

## 2.3. Music festivals as a factor of regional development: A pre-study.

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### Abstract

In my paper I will give a brief point of view which I consider important to study. Having in mind cultural and touristic contexts, music and arts festivals are very important for the development of smaller regions, mostly due to the increase of tourism in a specific time of the year. Successful cases of this model include the Festival Paredes de Coura in Minho area and Bons Sons in Cem Soldos, Tomar. But, more interesting than these cases, is to see this happening in even more smaller contexts, in Portugal. I seek to present the most important developments in this small venue, explain the benefits of festivals in Portugal, as well as give some good examples of the specific cases at hand. This is a pre-study.<sup>2</sup>

**Keywords:** festivals, festivalisation, music scenes, small venues.

### 1. Introduction

With this paper I intend to present a study about this new “boom festival” conception in Portugal, in the last 15 years, and the impacts caused by these events in smaller regions of Portugal. The data presented here is mostly empiric, obtained in news, articles, reviews, and some field work done by me, and theoretical, with some revision of literature. Although I’m presenting some facts and content about this now, this study is not yet completed. Also, the reason why this is not the final project, is because I was proposed to present at KISMIF’16 event, during my first year of my master’s in Sociology.

### 2. Music festivals context in Portugal

In the last 15 years, there was a “boom” of music festivals in Portugal. We can know at least one festival in each region of Portugal. We can say that Portugal, nowadays, is in the “music festival route”, in an international level, with some festivals appearing in music magazines and websites, such as NME (New Music Express), Rolling Stone, Guardian Music, CNN, BBC, etc... In fact, Portugal has some of the best music festivals in Europe and in the world, having the example of NOS Alive, which was considered, this year one of the best ten music festivals in world, by CNN, nominated as one of the best Overseas Festivals at the UK Festivals Awards in 2015 and winner of many titles in Portuguese Festivals Awards, including Best Festival in Portugal, and other significant major festivals like Super Bock Super Rock, Meo Sudoeste, NOS Primavera Sound, etc... Also, it’s important to say that, every year, there have been an increasing number of foreigners in music festivals in Portugal, with 20% to 40% of the audience composed by people from other countries, and that in just five years. Quoting Farinha, “In this sense, it is possible to register, according to Guerra (2010), a significant increase in the number of festivals rock from 2004.” (Farinha, 2012) But not only big festivals are important to be analyzed. Besides the big music festivals that Portugal

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<sup>2</sup> This is a pre-study. The content presented here are just things I intend to study in the future and some revision of empiric and theory data.

has, there are a huge number of medium and small size festivals that are very important to some regions of Portugal and that are my focus point in this paper.

### 2.1. Music festivals classifications (events)

Referring Barbara Maciel, “Getz<sup>3</sup> defines event as a temporal phenomenon, with a beginning and an end, with territorial expression confined to a special space that can be a showroom, a large space open or multiple spaces.” (Maciel, 2011). Festivals usually have a small duration, between one to five days, in a specific place that can be open or closed, big or small, in a city or in rural places. Also, there are festivals that don’t have a specific place, but multiples places, such as the example of NOS D’Bandada in Porto, or Vodafone Mexefest, in Lisbon. Also, one characteristic of music festivals is their typology. Using an event classification introduced by Donald Getz, there are some types of events: mega-events; media events; supporting causes events; special events; and community events. Festivals can be included in one of these event types, specially the small ones, due to the variety of small festivals. At last we can classify festivals in size. We have mega and big events; medium sized events; and small and micro events.

In Portugal we have some examples: in mega and big festivals we have, Rock in Rio, NOS Alive (figure 1), Super Bock, Super Rock, Meo Sudoeste, Meo Marés Vivas, Nos Primavera Sound and Vodafone Paredes de Coura, for example. Those are the main festival events in Portugal; in medium sized festivals we have, Milhões de Festa, in Barcelos, Vodafone Mexefest, Vilar de Mouros, NOS D’Bandada, Tremor in Azores, Festival de Músicas do Mundo in Sines, for example. In small and Micro festivals, we have the biggest part in Portugal. Almost every region of Portugal has their own festival, and they are countless. I can give examples from the region of Aveiro, with AgitAgueda in Águeda, Party Sleep Repeat in São João da Madeira, Cambra Fest in Vale de Cambra, Festival OITO24 in Espinho, etc... There is a wide variety of festivals in Portugal.



