

FEDEC

FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE
DES ÉCOLES DE CIRQUE
PROFESSIONNELLES
EUROPEAN FEDERATION
OF PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS SCHOOLS

FEDEC

MEMBERS SURVEY

SPRING 2021

2021 | MARCH

MAIN CONCLUSIONS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND & PARTICIPATION	3
LEGAL STATUS	4
EDUCATIONAL OFFER	5
HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS	7
PUBLICS: STUDENTS, TEACHERS, STAFF	8
STUDENTS	8
TEACHERS	9
STAFF	11
TECHNIQUES & DISCIPLINES	12
MEMBERSHIP	12
FULL MEMBERS	13



BACKGROUND

In May 2020, FEDEC decided to get a picture of the situation of professional circus schools across the world, with a special focus on how they were dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2021, FEDEC decided to launch the survey for a second time to update this picture.

Another questionnaire was sent this year to FEDEC's members, with a section focusing on how the schools were affected by the pandemic, and a general section aiming at collecting basic data.

This summary focuses on the section

dedicated to the general data, with the aim to renew FEDEC's understanding of how the federation is developing, and staying up to date by tracking its future evolution, on a regular basis.

PARTICIPATION

The Professional Circus Schools – Spring 2021 survey was open for responses from 2nd of March until the 1st of April. Out of the current 51 schools that are full members of FEDEC, 39 replied.

The survey from last year on FEDEC members gathered, out of the 50 full members, 45 respondents.

LEGAL STATUS

The organisations have different choices of legal status' when creating their school. Each choice comes with its load of advantages and disadvantages.

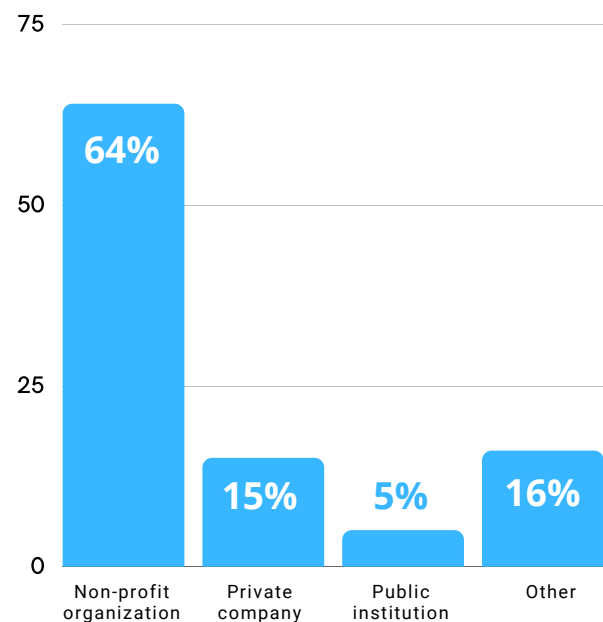
Most of FEDEC schools are either public institutions (15% of the respondents) or non-profit organizations (64% of respondents), while 16% can be considered as a mix of non-profit and private company, and only 5% of the respondents are private companies.

In the case of private companies (only 5% of the respondents), circus organizations have often a greater independence from public authorities in terms of the content and methodology for teaching circus and/or developing other activities such as performances, events and catering.

Furthermore, we can notice that often the educational activity is linked with a circus company, as it is the case for the ENC in Canada (strongly linked to Cirque du soleil) and Move to Circus in Israel.

