

# **MIROIR PROJECT**

## **PART 2**

### **ANALYSIS OF KEY SKILLS OF YOUNG PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS ARTISTS**



**FEDEC**

EUROPEAN FEDERATION  
OF PROFESSIONAL  
CIRCUS SCHOOLS

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## **PART 2**

### **ANALYSIS OF KEY SKILLS OF YOUNG PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS ARTISTS**

**AUTHOR ZITA HERMAN**

**FEDEC**

**EUROPEAN FEDERATION  
OF PROFESSIONAL  
CIRCUS SCHOOLS**



# FEDEC

Created in 1998, the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC) is a network that comprises 41 professional circus schools and 4 partner organisations in 21 countries in Europe and beyond (Albania, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Tunisia and United Kingdom).

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**FEDEC's main vocation is to support the development and evolution of training pedagogy and creation in the field of circus arts education with the following objectives:**

- to improve the education provided in professional circus schools
- to reinforce the links between professional circus schools
- to represent these schools at european or international level
- to promote the work of young artists who have graduated from these schools

**To this end the FEDEC sets up different activities:**

- facilitating a network of schools, allowing the organisation of numerous bilateral and multilateral exchanges of students, teachers and administrators each year
- assembling and distributing information of all kinds in the circus arts education sector
- designing and coordinating european projects that aim to improve the teaching practices of its members (in particular through the production of teaching aids, seminars, professional exchanges, dissemination of best practice)
- intervening with the authorities on a european or national level, according to the demands and needs of the fedec or one or more of its members


- organising and implementing events or demonstrations that aim to increase the influence of creation and training in circus arts or to improve contacts with associations and organisations working in the fields of art, education, sport, economy, and the social sector
- equipping the federation with regulations and a code of ethics for professional training in circus arts

FEDEC is supported by the European Commission (DG- Education and Culture - Lifelong Learning Programme), the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), Cirque du Soleil, Franco Dragone Entertainment Group and Cirque Phénix.



# PREAMBLE

This publication contains the results and the analysis of a survey of a group of young circus artists and circus employers, undertaken by the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC). It is the second survey organised by our network and illustrates our constant desire to question the pertinence of the education we offer in our schools in order to prepare students for a future as professional circus artists.



This will become obvious for the reader and reflects the fundamental philosophy of our organisation, where the common position that links us all together can be summed up in one phrase: behind the richness and depth of a form of artistic expression, there should be a richness and depth of educational approaches to that art. Each member of FEDEC has its own history and philosophy, they each evolve in a different economic context and even though programmes vary from one country to the next, we remain convinced that core educational aims – know-how, know how to be and know how to function – are common to all programmes. The importance that each structure assigns to each of these fundamental values can change from one educational programme to another and can determine different professional capacities from one individual to another. In fact, we strongly believe that each school has the right to personalise its programme and this affirmation of a specific identity will be what a potential student will look for when deciding on a school to audition for.

FEDEC schools develop their educational programmes through a responsible engagement with each future circus artist, with the will to provide each student with tools that will allow them to fulfil themselves individually and artistically, but that will also allow them to mature and to adapt to a professional context that is in perpetual evolution.

We are well aware that the abilities that employers look for differ depending on the type of performance and the economic context in which it will be performed. There is not one reality, but several European and global realities, at the heart of which the need for profit and immediate efficiency directly influences the skills needed by employers. While taking into account these realities, we also have the obligation to accompany each individual throughout their education so that he/she can make free and informed choices for his/her career, the kind of artist he/she would like to be and the context in which he/she would prefer to express his/her art: as a member of an ensemble, as an independent artist, as a freelancer or as a member of a much larger production. This multiple reality reassures us and shows us that we contribute to the education of individuals that are free to surpass conventional forms of expression, capable of seeing, understanding and seizing opportunities that present themselves and able to make choices.

This survey is important to our network because we want to regularly evaluate our educational methods and our artistic positions. We believe that this will help to evolve the sector and will contribute to placing Circus Arts alongside all the other major art forms. While affirming that educational programmes are not put into place solely for the needs of employers and that the educational sector should remain independent, we, at the same time, defend the role that our schools and partners play in the professionalisation of future graduates. It is for this reason that we have the responsibility to be in tune with the professional world and to maintain a healthy dialogue.

Our programmes aim to prepare students to enter the world of circus as young professionals. The information gained in our surveys will assist us in making sure that each graduate will enter that world in the best possible fashion, and on their terms.

**TIM ROBERTS, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDEC**  
LONDON, DECEMBER, 1<sup>ST</sup> 2009







# OVERVIEW OF THE MIROIR PROJECT

The European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC) has undertaken a survey of employers of the circus sector and of former FEDEC school students now operating as artists, to identify the key skills that a professional circus artist is currently required to master.

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The goal of the survey, entitled the Miroir project, is to gather a series of information on how the schools and the teaching they provide are viewed by the sector and by their former students, by creating an interaction between the labour market and the former students.

The circus arts sector obviously requires its artists to master and use a defined set of skills some of which deal mainly with technical and artistic know-how. As schools and training centres are the main providers of these skills, it is crucial for them to benefit from up-to-date information about the evolution of the field. Schools are where teaching, learning, training and improvement take place, but they do not necessarily have the capacity or resources to closely follow the evolution of the sector's requirements, especially if they are located outside Western Europe. All schools have a regularly updated curricula, and educational goals as well as skills that students should ideally be able to achieve.

It is the FEDEC's hope that the key skills identified through the surveys will act as a starting point for professional development, and career and performance management in the long-term, through the development of training. This is the FEDEC's main motivation for undertaking the Miroir project.

The first part of the Miroir project was completed in 2008. Two results were published: a directory of all training schools and centres for circus arts worldwide, and a survey report about the employers in the circus arts sector. The directory, which lists 360 circus schools and training organisations, covering both leisure and professional courses, was published in print and will be soon available as a searchable database on the FEDEC website.<sup>1</sup> The survey of employers in the circus sector was conducted in collaboration with Pascal Jacob, and resulted in the publication of a report entitled *The Circus Artist Today - Analysis of the Key skills: What type of training is currently needed? For what type of artist? In which field of activity?*<sup>2</sup>. We will be using its conclusions in the present study.

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1 [www.fedec.eu](http://www.fedec.eu)

2 A brief overview of the main findings is presented in part 1

In 2009, the second part of the Miroir project was achieved, complementing the first set of findings.

This second part is divided into two sections:

1 an additional survey of employers

2 a survey of young professional artists, all former students of FEDEC member schools.

The survey was realised in collaboration with sociologist Zita Herman, and coordinated by Danijela Jovic, Project Coordinator at the FEDEC.

### **MIROIR 2 – SECTION 1 - COMPLEMENTARY SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS**

The additional survey was conducted by way of interviews of the key players of the circus field, who could be referred to as the employers. The questionnaire highlights the key skills a professional artist has to acquire and how the range of training courses could be broadened. In order to obtain a deeper analysis of the sector's labour market, the key skills identified in 2008 in the Miroir 1 - Section 2 report were used as a basis for the second series of interviews. They were conducted in October and November 2009 with a pool of key players of the labour market: employers in the strictest sense of the term, but also professionals involved in the circus field producers, information and residency facilities managers.

The additional survey was based on 18 interviews conducted in Auch (France), during the CIRCA festival in October 2009, and on 3 additional interviews conducted in November 2009 plus two interviews via e-mail or telephone<sup>1</sup>.

### **MIROIR 2 - SECTION 2 - SURVEY OF YOUNG PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS ARTISTS**

Miroir 2 - Section 2 was aimed at young professionals with 1 to 5 years of professional experience. The survey addressed former circus school students, giving them the opportunity to share their views about their training and emphasising the key skills they acquired throughout that training. More precisely, the survey focused on the opportunities they were given to develop their skills during the training courses, and how useful these skills turned out to be during the first few years of their artistic careers. In order to allow young professionals to have easy access to the survey, the FEDEC set up a web space dedicated to it, comprising two parts: a personal page, and a questionnaire, available in French, English and Spanish. The online questionnaire was divided into 3 series of questions: professional information; skills; and personal information. The data used in this document were collected from September, 18 to November 18, 2009.

### **A DEEPER INSIGHT INTO KEY SKILLS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE TRAINING**

For the FEDEC, the main goal of the Miroir project - Part 2 is to provide its member schools with an overall assessment, both qualitative and quantitative, of the former students' feedback on their training. Anonymous and general feedback from a group of former FEDEC school students was analysed and put together in this report. The report was designed as a tool for the network schools to use in order to question the relevance of their curricula, training and educational projects in

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1 The complete list of the interviewees can be found in the appendix.

relation to the various segments of the labour market. Since the aim of the interviews was to provide an overview of the information provided, the interviewees will remain anonymous and will be analysed on an overall scale.

It is the FEDEC's hope that by conducting this study and disseminating its results in the present publication (available both in English and French, in print, or to download from the FEDEC website: [www.fedec.eu](http://www.fedec.eu)) the information exchange between schools and the circus sector in general will be improved. It was with this intention in mind that a public presentation of the ongoing analysis was held on Thursday, October 29, 2009 at the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie in Auch (France), in the framework of the CIRCA festival.



**Note to the reader:**

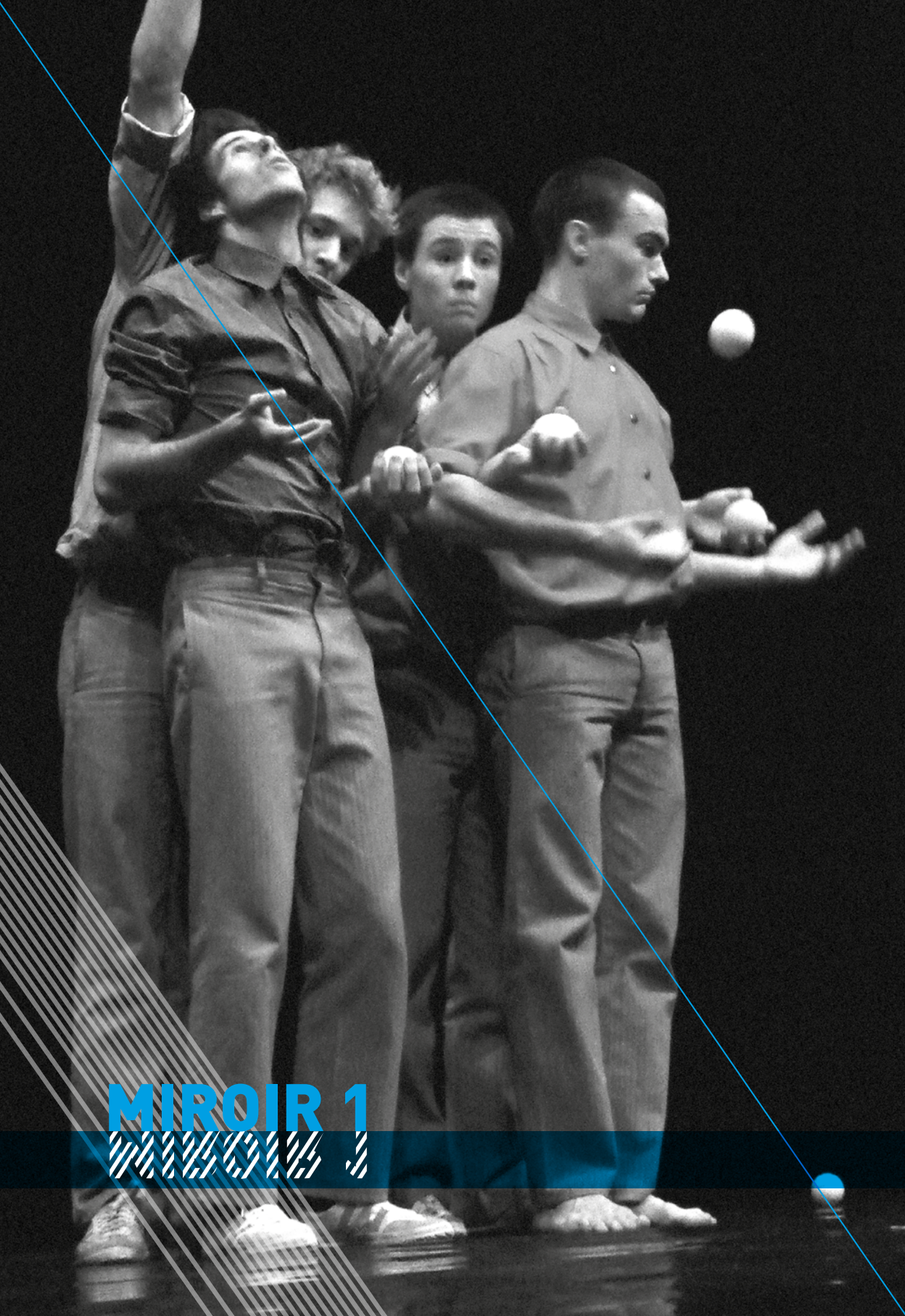
It should be emphasised that the survey is not intended to draw a comprehensive picture of respondents and their backgrounds. Neither the statistical nor the qualitative data allow for a conclusion that are valid for the whole circus arts sector, given that it is a very segmented one. This is a limited snapshot; a tool for further reflection for the network.



01

SURVEY  
OF EMPLOYERS  
PROFESSIONALS  
FROM THE CIRCUS  
ARTS SECTOR





# MIROIR 1



# 2008 | MIROIR PART 1 - SECTION 2

## SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS – PROFESSIONALS FROM THE CIRCUS ARTS SECTOR

Miroir 1 – Section 2 was conducted by the FEDEC in collaboration with Pascal Jacob in 2008, and focused on the opinion of employers in the circus sector. The aim of the survey was to map the key skills employers expect young artists to acquire, in order to provide the FEDEC member schools with some feedback. The question brought up by Pascal Jacob throughout his paper is a complex one: *“What type of training is currently needed, for what type of artist, and in which field of activity?”*

This is not an easy question to answer as the claim that there are distinctly separate fields within the sector is very hard to substantiate. On the other hand, the study confirmed that in spite of the profound changes in the circus arts field and the evolution of the productions, employers have been expressing a constant wish to work with versatile young professionals with highly developed technical skills.

The survey was launched during the *“Feat without mind or mind without feat? Which kind of training for which kind of artists for which areas of activity?”*<sup>1</sup> seminar at the Académie Fratellini in La Plaine Saint-Denis, on May, 23 and 24, 2008. The aim of the seminar was to identify the general key skills circus artists should have, and the boundaries shared between the teaching of these skills and the professional integration of the artists.<sup>1</sup> All parties agreed

that circus training must lead to an improved integration of young professionals within the various segments of the market. The role that the schools have to play in the preparation of the students is particularly important given the multiplicity of worlds and the variation of the artists’ social and economic status from one market and one country to another and according to each segment of the market.

Following this initial seminar, circus professionals representing different segments of the market and different countries completed a questionnaire on the key skills they deemed essential for professional artists today (technical and artistic qualities, entrepreneurial skills, teaching skills, etc.). The main conclusion of the survey was that better communication between training centres and the circus sector employers is desirable. Several recommendations were thus formulated for the FEDEC, all in favour of consolidating the connections between employers and schools. Some of these recommendations were turned into tools by the FEDEC network (web pages about schools and their graduates, online news portal for schools) and some are still under consideration (international glossary of circus terminology).

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1 A list of participants is available in the appendix.



# MIROIR 2

MIROIR 2

# COMPLEMENTARY SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS

The employers surveyed in the framework of Miroir 1 – Section 2 in 2008 mainly represented large, well-known and recognised organisations of Western Europe. That's why in 2009 the FEDEC felt that there was further insight to gain from undertaking a second round of interviews, bearing in mind the conclusions of Miroir 1 – Section 2. The FEDEC drew up a list of different types of employers to be contacted, so as to represent the wide range of professional practices in Europe. Thus, the decision was made to interview employers from Northern Europe (Sweden, Finland), South Eastern Europe (Croatia, Hungary), but also from countries where the main employers are established: the United Kingdom, Belgium and France.

