

The Impact of the World Cultural Heritage Classification by UNESCO on the Cultural Touristic Demand in Oporto

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Abstract:

Classified in 1996 as World Cultural Heritage, the historic centre of Oporto has been registering, since then, an increasing demand by the tourists who visit the city, raising the appearance of new cultural spaces and the requalification of many others. In this study, the authors will try to analyse the tourism impact on the historic centre after its classification by UNESCO as a World Heritage, through the analysis of the tourism activity's indicators, in a period of two decades, between 1996 and 2015. It will be analysed the international tourists' profile who visit Oporto and/ or the North of Portugal. It will be analysed, too, the visits to the municipal museums in the historic centre comparing to the remaining variety of museums existent in the city of Oporto, in order to detect an UNESCO classification influence. It will be given particular attention to the cultural tourism segment, namely the creation of new cultural attractions and spaces, as well as the requalification of the existent ones. By the end, it will be made an analysis to the historic centre's touristic advertising by official and private entities.

Keywords: Tourism; Touristic Demand and Offer; World Heritage; Oporto Historic Centre

Resumo:

Classificado em 1996 como Património Cultural da Humanidade, o Centro Histórico do Porto vem registando, desde então, uma crescente procura pelos turistas que visitam a cidade, suscitando o surgimento de novos espaços culturais e a requalificação de muitos outros. Neste artigo, os autores procurarão analisar o impacto do turismo na zona do Centro Histórico após a sua classificação pela UNESCO como Património da Humanidade, através da análise dos

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indicadores da atividade turística, no período de duas décadas, compreendido entre 1996 e 2015. Será analisado o perfil dos turistas internacionais que visitam o Porto e/ou Norte de Portugal. Procurar-se-á analisar também as visitas aos museus municipais do Centro Histórico em relação à restante oferta de museus existente na cidade do Porto, tendo em vista detetar uma influência da classificação da UNESCO. Será ainda prestada uma particular atenção ao segmento do turismo cultural, nomeadamente à criação de novas atrações e espaços culturais, assim como à requalificação dos existentes. Por fim, será efetuada uma análise à promoção turística do Centro Histórico por parte das entidades oficiais e privadas.

Palavras-chave: Turismo; Procura e Oferta Turística; Património Cultural da Humanidade; Centro Histórico do Porto

Resumen:

Clasificado en 1996 como Patrimonio Cultural de la Humanidad, el Centro Histórico de Oporto ha ido experimentado desde entonces una creciente demanda por parte de los turistas que visitan la ciudad, alimentando con ello la aparición de nuevos espacios culturales y la mejora de muchos otros. En este estudio, los autores tienen como objetivo analizar el impacto del turismo en la zona del Centro Histórico tras su clasificación por la UNESCO como Patrimonio de la Humanidad, a través del análisis de los indicadores de actividad turística durante un período de dos décadas, entre 1996 y 2015. Se analizará el perfil de los turistas internacionales que visitan Oporto y/o el Norte de Portugal. Se analizarán también las visitas a los museos municipales del Centro Histórico en relación a la restante oferta de museos existentes en la ciudad de Oporto, con el fin de detectar una (posible) influencia de la clasificación de la UNESCO. Se prestará también una particular atención al segmento del turismo cultural, particularmente en lo que respecta a la creación de nuevas atracciones y espacios culturales, así como a la mejora de los ya existentes. Finalmente, se llevará también a cabo un análisis de la promoción turística del Centro Histórico por parte de las entidades oficiales y privadas.

Palabras Clave: Turismo; Demanda y Oferta Turística; Património Cultural de la Humanidad; Centro Histórico de Oporto

1. Introduction

The study about the impact of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage classification on the cultural touristic demand of Oporto, in the period of two decades, between 1996 and 2015, intend to be a contribute to the academic debate about the appreciation of tourism in spaces considered World Heritage.

It was defined a text structure. First, it will be presented the methodological aspects, followed by the revision of literature about the theme, and then the case study, which concerns two aspects: the international tourists' profile who visit the city of Oporto and/ or the North of Portugal, as well as the appreciation of the cultural touristic offer of Oporto in the Cultural World Heritage historic centre, and, at the final, the conclusion.

