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## **PERFORMING ARTS PARTICIPATION IN SMALL URBAN CENTRES: THE THEATRE OF VILA REAL**

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### **Resumo:**

Tal como sucede na maioria dos países desenvolvidos, em Portugal, mesmo em pequenos centros urbanos, a oferta de artes performativas tem vindo a aumentar, devido à construção de novas estruturas culturais públicas. O elemento crucial para a sobrevivência e alcance da missão das instituições culturais, em especial das mais recentes, reside na captação e manutenção de audiências. O principal objectivo deste artigo é indagar da influência de variáveis relacionadas com o perfil social e económico na presença e frequência de artes do espectáculo, tomando como exemplo o Teatro de Vila Real. Para o efeito são estimados modelos microeconóméticos de escolha discreta. Os resultados indicam que um aumento da audiência de artes performativas está, sobretudo, relacionado com a elevação do nível educacional e a oferta de um serviço de proximidade.

**Palavras-chave:** Cultura, artes de espectáculo, participação, microeconomia.

**Códigos JEL:** C25, D12, Z11

### **Abstract:**

Like in most developed countries, in Portugal, even in small urban centres, the supply of performing arts has been growing, due to the construction of new public cultural facilities. However, the main factor determining the survival and sustainable success of cultural institutions, especially to the new entrants, is their ability to capture and keep audiences. The main aim of this paper is to explore the influence of a set of socio-economic variables in the awareness and attendance at performing arts, taking as example the Theatre of Vila Real. In order to achieve this aim, a micro-econometric model of discrete choice is used. The results indicate that the increase in audiences for the performing arts is primarily related to the public's educational level and to the proximity of the facilities.

**Keywords:** Culture, performing arts, participation, microeconomics.

**JEL Codes:** C25, D12, Z11

## 1. Introduction

In Portugal, like in other countries, in spite of the growing public support to performing arts, by both the state and local entities, there are still great disparities in its consumption according to different social groups and regions.

During the last 40 years, and as a consequence of the pioneering work by Baumol & Bowen (1966), the empirical evidence shows that the attendants for the performing arts have higher incomes, are better educated, with a high social status, and that both supply and demand for culture are more intense in urban areas with larger populations.

Based on the new theory of consumer choice, Stigler & Becker (1977) suggest that personal satisfaction resulting from the consuming of arts depends not only on the price, the income and taste, but also on factors such as the individual's previous artistic experience, knowledge of arts, education level and family background. The higher the experience and familiarity of the people with arts, the higher is their rate of satisfaction resulting from a certain level of arts' consumption.

Recent literature on performing arts attendance following an econometric approach (e.g. Gray, 2003; Borgonovi, 2004; Favaro & Frateschi 2007; Seaman<sup>1</sup>, 2008) appears to confirm prior evidence, highlighting education, income and residence in urban and metropolitan areas as significant demand determinants.

In the Portuguese case, mainly as a result of recent high levels of public investment in theatres, cinemas and other cultural spaces, the supply of cultural products and services in many small towns and cities has been growing and widening, in contrast to the marked tendency in big urban centres – particularly in Lisbon and, to a lesser degree, in Oporto – for cultural infrastructures, facilities and operators to become more concentrated (Fortuna *et al.*, 1999). Thus new cultural infrastructures have appeared, at different moments, in many of the smaller urban centres of the

country. One such example is the establishment of the Theatre of Vila Real (TVR), a small municipality with 50.000 inhabitants located in an inland and low density region, Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, which is characterised by a development lag comparatively to Portuguese Coastal areas. The TVR had its official opening in March 2004, and occupies an area of 9.600 m<sup>2</sup>. It is equipped with diversified spaces, ranging from auditoriums (big, small and open air), a games and play room (*ludoteca*), a bar with live music performances, a bar-gallery, foyer, exhibition room, rehearsal room and storage. Performances in a wide range of the arts (theatre, music, dance and opera) take place in the auditoriums. The cultural events provided in the bar are mainly of musical nature.

The opening of the TVR has created opportunities for the city and region to develop a new centrality and capacity for attracting people. The TVR has become, in a short period of time, a public space for social meetings or, using Fortuna's words (1999), a "place for the public expression of social life". In a way, it can also become an important ingredient in the construction of the Vila Real's identity, of the collective self-esteem of its inhabitants and of the way they and their city present themselves externally.

