

## **Dance schools in Portugal – Project**

Since my internship was held in an NGO, which despite having its headquarters in Paris, has a second office in Greece, I decided to carry out my project in order to help this NGO to establish a better relationship with Portugal and to obtain more information about the world of dance in our country. That way, I was able to use my knowledge in International Relations, General Principles of Economics and in International Organizations obtained from the degree of Languages for International Relations.

This project consists of an analysis of several parameters of dance schools spread throughout Portuguese territory, having as main objective the understanding of the level of development that the current schools present.

Since my internship allowed me a closer contact with dance schools, I decided to take advantage of the connection in order to develop the project. At the end of this project, it will be delivered to the host institution and continued by the trainees who will come to this institution in the future.

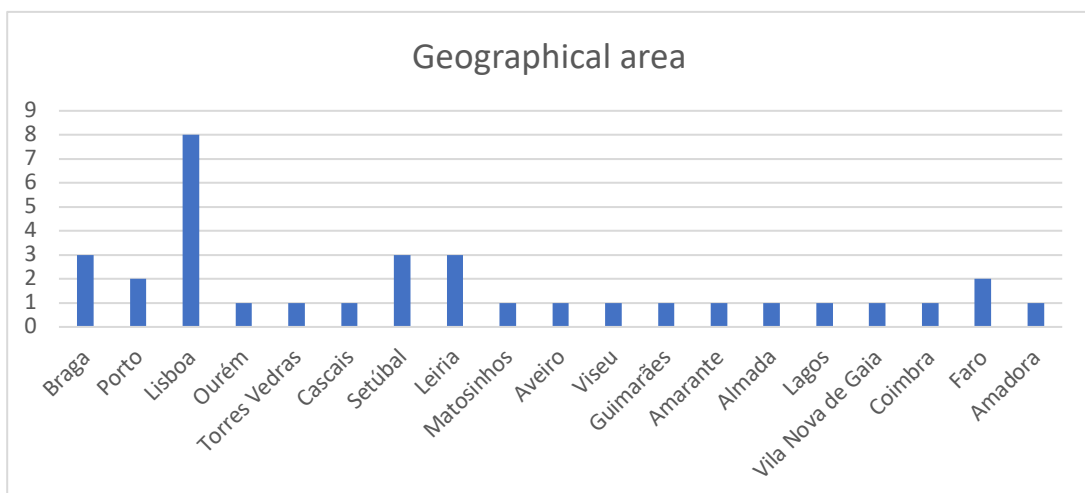
The first phase of this project went through its organization, choosing the tools that would be used and how they would be useful for the final product and what type of documents would be needed for all the data to be organized. After establishing these first steps, I developed a small and simple questionnaire with the help of the President of CID, Prof. Dr. Alkis Raftis. This questionnaire contains 10 quick answer questions, of which only 8 will be used for analysis, as the first two questions are merely to identify the school and its director, but this data will not be revealed. After the implementation of this questionnaire and having collected the names of some dance schools present in the Ergani database, I began to put into practice my idea and to do intense research of the information. Regarding research, I resorted to various methods of data collection, beginning my qualitative research, in which its basis was to obtain data through short calls to schools and internet research. As usual, whatever technique a researcher uses to collect information, this will always result in greater amounts of information than the initial one, and in this project that's exactly what happened. To have real data in this research, I made use of search techniques, through existing websites or even social media, but always ended up having to resort to a small interview

with the school director so that they could help me complete the missing information in the questionnaire, which would help facilitate collecting essential information.

To analyze the data collected, I separated, first, the questions from the questionnaire and made graphics, so that the information became clearer and easier to compare. That way, in the following paragraphs, I will develop my personal analysis of each question of the questionnaire, in order to reach a concrete conclusion about the development of the Portuguese dance schools analyzed.

