



# Accommodation Environmental Performance in Portugal | 2023

*Best Practices at Hotels, Tourist Villages and  
Tourist Apartments*





# Executive summary

The tourism industry, in particular the accommodation sector aim to have a net-positive impact on the territories. The vision for the 2027 Tourism Strategy reflects this ambition: ‘establish tourism as a hub for economic, social and environmental development throughout the territory, positioning Portugal as one of the most competitive and sustainable tourism destinations in the world’.

From the perspective of environmental sustainability, the Tourism 2027 Strategy aims to ensure that, by 2027, more than 90 per cent of tourism businesses adopt energy and water efficiency measures and develop environmental waste management actions. Bearing these targets in mind, this report is the result of a survey carried out among tourist resorts between March and April 2023. A total of 2,267 establishments across Portugal were contacted and 1,180 responses were submitted, representing 52.1% response rate.

The following pages present the results for 2023 and some comparisons with the previous year. The only exceptions are the topics of Circular Economy and Waste Management, which were introduced in this edition.

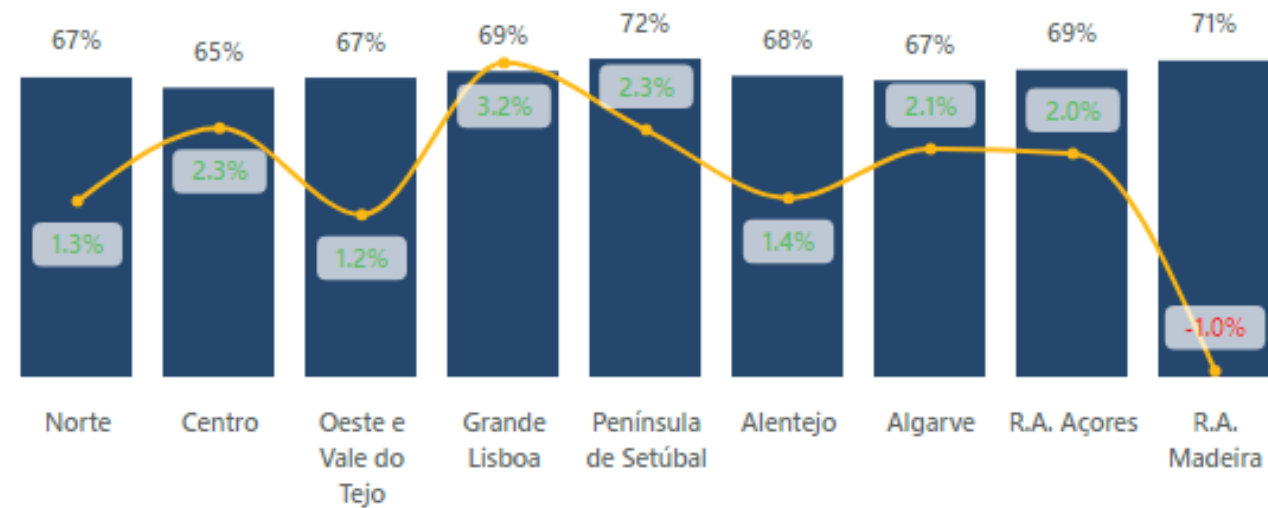
The aim of this report is to present and analyse the environmental performance of tourist resorts, always bearing in mind the targets set in the Tourism 2027 Strategy.



# Energy

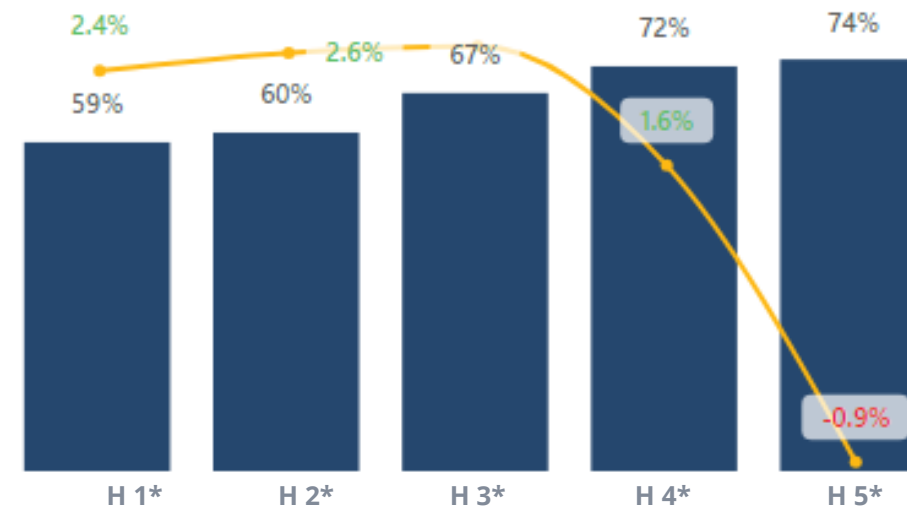
## Energetic efficiency | NUTSII

● efficient energy use ● variation



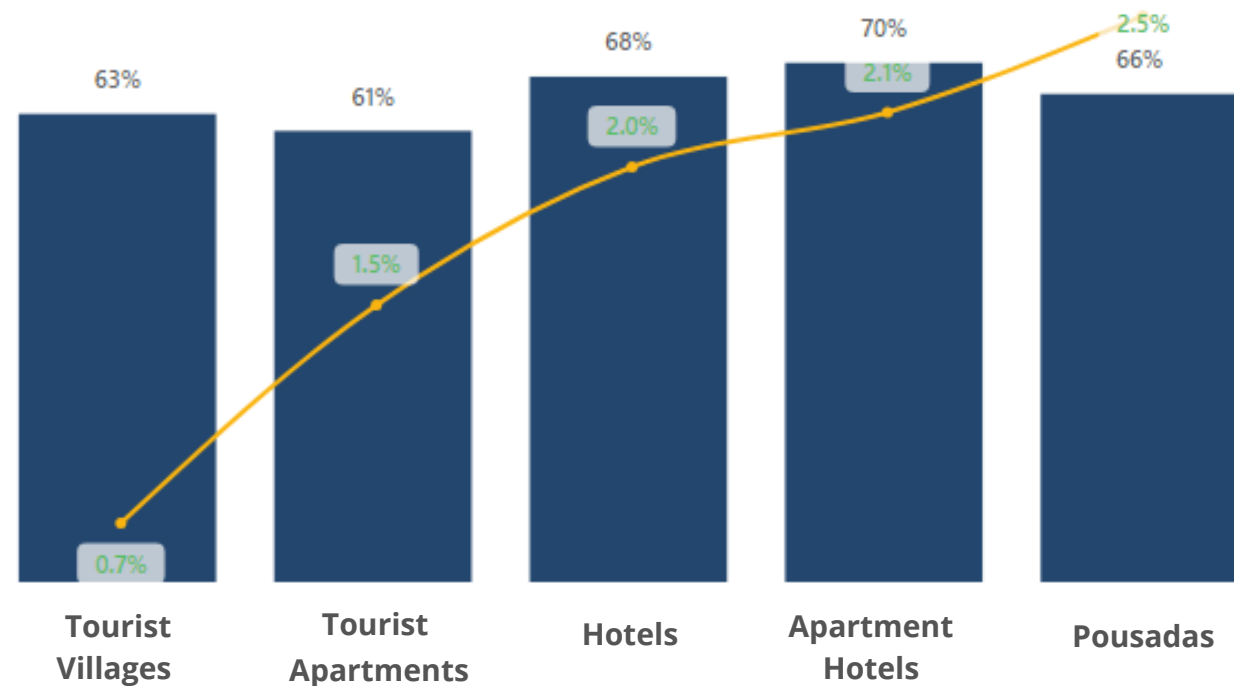
## Energetic efficiency | Year | Hotels by category

