964,74 Euro) and the ones residing in Switzerland (877,50 Euro).

If we consider the average daily expenditure (or daily budget), we find that sport event tourists usually living in Switzerland had the highest *per day* value (150,96 Euro), being followed closely by the sport event tourists residing in Italy (150,27 Euro).

#### **4.5. Visitors satisfaction with the event's organisation and the country**

The personal satisfaction sport event tourists get from a site is of vital importance to the later potential returning to the same site. In our case, we decided to measure indirectly satisfaction by asking the interviewees to cite their opinions on the image they kept from the event's organization and the country. The evaluation used a scale going from '1' (awful image) and '10' (stunning image).

When regarding Portugal and the event organization, the general idea caught is that visitors got a globally better image of the country (mean of 8,3 mark) than of the sport event organization (mean of 7,8 mark) – see Table 2.

**Table 2: Image of the event organisation and the country**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Image of the sport event organization (n=909)</b>		
1	1	0,1%
2	6	0,7%
3	5	0,6%
4	15	1,7%
5	33	3,6%
6	56	6,2%
7	175	19,3%
<b>8</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>43,6%</b>
9	140	15,4%
10	82	9%
<b>Image of Portugal (n=912)</b>		
1	0	0%
2	3	0,3%
3	1	0,1%
4	4	0,4%
5	21	2,3%
6	39	4,3%
7	125	13,7%
<b>8</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>36,5%</b>
9	193	21,2%
10	193	21,2%
<b>Previous trips to the country (n=912)</b>		
<b>0</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>69,7%</b>
1	146	16%
2	59	6,5%
3	29	3,2%
4+	42	4,6%
<b>Intention of coming again soon (n=900)</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>87%</b>
No	117	13%
<b>Recommend Portugal to best friend (n=912)</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>97,3%</b>
No	25	2,7%

Source: NIPE UEFA Euro 2004 Visitors Database

Latvian tourists were the ones who had the best image of both analysed items. Latvia residents kept the best image of Portugal, while Germany residents had the best image of the sport event organization. An also very interesting result is that almost 70% of the tourists came to Portugal for the first time.

#### 4.6. Hypotheses validation

*Hypothesis 1* states that visitors that usually reside in countries with a higher *per capita* GDP spend or are willing to spend more during their stay in the event's host country. Therefore, we gather all visitors in two groups of countries according to their *per capita* GDP, taking the *Human Development Report 2004*, published by the United Nations Development Program, as the criterium for this grouping.



Considering that the average amount spent (or willing to spend) by sport event tourists during their stay was 733,64 Euro for visitors living in the first group of countries (those having a *per capita* GDP lower) and 861,92 Euro for visitors living in the second group (countries having a *per capita* GDP higher), we must admit that the hypothesis H1 should not be rejected.

**Hypothesis 2** (H2) states that visitors usually residing in countries far away from the host country spend more in the preparation of their sport events trip, tend choose more than one overnight location and stay more time.

In order to test this hypothesis, we had to establish an average distance between the UEFA Euro 2004 host country and the sport event tourists' countries of origin. The distances were settled according to each countries capital, e.g. Lisbon and the other countries' capitals

The results we got show that sport event tourists that usually reside in countries with a capital placed less than 4.000 km away from Lisbon spent 861,29 Euro preparing the trip, while those over 4.000 km spent 1.901,49 Euro. Amazingly, data showed us also that sport event tourists travelling from more than 4.000 km spent or were willing to spend more during their stay (35,6% more) and had an higher daily expense rate (54,3% more), excluding sport tickets.

Regarding the overnight location, the empirical results show that 27,72% of the sport event tourists travelling from a distance over 4.000 km stayed in more than one overnight location and have chosen at least a secondary location to stay over night. Meanwhile, even though the difference is short, sport event tourists who lived closer to the event hosting country stayed 8,55, against 8,14 nights of the others. That is, in this case sport event tourists residing closer to the hosting country stayed a little bit longer.

This result may seem to conflict with the established hypothesis, but that may be due to the questionnaire implemented: the sport event tourists were only asked about using one or two overnight locations.

Finally, if we analyse the average number of overnights that sport event tourists stated to stay in their secondary location, we confirm that the farther a person usually lives, less time he or her spends in the secondary location. This could mean that the farther a sport event tourist travels from the country of origin, the greater are the number of locations they want to visit

and the less time they are willing to spend in each one. This is something to assess in future research and, therefore, we didn't succeed to validate H2<sup>2</sup>.

**Hypothesis 3** states that the percentage of visitors with regular sport consumption habits is higher than the percentage of those with no such habits.

