

**Interreg
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Alternative Tourism

The sky is not the limit: Astrotourism in the Coimbra Region

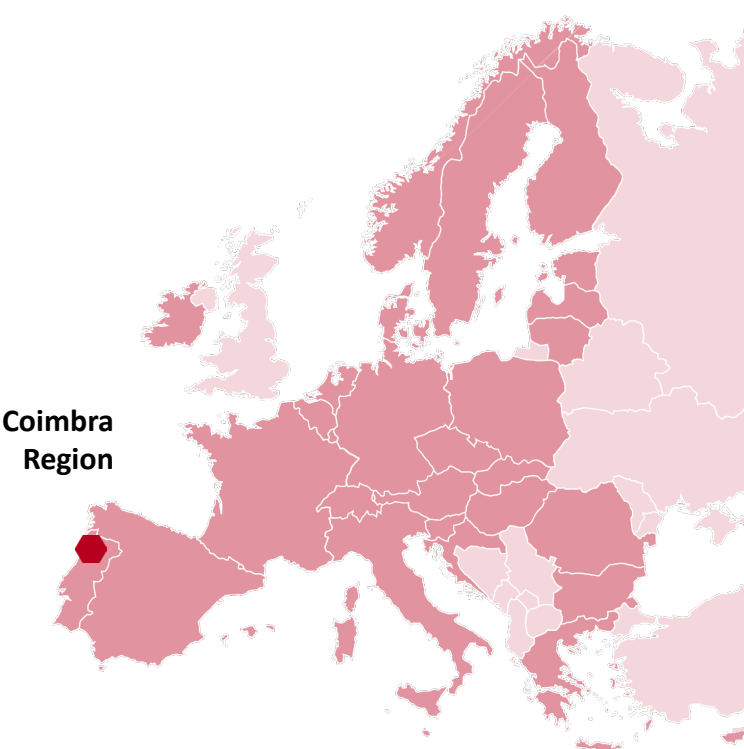
Zília Tovar

Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region

zilia.tovar@cim-regiaodecoimbra.pt

20th november 2024 | Vittorio Veneto

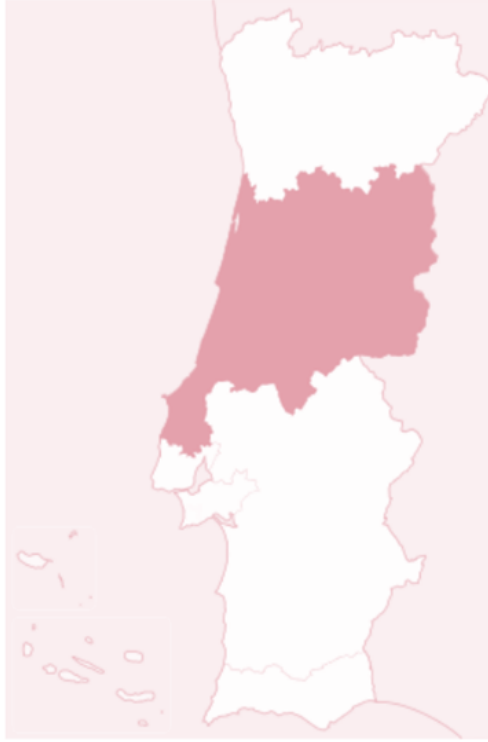
About Coimbra Region



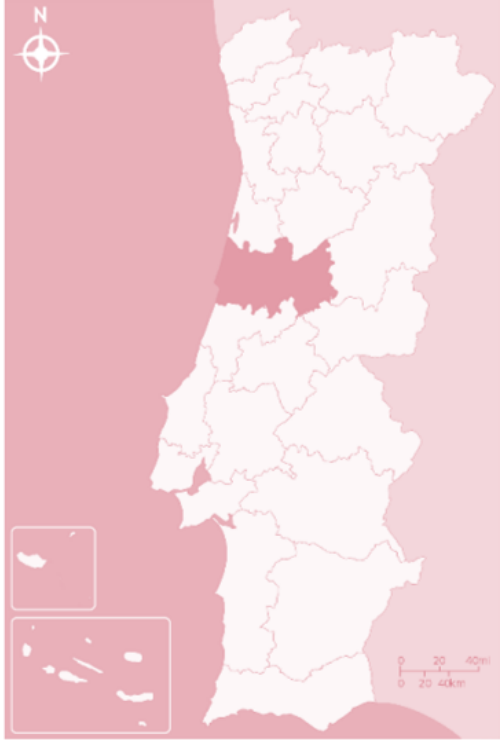
European Union



NUT I - Portugal



NUT II - Centro Region



NUT III - Coimbra Region

About Coimbra Region



439 929 inhabitants
100,76 inhab./km²
Area 4,336 km²



300 tourist accommodation
13 222 beds | Bed occupancy rate 35%



Number of tourists 920 010
Average length of stay 1,7 days
Seasonality rate 37%



42% foreigners (overnight stays)
(Spain, Brazil, France, USA, Italy)



Access

Francisco Sa Carneiro Airport – Porto (130 km/1h30h)