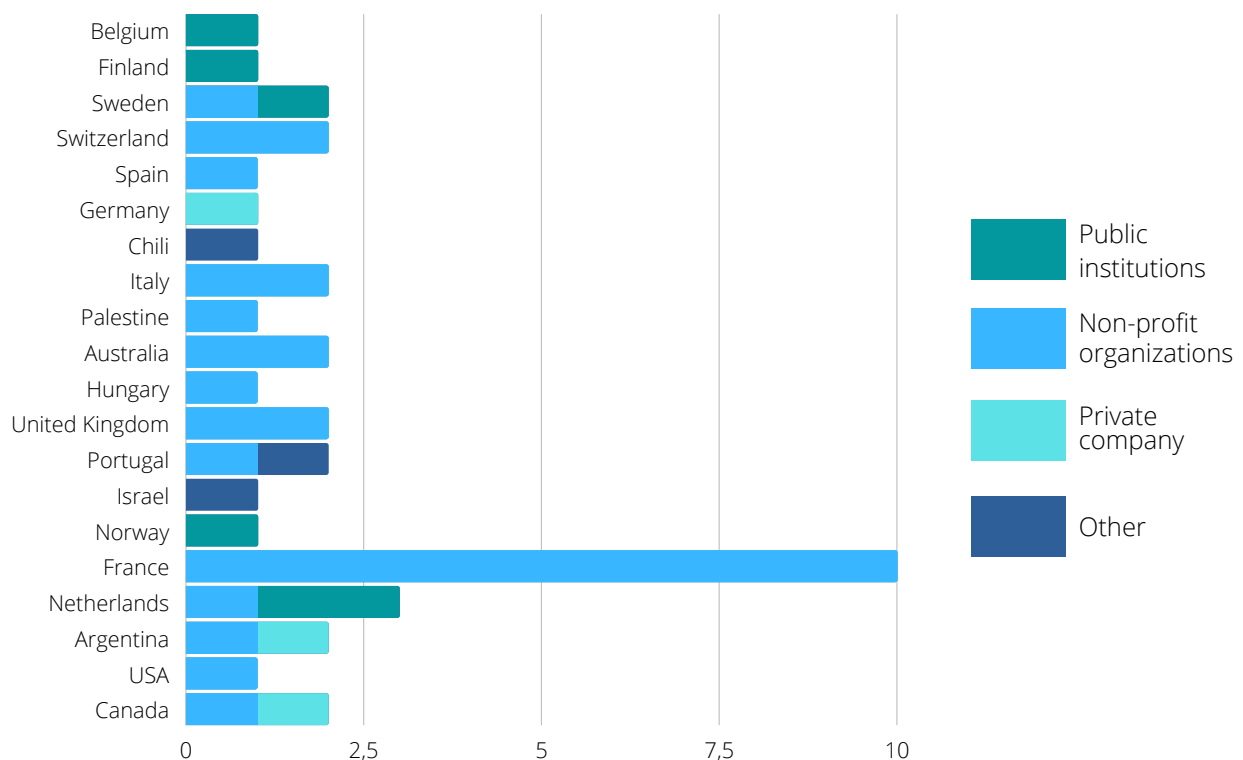
However, despite the differences among countries, being a non-profit organization often allow circus organizations to easily manage their budgets, as well as to apply for public funds to ensure their financial security and/or to develop their activities.

WHAT IS THE LEGAL STATUS OF YOUR SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION?



To apply for public funds is often easier in countries where circus is recognized as an independent art form. A quarter of the respondent's schools are based in France and they have all mentioned they are non-profit organizations (10). In France, where contemporary circus finds its origins and is considered as a legitimate art form, circus arts are promoted and supported by the state with subsidies and the creation of establishments for circus advocacy such as pôles cirque (circus hubs).

France is also one the few countries where circus arts are taught at tertiary level (i.e. the university level), as it is the case for Sweden, Finland and Netherlands. Many organizations teaching circus arts at a tertiary level (the so called "Superior Schools") are public institutions and are the result of years of advocacy by local circus schools, artists and fans. Norway being an exception: among FEDEC members, FFHS is the only public institution teaching circus arts at secondary level.