The conclusions of Pascal Jacob's survey formed the basis for the second round of interviews. According to the author, professional schools aim to prepare their future graduates to make a positive first professional step into the various labour markets, but the question remains whether their skills meet the requirements of the market's segments. One might therefore wonder whether, thanks to the skills developed during training, this goal can be reached. Also, the acquired skills do not hold the same value according to the different segments of the market. The employers interviewed stated that they do not always favour young circus school graduates for the jobs for which they should, in theory, be qualified.

The additional survey did not trace the flow of the young graduates' distribution into the market's various segments. The interviews gathered the key skills these players expect to find in circus arts professionals who are former FEDEC school students. Employers shared their working experiences with young graduates, thus providing an insightful appreciation of the weak and strong points of their skills and abilities. They were asked to identify which skills a professional artist must acquire, to point out which skills the training courses might be overlooking, and to list the most frequently recurring problems encountered when hiring young professionals.

The methodology used to complete the survey will be presented in the following chapter. The market employers participating in all stages of the survey will then be more thoroughly defined and categorised. Therefore, a broader and more inclusive definition of the word *employer*, in accordance with the specificity of the circus field labour market will be put forward. A brief introduction of the employers interviewed will be presented in the second part of the chapter. Finally, the results of the survey will appear in the third part. Three crucial themes will be emphasised:

- casting methods
- expectations of the labour market
- more accurate feedback on the young professional artists employment and skills

The presentation of the complementary survey will include the results of the 2008 survey. A few discrepancies were to be noted; a comparison of both surveys will therefore appear in the conclusion of this chapter.

## IDENTIFICATION OF THE MARKET

Endeavouring to identify the employers and employees of the field requires a clarification of what *employment* means in the circus arts world, and who the main players involved in that world are.

In the circus field, employment is atypical: it is non-standard, very diverse and often precarious. Moreover, it does not always fit the general definition of the term. This is due to many factors, including the segmentation of the sector, the growing legal intricacies for employment conditions and employers, flexible working hours, geographical mobility, and - in spite of European regulations - the discrepancy between the legal European framework and national-level restrictions. The present study chooses not to deal with the diversity of current legislation in the employment field.<sup>1</sup>

For the purpose of this survey, the operational definition of *employment* is *participation in the chain of actors leading to a paid performance or act, by a professional circus artist in an organisation or a venue*. This means that the employers' activity is conceptualised as a chain of actors leading to a final product that is presented to an audience. The final product is a show that a series of people have contributed to create. Yet the way this creation comes about varies according to the different segments of the sector, so this single concept refers to different positions within different

segments of the sector. However many players assume multiple parts throughout this chain. Based on the ideas mentioned above, the Miroir 1 – Section 2 survey conducted with the employers intends to widen the categorisation envisioned by Pascal Jacob. He identifies the following types of actors in the 2008 study:

- classical circus companies
- contemporary circus companies

### Intermediate structures

- cabarets
- festivals – competitions
- talent agencies
- casting agencies
- small circuses<sup>2</sup>

Developing this categorisation further, one could strongly disagree about cabarets being intermediate structures, since cabarets hire artists directly with short or long-term contracts just like the two non-intermediate structures.

Thanks to the Miroir 2 – Section 1 analysis some missing elements were added to the non-intermediate structures category:

- venues hosting contemporary circus
- non-competitive festivals

The categorisation of the sector was further enriched by the addition of the following types of actors:

- production agencies
- artistic advisory agencies
- administrative agencies
- residency centers
- interest-representative organisations (e.g. unions, associations) and information centres

The creation of shows and acts can follow several paths and benefit from different means of help: direct funding, contracts for the artists, introduction into networks, advisory services, contribution in kind, etc. The different types of employers take a more or less active part in the process by taking charge of one or more parts of the creative process. However, our analysis does not describe any chains of formal or informal relationships between the *employer* organisations and the artists; neither does it depict the processes available to the most prominent performances currently on the market.

In the present paper the categorisation of the products – the results of the chains of creation – is avoided as much as possible, since a central feature of the whole sector resides in the multiplicity of art forms, the opening-up to other artistic disciplines, and the functional versatility of the artist throughout his/her career. Moreover there is no clear-cut distinction between productions within the sector.<sup>3</sup> Nor is there any analysis of what the different segments of the market need: e.g. individual performers as opposed to ready-made acts or shows. In fact, the reality of the sector is one in which professional artists can be both performers to be directed and artists creating their own acts or shows, according to the employment conditions. There is also no default role for young creative artists:

young professionals can be employed in different capacities. The key words are adaptability and versatility.

Circus is very international with a high level of mobility for the artists and their shows. Yet the dominant type of sector actors in each country shows a comparatively slow evolution if one considers the mobility of the artists and shows. In this structural respect, France is an exception. Since 1968 the old artistic models have petered out in France, leading to a renewal of both education and production in the past 40 years.<sup>4</sup> Contemporary circus is the leading sector in France and benefits from public funding. Contemporary companies prevail thanks to their strong cultural-political influence, which has resulted in extensive state financing of the sector by the French State.<sup>5</sup> A similar pattern can be observed in Quebec.

The circus schools stand at the very beginning of the process. The FEDEC believes that it has the best position from which to assess and improve on the educational methods of its members but also the relationship between the schools and the market. Every vocational school has a special relationship with some of the market players, but obviously not with all of them. Nevertheless, as Pascal Jacob suggests, if the FEDEC wishes to highlight the communication dysfunctions between the

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1 For an analysis of the various issues, see Forette, 1998.

2 Small circuses were not addressed by the research in either year.

3 This question was explicitly explored in the FEDEC 2008 report: *The circus artist today - Analysis of the key competences: What type of training is needed today for what type of artist and in what field of activity?*, P. Jacob.

4 For a detailed description of the process and the establishment of the field, see Cordier, 2007

5 Some of the employers interviewed in 2008 talked about the over-financing of certain mechanisms, highlighting that there are too many companies and sometimes too many financial guarantees for artists, which has a counter-productive effect on the non-subsidised market employment of artists who do not participate in funded schemes.



schools and the market, it will only be able to do so from this comprehensive perspective, keeping in mind that schools do not necessarily have to serve all the labour market players.

### **COMPLEMENTARY SURVEY** **Interview methodology**

Following last year's seminar on key skills and the email interviews conducted in 2008, the methodology chosen for the second round of consultations was to collect the opinion of another pool of key players in the field by way of personal interviews.

The interviews were conducted by sociologist Zita Herman, during the CIRCA festival held in Auch in October 2009, in Budapest and at the Festival Novog Cirkusa in Zagreb in November 2009. In total 21 people were interviewed individually, in a personalised

one-on-one meeting. In two cases, the answers to the questionnaire were returned by e-mail, because a one-on-one meeting could not be arranged.

The interviews fall into the category of the 'semi-structured interview': the questionnaire used last year served as a guideline, or as a source of topics to be addressed during the interview (the questionnaire can be found in the appendix). In the course of the interviews, the questionnaire was adapted according to the type of organisation the interviewee was representing.

No hypothesis was put forward prior to the interviews. The respondents were listened to without bias, so as to draw up a structured list of skills based on their answers. The resulting list is presented in the next section.

The FEDEC selected a number of professionals from the list of those present at the CIRCA Festival. Some additional professionals were contacted following the advice of the FEDEC Board. Special attention was paid to some key players from Eastern Europe.

### Overview of interviewees

Thanks to its close partnership with the CIRCA Festival (Auch, France), the FEDEC chose to meet the majority of the survey respondents in 2009, during 'Circles', its annual pedagogical and artistic meeting in Auch. The FEDEC selected a number of professionals from the list of those present at the CIRCA Festival. Some additional professionals were contacted following the advice of the FEDEC board. Special attention was paid to some key players from Eastern Europe.

The results of the additional survey were based on the interviews of 23 persons representing 21 different organisations. Although one section of the interviews aimed to define the respondents' organisations, they will not be presented in detail in this study<sup>1</sup>.

**TABLE 1**  
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY TYPE OF ORGANISATION

TYPE OF ORGANISATION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Classical circuses companies	0
Contemporary circus companies	2
Cabarets	0 <sup>2</sup>
Competitive festivals	2
Talent agencies	1
Venues hosting contemporary circus	4
Non-competitive festivals	3 [8] <sup>3</sup>
Production agencies	1
Artistic counselling and support	1
Administrative agencies	1
Residency places	3
Interest-representative organisations and information centres	3

1 The list of the professionals and the organisations they are representing can be found in the appendix.

2 The first three categories were well represented in the survey conducted in 2008.

3 Three participants were interviewed principally in relation to their role with a festival. The remaining 5 respondents mentioned a festival for which they work, in the context of an interview on their work with a different type of structure.

An interesting fact should be underlined: although the interviewees were categorised according to their organisations, many of them actually held several positions. The survey conducted with the employers revealed two scenarios: either the person represented more than one organisation (this was the case in at least 6 instances), or the organisation represented by the person was multi-functional. The most frequent cases were those of organisations that set up a non-competitive festival along with their annual programming (four respondents mentioned this activity). Another instance involves structures with socially and educationally-oriented circus activities, especially in the field of technical circus training (this was the case for at least 3 of the respondents). The aspect that all venues and non-competitive festivals have in common is the fact they all act as producers or co-producers. This last piece of information gives a further nuance to the mapping of the circus sector.

As for geographical distribution, the FEDEC endeavoured to contact employers from a wide range of countries so as to reflect as many on-site situations as possible. The distribution of the interviews by country is as follows: 3 organisations interviewed from Hungary, 1 from Croatia, 1 from Austria, 2 from Sweden, 1 from Finland, 6 from France, 1 from the Netherlands, 2 from the UK, 2 from Belgium, 1 from Monte Carlo and 1 European network. The relative prevalence of French organisations is due to their predominance in the market, but also to the fact that the majority of the interviews were conducted in Auch (France).

## RESULTS

### The selection and casting process

As mentioned above, employment in the circus field takes on various forms. Knowing that it is atypical, it is crucial for schools to prepare their students to face very diverse employment conditions.

**In this field, work is formalised through a contract. Access to employment can be influenced by the mastery of a series of information beforehand:**

- what are the employer's specific needs: what kind of artist, or what kind of show are they looking for?
- how can a dialogue between the parties be established?

Within this context, *casting* is usually used to signify the future selection of one or more artists for the production of a show. *Programming* is used to signify the selection of shows within an organisation venue festival. The two processes differ in the way information is exchanged between the parties, and impact upon the contents of the contract.

As for the *casting*, the methods used to find the right person are numerous and mainly depend on the size of the organisation. Only the largest ones need - and can afford - a casting department, which was not the case for a large number of our respondents. Throughout the survey, people have especially stressed the value of word-of-mouth and letters of recommendation from networks they work with on a regular basis.



Some organisations advertise vacancies (by way of call-outs), then shortlist and audition the selected artists, but this procedure has become less common in the past few years. However, there are some indications concerning integration into the working world that tend to prove instead that the procedure is gaining weight within companies.

Some organisations also run internship and/or training programmes; this system entails contact that can lead to recruitment. Some of the respondents have stressed the importance of intuition and of the rapport established with the candidate during the final phase of selection.

The artists' publicity material was only mentioned a few times as a casting tool but the growing significance of video and of the Internet was underlined. You Tube appears to be one of the most popular tools used to search for artists and shows outside the existing networks of recognised structures. Finally, competitive festivals are also specific events where casting takes place.

*Programming* refers to the selection of shows that will make up a season, a festival or an event. In most cases, one single person is in charge of the selection. However, in some cases a selection committee is used, particularly during festivals.



For programmers, festivals are also an important venue to select shows for the future. Almost all respondents stated that they only bought shows they had seen at least once. Some of the respondents explicitly said that they try to see the shows twice or more.

To summarise, festivals play an increasingly important part in the integration of young graduates into the working world. They act as powerful levers for two main reasons: the first is that they enable the introduction of freshly graduated students, of new forms of performance (including acts) and of new aesthetics. The second is that they represent a strong networking potential.

One can also observe the increasingly significant role of new information and communication technologies in the dissemination of information on artists and performances. These channels of information are a great help to festival directors, who emphasised their wish to be the first to present artists and shows, which they consider to form a part of their role within the sector.

The main idea that can be concluded from the interviews conducted with the employers is that there seems to exist, within the sector, a somewhat structured informal network based on personal connections, on which casting and programming largely depend. Some organisations (the most significant being the Circostrada Network, Territoires du Cirque, and to some extent the European Circus Association) aim to formalise these proc-

esses. Other structures like Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe have taken on the task of triggering and developing a new artistic scene. It is both a casting and promotional process, based on a structured informal network.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the integration into the working world through both *casting* and *programming*, a great majority of the respondents stated that being a circus school graduate is not necessarily relevant for selection and does not directly affect employment. However, they also declared that they sometimes hire young graduates based on their first communication tools (graduation publicity material) or after seeing their shows. More detailed feedback on their working experiences with young circus school graduates is presented below.

### **The skills employers consider to be important**

Given that the qualities and skills required exclusively make reference to a person's qualities, the methodology used to analyse the skills does not attempt to treat artists and their productions separately. Also, the artistic and technical quality of the shows and acts is taken as read. The objective of the survey is to take a step further and learn more about the skills that are required above this level. As well as the skills required by the employers, the criteria that allow the young artists to get a job will be presented.

The present complementary survey of employers is focused on the main skills and additional factors expected by the field in the context of a professional collaboration.

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1 Jeunes Talents de Cirque is a competition that invites applications from young artists with a plan for a performance. JTC helps successful candidates to produce and promote their shows: casting here refers to the selection of the 10 supported applications.

Aside from the main skills required, additional factors were highlighted many times as having a great impact when hiring an artist or buying a show and/or act. The additional factors mentioned include incidental and travelling expenses, administrative contingencies (visas etc.) as well as knowledge of circus equipment, past experience with the employer, etc. Even though the present analysis does not focus on these factors, it is important to underline the essential role they play in the hiring process. Employers' existing expectations in terms of skills play a significant part in the selection of a particular artist and his/her production. Either they have already worked with the artists and therefore know what skills they have, or they will search out information about artists they haven't encountered yet through the structured informal network.

The present complementary survey of employers is focused on the main skills and additional factors expected by the field in the context of a professional collaboration.

Aside from the main skills required, additional factors were highlighted many times as having a great impact when hiring an artist or buying a show and/or act.



**Almost all of the required skills can be classified within three main categories:**

- savoir- faire
- savoir-être
- savoir-vivre

When a general skill was mentioned, respondents were always asked to define it in their own words and illustrate their definition with specific examples. Consequently, the categorisation of the skills does not stem from prior research but from a summary of the skills to which the participants alluded. Most of the answers referred to at least two out of the three categories, and sometimes even three out of three.



### Le savoir-faire

The answers and explanations concerning *savoir-faire* (the most frequently mentioned aspect of which was professionalism on stage) seem to suggest that two main features are required by employers:

Firstly, the so-called “right attitude”, defined by:

- being entirely involved in one’s project and completing it
- giving 100% on stage every time
- showing initiative
- being independent and determined

Secondly, the most frequently mentioned skill was a sound knowledge of the technical requirements linked to each line of work.

Employers stressed the following elements:

- being able to accurately list a show’s specific technical requirements
- having a total understanding of safety regulations and constantly putting them into practice
- being familiar with the technical requirements of a show
- having a general understanding of backstage and technical aspects, such as sound and lighting

Both of the above features are crucial for the respondents; each of them mentioned at least one element from the two categories of *savoir-faire*.

