

# The Portuguese Natural Stone industry

a short updated summary

Table 1 - Portuguese natural stone exports (USD, 2012 -2015) – COMTRADE data.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015
Slate	2 396 292	3 396 052	3 241 381	4 069 090
Marble & Limestone	82 645 691	81 259 929	80 027 632	69 117 988
Granite	62 235 111	72 191 542	65 593 661	31 470 417
<b>Total rough</b>	<b>147 277 094</b>	<b>156 847 523</b>	<b>148 862 674</b>	<b>104 657 495</b>
Setts, curbstones and flagstones	63 535 679	70 179 787	57 388 184	42 381 351
Worked stone	86 305 214	115 727 221	109 428 491	227 763 027
Worked slate	3 416 890	3 322 616	2 855 584	4 413 148
<b>Total worked</b>	<b>153 257 783</b>	<b>189 229 624</b>	<b>169 672 259</b>	<b>274 557 526</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300 534 877</b>	<b>346 077 147</b>	<b>318 534 933</b>	<b>379 215 021</b>

Portugal is an old and important natural stone producer and exporter – 380 M USD in 2015 (roughly over 70% of it as finished products) being, on a per capita basis, the largest world exporter. The country's stone exports have a high added value, its average price being one of (if not) the largest in the world.

The Portuguese natural stone production is diversified, ranging from marble and limestone quarried in the South and Centre of the country to granites in the Centre and North of Portugal. The country also has an important stone manufacturing base, with factories located near Lisbon (Pero Pinheiro) and in the main quarrying centres. The country is also a manufacturer of specialized equipment and machinery for the stone industry.

The natural stone industry is fragmented, being composed mostly of family owned businesses.

All these factors (abundant, diversified sources, widespread know-how, relatively low capital intensive) contributed along millennia to a stone culture in the country – Portugal has the largest concentration of pre-historic stone monuments in Europe and natural stone is used in virtually every single house in Portugal.

The country is well placed to be a trade platform between Europe, Africa and the Americas (with all of which Portugal has important historical, cultural and economic ties), with good transport infrastructure (notably the Sines deep water harbour and an excellent road network) and competitive specialized manpower.



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