Map of Brazilian tourism: A study on the categorization of tourist regions in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

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\textbf{Abstract:} This study analyzes the Categorization of Tourist Municipalities in the Rio Grande do Sul, and discusses the process of regionalization of tourism in the State and how tourism has impacted the development of the localities of Rio Grande do Sul that are part of the Brazilian Tourism Map, in light of the performance of their respective tourism economies. For this, an exploratory and descriptive study was carried out, based on secondary data available on the Mapa do Turismo 2019-2021 Portal of the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism. As a result, the categorization of tourist municipalities was created from the Tourism Regionalization Program, dividing the State of Rio Grande do Sul into twenty-seven tourist regions. The results show that in addition to the capital Porto Alegre, the Região das Hortênsias is the most important tourist destination in the state; it is the region with the most abundant offer of accommodation facilities, the one that generates more jobs in the hotel industry, and the one that collects the most taxes in the sector. Also of note are the Costa Doce, the Litoral Norte Gaúcho and the Região da Fronteira.

\textbf{Keywords:} Tourism Regionalization Program; Brazilian Tourism Map; Categorization of Tourist Municipalities; Regionalization; Public Tourism Policies

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The first version of the National Tourism Plan (NTP), executed between 2003 and 2007 by the Brazilian Ministry of tourism (MTur), aimed to structure the planning of tourist activity in Brazil and its respective strategies in order to “explain the thinking of the government and the productive sector and guide the actions necessary to consolidate the development of the tourism sector” (Brasil, 2007, p.15).

Through the 2003-2007 TNP, the MTur became consolidated, as the government body responsible for structuring initiatives for Brazilian destinations and supporting, managing, and promoting tourism in Brazil. In order to promote the sustainable development of tourist regions, the Tourism Regionalization Program - Tours of Brazil (Programa de Regionalização do Turismo - Roteiros do Brasil - TRP) was created in April 2004 (Brasil, 2007).

Since then, the TRP has been consolidating itself as a public policy aimed at developing tourism in the Brazilian territory, through regionalization and decentralization, focusing on coordinated and participatory planning (Brasil, 2007).

In general terms, the TRP, since its creation, has aimed to promote “the decentralization of the Brazilian tourist offer, located predominantly on the coast, providing the interiorization of the activity and the inclusion of new destinations in the itineraries commercialized in the domestic market and external” (Brasil, 2007, p.25). It works through partnerships at municipal, regional, and national levels.

Under the focus proposed by the TRP, the regionalization process gathered strength and brought a view that goes beyond the municipality - for the purposes of planning, management, promotion, and commercialization. It became clear that integrating the municipalities into tourist regions could generate better use of financial, technical and human resources. Thus, it was hoped that favorable conditions would be created for the emergence of qualified and competitive tourist destinations through regional development (Brasil, 2007).

To assist in the regionalization process, the MTur created the Brazilian Tourism Map, through MTur Ordinance No. 313 of December 3, 2013, as an instrument that sought to visualize and identify information related to the tourist municipalities. According to its most recent update - carried out in 2019 - the Brazilian Tourism Map divides the national territory into 333 tourist regions covering 2694 municipalities (Brasil, 2019).

It is worth mentioning that the municipalities that make up the Brazilian Tourism Map are indicated by the State Tourism Bodies, together with the regional government bodies (Instâncias de Governança Regionais - RGI). The municipalities are categorized, based on five previously established criteria, as A, B, C, D or E, according to their economic performances in the area of tourism (Brasil, 2019).

This categorization, established through Government Ordinance 144 of August 27, 2015, would enable the MTur to monitor the economic performance of the tourism sector in each of the municipalities; optimize the distribution of public resources; make better decisions; implement policies that respect the peculiarities of each municipality, and guide the development of specific policies for each category (Brasil, 2019).

Since the TRP was created, the regionalization of public tourism policies has gathered strength, becoming the central guideline for the process of Brazilian tourist development (Anjos & Andre, 2021). Since then, the Tourism Map has become one of the main instruments used by the MTur to guide its priorities, distribute resources, and specificities of the development of public policies aimed at the sector (Chemin, Filippim & Abrahão, 2019).