● efficient energy use ● variation



## Energetic efficiency | Typology

● efficient energy use ● variation



- 68% of Tourist Accommodation Establishments adopted measures for the efficient use of energy, a variation of 1.9 p.p. compared to the previous year;
- Analysing in the NUTS II level, Madeira has the highest achievement level: 71%;
- Regarding the classification, Apartment Hotels are the establishments with the best results (70%) and at the opposite end the Tourist Apartments (61%);
- It should be noted that the higher the number of stars, the greater the energy efficiency of the hotels, reaching 74 per cent in the 5-star category.



**97,4%**  
energy-saving light bulbs



**92,6%**  
customer-adjustable climate control system



**91,1%**  
ensure that unnecessary equipment is switched off



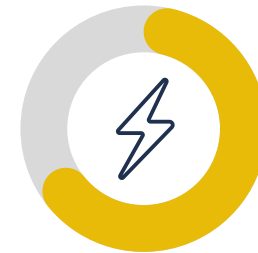
**83,4%**  
thermal insulation and soundproofing of the windows, and properly fitted frames



**74,6%**  
card-operated lighting system



**73,3%**  
automatic sensors in the lighting system of public areas



**70,4%**  
Class A equipment or superior



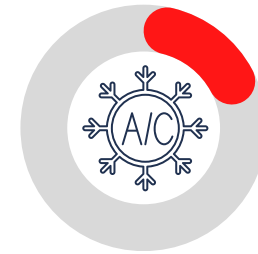
**60,7%**  
periodic energy audit by an accredited technician



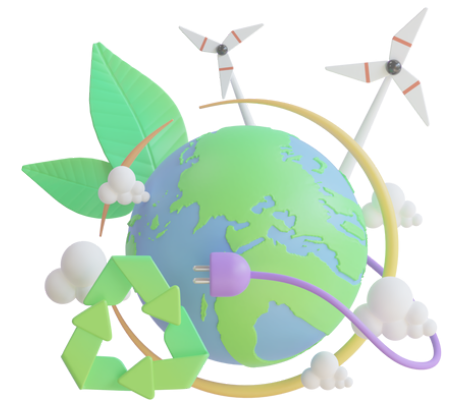
**48,0%**  
solar thermal panels for water heating, up 3.2 p.p.



**28,1%**  
photovoltaic solar panels for energy production, which increased by 8.8 p.p.



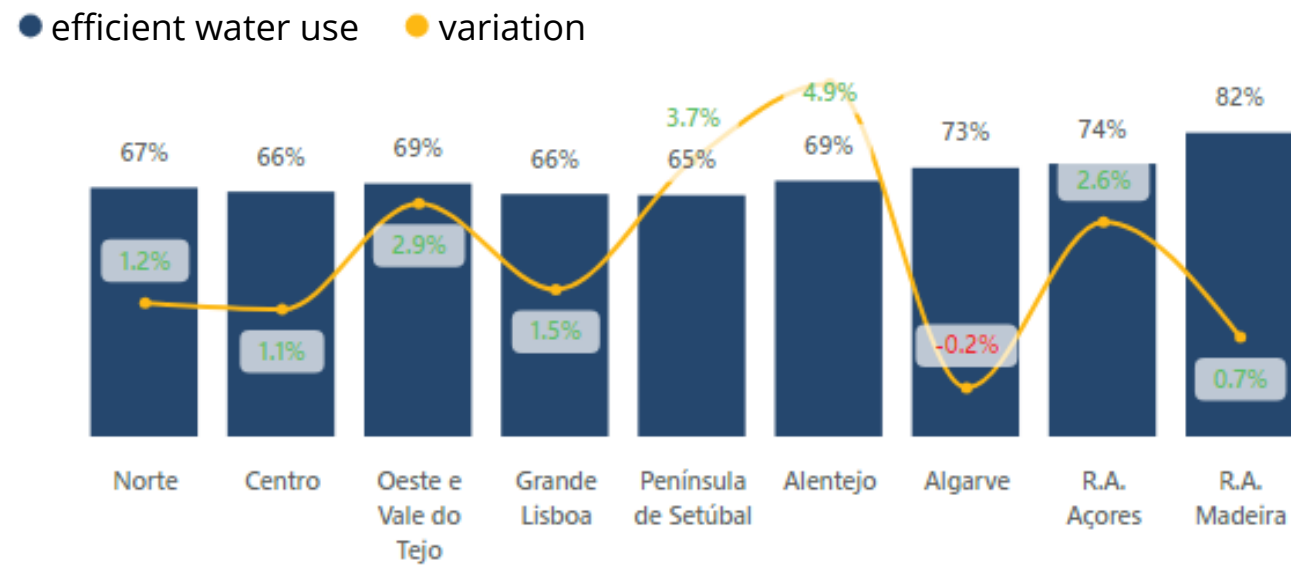
**23,6%**  
automatic system to switch off the air conditioning when the windows are opened, +2.3 p.p.