Lisbon Airport (200 km/2h00)
Train, bus, road



Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region

- Constituted under the Law n.º 75/2013, 12 September
- **Public association of 19 municipalities** with the following purposes:
 - a) promoting the planning and management of the strategy of economic, social and environmental development of the covered territory;
 - b) linking municipal investments of inter-municipal interest;
 - c) participating in the management of programmes supporting regional development;
 - d) and planning the actions of local authorities.

Intermediate body for structural funds

Promotion of sub-regional tourism

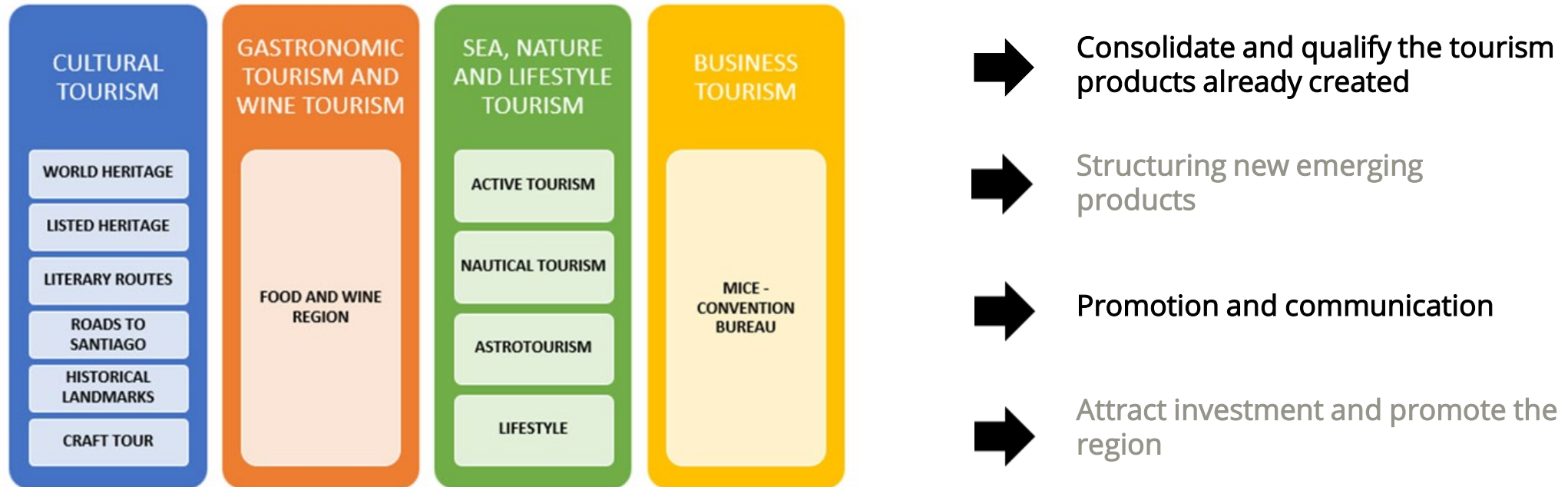
Intermunicipal transport authority

Beneficiary of national funds

Strong experience in managing structural and investment funds

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Tourism Strategy – main tourism products