From our inquiry we can conclude that only 9,32% of the tourists do not used to practise regularly any kind of physical activity *per week*, while 24,89% spend up to two hours and 77,85% spend more than two hours. Additionally, the percentage of tourists who didn't consume sport contents in the media proved to be insignificant (1,6%). Almost 78% did consume sport contents in the media regularly. Lastly, we found that 30,37% of the visitors did not usually attended alive sports. The percentage of tourists that spent one hour and two hours or more attending sports live *per week* was 32,13% and 37,50%, respectively.

Taking all H3 sub-hypothesis, we conclude the hypothesis H3 should not be reject, that is, the percentage of visitors with regular sport consumption habits showed to be higher than the percentage of those with no sport consumption habits.

**Hypothesis 4** states that the percentage of visitors overnighiting in a location directly motivated by the tournament was higher than the percentage of those visitors staying because of other reasons.

Regarding this issue, we noticed that the reasons directly related to the UEFA Euro 2004 were pointed out by 49,25% of the interviewees, while the reasons not directly related with UEFA Euro 2004 were pointed out by only 21,55%. Thus, we should not reject H4.

**Hypothesis 5** stated that the percentage of tourists that would say that were willing to come again soon and that would recommend Portugal to their best friend were higher within the tourists with usual active sport consumption under one hour *per week* than within the tourists with usual active sport consumption of one and more hours *per week*.

According to the data, 82,02% of the tourists with usual active sport consumption habits beneath one hour *per week* are willing to return soon. This percentage becomes higher within the tourists practising one or more hours (up to 87,55%). Besides, the percentage of tourists stating that they would recommend Portugal to their best friend was higher within the tourists with usual active sport consumption behaviour of one or more hours, 97,44%.

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<sup>2</sup> Although visitors usually residing in countries far away spend more preparing the trip and choose more than one overnight location.

This leads us to reject H5, bringing us to the assumption that, likely, tourists being active sport consumers under one hour *per week* have less potential to return to the UEFA Euro 2004 host country (Portugal) than tourists consuming actively sport for one or more hours *per week*.

**Hypothesis 6** stated that the percentage of tourists willing to come again soon and recommending Portugal to their best friend were higher within the group of tourists with a passive sport consumption through media audience of one or less hours *per week* than within the group with an audience over one hour *per week*.

Taking the empirical evidence we have verified that 85,19% of the tourist with usual passive sport consumption through media audience habits of one or less hours *per week* were willing to come again soon. This percentage was higher (87,18%) within the tourists with an audience of more than one hour *per week*. Therefore, we should reject also the hypothesis H6(a).

Regarding H6(b), the percentage of tourists stating they would recommend Portugal to their best friends was indeed higher within the tourists with usual passive sport consumption through media audience with one or less hours *per week* (100%) than within tourists with usual passive sport consumption through media audience over one hour *per week* (96,99%). This result is according the stated hypothesis H6(c).

**Hypothesis 7** stated that the percentage of tourists willing to come again soon and that would recommend Portugal to their best friends were higher within the tourists group usually consuming passively sport through live attendance less than one hour *per week* than within the other group consuming it for one or more hours *per week*.

Analysing the empirical evidence we found that 82,87% of the tourists with usual passive sport consumption through live attendance beneath one hour *per week* were willing to come again soon. This percentage was 89,69% within the tourists with usual passive sport consumption through live attendance of one or more hours *per week*. Regarding the percentage of tourists that that would recommend Portugal to their best friends was, indeed, higher within the tourists with usual passive sport consumption through live attendance under one hour *per week* (97,78%) than within tourists attending sport live for one or more hours *per week* (96,91%).

According, all the results bring us to reject H7. From there, we assume that, likely, sport event tourists normally being passive sport consumers through live attendance of one hour or

more *per week* have less potential to return to the UEFA Euro 2004 (Portugal) than tourists attending sport live beneath one hour *per week*.

## 5. Discussion of the empirical evidence

Naturally, the most frequent nationalities and residence countries visitors we found in our sample were those belonging to countries playing in *Braga* and *Guimarães*, that is: Denmark, Netherlands, Italy, Bulgaria and Latvia. They represented, respectively, 88% and 78,5% of the foreign tourists attending the UEFA Euro 2004 matches played in these two cities.

Comparing the tourists' nationalities with their residence countries, we identified differences: Switzerland, Germany and England became more significant as residence countries. This has to do with the fact that they are immigrant nations. The opposite happened with Bulgaria. Bulgarian sport event tourists came from several other residence countries than their own. Typically, it shows itself as an emigrant country.

Regarding sport consumption as one possible explanation source for major sport events attendance, physical activity practise, media audience of sport contents and sport live attendance helped us to disaggregate the collected database figures.

Surprisingly, (i) 30,4% of the Euro 2004 sport event tourists did not usually attended live sport events and, unsurprisingly, (ii) the sedentary among UEFA Euro 2004 attendants was lower than 10% and (iii) the sport event tourists not consuming sport contents in media was residual (1,6%).

