



NORTE | PORTUGAL
A UNIQUE REGION

NORTE IN NUMBERS

17

billion euros
in exports

100

thousand students
in higher
education

144

kilometres
of Atlantic
coastline

70

destinations
from Oporto
Airport

3,7

million
inhabitants

40

% of protected
territory

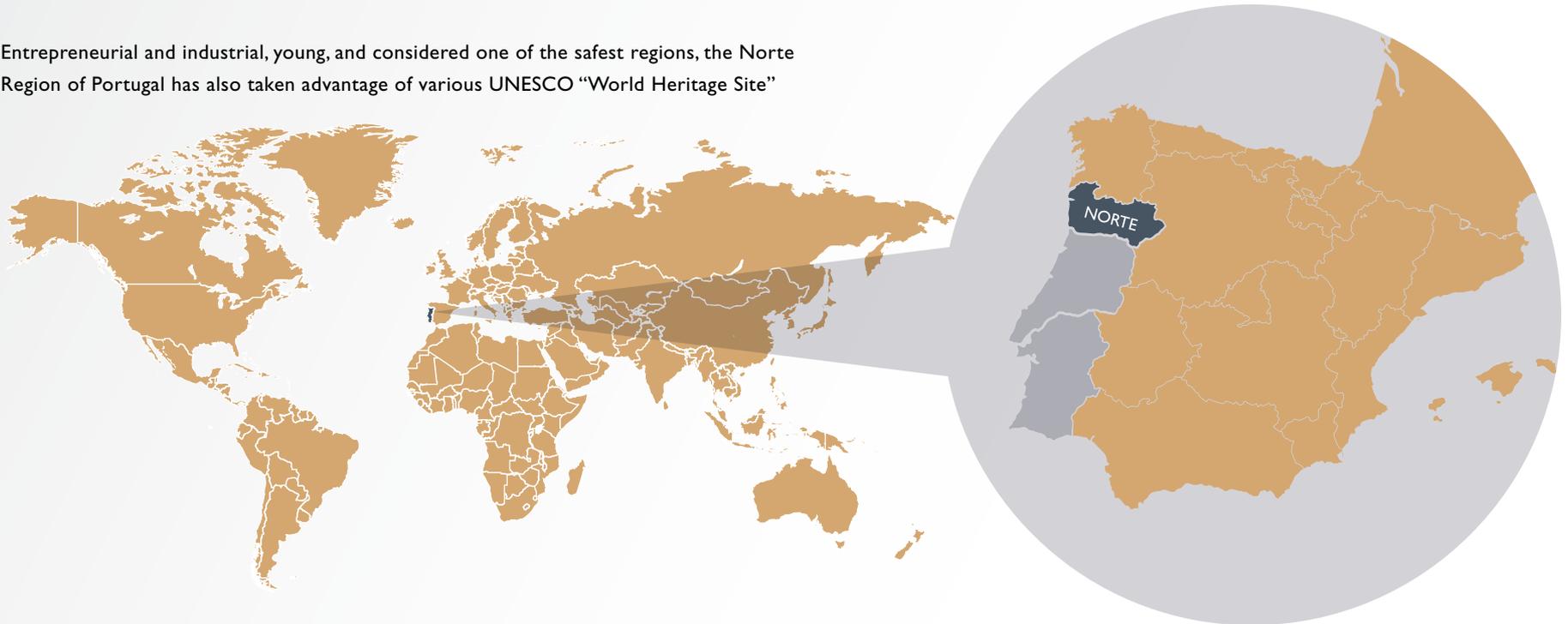
SMART LOCATION

NORTE, A REGION IN EUROPE AND IN THE WORLD

Home to 3.7 million people and 54% of the national working population, the Norte Region, located in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula, is characterised by its external openness, by strong tradition and experience in international trade and a deep-rooted trend for migration. Its 144 kilometres of Atlantic coastline offer further opportunities for internationalisation and economic communication, an ancient connection to the sea that is at the basis of a unique cultural and historical heritage.

Entrepreneurial and industrial, young, and considered one of the safest regions, the Norte Region of Portugal has also taken advantage of various UNESCO “World Heritage Site”

classifications to recover urban, historical and natural areas with strong potential for internationalisation and tourism. The richness of this region extends to its various cultural and sporting venues, as well as to its people, which has, in several areas, brought the name of the Norte Region, but also of Portugal, across borders.





SMART BUSINESS

NORTE, AN INDUSTRIAL AND EXPORTING REGION BY NATURE

Standing as the fifth most industrialised region of the European Union (15 countries), and holder of a strong industrial and exporting tradition, the development of the Norte Region is based on a positive regional trade balance, being home to nearly 45% of national exporting companies.

The textile industry is unquestionably the main contributor for this balance, with highlight also to the electrical machinery and equipment and footwear industries and, simultaneously, technology-based business areas with strong potential for internationalisation.

The Norte Region also boasts the Atlantic coastline with the most international goods traffic to and from the EU of the Iberian Peninsula, out of the Port of Leixões. This distinction also extends to the existence in this region of one of the best airports in Europe - the Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport, regarded as the most important airport in the North of the Iberian Peninsula, in terms of traffic volume, area of influence and connectivity. With a capacity for six million passengers per year, it offers about 70 destinations. With regard to land borders, the Norte Region of Portugal has the highest numbers of passenger traffic between Portugal and Spain, along its border with neighbouring Galicia, showing an increasing trend in the exit and entry of goods out of and into the regional space.

The North's entrepreneurship is also indissociable from its companies, which have, in some cases, reached international projection.