### Le savoir-être

Under the general heading of *savoir-être*, the skill that was considered to best represent this category was the ability to work in a team. Respondents brought up cooperation, positive attitude and work ethic/discipline as general skills that allow a project to develop in the best possible conditions. Here are some examples of the specific elements that were brought up: punctuality, the ability to work collectively in a team or a company, the ability to communicate and to solve conflicts. *Savoir-être* also implies mastering other skills such as time-management and physical training (i.e. warming up properly and sticking to an appropriate diet).

### Savoir-vivre

Different aspects of what employers mean by *savoir-vivre* were brought up: being connected to the informal networks (the phrase “*big circus family*” was used several times), moral values such as loyalty towards the profession, tolerance and mutual understanding, as well as the ability to settle the problems that arise when working in a team. All of these skills were underlined in this section. Employers stressed how difficult it is for young graduates to adapt quickly to the professional world and to establish and sustain a lasting trust between partners.

Employers stressed how difficult it is for young graduates to adapt quickly to the professional world and to establish and sustain a lasting trust between partners.



An additional skill which does not directly affect employment but which can be viewed as a general requirement from any artist was mentioned several times: an idea of one's own position in the artistic world, entailing an awareness of other forms of performances and also the ability to talk about his/her own work.

Finally, although it is not a skill per se, many mentioned the importance of each individual's personality, especially his or her open-mindedness and general cultural background. In this same category, some of the players have stressed the importance of the artist's personal outlook on society and the outside world.

The sample group of employers was asked to rank the proposed skills in order of preference so as to obtain a classification [see question 17 in the appendix]. One skill was added to the initial list established in the 2008 report: having outstanding technical know-how.

**The total list of skills included:**

- availability (i.e. being available to work when necessary)
- open-mindedness
- creativity
- outstanding technical know-how
- ability to adapt to the field's requirements

During the survey conducted with the employers, this question led to the creation of a profile of the "ideal artist", based on 5 criteria:

- the artist must be creative yet this creativity must be based on a high level of technical ability
- the artist must demonstrate an exceptional level of technical ability, yet this technical ability should be transcended by creativity
- the artist must be able to disregard all previous learning in order to focus on the collective creation
- the artist must be able to adapt to working methods and styles that he/she sometimes doesn't know
- and finally, the artist must be able to adopt a lifestyle linked to the requirements of the market to which he/she belongs

In the additional survey conducted in 2009, the definition of adaptability was further qualified (ability to adapt, open-mindedness), and availability was not mentioned. From a total of 23 people representing 21 organisations, 22<sup>1</sup> agreed to classify the skills by order of importance based on their own preferences when hiring young circus professionals.

You can see the responses from these 21 different organisations in the table below.

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1 The SCC (Syndicat du Cirque de Création) did not respond to this question because of their role as an interest-representative actor. The two professionals representing Winterfest completed the same classification of competencies but their results count as one.

**TABLE 2 RANKING OF SKILLS, ANSWERS TO QUESTION 17 OF EMPLOYER SURVEY<sup>1</sup>**

	1 <sup>ST</sup> PLACE	2 <sup>ND</sup> PLACE	3 <sup>RD</sup> PLACE	4 <sup>TH</sup> PLACE	5 <sup>TH</sup> PLACE	SCORE
Availability	1	1	2	4	13	36
Open-mindedness	3	4	3	8	3	59
Creativity	11	4	4	1	1	86
Exceptional technical level	2	6	7	5	1	66
Adaptability	4	6	5	3	3	68

The skills are listed in the first 5 lines on the left. At the top, we can find the ranking according to the order of preference for each competence (from 1 to the 5<sup>th</sup> position). The number in front of each competence shows how many people ranked this competence in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> position. The last column represents the sum of results for each competence that are calculated on the following basis: the 1<sup>st</sup> position is equivalent to 5 points and 5<sup>th</sup> place equivalent to 1 point. This calculation allows us to see the order of preference for each competence; the highest score signifying that this competence is the most important for the entire group of respondents.

The first 5 columns present the number of participants having ranked a given skill at given position and the last column presents

a total score obtained by multiplying the rankings by the number of respondents (where 1<sup>st</sup> place is worth 5 points and 5<sup>th</sup> place is worth 1 point).

This table shows that creativity (86 points) comes first and foremost. Adaptability comes in second. Aside from the additions made to the definition of the term in 2009, examples concerning adaptability to a particular lifestyle were mentioned (adapting to life on the road or to specific technical requirements).

A very close third is the demand for outstanding technical know-how. Next comes open-mindedness and last, the availability of the artists and their shows and/or acts (e.g. a show is free to be scheduled at the preferred time by a programmer).

This table shows that creativity (86 points) comes first and foremost. Adaptability comes in second. Aside from the additions made to the definition of the term in 2009, examples concerning adaptability to a particular lifestyle were mentioned (adapting to life on the road or to specific technical requirements).



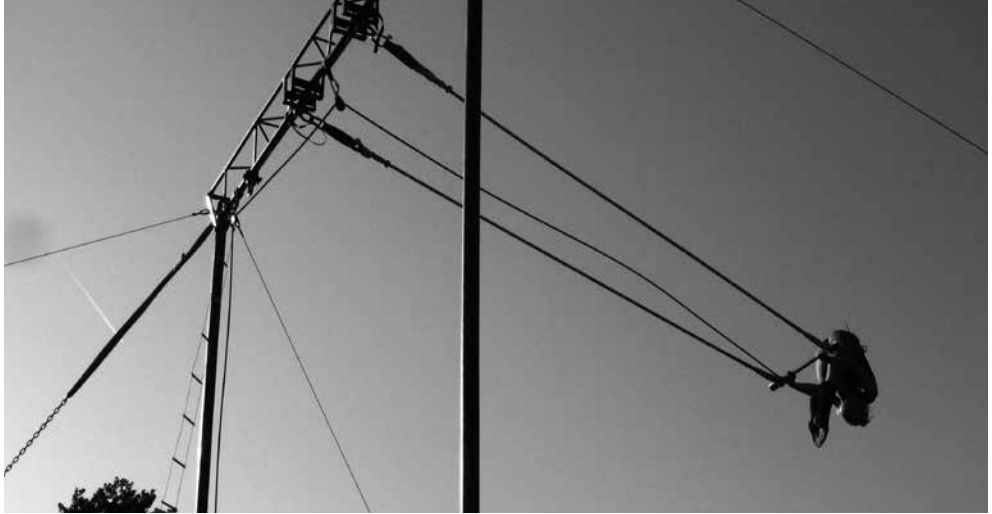
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 1 The score was calculated by multiplying each ranking by its position (with 1<sup>st</sup> place equivalent to 5 point and 5<sup>th</sup> place equivalent to 1 point). In this system, if one competence was placed in 1<sup>st</sup> position 5 times, the skill is 'worth' 25 points. The sum of points was calculated for each competence. The results are relative to each other and there is no absolute measure.

### Feedback about the skills of the young professionals

After mapping the skills they expect from young circus schools graduates, employers were asked to reflect on their own work experience with them. They were asked to share the methods used when working with young professionals but also to list the problems the collaborations arose, or the skills and way of working that need improving.

Overall, respondents were happy with the young professionals they have worked with. Although no negative experiences were mentioned, they could all point at elements that could be improved. The most important of these elements was the young graduates' ignorance of the realities of the labour market. It was stressed that this fact might stem from the schools' policies regarding the integration into the working world and their "*willingness to provide – or not – a safe, protected cocoon for creation and learning*". This remark was brought up by several respondents; according to most of them, this ignorance of the realities of the employment field is indeed a hindrance for collaboration.





**Further problems that have been mentioned by the interviewees are the following:**

- young professionals are often unaware of how to find work
- they often lack the skills and knowledge to sell themselves and their work
- young professionals have a poor knowledge of the field in general and sometimes only basic ideas about what the market expects from them
- their knowledge of the field should also be broadened to other art forms (such as theater and dance), mostly because many venues host different types of performing arts shows. It is therefore crucial for them to be aware of the opportunities they are offered
- they have little or no understanding of the cultural politics that prevail in the field
- more often than not, they are not prepared to work on short-term events
- they are not prepared to work in a team

- they are not prepared to tour the same show for two to three years, in other words, they are not ready “to exploit it”

In the first category of skills, *savoir-faire* i.e. according to employers the “*professionalism on stage*”, nearly a quarter of the respondents mentioned problems caused by a lack of knowledge of the technical equipment. Employers also stressed that young professionals do not know enough about the backstage requirements. Light and sound techniques were mentioned several times. Moreover, it was also stated that young professionals are not always aware of the different stages and processes of production, but as it was stated several times, this is probably true at the beginning of their careers since this knowledge comes with experience.

Most employers have brought up the difficulty that young professionals have problems in working as a team and often cannot meet the



complex challenges of collective work. As for the lifestyle, young professionals are not aware of the costs of life on tour, and life in a caravan.

Another aspect mentioned by a large number of respondents is that many young professionals are not prepared to perform five or more times per week. It was sometimes suggested that they were not trained for it and that some of them weren't even willing. In some cases, this can seriously hinder the professional relationship.

In spite of the young professionals' shortcomings in terms of administrative management, the employers were not able to agree on whether these young professionals should be asked to manage their own paperwork or to let professional administrators handle it. However, it was agreed that young professionals definitely need to be able to manage their career and employment conditions, therefore they should either be taught these skills or they should know how and where to find an administrator. This is expressed as a requirement from the employers' point of view: they asserted their need to have a qualified contact person at all stages of the negotiation. According to them, this prevents many misunderstandings regarding contracts, tax issues, and so on. Furthermore, minimal understanding of finances and budgeting is also needed and lacking in many cases.

Moreover, it has been mentioned that daily collaboration can be hindered by language issues: young French artists in particular seem to have a hard time using any other language than their own.

On the other hand, the sense of belonging to the circus world and professional involvement did not seem to be problem areas.

Nevertheless, all the interviewed employers agree on the fact that young graduates need time to adapt to the professional world. Adaptation is a learning process: some skills, aptitudes and the *savoir-vivre* cannot only be taught at school. Young professionals need time to successfully reconcile their talent and artistic vision with the opportunities of the sector. To quote one of the interviewees: *"Maybe they need time to grow up and mature after they graduate from school and get some advice from the professional sector, outside of the school world"*.

### Opinions on vocational schools training

The FEDEC wished to collect some feedback from the employers on school training and its impact on the integration into the working world. In order to get the employers' insight on that topic, a section of the questionnaire was devoted to the pros and cons of training in vocational schools. One of the issues raised by the respondents was that evaluating the knowledge and skills of a certain type of artist meant evaluating the school he/she has attended. The training in professional schools was stressed as being important, and so were the preparatory schools: employers have expressed the utmost respect for them.

Today, professional school training seems to be the *"normal"* path to becoming a circus artist, a fact none of the respondents even questioned. They stressed the fact that students not only acquire a number of specific circus-related skills at school but other abilities too, that will be very useful along their career, such as:

- the ability to initiate successful and fruitful exchanges in an international environment
- an overall professional attitude
- a follow-up from some schools to ease their students' introduction into the working world
- multidisciplinary and additional skills for the students
- a higher technical know-how
- originality
- conceptual and theoretical knowledge

To some extent, training and schools tend to “brand” the artists. Employers have noted certain types of attitudes in the young artists trained in vocational schools that could be improved:

- sometimes too much artistic research is undertaken at the expense of technical expertise
- young professionals sometimes overrate themselves after graduating
- they have unrealistic expectations concerning their future income
- as they have easy access to a lot of organisations and facilities, they tend to be less experienced when it comes to fighting for a contract
- they are not really trained to work in larger companies as there are almost no connections between schools and professional circuses
- schools are not focused on the market and its needs

In spite of this critical appreciation of professional school training, all respondents stated that training in a vocational school is an excellent starting point from which to successfully enter the diversified labour market.

Most of the negative feedback was expressed in reaction to the French context which according to the respondents, circus schools are well-established and recognized institutions in France and, many countries in Europe and around the world are not as fortunate and have to fight first and foremost for their training courses to be recognized.

However, it is interesting to mention that the employers answered this question by reflecting on the training situation in their countries before sharing their views about the privileged position of the French schools, which are regarded as a point of reference.

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**CONCLUSION**  
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After the results of the complementary survey of employers were summarized and added to those of the 2008 survey, a series of additional conclusions were expressed by the respondents, while some other topics and issues were brought up by both sample groups in 2008 and 2009.

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As far as casting goes, the 2009 results show slight differences in following respects:

1 In 2008, festivals are the top venue for casting. This was reasserted in the 2009 additional survey, while it also stressed the importance of informal networking and informal recommendations.

2 The non institutionalised selection processes correspond to an internal logic that are not random. Indeed, the 2009 additional survey results indicate that the selection process follows a logic based on informal networks. In the 2008 report, Pascal Jacob mentions “*preferential ties*”, yet the 2009 answers clearly show that the informal networking is more and more resorted to and increasingly structured.

3 Respondents to the complementary survey did not explicitly mention graduation shows as publicity tools helping young graduates to be hired. It has to be stressed that this type of

show was clearly mentioned in the first study as a real publicity tool and as having a great role in helping integration in the working world.

4 The 2009 survey helped to further enhance the listing of skills required on the labour market and to redefine them: as the refinement of notion of adaptability or the highlighting of the importance for young professionals to be able to “*blend in*”, which was linked to the “*feeling of belonging*”, a notion the circus world wishes young graduates to perpetuate.

When the respondents were asked to detail the specific problems faced while working with young professionals, a number of situations were brought up. But overall, employers confirmed that the mentioned skills and knowledge were usually acquired after graduation and that they were improved once put into professional practice. All respondents view the initial problems as challengers to be made through time by those who decide to remain active professional artists.

Listing the skills by order of importance brings out some important precisions about the employer's preferences and confirms the 2008 conclusion stating that in the end, the human qualities mentioned are as important as the artistic ones. According to the interviewed employers, technical and artistic skills are a prerequisite, but the importance given to human qualities is worth noting. However, the information about employers' preferences must be treated with caution: as previously mentioned, employers think that the pool they select from is composed of artists who have all reached the pre-required level. As a consequence, they select on the basis of additional criteria.

Finally, as regards the benefits of vocational school training, both surveys conducted with the employers showed that school training is not a decisive factor for professional collaborations. Today, young professionals are rarely directly cast by a programmer. What usually happens is that shows or acts are bought as ready-made products. In that case, there is no direct relation; employers stress that they don't always know each artist's individual skills. Nevertheless, they all agree on the fact that most of the outstanding products they are interested in are the work of artists trained in vocational circus schools.

This dichotomy appears in both surveys. We can therefore conclude that eventhough school training does not necessarily guarantee employment, artists who graduated from vocational circus schools will most probably play an essential role in the labour market in the next few years<sup>1</sup>.

Besides, creativity is also closely linked to the quality of the training and thus to the school itself. The matter of connections between the schools and the market has yet to be defined. All the recommendations resulting from the 2008 survey pointed at improving the connections between vocational schools and their graduates and the different segments of the market, especially by facilitating information flow.

At that time, the interviewees stressed the importance for the key players to get a better understanding of the training world, so as to develop and improve integration of their graduates into the working world. This was not mentioned in so many words during the 2009 additional survey, but the idea of a greater collaboration should be favoured between the labour market and vocational training was expressed.

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1 This was explicitly stated by the Casting Director of Cirque du Soleil during the seminar organised by the FEDEC "*Feat without mind or mind without feat? Which kind of training for which kind of artists for which areas of activity?*", at the Académie Fratellini in La Plaine Saint-Denis, on May, 23 and 24, 2008.