From this introduction, this study aims to analyze the Categorization of Tourist Municipalities in the Rio Grande do Sul, and to discuss the process of regionalization of tourism in the State and how tourism has impacted the development of localities in the State of Rio Grande do Sul that make up the Brazilian Tourism Map, based on the performance of their respective tourism economies.

The State of Rio Grande do Sul has a wide range of scenic, heritage, and climatic attractions, which, together with the gastronomy and traditions inherited from its European immigrants, give the State a diversity of opportunities that make it one of the main tourist attractions in Brazil (Rio Grande do Sul, 2021a). It is also noteworthy that the Brazilian Tourism Map organizes the State of Rio Grande do Sul into 27 Tourist Regions, each with its distinct characteristics, comprising 345 municipalities (Brasil, 2019).

**Historical background to the Regional Tourism Plan (NTP) and the Tourism Regionalization Program (TRP) and its guidelines**

Created on April 29, 2003, the NTP, through its first version - 2003-2007 - became the official document aimed at consolidating the MTur and its guidelines/strategies for the implementation of the National Tourism Policy, with the general objective of organizing and guiding actions aimed at the sector. Since its creation, the NTP has forecast global goals for tourism in Brazil. It has been updated and republished a further times, making four versions in total: 2003-2007, 2007-2010, 2013-2016, and 2018-2022. We shall now discuss the latest version.
Based on the literature presented, Table 1 summarizes the TRP definitions, giving the period, the TRP definition, and the Guiding Document for changes.

### Table 1: Summary of the guidelines of the Tourism Regionalization Program in the versions of the National Tourism Plan

| Period   | Definition of the Tourism Regionalization | Guiding Document                      |
|----------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2003-2007| Tourism Regionalization Program - Brazil  | National Tourism Plan – "Guidelines, Goals and Programs" |
| 2007-2010| Tourism Regionalization                   | National Tourism Plan – "A Journey of..." |
| 2011-2013| Law No. 11771 and Reference Document     | Law No. 11771 and Reference Document   |
| 2013-2016| Regionalization Guideline                | National Tourism Plan – "Tourism Doing Much More" |
| 2018-2022| Guideline Strengthening Regionalization  | National Tourism Plan – "More Employment and In..." |

Source: prepared by the authors.

To put into practice some of the guidelines of its first version - 2003-2007 - the NTP created the TRP in April 2004 as a tourism development policy for the country, a characteristic of which is the "diversification of the tourist offer in the country and constituting the NTP reference of the territorial base," that is, the process of regionalization promoted by the government (Brasil, 2007, p. 67).

Thus, the TRP was created so that its execution, in a decentralized and regionalized way, focused on coordinated and participatory planning, would have a positive on the country’s socio-economic results. Its aim, therefore, was to structure and diversify the tourist offer in Brazil, in order to make the country more internationally competitive (Brasil, 2007).

Thinking about the advancement of the TRP, in 2007 it underwent a restructuring that led to the NTP - "A Journey of Inclusion" [Uma Viagem de Inclusão] version 2007-2010 being changed, but still keeping the same focus of planning the tourist offer, due to the assertiveness in some programs, being subdivided into: the Regionalization Planning and Management Program; the Tourist Segment Structuring Program; the Structuring Program for Production Associated with Tourism; and the Support Program for the Regional Development of Tourism. This structuring process became the Tourism Regionalization Macro program (Brasil, 2007).

In 2008, the General Tourism Law 11,771 was approved, as the main legal framework for the sector in the country. One of the objectives of the National Tourism Policy, as defined by this law, was: to promote, decentralize and regionalize tourism, stimulating the states, Federal District and municipalities to plan tourist activities in their territories, sustainably and safely, collaborating among themselves, with the involvement and effective participation of the communities receiving the benefits arising from the economic activity (Brasil, 2008).

As a central point of the General Tourism Law, Silva and Fonseca (2017, p.155) highlight decentralization - "a premise that is in the Federal Constitution of 1988 and, since then, some policies with this bias have been produced in various sectors, such as in education and health, as well as tourism".