Once cultural infrastructures have been created, the immediate issue is how to attract and maintain audiences with different social and economic profiles. For an institution that provides cultural products or services, either having a public or private organisational structure, the determining element in its survival will be the existence of a public, since it needs to generate revenues both from ticket sales to clients, and to obtain public or private sponsorship (Escaleira, 2001). Without audiences the organisation will be unable to fulfil its basic mission.

The attraction of new audiences, while maintaining the existing ones requires greater investments, as in the last decades, due to the exponential growth of information technology, there have been changes in people's lifestyles, tastes<sup>2</sup>, attitudes, forms of cultural

<sup>1</sup> This paper includes a comprehensive revue of empirical studies on demand for performing arts. For Seaman (2008) during the last four decades, in spite of the contribution of sociologists, psychologists, marketing experts, as well economists, to the analysis of demand and participation for the performing arts, this remains an issue deserving further economic research.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, as arts education is now given less importance in the national educational system (basic, secondary and even university), there is some fear that the younger generation, as a consequence of the shifts both in demographic trends and cultural tastes, will be unable to fill the gap resulting from the decreasing number of adults who constitute both performers and audiences in the contemporary market for cultural products and services.

participation, and even in the methods by which tickets are purchased (Bernestein, 2007). These changes challenge cultural organizations to define a new vision of their business, giving a greater emphasis to the relationship with present and potential attendance in a way to provide customers' current and future needs and preferences. The potential range of the latter suggests that organisations should determine the products/services they intend to supply based on coherent plans and strategies for their artistic and public missions. Thus, they should conceive and execute marketing plans that imply, among other things, undertaking market research, clearly identifying target markets, building a readily identifiable brand, using new communication technologies, and offering services appropriate to each of the market segments.

Overall, in order to fulfil the essential conditions of the organisation's mission, the main aim has to be the presentation of high quality events, assuming that the ultimate objective of the artistic experience is the communication between artists and the audience. Without audiences there is no justification for the existence of either the arts or artists. Effective marketing is an absolute prerequisite for success and, to achieve a consistent and solid success, managers of cultural facilities have to continuously supervise their market environment (both supply and demand) and be aware of current and future market preferences.

For the new entrants and relatively inexperienced cultural institutions, such as the TVR case, it is particularly important to build a correct perception of the extent to which it has penetrated the market, i.e. to discover how well-known it is in its area of influence, by whom it is acknowledged and attended by and which physical facilities and products and services are most valued.

Having in mind the literature review and that the cultural attendance by the consumers is a sequential and learning process that starts by the awareness of the physical infrastructure and ends with the attendance at the performing arts events, this research analyses the influence of people's social and economic characteristics on the TVR awareness, presence, and attendance. Using a micro-

econometric analysis approach, its main objective is to explain the differences in behaviour between the current and potential users of the TVR, as reflected in variables related with socio-economic profile, place of residence and experience in frequenting performing arts events.

The paper is organized as follows: section 2 contains the data and model; section 3 presents the results; and, finally, section 4 includes some final remarks.

## 2. Data and model

The data used in this study were collected in 2007 via 1,000 telephone<sup>3</sup> questionnaires for a study entitled "Theatre of Vila Real 2007 – The Views of the Region's Inhabitants" (Rebelo *et al.*, 2007). The sample universe was constituted by people aged 16 or over, living in houses with home telephone connections and in the municipalities included within the previously defined geographical area of influence of the TVR. Those contacted totalled 1,000 individuals, selected using the share method, applied in two phases. Firstly, shares by municipalities were imposed, and afterwards, for each home, shares defined by gender and age were used to select the individuals asked to respond. The final shares were constituted based on the information collected on the last population census made by Portugal's National Institute for Statistics (INE, 2001), maintaining the proportion by municipality.

The 1,000 questionnaires were applied across the various municipalities according to each municipality's resident population in relation to the total population of the TVR's area of influence. Table 1 presents the distribution of the sample across the various municipalities, in percentage and absolute terms, as well as the respective maximum measurable sample error at the 95% confidence level (CL).