2. Methodology

The methodology used closely followed the procedure used to this kind of studies: delimitation of the subject in study, quantitative and qualitative data collection and its posterior analysis.

In what concerns to the data collection, it was conducted a researchof information, using primary sources concerning to the number of visitors/ tourists at the Oporto official Tourism Offices (1996-2015) and the number of visitors of the main Municipals Museums (2011-2015), provided by the *Departamento de Turismo da Câmara do Porto* (Oporto City Hall Tourism Department).

At the same time, it was used a secondary sources set, namely a selection of the results of a few number of works published until then, which analyse the subject and became useful for the appreciation of the Oporto historic city centre touristic offer, implementing surveys, questionnaires and interviews on the subject matter, in which we highlight the two documents conducted by the *Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal* (Oporto and North of Portugal Tourism) (2015), *Estratégia de Marketing Turístico do Porto e Norte de Portugal* (Oporto and North of Portugal Tourism Marketing Strategy) (2015-2020) and *O Perfil dos Turistas do Porto e Norte de Portugal* (The Oporto and North of Portugal tourists' profile) (2015-2020), as, as well as two studies sponsored by the Oporto City Hall Tourism Department about the surveys applied to the visitors and tourists at the Oporto official Tourism Offices in the Summer of 2014 and Easter of 2015.

The lack of primary and secondary statistical sources about the tourism at the Oporto historic centre, namely the absence of tourists entry records in the Oporto historic centre, testify the relevance of the study about the impact of UNESCO classification as World Heritage on the cultural tourism offer of Oporto.

In the data analysis, there was an attempt to eliminate the subjectivity inherent to the tourists' perceptions about the Oporto historic centre, valuing the resulting economic impact of the demand.

3. Literature review

Although it may be considered the existence of a cultural tourism since the beginning of the tourism activity, the definition of this specific modality has just gained shape since the middle of the 80's of last century, with the appearance of the first cultural tourism projects. There were several causes on the basis of this new tourism offer. Among them, it is important to highlight the relative exhaustion of the traditional tourism offer – mainly in the South European countries – based on sun and beach, arousing interest in a new type of possibility, which could correspond too to the alteration on demands that new social sectors had been providing in cultural terms.

In 1985, the World Tourism Organization presented one of the first definitions of cultural tourism, which included "movements of people mainly for cultural motivations, such as field trips, performing arts and other cultural trips, festivals and other cultural events, visits to sites and monuments, trips for studying Nature, folklore, art or pilgrimages." (World Tourism Organization, 1985: 131).

However, it was by the initiative of the Council of Europe in 1987, under the programme of "European Cultural Routes", that began the first cultural tourism projects as a structured tourism product. It began thus to forge the concept of cultural tourism with the launch of the first cultural tourism itineraries, covering four specific main themes - the Routes of Santiago de Compostela, the Baroque, Rural Habitat and the Silk Routes -, each presenting a historical, social and cultural interest, such as to facilitate the rapprochement between the different European peoples and cultures in their own subject area.

Since then, cultural tourism has become diversified, covering a very wide range of cultural content, with particular emphasis on the historical heritage and the development of cultural tourism itineraries, following on the Council of Europe initiative itself also involved in the

creation of new routes, mainly from 1998, with the establishment of the European Institute of Cultural Routes, based in Luxembourg.

In 1999, ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites also published an International Cultural Tourism Charter, with the aim, among others, to "facilitate and encourage those involved in the conservation and heritage management to make the significance of that heritage accessible to resident community and visitors "(ICOMOS, 1999: 3).

The literature on the cultural tourism has grown very quickly - books, magazines, guides and articles - being virtually impossible, under a single article, to provide a summary of the work hitherto established. It also varies according to the theme of different types of cultural tourism and the prospects that it is seen, for example, as a tool for sustainable economic development. The same is true with the literature on the classification as a World Cultural Heritage.

