Content analysis of sustainability awareness in the context of performing live music events

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Zásady pro vypracování

Úvod
Definujte cíle práce a použité metody zpracování práce.
I. Teoretická část

- Z dostupných literárních pramenů charakterizujte a vyhodnoťte teoretické poznatky týkající se oblasti udržitelného event managementu a formování povědomí o udržitelnosti v kontextu hudebních událostí.

II. Praktická část

- Formulujte cíle, výzkumné otázky a metodiku diplomové práce.
- Proveďte analýzu povědomí o udržitelnosti hudebních událostí u vybraných stakeholderů v České republice.
- Na základě výsledků analýzy zhodnoťte aktuální stav povědomí o udržitelnosti z pohledu vybraných stakeholderů a navrhněte doporučení týkající se zvýšení a zlepšení povědomí o udržitelnosti hudebních událostí, které by do své praxe měly aplikovat relevantní subjekty.

Závěr

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HILLMER, Franziska. *Effective Sustainability Communication for Music Festivals and other Mega-Events: Find out how to Green the Crowd*. Hamburg: Anchor Academic Publishing, 2016. ISBN 978-3954894987.
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ABSTRAKT

Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na analýzu povědomí o udržitelnosti v kontextu pořádání hudebních akcí v Česku. Teoretická část se zabývá zejména tím, jak se firmy pořádající hudební akce vyrovnávají s trendy udržitelnosti, a do jaké míry udržitelnost tyto firmy ovlivňuje. Praktickou část tvoří výsledky vlastního šetření, jehož cílem je zjistit a analyzovat, zda české firmy zohledňují udržitelnost při pořádání hudebních akcí, do jaké míry si uvědomují trendy udržitelnosti, jaké jsou perspektivy udržitelného event managementu v Česku. Výsledky výzkumu analyzují míru povědomí, přijatá opatření a bariéry, kterým čelí při zavádění udržitelných postupů. Závěrečná část práce nabízí konkrétní závěry a doporučení pro praxi.

Klíčová slova: udržitelnost, hudební průmysl, živé akce, řízení událostí, dopad na životní prostředí, společenská odpovědnost, zapojení zainteresovaných stran, společenská odpovědnost firem (CSR)

ABSTRACT

The thesis focuses on the analysis of sustainability awareness in the context of music events' organization in Czechia. The theoretical part deals mainly with how companies organizing music events cope with sustainability trends, and to what extent sustainability affects these companies. The practical part consists of the results of the own survey, the aim of which is to determine and analyze whether Czech companies take sustainability into account when organizing music events, to what extent they are aware of sustainability trends, and what are the perspectives of sustainable event management in Czechia. The research results analyze the level of awareness, measures taken, and barriers faced in implementing sustainable practices. The final part of the thesis offers specific conclusions and recommendations for practice.

Keywords: sustainability, music industry, live events, event management, environmental impact, social responsibility, stakeholder engagement, corporate social responsibility (CSR)

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's/Master's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Music festivals have become an important part of the cultural and economic aspects of Czechia. According to the analysis of Statista (2024), the local music events market is expected to grow by 2.06% by 2028. It will result in a market volume of approximately 1.48 billion CZK by then (Statista.com, 2024).

Events have an overwhelming ability to drive tourism, economic and social development, and change at global, national, and local levels, albeit mostly in the short term (Maguire, 2020, p. 1850). As with any event requiring significant movements of people, logistics and resources, music festivals also have an environmental impact (A Greener Festival, 2023). While drawing thousands of goers each year and boosting the economy of the country, it remains undiscovered what actions local event organizers take towards sustainability, if any.

The events present different musical preferences while the rising popularity of music festivals in Czechia requires more discussion about their environmental impact reduction. Local sustainable practices could be compared to international ones. For example, the Dutch music festival PinkPop has established sustainability goals for 2030. The plan is to reduce their environmental footprint through waste reduction, energy efficiency, and carbon offsetting (PinkPop, 2024).

Gohoungodji and Amara (2024) believe that since the early 2000s, sustainability practices that minimize environmental impacts have been implemented because of climate change. The music industry is not an exception regarding global concern for environmental issues. This new demand for sustainability brings both challenges and opportunities. Music festivals are often considered 'alternative' and attract a younger, more environmentally aware audience (Brennan et al., 2019, pp. 252-275). Whereas there is a rising demand for green events coming from festivalgoers, there are certain logistical and financial constraints that pose significant difficulties for organizers. The ones in charge of festivals should be able to engage stakeholders in communicating the environmental agenda. Understanding these dynamics is essential for both event organizers and marketers aiming to position their festivals as eco-friendly.

There is growing academic interest in events, a trend that reflects their importance to contemporary tourism, but also their wider significance. This maturing field of study is not merely growing in size; it is becoming more global, more sophisticated, and more critical (Mair and Smith, 2021, p. 2). The growth in number of events, their attendance, and

associated media coverage have contributed to a corresponding groundswell of interest in event studies (Baum et al., 2013, pp. 179-185). However, there has been little exploration of the current situation in Central Europe, respectively in Czechia.