<sup>3</sup> The telephone interviews are much more advantageous for the administration of short and simple questionnaire: besides being much cheaper than personal interviews, they facilitate the collection of standardized answers (Lavrakas, 1998).

**TABLE 1**  
**Distribution of the sample across municipalities of TVR's area**

Counties	Resident population	Percentage in the sample	Sample observations	Max. error (%) 95% CL
Alijó	14320	5.9	59	12.8
Chaves	46667	18.0	180	7.3
Lamego	28081	11.6	116	9.1
Mesão Frio	4926	2.0	20	21.7
Mirandela	25819	10.6	106	9.5
Murça	6752	2.8	28	18.6
Peso da Régua	18832	7.8	78	11.1
Sabrosa	7032	2.9	29	18.2
Santa Marta de Penaguião	8569	3.5	35	16.5
Valpaços	19512	8.0	80	10.9
Vila Pouca de Aguiar	14998	6.2	62	12.5
Vila Real	49957	20.6	207	6.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>245465</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>3.1</b>

**Note:** Rebelo *et al.* (2007: 33).

The selection criterion used originated a total sample with a maximum statistical error of 3.1%, at 95% confidence level, which corresponds to an acceptable degree of precision for the analysis of the information concerning the resident population in the area of influence of the TVR.

In a second phase, the sample was formed by selecting the homes to be contacted in each of the municipalities. To do that, shares defined by gender and age were applied, according to the respective proportions of these variables in each of the sample municipalities in the Census of 2001 (INE, 2001). The choice of those to be surveyed in each sub-sample, by gender and age, was consistently made in a random fashion, for each of the municipalities. The selection of the houses to be interviewed was likewise made randomly.

Table 2 shows the distribution of those surveyed in the total sample, by gender (52% female and 48% male) and age groups. The respondents have an average age of 45.3 with a range between 16 (minimum) and 86 (maximum) years old, with a relative dispersion of 41% (coefficient of variation). The modal class is the one corresponding to 41-65 years, and the groups between 26 and 65 years old represent 60.4% of the sample.

The questionnaires provided dichotomist information on the variables "Awareness of the TVR", "Presence at the TVR", "Frequency of attendance at performing arts events (theatre, dance and music)" and "Participation in the Events of the Live Music Bar", as well as on respondents' social-economic profile, among others. Table 3 presents the statistical data on the variables considered in the econometric models.

**TABLE 2**  
Distribution of the sample by gender and age group

	Number	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	520	52.0
Male	480	48.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age group (years)</b>		
16 to 18	85	8.5
19 to 25	87	8.7
26 to 40	240	24.0
41 to 65	364	36.4
More than 65	224	22.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>

**Note:** Rebelo *et al.* (2007: 34).

**TABLE 3**  
Variables used in the econometric model

Variable	Description	Answers 1	
		Number	%
Y <sub>1</sub>	Awareness	633	63.3
Y <sub>2</sub>	Presence	254	25.4
Y <sub>3a</sub>	Theatre	140	14
Y <sub>3b</sub>	Dance	77	7.7
Y <sub>3c</sub>	Music	132	13.2
Y <sub>3d</sub>	Live music bar	92	9.2
Y <sub>4</sub>	Frequency	206	20.6
X <sub>1</sub>	Gender	480	48
X <sub>2</sub>	Children	288	28
X <sub>3</sub>	Age	Years old (average of 45.3)	
X <sub>4</sub>	Student	888	88.8
X <sub>4a</sub>	Self-employment	146	14.6
X <sub>5</sub>	Professional status	99	9.9
X <sub>6</sub>	Educational level	= 1 if has primary education incomplete; 2 if has primary education completed; 3 if has secondary education completed; (...); 9 if is holder of Master's degree or PhD (average of 4)	
X <sub>7</sub>	Internet access	418	41.8
X <sub>8</sub>	Attendance elsewhere	275	27.5
X <sub>9</sub>	Proximity	Distance in kilometres between Vila Real and the municipality where the respondent is resident (average of 47 km)	

Table 4 includes statistical information concerning to the 207 respondents living in the municipality of Vila Real. If compared with the total sample (Table 3), we observe that these respondents have a higher rate of awareness and attendance of the TVR. About 63.3% of the population aged 16 or over has already heard of the TVR, which is a significant number, taking into account the short period in which it has been functioning. Looking specifically at Vila Real, the proportion is overwhelming (96.6%), indicating that this cultural site has developed an undeniable visibility and importance to the town's inhabitants.