However, among the extensive literature related to cultural tourism published in recent years, stands out the book "Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives", coordinated by Greg Richards, and that is the Proceedings of an organised Congress in Barcelona, in October 2003, by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS). Focused almost exclusively on experiences that have taken place in European countries, the book highlights, however, an essential aspect, the need to consider a striking reality in the tourism in general, but with the same implications for cultural tourism, ie, increased competition in the tourism offer (Richards, 2006: 109). Thus, it is essential not only to maintain the authenticity and affirm the identity of tourist destinations, in order to enhance its attractiveness, a key aspect in the case of the Oporto historic centre. The book also highlights the need and importance of the site (or sites) to visit constitute more than an aesthetic version of the tourist gaze, and that the cultural experiences provided by the visit must be authentic (Richards, 2006: 97). Thus, a steady stream of tourists will be guaranteed, maintaining the stability of income from visits to the local economy.

4. Case Study: UNESCO World Cultural Heritage in cultural tourism of Oporto

4.1 The profile of international tourists visiting Oporto and / or Northern Portugal

It is undeniable the dynamics of tourism in the region of Oporto and North of Portugal (see attached map, Figure 1), in particular in the 21st century, as shown by document *Estratégia de Marketing Turístico do Porto e Norte de Portugal* (Tourism Marketing Strategy of Oporto and North of Portugal) (2015-2020) (Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal, 2015) by a set of tourism indicators (including VAB, 2004: 15.7% and 2014: 21.5%; Guests 2004: 1.8 million and 2014: 3

million; Overnights stays 2004: 3.3 million and 2014: 5.4 million and Bed-occupation rate: 36.8% in 2004 and 2014: 41.4%). According to the source, "the performance of the tourism is concentrated in the Oporto Metropolitan Area, absorbing about 61% of overnight stays in the region" (Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal, 2015).

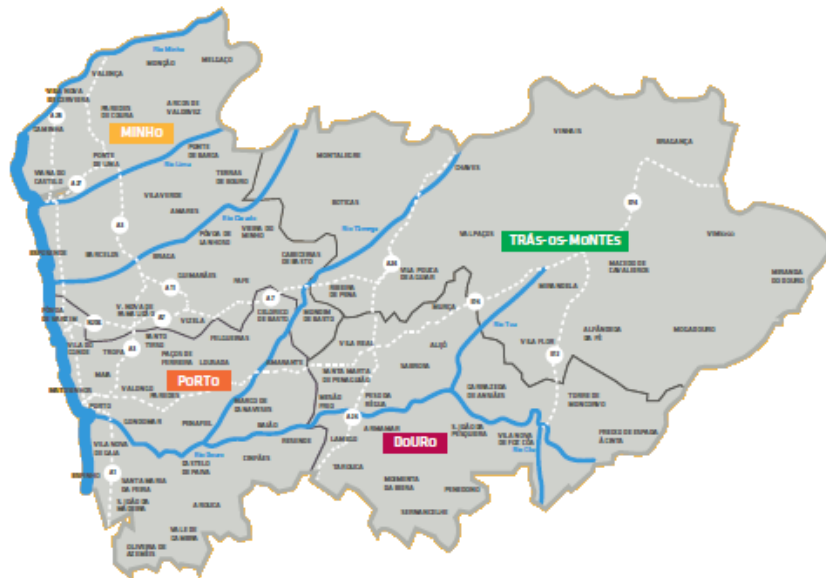


Figure 1. Oporto and North of Portugal

Source: Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal, 2015, *Estratégia de Marketing Turístico do Porto e Norte de Portugal (2015-2020)*

In the recent November 2015 study *O Perfil dos Turistas do Porto e Norte de Portugal* (The profile of tourists from Oporto and North of Portugal) (2015-2020), based on the analysis of the application of the results of 1,320 personal surveys in 2014 "in the Sá Carneiro Airport boarding lounge (eliminating the Resident in Oporto and North of Portugal, Transit Passengers and National Tourists/ Excursionists) "visits to family and friends (39%) and leisure travels (37%) are the main segments of the tourist destination Oporto and North of Portugal, 76% of the visitors. Even point out the relevance of the third reason for visit, business, representing 18% target segment of the Oporto area and North of Portugal, a markedly industrial region with a strong export focus.

According to the document *Estratégia de Marketing Turístico do Porto e Norte de Portugal* (Tourism Marketing Strategy of Oporto and North of Portugal) (2015-2020) (Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal, 2015), the product "Cultural and Landscape Touring" is part of anchor

products of all sub-destinations of Oporto and North of Portugal region: Oporto, Minho, Douro and Trás-os-Montes (Table 1 and Figure 2) and Heritage Cultural-Historical Wealth is one of the destination positioning elements of the region of Oporto and North of Portugal, one of the main reasons for the attractiveness of the Oporto historic centre area – World Cultural Heritage, as we will get to know in this study.

