



Lisbon School  
of Economics  
& Management  
Universidade de Lisboa

# **MASTERS IN MANAGEMENT (MIM)**

## **MASTER'S FINAL WORK**

PROJECT

**MARKETING PLAN: BIRDWATCHING FOR COMPANHIA DAS LEZÍRIAS**

INÊS MARQUES PERDIGÃO

MARCH 2024



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**MARCH 2024**

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this project is the creation of a Marketing Plan for Companhia das Lezírias regarding the birdwatching activities offered at EVOA, seeking to increase the number of visitors, national and international, to strengthen its presence in this niche market, that is ornithological tourism. Also known as birdwatching, this type of tourism is growing and becoming extremely attractive, and it has become a remarkably sustainable tourist product that fosters a positive interaction between humans and the environment.

To develop this marketing plan, an Action Research methodology was followed, with the intention of directly researching variables related to this type of business, involving the collection of primary and secondary data. A mixed collection of qualitative and quantitative data was conducted through the elaboration of a semi-structured interview and an online questionnaire, respectively. The interview was conducted with engineer Rui Alves and coordinator Sandra Paiva Silva from EVOA in order to better understand the company and clarify the specificity of the ornithological tourism activities that are provided there. Subsequently, to get a better understanding of the market's perception and perceptiveness regarding birdwatching and CL, an online questionnaire was elaborated, and responses were analysed.

The collection of information contributed to the elaboration of marketing-mix strategies that ultimately aim at achieving the marketing objectives that were previously reflected, raising brand awareness and enabling a competitive positioning in the market.

Keywords: Marketing Plan, Niche Market, Ornithological Tourism, Action Research, Marketing-Mix Strategies, Brand Awareness.

## RESUMO

O principal objetivo deste projeto é a elaboração de um Plano de Marketing para a Companhia das Lezírias (CL), no que diz respeito às atividades de observação de aves oferecidas pelo EVOA, visando o aumento do número de visitantes, tanto a nível nacional quanto internacional, de forma a fortalecer a sua presença neste nicho de mercado, conhecido como turismo ornitológico. Também denominado como *birdwatching*, este tipo de turismo está em crescimento e torna-se extremamente atrativo, transformando-se num produto turístico notavelmente sustentável que promove uma interação positiva entre pessoas e o meio ambiente.

Para desenvolver este plano de marketing, foi adotada a metodologia de Action Research, com o propósito de investigar diretamente as variáveis relacionadas com este tipo de negócio, envolvendo a recolha de dados primários e secundários. Tanto dados qualitativos como quantitativos foram recolhidos por meio da elaboração de uma entrevista semiestruturada e de um questionário online, respectivamente. A entrevista foi feita ao engenheiro Rui Alves e à coordenadora Sandra Paiva Silva do EVOA, com o objetivo de compreender melhor a empresa e esclarecer a especificidade das atividades de turismo ornitológico na CL. Posteriormente, para aprofundar o conhecimento relativamente à percepção do mercado e a sua percepção em relação ao *birdwatching* e à CL, foi elaborado um questionário online e, consecutivamente, os resultados foram analisados.

Esta recolha de informações contribuiu para a elaboração de estratégias de marketing-mix que, em última análise, visam alcançar os objetivos de marketing que foram previamente refletidos, aumentando o reconhecimento da marca e possibilitando um posicionamento competitivo no mercado.

Palavras-chave: Plano de Marketing, Nicho de Mercado, Turismo Ornitológico, Action Research, Estratégias de Marketing-Mix, Reconhecimento da Marca

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Within the scope of the Master in Management taught at ISEG - Lisbon School of Economics and Management, the project consists in the creation of a Marketing Plan for the birdwatching activities at Companhia das Lezírias (CL). The primary objective of this project is to improve CL's brand awareness and popularity as a way of expanding the number of both national and international clients.

The observation of birds has been, since the 1900's, a recreational activity followed by many, but it wasn't always like this. In the past, birds were seen as religious figures, or as pieces of decoration or just as a representation of food. It was not until the contribution of these four men – Gilbert White, Thomas Bewick, George Montagu and John Clare – that people started looking at birds in a different way, to solely appreciate their existence in their habitat, instead of a form of exploitation, taking a step closer to the relationship between humans and nature (Moss, 2004). Nowadays, with the development of this activity, birdwatching can have huge economic and environmental relevance in local communities, it can be a way of educating locals about biodiversity and foster local and national initiatives to preserve natural areas successfully (Sekercioglu, 2002).

Companhia das Lezírias (CL) is the largest agricultural, livestock and forestry company in Portugal. CL's areas of intervention expand through a wide scope of different activities: agriculture, cattle farming, horse breeding, forest management, birdwatching, nature tourism, olive oil and wine production, being all sustainably managed. The company was created in 1836, having gone through many changes as it was nationalized in 1975 and, in 1989, became a state-owned company exclusively held by public capital. Since 1997, Companhia das Lezírias has been consolidating its position, both technologically and financially, based on a philosophy of sustainable development. It is located between the Tejo and Sorraia rivers, extending to the Lezíria of Vila Franca de Xira, Charneca do Infantado, Catapereiro, and Pauis (Belmonte and Lavouras). This privileged location offers exceptional natural resources that give space to take advantage of the agricultural benefits, but also to explore and offer recreational and leisure activities in the heart of Natural Reserve of the Tejo Estuary (Reserva Natural do Estuário do Tejo). EVOA (Espaço de Visitação e Observação de Aves), managed by Companhia das Lezírias, is also located in the Natural Reserve that involves the most important wetland in Portugal, is an interpretative centre that offers different kinds of activities related to birdwatching.

As birdwatching is a niche market that has high market growth potential (Sánchez-Rivero et al., 2020), it would be important for Companhia das Lezírias to create a structured marketing plan that would enable the company to achieve new markets and attract more national and foreign visitors, positioning it as a reference in this sector. Having that in mind, the research questions that guided the this marketing plan were: 1)How can Companhia das Lezíras increase its visibility in national and international markets?; 2)How can Companhia das Lezírias attract birdwatchers to Portugal?; 3)What can make visitors come back to Companhia das Lezírias?; 4)What is the target audience of these activities?; 5)What are the best marketing channels that can be used to promote this destination?.

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### *22.1. Marketing Plan*

Marketing planning is an interactive methodical progression of activities aimed at establishing marketing objectives and coming up with corresponding plans for its implementation. It includes all marketing's components and protocols into a structured plan. The author also differentiates a strategic plan from a tactic plan. A strategic plan usually has a defined period for between three and five years, further than the following fiscal year. The tactical plan is more thorough, but relative to a shorter period of time - one year or less (McDonald, 2007). Kotler et al (2005) add that companies must have marketing plans for each business, product or brand "because even within a well-focused company product classes can face hugely different circumstances".

Puledran et al. (2003) stated that marketing planning is an important mechanism to align a company's efforts with the customer's demands and expectations. Conceptually, the process includes a series of important actions before implementation. For example, the process involves a review of the prevailing circumstances by developing marketing research inside and outside the company; the establishment of fundamental assumptions; the delineation of objectives regarding the product or service; identification of the target audience; determination of how these objectives will be attained, and the strategic allocation of resources, in terms of time, finances and people. Finally, an important step of creating a marketing plan is reviewing and analysing the results and objectives (Westwood, 2019).

Marketing plans are useful because with them companies can better identify marketing opportunities with a more efficient use of its resources. For Kotler et al. (2005), if a company can effectively coordinate "action programmes, the organization structure, decision-and-reward systems, human resources, and company culture" it will result in a successful marketing implementation. Besides, marketing plans create a better environment between teams and improves the company's identity. Ultimately, it makes the company one step closer to achieving its goals (Westwood, 2019).

### *2.2. Sustainable Tourism*

"In the last twenty years, the tourism industry has been transformed by several global trends. Among these, sustainability has become a priority for both the scientific community (countless international conferences, academic journals and research projects have been devoted to the subject) and for international organisations" (Martini & Buffa, 2020). As defined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), sustainable tourism is 'Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and

environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.’(United Nations Environment Programme & World Tourism Organisation, 2005). Aligned with the “Sustainable Development Goals”, sustainable tourism can, in fact, highly contribute to achieving those goals by motivating organisations and companies to implement sustainable approaches to their businesses as well as promoting this type of conscious and environmentally friendly behaviour among consumers and tourists. Out of the 17 Sustainable Goals created by the United Nations, Goals 8, 12 and 14 are the ones where sustainable tourism can have greater impact (Martini & Buffa, 2020). Goal 8 is “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, which is related to encouraging continuous, equitable, and environmentally responsible economic expansion, as well as providing full and productive employment and decent work opportunities for everyone. Goal 12 is “Responsible Consumption and Production”, and its focus is on securing responsible and environmentally friendly habits of consumption and production. Goal 14 is “Life Below Water”, that aims to preserve and responsibly utilize the oceans, seas, and marine resources to promote sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).

### *2.3 Current Scientific Debate on Sustainable Tourism*

For Martini & Buffa (2020), the tourism industry in any region significantly shapes the local development model, impacting decisions regarding resource utilization, production practices, social and economic transformations, that affect the local population. Therefore, sustainable tourism should find an equilibrium between the interests of local stakeholders (such as organizations, public entities, businesses, and the community) and the visitors. The pursuit of this equilibrium raises at least two concerns in the ongoing scientific debate: over tourism and the impacts of global warming. However, for Korstanje & George (2012), regarding global warming, it can be seen as an “unsustainable vicious cycle” because, on one hand, global warming reduces tourism but, on the other hand, tourism can increase global warming.

Even though the European Parliament’s Committee on transport and Tourism states that there isn’t a clear definition of overtourism available, the European Parliament described it, in 2018, as “the situation in which the impact of tourism, at certain times and in certain locations, exceeds physical, ecological, social, economic, psychological, and/or political capacity thresholds (Peeters et al., 2018). The term is a recent term to both public and academic discussions and refers to the downsides related to tourism (Vagena, 2021).

Regarding global warming, it is defined as “the long-term warming of the planet’s overall temperature. Though this warming trend has been going on for a long time, its pace has significantly increased in the last hundred years due to the burning of fossil fuels. As the human population has increased, so has the volume of fossil fuels burned. Fossil fuels include coal, oil, and natural gas, and burning them causes what is known as the “greenhouse effect” in Earth’s atmosphere”(National Geographic Society, 2024). The fact that temperatures are rising at an alarming pace is changing how destinations manage their resources and offers to the public. Businesses and organizations worldwide are rethinking tourist offerings and business structures due to the emerging circumstances caused by global warming (Martini & Buffa, 2020).

#### *2.4 Sustainable Tourism Marketing*

When talking about marketing for sustainable tourism, it has often been seen as a way to fuel “irresponsible consumerism” (Font & McCabe, 2017). Companies can take advantage of Marketing, especially regarding advertising, to spread dishonest information regarding supposed sustainable products or services. This practice is called ‘green washing’, which is when companies benefit from misleading clients about the company’s environmental performance. Nonetheless, practicing good marketing management can determine the success of businesses and sustainable tourist destinations, the types of tourists attracted and the economic improvements of the location (Cristobal-Fransi et al., 2020).

Marketing for sustainable tourism, or any kind of tourism, must be coordinated with both the sustainable concerns of the location for an extended period and the customers’ requirements and expectations (Middleton & Hawkins, 1998). There are two approaches to be used in sustainability marketing: the market development approach – which aims to improve consumerism related to sustainable products or services with the ultimate goal of changing the consumers’ behaviour in a way that they intentionally look for and buy sustainable products - and the product development approach – which strives to create and promote products that offer gradual improvements in sustainability to the entire market (Font & McCabe, 2017). In this project, the first approach will be followed.