The aim of this study is to address this gap by conducting both quantitative and qualitative research to examine the level of sustainability awareness among local music festival organizers.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF THESIS DEVELOPMENT

This exploratory study seeks to find out how much music festival organizers are aware of environmental sustainability practices at the local level. It can be defined as exploratory since it will investigate a problem that has not been thoroughly studied in the region. According to Kumar (2022), the exploratory type of research is usually conducted to have a better understanding of the existing problem but usually doesn't lead to a conclusive result.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will help gain insights and understanding rather than testing a hypothesis, allowing some suggestions for the event organizers based on the mathematical model of SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis will be built on the identified inner weaknesses and strengths of the local festivals and on the data from the report about Circular Czechia 2040 (ETC, 2022). The conclusions can later be developed in more depth through confirmatory research in future studies.

With the aim of evaluating sustainability awareness, content analysis took place. Besides, a structured questionnaire has been created and shared among local festival organizers. Its structure included questions covering various dimensions of sustainability, for instance, the adoption of green practices, the motivations behind these actions, and the perceived obstacles to achieving environmental sustainability in organizing festivals. On top of it, two interviews were conducted with event organizers to gain deeper insights into sustainability awareness, strategies, challenges, and decision-making processes at a local level.

This approach improved the reliability of comprehensive analysis and helped me describe how music festival organizers are environmentally aware, how sustainability is perceived, and which practices are implemented within the festival industry.

The study brings valuable insights into the current state of environmental sustainability in the Czech music festival scene.

Throughout the course, the research has been guided by the following research questions:

- What is the level of sustainability awareness among local music festival organizers?

- What actions are taken by music festival organizers in Czechia to support sustainability?

- What motivates music festival organizers to adopt environmentally sustainable practices?

- What discourages them from taking steps towards sustainability?

This study provides, albeit limited, insight into the issue of sustainability awareness in the Czech festival scene. It has identified key areas of interest, challenges, and some interesting trends that deserve further and more detailed investigation.

I THEORETICAL PART

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Sustainability and Sustainable Development

'Sustainability' means the capacity to endure. When placed in the context of human life, the natural environment, societies, cities, commerce, agriculture, coral reefs, etc., it means managing these so they can, in fact, all endure in unison. Looking at the natural environment and the bounty the earth provides, at a macro level this means we need to keep the use of the earth's resources within its carrying capacity to sustain life (Jones, 2017, p. 3).

One reason human sustainability is fascinating lies in its future uncertainty. A wide spectrum of sustainability scenarios involving food, water, energy, weather, ecosystems, and so forth exist, involving the status of our future sustainability, say, in 2050. The uncertainty is based on our inability to predict future outcomes based on our imperfect ability to model the many interacting, noisy, non-linear, time-variable, complex systems that determine human sustainability (Northrop and Connor, 2016, p. 15).

In our fast-paced, 21st-centuary world, we are often challenged with having to predict how our actions (or inactions) will affect events in the complex systems in which we live and interact. In particular, this includes our present and future actions intended to mitigate the adverse effects on human ecological sustainability caused by past human actions and inactions (Northrop and Connor, 2016, p. 17).

The concept of sustainable development was thrust into academic discourse with the publication of 'Our Common Future' by the Brundtland Commission in 1987. After 30 years of defining sustainable development as the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," the Commission's call to build a sustainable world with its full relevance still resonates with us today (Sarkar and Shaw, 2016, p. 228).

Sustainable development is related to pursuing the growth of the economy where as taking into account the aspects of the environment and social perspective for ensuring the enduring well-being. It is the framework that aids in aligning the sustainable development via stressing need of transition from the linear "take-make-dispose" model towards more circular one, here resources are kept within the usage for the longer period of time via remanufacturing, reusing and recycling (Toni, 2023, p. 83).

When at the business level, sustainable practices are adopted, this integrates the social and environmental consideration within the core operations and strategies of the business. These integrates materials accountable resources, reducing materials source, minimizing waste generation, lessening energy and water consumption, endorsing the usage of renewable energy, and aids in making sure that within the whole supply chain there are ethical labor practices followed (Toni, 2023, p. 83).

It has been shown that a sustainable development needs the awakening of the consumer. Only if they move to a more efficient, consistent and sufficient lifestyle, would companies really care about their own performances. This might be a disadvantage for the event industry but contains for organizers as well a great chance to set a good and promotionally effective example for improvement (Hillmer, 2016, p. 41).

1.2 Circular Economy

According to Barros et al. (2021), the circular economy has advanced a great deal in the last decade, and the investigation of alternatives in support of the circular economy in the industrial sector has been observed to bring consistent benefits not only to literature, but also to the business sector.

