

*Stefanija Leshkova-Zelenkovska*

## **Music Education versus the Preferences of Music Genres in the Central Region of Skopje in March-August 2004**

The purpose of this text is to examine the correlation between existing music education and music genre preference. This relation is demonstrated through the analysis of the data collected with the research of public music performances that took place in 2004, in Skopje.

In fact, this paper is part of a much larger study regarding a project which analyzes music life in the central region of Skopje in 2004. In the previous conferences organized by IRAM, we already discussed the formation of our database and we showed some parameters from two fields of the database: attendance and ticket prices.

This paper presents two other fields: the number of music events according to music genre and the number of people attending the events.

Thus, we will first present the distribution of the results from the above-mentioned database fields listing all the concert activities and public performances from all music genres.

We established the music genre indicators based on the attendance of public music performances taking place in the central region of Skopje in 2004. In fact, the data presented will date from the three months of the 2004 winter and the three months of the 2004 summer concert seasons. Bearing in mind the dynamics of music life, i.e. the frequent concert activities, the large number of festivals and guest appearances, we decided to cover the period from March to August.

When entering the data into the database, we categorized the music events according to the following music genres:

- serious (classical)
- modern ballet
- folk (ethno)
- pop
- rock
- children's songs
- alternative (heavy-metal, hip-hop, R&B, drum and base, DJ performances)

The alternative music performances include hardcore, heavy metal, R&B, drum and base concerts, as well as house and techno DJ performances. This grouping also concerns the age of the audience, since we assume that the events are attended by a mainly younger population.

In order to provide a clear presentation of the music genre preference data, we separated pop and rock genres as two different genres. Since the line between these two genres is thin, we used additional data from other fields in our database such as programs, who performed: artists from home or aboard, etc.

The analysis of the database shows situations where music of several genres was performed. We separated these concerts and multi-happenings from the remaining genres.

This text does not regard the live performances in the restaurants and cafes in the center of Skopje.

We obtained data about the attendance of the music events through:

- the organizers
- the daily press
- individual visitors

We did not have data for the attendance of some events. Therefore we used an approximate percentage derived from the capacity of the concert hall and from the media propaganda regarding the significance of the event for the city.

The main interest of this paper concerns music genre preferences versus music education.

Macedonian music education has generally remained unchanged during the last 50 years. It is mainly based on west-European classical music history. The subject of music is compulsory in the elementary schools. This subject covers classical music theory and history. In addition to providing theoretical background, the schools provide practical music activities such as choir singing, playing in a mandolin orchestra, taking part in an folk ensemble, etc.

In addition to general music education, in Macedonia there are specialized music schools: elementary, high school and Faculty of Music. All these educational institutions mainly study classical music; folk music also fills a small part of the curriculum. In fact, the study of folk and traditional instrument performance in the Music and Ballet School Center and the Faculty of Music only began ten years ago.

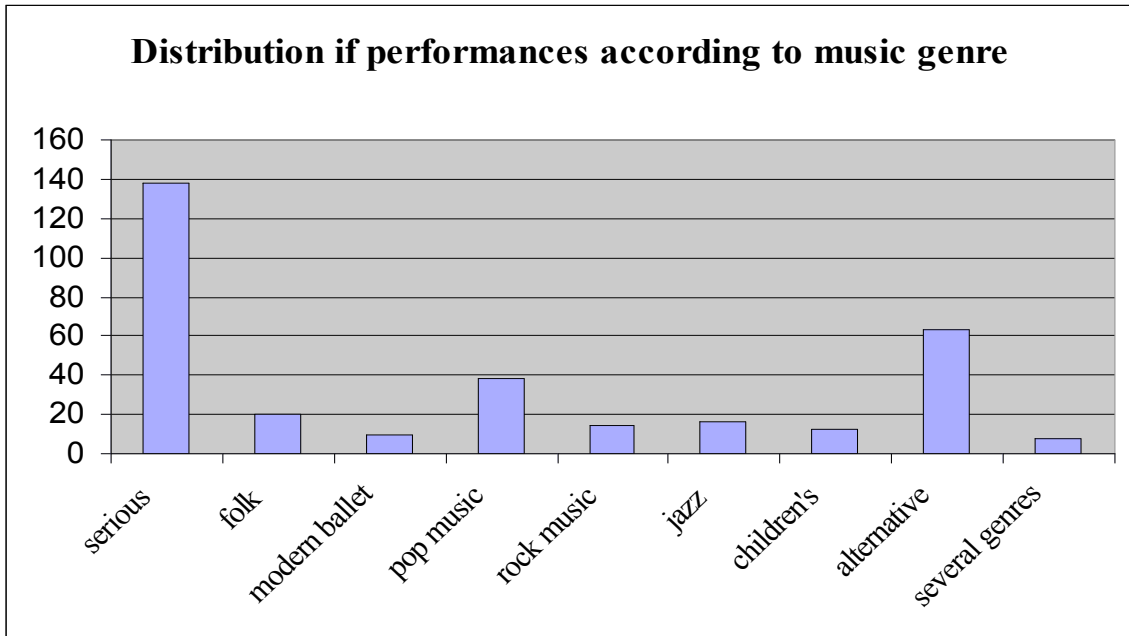
Apart from the official music educational institutions, several private music schools have been established in Skopje. These schools teach classical music instruments as well music and performance from other genres such as pop singing, jazz music and electric guitar.