#### *2.5 Services Marketing*

In recent years, the scope of marketing has expanded to encompass services. As the world transitions towards a service-based economy, it is crucial for marketers to gain a deeper understanding of marketing services. Well-managed service organizations adhere to several common practices, including a strong focus on customer satisfaction,

commitment from top management, high-quality standards, comprehensive systems for monitoring service performance, effective handling of customer complaints, and the satisfaction of both employees and customers (Kotler et al., 2005) because “In today’s competitive and customer-oriented business world, service quality has become synonymous with customer satisfaction” (p.26) (Nagendra & Osborne, 2000).

Based on the book “Principles of Marketing” (Kotler et al., 2005), services are essentially intangible products which involve activities, benefits, or satisfactions offered for sale. Lovelock et al (2015) add that services do not “result in the ownership of anything, but nonetheless creates value for the recipient”. They possess five distinct characteristics. Firstly, services are intangible, lacking physical attributes that can be seen, tasted, felt, heard, or smelled. They are inseparable from their providers, meaning they are closely tied to the individuals providing them. Variability is another defining feature of services because their quality depends on the service provider and the surrounding environment during delivery. Additionally, services are perishable, meaning they cannot be stored, stockpiled, or backordered. Finally, service products often do not result in ownership of any tangible item (Lovelock et al., 2015). Each of these characteristics present its own challenges, which involves the need of developing specific strategies (Kotler et al., 2005). Informally, like Lovelock et al (2015) would say, services are “something that may be bought and sold but cannot be dropped on your foot”.

Marketers are faced with the task of making services more tangible - because intangibility makes it hard for companies to know how their customers perceive their services (Yelkur, 2000) - , increasing the efficiency of providers who are closely associated with their offerings, standardizing quality in the face of variability, and managing demand fluctuations and supply capabilities considering service perishability due to the difficult task of synchronizing demand and supply (Yelkur, 2000). Because of that, in addition to the traditional marketing mix known as the "four Ps," organizations must also manage three additional elements: people, physical evidence, and processes (Kotler et al., 2005).

Successful service companies place a strong emphasis and know the importance of both their customers and employees. They recognize the link between service firm profitability, employee satisfaction, and customer satisfaction, which is known as the service-profit chain. Services marketing strategy involves external marketing as well as internal marketing to motivate employees. Moreover, interactive marketing must also be considered in order to develop service delivery skills among providers. To thrive, service

marketers must excel in creating competitive differentiation and effectively managing service quality and productivity. Service quality is assessed at each encounter with a client, and managers must identify the dimensions of service quality and align them with customer expectations to maintain high levels of satisfaction (Kotler et al., 2005). Yelkur (2000) explains that previous good or bad interactions with the service will definitely have an impact on the customer's opinion of the service, which is why it is very important to train frontline employees so that their actions will positively influence the customer's future perception of the service and its overall satisfaction.

### *2.6 Ecotourism*

There is not a clear definition for ecotourism due to the existing ambiguity of the origins of the word. For example, Laarman and Durst (1987) defined ecotourism as a nature tourism where the 'traveller is drawn to a destination because of his or her interest in one or more features of that destination's natural history. The visit combines education, recreation, and often adventure.

Harold Goodwin (1996) provides another definition for ecotourism, which is "low impact nature tourism which contributes to the maintenance of species and habitats either directly through a contribution to conservation and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for local people to value, and therefore protect, their wildlife heritage area as a source of income".

### *2.7 Ornithological Tourism*

Ornithological tourism, which is also referred as 'birdwatching', is a prominent type of nature-related tourism. People who are keen on this type of tourism can enjoy the observation of birds in their natural environment with the naked eye or any optical gadgets that might help get a better glimpse of the bird(s) (Szczepańska et al., 2014). However, for Afanasiev (2022) 'birdwatching' "covers a wider range of recreational activities: hobbies, walking, photography, activities with children, nature excursions, contemplation and meditation", and 'ornithological tourism' "involves visiting natural areas, including for the purpose of bird watching. Most ornithological tours fit into the ecological paradigm, and in addition to birdwatching, allow tourists to get acquainted with the natural conditions of the territory and enjoy not only observing and identifying the species, but also visiting a specific area" (Afanasiev, 2022).

There are differences between a 'birdwatcher' and an 'ornithologist'. For Szczepańska et al (2014) the 'ornithologist' is a professional scientific bird observer whereas a 'birdwatcher' is more of an enthusiast for the subject who appreciates watching

birds. A study made in 2018, collecting data from a sample of 357 Polish and foreign birdwatchers, whose main objective was to define a profile of the birdwatchers that were visiting the largest national Park in Poland, showed that most respondents were middle-aged men living in vast cities and who consider birdwatching as a lifestyle and not a hobby, being their reason for birding their desire to be close to nature and fascination with birds (Janeczko et al., 2021).

### 2.8 Ornithological Tourism Marketing

As mentioned, the interest in ornithological tourism is growing worldwide in a fast pace. Some of the essential requirements to attract more birdwatchers are related to “safety, accessibility, infrastructure, quality of birdlife, and knowledgeable guides” (Hossain & Rana, 2022) . Marketing can be used to attract more birdwatchers to a local area by spreading the word online in different platforms and channels, targeting middle-aged and elderly groups, exploiting the tourists’ willingness to pay, combining birdwatching tours with other activities related to nature and wildlife that might result in package tours. Prices must match the competitors’ (Rana & Hossain, 2022).

## 3. REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE MARKETING PLAN

Table 1 - Theoretical Framework

Structure	Authors
History, Mission, Vision, Values	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Westwood, 2019)
Current Marketing Situation	(Wood, 2017), (Kotler et al., 2005), (Poniewaz, 2020)
Internal Audit Human Resources, Financial Resources, Partnerships, Product, Price, Promotion, Place.	(Wood, 2017), (Kotler et al., 2005), (Poniewaz, 2020)
External Audit Macro Analysis: PEST (Political Factors, Economic Factors, Socio-cultural Factors, Technological Factors, Legal Factors, Environmental Factors).	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Ramly & Hussein, 2018) , (Yüksel, 2012)
Micro Analysis: Competitive Analysis, Michael Porter’s Five Forces Model, Critical Success Factors & Competitive Advantages	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Westwood, 2019)
SWOT/TOWS Analysis	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Kulshrestha & Puri, 2017), (Poniewaz, 2020), (Ramly & Hussein, 2018), (Westwood, 2019), (Wood, 2017)
Marketing Strategies	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Luther, 2011), (Westwood, 2019), (Wood, 2017)
Segmentation, Targeting & Positioning	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Luther, 2011), (Westwood, 2019), (Wood, 2017)
Marketing Objectives	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Luther, 2011), (Westwood, 2019), (Wood, 2017)

Marketing Mix: Product, Price, Promotion, Place, Process, Physical Evidence	(Grönholm, 2012), (Işoraitè, 2016), (Kotler et al., 2005), (Westwood, 2019), (Wood, 2017)
Planning, Implementation, and Control	(Kotler et al., 2005), (Westwood, 2019), (Wood, 2017)

#### 4. METHODOLOGIES

##### *4.1 Objectives and Types of Study*

To create a Marketing Plan for Birdwatching experiences in Companhia das Lezírias, which ultimately aims to attract more clients interested in this service, specially from countries other than Portugal, the research strategy chosen was the Action Research. This type of research strategy is commonly used “to explore and evaluate solutions to organisational issues and to promote change within the organization” (Saunders et al., 2019) and stands out because it involves someone from the company to facilitate the process and a teacher to help managing the process. Lastly, Action Research aims at promoting knowledge from the organisation that “produce practical outcomes through identifying issues, planning action, taking action and evaluating action” (Saunders et al., 2019).

##### *4.2 Research Design*

For the construction of the marketing plan, the Deductive Approach was followed. This approach “involves deduction, where the process is based on prior logical reasoning and available evidence from observation or the research literature resulting in a hypothesis to be tested” (p.48) (Veal, 2018). Also, the development of this work involved the resort to both primary and secondary data. According to Hox and Boeije (2005), primary data is the type of information gathered specifically for the subject that is being studied, using methods that suit the particular research problem. Every time new data is collected, it contributes to the already existing body of social knowledge. After becoming available for the research community, primary data becomes secondary data (Hox & Boeije, 2004). The primary data was collected through a semi-structured interview with Engineer Rui Alves and Sandra Paiva Silva, coordinator of EVOA, and an online survey to the general public. To collect secondary data, a variety of documents were consulted, especially internal documents from Companhia das Lezírias.

The research design used was a mixed methods approach as both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analysed.

Quantitative data was collected through an online survey in Qualtrics, in order to analyse the receptiveness of the market to Birdwatching, the perception of possible clients

to try this service through Companhia das Lezírias and to define the sample socio-economical and demographically (Appendix A).

Qualitative data was extracted from a semi-structured interview with Rui Alves, Director of the Forestry and Sustainability Department, and EVOA's coordinator Sandra Paiva Silva from Companhia das Lezírias to obtain insights and valuable information from the Birdwatching service that the company provides through EVOA (Appendix B). This interview was structured with five main themes: Companhia das Lezírias, Clients, Competitors, Partners, and Marketing-Mix.

### *4.3 Analysis and Discussion of Results*

#### *4.3.1 Interview and qualitative data*

MAXQDA was chosen to conduct the analysis of the interview. With this software, it was possible to transcribe the whole interview and proceed with the analysis of the content.

The content of this interview was analysed through a Thematic Analysis. This qualitative analytic method provides a way of analysing qualitative data that is both accessible and theoretically adaptable (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Fundamentally, this approach aims at exploring themes or patterns that emerge within a collection of information and it consists in coding it in order to create a simpler explanation of the data (Saunders et al., 2019).

Codification was conducted having in mind the five main themes in which the questions of the interview related to - Companhia das Lezírias, Clients, Competitors, Partners and Marketing-Mix. In Appendix C is a representation of the codes created in order to analyse the interview, presenting the code frequency in the analysis. Moreover, Appendix D, which is a word cloud of all the interview responses, represents, in a visual and simple way, the general themes that were addressed. Obviously, the word EVOA appears emphasised, for obvious reasons, but other words like “pessoa” (people), “estratégia” (strategy), “produto” (product) or “conservação” (conservation) also pop up to the eyes and definitely represent EVOA's desire to develop its birdwatching services, never losing sight of their dedication of preserving the habitats and species that the lezíria is home to, but also their concerns about visitors experience when visiting this space. There was also space to talk about future plans, expectations of the marketing plan, current difficulties that the company may be challenging or obstacles that should be tackled, as well as client related topics like feedback and satisfaction, among others. This

interview was important to get a better understanding of everything it takes for the birdwatching activities to exist at EVOA and learn more about the visitors' profile.

#### 4.3.2 *Survey and quantitative data*

Regarding the answers of the online questionnaire, which can be consulted in Appendix E, there was a total of 194 respondents, but only 157 with valid responses as 37 people did not complete the questionnaire. Most individuals that compose this sample have never experienced birdwatching activities – out of 166 answers in Q1.3, 123 never tried birdwatching comparing to only 27 who did and 16 who had never heard of it. Most people who have tried birdwatching experienced it mostly in Lisbon and Setúbal, with the same number as Outside Portugal (Q1.4). Most of them did it on their own (17), and only 9 did it through an organized tour provided by a company (Q1.5). 109 people would be interested in going on birdwatching activities with a company, compared to only 45 who would not be interested due to a lack of interest (Q1.6). Most people (51) would be willing to pay for this kind of activities, whereas only 8 are against it (Q1.7). The amount of money that most people would pay for this experience is between 11€ and 20€ per person (Q1.8). A significant amount of people (84) do not know about the existence of Companhia das Lezírias (Q.13) and, consequently, did not know about CL's offer regarding birdwatching activities (Q1.14) which shows CL's need of having a marketing plan to promote, not only the company itself, but also all its range of activities. Effectively, Q1.15 demonstrates that a great amount of people could possibly become new visitors once they realize CL provides this type of activities. Section B of the questionnaire focuses on the characterization of the sample. This sample is composed of 96 female respondents and 59 male respondents and 3 answered as 'Other' (2.1), aging mostly between 21 and 30 years old. However, a significant number of respondents are aged from 41 to 60 years old. (Q2.2). This sample is practically only Portuguese, mostly from Lisbon, Setúbal and Santarém (Q2.9), with higher education completed, employed and single (Q2.3, Q2.4, Q2.5, Q2.6). Most respondents do not have children and the sample has a heterogenous distribution regarding monthly income where, for example, the same number of people have a monthly income from 2001€ to 3000€ and less than 1000€, but also a quite significant number of people preferred not to answer this question. Finally, this sample is mostly from Portugal, specially from Lisbon, Setúbal and Santarém.