Sustainability

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Tourism Strategy



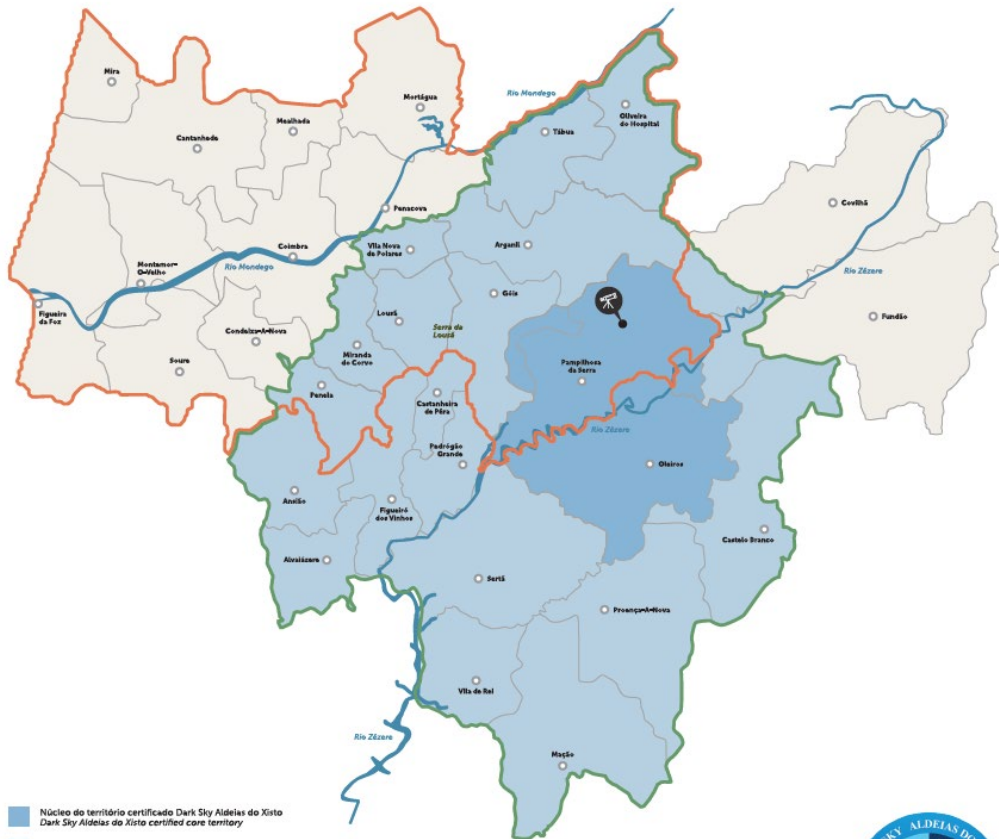
Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region

Tourism Strategy



Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region

Astrotourism



- Núcleo do território certificado Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto
Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto certified core territory
- Território certificado Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto - zona de proteção
Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto certified territory - buffer zone
- Comunidade Intermunicipal - Região de Coimbra
Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region
- Território certificado Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto
Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto certified territory
- Observatório Astronómico
Astronomical Observatory