The proportion of people actually attending the TVR is much lower: only 40% of the people who are aware of the theatre's existence have actually visited it. For Vila Real residents this proportion reaches 73%. Ranking the attendance by type of event, in the total sample we have theatre (14%), music (13.2%), live music bar (9.2%) and dance (7.7%), with a total frequency of 20.6%. To those living in Vila Real,

theatre and music have the same weight (47.3%) and are followed by live music bar (36.2%) and dance (29%), with a frequency of 65.7%.

Considering the explanatory variables, the main differences between the total sample and the residents in Vila Real are in the type of employment (self-employment), professional status (higher ranking), educational level (more educated), and internet access (higher level). The attendance level elsewhere is similar.

The maps 1 and 2 show the spatial distribution<sup>4</sup> of the awareness and attendance at the TVR. Predictably, Vila Real dominates. Nevertheless, there are both continuities and discontinuities in the distribution of awareness and attendance between different municipalities in the areas surrounding Vila Real. Basically, both variables (awareness and attendance) diminish as the distance from Vila Real increases, rather as if centrifugal forces were making awareness of and access to cultural infrastructure more difficult.

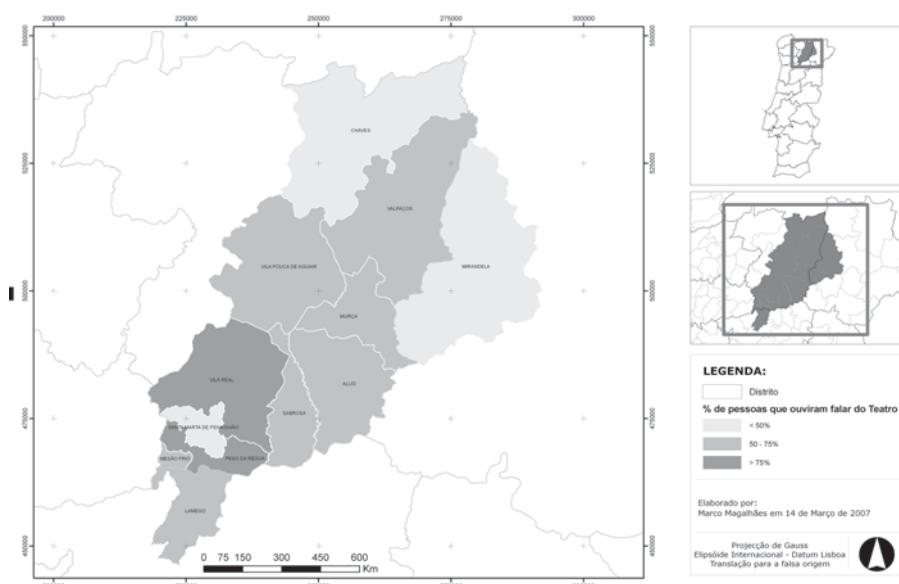
TABLE 4  
Statistical information of Vila Real (207 individuals)

Variable		Description	Answers <sup>1</sup> (%)
$Y_1$	Awareness	= 1 if has already heard about TVR; 0 if not	96.6
$Y_2$	Presence	= 1 if has visited TVR; 0 if not	75.8
$Y_{3a}$	Theatre	= 1 if has attended theatre at TVR; 0 if not	47.3
$Y_{3b}$	Dance	= 1 if has attended dance at TVR; 0 if not	29
$Y_{3c}$	Music	= 1 if has attended music concert at TVR; 0 if not	47.3
$Y_{3d}$	Live Music Bar	= 1 if has attended live music at TVR bar; 0 if not	36.2
$Y_4$	Frequency	= 1 if frequency of cultural events is positive; 0 if not	65.7
$X_1$	Gender	= 1 if is male; 0 if not	47.3
$X_2$	Children	= 1 has children <12 years old; 0 if not	28.5
$X_3$	Age	Years old (average of 45.1)	
$X_4$	Student	= 1 if is not student; 0 if student	85.5
$X_{4a}$	Self-employment	= 1 if is self-employed; 0 if not	7.2
$X_5$	Professional status	= 1 if holder of high ranking intellectual/scientific post; 0 if not	17.9
$X_6$	Educational level	= 1 if has primary education incomplete; 2 if has primary education completed; 3 if has secondary education completed; (...); 9 if is holder of Master's degree or PhD (average of 5.5)	
$X_7$	Internet access	= 1 if has access to internet; 0 if not	58.4
$X_8$	Attendance elsewhere	= 1 if attends such events elsewhere; 0 if not	30.9
$X_9$	Proximity	Distance in kilometres between Vila Real and the municipality where the respondent is resident (0 for all respondents )	