When the respondents were asked to detail the specific problems faced while working with young professionals, a number of situations were brought up. But overall, employers confirmed that the mentioned skills and knowledge were usually acquired after graduation and that they were improved once put into professional practice. All respondents view the initial problems as challengers to be made through time by those who decide to remain active professional artists.





02

SURVEY  
OF YOUNG  
PROFESSIONALS

THE NEW GENERATION  
OF CIRCUS ARTISTS








**MIROIR 2**



# 2009 | MIROIR PART 2 – SECTION 2

## SURVEY OF YOUNG PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS ARTISTS

**Miroir 2 – Section 2 is a consultation of former FEDEC member school graduates who are currently working as professional circus artists. The objective of the survey is to learn about their opinion on key skills of the circus artist today.**



Having surveyed the employers during the first phase of the project (Miroir 2 - Section 1), the aim of this second phase was to consult the other side of the market - the employees – in order to link the results of the two surveys and create a dialogue between them.

The survey was conducted among young circus artists, graduates of FEDEC schools with between 1 and 5 years' professional experience. FEDEC gave these young artists the opportunity to share their experiences and reflections on their training, but also their professional experience and further training in the years following their graduation. The aim of the survey is to get a feedback of young professionals on the use and utility of the key skills acquired during their training in professional contexts in order to rethink the contents of the curricula having in mind their suggestions for improvement.

The online questionnaire, realised by the associate sociologist and the FEDEC, was available in 3 languages (English, Spanish and French). The online questionnaire was composed in 3 parts: professional information, skills and personal information. In order to

have a better knowledge of the training and professional route, information on self-definition was collected but also information about their training, their career and their mobility.

The core of the questionnaire was composed by a series of questions concerning skills.

These questions focused on two aspects:

- firstly, whether the artists were taught the given skill during their training in the FEDEC members schools
- secondly, how useful they find that skill in their career

If the surveyed artists declared they did not learn the skill, a further question was asked in order to establish whether they were given the option to learn it at school or not. This additional question allowed us to see whether the training leading to the mastering of the skill was given by the school and if the fact that the student did not learn was the student's personal choice. Some additional information was asked in order to be able to gain an overview of the personal professional background of these young professionals. It was deliberately chosen to survey the students individually. Thus

the data presented here does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about the young professionals as a group: this was not the intention of the survey.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, the methodology of the research will be described in detail, and some of the difficulties encountered during the setting-up of the first survey among young graduates from vocational circus schools will be presented.

This is followed by the presentation of the results of the online survey in two parts:

- professional and personal background information of the artists
- their feedback about the skills

At the end of the chapter, a summary of the findings can be found.

## IDENTIFICATION OF THE POPULATION

The target population of the survey is composed by former graduates of the FEDEC schools. The total population surveyed is a group of former graduates who are no longer studying in any professional circus school, and who have worked and/or are currently working in the circus sector. The former students have been contacted thanks to the contact lists sent to the FEDEC by its member schools.

We do not have exact statistics nor a complete list of all students graduating each year from the schools, we can only make an estimation of the size of the population. In the introduction to the report on the survey among employers in 2008, Pascal Jacob estimates that there are a few hundred graduates per year. When compiling the database of young profession-

als who have studied at member schools, FEDEC concluded that the total population of young professionals with 1 to 5 years' experience - having graduated between 2003 and 2008 - is no more than 1200, *i.e.* about 200 graduates per year. This number is probably lower for the earlier years, given that some of the schools were created more recently.

## REACHING THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The online questionnaire was available from September, 18 to November 18, 2009, on a custom-built space on the website [www.fedec.eu](http://www.fedec.eu). The former graduates were contacted both by the FEDEC office via an electronic letter (e-letter), and by e-mail by the FEDEC schools directors. The questions were available in French, Spanish and English and young professionals were invited to answer in one of these languages. A totally secure system was built in order to allow a safe gathering of data and also to ensure to the respondents that the questionnaire is anonymous.

The online tool was composed by two parts in order to allow the consultation, and the setting up of a database of the former graduates: a personal page and the questionnaire. The personal page allowed the respondent to create his/her account, enter his/her contact and also upload promotional documents of his/her work, then to enter the questionnaire anonymously and answer the questions. This first page acted as an online CV giving the young professionals the opportunity to upload documents (photographs, short résumés, CVs) in order to allow their dissemination through the FEDEC network through printed or online publications and communication tools.

The decision to undertake the questionnaire online was motivated by a series of factors, the most important of which being time restrictions and the geographical distribution of potential respondents. Despite the problems encountered, which are described below, creating an online questionnaire was the quickest, most cost-effective available method to reach as many former students as possible, given their mobility.

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In total, 73 completed questionnaires were validated. Nevertheless, 173 young professional artists created a personal card and initiated the FEDEC database of former professional school students. Thirty seven of them used the uploading tool and did upload a lot of their visual material.

### PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

The decision to undertake the questionnaire online was motivated by a series of factors, the most important of which being time restrictions and the geographical distribution of potential respondents. Despite the problems encountered, which are described below, creating an online questionnaire was the quickest, most cost-effective available method to reach as many former students as possible, given their mobility. However, young professionals are not always familiar with surveys nor with the FEDEC network; a direct relationship between the FEDEC and former students is almost nonexistent.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, one of the significant limits of the use of an online survey was the lack of familiarity of the group not only with the FEDEC, but

also with the conventions of online questionnaires. Young circus artists are rarely solicited to participate in such research. The team invited one young artist to complete the online questionnaire, in order to assess how the questionnaire would be understood and received by young artists.<sup>3</sup> There were two major points of consideration arising from this experience: firstly, that former students are likely to reflect on their entire training history and do not make a distinction between the last school that they graduated from and the earlier schools that they attended. Secondly, that many of the skills are explained in terms that seem to be too abstract for them. Also, a further difficulty arose in relation to the definition of the skills: the young professional struggled when trying to assess whether the skills were acquired while training in school, and if they are useful in the professional context. This problem seemed to be a result both of the tool and of the difficulty to separate what was learned while training and what was gained through long-life learning. Questionnaires only capture a limited and structured segment of reality. This type of analytical and quantitative approach is quite rare in the field:

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1 In order to consider the young professionals as a group, a much larger representation of this population would need to be identified, and this would require greater resources than were available for the present study.

2 With the exception of those who have participated in the Circle project since its creation in 2007.

3 These test responses were not saved in the system.



very few studies on this subject have been conducted nationally or internationally,<sup>1</sup> a European study led by FEDEC is an innovative initiative. Also, language was probably still a barrier to many of the young professionals, despite the fact the e-mail containing links leading to the survey was written in three different languages. Even though most young professionals can generally speak English, the specific vocabulary of the questionnaire and the invitation e-mail may have played a role in excluding the opinions of certain groups especially those whose native tongue is neither of the three languages the survey was available in.

The survey also suffered from a problem common to sociological studies. It lacks a motivational incentive for the respondents, as they would gain no direct benefit from the results in any sense. The issue at stake is the improvement of training for future generations. Moreover, the rate of responses from young professionals was largely dependent on their relationships with their former vocational training school.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was composed of three main sections.<sup>2</sup>

- professional information
- skills
- personal information

In the third section, as well as classic socio-demographic data, such as year and place of birth and gender, a series of questions focused on mobility, and potential mobility, of the young professionals. The respondents were asked to specify their discipline and secondary discipline. These questions used the categorisation of disciplines established by the FEDEC *Directory of Circus Training Organisations – Europe and beyond*. Finally, there was a series of questions about their educational background: number of years spent in training, schools attended, and additional training and workshops they might have taken part in.

The professional section of the questionnaire focused on employment and continuing education. As far as occupation is concerned, a specific perspective based on self-definition has been adopted in order to give us an idea of the professional identity of the

young artists in relation to their main source of income. The exact question is: “*What is your main occupation? (The occupation that is currently your main source of income)*”. This is followed by a question about secondary occupation. The question about workshops gives us an idea of the continuing education undertaken and its contribution to the development of skills, although in some cases the very short time-span of these workshops does not allow us to draw any definitive conclusions regarding their actual impact. The workshops denominations may point out though the actual needs for further training.

## SKILLS

The core part of the questionnaire focused on the key skills of the young professionals. As mentioned earlier, these skills do not include an assessment of the artistic and technical know-how of the young professionals, but rather constitute additional key skills.

The starting point was the notion of competence. Competence refers to professional conduct: in other words, ways of working. Thus *skills are a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviour that lead to successful performance in a job, and which can be acquired by doing, learning, training and coaching*. The specific requirements of the sector should be identified in terms of skills.

The first step was then to identify the competencies and classify them between several groups. The construction of the list of skills was undertaken in several steps. Firstly, starting from the *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, European Reference Framework*<sup>3</sup> two of the main skills mentioned were adapted to the circus context:

- namely the specific civic and social skills
- the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

Another basis for the list of skills groups and their definitions was the *Council of Europe Competency Inventory*.<sup>4</sup> The list contains 10 skills, for which key skills and competence indicators are identified. This, again, was adapted to the circus context.

At the same time the schools themselves worked together on the list of major skills they think young professionals should acquire whilst training. The list proposed by the schools consists of the following skills:

- 1 outlook on professional environment
- 2 professional and technical competence
- 3 artistic skills
- 4 physical/athletic skills
- 5 teaching skills/supervision/training
- 6 managerial skills
- 7 interpersonal skills
- 8 communication and linguistic skills
- 9 personal attitudes
- 10 personal values

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 1 A publication on a similar subject is actually being completed based on the survey of Finnish circus graduates Riikka, Å., 2009 Survey about circus education and work life through the eyes of the Finnish circus graduates, *Finnish Circus Information Centre / Arts Council of Finland*.

2 A complete copy of the questionnaire is available in the appendix.

3 Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, European Reference Framework, *European Commission Education and Culture DG, Lifelong Learning Programme*, available to download at [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc42\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc42_en.htm)

4 Competency Inventory – Competency Management, *Council of Europe, Human Resources Publication* <https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=993922&SecMode=1&DocId=1113966&Usage=2>

Specific skills within these categories were listed by the schools.<sup>1</sup>

Taking a step further towards the final list in the questionnaire, half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> item and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> item were omitted. Technical and artistic skills were excluded for reasons already outlined, and “personal values” are not skills, but personality traits. Key skills were picked from the lists provided for each competence. A first draft of the list was thus created.

Next, the above list was compared to Pascal Jacob’s results, and to a series of pedagogical programmes from member schools.<sup>2</sup> The

following final list of skills is comprised of six major skills and 33 sub-category skills to be included in the questionnaire:

#### **Physical skills**

- the ability to keep fit and in the best condition to work
- a good understanding of your body
- the ability to judge the safety of a working environment





### **Reflection on your work and on that of others**

- the ability to analyse and interpret the performance of others
- the ability to recognise the elements that influence your work
- the ability to analyse your own work
- the ability to use circus vocabulary
- the ability to contextualise your performance within the field – to see where your work belongs
- the ability to speak in public about your work
- the ability to manage your professional development

### **Artistic knowledge – related fields**

- the ability to dance
- the ability to play a musical instrument
- the ability to act
- the ability to teach circus arts to others

### **Theoretical knowledge**

- knowledge of the dramaturgy of circus shows
- knowledge of the history and aesthetics of circus arts
- scientific knowledge linked to circus arts: physics, anatomy, psychology, etc.
- an understanding of the traditions and the concepts and principles of your discipline(s)

### **Creation of your work**

- the ability to create your own work
- the ability to use acting in your performance
- the ability to use music in your performance
- the ability to perform in multidisciplinary contexts
- the ability to be creative in your work
- the ability to create a costume that is both practical and fits in with the dramaturgy
- the ability to produce an act
- the ability to think about the lighting of your work
- the ability to be able to communicate with your audience through your work

### **Organisation of circus work and administration**

- team work
- foreign languages
- to be aware of the financial and legal context you work in and the practical implications
- management – organising/ managing time
- creation of promotion material for yourself
- digital video skills

In order to avoid similar answers to each skill of a group, the respondents were asked about the different skills in a random order.

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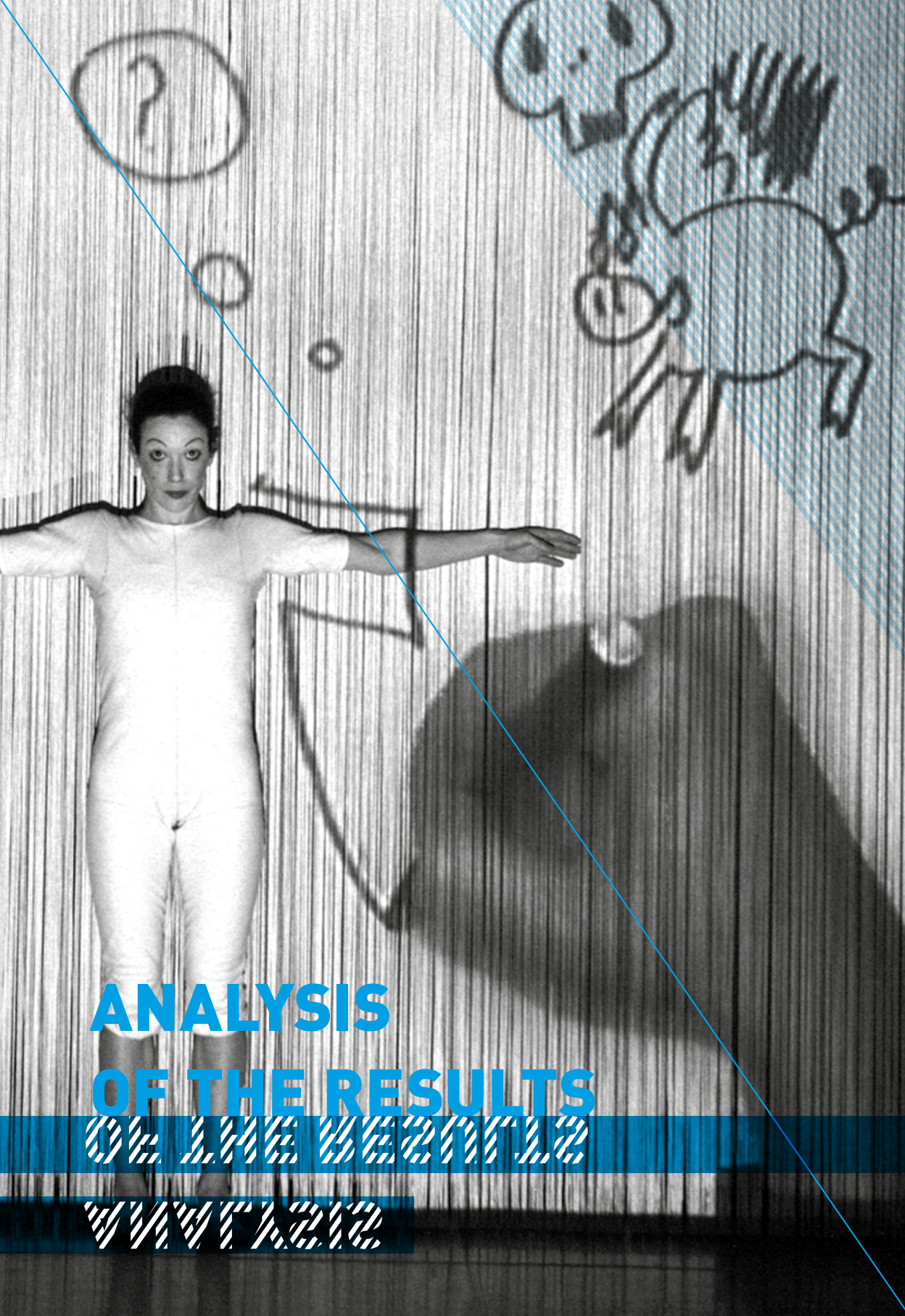
- 1 This document is not published in the appendix as it is an internal FEDEC document
- 2 These documents can be found on the websites of most member schools. Direct links to all member schools are provided on the FEDEC website - [www.fedec.eu](http://www.fedec.eu)

As mentioned earlier, two questions were asked about each skill. Firstly whether the skill was learned in school (it was possible to answer this question with either “Yes” or “No”). For each competence two sub-questions were asked according to the answer. If the respondent answered “Yes”, the sub-question allowed us to know how useful the skill has proven to be in his/her professional career on a scale of 1 to 6. If the respondent answered “No”, he/she was asked whether he/she had the option to learn the given skill in school or not.