	Oporto	Minho	Douro	Trás-os-Montes
Anchor products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City and short breaks; • Cultural and landscape touring • Nautical tourism • Gastronomy and wine • Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature (active tourism) • Cultural and landscape touring • Religious tourism • Nautical tourism • Gastronomy and wine • Golf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nautical tourism (cruises and tours in Douro) • Gastronomy and wine (farms) • Cultural and landscape touring • Nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and well-being • Nature • Cultural and landscape touring • Gastronomy and wine
Complementary products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and well-being • Golf • Sun and sea • Nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and well-being • City and short breaks • Sun and sea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious tourism • Health and well-being • Golf • Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious tourism • Golf

Table 1. Oporto and North of Portugal

Source: Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal, 2015, *Estratégia de Marketing Turístico do Porto e Norte de Portugal (2015-2020)*

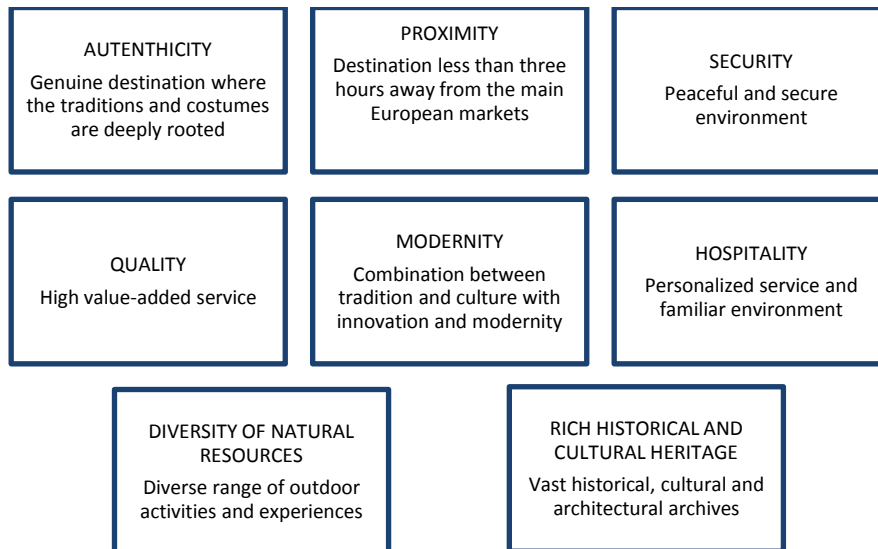


Figure 2. Oporto and North of Portugal – Destination Positioning Elements

Source: authors based on Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal, 2015, *Estratégia de Marketing Turístico do Porto e Norte de Portugal (2015-2020)*

4.2 The appreciation of cultural tourism of Oporto in the World Cultural Heritage Historic Centre

The award of the World Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO (Mexico) on 4th December 1996 to Oporto historic centre encompasses part of the area of the inner city to the route of the ancient wall Fernandina, from the 14th century, and some adjacent areas with identical characteristics or valued by later achievements for a total of about 49 hectares, territories located in the parishes of Sé, São Nicolau, Vitória and Miragaia in the Oporto city (Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 3. Panoramic view of Historic Centre of Oporto

Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/>



Figure 4. Oporto historic centre map

Source: provided by Oporto Official Tourism Board, 2016

The study *Estatísticas de Turismo Urbano. O Centro Histórico do Porto e o Turismo*, from Francisco Dias, is particularly useful for analysing the impact of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage classification in cultural tourism of Oporto. Thus, according to this author, the most relevant data on the tourist/ visitor's profile of the city of Oporto, in 2008, and, consequently, its historic centre, can be seen in the following Table 2.