EDUCATIONAL OFFER

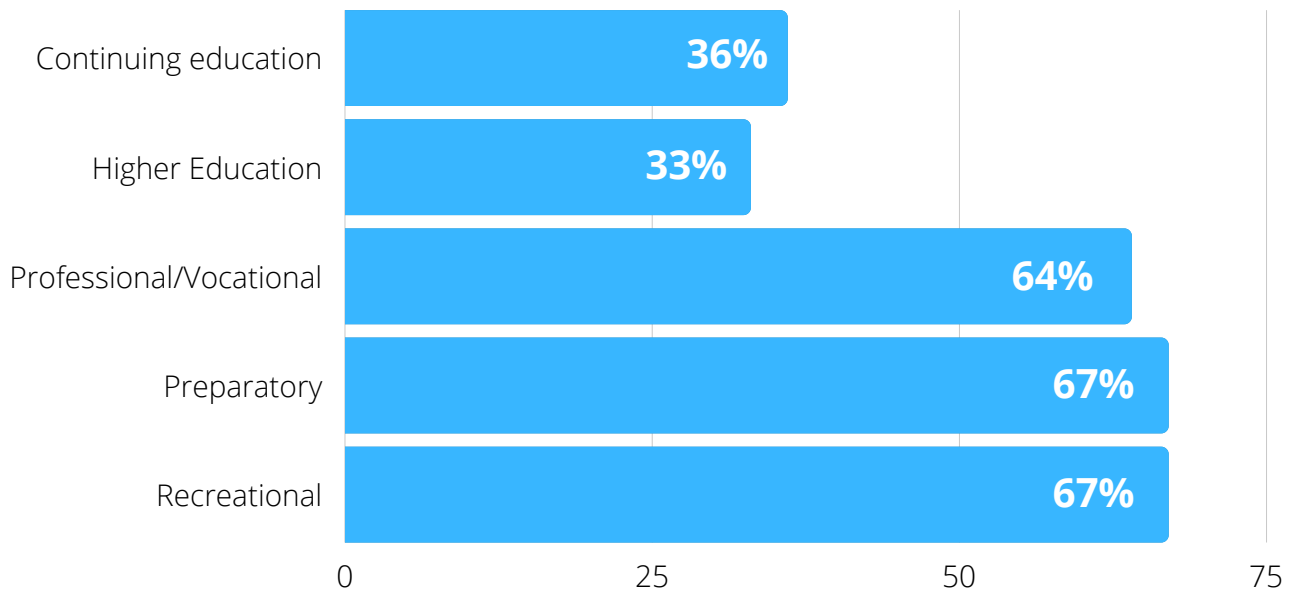
In line with the data collected last year, most of FEDEC schools (67%) is offering preparatory courses to prepare their students for the auditions at superior schools, while the same percentage is offering leisure/recreational courses. Only few less (64%) are offering vocational courses, i.e. courses preparing students to enter the job market with a certification.

With the number of circus students increasing every year, many circus schools are trying to prepare their students for the auditions at superior schools while at the same time providing them with a vocational certification they may use if they do not continue their studies.

This year, 36% of FEDEC schools are offering continuing education courses (addressed to teachers and professionals)

and 30% are offering higher education courses.

WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING DOES YOUR SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION OFFER ?



Last year, 4 schools declared that they were providing all kind of courses (National Center for Circus Arts – GBR, Centre des les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel – ESP, CIRCOMEDIA – GBR, National Institute of Circus Arts – AUS), but only 1 did this year (École de Cirque du Québec - CAN).

In fact, two of these schools stopped offering continuing education, probably due to the the small number of students that were enrolled last year in that particular training compared to the others.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the budgets of many circus schools, therefore maybe some of them could not finance the trainings with few enrolled students and decided to invest in more profitable programs.



HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS

13 FEDEC schools are offering higher education courses/curricula:

Académie Fratellini

France

ACaPA - Fontys Academy of Circus & Performance Art

Netherlands

Centre de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel

Spain

Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC)

France

Circomedia

UK

Codarts Circus Arts

Netherlands

École de cirque de Québec (ECQ)

Canada

École nationale de cirque (ENC Montréal)

Canada

Ecole Supérieure des Arts du Cirque (ESAC)

Belgium

ESACTO'LIDO

France

National Centre for Circus Arts (NCCA)

UK

National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA)

Australia

Stockholm University of the arts (SHK)

Sweden

Among them, 2 declared that they are offering only higher education course/curricula (ACaPA & ESAC).

PUBLICS: STUDENTS, TEACHERS, STAFF

STUDENTS

The total number of students in FEDEC schools is 15.245 (according to the data collected last year). Considering the academic year 2019/2020, the Covid-19 pandemic seemed to not affect the number of graduated students: if we consider only the 35 schools that answered to the survey this year and last year, we can see that the total number of graduated students has increased from 612 in 2018/2019 to 714 in 2019/2020.