At the end of the block of questions on skills, the last question was an open question, giving the respondents the chance to reflect on all of the questions so far, and to suggest other skills freely: answering the question *“Which skills would it have been useful to have learned at school, looking back with what you know from your professional experience?”*.

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**ANALYSIS  
OF THE RESULTS**



# ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the online survey will be presented in two main sections.



Firstly, the general background information of the respondents (the questionnaire sections on personal and professional information) is presented in order to give the reader a general idea of the composition of the pool of young professionals who completed the questionnaire. Please note that the general statistics are not taken from a random sample but based on the present respondents' answers, and therefore they cannot claim to be representative of the entire population of young circus arts professionals, neither of FEDEC graduates. Thus no conclusions about the whole population of young professionals can be made from the data presented below. The total response rate was 73, of which 11 were completed in English, 49 in French, and 13 in Spanish.

Secondly, complex analyses of the skills section of the questionnaire are presented, with a view to providing information and possible recommendations for schools to improve their training offer. The analysis is done in three steps: firstly, the implications of the answers are suggested and discussed; then a clustering of the respondents according to skills is presented; and finally, one of the most useful parts of the survey, the open question about the skills that young artists qualified as lacking, is presented in detail.

## BACKGROUND OF THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The first question that arises about the graduates surveyed is to what extent they are young professionals within the circus sector. Being a *professional* within the circus sector might have various meanings. In the framework of this survey, the following definition was applied: *persons who earn at least part of their livelihood from circus-related activities are professionals, given that all of them are former students of professional circus schools.* According to this definition, teaching is also a circus-related activity.

The table below presents the primary and secondary occupations of young professionals. We can observe that 66.3% of them are working in the sector full-time, 50.9% earn their entire living from the sector but excluding teaching activities, and the additional 15.4% teach different circus disciplines. On the other hand, 21.1% earn part of their livelihood from circus activities. Thus we can conclude that circus is the principal source of livelihood for 87.4% of young professionals who participated to the survey.

**TABLE 3** THE WAY THE RESPONDENTS DEFINE THEMSELVES PROFESSIONALLY:  
PRINCIPAL AND AND SECONDARY OCCUPATION

SELF IDENTIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS	SECONDARY OCCUPATION, CATEGORIES				TOTAL
	NO SECONDARY OCCUPATION	CIRCUS - EXCEPT FOR TEACHING	TEACHING CIRCUS	OTHER	
circus artist	19,70%		5,60%	2,80%	28,20%
circus artist with discipline	2,80%		1,40%	1,40%	5,60%
circus discipline	9,90%	8,50%	2,80%	4,20%	25,40%
circus - teacher	1,40%	1,40%		2,80%	5,60%
circus -other forms	9,90%		2,80%		12,70%
other	7,00%	8,50%	1,40%	5,60%	22,50%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50,70%</b>	<b>18,30%</b>	<b>14,10%</b>	<b>16,90%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

**TABLE 4** GROUPS BY PROFESSION  
ACCORDING TO THE SELF-DEFINITION OF RESPONDENTS

■ full time circus activity	50,9	%
■ teacher	1,4	
■ teacher and artist	14,0	
■ circus and something else	16,9	
■ teacher and other	4,2	
■ out of profession	12,6	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,0</b>	

Regarding the self-definition of participants in relation to the main occupation, 28.2% define themselves with the exact words “*circus artist*”, 5.6% add to this their discipline but keep the words “*circus artist*”. In total 33.8% identify themselves as circus artists or *specialized circus artists*. This information on self-definition is very revealing in terms of definition of their profession and the values instilled by their training.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the majority of FEDEC schools claims they intend to form circus artists. The self-definition of the young professionals here, provides direct feedback on whether (or not) the former students incorporate the definition when it comes to their professional identity.

Another quarter (25.4%) identify themselves by their discipline, 5.6% say that they are circus teachers, and 17.7% also identify themselves within the circus sector, but not within these terms: they either say that they are artists, or identify themselves with two disciplines at once, or add another profession into their principal profession (e.g. circus artist and dancer). This third category was formed to regroup less clear-cut cases. Persons who have declared to be teachers have been excluded from this analysis, as they do not play the same role in the market and it is a skill on its own in the skills list.

As for the rate of young professionals with a secondary occupation, it is 50% 16.9% have secondary occupations that are not related to circus sector. The secondary occupations related to circus have been divided into two groups: teaching on one hand and on the other hand other circus activities, such as production or creation, 18,3%. We see that the latter is somewhat more common than former (14.1% for the category “teaching”).

The information about professional identity and integration into the market presented above shows that most of the young professionals who participated in the survey are active within the market, and circus is their principal activity.

Focusing on how much professional experience the group of respondents has, the first graph shows that many more recent graduates responded to the survey (see graph 1). This is due to the fact that young graduates usually have a closer relationship with their former school and feel more concerned when it comes to participating to projects linked to the school. Moreover, some FEDEC schools do not have graduates corresponding to the entire target years (2003-2008) since they are younger. Also, it is very valuable to also gain an insight into the activities of mature professionals with over 3 years’ professional experience, even though a comparatively small number responded to the call.

The information about professional identity and integration into the market presented above shows that most of the young professionals who participated in the survey are active within the market, and circus is their principal activity.



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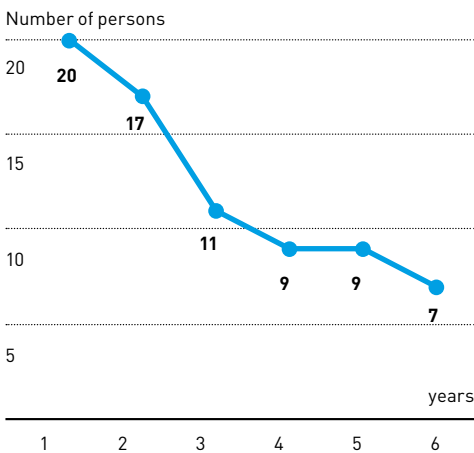
<sup>1</sup> In a sense, this points towards the 10<sup>th</sup> item on the skills list the schools created together (p. 46), which was later removed

Gender distribution of the respondents was as follows: 49.3% of the graduates were male and 50.7% female. These figures indicate that there is a higher representation of women. Although as far as the FEDEC is aware, no exhaustive statistics have been compiled in relation to young professional circus artists, Emilie Salamero, amongst others, calls attention to an over representation of men in schools and in the sector in general (Salamero, 2008). Marine Cordier estimates that men make up as much as around 66% of the whole profession (Cordier, 2007). Consequently, the rate of participation by gender is apparently balanced, but it is not compared to the reality of the profession. Men were less motivated to answer the survey.

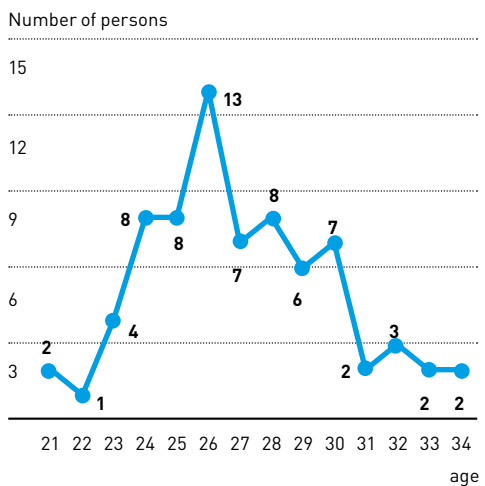
The graph below outlines the distribution of respondents' ages. Most of the professionals are between 25 and 30 years old. These figures correspond to our expectations, since all of the participants entered the profession in their early twenties.

As the circus arts are an itinerant art form, mobility plays a central role in the sector. Today, this mobility seems to begin during the training: respondents had lived in an average of 2.07 countries before they had finished their training. This means that they have moved at least once, and this is probably due to their will to complete their training in another country. This hypothesis is also underlined by the countries of origin of respondents as presented in the following bar chart.

**01 NUMBER OF YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AFTER GRADUATION**



**02 DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO THEIR AGE**

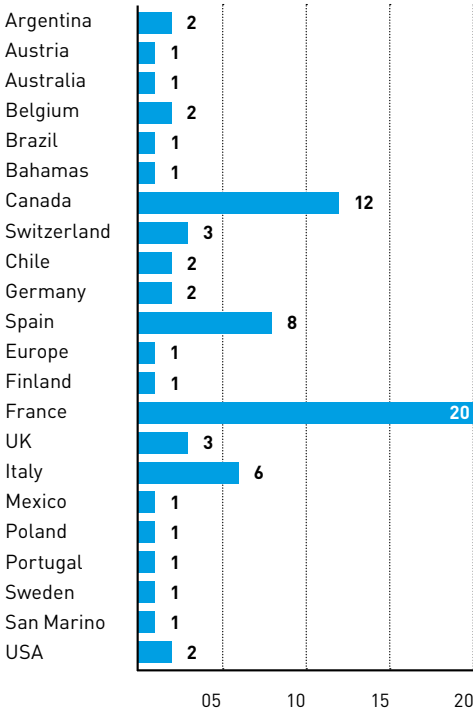


The bar chart shows that a lot of young professionals from France and Canada. They are exceptions in terms of mobility as they do not have to move to another country to access high quality training. As for the occupational mobility after the period following their graduation, following an average of 2.4 years' professional experience the young circus artists had worked in 3.73 countries on average. This high occupational mobility is partly enhanced by a high rate of multilingualism: 38.4%

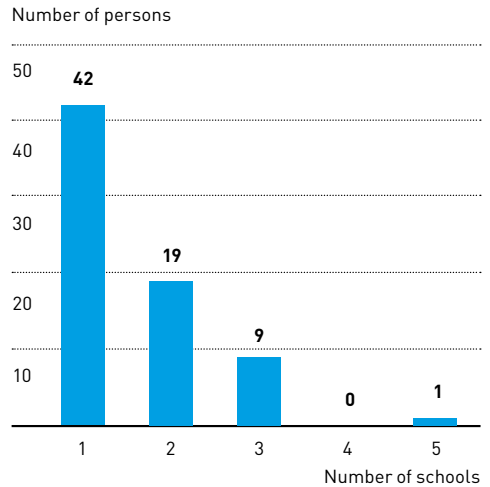
speak two languages, 26% speak three, and the remaining 24.7% speak four or more languages. One respondent speaks seven languages. Only 11% of respondents speak just one language: English or French.

As far as the educational paths of the young professionals are concerned, 68% only attended one school during their training. One person declared having attended five schools.

**03 COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF RESPONDENTS**



**04 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ATTENDED IN TOTAL**



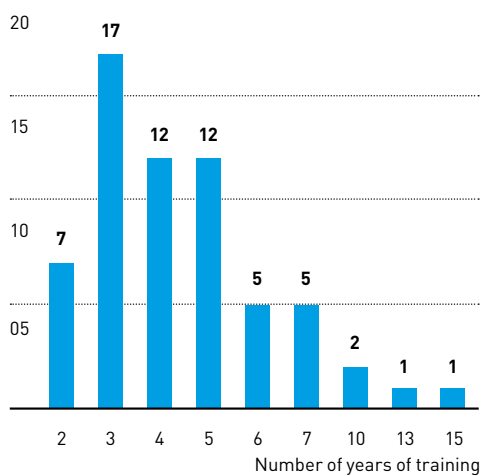




The number of schools attended reflects also the fact that students mostly trained for three to five years. The number of schools attended depends also from the student's training pathway before the vocational school. The level required for a vocational school can be achieved in formal training circumstances in preparatory schools, which explains longer periods of training.

## 05 NUMBER OF YEARS OF TRAINING

Number of persons



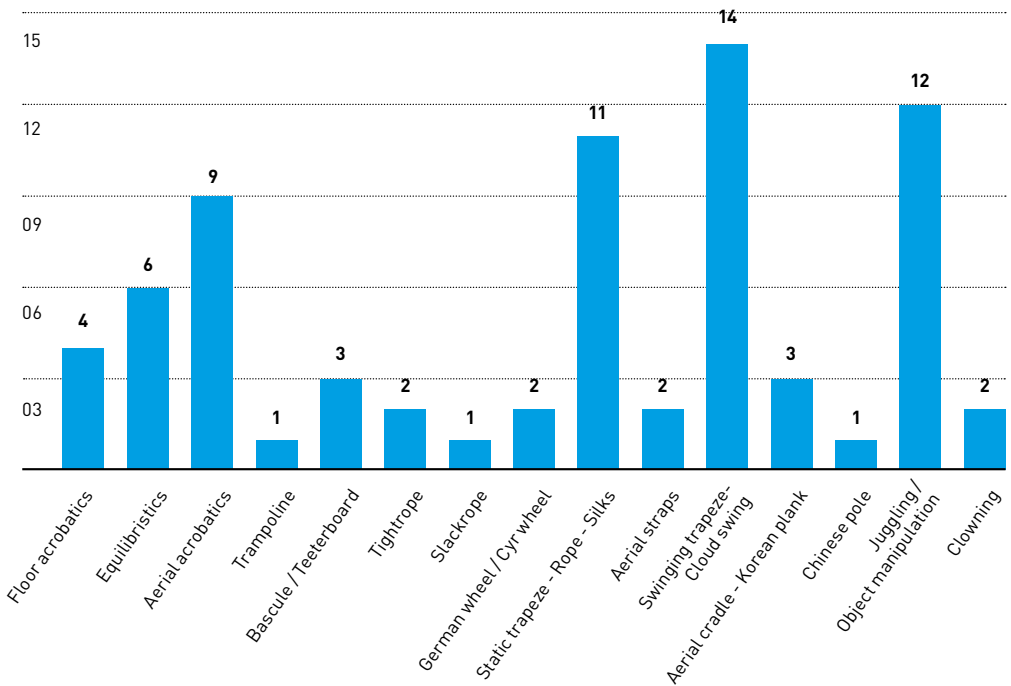
Regarding specialisation, the following remark on disciplines chosen was already made in the 2008 survey: *“trends in popularity and also the capacities of schools are significant*

*factors”* for the specialisation of young graduates. If a person wishes to learn a specific discipline, he/she will try to gain a place at the school which is known as specialised in.

In the pool of young professionals surveyed, the following disciplines are present:

**06 SPECIALISATION OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**

Number of persons

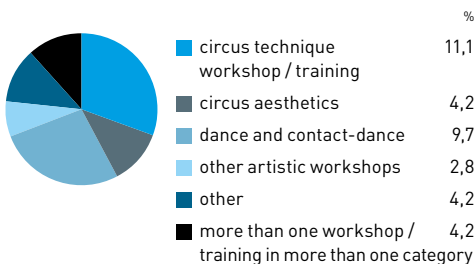


In the group of respondents there were no graduates specialised in Russian bar, Russian swing, highwire, unicycle, flying trapeze or equestrian art. The three most popular disciplines are swinging trapeze, followed by static trapeze, rope and silk, and finally juggling. Besides, 72% of participants declare having been trained in a secondary specialisation.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, 21.9% of the respondents stated that they participated in an exchange programme during their training. The overwhelming majority of them have subsequently found this experience useful during their career and employment.