In 2013, the NTP "Tourism Doing Much More for Brazil" was launched, guided by the Reference documents for Tourism in the Country and the Multi-Year Plan for the period 2012 to 2015, which contributed to the process of returning the original name of the Program from 2004, i.e. the Tourism Regionalization Program, removing the attributions of the Macro Program. No reason was given for this change, only the regionalization guidelines (Brasil, 2013).

Finally, the goals of the NTP "More Employment and Income for Brazil," which governs the period from 2018 to 2022, are to improve and strengthen the attributions of the TRP, structuring itself around several axes of discussion, such as Planning, Management, and Monitoring; Structuring Brazilian Tourism; Training and Qualification in Tourism; Incentive to Responsible Tourism; Marketing and Sales Support. (Brazil, 2018).

**How the Brazilian Tourism Map is formed**

The Tourism Map, established by Ordinance MTur no 313, of December 3, 2013, is the TRP instrument that enables a “reading of the spatial distribution of tourism in Brazil,” constituting the grouping that “guides priorities, distribution of resources, and specificities of the development of public policies” (Chemin, Filippim & Abrahão 2019, p.2). This instrument was designed as a tool to overcome several limitations to strategic decision making by the Federal Government. Thus, it was intended to optimize and guide the performance of the MTur in...
the development and management of tourism, and to advance the proposal of regionalization of the activity through the mapping of Brazilian tourist regions (Anjos & Andrade, 2021).

Anjos and Andrade (2021, p.436) emphasize that the Tourism Map should help the government to develop "strategies that establish the evolution of national tourism public policies, reducing the focus on the isolated tourist destination (municipality), strengthening the regionalization and the concept of working with the group of destinations."

To become part of the Brazilian Tourism Map, a municipality must fulfill a series of established criteria, including having an official body responsible for its tourism portfolio; maintaining an active Municipal Tourism Council; participating in an IGR; submitting its budget for the sector, and having at least one company or professional registered in the Register of Tourist Service Providers - Cadastur (Brasil, 2019).

It is also noteworthy that the State Tourism Agencies and the RGIs must validate the steps and fulfilment of the criteria. In turn, it is essential to point out that in order to participate in the same tourist region, municipalities must have aspects that identify them, such as a historical, cultural, economic and/or geographical identity, and they must be geographically next to each other. This facilitates cooperation for regional development because, even if the location does not have tourist attractions itself, it can still offer human resources, products, and services necessary for tourist activities (Brasil, 2017).

The Brazilian Tourism Map is updated every two years. Its most recent version, published in 2019, divides the national territory into 333 tourist regions covering a total of 2694 municipalities. The State of Rio Grande do Sul has 27 tourist regions involving 345 locations (Brasil, 2019).

How the municipalities of the Brazilian Tourism Map are categorized.

In order to consolidate the diversification and regionalization of the Brazilian tourist offer, on August 27, 2015, Ordinance No. (Brasil, 2019) established the Categorization of Municipalities as a proposal for the economic identification and performance of the regions of the Brazilian Tourism Map (Brasil, 2019).

This tool aims to categorize the municipalities inserted in the tourist regions as a way of subsidizing the strategic decision-making of public management and guiding the elaboration and implementation of specific policies for each category of municipality in order to meet their specificities, based on the performance of its tourism economy (Anjos & Andrade, 2021).

The categorization of tourist municipalities is based on the following criteria established by the MTur: number of accommodation establishments; number of jobs in accommodation establishments; estimated number of domestic visitors; estimated number of international visitors; federal tax revenue from accommodation establishments (Brasil, 2019) (Table 2).

| Variable                                      | Collection Data                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Number of Accommodation Establishments        | Annual List of Social Information - RAIS 2017/ Ministry of Economy |
| Number of Jobs generated by the Accommodation Establishments |                                          |
| Number of National Tourists                   | 2012 Domestic Demand Survey - MTur/FIPE                    |
| Number of International Tourists              | International Demand Survey 2017 - MTur/FIPE              |
| Taxes generated by the Accommodation Means    | Brazilian Inland Revenue Service - Ministry of the Economy |

Source: Brasil (2019, p.3)

Regarding the variables presented in Table 2, the focus on the exclusive use of data from the accommodation sector is justified, considering that almost all those who stay at a hotel are tourists. While food services and car rental, for example, have a very high use by residents, the data related to their use are not as easy to access (Brasil, 2019).