In line with the data of 2020, 57% of the graduated students are females, 42% are males and 1% of them do not recognize themselves in the previous categories.

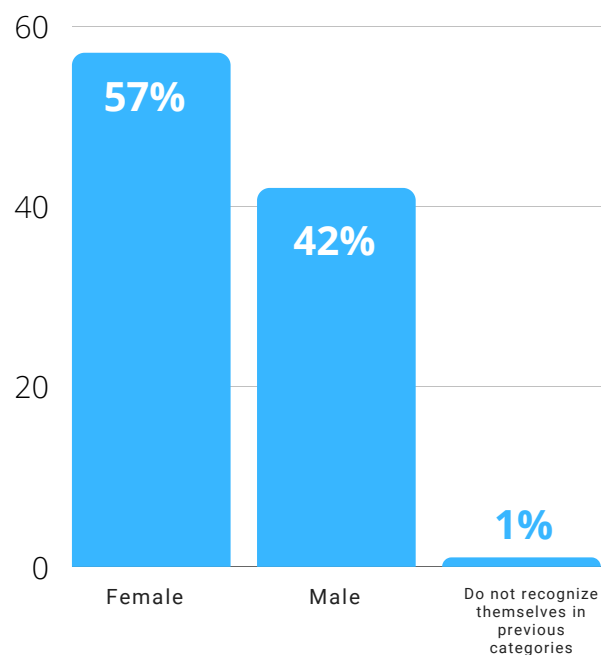
As for the academic year 2019/2020, 30% of the graduated students are foreigners, and this percentage raises up to 42% if we consider only schools located in the European Union and the United Kingdom. This means that in FEDEC schools located in EU and UK almost half of the students come from abroad.

More in detail, the schools with highest number of foreign students are based in Italy (63 foreign students out of 142 graduated students), France (63 foreign students out of 183 graduated students) and Canada (49 foreign students out of 112 graduated students).

France and Canada are internationally renowned for the quality of their circus education. In addition, France is the country hosting the highest number of circus schools (it is not a coincidence that 15 out of 51 FEDEC members schools are based in France).

Therefore, it is not surprising to see a high number of foreign students enrolled in French and Canadian schools.

WHAT ARE THE STUDENTS' GENDERS?



It is, however, quite surprising that this happens in Italy, as well as in Spain (29 foreign students out of 39) or Portugal (41 out of 45). The reasons for this are obviously multiple and complex, and linked to individual national situations. Despite this, it is possible to venture that the national pool of students is more limited in the above-mentioned countries, as the circus sector is still developing. Furthermore, schools based in Portugal, Spain and Italy can probably take advantage of the fact that the cost of living in these countries is lower than in northern European countries. Finally, those schools often emphasize the idea of accepting all types of student's ages and backgrounds and in general are very supportive of foreign students (for example: they use English as main language for teaching).

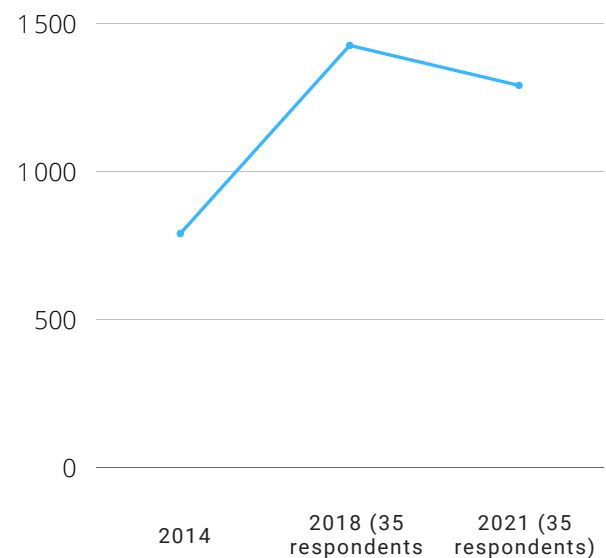
TEACHERS

As for teachers, the total number declared by the survey's respondents this year is 1338. If we consider only the 35 respondents for which we have data for both 2021 and 2020, we can observe a decrease: from 1441 employed teachers in 2020 (almost the double of the figure for 2014: 779) to 1277 declared in 2021.