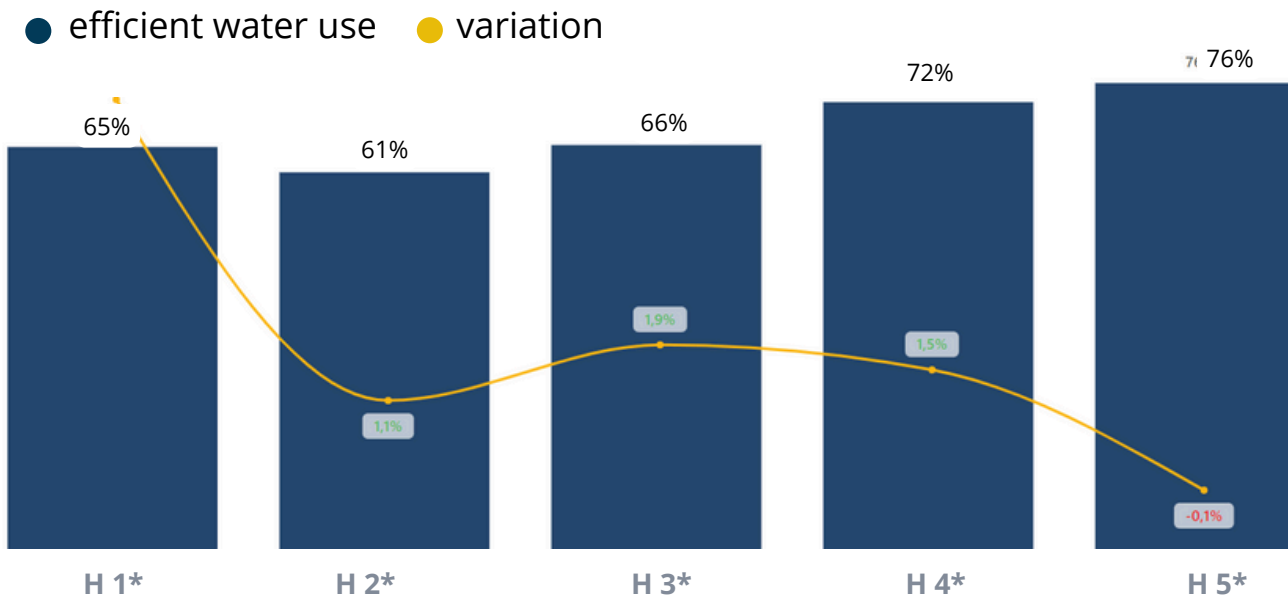
# Energy

## Energy efficiency best practices in 2023

### Efficient use of water | Year | NUTSII

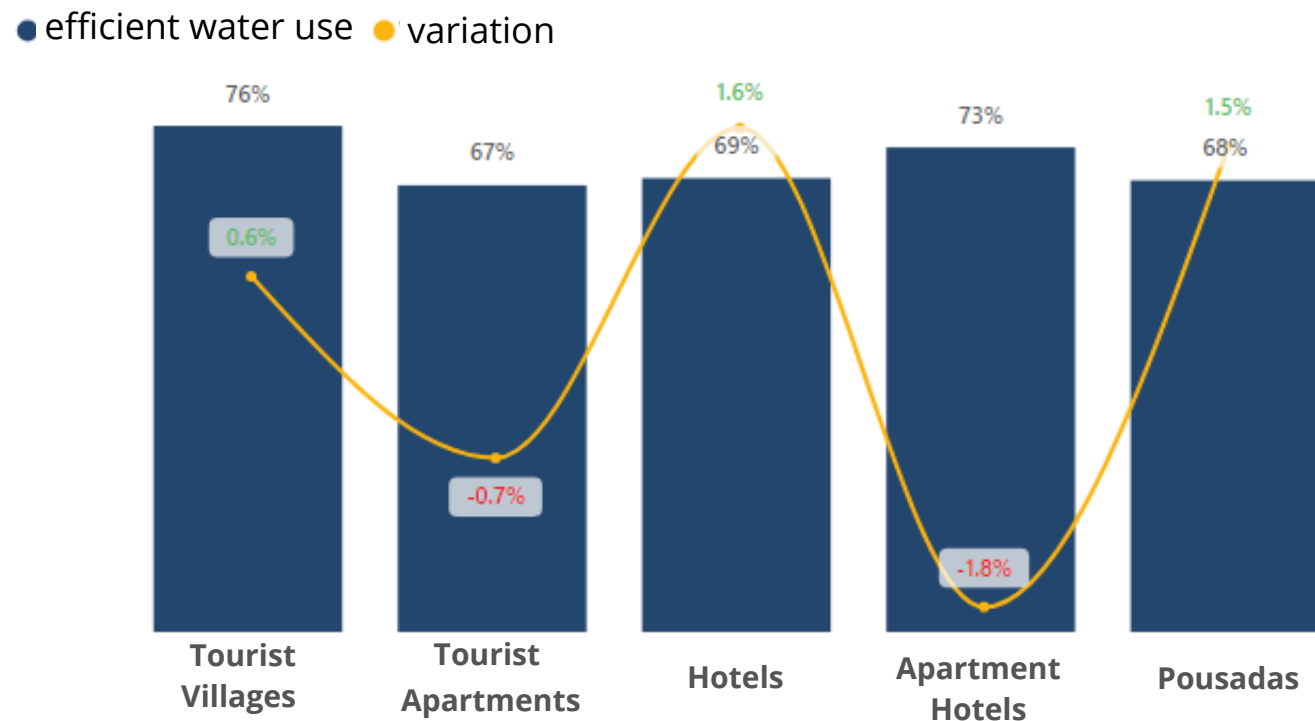


### Efficient use of water | Hotels by category



Water

### Efficient use of water | Typology



- 69% of Tourist Accommodation Establishments have adopted efficient water use measures;
- Looking at the NUTS II, the Madeira region has the highest level of implementation (82%), followed by the Azores (74%) and the Algarve (73%), with the Alentejo seeing the most significant increase of 4.9 p.p., compared to 2022;
- In terms of classification, Tourist Villages (76%) and Apartment Hotels (73%) are the best performing establishments. At the opposite end are Tourist Apartments (67%);
- The water efficiency of hotels, on the other hand, rises as it rises the number of stars (except in the case of two and one stars hotels) and reaches 76% in 5-star properties.



## Water

### Best practices in water efficiency 2023



**95%**  
change of towels and sheets at guests' request or according to the minimum legally required



**79%**  
flow reducers on taps and showers



**85,4%**  
low-consumption toilet cisterns (different flushing options)



**37,6%**  
self-closing taps



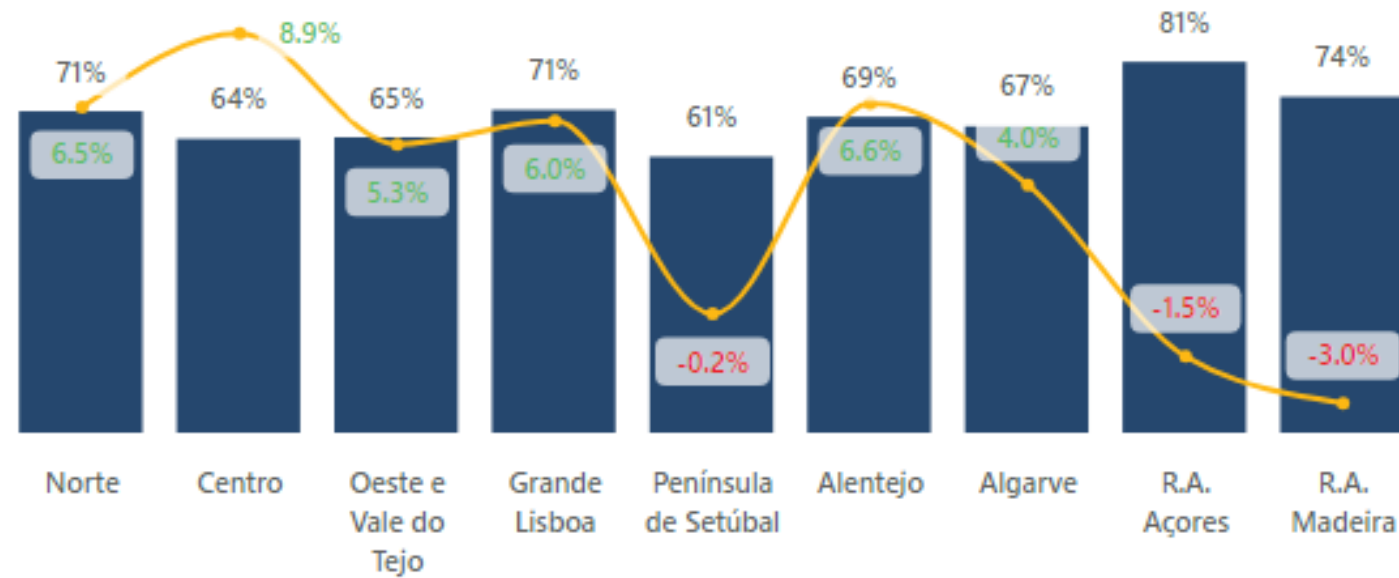
**81,9%**  
guests asked to inform the property of any leaks detected