The lack of implementation of circular economy-based projects is associated with the large number of barriers that need to be overcome for these projects to become a reality. In addition to social barriers, generally associated with a lack of information and a system that has been rooted in society for decades, and political and regulatory difficulties, derived from a fragmented administration and institutions in which the competences for resource management are very divided and regulated by different regulations that are very disconnected from each other, there are also technological and economic or financial barriers (Singh et al., 2023, p. 24).

1.3 Sustainable Development Goals

In order to integrate and promote the circular economy, the fundamentals of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental sustainability - had to be reformulated in 2015 with the aim of unifying criteria in the member states of the United Nations. They became known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Singh et al., 2023, p. 24).

The 17 SDGs, comprising 169 targets and 230 indicators, are set to be achieved by 2030. As illustrated in Figure 1, these goals serve as a global roadmap, urging all nations to make

sustainable choices and take action. Importantly, each goal is linked to an environmental context (Bojarska et al., 2021, p. 52).

Figure 1 Sustainable Development Goals

Source: UNITED NATIONS. *Sustainable Development Goals*

2 CIRCULAR CZECHIA 2040 AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN CZECHIA

The European Travel Commission (2022) states in its report on the Czech Republic that the country adopted a dedicated national circular economy (CE) strategy called the Strategic Framework of the circular economy of the Czech Republic 2040 (or Circular Czechia 2040) in December 2021.

It sets out a vision: "In 2040, the circular economy brings significant environmental, economic, and social benefits to the Czech Republic. As part of the measures taken, the Czech Republic systematically supports the circular economy as a model for improving environmental protection, strengthening competitiveness and technological sophistication, creating new jobs, increasing raw material security, and acquiring new competencies of the citizens," with a main goal of "Less waste and more value for the Czech Republic" (European Travel Commission, 2022).

According to the European Travel Commission (2022), there are 10 strategic goals:

1) improving the state of the environment;

2) reduction of waste production and better waste management;

3) strengthening competitiveness;

4) creating of new jobs;

5) increasing raw material security, increasing the efficiency of natural resources management and increasing the share of renewable resources;

6) improving technological sophistication and innovation;

7) support for innovative forms of consumption;

8) the acquisition of new competencies, knowledge and skills;

9) creating a non-toxic environment and protecting the health of the population;

10) expanding the CE at regional and municipal level.

The European Travel Commission (2022) acknowledges that as circular-based projects, there are different barriers to the implementation of the CE strategy in Czechia, including:

- lack of capacity for recycling municipal waste;

- lack of public awareness of the environmental issues - citizens do not have enough information about the state of the environment and information about the possibilities of how they can contribute to improving the situation; as a result, they are not motivated to engage in more environmentally friendly behavior;

- primary materials are often cheaper than secondary materials, although this has been changing in the light of recent crises (Covid and Ukraine);

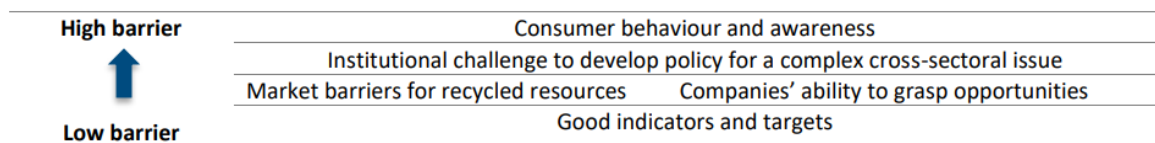- to some extent, insufficient cooperation among responsible authorities.

High barrier	Consumer behaviour and awareness
	Institutional challenge to develop policy for a complex cross-sectoral issue
	Market barriers for recycled resources Companies' ability to grasp opportunities
Low barrier	Good indicators and targets

Figure 2 Ranking Types of Barriers

Source: EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION. *ETC CE Report 2022/5 – Czechia*

Environmental awareness is one of the variables that can affect green consumer behavior as well as the (higher) quality of sustainable products and can be defined as personal awareness of environmental problems and by the willingness to be part of the solution to the problem. ((Dropulić and Krupka, 2020, p. 105). According to the European Investment Bank (EIB) Climate Survey (2023), nearly two-thirds of Czech respondents (62%, or 10 percentage points below the EU average) say they are convinced that their own behavior can make a difference in addressing the climate emergency, which demonstrates a strong interest of the local population in sustainable practices.

3 SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT

Events are gatherings of people for a purpose. They are opportunities for celebration and expression. They can be put on to exchange ideas, for commerce, to showcase excellence, to entertain, for competition, to garner community pride, celebrate culture and enhance social cohesion. With the right setting and immersive environment, events have the opportunity to make a long-lasting impact on the hearts and minds of those involved. But in the gathering of all those people for whatever purpose, resources are used, waste is created, people, environment and economies are affected (Jones, 2017, p. 2).

Green event value is seen as in demand for emphasizing sustainable concepts in event management. Although there is still a lack of awareness among the event's organizers on how to organize a green event, yet the effort from the event's organizers is significant in achieving sustainable development goals (Zamzuri et al., 2021, p. 205).