It should also be noted that the data on Federal Tax Revenue are obtained from the Federal Revenue Service of the Ministry of the Economy, and include revenues from various taxes: IRPJ, CSLL, Cofins, PIS/Pasep, Income Tax at Source and Revenue Social Security (both employee and company contributions) (Brasil, 2019).

In order to form the categories, the data were submitted to cluster analysis, a methodological technique that, as presented by Mingoti (2005), divides elements of a sample into groups, grouping them according to established variables. Thus, there are five categories of municipalities: A, B, C, D, and E (BRASIL, 2019), grouped according to the performance of their tourism economy.

Category A is applied to all the state capitals of the
country, and municipalities that have a high flow of tourists, lots of facilities and accommodation establishments, and high tax revenues. Categories B and C are applied to municipalities with great potential or that already occupy a prominent position in the tourism sector, especially in relation to the variables in question. Categories D and E are for municipalities with below average levels in relation to the variables, representing regions where tourist activity is still in its infancy and/or is not a significant part of the local economy (BRASIL, 2007).

**Methodological Procedures**

This is an exploratory and descriptive study. According to Gil (2019), exploratory research focuses on linking an obstacle, and involves bibliographic and documentary surveys, as is done in this study. According to Oliveira (2018), this type of study is a preliminary study, allowing for more in-depth research, in order to become more familiar with the phenomenon being studied. Descriptive research, meanwhile, seeks to discover the peculiarities of a given sample, especially what is happening, enabling the characteristics of a situation to be covered with greater accuracy, using standardized data collection procedures, such as forms, questionnaires and technical observation (Vergara, 2014).

As regards the source of the information, secondary data were collected from the 2019-2021 Tourism Map Portal, updated every two years, based on content provided by the MTur and taking into account the dimensions and variables.

To analyze the results, group discussions were held to discuss the interpretation of the information collected through a deep analysis of the data and interpretative richness. For Aaker, Kumar, and Day (2004), in exploratory research, the use of discussion groups usually involves a qualitative approach and is generally characterized by the absence of a hypotheses or a poorly defined hypotheses.

**Interpretation and Analysis of the Results**

The State of Rio Grande do Sul occupies a residential unit area of 281,707.149 km², with a population of 10,693,929 people (2010), and a population density equivalent of 37.96 inhabitants/km² (Figure 1) (Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics [Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística] – IBGE, 2010).

![Figure 1: Rio Grande do Sul Tourist Regions Map](http://www.emater.tche.br/site/turismo-rural/mapa_regioes_turisticas.php)

Source: prepared by the authors, based on data from the Brazilian Tourism Map (BRASIL, 2019).

| Year | No. of Municipalities | No. of Regions |
|------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 2013 | 467                   | 25             |
| 2016 | 294                   | 27             |
| 2017 | 371                   | 27             |
| 2019 | 345                   | 27             |

Source: prepared by the authors, based on data from the Brazilian Tourism Map (BRASIL, 2019).
According to Table 3, the 2017 edition shows that the total number of regionalized municipalities dropped (from 371 to 345), with 258 being maintained, 85 included, and 112 excluded. Also, compared to the first edition (in 2013), there was a significant drop in the total number of municipalities included in the map (from 467 to 345).

The distribution of the Rio Grande do Sul Tourism Map is shown below, according to the categories - ranging from “A” to “E” (Table 4).

Table 4: Distribution of the Tourism Map in Rio Grande do Sul, by categories

| Categories | A | B | C | D | E | Total |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| No. of     | 2 | 22| 40| 83| 345|       |
| % of Cases | 058%|6.38%|11.6%|57.4%|24.1%|100%   |

Source: prepared by the authors, based on data from the Brazilian Tourism Map (BRASIL, 2019).

As shown in the data presented in Table 4, the State of Rio Grande do Sul has two municipalities categorized as A (0.58%), 22 as B (6.38%), 40 as C (11.6%), 198 as D (57.4%), and 83 as E (24.1%).

