

## Faro National Capital of Culture (FCNC 2005) and Tourism – reflections on the profile of tourists who attended the events

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This paper presents and reflects on some of the results obtained from a study conducted over a 6-month period. The study focused on the tourists who visited the Faro National Capital of Culture attractions. Between March and December 2005, a total of 154 events and attractions (with a total of 2513 sessions) including art exhibitions, theatre, concerts, dance and cinema, took place in Faro and other towns throughout the Algarve region. Although FCNC 2005 was not specifically projected as a tourism-related event, the fact that the Algarve is the most important tourist region of Portugal, together with the concentration of most of the sessions over the summer months which constitute the tourism high season, meant that many of the events were well attended by tourists.

### Conceptual framework

- We explored the concept of the “new middle class” that has been studied since the mid XX century, and the origin of their high degree of cultural capital (Parkin, 1968, Bell, 1973/1976; Bourdieu, 1979/1992; Ley, 1996, Florida 2002);
- We analysed the relationship between the concepts of the “new middle class”, the “new Tourist” (Curvillier 1994, Poon, 1993, OMT, 2000) and “cultural Tourism” (Richards 1996, 2001; Silberg, 1995);
- We reviewed surveys carried out at international (Richards 1996, 2001), regional and local levels (Henriques, 1996; Ferreira, 2003; Fortuna, 1999; Martins, 2002);
- We paid particular attention to cultural events (Dobson e Sinnamon, 2001; Getz, 1997, Hall, 1992; Light 1996, Raj, 2003 Westerbeek et al. 2002) including the evaluation of the event European Capitals of Culture commissioned by the European Commission (Palmer and Era, 2004) and the research carried out in Oporto and Rotterdam in 2002 (Richards, Hitters e Fernandes, 2002).

### Research process

#### *Main aim of this survey*

To explore the profile of tourists who attended Faro National Capital of Culture 2005, taking into account their motivations, both for travelling to the Algarve and for being in the town where the event was taking place, their impressions of the town and the event, and their behaviour as tourists.