Uncaptured value is not only highlighted in the use of materials but also in community engagement throughout the process of organizing the event. This shows that uncaptured value is not only seen from the use of the event's materials, but the value is also on community commitment throughout the event (Zamzuri et al., 2021, p. 205).

It is a difficult task to gain the stakeholders' trust, as market endogenous difficulties occur. The companies' liability is hard to prove for the public or the consumer. Thus, due to these information asymmetries, many companies try to exploit this advantage so that green washing occurs (Hillmer, 2016, p. 32).

Entrepreneurs who really try to run the businesses more sustainably are dependent on cooperation partners, which often need to be convinced, but should also prove to be trustworthy (Hillmer, 2016, p. 32).

3.1 Sustainability in Live Music Events

According to Manfra and Quercia (2024), temporary music festivals more and more often detach themselves from having a purely entertaining role as crowd-gathering event. As Manfra and Quercia admit (2024), all over the world, temporary and sustainable music festivals - and the projects associated with them - seem to have embraced their capability to be a large-scale vehicle of diffusion, in fact, given their nature as centers of artistic expression and cultural, educational propagation, such events can take on a dimension of

social activism, helping to inspire people towards new environmentally, energetically, and socially preferable trends and behaviors (Manfra and Quercia, 2024, p. 12).

The challenge of discussing the sustainability of the music industries is no different from other business sectors in this regard: environmental sustainability is viewed as a priority by some, but tends to be weighed up against other notions of (usually economic) sustainability, limiting the scope for radical re-imaginings of sector wide change towards events that actively curtail carbon emissions (Brennan et al., 2019, p. 8). According to Johnson (2015), travel by audiences and artists is widely acknowledged as the largest contributor to the environmental footprint of music festivals, with audience travel alone responsible for approximately 80% of the total carbon emissions generated by these events.

As a reference to the Triple Bottom Line, Ricaurte Bermudez (2015) mentions that sustainable or environmentally friendly festivals can gain benefits in three different areas: the economical, the social, and the environmental. Festivals may also generate business activity and increase the income for communities as they can directly and indirectly increase tourism revenue (Gerald, 2019, p. 13).

In recent times, the importance and number of festivals has increased, primarily in tandem with the increasing importance placed on festivals (and other events) as opportunities for increased tourism, branding and economic development (Mair, 2019, p. 3). However, music festivals are not merely a key economic component of the wider music industries: they also carry a cultural legacy as sites where constituents of musical cultures gather to form temporary communities (Brennan et al., 2019, pp. 252-275).

According to Manfra and Quercia (2024), in the last decade, in Europe, with different formats and grades of engagement, festival managers, public institutions, design teams of various backgrounds and active citizens' groups, have fostered and disseminated an awareness of the logic of circularity, water-saving, energy-saving, soft mobility, use of renewable sources, and other interrelated issues.

It is very likely that most of the team members, attendees and partners will appreciate the effort for a greener festival but are nevertheless not interested in new hippy movements. Thus, what is possible and what might destroy the festival image, and vibe should be carefully examined in advance (Hillmer, 2016, p. 49).

That means: Greening either way, but communication fitting to the crowd and to the general festival design (Hillmer, 2016, p. 49).

Recognizing ecological values as shared and meaningful is crucial for establishing sustainability as the mainstream vision of eco-social prosperity, rather than merely an alternative one (Manfra and Quercia, 2024, p. 12).

If the festival shifts to very efficient lighting and electronics, but it is still growing so that more material is needed, the absolute energy use would very likely still grow. It simply shows that organizers have to step up their efforts as well in consistency and especially sufficiency measures to substitute unavoidable emissions and present a convincing sustainability strategy (Hillmer, 2016, p. 44).

While investigating how festival communities address environmental sustainability, Brennan et al. (2019) learnt that Scottish festival organizers faced significant challenges in encouraging lower carbon audience and artist travel behaviors, attributing this to the remote locations of festival sites, in combination with poor public transport links and the added expense of contracting private shuttle buses for audience members. The increase in the transport sector in the last decades is connected with a rise in negative impacts on the environment and society. For example, this refers to air pollution, noise, traffic accidents, soil and water pollution, and global warming (Domagala et al., 2022, p. 180).

Despite this, a number of festival organizers cited positive actions in reducing travel-related emissions including reimbursing artist travel at a public transport rate, working with local businesses and councils to introduce a Park and Ride system to reduce audience travel directly onto the festival site at The Big Tent Festival and running a shuttle bus to cut carbon, despite the financial loss. Learning from England-based festivals with strong green commitments such as Glastonbury Festival, it was evident that the more developed festival network, and higher levels of resource behind large scale festivals, allows for greater connection and bargaining power with public transport providers (Brennan et al., 2019, p. 13). According to Domagala et al. (2022), moving transport towards better sustainability is a long-term tendency. More sustainable use of transport is a crucial policy at a national, international and global level.