<sup>4</sup> The distance between the municipality of residence and Vila Real ranges between a minimum of 0 km and a maximum of 80 km, with an average of 46.6 km and a coefficient of variation of 73.9%.

MAP 1

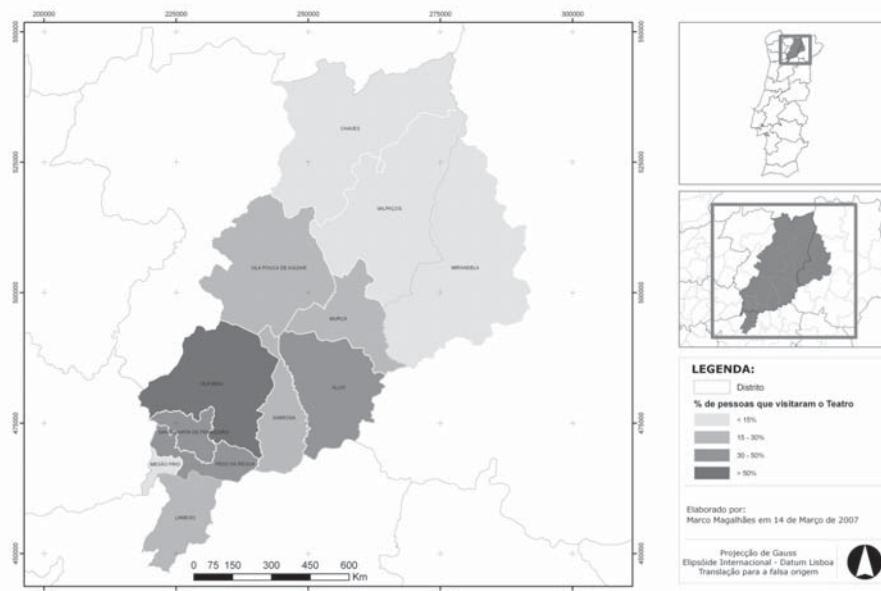
## Spatial distribution of the TVR awareness



**Note:** Rebelo et al. (2007: 38).

MAP 2

## Spatial distribution of the TVR presence



**Note:** Rebelo et al. (2007: 38).

Given that the main aim is to know if any of the explanatory variables ( $X$ ) referred to in Table 3 influence individuals' awareness of the TVR, their having visited the TVR, or their having attended events at the TVR (the dependent variables,  $Y$ ), the problem has to be solved using a binary choice model that employs categorical answers (i.e.  $Y = 1$  or  $Y = 0$ ); more specifically, the probit or logit models<sup>5</sup> (Greene, 2003):

$$\text{Prob } (Y = 1) = F(X, \beta) \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Prob } (Y = 0) = 1 - F(X, \beta) \quad (2)$$

The set of parameters  $\beta$  reflects the impact of changes in  $X$  on the probability of  $Y$  occurring; however, the marginal effect is not quantified in a direct way, as it is in the case of linear models (Greene, 2003).

In this paper, we present the estimation results obtained from using the probit model, in which:

$$\text{Prob } (Y = 1) = \Phi(\beta' X) \quad (3)$$

The  $\Phi(\cdot)$  is a commonly used notation for the standard normal distribution. A positive (negative) coefficient indicates that the probability change in the same (opposite) sense than the explanatory variable. If the coefficient is statistically non significant it means that changing the explanatory variable has no impact on the probability occurrence of the dependent variable.