Category A includes Porto Alegre and Gramado; and Category B: Bagé, Bento Gonçalves, Canela, Canoas, Sapucaia do Sul, Caxias do Sul, Erechim, Lajeado, Novo Hamburgo, Passo Fundo, Pelotas, Rio Grande, Santa Cruz do Sul, and others.

Category C is comprised of Alegrete, Arroio do Sal, Caçapava do Sul, Cachoeira do Sul, Camaquã, Cambará do Sul, Canguçu, Chuí, Cidreira, Cruz Alta, Farroupilha, Frederico Westphalen, Garibaldi, Gravataí, Guaxuma, Imbé, Jaguaraçu, Marau, Marcelino Ramos, Montenegro, Nono-Me-Toque, Nova Petrópolis, Osório, Palmares do Sul, Panambi, Pinhal, Rosário do Sul, Santa Rosa, Santa Vitória do Palmar, Santo Ângelo, Santo Augusto, São Borja, São Francisco de Paula, São Lourenço do Sul, São Luiz Gonzaga, Sarandi, Soledade, Tapera, Viamão, and Xangri-lá.

Due to space limitations, the municipalities categorized as D or E were not mentioned here by name. These had below averages scores in the indicators used to compose the Tourism Map, indicating that tourist activity in these locations is incipient and/or is not a significant part of the local economy.

In addition, Table 5 presents, in alphabetical order, a list of the 27 Regions that make up the Rio Grande do Sul Tourism Map and the number of municipalities that each one has belonging to each category (A, B, C, D or E).

Table 5: Tourist regions of Rio Grande do Sul, by categories within the State

| Region | A | B | C | D | E | Total |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| Alto da Serra do Botucarai | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 6 |
| Campos de Cima | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 10 |
| Carbonífera | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Central | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 16 |
| Centro-Serra | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| Costa Doce | 0 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 20 |
| Cultura e Tradição | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 7 |
| Delta do Jacuí | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| Fronteira | 0 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Hortênsias | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Litoral Norte | 0 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 19 |
| Pampa Gaúcho | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 7 |
| Porto Alegre | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Rota Águas e Pedras | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Rota das Araucárias | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| Rota das Terras Encantadas | 0 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 15 |
| Rota do Rio Uruguai | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Rota do Yucumã | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Rota Missões | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 |

Source: prepared by the authors, based on data from the Brazilian Tourism Map (BRASIL, 2019).

It is highlighted that Porto Alegre and the Região das Hortênsias have municipalities in Category A; while Category B identifies 22 municipalities in 9 regions - Campos de Cima da Serra (1), Central (1), Costa Doce (2), Cultura e Tradição (1), Delta do Jacuí (1), Fronteira (3), Hortênsias (2), Litoral Norte Gaúcho (3), Pampa Gaúcho (1) and Rota do Yucumã (1) and that Category C classifies 40 municipalities in 5 regions – the main ones of which are Costa Doce (with 7 municipalities), Litoral
Table 6: Economic variables of tourist municipalities in Rio Grande do Sul