Finally, in relation to tendencies in continuing education, 47% of respondents have participated in workshops. Apart from workshops on strictly circus related themes, the most significant percentage of artists have completed extra training/workshops in dance and contact improvisation.

**07 WORKSHOPS ATTENDED BY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**



**THE KEY SKILLS - THE REFLECTION OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**

The answers of the core part of the questionnaire dedicated to the key competencies will be presented in this section. In the next section, reflections of the young professionals on key competencies will be presented.

In the table below, all the skills mentioned in the questionnaire are recapitulated according to the theoretical groups in which they were classified while constructing the questionnaire. For all of the skills the percentage of participants who learned the given skill is presented, followed by the average of how useful that skill has proven to be in their professional careers (on a scale from 1 to 6). Subsequently, the percentage of those who declared not having learned the skill is presented, answering the question *“Have you learned the following skill during your training?”* along with a general indicator of whether there was any opportunity to learn that skill (as an answer to the question *“Did you have had the opportunity to learn this competence during your training?”*). The general indicator represents a mean score of all answers to the question where 0 represents “No” and 1 represents “Yes”.

Later, a series of graphs display the number of skills learned by the respondents in each category. The two sets of statistics allow us to gain an overview of the acquisition of skills according to the young professionals of circus arts.

1 A table containing the different combinations of specialisations is included in the appendix.

The general information that can be taken from the answers is that young professionals find the skills that they learned at school useful even very useful for their professional career: all the averages are over 4.2 on utility scale.

The three skills that obtained the lowest mean are in ascending order, digital video, history of circus arts, and playing a musical instrument. Other notable exceptions are: lighting, costume, recognising artistic influences, speaking in public, contextualising your performance in the field, foreign languages, digital video, financial and legal context, creation of promotion material, management of professional development, project coordination, playing a musical instrument and dancing. Here, where respondents did not learn a skill

at school, they answered that they did not had the opportunity to learn it during the training. Nevertheless, this information cannot be checked as it is the result of respondents' personal opinion.

Looking at the skills related to the body *i.e.* the physical skills, nearly all respondents answered they learned them and found them very useful. The skill entitled "A good understanding of your body" attained the highest mean score of all the skills in the survey.

Another important indicator is that 21% of the respondents said that they did not learn how to judge the safety of a working environment during their training.

	PHYSICAL SKILLS		
	KEEP FIT AND ABLE TO WORK	JUDGE SAFETY WHILE WORKING	BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR BODY
Ratio of persons who learned the given skill	0,932	0,792	0,958
Mean of usefulness on a 1 to 6 scale	5,382	5,526	5,725
Ratio of persons who did not learn the given skill	0,068	0,208	0,042
Mean of possibility where 0 means no and 1 means yes	0,400	0,200	0,000

	THEORETICAL SKILLS			
	DRAMATURGY OF CIRCUS SHOWS	SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE LINKED TO CIRCUS ARTS	HISTORY / AESTHETICS OF CIRCUS ARTS	TRADITIONS /CONCEPTS OF CIRCUS ARTS
Ratio of persons who learned the given skill	0,778	0,822	0,775	0,710
Mean of usefulness on a 1 to 6 scale	5,000	4,867	4,436	4,490
Ratio of persons who did not learn the given skill	0,222	0,178	0,225	0,290
Mean of possibility where 0 means no and 1 means yes	0,125	0,154	0,188	0,200

	CREATIVE SKILLS								
	PERFORM IN MULTIDIS- CIPLINARY CONTEXTS	USE ACTING IN YOUR PERFOR- MANCE	BE CREA- TIVE ABOUT YOUR WORK	COMMU- NICATE WITH YOU AUDIENCE	CREATION OF YOUR WORK	USE MUSIC IN YOUR PERFOR- MANCE	CREATE AND PRODUCE AN ACT	THINK ABOUT COSTUME	LIGHTING OF YOUR PERFOR- MANCE
Ratio of persons who learned the given skill	0,959	0,945	0,930	0,833	0,932	0,795	0,958	0,653	0,625
Mean of usefulness on a 1 to 6 scale	5,286	5,333	5,515	5,483	5,632	5,241	5,507	5,170	4,844
Ratio of persons who did not learn the given skill	0,041	0,055	0,070	0,167	0,068	0,205	0,042	0,347	0,375
Mean of possibility where 0 means no and 1 means yes	0,333	0,250	0,000	0,167	0,400	0,267	0,333	0,120	0,185

	ANALYTICAL SKILLS					
	RECOGNIZE ARTISTIC INFLUENCES IN YOUR WORK	SPEAK IN PUBLIC ABOUT YOUR WORK	CONTEXTUALIZE YOUR PERFORMANCE	ANALYZE YOUR OWN WORK	ANALYZE/ INTERPRET PERFORMANCES OF THE OTHERS	USE CIRCUS VOCABULARY
Ratio of persons who learned the given skill	0,739	0,589	0,662	0,877	0,819	0,944
Mean of usefulness on a 1 to 6 scale	4,784	4,628	4,532	5,297	4,763	4,925
Ratio of persons who did not learn the given skill	0,261	0,411	0,338	0,123	0,181	0,056
Mean of possibility where 0 means no and 1 means yes	0,222	0,100	0,167	0,222	0,154	0,000

	ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS						
	FOREIGN LANGUAGES	KNOWLEDGE IN DIGITAL VIDEO	TEAM WORK	FINANCIAL/ LEGAL CONTEXT OF YOUR WORK	CREATION OF PROMOTIONAL TOOLS FOR YOUR WORK	MANAGEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	COORDINATING PRODUCTION
Ratio of persons who learned the given skill	0,643	0,271	0,959	0,528	0,643	0,529	0,309
Mean of usefulness on a 1 to 6 scale	5,356	4,211	5,529	4,658	5,044	5,162	5,143
Ratio of persons who did not learn the given skill	0,357	0,729	0,041	0,472	0,357	0,471	0,691
Mean of possibility where 0 means no and 1 means yes	0,160	0,078	0,333	0,088	0,120	0,091	0,064



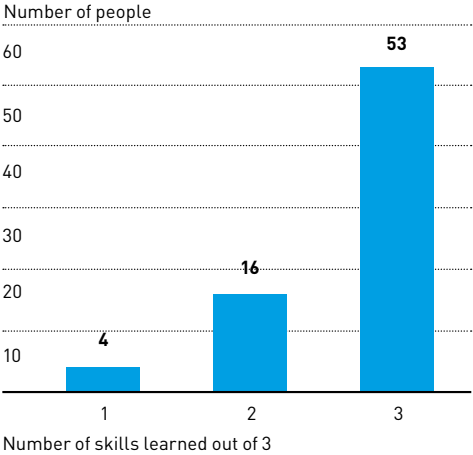
	RELATED ARTISTIC SKILLS		
	PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT	DANCE	ACT
Ratio of persons who learned the given skill	0,130	0,973	0,959
Mean of usefulness on a 1 to 6 scale	4,444	5,197	5,457
Ratio of persons who did not learn the given skill	0,870	0,027	0,041
Mean of possibility where 0 means no and 1 means yes	0,167	0,500	0,000

The second group of skills is the theoretical skills group. Two skills of the group focused on the conceptualisation of a show and backgrounds needed for creation work. The other two focused on direct theoretical knowledge. Thus 82% of the participants to the survey acquired the scientific background of circus disciplines, 78% said they learned skills in dramaturgy, 77% said they learned general history of circus arts, and 71% the history and concepts of their discipline. The latter two were judged to be relatively less useful than other skills of the group.

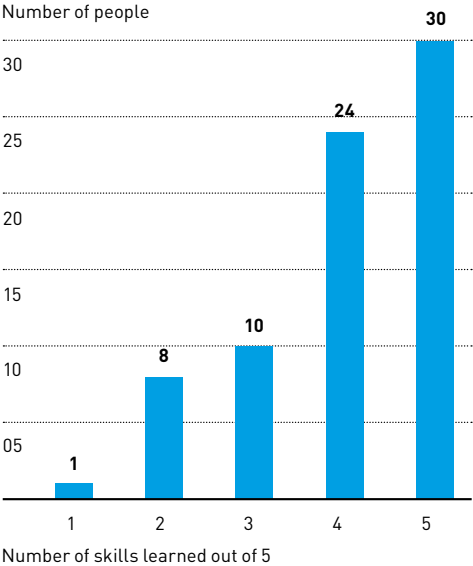
Looking at the group of creative skills which contains 8 items, we cannot dissociate their acquisition and their utility expressed by young professionals from the expectations of the employers. Indeed, the employers declare that this category of skills is the most important and the most valued by the professional sector.

One can argue whether or not creativity can be learned during the training in school. However, 93% of the young professionals indicated that they learned some precise elements of creative skills during their training. The core of creativity is creation generally speaking. The most common form of in the sector is the act. We observe that 96 % of participants declared they learned to create and produce an act, and 93% to create their own work. Both of these skills have a mean of over 5.5 on the utility scale. The only other skill that nearly all respondents said they acquired was to use acting in their performances (95%). Fewer respondents said they learned to use music in their performance, and to communicate with the audience. Still fewer indicated that they learned about two other aspects of creation: costume and lighting. Those who declared

**08 PHYSICAL SKILLS**



**09 THEORETICAL SKILLS**





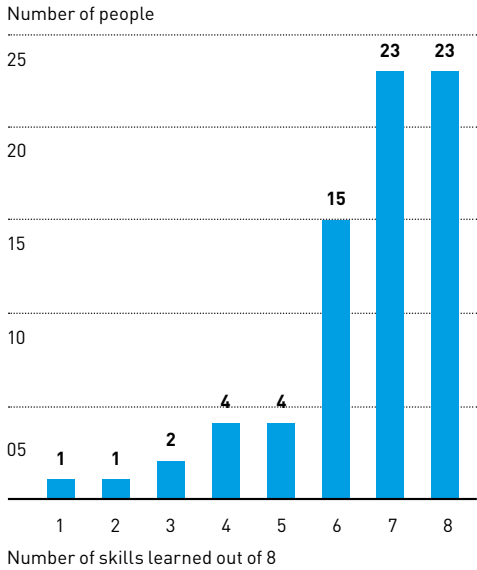
they did not learn the latter two skills, *i.e.* around a third of the total respondents, they said that they had no opportunity to learn it in their school.

Following the analysis of the skills in relation to the creation of one's own work, we'll now focus on the analytical skills. At first glance we can say that fewer people acquired these skills. It appears that the respondents find them less useful than the creative skills, and more useful than the theoretical skills.

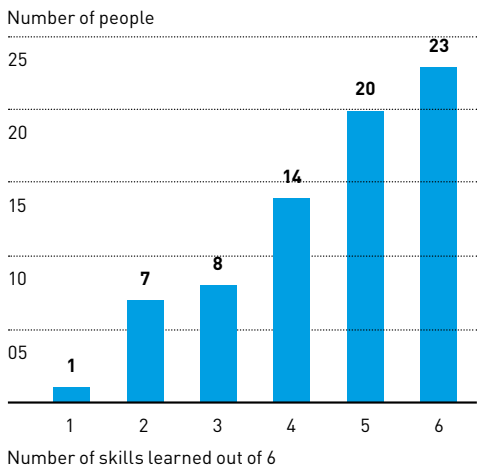
The exception is circus vocabulary; 94% of respondents declared they learned, while the utility mean is just under 5. Over half of the young professionals indicated that they learned 5 or 6 out of the 6 analytical skills. No skill stands out as being widely unavailable. The skill acquired by the lowest number of people is speaking in public about your own work.

According to this structured feedback, the skills that are taught the less in schools are the skills linked to organisation and management. Fewer than 75% of respondents stated they learned the skills related to organisation and management except team work, and only 31% stated they learned about coordination of different aspects of production. The opinion expressed by young professionals on their low level of mastering of coordination skills match with the remarks expressed by the employers of the sector. The 69% who said they did not learn this skill clearly indicated that they did not have the opportunity to do so (only 6.4% declared they had the opportunity to learn it at schools, but did not learn).

## 10 CREATIVE SKILLS



## 11 ANALYTICAL SKILLS



Digital video skills were learned by 27%, with the same rate of opportunity. However, it must be underlined that this skill is that the few who have learned it do not find it very useful in their professional life.

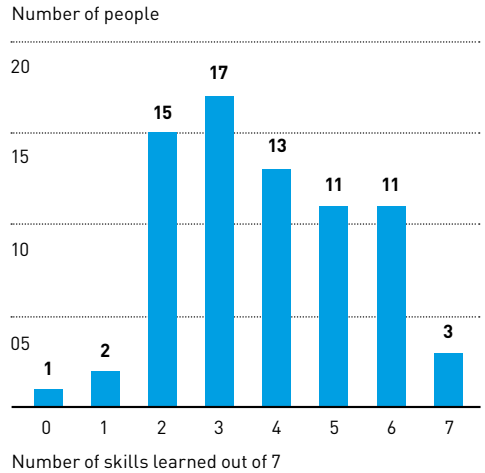
Relatively more have learned to create promotional material and to undertake financial aspects and management. The results suggest that those who did not learned the skills, stated they did not have the opportunity to acquire them in school.

The number of skills acquired by individuals ranges all the way from 0 to 7. These results suggest that the access to the skills related to organisation and management might need to be improved and taken into consideration for the pedagogical programmes and the making of the curriculum of the vocational schools.

Finally we will present the results obtained by the artistic skills associated with the circus arts field. Three such skills were included: acting, dancing and playing a musical instrument. Acting is the most mentioned: nearly every respondent acquired it as a skill, and respondents found it useful in their professional careers.

Dance is more delicate to analyse because although nearly all respondents studied dance in school, many have participated in dance workshops since graduating.<sup>1</sup> These results lead to the conclusion that perhaps the content of this teaching is not totally adequate for the needs of the young professionals. Very few have learned to play a musical instrument, and have not found this skill to be very relevant to their circus arts careers.

## 12 ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS



## 13 RELATED ARTISTIC SKILLS





Teaching was extracted from the related skills to stand alone as a separate skill because the self-definition of many of the respondents indicated this separation. 42% learned how to teach and found it quite useful.<sup>2</sup>

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- 1 Given that only two people indicated that they did not study dance, the 0.5 result concerning the utility of the skill in a professional context should not be interpreted in any way.
- 2 There was no significant relationship between learning how to teach during training and whether the person is currently teaching.

Finally, we regrouped the respondents into a quick cluster<sup>1</sup> to check for skill sets that are learned simultaneously.<sup>2</sup> The clustering provides a snapshot of the relationship between the different skills within the group of respondents. This useful multivariate tool allows us to view hidden relationships between variables.

Clustering leads to three distinct groups of young professionals. The table below presents the cluster centers for the three clusters according to the variables it was created from. There are 22 cases in both the first and the second cluster, and there are 29 cases in the third cluster.

The first cluster is a sub-group of participants who acquired the highest number of skills. All the scores (except for organisation and related skills) are over 0.9, which means that these respondents were only lacking approximately one skill from each group. Although organisation and related skills have lower scores, they still have comparatively high scores within the given skill set, as we have already noted. These participants consider all of their training (and the acquired skills) as being the most complete and useful to their career.

The second cluster gathers the participants who acquired least skills during their training. However, this sub-group of participants is more competent as regards of the organisation and the associated skills than in the third cluster. This result concerning the associated skills could be due to the fact that these participants come from schools where musical instruments courses are given.

The third cluster gathers the participants who received a very good basic training (physical, theoretical and creative skills), but in whom miss certain skills. This sub-group of participants masters on average a skill less at least than those of the first cluster. Their organisational skills are extremely poor. It is the sub-group with most members.