### 3. Results

Table 5 shows the results of the estimations of the probit model for the different dependent variables. Each of the seven estimations<sup>6</sup> has overall significance

**TABLE 5**  
Results of the Probit model estimations

	Awareness	Presence	Theatre	Dance	Music	Live music bar	Frequency
Constant	-0.27 (-1.07)	-1.15* (-4.22)	-1.31* (-4.28)	-2.11 (-5.63)	-1.12* (-3.48)	-0.84* (-2.29)	-0.83* (-2.91)
$X_1$ – Gender	0.16** (1.72)	0.06 (0.54)	-0.20 (-1.59)	0.09 (0.60)	0.05 (0.37)	-0.01 (-0.08)	-0.19 (-1.59)
$X_2$ – Children	0.07 (0.65)	0.20 (1.56)	-0.01 (-0.10)	0.05 (0.30)	-0.10 (-0.70)	-0.38* (-2.21)	0.09 (0.71)
$X_3$ – Age	0.00 (0.80)	0.00 (0.70)	0.00 (1.13)	0.00 (0.76)	-0.00 (-1.31)	-0.02* (-3.95)	-0.00 (-0.84)
$X_4$ – Student	0.11 (0.60)	-0.06 (-0.29)	-0.19 (-0.89)	0.24 (0.92)	0.19 (0.87)	0.49* (1.98)	0.00 (0.02)
$X_{4a}$ – Self-employment	0.15 (1.21)	-0.20 (-1.36)	-0.11 (-0.66)	-1.20* (-2.76)	-0.51* (-2.18)	-0.15 (-0.60)	-0.23 (-1.43)
$X_5$ – Professional status	-0.26 (-1.08)	-0.09 (-0.47)	0.29 (1.53)	0.21 (0.95)	0.03 (0.16)	0.10 (0.44)	0.14 (0.71)
$X_6$ – Educational level	0.22* (6.80)	0.23* (6.77)	0.13* (3.58)	0.13* (2.75)	0.16* (3.92)	0.18* (3.48)	0.19* (5.21)
$X_7$ – Internet access	0.11 (0.90)	0.36* (2.39)	0.38* (2.15)	0.25 (1.18)	0.18 (0.97)	0.04 (0.19)	0.34* (2.11)
$X_8$ – Attendance elsewhere	0.16 (1.42)	0.15 (1.25)	0.24** (1.83)	0.24 (1.59)	0.21 (1.51)	0.13 (0.83)	0.21** (1.63)
$X_9$ – Proximity	-0.02* (-9.35)	-0.04* (-13.62)	-0.03* (-10.12)	-0.03* (-7.32)	-0.04* (10.10)	-0.04* (-8.58)	-0.04* (-12.62)
Chi-squared (Signifi. level)	252.8 (0.00)	464.3 (0.00)	265.7 (0.00)	167.4 (0.00)	291.3 (0.00)	250.2 (0.00)	414.30 (0.00)

**Note:** Statistic t Student between parenthesis, excepting the significance level of Chi-squared statistic; \* and \*\* indicate statistical significance of the parameter at 5% and 10% significance level, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Although the two models provide different values for the regression coefficients, the signal and statistical significance of the parameter allow similar conclusions.

<sup>6</sup> Having in mind the potential consequences on the results (non-consistent regression estimators) originated by measure errors on the order variable "educational level", the same models were estimated assuming as dummy variables: primary education uncompleted, primary education completed, secondary education completed, higher education. The results (sign and significance of the regression parameters) and the conclusions were very similar to the models included in the text.

(the Chi-square has a high value), even though in each of the seven, the majority of the parameters, taken individually, is non-significant, according to the values of the t statistic.

According to the sign and significance of the respective parameters, we can infer that gender difference do not influence attendance at arts events, though male individuals have a higher awareness of the TVR's existence.

Having primary school-aged children does not seem to constrain people from attending performing arts events, with the exception of the live music in the TVR's bar, which is less attended by parents with younger children. Similar conclusion is obtained in relation to the variable "age", which has only statistical significance, with negative signal, in the model with dependent variable "live music bar", i.e., the older are the people the lower is the probability to attend the TVR's live music bar.