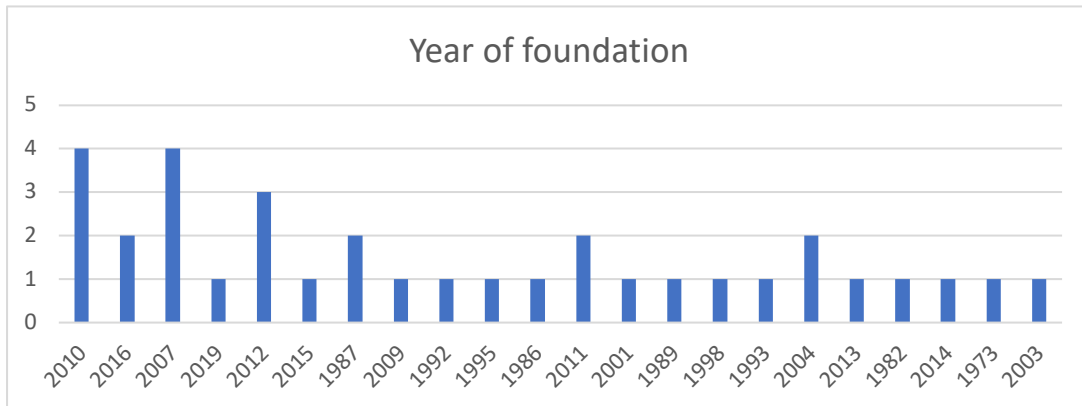
In a sample of 87 schools collected on the Ergani data platform, it was possible to complete the profile of only 34 of them over 3 weeks. The information collected differs between geographical area, dance styles taught, the year of foundation, among others that will be presented below.

As for the geographical area, it is possible to observe in the chart that there is a greater concentration of dance schools in the Lisbon area, since 8 schools are based in this area while the geographical areas with the second largest number of schools are in Braga, Setúbal and Leiria, but only with 3 schools in each. All other zones visible in this chart display only 1 or 2 schools per zone.

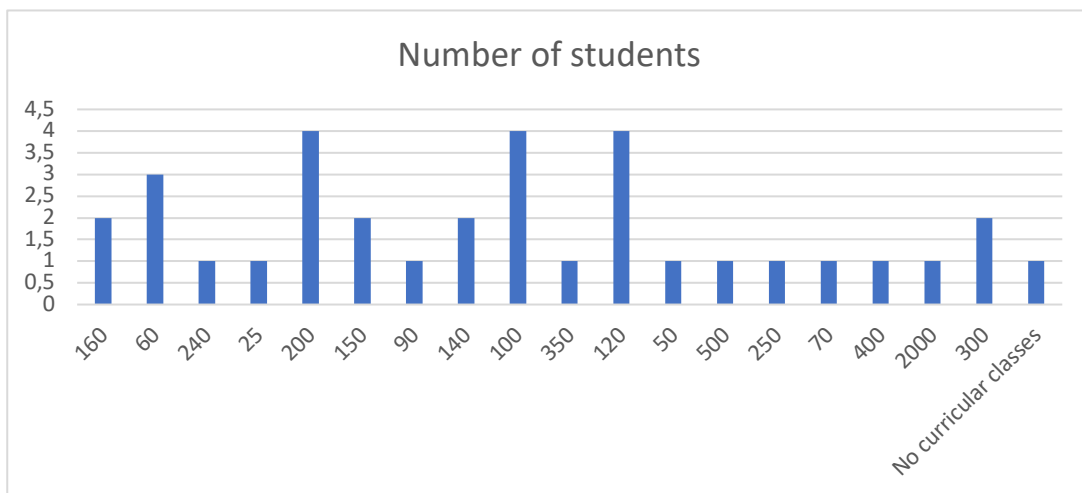


For the year of foundation, we found 22 different years. Among these 22 results we are found with a division between the last centuries, being able to divide in the period from 1973 to 1998, where 10 dance schools were founded, while in the 21st century, in the period between 2001 and 2019, 24 schools were created,