**TABLE 3 INDICATORS ON ACQUISITION OF SKILLS BY CATEGORY OF SKILLS AND CLUSTERS OF RESPONDENTS (Maximal value here is 1,00)**

skills	CLUSTER		
	1	2	3
physical	0,95	0,78	0,91
theoretical	0,92	0,45	0,89
creation	0,91	0,71	0,83
analytical	0,90	0,57	0,77
organisation	0,79	0,44	0,38
related skills	0,73	0,68	0,64

## OPEN FEEDBACK

The last question of this section asked the young professionals to provide open feedback. 73 out of 73 of the young professionals consulted had something to say, and most of them made more than one suggestion. The exact wording of the question was: “Which skills would it have been useful to have learned at school, looking back with what you know from your professional experience?”. Respondents did repeat some of the skills and skills that had been asked about earlier, and if they did so that suggests that the given skill is all the more important.

All the suggestions from this section will be presented in categories. Any further details are presented as sub-points within each category: these are part of the general category, or are paraphrases that do not have entirely the same meaning.

When the same meaning was suggested more than once, the number of times it was mentioned is indicated in brackets at the end of the point. It was later conceptualised that the number at the end of a main category means that the category was also mentioned as well as the sub-points.



### The suggestions had been organised into main groups, as follows:

- facilitation of professional integration
- financial and administrative knowledge
- additional circus knowledge
- related artistic skills

Firstly, many of the respondents would have liked to have been better prepared for professional integration. Generally they think that as recent graduates they lacked both information and skills to find work, and that the school should have prepared them better. One of the respondents described this knowledge simply as the one of “*the world outside school*”. Another suggested that he/she would liked to be “*better prepared for the world of work*”.

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- 1 Cluster analysis seeks to identify homogeneous subgroups of cases in a population to establish groups and then analyse group membership and differences between the groups. Quick clustering is one of the clustering methods based on analysis of variance (ANOVA) between the items. For further information see Cluster Analysis, Chapter 16, Noruis, M., J., SPSS 17.0 Statistical Procedures Companion, Prentice Hall, 2010.
- 2 As quick-clustering is not limited by sample size, we were able use this method to basically group together similar individuals within our relatively small sample group.

The items of this group were the following:

**Better knowledge of the circus sector / the market (4)**

**Promotion of one's work (10)**

- know how to present one's show (4)
- know how to sell one's show (8)
- improve knowledge of digital video (8)
- improve knowledge of web-design (2)

**Know how to face unemployment**

- Networking (13)
- know how to talk to programmers (2)
- strategies in talking to an employer

**Self-analysis**

- know where you stand in the artistic context
- be able to step back from your own performance

**Career management**

- know your price on the market (3)
- draw limits, and say no, when you need to



As a second group, the young artists mentioned that they would have liked to learn much more about the management and administrative aspects of their work. Specific areas where improvements are needed according to their experience and expectations are the following:

**Administration of work (10)**

- international tax laws

**Financing of a production (14)**

- learn about grant applications (5)
- financial aspects of having a tent

**Legal background of artistic work (3)**

**Logistics**

- where to buy equipment

**Knowledge of technical terms in other languages**

Thirdly, as for the additional circus knowledge, skills and knowledge connected directly to daily circus work are listed:

**Preparation for an itinerant life-style**

**Preparation for working in groups/companies and team work (3)**

**Deeper knowledge of lighting and sound techniques (7)**

**Better understanding of safety issues (4)**

- rigging (2)

**Better acrobatic foundation**

**Discipline and self-discipline**

**How to adapt your act**

**Foundations for a second act (3)**

In the survey with young professionals, a limited number of theoretical skills or related artistic skills were mentioned (7 skills all in all). It is very interesting to note that the 3<sup>rd</sup> category of skills (related artistic skills) young artists suggested is a much longer list of artistic skills associated with the field. This category contains skills and knowledge which could be qualified as abstract or as connected skills. The number of skills mentioned here is rather high, but few of them were mentioned more than ones or twice. We notice that one of the categories of skills here is relative to a particular discipline. The suggestions for a bigger access to the following skills were made:

**More milestones in creating a performance (3)**

- deeper knowledge of circus writing (3)

**Mise-en-piste (circus staging)**

- choreography
- scenography (2)
- dramaturgy

**Costume creation: conception and sewing (3)**

**Ability to play a musical instrument (5)**

- music (2)

**Knowledge of the circus field and related art forms**

- circus (2)
- theatre and directing (2)
- film history
- street arts

**Anatomy**

- understanding of the body
- body analysis
- body management

**Dance (4)**

**Teaching different circus techniques (3)**

**How to build your own equipment**

**More "passing" - group juggling**

**Mechanics**

**Sign-language**

**Independent research**

**Yoga**



**CONCLUSION**  
CONSTRUCTION



# CONCLUSION OF MIROIR 2- SECTION 2

The aim of the online consultation of young professionals was to create a dialogue between the FEDEC, the young graduates from which they graduated from. The dialogue was made possible through a posterior evaluation of the key skills learned during their training in vocational schools.

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The survey allowed the young professionals to express themselves anonymously and to freely formulate suggestions to improve training curricula for the future generations of students. They could reflect on their professional experience (1 to 5 years) and on new skills.

The results of the survey indicate that the respondents learned the majority of skills mentioned in the questionnaire at school. Moreover, the young professionals find these skills useful to their work career. The mobile and polyglot participants were very eager to communicate their opinions in the open question. Their feedback was very complete and precise, allowing their suggestions to be classified into several groups. Their suggestions are very detailed for skills that they believed they hadn't acquired, such as organisational and management skills and artistic skills related to circus. Their suggestions are very detailed for skills which they stated not to have acquired like organisational and management skills and artistic skills related to circus.

Thus, it can be concluded that the students' opinions on the weaknesses of their training are in accordance with their suggestions.

Unfortunately, due to the low response rate, we were not able to analyse the skills in relation to the respondents' background information nor to draw conclusions on the whole population of young circus professionals.



03

DISCUSSION





# FINAL CONCLUSION

FINAL CONCLUSION

# FINAL CONCLUSION

## MIROIR | PART 2 - SECTIONS 1 AND 2

The following section aims to initiate a dialogue between the two principal actors of the labour market (employers and employees), with the additional contribution of the FEDEC representing professional circus schools. It will be based on the juxtaposition of the problems identified by the sector and questions and suggestions formulated by the young professionals. A comparison between the results obtained from the young professionals and the categories of skills identified by the employers will be the first element of the dialogue.



First of all, it is important to underline the high degree of coherence between the contents of the schools' teaching programmes, the skills the employers want when employing young professionals, and the skills the young circus professionals described as essential to be imparted during training. These three elements agree that essential skills are technical knowledge, artistic quality and the human factor. The results of the two surveys allow us to confirm that these three sets of skills are universally present among graduates. The richness of the present study lies in the debate and the suggestions made on the complementary and related skills that the artists need to acquire in order to integrate more easily into the professional circus world in Europe and beyond.

To return to the skills required of young circus professionals in more detail, the employers stressed the following skills: professionalism on stage, the ability to work easily within a team and the capacity to create bonds and relationships in a community. The latter skill was not mentioned by the young professionals. As far as professionalism on stage is concerned, the main issues are safety and equipment. A quarter of the employers underlined difficulties because of the lack of knowledge of the young professionals in this area. Indeed, 21% of the young professionals stated that they had not acquired the skill of evaluation of the level of safety in a working environment. Moreover, the control of safety and the equipment was mentioned 6 times by the young professionals as a skill that should be better taught.

another skill which deserves to be developed within the curricula is knowledge of lighting and sound techniques. The former students did not mention this skill as such, but rather centred on the lighting techniques of their own shows. 63% of the participants learned about lighting, and this skill was mentioned 7 times in the open-ended question as missing from the curricula. It is also not by chance

that young artists participated in training and additional dance workshops after graduation: they underlined that dancing skills had not been developed enough at school. In answer to the open-ended question, they also came back to the fact that this skill was missing in their school curricula. The efforts of young professionals underline that this skill is really needed for a career as a professional circus artist.



The expression “*to work easily in a team*” personal values and attitudes, such as open-mindedness, flexibility and external skills for interacting within the work. Some employers asserted that teamwork was a problem for a large number of young professionals. This statement seems to be confirmed by the results obtained in the survey: in spite of the fact that 96 % of them declare that they learnt this skill, three people declared that teamwork was not developed enough at school. This probably can be explained by the fact that teamwork is approached through from various angles and at various levels.

Consequently, it would be interesting to examine in detail how teamwork or work in groups is taught within schools and how it can be applied in professional contexts (collective creations, adaptation within a company, etc.). Lack of knowledge of the requirements of an itinerant lifestyle was also raised. Students as well as employers mentioned it as a field where lack of relevant skills can be a problem during collaboration. The next issue is administration and management. The schools’ dilemma has already been mentioned: whether students should be taught to manage and organise their work or not. Looking at the former students’ feedback, the answer is a clear “Yes”. These skills are generally poor and nearly half of the respondents mentioned them in the open question. The definitions of the skills that the young professionals feel they are lacking are sometimes too general, but in other cases, where the students have learned some general skills, they specified more precise requirements. This is the case for administration and paperwork for instance: young professionals expressed a wish to learn more about international tax laws.

Promotion material is a common issue for both the sector and the young professionals. Employers mentioned that they constantly use promotion tools and they also insisted on the importance of informal channels as communication tools for casting and for their selection of shows. However, young professionals stated that they would have been very happy to have a better understanding of the market when graduating. The most significant open feedback focuses on this field.

Consequently, the majority of the young professionals underline the lack of possibilities during their studies for building professional networks, which highlights that the role of structured but informal networks identified by the employer is of capital importance in the sector. In the field of direct promotion techniques, many young professionals would have liked to have had better skills and knowledge especially in digital video and website creation in order to create their own promotional material. However, the participants who had access to this type of training did not find it very useful in general. Thus, a careful approach to introducing this type of course into the curricula is crucial: the specific course must serve the actual needs of students.

When the employers were asked to rank selection criteria, creativity scored the highest. From the survey of young professionals, creativity was the skill with the highest rate of acquisition. This suggests a harmony between schools and the broader sector about the primordial importance of this skill.

In general, the sector is satisfied with young graduates and although professional integration is not always smooth from the outset, young professionals eventually learn the skills that they are lacking through practice. Of course, this could be improved by preparation at school. The results of this survey aim at providing the schools with useful starting points for their reflections on and evaluation of these issues.

Of course it is up to each school to decide whether these skills should form part of their curricula or not. But it seems that the young artists think that school is the best place to learn these skills. According to them, the teaching of these skills in vocational schools would prepare them for their professional life in a more optimal way.

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## TO IMPROVE PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION CHANNELS

FEDEC's mission is to provide a common language for dialogue between professionals from the circus sector, and especially between schools, students, professional artists and their current or future employers.

FEDEC can play the role of facilitator in order to help improve communication between the sector and training institutions. As a European and international network representing interests of vocational schools, FEDEC is in a position to initiate the construction of more structured bridges between the two parties. Some specific recommendations that have been highlighted as relevant by the studies conducted over the last two years. As all communication is at least two-directional, the market also needs to approach the schools in order to create a fruitful dialogue. To achieve this, the visibility of the schools needs to be strengthened.

**The following actions should be undertaken or continued by the FEDEC to increase visibility:**

- continue online update and newsfeed about member schools - [www.fedec.eu](http://www.fedec.eu)
- continue to present the pedagogical and artistic work of the FEDEC schools through communication tools and within the framework of international pedagogical and artistic exchanges and professional festivals

- maintain a special section of the FEDEC website dedicated to graduates of member schools
- undertake studies and finance research on transversal themes of vocational training in circus arts
- organise regular FEDEC roundtables between the education and professional sector
- improve the relations of circus arts schools with other art schools or departments to create bridges with other performing arts (dance, theatre) in order to share the reflexions on topics such as skills or professional inclusion
- to establish privileged contacts with other European networks working for the improvement of the vocational training

Secondly, it would be useful for the schools to follow former students more closely. This would increase the schools visibility within the professionals' networks, would allow easier integration of new graduates, and would also keep the school informed of developments in the sector. The FEDEC has to act as a link taking part in the communication between member schools, their graduates and the sector through mutualised tools.

Finally, we would like to emphasise Pascal Jacob's recommendation for the creation of an international glossary of technical terms. This is not a project that would single-handedly provide opportunities for communication, but it would help to improve

the quality of communication between the different segments of the sector, through the facilitation of the highly technical communication already taking place between the various actors of the field.

### TO IMPROVE TRAINING

**The present analysis and the skills inventory established can be used as:**

- a tool for the FEDEC schools for future reflexions on the professional integration of young graduates
- a reference point gathering key skills for professional artists in order to facilitate further professional development
- a tool for employers and other professionals of the circus arts for successful human resources management at all stages of the selection (recruitment, staff development etc.).

**The young professionals surveyed made some suggestions about how to resolve some of the issues identified in the open question:**

- ask graduating students to write a project and to set up a fundraising strategy for the given project

- formally analyse the role and the performance of each student in the graduate shows
- provide more opportunities for internships and other forms of direct experience in the professional sector
- provide more opportunities for students and teachers to see shows and analyse them provide more formal or informal opportunities to participate in exchange programmes between schools
- provide consultations and lectures with health professionals on psychological and physical aspects within the circus artist profession

The FEDEC wishes to continue the work initiated in this study and to question skills which we divided here into *savoir-faire*, *savoir-être*, and *savoir-vivre*. If the first series of skills more obvious to characterise, the two other are related to personal values and attitudes and are more difficult to qualify but also to transmit because they do not have theoretical or technical support. They are linked to education and can be transmitted through specific pedagogical approaches and relations.

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The improvement of training in vocational circus schools also goes through a more significant development of these two “knowledges”.

The Fresh Circus seminar, which was organised by the Circostrada network, and took place September, 25 and 26, 2008, at Parc de la Villette in Paris, also made recommendations regarding the improvement of training, highlighting the importance of experience and the development of the three knowledges. The participants, major actors from the circus arts sector, concluded that to improve training there should be more artistic exchanges between students, more master classes and residencies or internships in private companies. They also concluded that not all skills can be taught through formal education, and that some skills are only learned through experience.

The FEDEC agrees with the conclusion that young professionals need time and experience to learn. After the training in vocational schools, that are at the beginning of the employment chain, the young graduate should go through an accompanied professional integration.

**Concrete actions of the FEDEC and its members to facilitate integration are the following:**

- better dialogue and listening between the schools and the labour market to favour mutual comprehension through various forms of meetings
- promote and create more meetings between current students, former graduates and professional artists to rethink the current models of professional integration and the professional circus artists' working conditions

- create projects and support students to discover the production techniques, touring, communication, administration and technical requirements and related fields
- allow the acquisition of skills within the course of different types of professional 'immersion', in the framework of partnerships between schools and the sector (performance or production venues)
- support partnerships between schools and professional organisations to create a pilot project "First contract after training"
- The demands and supply in terms of contracts and other forms of professional integration could be gathered in a data base. It will facilitate the contact between the young graduates and the professional organisations that produce or host shows and companies.



**SUGGESTIONS**

IN THE FUTURE

# SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

During the present surveys, several questions were raised. The list below suggests some issues connected to our topic that could be used for future FEDEC researches:

## **THE ROLE AND LIMITS OF THE SCHOOL IN PROFESSIONAL INSERTION**

Which ways, which networks? Which relations with the private companies? What productions should be initiated during the training and which touring should be proposed? New researches could be initiated in order to specify the effective differences in professional integration, according to the contacts and opportunities initiated during the training period.

## **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PROFESSIONAL IN THE CIRCUS SECTOR?**

The question of professional identification briefly treated in the section dealing with the young professionals' background is very interesting from the point of view of professional identity as well as its relation to the source of income.