When compared to other categories among the individuals surveyed, it appears that the only distinction attributable to students is with regard to their greater attendance at live music bar events, once to all other events the parameter is statistically non-significant. This result shows that the TVR has been unable to attract students to its other performing arts offerings, in spite of the large number of students living in the city, most likely attending the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, whose main campus is situated in Vila Real.

Although the coefficient associated with the variable "self-employed worker" is negative with regard to all types of events, only dance and musical ones have a statistically significant coefficient; that is, the probability of this category of worker attending any performing arts events is lower than for other categories.

Having high-level intellectual/scientific employment do not affects attendance at theatrical events, with the corresponding coefficients of all events having no statistical significance.

As for education, there is no doubt that there exists a clear relationship between formal education and attendance at artistic events: the higher the former, the greater the latter.

Those individuals whose responses indicated that they had internet access were more likely to be present and to frequent all events at the TVR. Taken separately, these respondents showed evidence of greater attendance at theatre events.

Although the variable "attendance at events elsewhere" reflects, *a priori*, diversified and pre-existing cultural behaviour, in the case of the TVR this is the only variable that has a positive influence (with a coefficient that was significant at the 10% level) on attendance at theatrical events (in particular) and on attendance at the entire range of the TVR's cultural offerings.

The sign and significance of the coefficients relating to the variable "distance in kilometres between Vila Real and the municipality where respondent is resident" clearly indicate that the farther the cultural supply is, the weaker the participation, confirming that the supply of cultural activities represents, undoubtedly, a proximity service<sup>7</sup>.

#### 4. Final remarks

Who is aware of the TVR and attends its events? This was the empirical question with which this research started. The survey results are clear: in the defined area of influence, constituted by the municipality of Vila Real and 11 other municipalities located around it, there is no doubt that as one moves progressively further away from Vila Real, fewer people know of the existence and attend the TVR.

Taking into account the econometric results, with regard to the social-economic profiles, the conclusions do not vary significantly from those obtained in other studies of cultural goods and services (e.g., Borgonovi, 2004), especially those relating to live performing arts events. More specifically, when we try to evaluate the impact of key social-economic traits on the decision to attend the cultural activities promoted by the TVR, we find that the main determining variables are their academic level and the distance between their place of residence and the TVR, with the remaining variables having impact in none or only in some of the events. That is, the rise in the audiences of performing arts events is strongly influenced by the academic level and by the supplying of a proximity service.

<sup>7</sup> Similar result is obtained if the quantitative variable "distance" is replaced by a dummy variable that assumes the value 1 if the respondent is resident in Vila Real and 0 if not.

Based on the analysis developed in the paper, it is possible to infer some guidelines that can help to consolidate the TVR's marketing efforts and to fully achieve its mission and become a cultural facility with spillover effects and a relevant importance for regional economic development. Among these guidelines we would emphasise: (1) the importance of policies aiming to promote greater knowledge of the TVR outside Vila Real, with a view not only to gaining greater regional – i.e. not only local – visibility, but also consolidating established audiences; (2) the necessity of developing a strategy of consolidating the TVR's public and the attraction of new attendees, with particular focus on students and young people, but without forgetting all the age groups of the target population; and (3) the importance of establishing a networked and cooperative effort linking cultural and educational institutions in the immediate vicinity of the TVR and beyond, i.e. by creating scale and scope economies. In summary, a strong marketing strategy, more and better network efforts and cooperation, and an intensive focus on educational initiatives seem to constitute the three central pillars of any future cultural programme.

In line with the major lines of thought underpinning current EU efforts to establish a dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy, future analysis of the socio-economic effects of the TVR must focus on the existing and potential synergies between culture, knowledge and economic development, and the potential that the corresponding facilities and institutions have to promote more innovative and creative services and activities, capable of generating spillover effects. This view is emphasised in the strategic plan for Portugal's Northern Region to the year 2015, in which "culture has a well-established and significant role in the production of territorial identities and the generating of social interaction, in the production of new logics of innovation, and in the promotion of change and competitiveness" (CCDRN, 2006: 44). The linkage between cultural activities and local development is certainly an area deserving future attention and further research.

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