#### *4.4 Limitations*

In general, most limitations are related to the respondents in the sample. The fact that birdwatching is a niche market that is still growing, especially in Portugal, made it difficult to find a sufficient number of respondents that know about these activities and have interest in them. Furthermore, besides the effort of trying to reach a heterogeneous sample, its characterization was not the most appropriate because it does not match most of the characteristics that are generally seen among birdwatchers or people interested in birdwatching, which limits the possibility of generalization.

### 5. MARKETING PLAN

#### *5.1 History, Mission, and Values*

Companhia das Lezírias, a significant agricultural and forestry company in Portugal, operates as a Public Limited Company with exclusive state-owned capital. Headquartered in Samora Correia, the company manages a vast territory of about 200 km<sup>2</sup> in Lisbon, Vale do Tejo, and Alentejo. This expansive region includes key areas like Lezíria of Vila Franca de Xira, Charneca do Infantado, and Paul de Magos. The state granted Companhia das Lezírias a 30-year concession to oversee Coudelaria de Alter.

Within Lezíria of Vila Franca de Xira, two main sections exist, Lezíria Norte and Lezíria Sul. Lezíria Norte, covers around 1,300 hectares, and is indirectly managed by tenants. Conversely, Lezíria Sul spans about 5,000 hectares, with 2,600 hectares leased and 2,200 hectares directly operated by Companhia das Lezírias. Lezíria Sul includes areas dedicated to pastures (2,130 hectares) and rice cultivation (320 hectares) and is fully integrated into the Rede Natura 2000. Companhia das Lezírias has been managing EVOA (Espaço de Visitação e Observação de Aves), the country's largest bird observation centre, located in Lezíria Sul, for the past eight years. The area around EVOA involves three freshwater wetlands covering a collective expanse of 70 hectares. These aquatic habitats hold significant importance in avian ecology, functioning as sanctuaries and potential breeding sites for birds. To ensure the serenity of the avian population and enhance the overall visitor experience and comfort, EVOA is equipped with two dedicated photography shelters, four strategically positioned observatories surrounding the wetlands, assorted camouflaged observation points, and a specialized Interpretation Centre.

The company's largest property, Charneca do Infantado, spans approximately 11,000 hectares. Predominantly used for forestry, it includes a cork oak forest covering 6,570 hectares. This extensive area also accommodates major crops such as corn (406 hectares),

vineyards (140 hectares), and olive groves (70 hectares). Additionally, Charneca do Infantado features 3,100 hectares of diverse permanent meadows cultivated organically. In these meadows and the overall natural pasture area of 5,800 hectares, over three thousand cattle and the Puro Sangue Lusitano horse herd from Coudelaria Companhia das Lezírias are fed extensively. Since 2013, the company has managed the Coudelaria de Alter, founded in 1748, emphasizing the preservation and enhancement of the Puro Sangue Lusitano, with recent efforts focusing on modernization and tourism. Guided by a commitment to sustainability and public service maximization, Companhia das Lezírias plays a vital role in managing these extensive resources.

Companhia das Lezírias' mission is to find a harmonious way of balancing economic and financial profitability with environmental and social sustainability, within a framework of improved, responsible and quality competitiveness. The values internalized in Companhia das Lezírias' organizational culture are Pride, Competence, Public Service, Biodiversity and Sustainability. The company aspires to stand out as a prominent company in its industry, prioritizing Earth, People and Nature with the goal of fostering expertise and strengthening interpersonal skills.

## *5.2 Analysis of the Current Situation*

### *5.2.1 Internal Analysis*

#### *5.2.1.1 Human Resources*

Regarding Companhia das Lezírias' human resources, the 2022 Sustainability Report states that the number of workers has been declining over the years, decreasing from 93 in 2019 to 86 in 2022. All individuals are employed under permanent contracts and fall under the provisions of a collective labour agreement.

66% of Companhia das Lezírias' workforce is male and 34% is female. Since 2018, the majority of the members of the Board of Directors were female. On average, female workers are aged 47 years old, while male workers are aged 46 years old. Also, most workers are aged between 35-65 years old and only nine workers are aged between 25-35 years old. As for the absenteeism rate in 2022, it was higher regarding female workers (7.6%) when comparing to male workers (5.9%), contrary to past information. Moreover, both the number of workers entering and exiting the company has decreased since 2021, but the number of employees exiting has been higher than the number of workers entering since 2020.

Since 2021, Companhia das Lezírias has had a Gender Equality Plan, updated in 2022, with the aim of ensuring effective equal treatment and opportunities for both female and male employees. The plan seeks to eliminate discrimination and promote a balance between personal and professional life.

In 2022, training hours increased by 39% compared to 2021, totalling 1,145 hours. Out of this, 1,123 hours were dedicated to employees, and 22 hours were allocated to the administration. This emphasis on employee training is viewed as a strategic measure, intended to be maintained and expanded in the next years. Training was provided across all departments, covering both technical subjects such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, accounting, and taxation, as well as areas like personal development and workplace safety. The topic that received the highest number of training hours, once again, was vehicle driving, accounting for a total of 605 hours, representing over 50% of the total training hours.

#### *5.2.1.2 Financial Resources*

In 2022, Companhia das Lezírias generated a Net Profit of €2.231 million, sustaining the trend of positive results already observed in other years. This result is admirable considering the challenges posed by the recovery of the harsh context during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine predicted a difficult year for CL. Even though CL presented Net Profit, it decreased by approximately €400.000 when comparing to 2021. In parallel, in 2022, EBITDA amounted more than €3 million, but also decreased by 11% comparing to 2021. These results were also influenced by increases in inflation and climate change, which directly impacts CL's business (Companhia das Lezírias, 2022).

Nature and equestrian tourism contributed to an increase of 139% in services provided, alongside the contract for sunflower seed multiplication services. The expansion of these types of services is due to CL attempt at gaining engagement with the public like contacting, on national and international scale, with journalists, influencers, television hosts and other. key opinion leaders. These initiatives expanded CL's visibility and reputation.

In the interview with engineer Rui Alves and coordinator Sandra Paiva Silva, it was explained that EVOA does not rely solely on charging for the activities, but on fundings for investigation and conservation projects.

### *5.2.1.3 Partnerships*

Focusing on partnerships made by EVOA, which is the main provider of birdwatching activities at CL, as was explained in the interview, there can be pointed out six main partners that contributed for the creation of EVOA: Companhia das Lezírias; Associação de Beneficiários da Lezíria Grande de Vila Franca de Xira, which is the entity that manages the roads and water which allows EVOA to have water in the ponds, rice paddies and pastures; Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e Florestas (ICNF); Vila Franca de Xira's City Hall; Aquaves, which is a small association whose members initially had the idea of building structures to support visitation in that area of the reserve; and the Liga Para A Proteção da Natureza, which is the oldest non-governmental environmental association in Portugal.

Beside these partnerships, all the entities that create some kind of synergies or connections with EVOA, are considered as collaborations. For example, the company Brisa was a key collaboration in the beginning of the project. By being the founding sponsor, it had an important role for EVOA's first steps and making the project viable. There are other important collaborations with Birds & Nature, SPEA (Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves) and Wetland Link International.

### *5.2.1.4 Product and Price*

EVOA has a wide range of birdwatching experiences to offer, appropriate to different audiences and ages, as it a space for leisure but also to learn. EVOA is open from Tuesday to Sunday. From November to February, it is open from 10am to 5pm, and from March to October, it is open from 9am to 7pm. EVOA is closed in July, on December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. The table below presents EVOA's birdwatching experiences and respective prices.

Table 2 - EVOA Experiences

Visits	Characteristics	Price
Daily Guided Tours	Walking or electric car tours; 1h30 tour; 4 possible schedules; Interpretative guided tours with full necessary equipment; Bilingual tours; Minimum number of participants: 1 during the weekend, 3 during the week or minimum payment of 36€; Maximum number of participants: 12 on electric car tours and 15 on walking tours.	Adults: 14€ or 12€ Seniors (+65 years old)/students/professors: 11€ or 9€. Children (7-12 years old): 8€ or 6€. Children (<7 years old): free. Family pack (Maximum of 5 people, with a maximum of 2 over the age of 18): 36€ or 30€. For the electric car tour, price increases 3€ per person. (Special price for Residents of Vila Franca de Xira, Benavente, members and employees of partner organisations and founding sponsor)
Private Tours	Option of exclusive electric car tour; 3h tour; Exclusive guide; Observatories exclusively for your group; Participants' goals are taken into consideration; Minimum number of participants: 4 people or paying the equivalent price; Maximum people: 15 people for walking tour and 12 people for electric car tour.	Price per group: 120€ Adults: 20€ Seniors (+65 years old): 17€ Children (7-12 years old): 15€
Personalized Private Tours	3h tour; Scheduling is made considering the participants' convenience; Adaptation of the route to the participants' interests and needs; Participants can choose from 3 different rout options: Lagoons, Lezíria and Saragoça Saline; Minimum number of participants: 5 participants or payment of the equivalent price; Maximum number of participants: 12 people.	Adult: 30€ Senior (+65 years old): 27€ Children (7-12 years old): 25€
Lezíria Tours - From the Rice Paddies to the Estuary Tour or Looking for Flamingos Tour	3h tour; Schedule: from Tuesday to Sunday; Transport included from Vila Franca de Xira or Braço de Prata station (Companhia das Lezírias accommodation); Minimum number of participants: 5 people or payment of the equivalent price; Maximum number of people: 8 people.	Adult: 35€ Senior (+65 years old): 32€ Children (7-12 years old): 30€
Grand Tour Birds, Wine and Cork	8h tour; Schedule: from Tuesday to Sunday; The tour involves birdwatching, wine tasting at Catapereiro winery, a drive through the cork oak forest, a lunch break near the stud farm, observation of pastures with cattle, Lusitano horses and rice paddies and a walking or electric car tour in EVOA's lagoons; Minimum number of participants: 3 people or payment of the equivalent price;	80€ per person.

	Maximum number of participants: 8 people;	
Birdwatching in the Tagus and Beyond	2 days trip; Schedule: from Tuesday to Sunday; Transportation included from Lisbon municipality; 1 <sup>st</sup> day: similar to the Grand Tour Birds, Wine and Cork, involves accommodation in the heart of the forest at Companhia das Lezírias; 2 <sup>nd</sup> day: the tour heads south with a visit through Castro Verde and Mértola and it ends next to the Vale Cobrão reservoir ; The best time of the year for this visit is during spring and winter, nonetheless these observations are fascinating all year long; Maximum number of participants: 8 people.	From 290€ per person. Doesn't include meals.
Night Raptor Watching	2h tour; Schedule: Tuesday to Sunday, from August to February with a limit of two sessions per month and suitable weather conditions; Minimum number of people: 5 people or payment of equivalent price; Maximum number of people: 12 people.	40€ per person.
EVOA's Exhibition – Where the World Meets Tagus	Interactive exhibition.	Adults (+12 years old): 4€ Children (7-12 years old): 2€
Autonomous Visit	Available to EVOA members or more experienced visitors that have their own equipment; Children under 7 years old are not allowed as well as groups with over 4 people; Maximum distance is 4500m	Adults: 14€ or 12€ Seniors/students/teachers: 11€ or 9€. Children/Teenagers (7-18 years old): 8€ or 6€. Family pack (5 people max. with no more than 2 people over 18 years old): 36€ or 30€. (Lower price for Residents of Vila Franca de Xira, Benavente, members and employees of partner organisations and founding sponsor)

source - EVOA's website (EVOA, n.d.)

