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**WHO IS THE PUBLIC OF SERIOUS MUSIC FESTIVALS? THE
EXPERIENCE OF A FESTIVAL IN A RURAL REGION OF PORTUGAL**

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ABSTRACT

In the last 20 years, practically throughout Europe, there has been a boom of serious music Festivals. In Portugal, one of most famous is the Northern Regional Music Festival (“Festival de Música da Região Norte”), promoted by the Casa de Mateus Foundation. This Festival has a number of peculiar characteristics: it is held in a predominantly rural and economically underdeveloped region; it is promoted during the summer months throughout the region, with many concerts held in a well known baroque Palace (“Casa de Mateus”); classic and ancient music constitute the core of the programme, but additional styles of music are also offered such as jazz, pop or “fado”. As in other festivals and cultural events, the success of this Festival depends upon the capacity to attract and maintain a public, which legitimizes the supply (music programme), and is a source of income. In this context, it is important to know who is the public of the Festival, whose behaviour does not depend exclusively upon social characteristics, but also the characteristics of product offered and the implicit organisational process.

The objective of the paper is to analyse how the product supplied and the social characteristics of the attendance influence the public profile. The results of the multinomial logit model indicate that, in order to follow a strategy to capture a steadfast public, more attention should to be given to the following aspects: professional programme promotion; inclusion of music types other than the ancient; holding concerts mainly at the Palace; including a cover charge; and focusing on Portuguese citizens, mostly middle age male or older. Besides the introduction, the paper includes a brief history of the Festival (section 2), data, model and results (section 3), ending with the final remarks (section 4).