**35,3%**  
Inferior quality water used for watering and washing (for example: rain water)

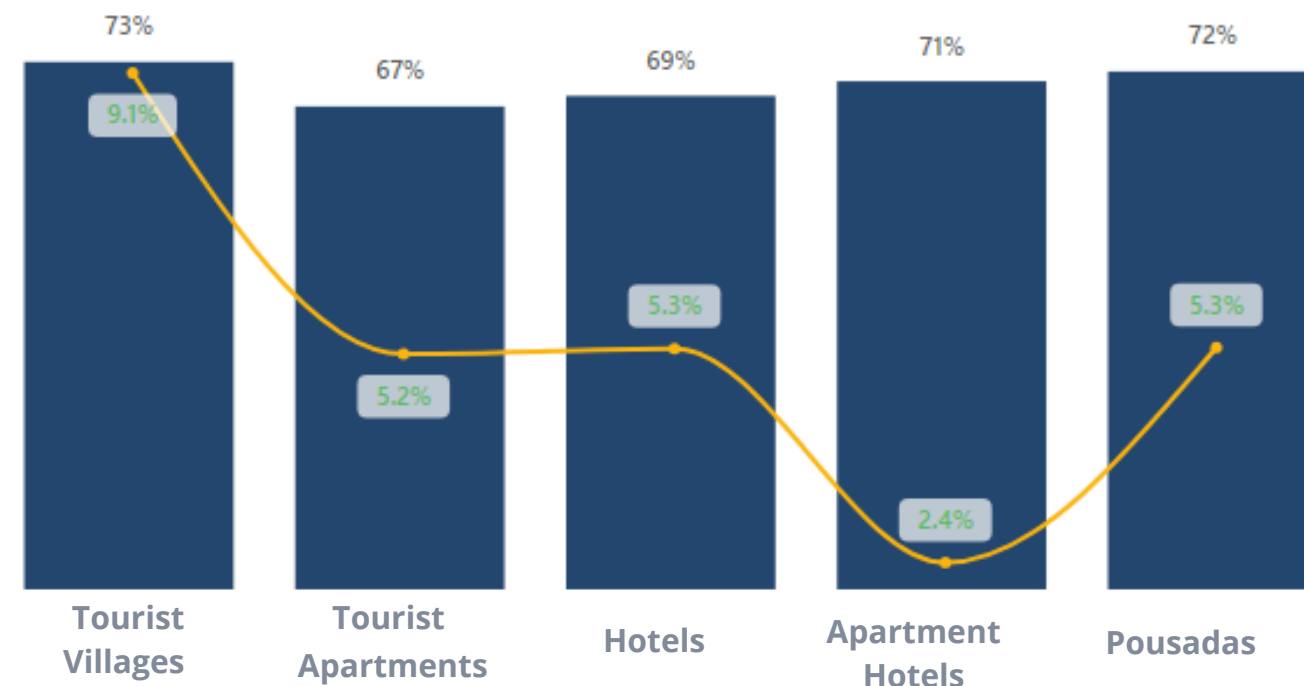
### Efficient waste management | NUTSII

● efficient waste management ● variation



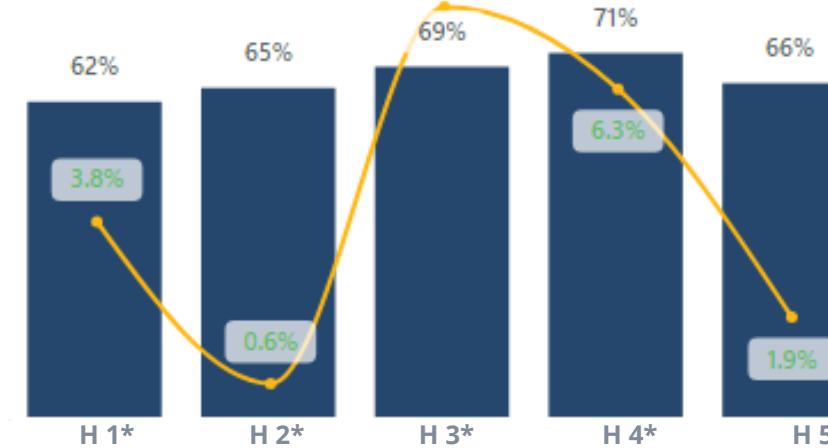
### Efficient waste management | Typology

● efficient waste management ● variation



### Efficient waste management | Hotels by category

● efficient waste management ● variation



# Waste

- 69% of Tourist Accommodation Establishments have adopted efficient waste management measures, and increase of 5.1 p.p. compared to the responses to the same survey in 2022;
- The regions of the Azores (81%) and Madeira (74%) show the best results; at the opposite end is the Setúbal Peninsula (61%);
- In the tourism classification, Tourist Village establishments are the most efficient (73%), followed by guesthouses (72%), with all types of accommodation seeing an increase in efficiency;
- In hotels, four-star Tourist Accommodation Establishments ranked 1st in waste management practices (71%), with greater efficiency in all categories.



# Waste

## Best practices in waste management 2023



**95,6%**  
separate waste for recycling



**76,7%**  
minimise the use of packaging in catering (for example: tap water in jug or own bottle, water dispenser or own reusable bottle)



**75,7%**  
provide refillable products in the rooms (shampoo, shower gel, others)

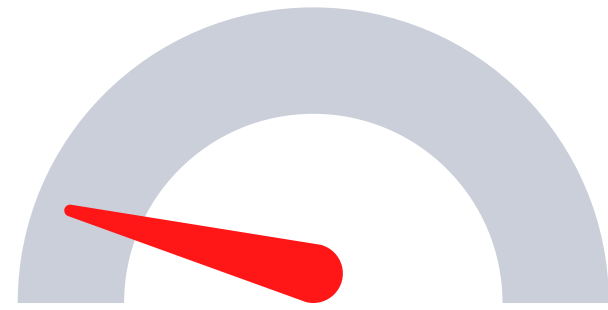


**48,5%**  
sorting organic waste to be composted



**41,1%**  
recipients available for guests to sort waste (glass, paper, packaging and undifferentiated or biowaste), +7.5 p.p. than 2022





