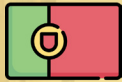




# Shops with a History

Traditional shops and commerce as a distinctive feature of cultural heritage cities



(PT)

LISBON



544,851



Governance and financing: new roles for local and regional authorities



## Challenge

Lisbon's population has been dropping since the 1980s, particularly in the historic centre and traditional neighbourhood. On the other hand, despite an economic and financial crisis that hit the country in 2011, Lisbon has become a popular tourist destination. These aspects combined threaten the distinctive character of the city and put traditional shops and commerce at risk of bankruptcy. Traditional buildings also risk going through changes in use or may be abandoned, issues that cause depopulation, loss of distinction and a feeling of insecurity in the downtown area.



## Solution

To keep the distinctive character of Lisbon, preserve its commercial and trade heritage and revitalise the urban fabric, in 2015 the municipality set up the programme Lojas com História (Shops with a history). This pioneering programme aims to safeguard the remaining retail stores with unique commercial activities and whose history is intertwined with the city. Awarding traditional shops and their owners allows at the same time to fight property speculation and prevent the unrestrained increase of the retail rents.



## How ?

- 1 Lisbon City Council created the programme Lojas com História in 2015. A sense of urgency drove the city to preserve and boost a distinctive local commerce and trade heritage, knowing that in it lies a relevant part of the identity and character of Lisbon and that it is, at the same time, an important social and economic mechanism for its development.
- 2 In 2017, the municipality awarded the first 82 commercial establishments. The selection criteria include the type of commercial activity, material assets and cultural and historical heritage.
- 3 Each distinguished shop is awarded a plaque to be placed on the façade of its building with the insignia Loja com História. With such distinction, shops or stores immediately benefit from a mandatory commercial lease renewal for up to 10 years, on top of greater public visibility and support for the building's rehabilitation or improvement of business activities.
- 4 Distinctions are communicated to the national Ministry of Economy, to exempt the shop owner from property tax. The exemption lasts as long as the store retains the distinction.
- 5 Since 2019, the municipal agency for the management of cultural facilities and urban regeneration (EGEAC) has promoted artistic interventions in store windows and organised guided tours to the shops.

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## Budget/Financing

€ 320,000

- The municipality entirely funds the programme through a dedicated municipal fund. In 2021, the total budget was €320,000, from which €275,000 was allocated to financial support to 21 stores for rehabilitation, maintenance and economic or cultural initiatives, and €45,000 for advertising, promotion and dissemination of the project. Since 2016 a total of 178 shops have been distinguished, of which 32 stores benefited from financial support through the municipal Fund.



## Management

- Since 2016, a multidisciplinary working group composed of members from the economy, urbanism and culture municipal departments has been responsible for managing the applications for distinction or funds and general support to shopkeepers and store owners. A municipal team is dedicated to the tenants.
- From the start, the municipality wanted to involve representatives of shopkeepers and store owners from different trade and catering associations, who joined an advisory board comprising representatives from the associative, business, cultural, academic and civil society sectors. The board decides on the most critical steps of the programme, namely the shop distinction process and the validation of the working group proposals. Lisbon's Mayor and Economy, Urbanism and Culture Councillors take the final decisions on attributing distinctions to the selected shops. This decision is preceded by a period of public consultation. The shops' recognition is valid for a minimum period of four years, renewable if its prerequisites remain in place.



## Transferability

- Find your city's distinctive character and support those who embody it with the means you have at hand. Lisbon's case has allowed the return of a certain authenticity of the historic city centre and a sense of belonging for inhabitants and visitors alike.
- Do not hesitate to partner with your local assets! For instance, University of Lisbon's Fine Arts Faculty supported the creation of the programme's visual identity and the setup of evaluation criteria.
- Use the results of pioneering programmes or innovative initiatives to make your voice heard at the national level. Lisbon City Council formulated recommendations to the national government to prevent the unrestrained increase of the retail rents, culminating in the approval of a specific law in 2017, recognising and protecting the stores awarded by the municipality (Regime for the recognition and protection of establishments and entities of local historical, cultural or social interest).



## Impact

Lojas com História contributes to urban regeneration, keeping or attracting people and business to the city, and at the same time stimulates the local economy, increasing and valuing a different tourism style. The trade activities and traditional shops bring positive effects that characterise and enhance the economic, social and cultural aspects of Lisbon. The programme has been awarded several national and European distinctions and is often referred to in international publications. The Portuguese cities of Angra do Heroísmo (Açores), Braga, Cascais, Coimbra, Funchal (Madeira), Fundão, Loulé, Porto, Sintra and V.N. Famalicão have already replicated this practice. Ponte de Lima (North of Portugal) is now starting the replication process. In the case of Porto and Funchal Lisbon's involvement was direct, through meetings and the provision of evaluation criteria for the distinction.



## Links

Website: <http://lojascomhistoria.pt>  
Videos: <http://www.lojascomhistoria.pt/documentaries>



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A Brasileira (c) CML/Lojas com História

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