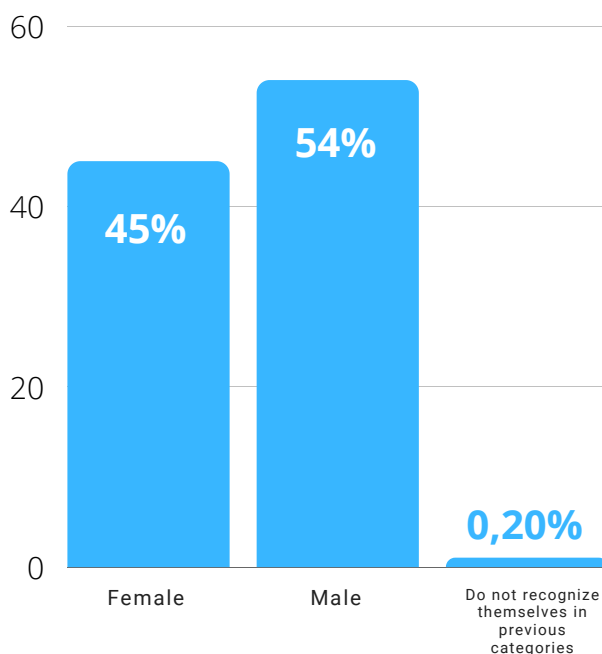
This figure includes any kind of teacher and contract (full-time, part-time, free-lance ...), as well as invited teachers and directors, and it makes therefore difficult to estimate the loss of jobs.

If we consider only permanent teachers, the declared full-time equivalent positions (FTE) for 2021 are equal to 314. Again, if we compare only the 35 respondents for which we have data for both 2021 and 2020, we can observe an important decrease: from the 342 FTE registered last year to the 302 declared this year.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYED TEACHERS



WHAT ARE THE TEACHERS' GENDERS?



This data could easily be linked to the pandemic, as the schools could not hire as many teachers as in the past, and were forced to put on furlough and/or to fire some of them. For more info on the impact of Pandemic on circus schools, please have a look at the [2021 report on the impact of Covid-19 on professional circus schools](#).

In the contrary of the data regarding the students' genders, there is a majority of male teachers within the FEDEC's schools.

1 Full-time equivalent (FTE) is a unit that indicates the workload of an employed person in a way that makes workloads or class loads comparable across various contexts. An FTE of 1.0 is equivalent to a full-time worker (no matters if "full-time" means 35, 37 or 40 hours per week according to the country), while an FTE of 0.5 signals half of a full work load.



STAFF

As for the technical staff (i.e. technical director, riggers and stage managers who do not teach). The total FTE is equivalent to 39.

If we consider only the schools that answered to both surveys, we go from 52 in 2020 to 37 FTE in 2021, an important decrease. Such decrease may be explained by the fact that many technicians were asked to cut down their working hours, since the COVID-19 pandemic forced many schools to remain closed for long periods and to cancel several events.

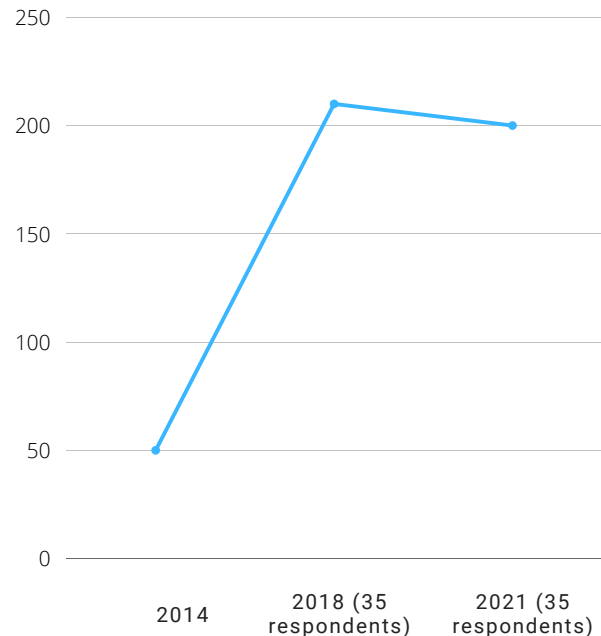
Nevertheless, we can notice that 67% of respondents are employing staff that is exclusively technical.