EVOA also provides other types of activities: Guided Photography Session, Personalised Workshops on Bird Photography, Biodiversity at Dusk in the Accommodation, Birthday Parties, School Holiday Programmes and Customised Programmes. The capacity of the centre as made possible to develop some activities like celebratory lunches, sunsets, Team-building activities and meetings for companies and photography marathons in teams.

There is also the possibility of becoming a member of EVOA, which has several advantages: free entrance for 1 year, access to the lagoons outside EVOA's working hours

(by appointment), participation in special occasions, special prices at events organized by EVOA and special prices for companions.

#### *5.2.1.5 Promotion*

Promotion at EVOA is jointly made through Companhia das Lezírias, and the company has invested more on communicating through digital channels like Google Ads to try taking advantage of online search, because a lot of the visitors who come to EVOA find these activities through search engines like Google. On another note, EVOA also knows the impact that influencers have nowadays in social media and even though they have made some initiatives regarding this type of communication, its in their interest to do more campaigns with relevant influencers in this field and attract more birdwatchers this way.

Besides the online promotion, EVOA emphasises the importance of its presence in international fairs like the Bird Faire in the UK because there this type of activity attracts a much more significant number of people, which is always an opportunity for EVOA to show its potential and gather more visitors.

#### *5.2.1.6 Place*

These activities take place in EVOA, but they can also involve travelling to other areas, as was explained before, but usually visitors have to go to EVOA to start their activity or, sometimes, it can be arranged with the centre to pick up clients at the train station or other places.

EVOA is located in the Nature Reserve of the Tagus Estuary. Visitors have to ways of getting there:

- from the A1 (Lisbon/Oporto), exit at Vila Franca de Xira and cross the bridge over the Tagus River towards Porto Alto. After the bridge, visitors should take the first exit on the right, towards Cabo. After entering the Lezíria of Vila Franca de Xira through the Cardal Gate (38° 57' 00, 42" N; 8° 58'18,20" O), visitors must follow the EVOA signs for 12.5 km.
- from Porto Alto, visitors should head towards Vila Franca de Xira on the N10 (Reta do Cabo) and turn right just before entering the Marechal Carmona Bridge, in the direction of Cabo. Then, visitors must follow the EVOA signs, entering the Cardal Gate and driving 12.5km through the Lezíria to the centre.

The address is: 2600 Vila Franca de Xira, Lisboa, Portugal

EVOA is open from Tuesday to Sunday including holidays, except on December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. From November to February, the centre is open from 10h to 17h. From March to October, the centre is open from 9h to 19h.

#### *5.2.1.7 Processes*

The process of reserving and scheduling a birdwatching activity in CL's website is made through a software called FareHarbor. Visitors can navigate to the dedicated section for birdwatching activities and choose the desired activity. Upon selecting a preferred date and time and having read all the useful information about pricing, duration, the activity and equipment, users are guided through a straightforward reservation system. Additionally, the software incorporates a secure payment gateway, ensuring a smooth transaction process for customers. After completing the reservation, users receive a confirmation email with all the relevant details, such as meeting points, essential instructions, and any necessary equipment. This user-centric online platform enhances the overall experience, simplifying the process of reservation.

#### *5.2.1.8 Physical Evidence*

The interpretative centre of EVOA is a construction that reflects the pleasant coexistence of simple, but modern, architecture and environmental preservation. Its design seamlessly integrates with the surrounding natural environment due to the building's aesthetic characterized by clean lines, light-coloured sustainable materials, and large windows with a panoramic view for the lagoons. Around the centre, the paths for the experiences can be seen, and their state is highly determined by weather conditions, once they are naturally made on the land. The shelters and observation decks can also be seen, even though they are very discrete in order for the species not notice the presence of the visitors.

EVOA features a wide space for both permanent and temporary exhibitions, a multi-purpose room than can be used, for example, as an auditorium, a pleasant snack-bar with a privileged view over the lagoons, a shop and restroom facilities. In addition, due to the structure of the building, there is also an outdoor picnic area that is located under the centre.

Visitors can also find at EVOA a variety of promotional material, both from EVOA and Companhia das Lezírias, such as brochures for the birdwatching activities that can be experienced there, as well as information about the species that can be seen in the lagoons. In the shop, it is possible to purchase clothing allusive to the species and the centre, as well as other objects like pens.

Employees from Companhia das Lezírias, including EVOA, are properly identified with CL's logo in their garments.

### *5.2.2 External Analysis*

#### *5.2.2.1 Macro Analysis – PEST*

##### *Political Factors*

According to Plano Estratégico de Turismo para a Região de Lisboa 2020-2024, the construction of the new airport in Lisbon is currently one of the most impactful political issues regarding tourism in order to make up for the lack of airport capacity in the Lisbon area (Entidade Regional de Turismo da Região de Lisboa, 2019). The performance of the existing airport is deteriorating, due to many aspects like, for example, the fact that the number of passengers handled at the airport more than doubled between 2010 and 2019, and by 2019 Aeroporto Humberto Delgado de Lisboa presented a saturation level significantly higher than other European airports which can have a severe impact on tourists' satisfaction. However, its ability to respond to the increasing number of tourists is crucial because the Lisbon airport serves not only Lisbon, but also the whole country, including regions directly served by international airports (EY, 2022).

##### *Economic Factors*

Portugal's economy characterizes as highly dependent of services, and it has been gaining a higher representativity in the last years. In 2020, services represented 76% of the Gross Value Added, 11% higher than 1995 (67%), and employed 70% of the active population, revealing its importance in the country. Businesses have changed during the last years: not only have there been more and different services in the economy, but the manufacturing industry has also shifted. Instead of relying on traditional industries, it now focuses more on newer sectors like automotive, electronics, energy, pharmaceuticals, and industries related to new technologies. These sectors are growing and incorporating more technology (AICEP, 2021).

After two years of substantial disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the available statistical data shows that in 2022, the tourism sector came close to reaching the record levels of 2019 as it was marked by the significant return of international tourists to Portugal (GEE & República Portuguesa Economia E Mar, 2023). Finally, in 2023, tourism recovered from the pandemic. In November 2023, the tourist accommodation

sector experienced a surge with 1.9 million guests and 4.6 million overnight stays, marking a 9.2% and 7.5% year-on-year increase, respectively. These figures also represent an 8.4% and 12.3% growth compared to November 2019. Total revenues saw a notable increase of 13.3% from the previous year, reaching €329.4 million. Accommodation-specific revenues amounted to €243.5 million, which translates as a 13.2% year-on-year increase. Comparing to November 2019, both total revenues and accommodation revenues recorded substantial growth, showing increases of 43.2% and 46.8%, respectively (Turismo de Portugal, 2023).

Closing the year with a more optimistic performance, the growth rate for 2023 reached 2.3%, exceeding the government's projected 2.2% in the 2024 Government Budget. INE informed that domestic demand played a positive role in the annual GDP change, although at a slower pace compared to the previous year, with a deceleration in both private consumption and investment. Additionally, the positive contribution of net external demand in 2023 was less pronounced than in 2022, marked by a notable slowdown in the volume of exports and imports of goods and services (Espírito Santo, 2024).

### *Social Factors*

According to PORDATA, in 2022, Portugal was home to 10,44 million people, 60% of which accounting for working population (5,2 million), 24% are elderly people (2,5 million) and only 13% represents people under 15 years old, highlighting the substantial values of the ageing index, which is 184 elderly people per 100 young individuals (PORDATA, 2022b).

In 2022, there were 103 non-governmental organisations for the environment in Portugal, with more than 230 thousand people associated to them. Although the number of NGA for this matter has been unstable through the years, the number of people associated to them has been increasing, with a significant rise of more than 12 thousand people from 2021 to 2022, which may represent the improvement of the awareness being raised regarding the environment (PORDATA, 2022a).

As stated in the image below, in 2021, outdoor tourism and adventure activities were the most popular in Portugal, accounting for 33% of preferences, closely trailed by maritime tourism, which held a share of 30.7%. The Covid-19 pandemic and, consequently, the long lockdowns may have contributed for customers' favouring outdoor options over indoor ones (Direção de Gestão do Conhecimento, 2023).

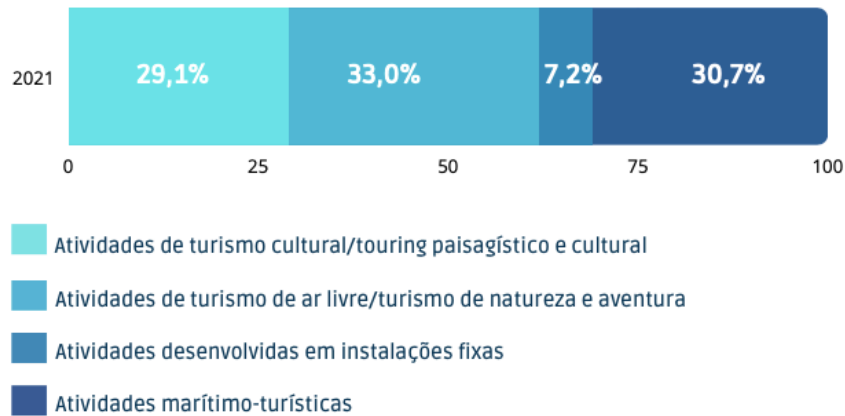


Figure 1 - Most sought-after activity in Portugal | 2021 - (Direção de Gestão do Conhecimento, 2023)

Turismo de Portugal stated that birdwatching holds substantial growth prospects in Portugal as a Nature Tourism activity because the country stands out as an ideal destination, with a natural heritage that includes about 330 bird species, some of which are rare. Lisbon is uniquely positioned like no other European capital, close to an area with a very diverse birdlife. Beyond these qualities, birdwatching is a year-round activity, immune to the effects of seasonal fluctuations, attracting interested people all year long (Turismo de Portugal, 2008).

### *Technological Factors*

It is safe to affirm that the unpredictable pandemic that the world went through accelerated the digital transformation in all kinds of sectors, and tourism wasn't left behind (Neto, 2021). For example, the rise of online booking services and platforms such as TripAdvisor and Yelp has empowered travellers, enabling them to take a more proactive role in planning their journeys. This has led to a shift towards travellers being more informed and selective, seeking more information about their own choices and prioritizing personalized, convenient, and dynamic experiences (Altice Empresas & MediaNext, 2022).

Clear evidence of the realization of the importance of the digital transformation was the creation of projects like “Transformação Digital do Turismo em Portugal”. This project's goal is to develop mechanisms that raise awareness about the relevance of digitization in the competitiveness of companies operating in the tourism sectors to ultimately empower and foster new models of innovation and experimentation among the employees of Turismo de Portugal (Turismo de Portugal, 2018).

