

## **National Image in the Age of Mass Self-Communication: An Analysis of Internet Users' Perception of Portugal**

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**Abstract :** Nowadays, massification of Internet access represents one of the major challenges to the traditional powers of the State, among which the power to control its external image. The virtual world has also sparked the interest of social sciences which consider it a new field of study, an immense open text where sense is expressed. In this paper, that immense text has been accessed to so as to understand the perception Internet users from all over the world have of Portugal. Ours is a quantitative and qualitative approach, as we have resorted to buzz, thematic and category analysis. The results confirm the predominance of sea stereotype in others' vision of the Portuguese people, and evidence that national image has adapted to network communication through processes of individuation and paganization.

**Keywords :** national image, internet, self-communication, perception

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