Last year this percentage was only 56%. This data seems to confirm that safety is becoming more and more fundamental for FEDEC schools. The work of technical staff is not very visible in circus schools, unless there are problems: accidents, injuries or...a pandemic.

In 2020, technical directors were often the people in charge of drafting the protocols for the re-opening of circus schools. Furthermore, in 2021 FEDEC applied for an Erasmus+ grant on safety and rigging, with the aim of enhancing the quality of safety measures and to create an International Community of professionals.



FTE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF



As for the other staff, almost all of the schools declared that they are employing staff that is exclusively administrative. The total FTE is equivalent to 206. If we consider only the schools that answered to both surveys, we pass from 212 FTE in 2020 to 200 FTE in 2021.

The decrease for the administrative staff is slighter than for other categories of employees. This is probably due to the fact that administrative staff still had work to do despite the lack of teaching activity in the schools.

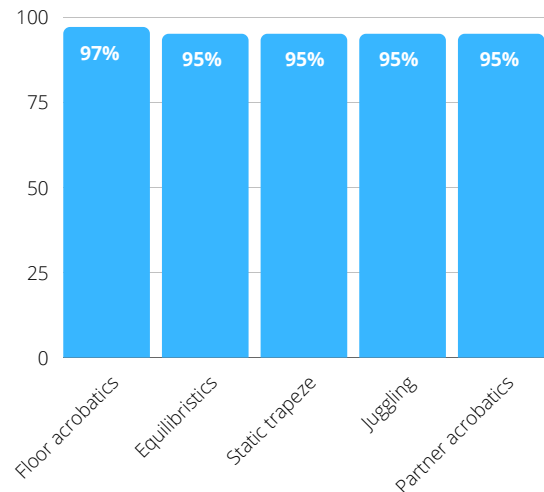
The current total FTE is still around four times bigger than in 2014 (49 FTE), and shows the structural growth of circus schools in the last years, and the professionalization of the sector, that needs more and more staff dedicated to administrative tasks.

TECHNIQUES & DISCIPLINES

The schools participating in the survey were invited to precise which circus techniques or disciplines are taught in their professional training, out of a list of 22 different disciplines. In case they wanted, they could also mention disciplines that were not on the list.

In line with the data of 2020, Acrobatics – balances are taught in almost all FEDEC schools, partner acrobatics in more than 95% of the schools, and floor acrobatics in 97%. In the same way, juggling is taught in 95% of the schools. On the contrary, only 10% are teaching highwire (funambulism), 18% Russian swing, and nowadays, none of the respondents is teaching equestrian arts in their schools.

WHAT CIRCUS TECHNIQUES/DISCIPLINES DO YOU TEACH IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING?



MEMBERSHIP

FEDEC was created in 1998 on the initiative of the Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC, France), the École Supérieure des Arts du Cirque (ESAC, Belgium) and the Circus Space (now named the National Center for Circus Arts - NCCA, UK).

That same year, the École Nationale de Cirque (ENC, Canada) joined the network. Since then, although the data we have are still partial, we can observe how FEDEC has steadily grown, with 2 peaks in 2004-2009, and especially in the last five years.