| Municipalitie                  | No. of jobs generated in the accommodation means | No. of Accommodation Means | No. of International Tourists | No. of National Tourists | Collection of Taxes generated by the Accommodation Means | Category |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Gramado                       | 2,758                                           | 163                        | 39,774                         | 959,445                  | R$ 60,905,220.00                                       | A        |
| Porto Alegre                  | 2,875                                           | 133                        | 176,836                        | 3,020,513                | R$59,776,547.00                                        | A        |
| Bento Gonçalves               | 543                                             | 17                         | 6,627                          | 164,856                  | R$ 7,003,433.00                                        | B        |
| Passo Fundo                   | 392                                             | 23                         | 15,940                         | 349,768                  | R$6,340,243.00                                         | B        |
| Canela                        | 564                                             | 48                         | 9,350                          | 147,149                  | R$5,492,866.00                                         | B        |
| Santa Maria                   | 358                                             | 21                         | 9,873                          | 428,404                  | R$5,217,749.00                                         | B        |
| Caxias do Sul                 | 405                                             | 27                         | 13,600                         | 479,511                  | R$ 4,894,743.00                                        | B        |
| Pelotas                       | 415                                             | 34                         | 30,651                         | 283,409                  | R$ 4,891,698.00                                        | B        |
| Rio Grande                    | 338                                             | 33                         | 33,288                         | 696,471                  | R$ 3,598,486.00                                        | B        |
| SantAna do Livramento         | 310                                             | 24                         | 5,256                          | 175,810                  | R$3,522,952.00                                         | B        |
| São Leopoldo                  | 120                                             | 11                         | 3,536                          | 122,661                  | R$ 3,340,091.00                                        | B        |
| Canoas                        | 194                                             | 21                         | 20,409                         | 104,533                  | R$3,113,973.00                                         | B        |
| Novo Hamburgo                 | 139                                             | 13                         | 11,382                         | 99,118                   | R$ 2,829,017.00                                        | B        |
| Torres                        | 491                                             | 43                         | 90,900                         | 354,626                  | R$ 2,802,456.00                                        | B        |
| Uruguaiana                    | 188                                             | 20                         | 14,090                         | 67,243                   | R$ 2,314,966.00                                        | B        |
| Santa Cruz do Sul             | 134                                             | 16                         | 5,505                          | 102,289                  | R$ 2,254,033.00                                        | B        |
| Ijui                          | 158                                             | 13                         | 10,064                         | 85,319                   | R$ 1,972,171.00                                        | B        |
| São Gabriel                   | 93                                              | 13                         | 28,062                         | 114,291                  | R$1,735,484.00                                         | B        |
| Erechim                       | 128                                             | 21                         | 2,472                          | 87,999                   | R$ 1,639,074.00                                        | B        |
| Lajeado                       | 152                                             | 11                         | 926                            | 110,079                  | R$ 1,397,782.00                                        | B        |
| Bagé                          | 124                                             | 12                         | 1,639                          | 274,902                  | R$ 1,264,817.00                                        | B        |
| Nova Petrópolis               | 108                                             | 15                         | 2,676                          | 46,896                   | R$ 1,264,152.00                                        | B        |
| Capão da Canoa                | 147                                             | 36                         | 34,499                         | 393,051                  | R$ 1,034,343.00                                        | B        |
| Tramandai                     | 106                                             | 17                         | 13,531                         | 324,818                  | R$ 957,434.00                                          | B        |
| São Francisco de Paula        | 73                                              | 13                         | 406                            | 10,056                   | R$ 937,118.00                                          | C        |

Source: prepared by the authors, based on data from the Brazilian Tourism Map (BRASIL, 2019).
As shown in Table 6, the state capital Porto Alegre (which forms a tourist region in itself) and Gramado collect approximately 60 million reals in tax revenue from accommodation establishments; this includes only those belonging to Category A.

Other municipalities that stand out in terms of tax revenues from accommodation are: Bento Gonçalves (7 million reals); Passo Fundo (6.3 million reals); Canela (5.4 million reals), Santa Maria (5.2 million reals), Caxias do Sul (4.8 million reals) and Pelotas (4.8 million reals).

Gramado and Porto Alegre also stand out in relation to the number of accommodation establishments (163 and 133), number of jobs generated in the hotel industry (2,758 and 2,875), and total number of national and international visitors (999,219,000 and 3,197,349 million, respectively) (Table 6).

Regarding the number of accommodation establishments, in addition to those categorized as A, Canela (with 48), Torres (with 43), Capão da Canoa (with 36), Pelotas (with 34), and Rio Grande (with 33) are evident. Furthermore, Canela and Torres stand out regarding the number of jobs generated in the hotel industry, with 564 and 49, respectively. Joining them are: Bento Gonçalves (with 543), Pelotas (with 415), Caxias do Sul (with 405), Passo Fundo (with 392), Santa Maria (with 358) and Rio Grande (with 338) (Table 6).