SMART PEOPLE

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND EXCELLENCE IN HUMAN CAPITAL

The Norte Region currently boasts R&D clusters par excellence and international recognition in the widest range of scientific and technological areas, which result from the specialisation of their senior management and the creation of critical capital at universities and research centres. This trend is the result of over 100,000 students in higher education, which reflects a high human capital training capacity, which, combined with its entrepreneurial and creative capabilities, make the North of Portugal a source of human resources par excellence.

Some research centres have already achieved international recognition and have become the preference of foreign researchers. In the field of Health Sciences, clusters of excellence include the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (IBMC), the Institute of Biomedical Engineering (INEB), the Institute of Pathology and Molecular Immunology of the University of Porto (IPATIMUP) and the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL).

With regard to Engineering, the area of Research & Development achieved a benchmark level at the Institute for Polymers and Composites and 3B's Research Group - Biomaterials, Biodegradables and Biomimetics and at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and Industrial Management (INEGI). The Institute for Systems Engineering and Computers (INESC Porto) stands out for excellence in the field of Communication and Information Technologies.





SMART LIFESTYLE

NORTE, A STAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL BRANDS

To characterise the Norte Region of Portugal is to speak of culture and artistic creation. A set of creative and cultural centres emerge as international brands. One example of this is 'Casa da Música', one of the most prominent examples of a centre of excellence in the field of arts and entertainment, which democratises access to culture and music.

The internationally acclaimed Serralves Foundation is another reference in cultural centres, both in the region and in the country, thanks to the programme of its Museum of Contemporary Art. 'Centro Cultural Vila Flor', in Guimarães, and 'Casa das Artes', in Vila Nova de Famalicão, have stood out in the hosting, programming and promotion of various artistic and cultural events of national and international significance.

Cultural vitality also relies on the important contribution of public theatres, such as the recently renovated 'Teatro Circo', in Braga, the 'Teatro Nacional S. João', in Oporto, and the 'Teatro Municipal' of Vila Real and Bragança.

Artistic and literary creation is one of the regions's best established brands. It is the birthplace of many important figures of national literature, such as Miguel Torga, Agustina Bessa-Luís and, most recently, Manuel Jorge Marmelo, winner of the Camilo Castelo Branco Prize, and Valter Hugo Mãe, who was distinguished with the José Saramago Prize.



In the field of painting, among many artists, highlight goes to Júlio Resende and Graça Morais. In music, pianists Rui Massena, Maria Helena Sá e Costa and Pedro Burmester. In architecture, the celebrated “Oporto School” was made famous thanks to Fernando Távora, Alcino Soutinho, Souto Moura and Siza Vieira, among others. The latter two have been distinguished with the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the world’s most prestigious award in the field of architecture.

With regard to films, the Oporto-born director Manoel de Oliveira is one of the most prestigious and influential authors of European cinema of the 20th and 21st centuries, and in his works he imprinted the memory and the image of Oporto and of the Alto Douro and Trás-os-Montes.

Northern brand fashion has garnered wide acclaim through the hand of designers such as Maria Gambina, Nuno Gama, Ana Sousa, Luís Onofre, Katty Xiomara and Micaela Oliveira. This recognition is also supported by the hosting of two major events in the region - Portugal Fashion and Modtissimo, which have helped launch Portuguese designers onto the major catwalks of European fashion.







SMART LIFESTYLE. SMART LOCATION

NORTE, A TOURIST DESTINATION

The Norte Region of Portugal is one of the tourist destinations with the highest potential for internal and external growth. For several consecutive years, it has earned the praises of different foreign entities, such as the title of Best European Destination, which resulted in an increasing number of visitors.

Among the various tourist attractions, highlight goes to those classified as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. This status was first given to Oporto's Historic City Centre in 1996, for the preservation of age-old buildings with an ancient cultural and commercial tradition. In 1998, the Prehistoric Rock Art Site of the Côa Valley was also distinguished by UNESCO as the most remarkable open-air ensemble of Palaeolithic art on the Iberian Peninsula. In 2001, the time came for UNESCO to recognise the Historic Centre of Guimarães and also the Alto Douro Wine Region, which was considered a "living evolutionary cultural landscape." It is the birthplace of one of the most remarkable wines in human history - Port Wine -, and is considered the oldest demarcated region in the world.





The Norte's tourist offer also includes the discovery of an increasing number of products with protected designation of origin certificate. Apart from wine, there is also olive oil, smoked meats, honey and other food products, as well as bobbin lace and filigree jewellery, among many other handmade goods of established quality and authenticity. The priceless value of the heritage and culture associated with these products has even spurred the creation of themed promotional initiatives, as is the case of the Port Wine Route, the Vinhos Verdes Route and the Trás-os-Montes Olive Oil Route.

The region's tourist itinerary also includes many historic estates and manor houses converted into rural tourism units and guest houses. Efforts to organise and promote heritage tourism in the region are ongoing and very significant. The Romanesque Route of the Sousa Valley is quite a successful example of this effort.



Quality tourism in permanent growth, supported by rich cuisine and an array of outdoor leisure and sports activities, which make up a wide offer in adventure, environmental and nature tourism. In this respect, the region offers two Geoparks - Arouca and Terras de Cavaleiros, recognised for their exceptional and internationally significant geological heritage, combined with a comprehensive sustainable development strategy.

The existence of a significant percentage of territory protected under a nature conservation status also speaks well of the Region. Such is the case of the Peneda-Gerês National Park and the Montesinho, Alvão and Douro International nature reserves.

NORTE

VISIT, DISCOVER AND INVEST

IN A SMART REGION!



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