

# Characterization of Portuguese Heritage Language teachers: A preliminary study

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## INTRODUCTION

Teachers are very important for qualified students' education. Reinforcing teacher education is imperative. Obtaining qualified teachers implies specific professional development programs, based on the acknowledgement of their motivations, characteristics and needs. Research on Portuguese Heritage Language (PHL) teachers around the world has shown that these professionals form a very diverse group in terms of their education and work contexts (Soares 2012; Melo-Pfeifer 2016; Silva 2016; Ferreira 2017; Gonçalves & Melo-Pfeifer 2020). However, detailed and systematized knowledge about these teachers does not yet exist. There is a need to characterize these teachers, their profile, challenges, constraints and professional development needs.

## AIM OF THE STUDY

To define the profile of PHL teachers based on data collection:

- Biographical data
- Teaching experience (number of years, constraints, working conditions etc.)
- Beliefs and perceptions about PHL teaching and training needs

## Data collection method

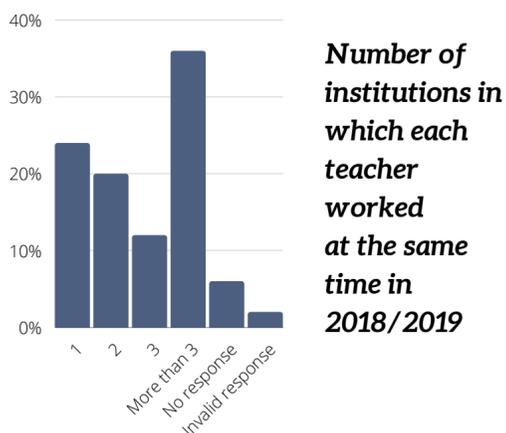
Online survey (to collect data for the characterization of PHL teachers around the world), namely in terms of:

- socio-demographic profile
- academic background
- relation to other languages and cultures
- professional activity
- beliefs and representations about teaching PHL
- professional training needs

**Number of responses - 163**

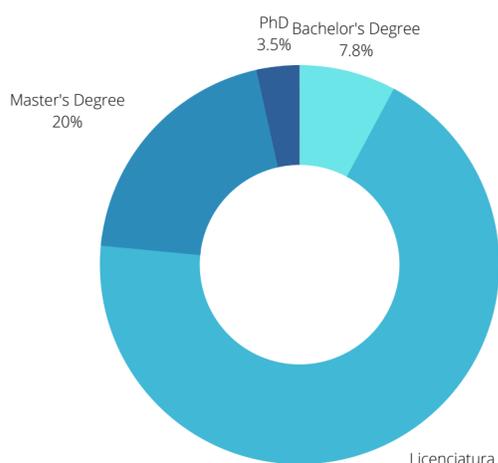
**Age - Mean: 44,7 years (S.D. = 8,4)**

**Gender - Male 21% ; Female 79%**

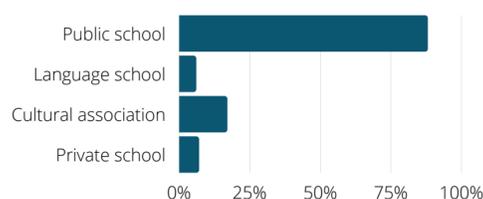


**Number of institutions in which each teacher worked at the same time in 2018/2019**

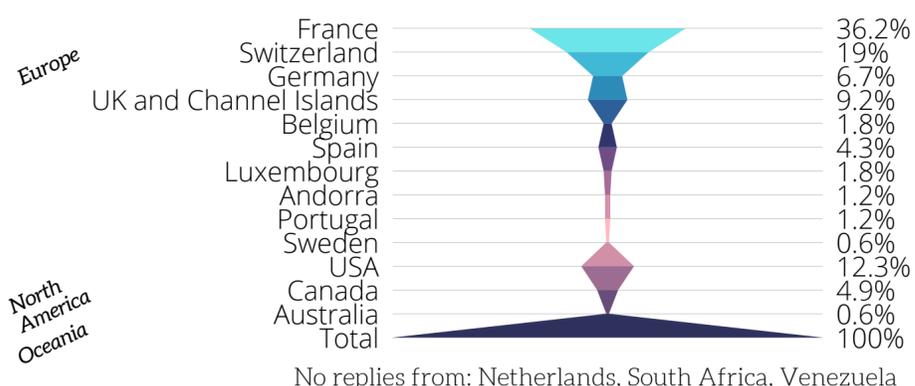
## Academic qualifications



## Types of schools



## Working place



## PRELIMINARY RESULTS

This presentation will not only highlight the preliminary results of the research conducted with this survey but also identify areas that need further study.

## MAIN PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Geographical diversity of educational settings

High number of PHL students in classes

High heterogeneity of students in classes

PHL students mainly attend public schools

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The sample of the study is a convenience one, since it was an online questionnaire. There was a limited number of responses.

## MAIN FURTHER DATA GATHERED (for future publication)

Curricular management and teaching materials

Beliefs and representations about PLH and its teaching

Challenges, constraints and professional development needs

## References

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- Gonçalves, M.L. & Melo-Pfeifer, S. 2020. *Português Língua de Herança e Formação de Professores*. Lisboa: Lidel.
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