The following table presents the data concerning the number of music performances according to music genres, as well as the number of people attending these events.

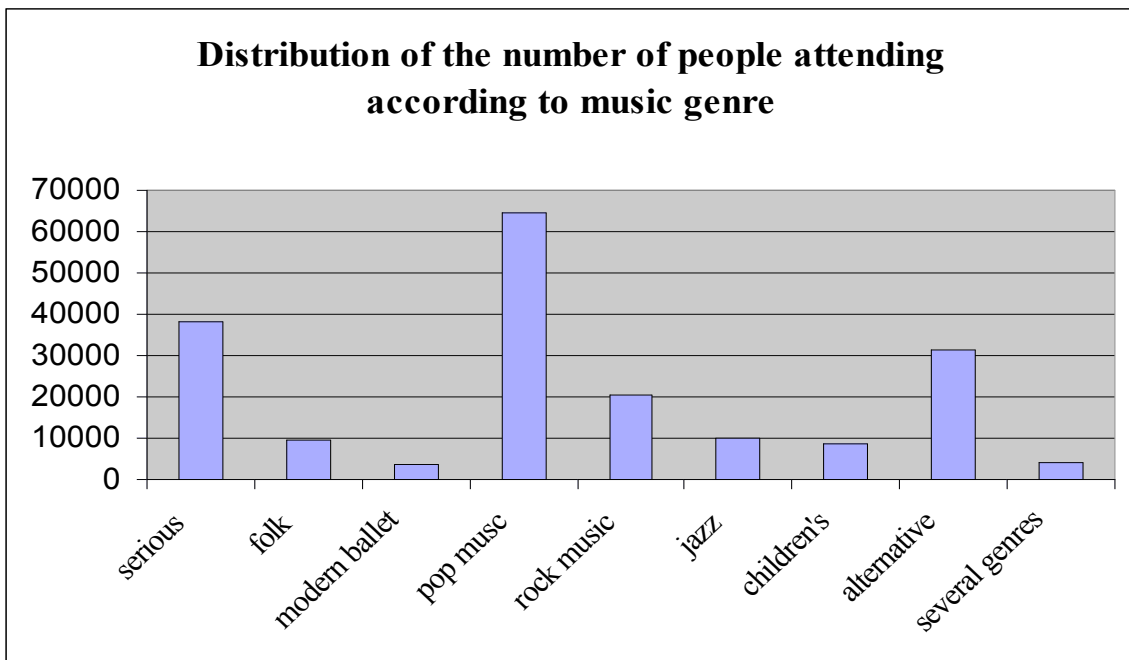
Distribution of attendance and music performances according to music genres

<b>music events</b>	<b>number of performances</b>	<b>number of people attending</b>
classical	138	38250
folk	20	9500
modern ballet	10	3700
pop	38	64650
rock	14	20350
jazz	16	9800
children's songs	12	8700
alternative	63	31250
several different music genres	8	4200

table no.1



graph 1



graph 2

The data presented in table 1 indicates that there is no correlation between music education in Macedonia and music genre preference. In fact, between March and August of 2004, the largest number of people attending, 64 650, preferred popular music. The classical music concerts (the essence of our education) were attended by 38 250 visitors.

If we assume that the largest percentage of people attending the pop, rock and alternative music performances is the younger population (below 21), then between March and August of 2004 more than 50 000 people preferred music genres not covered in our music education. This data indicates that the younger population prefers popular music and that this genre clearly dominates.

On the other hand, table 1 shows that the largest number of performances are in the domain of classical music. The analysis of the cause for such a situation is not part of this paper's interest, since it is a very complex phenomenon. However, we will only state some of the reasons. The disagreement between the number of performances and the number of people who attended is mainly a result of the capacity of the concert halls. For instance, the classical music concert halls have the capacity of 80-750 visitors, whereas the public performances of other genres, such as pop and rock music are held on the City Stadium which has the capacity of 20 000 visitors (such as the attendance during Zdravko Colic or Toshe Proeski concerts).

The growing number of classical music performances as opposed to other genres is also a result of the fact that in Macedonia, these concerts are financed and organized by government-supported institutions.

In addition, the number of classical music concerts grows in the summer period when the music educational institutions hold graduation exams and end-of-the-year classes as public performances.

In conclusion:

- the greater number of performances are classical music concerts;
- the largest part of the audience prefers popular music performances;
- pop, rock and alternative music dominates with the younger population;
- in our cultural and music environment there is no correlation between the existing music education and music genre preference.