3.2 Integrative Conceptual Framework

In 2024, Gohoungodji and Amara reviewed the most popular theoretical frameworks in the context of sustainable practices at the music festival sector such as the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Triple Bottom Line, and Mair and Jago's model. To fill these gaps and offer a

clearer understanding of sustainability in this context, they proposed a new integrative conceptual framework.

3.2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior

Planned behavior theory assumes that human behavior is voluntary and planned, and is determined by the intention, which in turn is determined by three constructs namely "attitudes", "subjective norms" and "perceived behavioral control" (Masengu et al., 2023, p. 2).

According to Vazquez-Alonso and Ballico (2021), the key limitation of the theory is the assumption that intentions predict actual behavior.

It's been confirmed by studies that the willingness to act sustainably does not always translate into real actions at festivals (Gohoungodji & Amara, 2024, p. 82). According to Vazquez-Alonso and Ballico (2021), it is essential to understand the factors influencing both intentions and actions. Many festivals express their desire to go eco-friendly but fail to translate this into effective actions. Predictably, relying solely on media statements or press releases to assess sustainability can be misleading (Bendrups and Weston, 2015, pp. 61-71). According to Gohoungodji and Amara (2024), the theory of planned behavior takes into consideration individual motivations, but it fails to overview broader economic and environmental factors.

3.2.2 The Triple Bottom Line (TBL)

This theory evaluates sustainability in music festivals by three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. While most of academic literature highlights the importance of social and environmental aspects in promoting green practices, the economic side of sustainability needs further discussion. Some researchers believe that festivals play a key role in boosting the economy by creating jobs, generating tax income, and bringing in revenue from ticket sales (Gohoungodji & Amara, 2024, p. 82).

Hell and McPherson (2022) share a different opinion. They believe that prioritizing economic goals can undermine social, cultural, and environmental commitments. On top of it, focusing on economic goals can potentially reduce the quality of festival services, limiting investment in sustainable infrastructure, and promoting environmentally harmful mass tourism (Gohoungodji & Amara, 2024, p. 82).

Gohoungodji and Amara (2024) recommend that future studies look more closely at how the Triple Bottom Line model can be used in festival settings - especially at smaller, community-based events that are not driven primarily by profit.

3.2.3 Mair and Jago's Model

As a reaction to limitations of the Theory of Planned Behavior and TBL in predicting green practices at events, Mair and Jago (2010) proposed a more comprehensive model to better understand sustainability efforts in the festival industry.

As briefly described by Gohoungodji and Amara (2024), the model explains why companies in event management adopt corporate greening and highlights the interplay between motivating factors, obstacles, organizational context, and media influence. Even though the model was not designed for music festivals, it started to be applied in research in this area (Gohoungodji & Amara, 2024, p. 82).

As mentioned in the article by Gohoungodji and Amara (2024), the effectiveness of this model was different from region to region. It failed in Asia while revealing government support as a significant barrier. And it identified other new elements while being applied to the British and Malaysian companies (Gohoungodji & Amara, 2024, p. 82).

The variations that define the model were developed within the Australian context, and it probably can't be transferred to other regions without further adjustments. Thus, Gohoungodji and Amara (2024) suggest that this model doesn't bring a complete framework for understanding the diverse factors influencing the adoption of sustainable practices at music festivals.