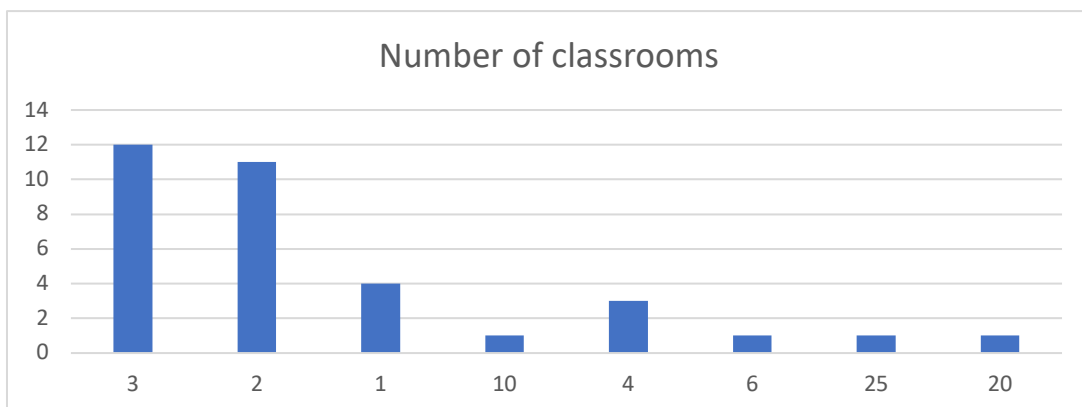
making more than 2/3 of the sample under study schools with less than 22 years of existence.



For this study I also thought it would be essential to question the directors about the estimate of the number of students who belong to each school. As this information usually is not found in any social media or website, I used phone calls in order to have a closer contact with the directors of the schools, which allowed me to become informed and understand the loss that occurred in this sector due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In almost all the schools I contacted I was faced with the reality that the pandemic we experienced caused many of the students to end up giving up dance classes altogether, causing some of the schools to be less than 50% of the students who would have attended their classes in the year before the pandemic. This way, it is possible to visualize that the estimates vary between the 50 students and the 2000 students, but there is a peculiar case in which a studied school stopped teaching dance classes, because it didn't have students due to the pandemic, but remained open and is now used for activities with special guests or by teachers who wish to rent the space to teach a class to their own students.

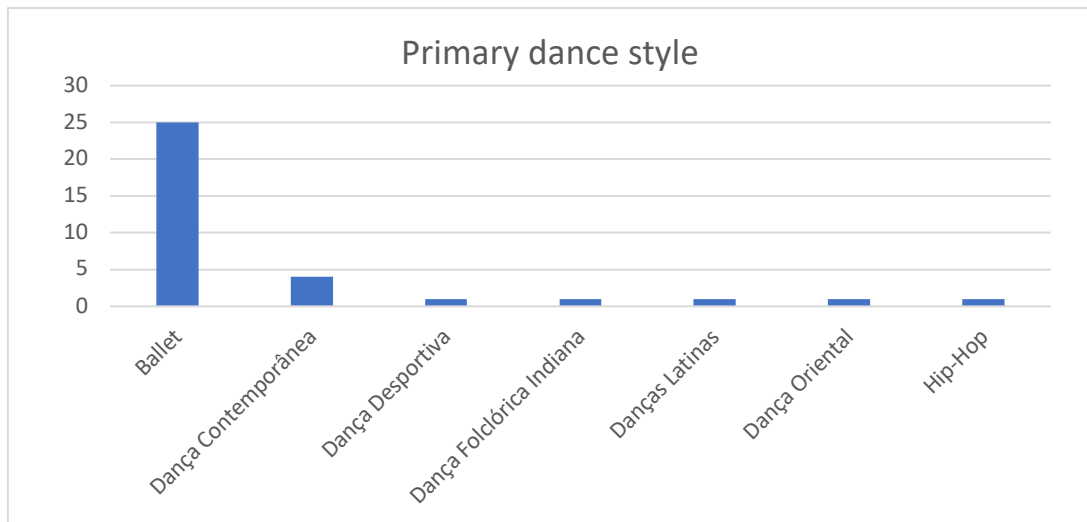


Given the number of students presented above, it also seemed interesting to me to recognize the space used by them, as well as in the graph it is visible that 23 of the schools have about 2 or 3 classrooms, while in the 11 schools this number varies between 1 and 25.

