

**International Conference on Religious Tourism:  
*Fostering sustainable socio-economic development in host communities***

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**Session 3: Innovative approaches to tourism management in religious sites**

**Mr. Adolfo Mesquita Nunes, Secretary of State for Tourism, Portugal**



**Bio:**

Adolfo Mesquita Nunes was appointed as Secretary of State for Tourism of Portugal in February 2013. He was previously a senior associate in one of the Portuguese biggest and leading law firms (MLGTS) mainly practicing in the areas of public procurement, environment and urban planning, as well as in the areas of procedural matters and administrative litigation.

Elected as a deputy to the Portuguese Parliament in 2011, Adolfo Mesquita Nunes was Head of the Office of the XVI Portuguese Government Minister of Environment and Urban Planning between 2004 and 2005.

Adolfo Mesquita Nunes obtained his Law Degree from the Law Faculty of the Portuguese Catholic University in 2000 and Master Degree in Legal and Political Sciences from the Law Faculty of the University of Lisbon in 2008.

Appointed as a "40 UNDER 40" - European Young Leader, by EuropaNova and Friends of Europe.

**Abstract:**

When I assumed the position of Secretary of State for Tourism of Portugal, one of the first decisions I had to make was to declare or not declare Religious Tourism as a strategic product in our National Strategic Plan for Tourism. It

was a very easy decision. Religious Tourism is clearly a strategic product in our country.

With a highly concentrated diversity, Portugal enjoys, from North to South, an extensive offer of religious sites and experiences. But as in any product of this Industry, Religious Tourism has to be a consolidated offer. Public and private sector have to work hand in hand to offer and deliver authentic and high-end quality experiences to travelers.

It is not only important the visitation of the religious sites, the peregrinations, the museums, the routs. It is vital to manage, promote and offer to our tourists a combined and updated range of experiences and services.

It is not only important that a religious site will be open to visitation at extended hours, it is important that information is provided in several languages. It is important to have and promote nearby restaurants, tours, shops and accommodation. This information has to be constantly updated and available in apps, websites and social networks.

Keeping up with innovation and new trends are challenges transversal to tourism players and managers overall.

To maintain competitiveness of the destinations and travelers satisfaction we have to constantly analyze the market, be aware of our visitor's needs and expectations, and update our communication and managing approaches.