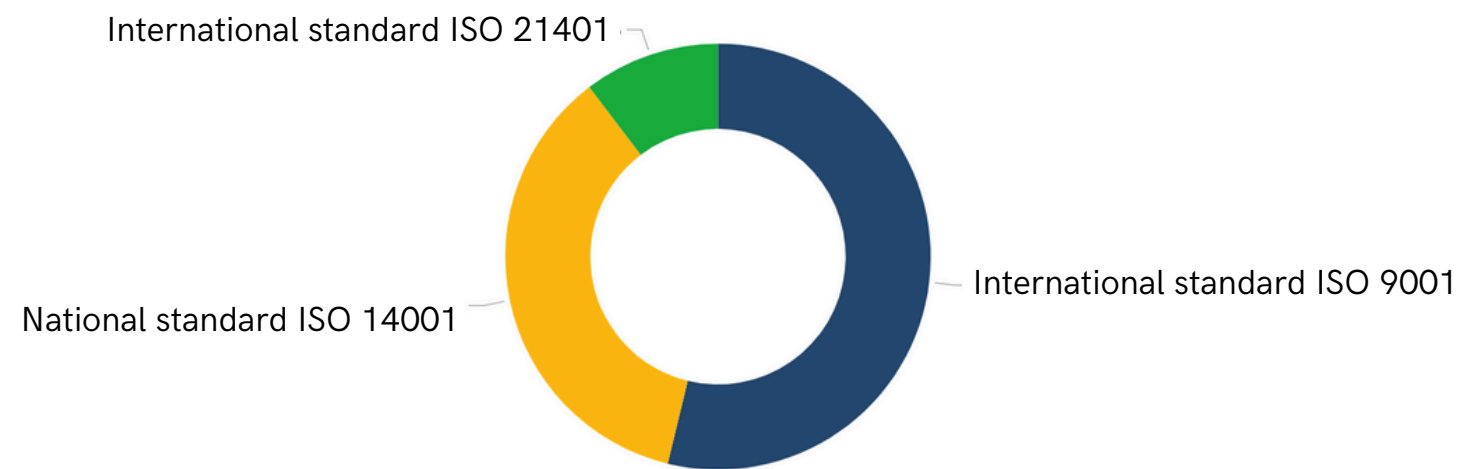
**11%**

of tourism establishments in Portugal had at least one certification, national or international



# Certifications

## Tourism Establishments with international certification (%) Type of standars | 2023



## Tourism Establishments with national certification (%) Type of standars | 2023



- 11% of Tourist Accomodation Establishments declared that they were certified to at least a standard. Among these, 37 per cent are certified to international standards;
- The region of Madeira (27%) and the Azores (22%) are the ones with the most establismments with certifications;
- International certification standards are most mentioned by respondents in Lisbon region (55%), with a variation of 15 p.p. compairing to 2022. The Azores is the second region with more international certification standards (53%);
- Quality management (ISO 9001) is the most mentioned international standard (60%), followed by environmental management standards (ISO 14001) achieving 40%;
- Among the certified establismments with some kind of standard, 34% mention portuguese standards in the area of accessible tourism (NP 4523).