3.2.4 Proposal for a New Integrative Conceptual Framework

By analyzing the gaps of the three theories mentioned earlier, Gohoungodji and Amara (2024) proposed their own integrative conceptual framework to boost green innovation in music festivals (Figure 3).
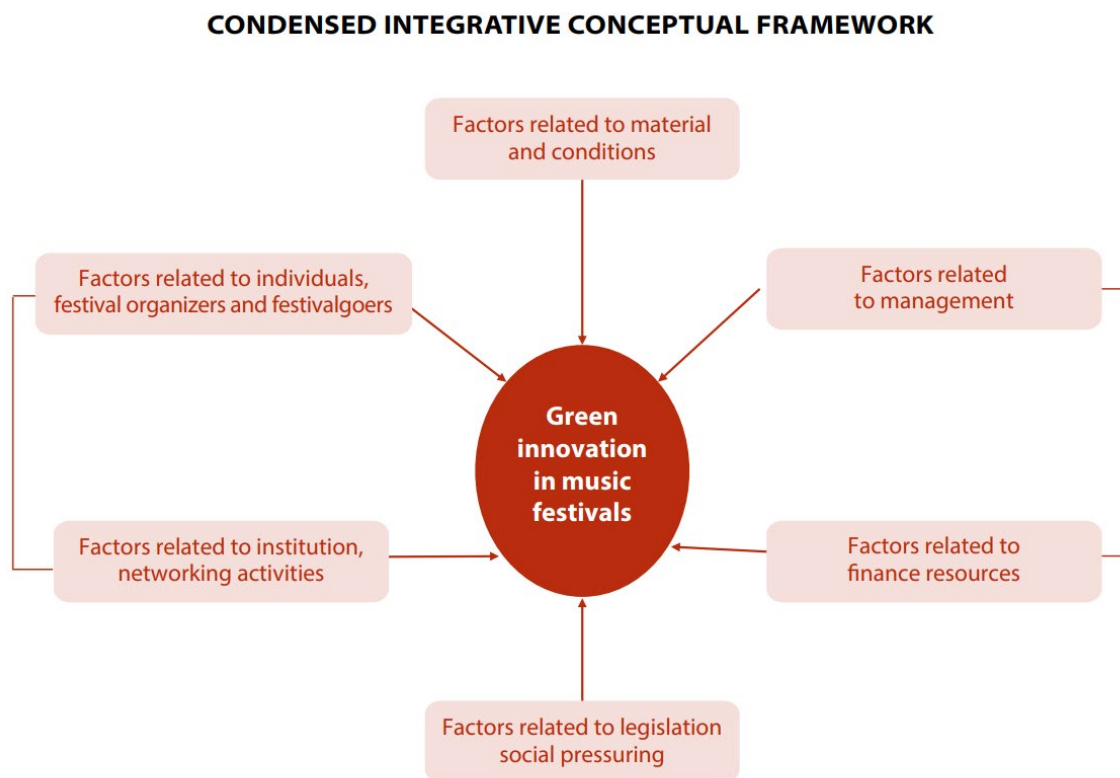
CONDENSED INTEGRATIVE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 3 Integrative Conceptual Framework

Source: Gohoungodji and Amara (2024)

4 VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE EVENTS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

The music industry in general as a service sector is not categorized as very energy or carbon intensive. Emissions occur due to energy supply for officers, music venues or CD-manufacturing. But the picture changes when the emissions or the, often international, travel of staff, artists and audience get included (Hillmer, 2016, p. 42).

Festivals and events create a vast majority of negative impacts on many surrounding areas of a festival or event such as venue and landscape, transportation and many other areas of the event (Maguire, 2020, pp. 1850-1874). Therefore, the urgency of sustainability is clear, and society should acknowledge this. According to Mair (2019), negative ecological values, revealed through 'footprint analysis', are generated by most events from travel to and from the event, and from accommodation and catering.

Despite conflicting interests over the environmental versus economic sustainability of the festival sector, there are a range of industry-led initiatives to mitigate the environmental impact of music festivals and live events. Indeed, the UK has historically played a leading role in the development of infrastructural support to address the particular environmental challenges facing festivals. UK-based industry organizations such as Julie's Bicycle, Powerful Thinking, and A Greener Festival are all concerned with reducing the carbon footprint of festivals. Outside the UK there are additional organizations across Europe such as Energy Efficient (EE) Music, Green Events Europe, and the Green Music Initiative, as well as one-off events (e.g., the Europe Jazz Network's 2015 seminar 'Take the Green Train'). Finally, there are annual summits which have grown steadily in size in recent years where festival promoters gather to share best practice, notably the ADE Green conference in Amsterdam and the Green Events and Innovation conference in London. As such they join a much larger work sector that has emerged in the past two decades to address sustainability issues for global industries of all kinds (Brennan et al., 2019, pp. 8-9). Festival organizers are as well advised to take action, as even more and more artists face the sustainability problems (Hillmer, 2016, p. 45).

The discourse around the negative environmental impacts of festivals and events led to the creation of The Vision: 2025 group, which is a UK-based initiative focused on driving sustainability in the events industry. It was established in 2010, and published the first report in 2015 as a response to the environmental challenges posed by festivals and outdoor events,

aiming to reduce carbon emissions and waste while promoting sustainable practices. In the absence of legislation or recognized minimum standards for event sustainability, the group steps forward together to create shared targets and minimum standards for best practice that meet the challenges of the climate crisis and are work-able for event organizers at different scales (Visionsustainableevents.org, 2025).

Speaking of Czech initiatives, the interest in sustainability is growing. Milan Anděl, who has been implementing the Čistý festival project for concert and festival organizers under the auspices of EKO-KOM since 2008, is also following this (Obnovitelne.cz, 2023).

In his interview with Obnovitelne.cz (2023), he admitted that "every year the organization is approached by new organizers who want waste sorting as the first step towards sustainability." The festivalgoers are also active. "They often come to the promo stand with interesting suggestions for improvement," he added.

The project offers visitors bins for sorted material and uses a communication campaign to spread awareness about waste and how to handle it better. In addition, it tries to select processors to recycle waste directly at the festival site, thereby reducing the carbon footprint of transport. And it brings results, festival visitors sort, waste is recycled, and the sea of plastic cups has probably already died down. The initiative collects most of the sortable festival packaging (Obnovitelne.cz, 2023).