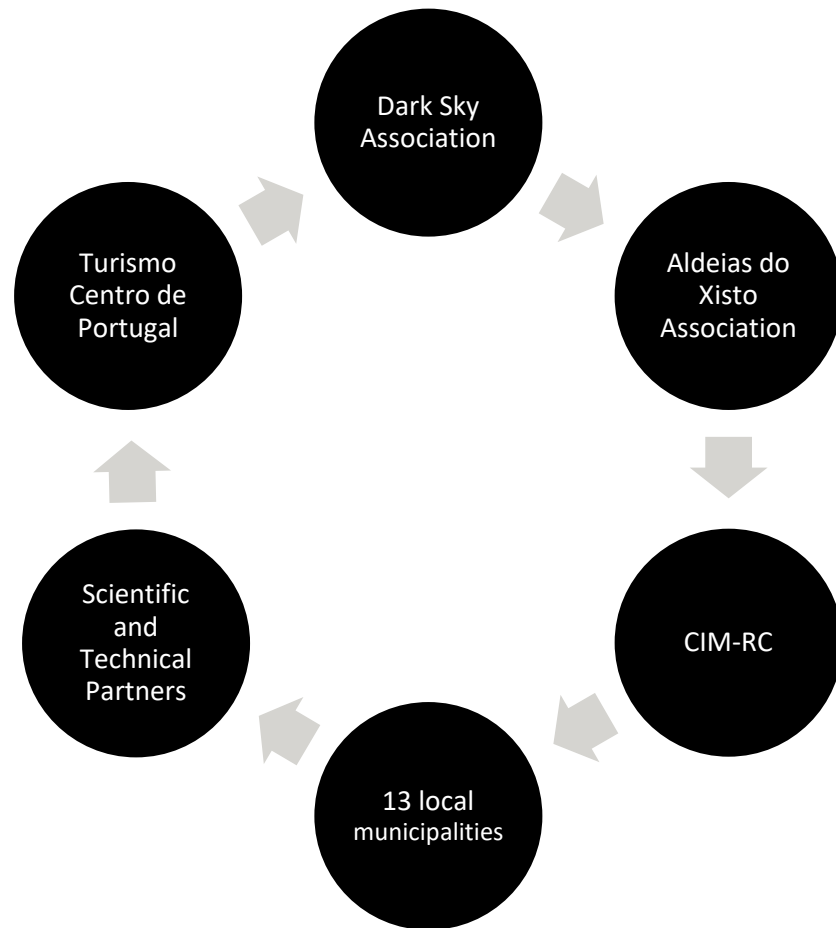
Astrotourism is an emerging product of special interest, which promotes the observation of the starry sky, planets and constellations and scientific knowledge.

It has the particularity of taking place in geographical locations that have the necessary and appropriate conditions for it, i.e. places free from light pollution.

Certification “Starlight Tourist Destination” recognizes “*the excellent conditions of visibility, transparency and darkness of the sky, along with the commitment of public, private and scientific entities, for the development of the destination, along with the readiness and quality of tourist services, amplified by the genuine interest of the resident communities.*”

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Astrotourism partnership



Qualification of the territory with infrastructures and equipment for the development of the Dark Sky tourist destination Schist Villages

Qualification and integration of a Network of Official Partners to operate under the Dark Sky Schist Villages brand

Promotion and activation of the Dark Sky Aldeias do Xisto brand through a calendar of awareness-raising, training and activation events, with national and international reach

Creation of integrated and innovative tourism products linking observation and contemplation of the night sky with the enjoyment of the territory's natural and cultural assets

Implementation of a communication and marketing plan focused on national and international promotion of the Dark Sky Schist Villages as a Starlight Tourist Destination integrated into the Dark Sky® Portugal Dark Sky® Portugal

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Astrotourism

Dark Sky Ass.	ADXTUR	CIM-RC	Municipalities	Scientific and technical part.	Regional Tourism Entity
Identification, protection and promotion dark sky areas	Regional development and tourism promotion	Co-promotion and project management	Infrastructures	Technical expertise (astronomy, environment, ...)	Tourism promotion
Expertise	Stakeholder engagement and community involvement	Program management and funds attraction	Regulations	Data collection and monitoring	Marketing/visitor attraction
Guidance on technical standards and methodologies	Sustainable tourism practices	Tourism planning and promotion	Coordination of local services (tourism experience)	Education / training	Integrated experiences

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Astrotourism – private tourism operators – astrofriendly accommodation

- Late breakfast
- Self check-in
- Entrada autónoma (devido às horas pós observação)
- Investment in observation instruments (optional)
- Theme gifts
- Kit for night observation - blanket, stool, cushion, compass and flashlight
- Information brochures (Dark Sky@Schist Villages)
- Specific training for human resources



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Astrotourism – private tourism operators – astrofriendly restaurants

- Picnic dinner under the stars
- Information brochures (Dark Sky@Schist Villages)
- Specific training for human resources



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Astrotourism – private tourism operators – activities

- Gastronomic tasting (honey, bread, olive oil, medronho)
- Birdwatching
- Wild night watching
- Private and Group Astrophotography Workshops
- Solar observation
- Guided tours