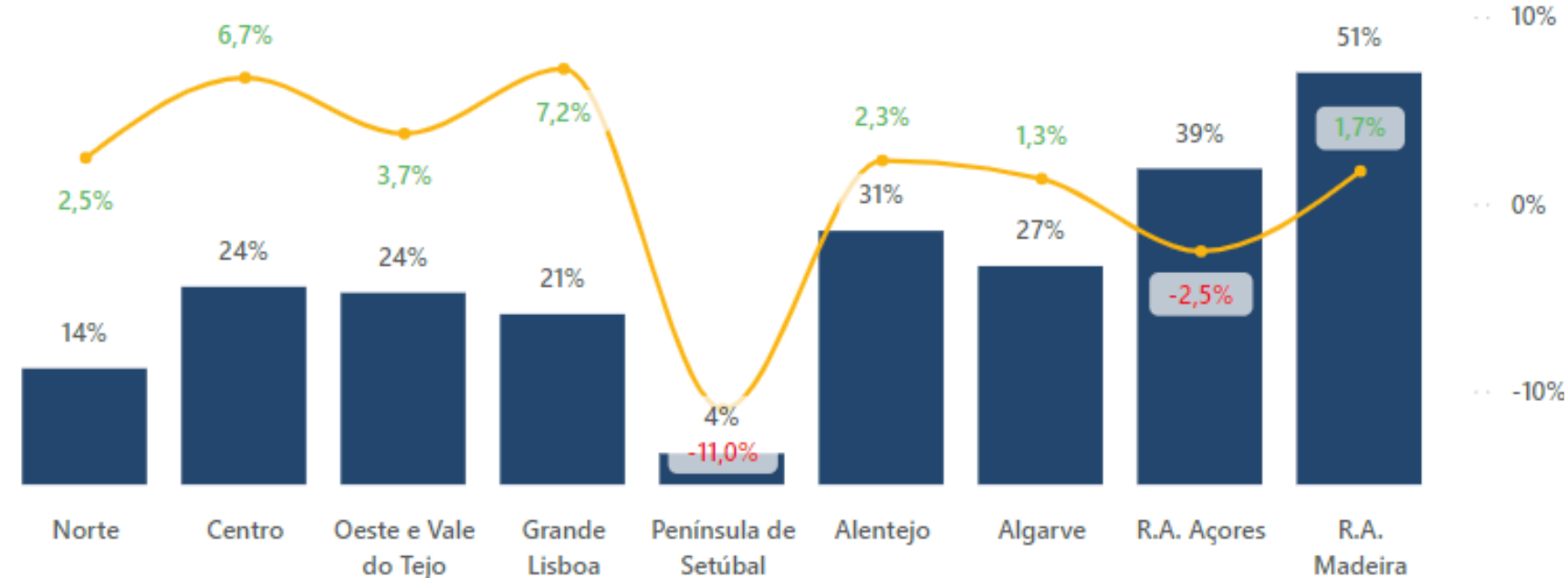


**23%**  
of the tourism establishments are certified with stamps/distinctions



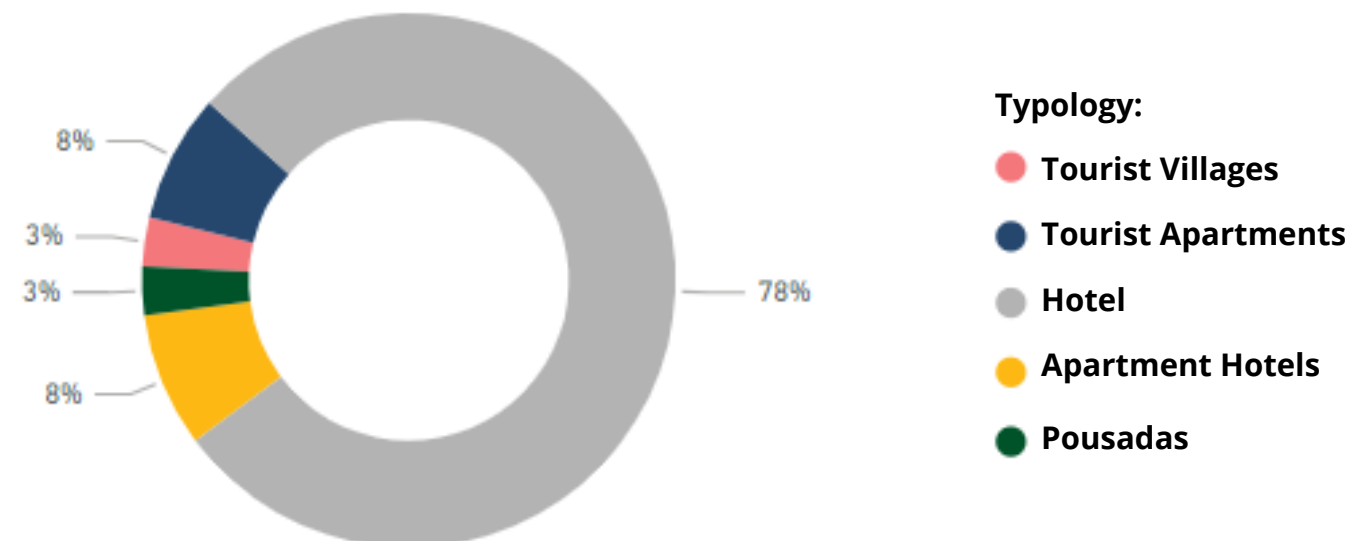
# Awards, honours and labels

Tourism Establishments with awards (%) | NUTSII



- The regions of Madeira (51%) and the Azores (39%) are the best performers in terms of distinctions, awards or labels. The Setúbal Peninsula (4%) and the North (14%) are at the opposite end;
- In terms of type, Hotels are the Tourist Accommodation Establishments with the highest percentage of certificates: 78%;
- Environmental management is the area with the highest number of distinctions, awards and labels.

Tourism Establishments with stamps/distinctions (%) | Typology | 2023



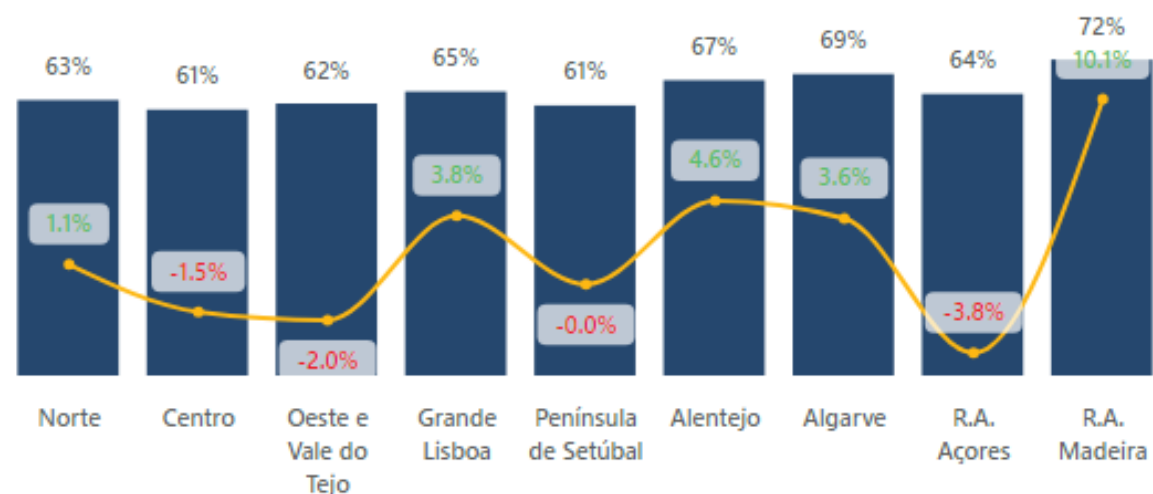


**65%**  
of the tourist accommodation establishments declare that they don't give single-use plastics to their guests.

# Single-use plastics

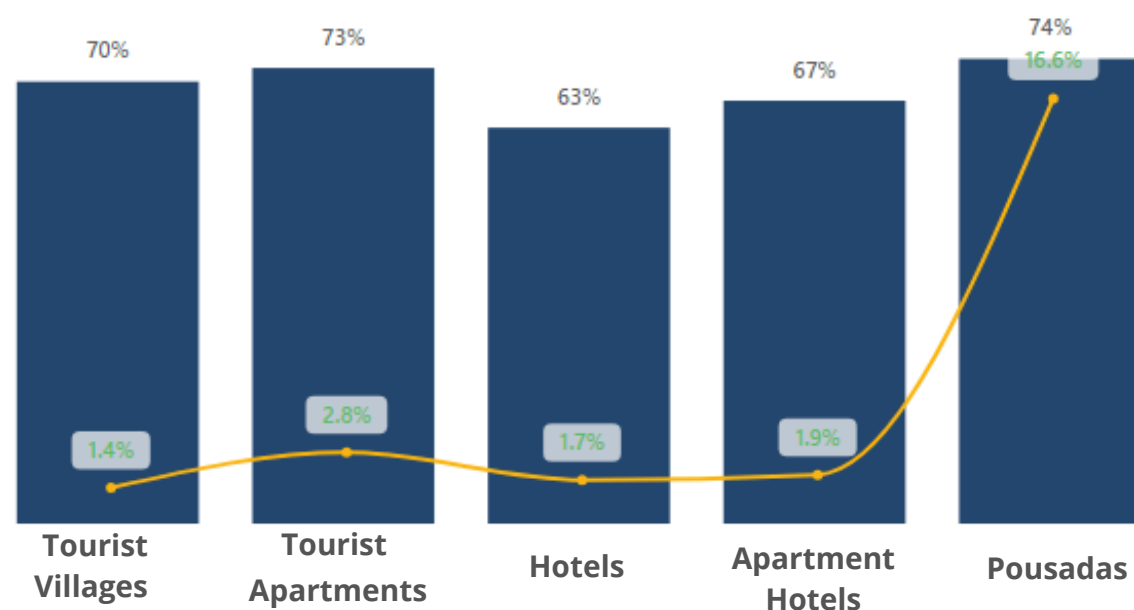
## Single-use plastics (use drop rate) | NUTSII

● use drop rate (%) ● variation



## Single-use plastics (use drop rate) | Typology

● use drop rate (%) ● variation



- 65% of Tourist Accommodation Establishments stated that they do not make single-use plastics available to customers;
- The Region of Madeira (72%) had the highest rate of rejection of this type of plastic. At the opposite end of the Centre and the Setúbal Peninsula (both 61%);
- Among the least used types of plastic were coasters and packaging used to wrap sheets and towels after washing (80%). The use of individual packets of butter and jam are the most difficult practice to stop, with 28% of establishments continuing this practice, despite a 8.9 p.p.reduction comparing to 2022;
- The rate of plastic use drop was highest in guesthouses (74%) and tourist apartments (73%), and lowest in hotels (63%).