5 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

According to Jones, the concept of social responsibility has been around for as long as there have been people bringing personal morals, ethics, and values into their businesses. The issues of concern within social responsibility, over history, have reflected the issues of the time or place. The principles of sustainable development are a sound basis for social responsibility. They reflect accepted international norms and are continually reinforced and enhanced at each edition of international gatherings on sustainable development. Embedding these principles into the organization's culture, policy, training, and practice will set an organization on a socially responsible path (Jones, 2017, p. 9).

The very reason for considering social responsibility within an organization should be to contribute to the sustainable development of the societal, economic, cultural, and natural systems in which it exists (Jones, 2017, p. 10).

The event sector is in a unique position when it comes to social responsibility and transparency. This makes event impacts highly visible and our reporting periods short. These two aspects combine to offer event organizers nowhere to hide. The other side of that coin is the risk that some less-than-responsible event producers may take the stance that they can actually hide because their event is a quick in-and-out, with an organizing committee that may dissolve after the event (Jones, 2017, p. 10).

As each event is often a temporary coming together of so many individuals and organizations, many don't have the continuous organizational culture that a permanent organization would have. It's important that each of us is committed at an individual level and working together as an entire sector to embrace the principles of social responsibility and ethical governance through one event and on to the next. Clients, event organizing companies, individual meeting planners, sponsors, venues, and suppliers all have a role to play in ensuring that socially responsible practices are embedded throughout the industry (Jones, 2017, p. 11).

Jones (2017) makes a reference to the work of Hashmi and Muff (2015), who mapped the evolving approaches and increasing sophistication of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within the hotel industry. This approach can be also applicable to events. Their framework, known as the S-WELL grid, outlines various types of CSR and sustainability management as stages zin an evolutionary process. The model is defined by four quadrants. Each of them is a reference to a different phase of hotel (or event) sustainability (Jones, 2017, p. 11).

Jones (2017) provides an overview of the quadrants with further explanation on its applicability in event management:

1) Compliance: This initial point is associated with the beginning of the sustainability journey. The phase is associated with "going green" and "doing less harm". The main focus during this phase is on managing environmental issues and resource efficiency.

2) CSR: It's defined by sustainability practices motivated by public opinions and desire to improve the image of the brand among stakeholders. For events, it's the moment when a social conscience begins to emerge.

3) Triple Bottom Line: This phase is characterized by adoption of a broader perspective that seeks to balance three pillars of TBL. All the efforts made are used to create socioeconomic and environmental value while incorporating principles such as corporate governance, transparency, and inclusivity.

4) Societal well-being: It is defined as the most advanced phase of the framework. It relates to adoption of sustainability for the best interest of future generations.

The S-WELL grid can be used as an analytical tool for understanding and challenging event sustainability strategies and practices to benefit society at large (Jones, 2017, p. 11).

II   PRACTICAL PART

6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Objectives

The aim of the research is to explore the level of sustainability awareness among music festival organizers in Czechia and to summarize how they perceive and implement sustainability practices, and if they are influenced by those in general. The main goals are to find out the level of sustainability awareness, to identify what actions are being taken to support environmental sustainability, what motivates organizers to take these actions, and what challenges make it difficult. The work will give a clearer picture of how environmentally aware local music organizers are and how Czech festivals deal with environmental sustainability and suggest ways they can become better at it. A mathematical model of SWOT analysis will be included at the end to show the most important opportunities and the riskiest threats in this area. The SWOT will be based on identified strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. The results aim not only to measure the overall sustainability awareness but also to give a piece of advice to festival organizers and other stakeholders in the field plan better for more eco-friendly event management.

Sub-Objective 1:

To evaluate the level of sustainability awareness in the context of sustainability among music festival organizers in Czechia.

Sub-Objective 2:

To find out what music festival organizers in Czechia are currently doing to help protect the environment. This includes how they handle waste, use energy, manage transport, choose food suppliers, and engage with festivalgoers.

Sub-Objective 3:

To understand what motivates festival organizers to use sustainable practices. For example, if their motivation comes from personal values, rules and laws, public demand, or working with business partners who care about the environment.

Sub-Objective 4:

To identify the main barriers and challenges that make it hard for organizers to use sustainable methods (e.g., not having enough budget, not having the know-how, complex planning, or low interest from the public).

Sub-Objective 5:

To develop a SWOT analysis based on the own collected data and report from ETC (2022), highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Thus, to indicate the main threats and opportunities within the area with the help of a mathematical model.

6.2   Research Design

This study uses a combination of different research methods to examine how music festivals organizers are environmentally aware and the ways they deal with sustainability issues. It combines quantitative and qualitative analysis to provide a more comprehensive picture of the current situation. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data in mixed methods research enables researchers to achieve results that one approach cannot achieve independently (Wilkinson and Dokter, 2023; Heigham and Croker, 2009). The study can thus show not only how environmentally aware the organizers are, but also what they do in terms of environmental sustainability, as well as what motivates or hinders them from doing so.

