

# WHV – Guardians of the Douro: Cultivating Heritage and Landscape

## Alto Douro Wine Region, Portugal

## PROJECT DATES

Cultural property inscribed on the World Heritage List (2001)

07 October - 16 October 2024

**THE SITE** - Wine has been produced by traditional landholders in the Alto Douro region for some 2,000 years. Throughout the centuries, row upon row of terraces have been built according to different techniques. Since the 18th century, its main product, port wine, has been world famous for its quality. The long tradition has produced a cultural landscape of outstanding beauty that is at the same time a reflection of its technological, social, and economic evolution. The visually dramatic landscape is still profitably farmed in traditional ways by traditional landholders.

**OBJECTIVES** - The Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto joins the campaign for the first time to leverage its academic expertise and research in rural geography to contribute to the preservation and valorization of the Douro Wine Region's unique cultural landscape. This involvement aligns with the commitment to sustainable rural development, cultural heritage conservation, and community engagement, offering an academic and practical platform to apply and share knowledge while fostering international cooperation and cultural exchange among volunteers.

**ACTIVITIES** - The volunteers will participate in interactive workshops on sustainable viticulture, highlighting climate change impacts and adaptation strategies, as well as in guided eco tours demonstrating eco-friendly practices, and take part in public debate on balancing heritage preservation with modernization, involving community members, experts, and authorities. The volunteers will also take part in participatory vineyard restoration of old vine terraces, learning traditional techniques to enhance the landscape's sustainability. They will plant native species to support ecosystem health, and will be introduced to composting and recycling at the site to reduce the environmental footprint. Finally, volunteers will help documenting traditional practices and stories, preserving cultural knowledge for future generations.

**PARTNERS** - The Centre of Studies in Geography and Spatial Planning (CEGOT) and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto; Municipalities of Peso da Régua and Mesão Frio; Sesc - Sociedade de Estudos Superiores e Culturais, S.A (ESCAD/IPLUSO).

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