**80%**

do not use towels, sheets or similar products stored in plastic containers after washing



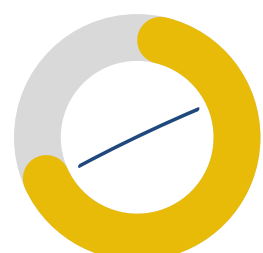
**80%**

they have already eliminated coasters



**76%**

don't have towels, cups and toilet lids wrapped in plastic sheeting or tapes



**65%**

no toothpicks



**62%**

toothbrushes are not available



**57%**

do not have individual tea portions with plastic packaging



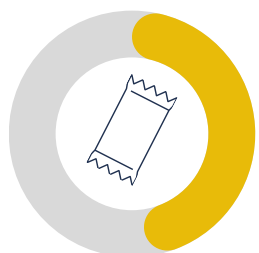
**56%**

no longer use coffee capsules



**56%**

don't use bottles of water



**49%**

disperse the use of individual sauce sachets, 8,5 p.p. less than 2022



**28%**

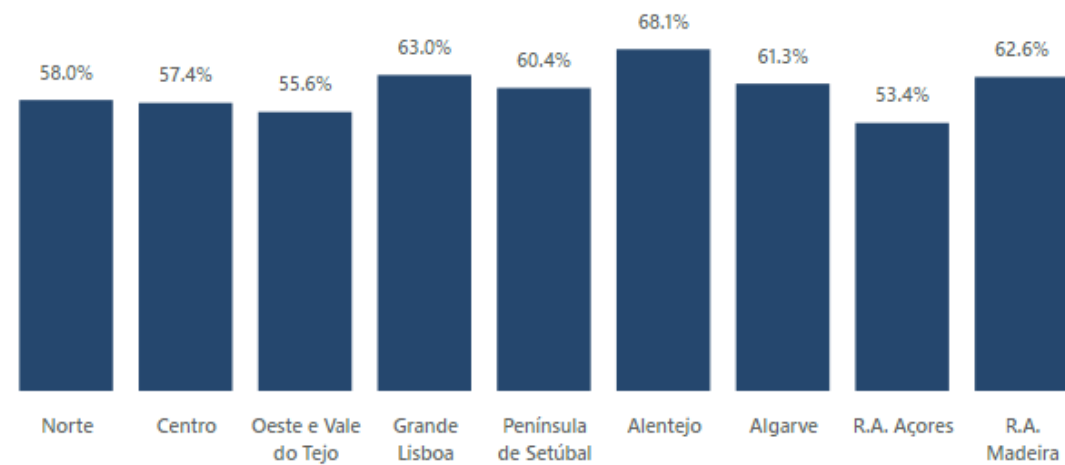
no longer have individual packets of butter, jam, condiments or similar products



## Plastics

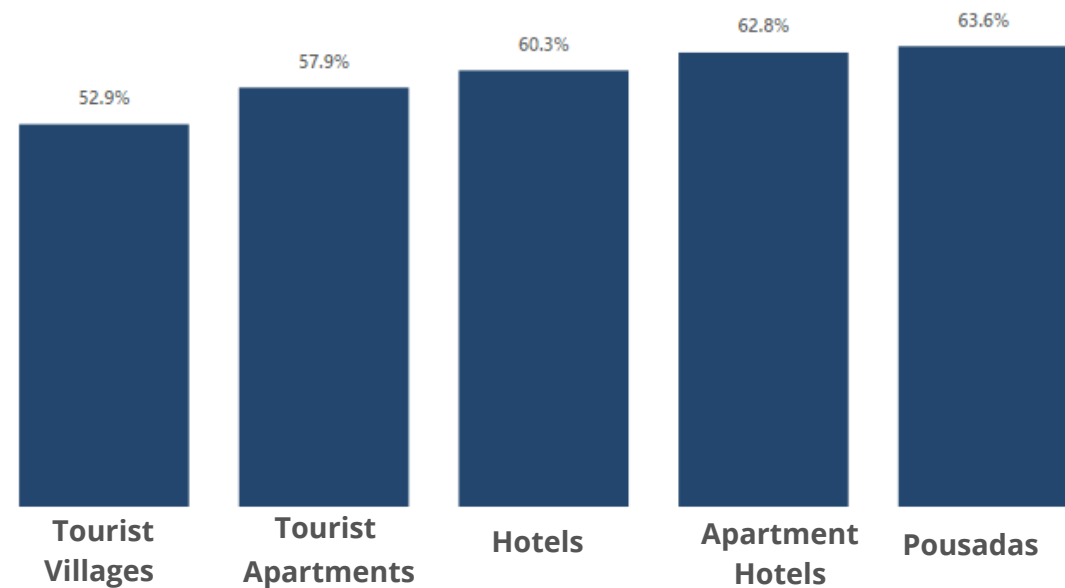
**Type of disposable plastic wich use droped in 2023**