Finally, Table 7 presents the sum of the variables used in categorizing the Brazilian Tourism Map, based on the regions that make up the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

Table 7: Economic Variables of the Tourist Regions of Rio Grande do Sul

| Regiões                           | No. of jobs generated in the accommodation establishments | No. of Accommodation Establishments | No. of International Tourists | No. of National Tourists | Tax revenues from Accommodation Establishments (BRL) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Alto da Serra do Botucaraí        | 59                                                       | 10                                  | 784                           | 23,650                   | 0                                                   |
| Campos de Cima da Serra           | 166                                                      | 38                                  | 14,320                        | 158,558                  | 1,035,455                                           |
| Carbonífera                       | 31                                                       | 8                                   | 1,580                         | 24,566                   | 0                                                   |
| Central                           | 485                                                      | 45                                  | 11,386                        | 654,999                  | 5,217,749                                           |
| Centro-Serra                      | 13                                                       | 5                                   | 191                           | 401,481                  | 6,340,243                                           |
| Costa Doce                        | 1,081                                                    | 134                                 | 84,179                        | 1,371,673                | 9,603,449                                           |
| Cultura e Tradição                | 410                                                      | 31                                  | 16,408                        | 401,481                  | 6,340,243                                           |
| Delta do Jacuí                     | 388                                                      | 38                                  | 23,829                        | 207,595                  | 4,567,264                                           |
| Fronteira                         | 754                                                      | 82                                  | 53,580                        | 515,368                  | 8,176,261                                           |
| Hortênsias                        | 3,912                                                    | 268                                 | 65,806                        | 1,646,083                | 73,494,099                                          |
| Litoral Norte Gaúcho              | 949                                                      | 144                                 | 156,643                       | 1,570,526                | 5,636,296                                           |
| Pampa Gaúcho                      | 183                                                      | 28                                  | 3,871                         | 378,525                  | 1,431,093                                           |
| Porto Alegre                      | 2,875                                                    | 133                                 | 176,836                       | 3,020,513                | 59,776,547                                          |
| Rota Águas e Pedras               | 123                                                      | 29                                  | 2,735                         | 168,045                  | 412,689                                             |
| Rota das Araucárias               | 50                                                       | 8                                   | 1,493                         | 211,105                  | 0                                                   |
| Rota das Terras Encantadas        | 166                                                      | 35                                  | 1,250                         | 191,179                  | 565,044                                             |
| Rota do Rio Uruguai               | 166                                                      | 24                                  | 3,563                         | 152,340                  | 925,611                                             |
| Rota do Yucumã                     | 256                                                      | 33                                  | 11,351                        | 267,620                  | 2,493,420                                           |
| Rota Missões                      | 231                                                      | 37                                  | 11,350                        | 132,795                  | 1,233,842                                           |
| Total                             | 12,298                                                   | 1,130                               | 641,155                       | 10,906,621               | 180,909,062                                          |

Source: prepared by the authors, based on data from the Brazilian Tourism Map (BRASIL, 2019).
As shown in Table 7, the Região das Hortênsias stands out for having the highest rates of job creation (3,912 thousand), the number of lodging establishments (268), and tax revenues 73,494,099 million BRL.

More specifically, concerning the variable generation of jobs in accommodation establishments, the following are also noteworthy: Porto Alegre (2,875 thousand vacancies), Costa Doce (1,081 thousand), and Gaúcho North Coast (949). In relation to the number of accommodation establishments, the following stand out: Litoral Norte (com 144); Costa Doce (134) and Porto Alegre (133) (Table 7).

Regarding the number of national visitors, the following regions stand out: Porto Alegre (3 million), Região das Hortênsias (1.6 million), Litoral Norte Gaúcho (1.5 million) and Costa Doce (1.3 million). For international visitors, the figures are: Porto Alegre (176 thousand), Litoral Norte Gaúcho (156 thousand), (84 thousand) and Região das Hortênsias (65 mil) (Tabela 7).

Contribution of the study

In the analysis of the categorization of municipalities in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, it is observed that the classification of tourism performance is dynamic, constituted as multivariate. The process of decentralization has different levels of tourist activity, in other words, the Tourism decentralization policy has been advancing, albeit with difficulties, especially due to the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic in the last two years (2020/2021), which has led to significant changes in tourism, with low circulation. The results of this study contribute to the market by encouraging municipal managers to create new strategies for specific public policies, to promote continuity and resumption of the flow of domestic and international tourists in the regions. This will bring an increase in the demand for accommodation establishments, generating tax revenues and creating more jobs in the sector. These are all included in the categorization criteria established by the MTur.