Portugal appears in the 36<sup>th</sup> place in the Digital Competitiveness Ranking among 64 participants. This ranking evaluates key factors like Knowledge, Technology and Future Readiness. It is important to point out Portugal's overall top strengths like elevated number of graduates in sciences (16<sup>th</sup> place), pupil-teacher ratio (12<sup>th</sup> place), immigration laws (6<sup>th</sup> place), communications technology (8<sup>th</sup> place) and privacy protection by law content (1<sup>st</sup> place) that positively contributed to the overall performance of the country. On the other hand, IMD also identified some weaknesses, which are the low levels of mobile broadband subscribers (58<sup>th</sup> place), employee training (60<sup>th</sup> place), companies' agility (56<sup>th</sup> place) and the use of big data and analytics (56<sup>th</sup> place) (IMD, 2023).

#### *Environmental Factors*

Since 2013, Portugal successfully separated energy consumption and major air pollutant emissions from economic growth by transitioning to natural gas and renewable energy sources, setting the record on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 when during 149 uninterrupted hours, renewable energy production was higher than consumption needs (República Portuguesa, 2023).

Even though air quality improved, material consumption, urban waste production, and freshwater withdrawals increased at a rate equal to or faster than the GDP. Portugal made progress in wastewater treatment and expanded protected areas, but more efforts are needed in order to manage water and waste effectively and avoid the deterioration of the environment (OCDE, 2023).

Portugal is facing climate change threats such as coastal erosion, intense precipitation, and heatwaves, that can negatively impact agriculture and forest vulnerability to wildfires. There have been more and more efforts to adapt to these conditions, Adaptation, particularly regarding the prevention of wildfires (Silva, 2022). Nonetheless, more actions are needed to improve knowledge, monitor adaptation policies, and elevate the role of rural areas in climate change mitigation and adaptation (OCDE, 2023).

#### *Legal Factors*

The ICNF (Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas) explains that, in Portugal, nature tourism activities are referred as so if the tourist entertainment activities are carried out in areas included in the SNAC (Sistema Nacional de Áreas Classificadas), provided they are recognised as such by the ICNF, I.P. The types of activities allowed in

the SNAC are described in appendix 1 of Dec.-Lei nº186/2015, of September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The recognition of the activity requests must be addressed to Turismo de Portugal, I.P through a specific formulary, as stated in article 13<sup>o</sup> of Dec.-Lei nº. 108/2009 of May 15 (ICNF, n.d.).

Plano Estratégico da PAC states that SNAC is composed by the Rede Nacional de Áreas Protegidas (National Network of Protected Areas), the areas that constitute the Rede Natura 2000 and other areas classified by international commitments and used on a national level. These commitments include the Convenção das Zonas Húmidas (Convention on Wetlands) with international importance for water birds, Ramsar Convention, and UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve (GPP & República Portuguesa, 2020).

#### 5.2.2.2 *Micro Analysis*

##### *Market Analysis*

Portugal is privileged with an important starting point for the development of nature tourism activities like birdwatching once 21% of the territory is classified as areas with robust natural and biodiversity values regarding fauna, flora, landscape, and environmental quality (Turismo de Portugal, 2007).

The vast diversity of landscapes and natural habitats enable the development of different kinds of recreational and sports activities, as well as products associated with tourist entertainment, offering new ways to enjoy nature (Pires de Oliveira, 2013).

Activities related to birdwatching have become increasingly popular, making it a growing market, where Europeans stand out as being extremely interested in it (CBI, 2021). Portugal is seen as one of the best places for birdwatching purposes as the country offers easy access to Europe's most popular and spectacular species (Hatch, 2013). Furthermore, Portugal offers exceptional infrastructure dedicated to tourism and benefits from its geography that makes it simpler to travel from countries like the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Germany which are the highest source of birdwatchers in Europe (CBI, 2021).

##### *Competitive Analysis*

There are multiple activities in Portugal that might compete with EVOA's birdwatching activities, even when they are not directly related with birds. However, these competitors offer services/activities related to nature in some kind of way.

The table below was made based on what engineer Rui Alves and coordinator Sandra Paiva Silva pointed out, during the interview, to be EVOA's main competitors.

Table 3 - Main Competitors

Competitor	Advantages	Disadvantages	Price
Doñana National Park Birdwatching Tours	Largest wetland in Western Europe; Great diversity of wildlife and landscapes; It is home to some population of the world's most endangered feline, the Iberian Lynx; Highly customizable excursions according to visitors' preferences	Expensive price; Depends on whether;	From 50€ to 875€ (depending on type of activity)
Oceanário Lisboa	Diversity of species; Easy access; Indoor activities; Expositions; Not affected by seasonality; Attracts public from all ages; It is the most visited cultural place in Portugal; Unique programs	Expensive price; High maintenance; Types of tickets; Lack of sponsors; Communication more focused on children and schools.	From 0€ to 75€ (depending on age and type of activity)
Jardim Zoológico Lisboa	Diversity of species; History; Strong branding; Location and accessibility; Attractions; Partnerships; Not affected by seasonality; Educational programs	Limitation of space; Price perception; Depends on the whether; Visitors expectations of animal activity	From 0€ to 29€ (depending on age and type of activity)
Badoca Safari Park	Visitors can experience a Safari; Diversity of wild species; 90 hectares of land to explore; Offers more activities beside the Safari	Affected by seasonality; Depends on whether; Performance is declining; Expensive price.	From 0€ to 150€ (depending on age and type of activities)
Dino Parque Lourinhã	Theme is a differentiating factor; Large outdoor area; Quality of dinosaur models; Educational environment; Complementary activities; Proximity to Lisbon	Lack of interactivity; Poor offer of meals; Constant need for maintenance.	From 0€ to 55€ (depending on age and type of activity)
Lagoa Pequena of Sesimbra	Lagoa Pequena was included on the list of wetlands of international importance; Diversity of species; Beauty of the landscape; Attractive place for nature lovers; Easy access	Occasional closures; Not open every day of the week; Depends on whether; Does not provide a wide range of activities.	From 0€ to 5€ (depending on age)

Salinas do Samouco	The Samouco saline is considered the one with the greatest richness and abundance of birds during the high tide period in the entire Tagus River; Proximity to Lisbon; 360 hectares to explore; Cheap price; Diverse activities; Special Protection Area visited by 170 species of birds.	Depends on whether; It's not a popular attraction. <sup>1</sup>	From 0€ to 10€ (depending on age, type of activity and if it includes a guide)
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Source: (Badoca Safari Park, n.d.), (Oceanário de Lisboa, n.d.), (Franklim, 2013), (Mateus, 2018), (Município de Alcochete, n.d.), (Salinas do Samouco, n.d.), (Valter Leandro, 2024), (TripAdvisor, n.d.), (Doñana Wings, n.d.)

*Michael Porter's Five Forces Model*

Table 4 - Michael Porter's Five Forces Model

Threat of new entrants	Even though there is the possibility of new companies entering the niche market of birdwatching, it is somehow limited in the sense that usually these kinds of activities are carried out in areas with elevated fauna and/or flora richness. Evidently, companies cannot simply come up with a natural area worth exploring if it does not, in fact, present interesting characteristics, like being the habitat for some iconic species or a significant number of identifiable species appealing to the public. Conservation and sustainability are also two important concepts that birdwatchers value, as well as for birdwatching products to have good sustainable credentials. (CBI, 2021)
Bargaining power of suppliers	Due to the nature of this type of activities and where they are carried out, companies don't rely much on suppliers to keep their businesses going, but rather they have to guarantee they can maintain habitats and natural zones sustainable for the species to live there.
Bargaining power of customers	Once birdwatching activities belong to a niche market, customers' bargaining power tends to be low. Most birdwatchers don't mind paying the offered price if they know it has the corresponding quality. Furthermore, prices vary a lot depending on the type of activities provided and the level of interest in birdwatching. So, people who casually appreciate to observe birds can look for cheaper options, while hardcore birdwatchers may require more in-depth excursions and usually, they do not mind paying more for it.
Threat of substitute products	Because activities related to birdwatching are not very representative in Portugal, the threat of substitute products is not very alarming, in the short run. Nonetheless, these activities are experiencing a growing amount of interest in Portugal and other countries in Europe, so it is expected that more and more substitute products will appear in the market.
Competition in the industry	In 2020, 112 birdwatching companies were identified in Portugal, but birdwatching is not the main focus in most of them and most of these companies considered that ornithological tourism is only feasible when complemented with other activities related to nature tourism, which implies the low level of competition in the industry.

*Critical Success Factors & Competitive Advantages*

After a thorough interview with engineer Rui Alves and coordinator Sandra Paiva Silva, it was possible to understand the uniqueness of EVOA and what are they key characteristics that attract visitors.

The table below summarizes the critical success factors and the competitive advantages that derive from them.

Table 5 - Critical Success Factors and Competitive Advantages

Critical Success Factors	Competitive Advantage
Proximity to birds	Strategically placed shelters and the lack of land modelling permit a close observation of birds, without them noticing and changing their behaviour.
Quantity	Tagus estuary is home to half the number of birds that Portugal receives, and a high proportion of that amount can be seen at EVOA, approximately 25000 birds.
Rice Fields	EVOA takes advantage of the beauty of rice fields that triggers the curiosity of visitors.
Safari Experience	The feeling of immensity and grandiosity of the lezíria makes it easier for visitors to feel overwhelmed with the environment. Combined with the quantity and proximity to birds, it can resemble the experience of being in a Safari.
Senses' Stimulation	There are no barriers between birds and visitors, which is more favourable to explore all the senses, lacking artificiality and, therefore, showing authenticity.
Interpretation of the territory	Besides having the opportunity of observing a diverse range of species, the interpretation of the territory is also part of the visit. Guides explain what is the lezíria, previous economic activities developed there and the ones that survive nowadays, never losing sight of the importance of the conservation for this area.
Contrast between rural and urban area	The lezíria is an extremely rural area, with reduced number of habitants, which contrasts with the urban sprawl that is Tagus' right bank.

Source - Own Source

*5.3 SWOT/TOWS Analysis*

Table 6 - SWOT/TOWS Analysis

	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust commitment to sustainability</li> <li>Largest bird observatory in the country</li> <li>Biodiversity and quality of habitats</li> <li>Proximity to the birds while visiting</li> <li>Strategic Location</li> <li>Observatories tactically positioned</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hard accessibility</li> <li>Existence of ticks at certain times of the year</li> <li>Non-existence of a Marketing Plan only for EVOA</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>Lack of national popularity</li> </ol>
Opportunities (O)	S-O Strategies	W-O Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of activities in the Saragoça salt pan.</li> <li>Take advantage of the reconstruction of the old pier in CL</li> <li>Growing interest in birdwatching worldwide</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch international marketing campaigns targeting birdwatching communities globally, proving EVOA as an important birdwatching location</li> <li>Create a corporate package for companies, combining birdwatching</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest on better accessibility</li> <li>Develop a comprehensive marketing plan for EVOA</li> <li>Collaborate with local tourism companies, travel influencers and important birdwatchers to make EVOA a place that no birdwatcher wants to miss.</li> </ol>

4. Educational component of the visits 5. Becoming an option for companies to make teambuilding activities	experiences and corporate activities in the EVOA interpretative centre. 3. Introduce guided tours and activities focusing on the importance of the Saragoça salt pan for the lezíria. 4. Develop complementing birdwatching programs involving boat tours from the reconstructed pier.	
Threats (T)	T-S Strategies	T-W Strategies
1. Wetlands are one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world. 2. Consequences of global warming. 3. Economic crisis. 4. Some visitors reject the presence of a guide which can lead to a not as rewarding experience	1. Create a mandatory part in each tour where guides explain the main attractions and relevant information about EVOA in the hope that visitors might want to have a guided tour. 2. Emphasize how much visitors' contribution is important for the conservation of EVOA and its commitment to sustainable practices. 3. Collaborate with environmental organizations and the community around the lezíria to create initiatives about and raise awareness about wetland preservation	1. Promote guides' knowledge and valuable insights in visits by showing visitors' opinion about the presence of guides during the experience. 3. Now and then create promotions for some visits so that visitors who normally cannot afford this type of experience might be able to do it.