### Waste management | NUTS II



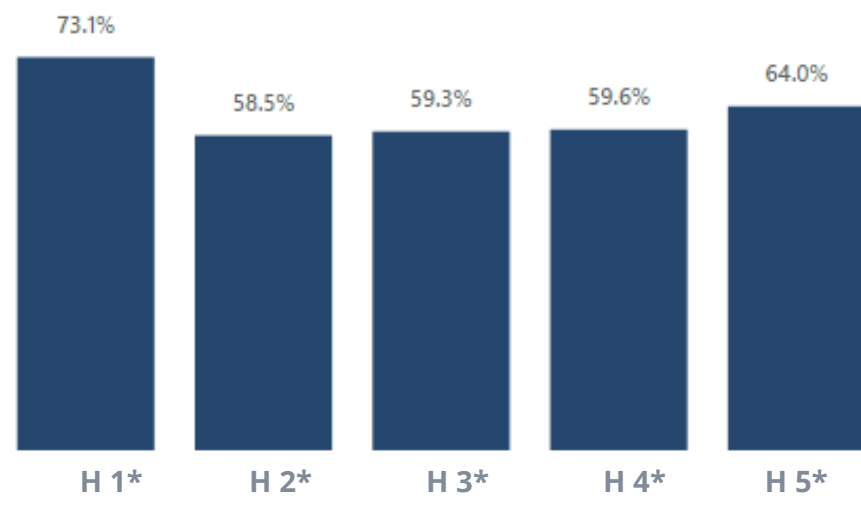
# Waste management

### Waste management | Typology

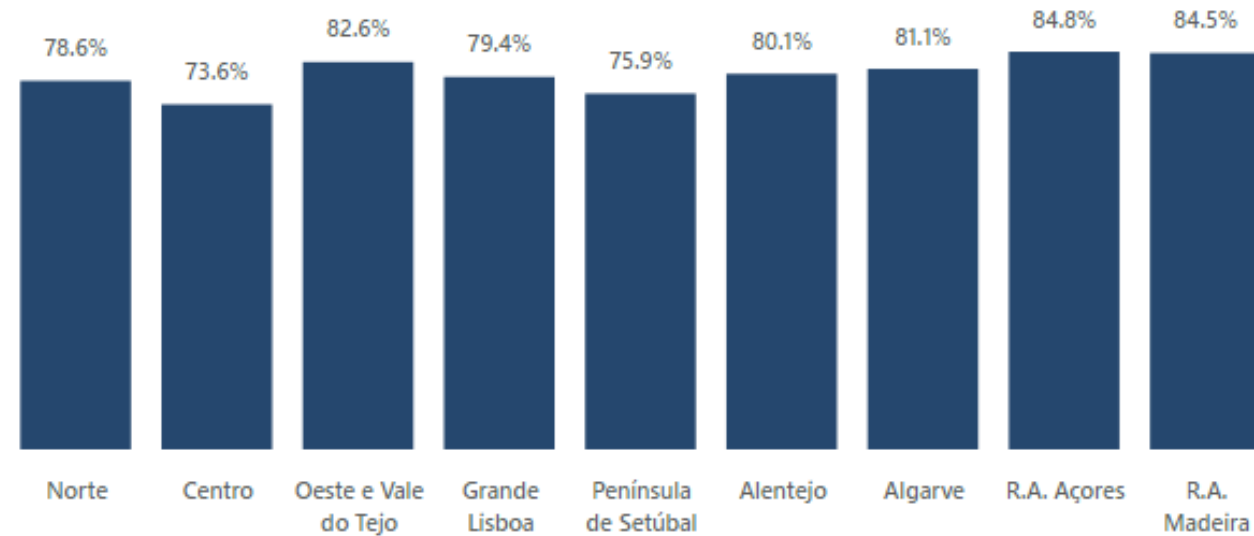


- 60% of Tourist Accommodation Establishments state that they have adopted efficient waste management practices in 2023;
- Alentejo leads the regions where establishments have the most waste management practices(68%). At the other end the Azores region (53%);
- Pousadas (64%) and Apartment Hotels (63%) have the most efficient waste management practices, with Tourist Villages scoring the lowest percentage (53%);
- Inventory monitoring is the widely adopted practice (95%);
- Less than half of the establishments use other practices identified as positive in waste management such as promotions to avoid leftovers (46%) and donations of the unused food (45%).

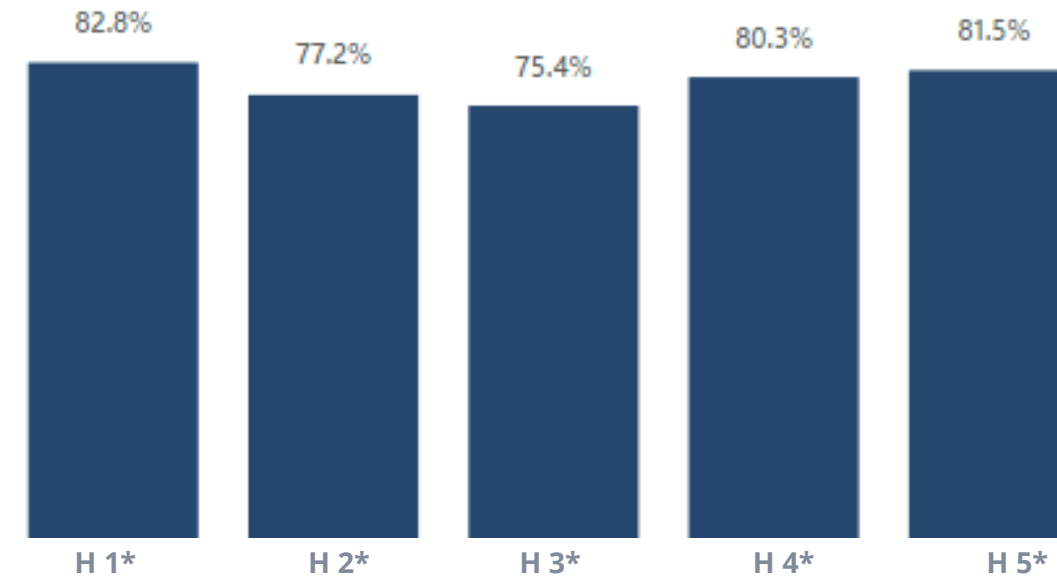
### Waste management | Hotels by category



% of establishments adopting circular economy practices| NUTS II

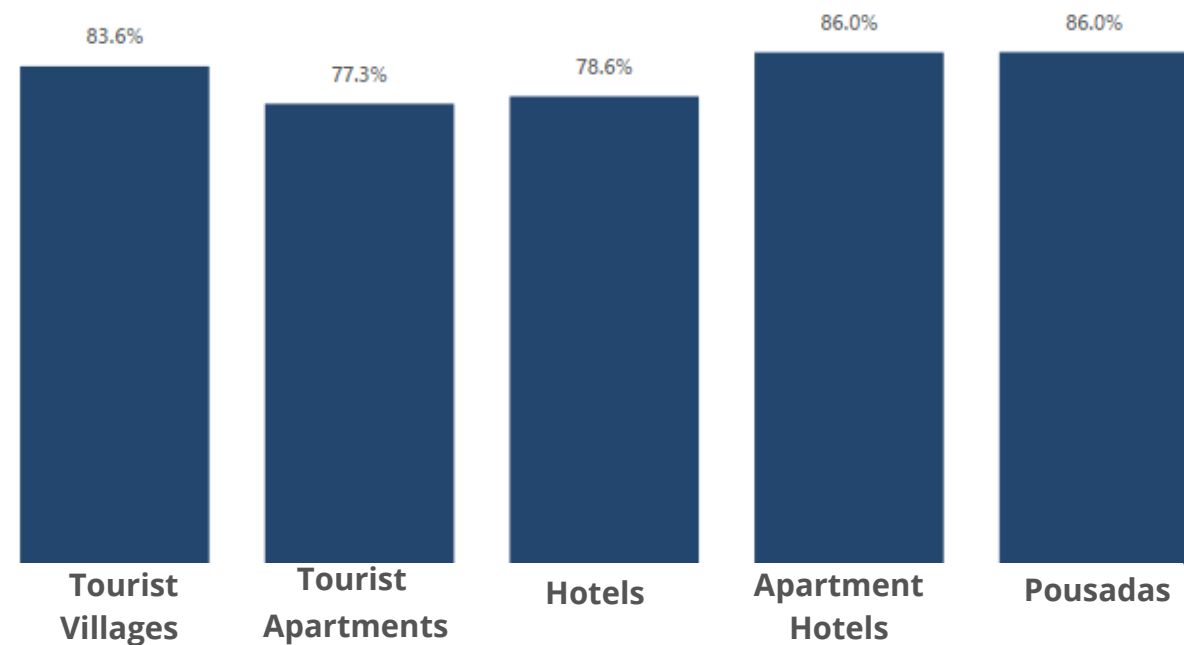


% of establishments adopting circular economy practices| Category



# Circular economy

% of establishments adopting circular economy practices| Typology



- 79% of Tourist Accommodation Establishments reported having adopted the Circular Economy practices included in the questionnaire;
- Analysing at a NUTS II level, the Regions of Madeira and the Azores have the highest implementation of these practices (85%), followed by the West and Tagus Valley (83%);
- In terms of typology, Pousadas and Apartment Hotels (86% ex aequo) are the establishments that report the best performance.



# Circular Economy

## Circular economy practices 2023



**91,1%**

training staff for circular economy is, including waste management



**74,3%**

promoting the shared economy of resources, such as equipment or facilities



**88,2%**

there is a sustainable procurement policy to reduce the amount of packaging and consumables



**72,4%**

the establishment's sustainability policy is communicated to customers



**79,1%**

in the design of products or services, the possibility of recovering materials after the end of life cycle is considered



**68,2%**

there is a circular economy policy towards suppliers



Credito: António Sá

## Credits:

**Property:** Turismo de Portugal, IP

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