Figure 1: Logo of NOS Alive'15.

Source: Retrieved from [www.meiosepublicidade.pt](http://www.meiosepublicidade.pt).



Figure 2: Logo of Party Sleep Repeat in São João da Madeira.

Source: Retrieved from [www.media.rtp.pt](http://www.media.rtp.pt).

### 2.2. Impacts of music festivals on the development of regions — a pre-study context

As I said earlier, this is not a final project, but a pre-study, with some field work and empiric data. In my project, I will study the cases of medium, small and micro festivals in between Douro and Vouga area, more specifically the cases of Milhões de Festa, Party Sleep Repeat and Cambra Fest.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara referred Donald Getz in her paper, in the book “Event management and event tourism” 1997.

### 2.2.1. Milhões de Festa music festival

From news and articles and video footages, I know that this festival is very important for the region of Barcelos, due to the economic impact that this festival has in that region. Despite not being a big festival, many people from other countries already visited this festival. As the organization, (Lovers and Lollypops) says, they have many people from England, Spain and Deutschland. This festival usually takes action in in the end of July, in the last weekend of July, and during that time, Barcelos is home to a large number of tourists who came for that festival, and because of that the economy of that region improves a lot. It is important to say that this festival is considered one of the best medium size festivals in Europe by critics, according to the organization. Milhões de Festa, not only focus on the music itself, but also in the regional products of Barcelos. The products that they sell in the festival are mostly regional products. For example, the food come from the restaurants in Barcelos, and that is very important for the economy of Barcelos. One more idea of this festival is that, this is a new conception of festival. This is a medium size festival, with some international bands, in the line-up, like Alt-J, Crystal Fighters, Dan Deacon, etc...and the place where it takes action is quite peculiar. One of the stages is in the municipal swimming pool, and people can watch the concerts from the pool.

### 2.2.2. Party Sleep Repeat music festival

Party Sleep Repeat is a small festival located in São João da Madeira. It is a two-day indoor festival, in Oliva Factory with only Portuguese bands in the line-up, (Linda Martini, Paus, Holy Nothing, etc... examples of Portuguese bands that performed there). Usually, this festival takes action in the month of April. This festival has already won the title of Best Indoor Festival at the Iberian Festival Awards in 2015, a very important title for this festival, and that's why this festival is known in other parts of the country, people from Porto, Aveiro, Coimbra, already visited this festival. According to the organization (Associação Cultural Luís Lima) this festival is very important for the city of São João da Madeira, because the box office goes entirely to the families in need. They say that, they want this festival to be a community cause for those families, and they have already helped many families in their economic situation.



Figure 3: Party Sleep Repeat Festival photo.

Source: Retrieved from [www.ecosurbanos.pt](http://www.ecosurbanos.pt).

### 2.2.3. Cambra Fest music festival

Cambra Fest is a micro festival, in Vale de Cambra, in Aveiro region. This festival usually happens in the month of September, in every weekend of September. Is a festival based on garage band contest in several pubs in Vale de Cambra. According to the organization, Vale de Pandora, this allows some pubs to participate in the festival, winning a share of the festival box office, giving them a chance to improve their economic situation. Also, it is a chance for the bands to “get out of the garage”, to be recognized by the audience, and that’s good for the culture of Vale de Cambra.



Figure 4: Cambra Fest Banner.

Source: Retrieved from [www.aac.pt](http://www.aac.pt).

## 3. Conclusion

Having in mind that this is not a finished project, with this pre-study, we can see that music festivals are important in these days. Not only big festivals, but mostly the small ones, because those can make a significant difference in some regions of Portugal, in small cities, villages and other parts of the country that aren't so developed. During those days, music festivals have a significant role in the improvement of economic, social and environmental development in those regions.

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