Source - Own source

#### 5.4 Marketing Strategies

This marketing plan follows a market development strategy, mostly due to the fact that ornithological tourism is expanding worldwide, and Portugal has enormous potential in attracting a higher amount of more experienced birdwatchers for this kind of experiences, not only from Portugal, but also from other countries. And, consequently, the more markets the company is able to reach, the greater the growth will be.

Align with this strategy, and due to a significant increase on the importance of social media in developing tourism activities, it is also important to focus on a deeper digital marketing strategy.

#### 5.5 Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning

##### 5.5.1 Segmentation

Segmentation for birdwatching activities at Companhia das Lezírias is multi-variable, taking in consideration three main factors: geographic, demographic, and psychographic.

Geographic Factor	Most birdwatching enthusiasts in Europe come from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Italy, and Spain.
Demographic Factor	Male individuals, of 50 years old or older, retired with financial stability.

Psychographic Factor	Usually, individuals who appreciate these activities are highly educated and worry about sustainability. Birdwatching and being in the nature is a lifestyle for them. Their financial stability allows them to spend, on average, more than 100€ per day.
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### 5.5.2 Targeting

EVOA's target will be, not only individuals and families that casually enjoy affordable birdwatching experiences, but also more affectionate national and international birdwatchers who are looking for enriching and structured birdwatching activities and don't mind paying a premium price that reflects the quality of the offer. One of the most important characteristics of this target is the respect for the human nature and sustainability awareness.

### 5.5.3 Positioning

Companhia das Lezírias sets an exemplary standard in the natural sector by hosting a dedicated centre for its birdwatching activities. EVOA's image should be portrayed as a robust protector of avian species, actively preserving, and monitoring the surrounding habitats. Beyond educating visitors on the environment, the ultimate goal is to position EVOA as a benchmark among its peers, distinguished by its exemplary practices, steadfast values, and extensive expertise in the field.

## 5.6 Marketing Objectives

The creation of this marketing plan is aligned with the following marketing objectives for the birdwatching activities at CL in 2025:

- Increase brand awareness among consumers inside and outside Portugal;
- Attraction of new tourist markets;
- Enhance CL's visibility on social media platforms;
- Increase number of visitors by 15% until the end of 2024;
- Improvement of the birdwatching services.

## 5.7 Marketing Mix

### 5.7.1 Product Strategy

The product strategy involves the purchase of a small boat that can be safely and sustainably used in the lagoons with the supervision of a guide so that visitors can take a ride and enjoy observing birds in a different and more intense kind of way. In addition, this strategy also proposes the creation of a new activity dedicated to more experienced birdwatchers called Ultimate Birdwatching. It is defined by an experience where visitors camp at EVOA during 3 days, have a full onsite guide, premium equipment and have the

privilege of watching closely the species' activity since the early morning until the end of the day.

### *5.7.2 Price Strategy*

In the online questionnaire, most people answered that they would be willing to pay between 11€ to 20€ for a 1h30 birdwatching activity with a guide. Having in mind that most people who have already tried birdwatching activities before paid less than 10€ and that, at the moment, the price for adults and seniors for the Daily Guided Tours is 14€ and 11€, respectively, the price for this activity should increase by 1€ in both categories. The new price for adults will be 15€ (it is still between 11€ and 20€) and the new price for seniors will be 12€ (also between 11€ and 20€). Nonetheless, the price increase should be aligned with improvements in the service provided.

Moreover, the creation of a 10% discount on a second purchase to all customers who purchased any birdwatching activity within a one-year period is also proposed. In other words, all customers who purchased a birdwatching activity at CL in 2024 will receive a 10% discount on the same activity in 2025.

Finally, establishing partnerships with local restaurants and other local companies to provide a pre-agreed discount to all visitors of EVOA is also another pricing strategy that contributes to the achievement of the marketing objectives.

### *5.7.3 Communication Strategy*

In order to interact more with possible new clients and maintain the existing ones, it's necessary for EVOA to develop a digital marketing strategy focused on platforms like Instagram and TikTok by posting content daily and creating regular initiatives through these platforms. Aligned with this, the creation of partnerships with influencers will boost the engagement and raise brand awareness. Moreover, the presence of EVOA in fairs (Bird Faire, Dutch Bird Fair, Gouden Ring Show, etc) is crucial to publicise EVOA through the variety of birdwatching offers and make the market not forget about EVOA's name. Besides these online strategies, it's important for EVOA to establish partnerships with travel and tourism agencies that directly deal with tourists and can suggest EVOA as a reference in this sector.

### *5.7.4 People Strategy*

CL will invest on the English skills of EVOA's employees by offering them 2 courses per year. It is important for the employees, especially the guides, to perfectly know how to express themselves in English because it cannot be a barrier for foreign visitors.

Besides, the recruitment of a marketer to manage EVOA’s digital platforms and content is extremely important to keep information updated and show the public all the different initiatives and activities that can be done at EVOA.

*5.7.5 Process Strategy*

Even though the reservation of activities can be done EVOA’s email or by a telephone call, it should be clarified that online reservations can also be made through Companhia das Lezírias’s website. By doing this, visitors know all the possible ways of making a reservation and, by doing it online, EVOA can improve its already existing client database with more information retrieved from the reservation process and take advantage of those insights to get to know more about their clients.

*5.7.6 Physical Evidence Strategy*

This strategy involves positioning information points near each shelter and observing deck, containing insights and fun facts about the species that can be seen there, tips for correctly observing the birds and other relevant information that might improve the visitors’ experience. Additionally, it involves the construction of a small eco-camping park near the parking lot for the new activity – Ultimate Birdwatching – with long-lasting tents made of sustainable products and equipped with all the necessary amenities for a 3-day camping.

*5.8 Planning, Implementation, and Control*

*5.8.1 Planning and Timetabling*

The strategies suggested before have different timeframes for implementation, and most of them are planned to be executed in the long run. Effectively, the implementation and success of all these strategies depends on financial and human resources, that may suffer changes in time. The table below represents the monthly schedule of the implementation, starting next year.

Table 7 - Planning and Timetabling

Strategy	Actions	2025											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Product	Purchase of a boat												
	Launching of Ultimate Birdwatching												
Price	New price for Daily Guided Tours												
	10% Discount offer for next year												

	Local partnerships for discounts for EVOA's visitors.																		
Communication	Investment in digital marketing and partnerships with influencers.																		
	Participation in fairs.																		
	Partnership with tourism/travel agencies.																		
People	English course																		
	Recruitment of a Marketing specialist																		
Process	Improvement of the reservation process																		
Physical Evidence	Positioning of information points																		
	Construction of the eco-camping park																		

Source - Own source

### 5.8.2 Implementation and Control

To guarantee a successful implementation of the previously described strategies, it is crucial to maintain regular control over time. To do that, it is suggested that monthly evaluation of the ongoing developments occurs as well as doing the necessary adjustments.

This evaluation will be based on online adherence to the content that is posted, based on number of followers, likes and shares in social media platforms (Instagram and TikTok), database information about clients, evolution of the number of national and international visitors, and their feedback. Moreover, the employees' perspective on the visitors' reactions to the changes is also extremely important.

### 5.8.3 Financial planning

The concretization of the marketing strategies depends on financial resources in order to implement everything. The estimated budget to proceed with all the improvements is 50.000€. Nonetheless, this value may not represent CL financial capabilities, as it is based only on average market prices, not taking into consideration CL's budget for EVOA as it was not possible to obtain that type of information. The table below represents the weight that each strategy has on the estimated budget:

Table 8 - Financial Planning

Total Budget (50.000€)	
Strategy	Percentage (%)
Product	10%
Price	2%
Communication	10%
People	45%
Process	3%
Physical Evidence	30%

Source1 - Own source

## 6. CONCLUSION

The implementation of this marketing plan on birdwatching activities for Companhia das Lezírias is an advantage for the company, clarifying strategic objectives and, consequently, defining how to achieve those objectives, with the final goal of enhancing the brand's visibility in Portugal, as well as abroad. Throughout this study, the importance of keeping birdwatching as a sustainable activity is also mentioned, not only because it is a structural value of CL, but because the area where these activities take place is a natural reserve that needs to be preserved due to its special characteristics. Moreover, the marketing plan was also created having in mind the positive impacts and economic advantages that birdwatching activities can have on local communities.

The suggested strategies involve the creation of a new birdwatching activity at EVOA (Ultimate Birdwatching), purchase of a boat in order to complement the visitors' experience, price rearrangement, discounts on visits and on local restaurants and companies, digital investment, including partnerships with influencers, English training for employees, recruitment of a marketing specialist, improvements on the reservation process, construction of a small eco-camping space and positioning of information points near the shelters and observing decks near EVOA. The success of the implementation of these strategies depends on financial and human resources, as well as regular control and close monitorization to make any necessary adjustments. Moreover, EVOA must know its clients and must be able to keep track on tourism tendencies of this sector and be updated on new market tendencies and innovation that might be worth investing on to keep being a reference regarding birdwatching. In order to do so, the creation of a social media strategy is recommended.

Lastly, this study reveals the importance of birdwatching activities and how it is developing dynamically, attracting more and more people from all over the world.

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APPENDICES

*Appendix A*

In the context of the final master’s work in Management at Lisbon School of Economics and Management (ISEG), this survey is aimed at developing a Marketing Plan for the Birdwatching activities at Companhia das Lezírias (CL). Ornithological tourism, which is also referred to as ‘birdwatching’, is a prominent type of nature-related tourism. People who are keen on this type of tourism can enjoy the observation of birds in their natural environment with the naked eye or any optical gadgets that might help get a better glimpse of the bird(s) (Szczepańska et al., 2014). This questionnaire was developed in order to analyse new possible clients for CL and the market’s acceptance of this kind of experiences. Your honest participation in the survey is very important. We guarantee that your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Completing this questionnaire should only take 10 minutes.

<b>Section A</b>	
<b>Questions</b>	<b>Supporting References</b>
Q1.1 Do you often go on paid touristic activities? – Yes - No (If the answer is ‘Yes’ the questionnaire goes on to Q1.2. If the answer is ‘No’, the questionnaire goes on to Q1.3)	(Pereira, 2016)
Q1.2 How much do you usually spend on average on tourism activities annually? - Less than 50€ - 51€-100€ - 101€-300€ - 301€-500€ - 501€-700€ - 701€-900€ - 901€-1100€ - more than 1100€	
Q1.3. Have you participated in birdwatching activities? - Yes - No - Never heard of it (If the answer is ‘No’ or ‘Never heard of it’, the questionnaire goes on to Q1.6. )	(Pereira, 2016)
Q.1.4 Where did you do Birdwatching? - Lisbon, -Viana do Castelo, -Braga, -Oporto, -Aveiro, -Vila Real, -Bragança, -Évora, -Faro, -Santarém, -Leiria, -Coimbra, -Guarda, -Viseu, -Setúbal, -Beja, -Castelo Branco, -Azores, -Madeira, -Outside Portugal.	(Veal, 2018)
Q1.5 Did you do it on your own or through an organized tour provided by a company? - On your own - Organized tour provided by a company (If the answer is ‘Organized tour provided by a company’, the questionnaire goes on to Q.1.9)	(Companhia das Lezírias, 2023)