Educational background	Around 70% of the visitors have a college degree (graduated or post-graduated).
Nationality	70% of the visitors correspond to five nationalities: Portuguese, Spanish, British, French and German.
Visit motivation	70% of the visitors admit the main motive of their visit is the cultural tourism, and they refer as destination's main attractions the monuments, the museums, the historical sites and the wine cellars of Oporto.
Duration of the stay in Oporto	In 75% of the cases, it is under a week (45% from 2 to 3 days; 30% from 4 to 6 days).
Destinations' information source	48% used the Internet
Air transport booking	39% used the Internet
Accommodation booking	39% used the Internet

Table 2. Visitor/ tourist's profile of the city of Oporto (2008)

Source: Authors, based on Dias, 2011: 195

In addition to several problems and shortcomings indicated by the visitors / tourists, the field work of the author also points out the "car and pedestrian mobility, cleaning, recovery and conservation of heritage and tourist information" (Dias, 2011: 196). However, it is still significant that 70% of visitors have assumed that cultural tourism was the main reason for their visit, referring to major attractions monuments, museums, historical sites and the wine cellars of Oporto.

In this study, we present the results of two case studies in research on the impact of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage in the historic centre of Oporto: 1) evolution of the number of visitors of Municipal Museums of Oporto and 2) evolution in the number of tourists / visitors in the Oporto Tourism Offices.

Thus, the results of research carried out on the data courtesy of the Tourism Department, regarding the main Municipals Museums of Oporto, the city and the historic centre of the same city, from 2011 to 2015, allow us to state that the total number of Municipal Museums remained - being 13 in total - 3 of which are located in the historic centre of Oporto.

From 2011 to 2015, the number of visitors of Municipal Museums at the historical centre of Oporto increased considerably: in 2011 reached 47.5% of total demand (118,278 visitors / year) in 2015 amounted to 69.4% (214,965 visitors / year) ie, we can state that the historic centre of Oporto is the main geographical space in demand for museums (Table 3).

Municipal Museums	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Museu Romântico da Quinta da Macieirinha	27.846	24.932	28.557	29.842	27.498
Casa Museu Guerra Junqueiro	16.254	19.791	25.545	27.234	23.559
Casa Museu Marta Ortigão Sampaio	11.230	13.189	9.621	11.106	7.694
Museu do Vinho do Porto	23.859	24.843	28.052	26.035	24.351
Casa Tait	23.436	22.015	13.882	8.054	8.208
Casa Oficina António Carneiro	5.776	5.526	4.524	4.791	4.753
Gabinete de Numismática	5.310	4.492	6.026	5.166	5.480
Arqueo-sítio da Rua de Dom Hugo, n.º 5	406	1.232	780	1.568	1.050
Visitas à Cidade	682	1.714	3.419	5.580	8.287
Palacete Pinto Leite	11.279	3.327	8.285	4.174	4.261
Palacete Viscondes Balsemão	16.339	12.550	12.002	12.073	8.915
Banco de Materiais	4.763	4.914	5.524	6.314	7.240
Núcleo Museológico da Casa do Infante	101.618	134.590	145.170	176.663	217.356
TOTALS	248.798	273.115	291.387	318.600	348.652

Table 3. Number of visitors of Oporto's main museums, 2011-2015

Source: data provided by Oporto Official Tourism Board, 2016

The most visited municipal museum of the historic centre of Oporto during the five years of the review period was the Museum Centre of the Infante House, with 101,618 visitors in 2011 and 217,356 visitors in 2015, which corresponds to a significant increase in the cultural demand, 113,8%. The remaining two Municipal Museums - Guerra Junqueiro House-Museum and Rua de D. Hugo no 5 archaeo-site - registered a number of visitors, respectively, 16,254 and 406 in 2011 and 23,559 and 1,050 in 2015. Although both register a lower demand, when comparing to the Casa do Infante Museum Centre, the data show the growth of cultural demand in the Guerra Junqueiro House Museum, 44.6%, and Rua D. Hugo No. 5 archaeo-site, 158%.

Thus, we can conclude that the growth of the annual number of visitors 104.6% in the historic centre of Oporto in the last five years was based on a sustainable increase in the cultural demand for municipal museums placed in this area.

The results allow us to state that the richness of historical and cultural heritage of the Municipal Historic Centre of Oporto Museums is a target element and attraction of motivation of the Oporto historic centre area – World Cultural Heritage.