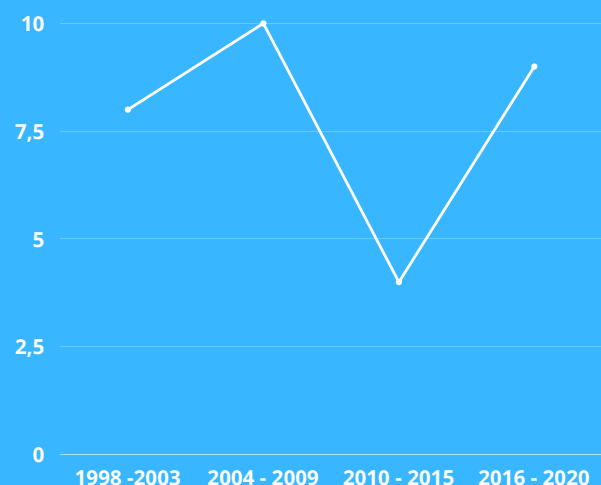
Although it is hard to find a comprehensive explanation, we can imply that those 2 peaks are due mainly to FEDEC membership's policy, as well as to circus education situation at the time. This is especially true for the last 5 years: FEDEC membership procedure has been changed in 2019, and since then the Board has actively pursued new members to join the network and nurture the reflection in the field.

At the same time, starting from 2015, an increasing number of new circus schools

(professional and leisure) have been created in Europe and the rest of the world. For many of them, to become a member of FEDEC it is probably part of their process of growth and professionalization.

FEDEC MEMBERSHIP

Number of accepted requests every 5 years



FULL MEMBERS

ARGENTINA

- Circo de las Artes, Tigre
- Ludi Circens Escuela de Circo, Wilde

AUSTRALIA

- Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Albury
- National Institute of Circus Arts, Prahran

BELGIUM

- École supérieure des arts du Cirque, Bruxelles

CANADA

- École de cirque de Québec, Québec
- École nationale de cirque, Montréal

CHILE

- El Circo del Mundo, Lo Prado

DENMARK

- AFUK-AMoC, Copenhagen

ENGLAND

- Circomedia, Bristol
- National Centre for Circus Arts, Londres

FINLAND

- Salpaus Circus Artist Education, Lahti
- Turku University of Applied Sciences, Turku

FRANCE

- Académie Fratellini, Saint-Denis
- Arc en cirque, Chambéry
- Balthazar, Montpellier
- Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC), Châlons-en-Champagne
- Centre Régional des Arts du Cirque de Lomme (CRAC), Lille
- Le Samovar, Bagnolet
- École de Cirque de Bordeaux, Bordeaux
- École de Cirque de Lyon, Lyon
- École Nationale de Cirque de Châtellerauld (ENCC), Châtellerauld
- École Nationale des Arts du Cirque de Rosny-sous-Bois (ENACR), Rosny-sous-Bois
- Ésacto'Lido, Toulouse
- Institut National des arts du Music-Hall, Le Mans
- Piste d'Azur, La Roquette-sur-Siagne

GERMANY

- CircArtive School, Gschwend
- Die Etage, Berlin
- Staatliche Ballettschule Berlin, Berlin

HONGARY

- Circus School Baross Imre, Budapest

ITALY

- FLIC, Turin
- Scuola di Circo Vertigo, Turin

NETHERLANDS

- Codarts Circus Arts, Rotterdam
- Fontys Academy of Circus and Performance Art, Tilburg

NORWAY

- Fjordane Folkehøgskule, Nordfjordeid

PALESTINE

- The Palestinian Circus School, Ramallah

POLAND

- Ocelot, Zlotoryja

PORTUGAL

- Escola de Circo do Chapitô, Lisboa
- Instituto Nacional de Artes do Circo (INAC), Vila Nova de Famalicão

RUSSIA

- ArtArea Project, Moscow

SPAIN

- Centre de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel, Barcelone
- Escuela de Circo Carampa, Madrid

SWEDEN

- Cirkus Cirkör, Norsborg
- Stockholm University of the Arts - SKH, Stockholm

SWITZERLAND

- École de cirque Zôfy, Charrat
- LeZartiCirque, Sainte-Croix
- Théâtre Cirqule, Genève

USA

- Circadium, Philadelphie
- FSU Flying High Circus, Tallahassee

The full figures of this survey are
available upon request: info@fedec.eu



Co-financed by the European Union



This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

FEDEC
Rue du Meiboom 18,
1000 Brussels Belgium
info@fedec.eu www.fedec.eu

© ALL RIGHTS RESERVED - FEDEC MARCH 2021