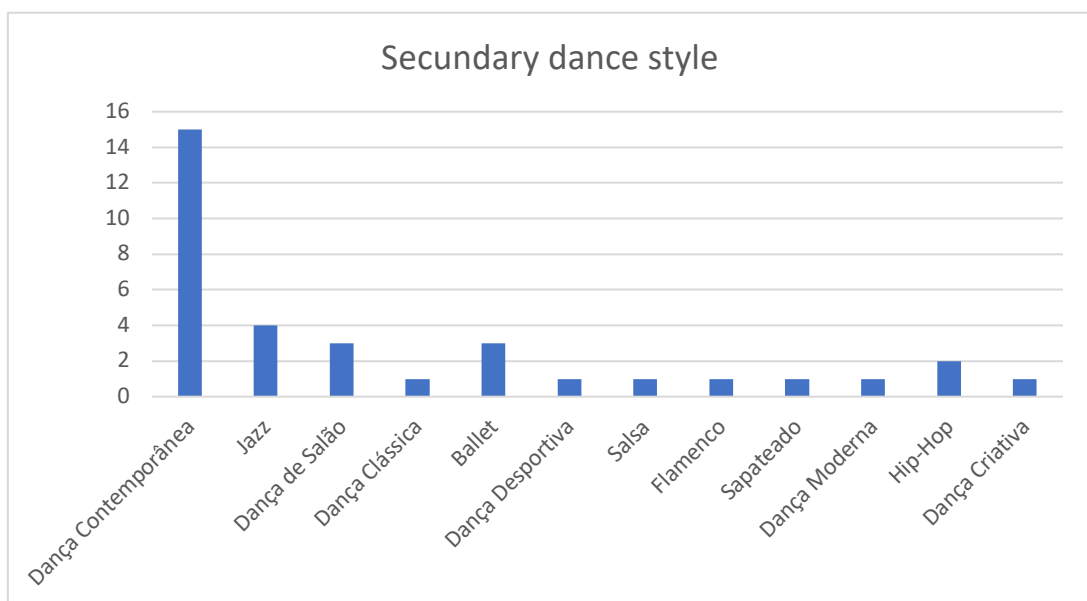


In the following three graphics are presented all dance styles taught in the 34 schools, but I divided these same styles into small categories, these being the primary dance style, the secondary dance style and also the other dances that can be found in schools.

According to the graph relative to the primary dance style, it is clearly visible that ballet is the predominant style, since it is the main style of dance taught in 25 schools, being followed by contemporary dance in 4 schools and other styles that are only taught in one school each.