<p>Q1.6 Would you consider participating in birdwatching activities through an organized tour provided by a company?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No (Why?)</li> </ul> <p>(If the answer is 'Yes', the questionnaire goes on to Q1.8. If the answer is 'No', the questionnaire goes on to Q1.1)</p>	(Companhia das Lezírias, 2023)
<p>Q1.7 Would you consider paying for this kind of experience?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No (Why?)</li> </ul> <p>(If the answer is 'No', the questionnaire goes on to Q1.13)</p>	(Pintassilgo et al., 2023)
<p>Q1.8 How much would you be willing to pay for an experience like this? (for at least 1h30 with a guide)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Until 10€ per person</li> <li>- 11€ - 20€ per person</li> <li>- 21€ - 30€ per person</li> <li>- 31€ - 40€ per person</li> <li>- more than 40€ per person</li> </ul> <p>(The questionnaire goes on to Q1.13)</p>	(Pintassilgo et al., 2023), (Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.9 How long did your session take?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less than 1 hour</li> <li>- 1 hour</li> <li>- 1 hour and 30 minutes</li> <li>- More than 2 hours</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.10 Did your session involve a guide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.11 Do you consider that the amount of time was appropriate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No, it took too long</li> <li>- No, it was too brief</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.12 What was the price per person?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less than 10€ per person</li> <li>- 10€-15€ per person</li> <li>- 16€-20€ per person</li> <li>- 21€-30€ per person</li> <li>- 31€ - 40€ per person</li> <li>- more than 40€ per person</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.13 Have you heard of Companhia das Lezírias?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.14 Did you know that Companhia das Lezírias has a variety of experiences related to Birdwatching?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<p>Q1.15 Would you be interested in participating in a Birdwatching tour at Companhia das Lezírias?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> </ul>	(Companhia das Lezírias, n.d.)
<b>Section B</b>	
<p>Q2.1 Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Masculine</li> <li>- Feminine</li> <li>- Prefer not to answer</li> <li>- Other – Which? Open answer</li> </ul>	(Veal, 2018), (Pintassilgo et al., 2023)

<p>Q2.2 Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less than 18</li> <li>- 18 – 20</li> <li>- 21-30</li> <li>- 31-40</li> <li>- 41-50</li> <li>- 51-60</li> <li>- more than 60</li> </ul>	<p>(Veal, 2018), (Pintassilgo et al., 2023)</p>
<p>Q2.3 Nationality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Portuguese</li> <li>- Spanish</li> <li>- British</li> <li>- German</li> <li>- Belgian</li> <li>- Dutch</li> <li>- Other – Which?</li> </ul>	<p>(Pintassilgo et al., 2023)</p>
<p>Q2.4 Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Higher Education completed</li> <li>- High School Completed</li> <li>- Primary School completed</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>	<p>(Veal, 2018)</p>
<p>Q2.5 Professional Situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student</li> <li>- Working student</li> <li>- Employee</li> <li>- Self-employed</li> <li>- Unemployed</li> </ul>	<p>(Veal, 2018)</p>
<p>Q2.6 Marital Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Married</li> <li>- Living Together</li> <li>- Single</li> <li>- Divorced</li> <li>- Widowed</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>	<p>(Pintassilgo et al., 2023)</p>
<p>Q2.7 Number of children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None</li> <li>- One</li> <li>- Two</li> <li>- Three</li> <li>- Four or</li> <li>- more</li> </ul>	<p>(Pintassilgo et al., 2023)</p>
<p>Q2.8 Monthly Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less than 1000€</li> <li>- 1001€ to 2000€</li> <li>- 2001€ to 3000€</li> <li>- 3001€ to 4000€</li> <li>- More than 4000€</li> <li>- Prefer not to answer</li> </ul>	<p>(Pintassilgo et al., 2023)</p>
<p>Q2.9 District of Residence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lisbon, -Viana do Castelo, -Braga, -Oporto, -Aveiro, -Vila Real, -Bragança, -Évora, -Faro, -Santarém, -Leiria, -Coimbra, -Guarda, -Viseu, -Setúbal, -Beja, -Castelo Branco, -Azores, -Madeira, -Outside Portugal</li> </ul>	<p>(Veal, 2018)</p>

*Appendix B*

Interview with engineer Rui Alves and EVOA’s coordinator Sandra Paiva Silva from Companhia das Lezírias.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Supporting References</b>
<b>1. Companhia das Lezírias/EVOA</b>	
When did EVOA start its activity, and how do you characterize its performance so far? [Quando é que o EVOA começou a sua atividade e como é que caracteriza a sua performance até agora?]	(Maia, 2021)
What are the main objectives, values and mission of EVOA? [Quais são os principais objetivos, valores e missão do EVOA?]	(Maia, 2021)
What are the marketing strategies that are currently being used regarding Birdwatching? [Quais as estratégias de marketing que estão a ser usadas atualmente?]	(Curty, 2019)
What are the main political factors that can affect EVOA the most? [Quais são os principais fatores políticos que mais podem afetar o EVOA?]	(Maia, 2021)
Can the construction of new airport be a threat to EVOA if it is decided to be built in Alcochete? [Poderá a construção do novo Aeroporto ser uma ameaça para o EVOA, se for decidido ser construído em Alcochete?]	
What are other threats in the area that are worth considering regarding the environment? [Que outras ameaças na zona do EVOA são importantes considerar, relativamente ao meio ambiente?]	
What are EVOA’s main challenges? [Quais são os maiores desafios do EVOA?]	(Maia, 2021), (Curty, 2019)
Do you feel that the constant technological evolution has impacted the business in any way? [Sente que a constante evolução tecnológica tem, de alguma forma, impactado o negócio?]	(Maia, 2021)
What are EVOA’s plans for the future? [Quais são os planos para o future do EVOA?]	(Curty, 2019), (Maia, 2021)
<b>2. Clients</b>	
In general, where are most visitors’ from? [Em geral, de onde são a maioria dos visitantes?]	
What are the main characteristics of EVOA’s visitors? [Quais são as principais características dos visitantes do EVOA?]	(Barata, 2015) , (Maia, 2021)
In the sustainability report, it is mentioned that school visits are quite important. Are they Portuguese schools? Would you be interested in collaborating with schools from outside Portugal? [No relatório de sustentabilidade de 2022 mencionam que visitas de estudo são bastante importantes no EVOA. Estas escolas são portuguesas? Seria do vosso interesse atrair escolas de outros países?]	(Companhia das Lezírias, 2023)
How is the company’s relationship with the visitors? [Como caracterizam a relação com os visitantes?]	(Barata, 2015)

How do you describe the visitors' satisfaction and how does EVOA measure it? [Como descreve a satisfação dos visitantes e como é que o EVOA a mede?]	(Barata, 2015)
What does CL do with the results of the visitors' satisfaction analysis? [O que é que a CL faz com a análise da satisfação dos clientes?]	
What is the main target that EVOA aims to reach? [Qual o principal público-alvo que o EVOA pretende atingir? ]	(Maia, 2021)
Why does CL want to focus on attracting more foreign birdwatchers? [Porque é que a CL pretende focar-se em atrair visitantes estrangeiros?]	(Regarding an online meeting with Engineer Rui Alves from CL on the 7th of December 2023)
How do clients usually find the birdwatching experiences at CL? [Normalmente, como é que os visitantes descobrem este tipo de experiências oferecidas pela CL?]	(Barata, 2015)
What's the difference between the capacity of EVOA to receive clients and the actual number of clients that it receives? [Qual a discrepância entre a capacidade de visitantes que o EVOA consegue receber e o número de visitantes que o EVOA recebe efetivamente]	(Regarding an online meeting with Engineer Rui Alves from CL on the 7th of December 2023)
During the summer, what is EVOA's maximum capacity of visitors? [Durante o verão, qual é a capacidade máxima de visitantes que o EVOA consegue receber?]	(Regarding an online meeting with Engineer Rui Alves from CL on the 7th of December 2023)
How many visitors can EVOA attract during the overall tourism's off season? [Quantos visitantes consegue o EVOA atrair durante a época baixa do turismo?]	(Regarding an online meeting with Engineer Rui Alves from CL on the 7th of December 2023)
<b>3. Competitors</b>	
Who are EVOA's main competitors? [Quais são os principais concorrentes do EVOA?]	(Pereira, 2016)
What are CL's competitive advantages when comparing with its competitors? [Quais são as vantagens competitivas do EVOA relativamente aos seus concorrentes?]	(Pereira, 2016)
<b>4. Partners</b>	
Who are EVOA's main partners and what is their importance? [Quais são os principais parceiros do EVOA e qual a sua importância? ]	(Maia, 2021)
<b>5. Marketing Mix</b>	
<b>5.1 Product</b>	
How does EVOA/CL define the offers regarding Birdwatching? [Como são definidas as atividades de Birdwatching pelo EVOA/CL?]	(Barata, 2015)
What are the best-selling birdwatching activities? [Quais são as atividades de birdwatching mais vendidas?]	
Does CL think of creating/adding new types of birdwatching activities? [A CL prevê a criação ou adição de novos tipos de atividades de birdwatching?]	

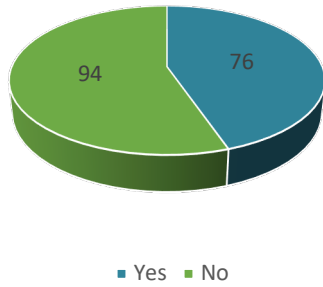
How could these activities be improved? [Que melhorias poderiam ser aplicadas nestas atividades?]	(Barata, 2015), (Dias, 2018)
Have visitors suggested any improvements regarding Birdwatching? [Os visitantes já sugeriram alguma melhoria?]	(Dias, 2018)
<b>5.2 Price</b>	
How does EVOA price these activities? [Como é que o EVOA define o preço destas atividades?]	(Barata, 2015)
What is the profit margin? [Qual a margem de lucro?]	(Barata, 2015)
<b>5.3 Communication</b>	
What is EVOA's communication strategy and objectives? [Qual a estratégia de comunicação do EVOA?]	(Barata, 2015)
What are the main communication channels used? [Quais os canais de comunicação?]	(Barata, 2015)
What's the message, content and tone that EVOA wants to transmit? [Qual a mensagem, o seu conteúdo e tom, que o EVOA quer transmitir?]	
Would it make sense to transmit different messages for different types of visitors? [Fará sentido transmitir mensagens diferentes a diferentes tipos de visitantes?]	
Which improvements could the company implement? [Que melhorias poderiam ser implementadas?]	(Saunders et al., 2019)
<b>5.4 People</b>	
How many people work at EVOA? [Quantas pessoas trabalham no EVOA?]	(Barata, 2015)
Does CL provide workers with training opportunities? [A CL oferece formações aos seus trabalhadores?]	(Barata, 2015)
How does EVOA evaluate its employees? [Como é que o EVOA avalia os seus empregados?]	(Barata, 2015)
How does EVOA evaluate the employees' relationship with the visitors? [Como é que o EVOA avalia a relação dos empregados para com os visitantes?]	
<b>5.5 Processes</b>	
How is EVOA integrated with CL? [Como é que o EVOA está inserido na CL?]	
How is the communication between the two parts? [Como caracteriza a comunicação entre as duas partes?]	
Can you describe the most common booking processes of these activities? [Consegue descrever a forma mais comum de reserva destas atividades?]	(Barata, 2015)
<b>6. Other</b>	
What does CL expect from this Marketing Plan? [O que é que a CL espera deste Plano de Marketing?]	(Regarding an online meeting with Engineer Rui Alves from CL on the 7th of December 2023)



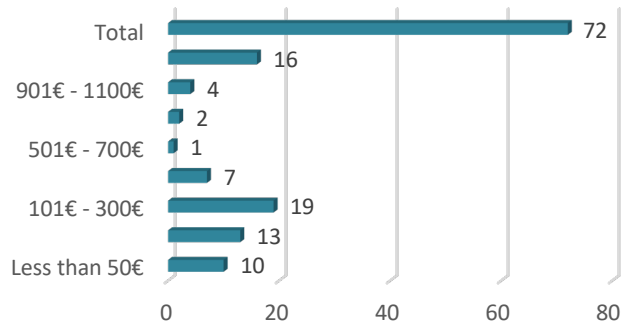
Appendix E

Section A

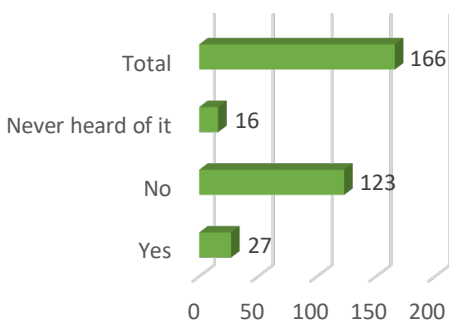
Q1.1 Do you often go on payed touristic activities?