From the side of tourism demand, the amazing evolution of the number of visitors / tourists annually in official Tourism Offices of Oporto, of 542% between 1996 and 2015, is, in turn, a clear indicator of the positive impact of the classification as World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in the cultural tourism demand of Oporto. The research results concluded that tourism demand has grown 106% from 1996 to 2000, 36% in the first decade of this century and the trend is for growing, based on the registered value between 2010 and 2015, 128% (Table 4).

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
70.453	87.313	90.806	102.474	132.321	145.120	122.884	147.791	186.230	138.020
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
148.652	191.165	194.139	174.858	198.55	236.408	262.228	303.147	308.694	452.322

Table 4. Evolution of the number of visitors/ tourists at the official Tourism Offices, 1996-2015

Source: data provided by Oporto Official Tourism Board, 2016

The results allow us to state that the classification of the historic centre of Oporto by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage in December 1996 had the immediate effect on the increasing demand by visitors / tourists.

An interesting study by Oporto City Hall based on surveys applied to visitors and tourists in official Tourism Offices of Oporto in Easter 2015 also highlights the tourism appreciation of the historic centre of Oporto:

The World Heritage is for 24% of tourists and visitors the main attraction of the city, followed, according to the preferences of respondents, by Port Wine with 14% of calculated answers. Events and city nightlife are the least scored by tourists and visitors, respectively 2.3% and 1.3% (...). To 19.4% of the sample, the Ribeira is assumed as city icon, capitalising Ponte D. Luís 18.5% of preferences of tourists and visitors. The Clérigos Tower and the Port wine arise soon after, respectively 14% and 13%.

In turn, a similar study, applied in the Summer of 2014 by the same entity, shows that the historic centre of Oporto comes in first place in the preference of tourists and visitors of Oporto (21% and 20% of the tourists and visitors of Oporto, respectively in 2014 and 2015, intended to visit the historic centre of Oporto).

Along with the tourism demand growth, UNESCO classification also promoted the rehabilitation of the historic centre and, in recent years, the licensing for rehabilitation of homes for hostels. Although there are no specific statistics that record tourist demand only for the historic centre of Oporto, it is easy to understand that this was one of the attractions that contributed to the growth of that demand.

The opening of the new terminal from Oporto airport at the end of 2005 favored the increase of its air accessibility, to which must be added the progressive availability of low cost flights from over four dozen European cities. The case of Oporto confirms that airports are the main entrance borders of foreign tourists in Portugal, since more than 60% of those who visited Oporto and the North of Portugal, in the years of 2012 and 2013, went through the airport and travelled on low-cost companies, according to a IPDT (*Instituto de Planeamento e Desenvolvimento do Turismo*) study - *Instituto do Turismo* (Carvalho, 2013). The fact that the low-cost airline Ryanair has established in 2009 its base in Oporto contributed surely to the city has becoming an increasingly sought destination. The capacity of Leixões Port for large cruise ships, with the consequent entry into terminal operation cruise, opened in July 2015, also contributed to the increase in tourism demand of Oporto and its historic centre.

The performance of the different tour operators - public and private - over the past few years, through an effective marketing strategy, established the Oporto brand in international markets, with increasing interest and demand for its heritage values, of which the historic centre is a clear example.

5. Brief Conclusion

The research results are quite clear regarding the existence of a relationship between the classification of the Oporto historic centre as World Heritage Site and the increased demand of the city as a tourist destination. It is, however, a situation that is not exclusive of Oporto, being verified, generally, in the following years to a classification by UNESCO of a particular good/ site as a World Heritage Site. What gives some particularity to the case of Oporto is that the tourist demand have mainly increased in the last five years, after 2010, that is, more than 14 years after the classification date.

This increase in demand, specially in recent years, was due also to other factors, such as the qualification of the cultural offer of the city and its historic centre, with the creation of new museological infrastructure (for example, the Museu das Marionetas (Museum of Marionettes), opened in February 2013, or the Museu da Misericórdia (Museum of Mercy), opened in July 2015, but whose assets was already visitable), the emergence of low cost flights - greatly facilitating access to Oporto from numerous European cities - the phenomenon of hostels, which accompanied it, and yet, with a slightly smaller effect, because it was only opened in July 2015, the capacity of the Leixões Port for large cruise ships.

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