## **WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIES USED BY THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TO POSITION THEMSELVES IN THE SECTOR?**

Danner and Galodé underline the large variety of the activities and the types of employment in the sector of visual arts. It is all the more present in the sector of the circus arts. These two authors examine the positioning strategies, it would be interesting to study the strategies which the circus professionals use to find their place in such a heterogeneous sector.

## **VOCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL RETRAINING AND RECONVERSION TO RELATED OCCUPATIONS**

The recalling of typical trajectories of individuals could also help to draw up a picture of the sector, which is currently undergoing changes and mutations. The reconversion could be approached as well as the most common choices of reconversion within different trades related to circus or within related professions in the following fields: pedagogy, backstage techniques and rigging, communication, production or touring.



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# BIBLIOGRAPHY

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# APPENDIX



# APPENDIX

## SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF CIRCUS SECTOR

Questionnaire used in 2008 and 2009 survey

### Context

- 1 Company / Organisation Name
- 2 Area of activity within the sector (circus, cabaret etc.)
- 3 Size of the organisation  
seating capacity .....  
number of employees .....
- 4 Status of the organisation  
 exclusively private  
 exclusively public  
 public-private partnership  
 other .....
- 5 Regularity of performances  
performances every .....

### Requirements

- 6 On average, how often do you hire new artists and how many do you hire each time?  
.....artists every .....
- 7i Do you have a casting department?  
 Yes  No
- 7ii If yes, how is it structured?

- 8 Where do you mainly search for your artists?  
 Festivals  
 Sports competitions  
 Agencies  
 Other .....
- 9 What guides your choices when selecting?
- 10i Do you hire artists that have graduated from circus schools?  
 Exclusively  
 Sometimes  
 Never
- 10ii Why, or why not?
- 11 Do you train artists for specific requirements?  
 Yes  No  
 Other .....
- 12 Would you consider engaging an external organisation in order to help you create a show?  
 Yes  No  
 Other .....

## Expectations

- 13 What are your expectations (artistic, technical, human etc.) of your artists during a show?
- 14 What do you think the expectations of the market in general are?
- 15 What are the expectations of your area in particular?
- 16i In your opinion, what are the advantages of school training?
- 16ii What are the disadvantages?
- 17 What do you expect most from an artist? Please place these qualities in order of priority (where 1 is most important and 5 is least important):
- Availability
  - Open-mindedness
  - Creativity
  - Exceptional technical level
  - Adaptability to the requirements of your sector (daily life, frequency of performances, ability to work as a team)
- 18 Do you have any criticisms to make regarding the artists available to work in general, and working in your area in particular?
- 19 Do you think that it would be useful for artists to have entrepreneurial skills?
- Yes       No
- Other .....
- 20 Do you think that it would be useful for artists to have skills as a circus arts teacher/trainer?
- Yes       No
- Other .....
- 21 What proportion of male to female artists do you hire, on average?
- .....% male
- .....% female

## Resources

Apprenticeships offer students the possibility to complete professional work experience during their training. This allows future artists to evaluate the needs of companies, and to understand the daily demands of this field.

- 22 Would you support the integration of apprentices into your company?
- Yes, on a regular basis
- Yes, occasionally
- No
- 23 Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

## FEDEC SEMINAR 2008

“Feat without mind or mind without feat?”

Which kind of training for which kind of artists for which areas of activity?,”

May, 23 and 24, 2008, Académie Fratellini, La Plaine Saint-Denis (France)

### LISTE OF PARTICIPANTS TO THE SEMINAR

#### Moderators

Mr **Pascal Jacob**<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Philippe Haenen**,

Ecole Supérieure des Arts du Cirque<sup>BE</sup>

#### Invited

Mr **Christophe Aebi**, Cirque Starlight<sup>CH</sup>

Ms **Agathe Alie**, Cirque du Soleil<sup>CA</sup>

Mr **Artyom Badalian**, Art of Artistic<sup>DE</sup>

Mr **Guy Carrara**, Cie Archaos<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Georg Daxner**, Festival Winterfest<sup>AT</sup>

Mr **Marc Fouilland**, Circuits – Scène conventionnée pour les Arts du Cirque<sup>FR</sup>

Ms **Line Giasson**, Cirque du Soleil<sup>CA</sup>

Mr **Carl Gustag Jernström**, Cirkus Finlandia<sup>FI</sup>

Ms **Claude Lemay**, Dragone / Productions du Dragon<sup>BE</sup>

Mr **Johan Mast**, Vlaams Centrum voor Circuskunsten<sup>BE</sup>

Mr **Joan Montanyes**, Teatro Circo Price<sup>ES</sup>

Mr **Gaëtan Morency**, Cirque du Soleil<sup>CA</sup>

Mr **Alex Nicolodi**, Turtle Production<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Arie Oudenes**, European Circus Association<sup>EU</sup>

Mr **Alain Pacherie**, Association française pour le Cirque de Demain<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Frank Reinhardt**, Wintergarten<sup>DE</sup>

#### Observers

Mr **Walter Ferrero**, Cirkus Cirkör<sup>SE</sup>

Mr **Martin Gerbier**, Centre des Arts du Cirque Balthazar<sup>FR</sup>

Ms **Anny Goyer**, Ecole Nationale des Arts du Cirque de Rosny-sous-Bois<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Ivar Hecksher**, Danshögskolan<sup>SE</sup>

Mr **Alain Laëron**, Académie Fratellini<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Marc Lalonde**, Ecole Nationale de Cirque<sup>CA</sup>

Ms **Anne-Elisabeth Leboulanger**, Atoucirque<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Donald Lehn**, Escuela de Circo Carampa<sup>ES</sup>

Ms **Martine Leroy**, Centre des Arts du Cirque Balthazar<sup>FR</sup>

Mr **Tim Roberts**, The Circus Space<sup>UK</sup>

Mr **Dominique Toutlemonde**, Ecole Nationale de Cirque de Châtelleraut<sup>FR</sup>

Ms **Camille Vlérick**, European Federation of Professional Circus Schools -FEDEC<sup>EU</sup>

## COMPLEMENTARY SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF CIRCUS ARTISTS

Liste of persons surveyed in Auch (France), Budapest (Hungary), Zagreb (Croatia) and by e-mail and phone

1. Ms Leila Jones, Roundhouse<sup>UK</sup>
2. Ms Evelyn Daxner - Eghartner, Winterfest<sup>AU</sup>  
Mr Georg Daxner, Winterfest<sup>AU</sup>
3. Mr Paco Bialek, La Cellule<sup>FR</sup>
4. Ms Cécile Beretta, Cie Pré-occupé<sup>FR</sup>
5. Ms Kiki Mukkonen, Subtopia<sup>SE</sup>
6. Mr Wille Christiani, Circus Arts – Artist Production Consulting<sup>SE</sup>
7. Ms Ali Williams, NoFitState Circus<sup>UK</sup>
8. Mr Wim Claessen, Festival Circo Circolo<sup>NL</sup>
9. Mr Tomi Purovaara, Finnish Circus Information centre<sup>FI</sup>  
Mr Riku Lievonen, Finnish Circus Information centre<sup>FI</sup>
10. Mr George Martinez, La Grainerie<sup>FR</sup>
11. Ms Claire Peysson, La Cascade<sup>FR</sup>
12. Ms Mathilde Ochs, Scènes de Cirque<sup>FR</sup>
13. Mr Philip Haenen, Franco Dragone productions<sup>BE</sup>
14. Mr Arie Oudens, European Circus Association<sup>UE</sup>
15. Mr Yannis Jean, SCC Syndicat du Cirque de Création<sup>FR</sup>
16. Ms Zsafia Molnár, TRAFÓ, Contemporary Art House<sup>HU</sup>
17. Mr Ivan Kralj, Festival Novog Circusa<sup>HR</sup>
18. Ms Gallyas Veronika, Cirkuszinhaz<sup>HU</sup>
19. Mr Krisztián Kristóf, International Circus Festival of Budapest<sup>HU</sup>
20. Ms Anne Kumps, Les Halles<sup>BE</sup>
21. Mr Urs Pilz, Festival International du Cirque de Monte-Carlo<sup>MONTE-CARLO</sup>

## SURVEY OF YOUNG PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS ARTISTS 2009

### On line questionnaire

\* = Obligatory

#### Step 1 - Professional

01 What is your main occupation? \*

(The main occupation that is the main source of income for you currently)

02 Do you have a secondary occupation?\*

Yes  No

→ Yes

03 Which? .....

04 What is your current job-market status? \*

- full-time employment
- part-time employment
- artistic contract
- self-employment
- unemployed
- other .....

→ other (\*)

.....

05 Have you followed any vocational training/ workshop since your graduation? \*

Yes  No

→ Yes

What workshop(s) / training (s)?

Please name the workshops/trainings, describe what did you learn and in what way it was useful for your professional career.

06 How many hours did you spend in total in these workshop(s)/ training(s)?

Please estimate. ....

07 What countries did you work in over the last two years/ since your graduation?

.....

Country 1 \*

.....

other countries

If the country is not in the list, please write it down here

Country 2

other countries.....

Country 3

other countries.....

Country 4

other countries .....

Country 5

other countries .....

#### Step 2 - Skills 1

01 Did you learn the following skills while you were doing your training?

02 How to keep fit and able to work \*

Yes  No

→ Yes: Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ No: Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

03 Dramaturgy of circus shows \*

Yes  No

→ Yes: Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ No: Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**04 To be able to recognize the artistic influences in your work \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**05 To play a musical instrument \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**06 To speak in public about your work \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**07 To perform in multidisciplinary contexts\***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**08 To use acting in your performance \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**09 The scientific knowledge linked to circus arts - physics, anatomy, physiology etc. \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**10 Creation of your work \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**11 Judge the safety of a working environment \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**12 To contextualize your performance in the field and to see what you are doing belongs where \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**13 To create and produce an act \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**14 To use music in your performance \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**15 To be able to communicate with your audience through your work \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**16 Foreign languages \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**17 Knowledge in digital video \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**Step 3 - Skills 2**

**01 Did you learn the following skills while you were doing your training?**

**02 Team work \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**03 The financial and legal context you work in and the practical implications \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**04 Analyse your own work \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**05 To dance \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**06 To think about a costume that is both practical and goes well with the dramaturgy \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**07 The history and aesthetics of circus arts \***

Yes  No

→ **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.

→ **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?



**08 Creation of promotion material for your own work \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**09 To understand the traditions and the concepts and principles of different circus discipline(s) \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**10 Have a better understanding of your body \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**11 To be creative about your work \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**12 Management of your professional development \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**13 To teach circus arts to others \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**14 Analyse and interpret the performance of others \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**15 To act \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**16 To use circus vocabulary \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**17 To think about the lighting of your performance \***

Yes  No

- **Yes:** Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- **No:** Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

- 18 Coordinating different aspects of production: administrative, technical, logistical and financial \*
- Yes       No
- Yes: Please evaluate how useful this skill is for you in your circus related work.
- No: Would you have had the possibility to learn it at school?

**Step 4 - Skills 3**

- 01 What are the skills you would have found useful to have learned in school looking back with your professional experience? \*
- Please indicate the skills

**Step 5 - Personal 1**

- 01 You are: \*
- Woman       Man
- 02 What year were you born? \*
- 03 Where are you from? \*  
other countries
- 04 What countries have you lived in until your graduation?  
Country 1 \*  
other countries .....  
Country 2  
other countries .....  
Country 3  
other countries .....  
Country 4  
other countries .....  
Country 5  
other countries .....
- 05 What circus school did you attend last? \*  
Other  
If the school is not in the list, please write it down here .....

- 06 What was your specialisation? \*
- 07 Do you have a secondary specialisation?\*
- Yes       No
- Yes: Other .....  
Which? .....
- 08 What year did you graduate? \*
- 09 Did you participate in any exchange programs while you were in school? \*
- Yes       No
- Yes: How many times have you participated in an exchange program during your training?  
For how long did the longest exchange program last?  
How useful it was in your training? Think back to the most useful one
- 10 Did you attend any other school or training center before the last attended? \*
- Yes       No
- Yes: How many schools did you attend in total?  
What school did you attend previous to the last school mentioned?  
Other .....  
What school did you attend previous to the last 2 schools mentioned?  
Other .....
- 11 How many years of training did you do in total? \*

## Step 6 - Personal 2

- 01 What is your mother tongue? \*
  - another language
- 02 Do you use your mother tongue in your circus arts related work?
  - Please estimate from 1-10
- 03 What other language do you work in most often?
  - another language
  - Evaluate your level:  
how well do you speak this language?
  - Please estimate from 1-10
- 04 What other language do you speak?
  - another language
  - Evaluate your level:  
how well do you speak this language?
  - Please estimate from 1-10
  - How useful is it in your circus arts-related work?
- 05 What other language do you speak?
  - another language
  - Evaluate your level:  
how well do you speak this language?
  - Please estimate from 1-10
  - How useful is it in your circus arts-related work?
- 06 What other language do you speak?
  - another language
  - Evaluate your level:  
how well do you speak this language?
  - Please estimate from 1-10
  - How useful is it in your circus arts-related work?

## DEFINITION OF TYPE 1 AND 2 SCHOOLS

**FEDEC member schools are divided into two sub-categories, which are:**

### Sub-category 1

**Type 1: Higher Education institutions that deliver a qualification recognised by the state.**

These are schools or institutions that offer circus arts training or programmes, which last a minimum duration of three years, at the end of which the student is ready to enter the professional sector/the job market and is presented with a state-recognised qualification. The school or institution must have legal status. Its programme must be written and submitted to the Federation. Enrolled students must be studying full-time. Students are accepted on the condition that they are qualified to higher secondary education level. This full member sub-category has the right to six (6) representatives on the Managing Board.

### Sub-category 2

**Type 2: Preparatory and/or vocational schools.**

These are schools or institutions that offer full-time training programmes in order to prepare the student:

- either with the experience and qualifications needed for the student to be admitted into a higher education institution, in which case the preparatory training should last a minimum of one year;
- or for professional life, in which case the professional training should last a minimum of two years and prepare the student to enter the job market. The school or institution must have legal status. The programme that it offers must be written and submitted to the Federation. This full member sub-category has the right to a maximum of six (6) representatives on the Managing Board.

## PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SPECIALISATIONS OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

WHAT IS YOUR SECONDARY SPECIALISATION?	WHAT WAS YOUR SPECIALISATION?															
	FLOOR AEROBATICS	EQUILIBRISTICS	AERIAL AEROBATICS	TRAMPOLINE	TEETERBOARD	TIGHTROPE	SLACKROPE	GERMAN WHEEL CYR WHEEL	STATIC TRAPEZE - ROPE - SILKS	AERIAL STRAPS	SWINGING TRAPEZE - CLOUD SWING	AERIAL CRADLE - KOREAN PLANK	CHINESE POLE	JUGGLING - OBJECT MANIPULATION	CLOWNING	TOTAL
Floor acrobatics	/		1	1				1	1		1			1		6
Equilibratics	1	/				1				1	1				1	5
Aerial acrobatics			/								1			2		4
Trampoline				/	1							1		1		3
Unicycle														1	1	2
German wheel/ Cyr wheel		1	1							1	1					4
Static trapeze Rope - Silks		1	1						/		5					7
Flying trapeze												1	1			2
Aerial cradle Korean plank											1	/				1
Juggling Object manipulation		1	3		1									/		5
Clowning							1					1		3	/	5
Equestrian art									1		1					2
Fixed Cloud swing											1					1
Other	1		1					1	1							4
Dance	1															1
Did not have second Specialisation	1	3	2		1	1			5	1	3			4		21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>73</b>



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**Miroir project – Part 2. Analysis of key competences of young professional circus artists**

A publication of the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools ( FEDEC)

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