In terms of public expectations regarding the overnighing in the *Braga* and *Guimarães* area of the foreign match attendants, we must conclude that only a few, 33,4%, chose the *Minho* region for their primary overnight. This figure is corrected down in the case of the secondary site (24%). Any way, 74,6% of the foreign sport event tourists chose sites in the North of Portugal to remain as primary location.

When looking at the sea proximity of the chosen overnight sites, 61,5% of the primary chosen cities had a direct sea access and 81,7% of the secondary chosen. The spanish region of *Galiza* became competitive within the primary site location choice. In the secondary site choice *Lisboa e Vale do Tejo* became the second preferred location.

In terms of average daily expenditure by residence country, sport event tourists living in Switzerland spent the highest amount, 150,96 Euro *per day*, closely followed by Italy residents (150,27 Euro). Considering the total amount sport event tourists spent or were willing to spend during all their stay, the sport events tourists living in England had the biggest budget, 1.239,38 Euro, in average, followed closely by those living in Denmark (964,74 Euro) and in Switzerland (877,50 Euro).

Sport event tourists retained a globally better image of Portugal (mark of 8,3) than the one of the event organisation (mark of 7,8). Nevertheless, they were both very good. As 70% of the tourists came to Portugal for the very first time, this leaves a good potential for future returns.

As seen in the hypotheses validation, tourists usually residing in countries farther than 4.000 km from Portugal spent more 36% in the destination country (or 54,3% more by each day they stayed) than the other ones. This is remarkable as tourists travelling from greater distances already spent huge amounts of money in preparing the trip. Besides, reaching the host country, they do not worry with “saving” money and they show a different sense of the value of the Euro. A possible explanation for such behaviour comes from the fact that, as the trip is quite expensive, only individuals with higher incomes are able to afford it.

Tour operators should also be alerted to the routines of distance travellers. Results we got show that sport event tourists coming from farther away have a 28% chance to choose more than one site to stay, against 19% of those coming from nearer sites. Additionally, when we analyse the average number of nights tourists stay in their secondary location, we have verified that the farther a person usually lives, the least time is spent in the secondary location. Nevertheless, this idea needs further scrutiny as our study only asked the tourists about two overnights stay. We believe, this is valuable information for package tours.

In our pursuit of clearance of the overnight site location choices, we could identify 50% of sport event tourists pointing out reasons related directly to the tournament, that is: ‘halfway between the matches’, ‘to follow my team’ or ‘decision of the organization agency’. At least 22% chose their overnight site basing on ‘cheapest’, ‘recommended’ or ‘to make tourism in the area’. Of all the reasons pointed out, ‘halfway between the matches’ was the most chosen answer (representing almost 40% of the total). These results give us an idea about the demand for coordination between the tournament’s sporting settings and the warrant of accommodation in the involved cities and regions.

According to the travel rates involving the competing teams, the higher or lower is the impact over local and regional tourism economy. This was easily observable in the UEFA Euro 2004. Transportation and communication were intensively stressed during the tournament, because teams had to travel across the country since the first round. The sport event tourists mainly settled themselves within the most efficient site to easily access to all match sites of the teams they wanted to watch playing. Settling a set of games in the same region for at least the first round, would possibly serve the purposes of a higher local and regional economic impact and its decentralising.

Finally, we tried to evaluate the potential return to Portugal in the near future of the sport event tourists. Although the answer may only be approached correctly by evaluating long-run figures, as mentioned in the hypotheses we have formulated, it seemed to us reasonable to expect sport event tourists with no sport consumption habits would show a more potential for future return. Following the same reasoning, the sport fans were ever travelling to where the sport event would travel. Meanwhile, analysing the statements concerning the countries 'image', its 'recommendation' to a friend and the 'willingness' to return soon, we had to reject this assumption. This result suggests sport event tourists being motivated by more complex reasons we could establish.

## **6. Conclusion**

In this research, we found that sport event tourists usually living in countries with higher *per capita* GDP spent or were willing to spend more in the UEFA Euro 2004 Championship. The same tourists spent significantly more in Portugal, namely in *Braga* and *Guimarães*, and stayed more frequently in more than one overnight location site. Tourism operators should focus on these results and conceive according travel program packages.

Other valuable information for both tourism operators and tournament managers is that the majority of sport event tourists decided to overnight on sites with efficient and direct accesses to the matches. They also could be characterised as usual active and passive sport consumers, that is, they used to follow sport events through the media and had some sort of sport live attendance.

The potential to return to the site where the UEFA Euro 2004 took place (generally speaking, Portugal) exists, but just only the future will allow us to confirm that potential.

Future studies should concentrate on community reimbursement and mid/long term benefits.

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