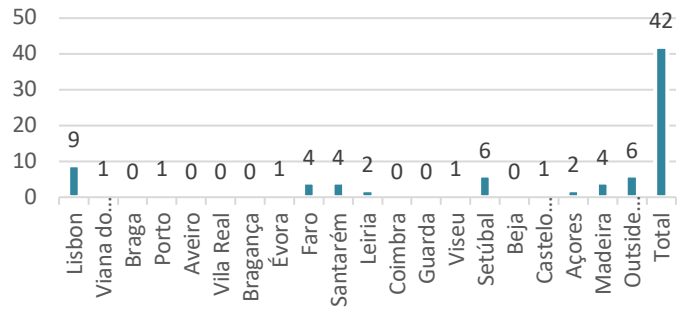
Q1.2 How much do you usually spend on average on tourism activities annually?



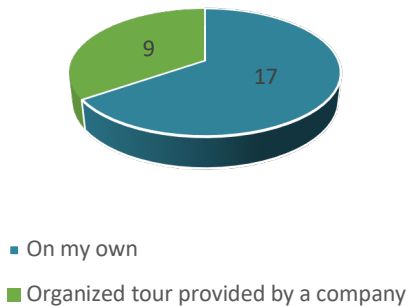
Q1.3 Have you participated in birdwatching activities?



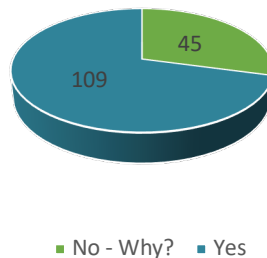
Q1.4 Where did you experience Birdwatching?



Q1.5 Did you do it on your own or through an organized tour provided by a company?

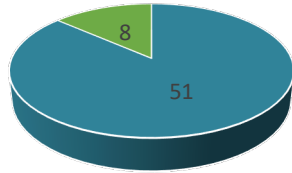


Q1.6 Would you consider participating in birdwatching activities through an organized tour provided by a company?



No - Why?
Not interested
Not my greatest interest
Not very interested. At
not my thing
Duhhh
Not in list of interests
I'm not interesting
Not interesting
It doesn't
It's not my type of thing

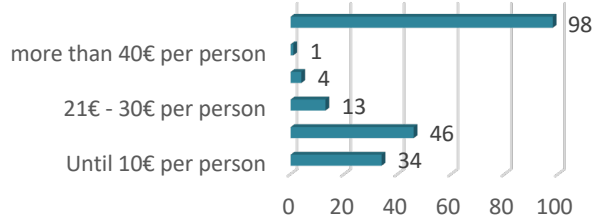
Q1.7 Would you consider paying for this kind of experience?



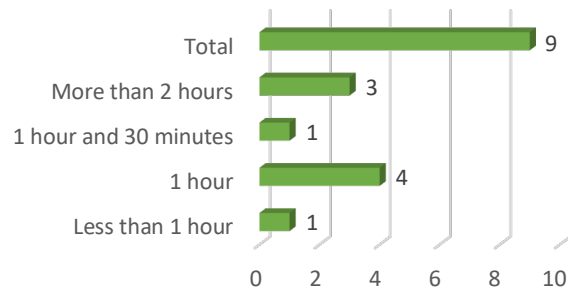
■ Yes ■ No - Why?

**No - Why?**  
 should be something free in the beginning or in specific days to attract people

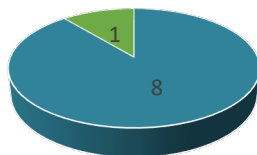
Q1.8 How much would you be willing to pay for an experience like this? (for at least 1h30 with a guide)



Q1.9 How long did your session take?

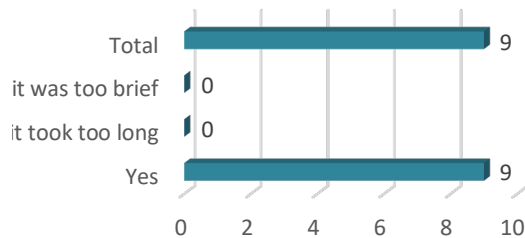


Q1.10 Did your session involve a guide?

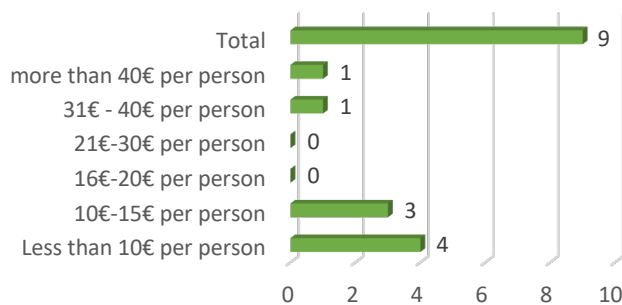


■ Yes ■ No

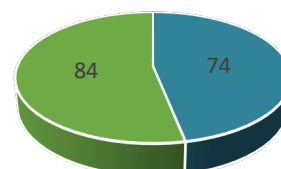
Q1.11 Do you consider the amount of time was appropriate?



Q1.12 What was the price per person?

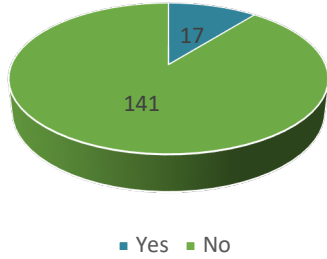


Q1.13 Have you heard of Companhia das Lezírias?

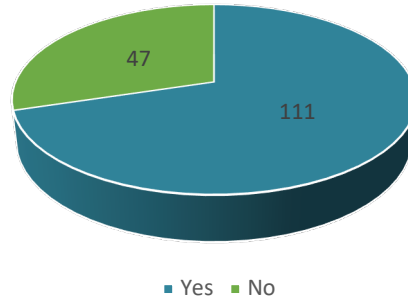


■ Yes ■ No

Q1.14 Did you know that Companhia das Lezírias has a variety of experiences related to Birdwatching?

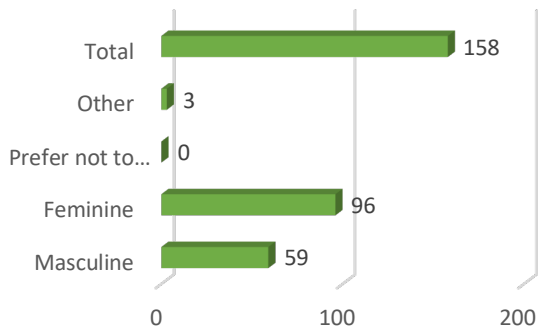


Q1.15 Would you be interested in participating in a Birdwatching tour at Companhia das Lezírias?

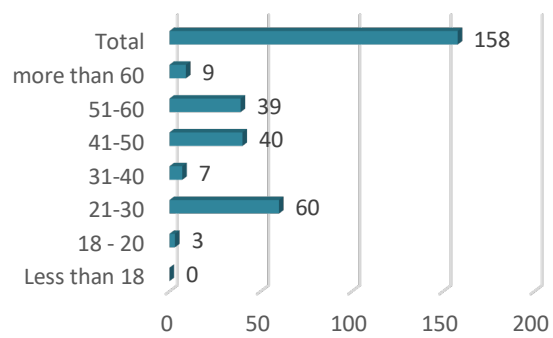


### Section B

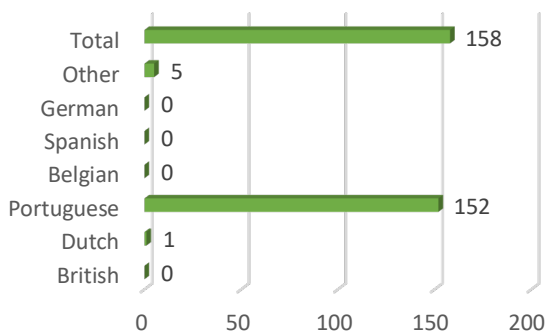
2.1 Gender



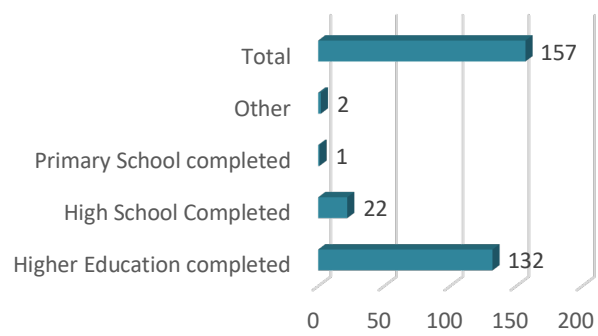
Q2.2 Age



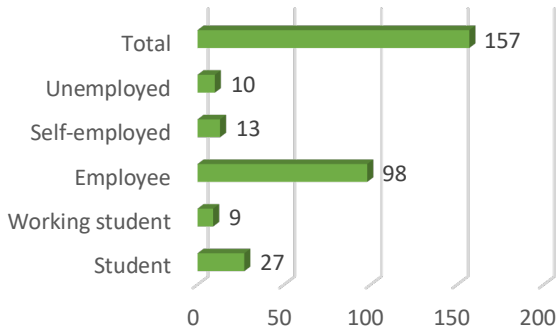
Q2.3 Nationality



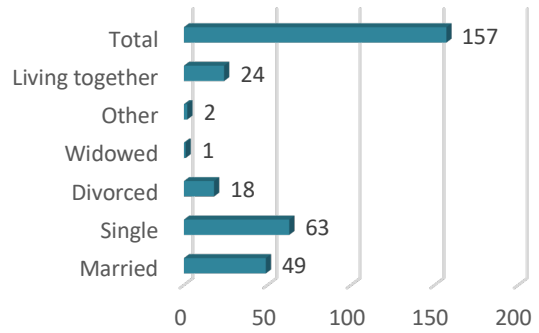
Q2.4 Education



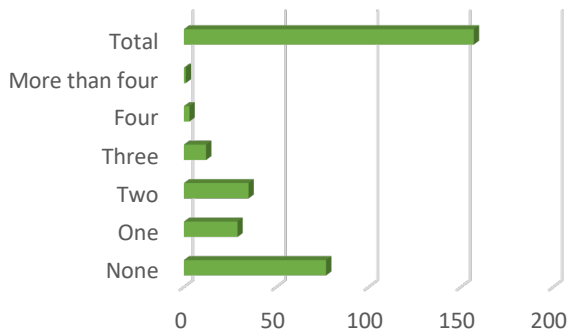
Q 2.5 Professional Situation



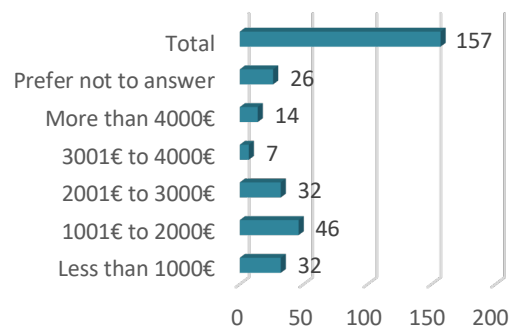
Q2.6 Marital Status



2.7 Number of children



Q2.8 Monthly Income



Q2.9 District of Residence