For the academic community, the study makes suggestions for future studies, focusing on the municipalities that are not part of any tourist region. Bearing in mind that in 2013, the tourist map of the State of Rio Grande do Sul had a total of 467 municipalities, it also suggests expanding the discussions about the TRP, the Brazilian Tourism Map, and the Categorization of Brazilian Municipalities, so that students can expand their knowledge of the subject, allowing other researchers to conduct similar studies in other states, using the methodology presented here.

Finally, this research translates into a learning process, making it possible to explore and promote public tourism policies.

**Final Considerations**

Based on the results of this study, it can be considered that the Região das Hortêsías is the most relevant in the Rio Grande do Sul, as it is the region with the most extensive offer of accommodation establishments, the one that generates the most jobs in the hotel industry, and the one that collects the most taxes in the sector. This is evidenced by the categorization that shows that the region is composed of one municipality in Category A (Gramado), two in Category B (Canela and Caxias do Sul), two in Category C (Nova Petrópolis and São Francisco de Paula), and one in Category C. D (Picada Café).

The Região das Hortêsías often receives tourists from nearby regions and other parts of Brazil, especially in winter, and at Easter and Christmas. The European architecture (particularly German) can be seen here, and there are theme parks and natural parks, cultural attractions, gastronomy, as well as structured event and fair centers. It is also worth mentioning its geographical proximity to the state capital, Porto Alegre - which is, in itself, a tourist region and is, therefore, also categorized as A.

Additionally, the Costa Doce has two municipalities in Category B (Pelotas and Rio Grande) and 7 in Category C (Camaquã, Canguçu, Chui, Guaiaba, Jaguão, Santa Vitória do Palmar and São Lourenço do Sul). Pelotas and Rio Grande also stand out for their tax revenue figures, number of accommodation establishments, and formal jobs generated in the sector.

The tourist flow and the relevance of the accommodation sector of Costa Doce can be explained by its regional cultural identity (its municipalities have old buildings that tell the story of the Farroupilha Revolution), the presence of beaches and lagoons and, especially, the Port of Rio Grande (one of the largest in Brazil and a reference for the countries of the Mercosur) and Pelotas International Airport (which offers regional air routes).

Another region of evidence is the Litoral Norte Gaúcho, which has three municipalities categorized as B (Capão da Canoa, Tramandai and Torres) and 6 as C (Arroio do Sal, Cidreira, Imbé, Osório, Palmares do Sul and Xangri-Lá). Torres, Capão da Canoa, and Tramandai are destinations referenced by the sun and beach segment, making the Litoral Norte a region much sought after by tourists from the State of Rio Grande do Sul itself, as well as visitors from neighboring countries, such as Argentina and Uruguay, especially during summer periods.

Furthermore, the Região da Fronteira has three municipalities categorized as B (SantAna do Livramento, São

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11 Portal em Números do COVID-19. Available at: <https://covid.saude.gov.br/> Accessed on Feb 10, 2022.
Gabriel and Uruguaiana) and two as C (Alegrete and Rosário do Sul). This regional grouping stands out for its rural tourism, and its connections with the traditional culture of Rio Grande do Sul. Based on the above considerations, one can assume a tendency to concentrate on the allocation of resources (human, technical, and/or financial) to regions in which tourist activity is more consolidated in the State and which have more municipalities indicated in categories A and B (in particular, the Região das Hortênsias).

It is also believed that the study presents elements that promote an understanding and deepening of the Tourism Map and the Categorization of Brazilian Municipalities - emerging themes and increasingly receiving attention in the formulation of public policies by the Federal Government.

It is recommended that research be carried out in other states, as well as specific, in-depth investigations aimed at tourist regions in a specific way, replicating the methodological procedures proposed here and comparing the results obtained, either in the state of Rio Grande do Sul or in other Federative Units.

It is also proposed that in-depth research be carried out with public managers (Secretaries of Tourism, Presidents of Municipal Councils, and representatives of IGs) to identify the knowledge that each one has about the TRP, the Tourism Map, and the Categorization of Brazilian Municipalities.

Finally, it should be noted that future research should address the difficulties that have been encountered, so that the actions provided for by the TRP actually achieve the expected results and promote regional development, through the decentralization of tourist activity in the gaucho and/or Brazilian territory.

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