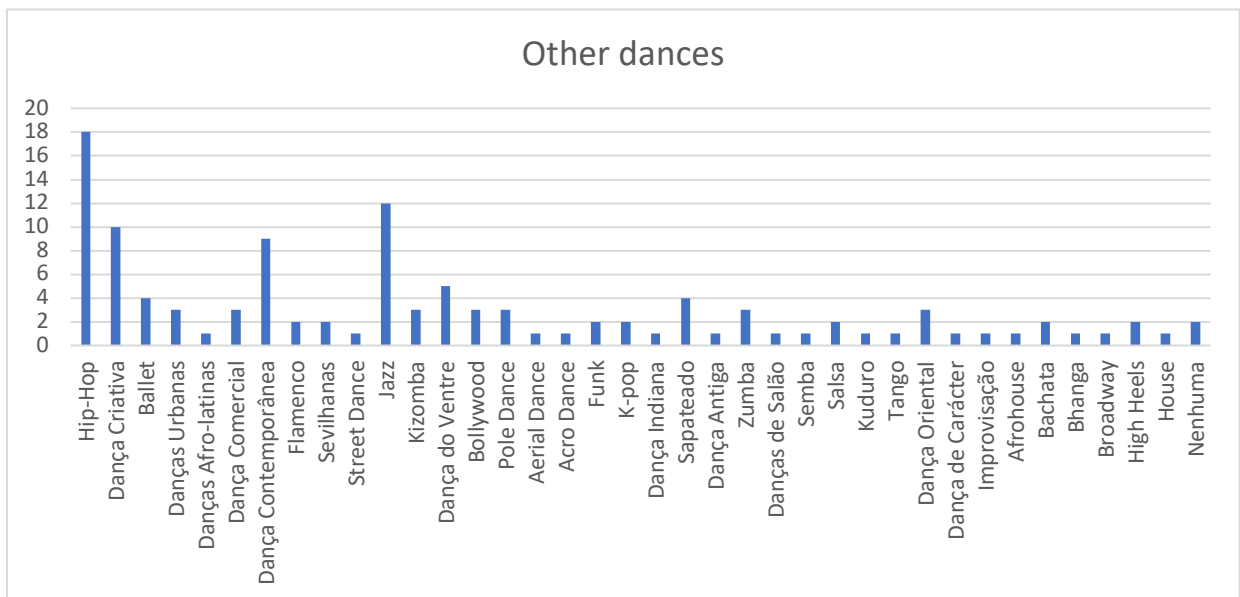


For the secondary dance style, we have already come across a greater tendency towards contemporary dance, which is taught in 15 schools, followed by jazz, ballroom dances and ballet, as well as many well-known ones.

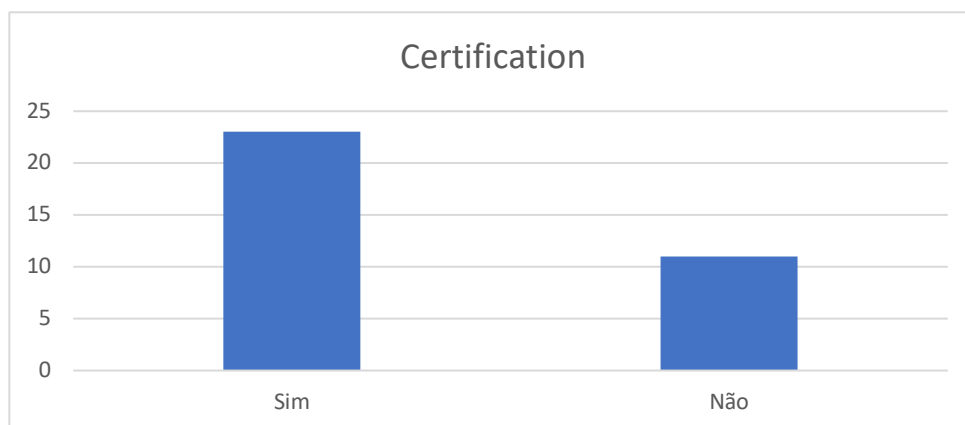


Among all these dances, we can also highlight the dance styles taught in smaller classes. In this topic, if we look at the graphic, we were able to distinguish several dance styles, some more common and more known than others. As a style most taught at this point, we find hip-hop in 18 schools, followed by jazz that is found in 12 schools and creative dance, found in 10 schools and contemporary dance in 9 schools. In addition to these styles, which are the ones with the highest turnout,

we also find 34 other styles, very differentiated and that add different rhythms to these schools.



Finally, directors were asked about the certification offered by their schools. It was mainly focused on international organizations such as the CID or the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD). In this question it can be seen that more than 50% offer one of these certifications, leaving only 11 schools that do not have any type of official certification, but very affectionately, always present a diploma to their students after the end of their studies.



With the conclusion of my study project, I look at the beginning of it and I have a full notion that, although its object of study is something for which I have always had a fascination, I had almost no information before of how dance schools throughout Portugal were developed. This research and analysis, together

with the internship at CID, allowed me to expand my horizons and better understand the world of dance, because what we see at the time of the shows, in which the curtain opens and the magic begins, is the result of a lot of dedication on the part of students, teachers and also the administration, which faces obstacles every day, but in the end it allows them to remember why they chose this art to represent.

Research and report done by Inês da Silva Oliveira

CID intern, summer 2022