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Leisure, Tourism, and the Valorisation of Proximity to Water: A Perspective From Portugal's Resident Population

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Abstract

The relationship between the proximity of water and human beings is intrinsic. Blue Spaces are the most populated and most visited territories. The literature has centered on the salutogenic effects of water on the resident population. This study addresses leisure in places of residence and adds the valence of choosing tourist destinations when residents travel. The premise is that good places to live are good places to visit. To this end, an online questionnaire was applied to the resident population in Portugal using LimeSurvey; it was shared on the main social networks and disseminated by municipal public and private entities to their populations. The main results indicate that water played a decisive role in the choice of place of residence and visitation destinations. The reasons for their choice are leisure activities (more space for walks, water sports, etc.), the landscape/view, better conditions for well-being, and tranquillity. In the last 12 months, most respondents have travelled frequently to tourist destinations where water is present. This study allows territory managers to invest in and enhance structures and activities that promote the quality of life of residents and consequently attract visitors with a view of promoting health and well-being.

Keywords: leisure activities, residents, proximity to water, tourist destinations, Portugal

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