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Astrotourism - Geoscope



- 250-degree unobstructed view to the southwest, ideal for both daytime and nighttime observation
- For scientific research
- For astrotourism communities
- For businesses to create tourism products and engaging experiences
- A place for children to ignite their curiosity and imagination
- A place for local communities to take pride in the richness of their land and sky

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Astrotourism - Kiosk



Located in the center of the village of Fajão, the Kiosk is a reception and welcome center

Theoretical and practical content, featuring models and virtual reality to simplify science

Information about the dark sky observation programs

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Astrotourism – Activities – Event calendar



- **Astrophotography Workshop**
In partnership with: Miguel Marques Photography
July 3, 6, and 10
- **Astronomy Workshop: The Sun and Other Stars - Seeing and Understanding the Universe**
In partnership with: Clube de Astronomia do Alva
July 20 and 27 | 6:00 PM
September 7 and 14 | 6:00 PM
- **Clandestine Concerts - A Um Palmo do Céu**
Helder Bruno on Piano
July 27 | 10:00 PM
- **Perseid Night: Observation of Shooting Stars, Constellations, and the Moon through a Telescope**
In partnership with: FISUA
August 11 | 10:00 PM
- **Astrophotography Workshop: Photographing and Revealing the Universe**
In partnership with: Miguel Marques Photography
August 10 and 11

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Astrotourism – Activities

The screenshot displays the bookinXisto.com website interface for astrotourism activities. The header includes the logo, search bar, and navigation links. The main content area shows three activity cards, each with a circular image, a price tag, and details.

bookinXisto.com Mapa das Aldeias | Login

Villages | Sort Order | 3 results | €0 | €2500

Night Canoeing on the Santa Luzia Dam
Vidual de Baixo
Every day
November
*Price per person
min. 2/ max. 24
2 testimonials | see +

Starlight Journey
Vidual de Baixo
Every day
November
*Price per person
min. 2/ max. 24
2 testimonials | see +

Journey by Starlight at the Geoscope (Fajão)
Fajão
Every day
November
*Price per person
min. 2/ max. 20
2 testimonials | see +

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Astrotourism – Açor by night

Mobile app for use by visitors of the Dark Sky Schist Villages territory

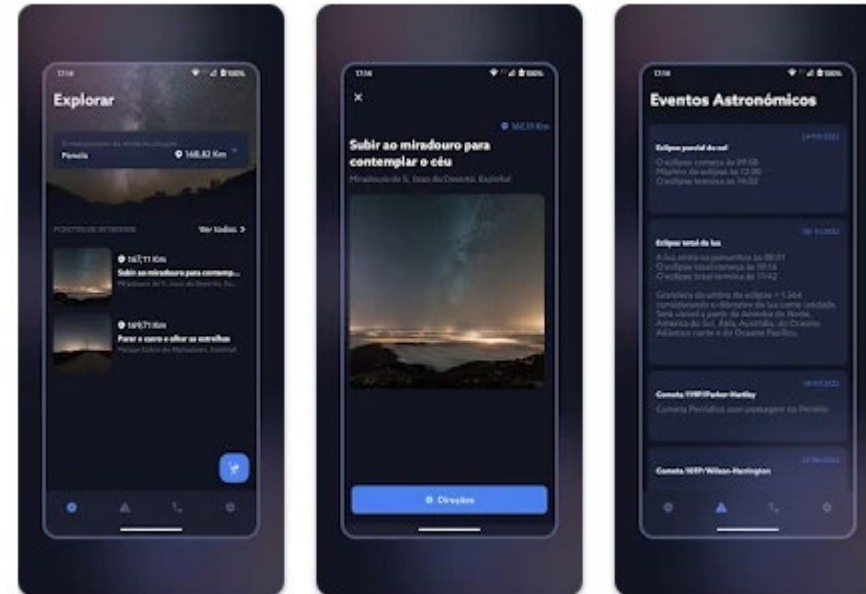
Points of Interest for viewing the night sky with georeferencing

Accommodation

Restaurants

experiences and activities

Real-time sky map



Thank you!