The study is linked to three primary data sources. First, it employs a content analysis of 30 official webpages of Czech music festivals. Second, it consists of the data gathered via a structured questionnaire shared among different event organizers and its analysis. And finally, two interviews were conducted with organizers from different festivals to understand the personal beliefs and the direction taken towards environmental sustainability and awareness. The research questions receive answers through each method, which examines the data from unique perspectives.

6.2.1   Content Analysis

According to Lune and Berg (2017), content analysis is a systematic research method used to examine artifacts of social communication, typically involving written texts or

transcriptions of verbal exchanges. Defined broadly, it encompasses any technique for making inferences through the objective and systematic identification of message characteristics. A key feature of content analysis is the use of explicit and predefined criteria of selection, which guide the objective evaluation of message content. Importantly, the method aims to avoid biased interpretation by including or excluding content solely based on the consistent application of the established criteria (Lune and Berg, 2017, p. 182).

Content analysis can serve as a flexible method suitable for both quantifying elements of communication and interpreting underlying meanings, making it a valuable tool in both qualitative and quantitative research traditions (Lune and Berg, 2017, p. 186).

The analysis starts with the patterns discernible in the text, which are subsequently explained by the application or development of a theoretical framework. In a deductive approach, researchers start with some categorical scheme suggested by a theoretical perspective. The framework is designed to explain cases, such as the one under investigation, and may be used to generate specific hypotheses about the case. The data itself, the documents or other texts, provide a means for assessing the hypothesis (Lune and Berg, 2017, p. 188).

The word is the smallest unit and is commonly used to create frequency distributions. However, themes, often expressed as simple sentences, are considered more meaningful as they convey distinct ideas. Due to their varied locations within texts, researchers must predefine where and how themes will be counted. In some cases, the character (e.g., a person mentioned) becomes the primary unit of analysis. Less frequently, researchers may use the paragraph as a unit, though this presents challenges due to the complexity of thoughts within paragraphs (Lune and Berg, 2017, p. 189).

Other possible units include items which encompass the complete message source and concepts, which group related terms into clusters representing broader ideas. This approach often shifts the analysis toward latent content, focusing on underlying meanings (Lune and Berg, 2017, p. 189).

Finally, semantic analysis goes beyond word counts to consider the affective strength of words and their emotional tone within context. This reflects an interest not only in frequency but also in how language conveys intensity and sentiment (Lune and Berg, 2017, p. 189).

The content analysis in the study offers a systematic analysis of **words** and **themes.**

Words (Frequency Counts): Tracking how often sustainability-related words appear.

Themes: Identifying recurring ideas or messages related to sustainability (e.g., waste management, sustainable travelling options).

The analysis was conducted based on the publicly available information about sustainability from official websites. It reveals if Czech music festivals are aware of environmental sustainability and if they name any eco-friendly practices on official webpages. This helps the study determine if sustainability information reaches participants in that way and whether sustainability awareness stands as a focus.

6.2.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a formalized set of questions for obtaining information from respondents. The overriding objective is to translate the researcher's information needs into a set of specific questions that respondents can answer (Wilkinson and Dokter, 2023; Grover et al., 2006).

A questionnaire is the main means of collecting qualitative primary data. It enables qualitative data to be collected in a standardized way so that the data are internally consistent and coherent for analysis (Wilkinson and Dokter, 2023; Grover et al., 2006).

Three types of information are obtained from a questionnaire: (1) basic information, (2) classification information, a (3) identification information. Basic information relates directly to the research problem. Classification information consists of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. Identification information may be obtained for a variety of purposes including verifying the respondents (Wilkinson and Dokter, 2023; Grover et al., 2006).

The results of quantitative research are presented in the form of descriptive or complex statistics, like tests of significance, correlation, regression analysis. As the name suggests, quantitative research is concerned with presenting findings in a numerical form. The values underlying quantitative research include neutrality, objectivity, and the acquisition of a sizeable scope of knowledge (e.g., a statistical overview from a large sample) (Leavy, 2017, p. 9).

The questionnaire data serves as the quantitative part of the study, which gathers detailed information about festival organizers' awareness, actions and motivations, and obstacles to sustainility. From a selected sample of 80 festivals being contacted, 15 responses were validated for the analysis.

6.2.3 Interview

According to Edwards and Holland (2023), the systematic use of interviews as a social research method (rather than part of observation, for example) to explore people's understandings of their lives and aspects of their experiences is relatively recent.

Research participants can be interviewed through two main methods which include structured and unstructured interviews. The process of structured interviews relies heavily on predetermined question schedules which researchers use to conduct participant conversations. The researcher maintains a point-by-point list of all questions to be asked during the interview process. The researcher maintains strict adherence to the schedule during each interview by asking questions exactly as written and in the predetermined order (Roulston, 2021, p. 78).

The third practice would be semi-structured interviews. In this case, the interview protocol is used as topical guidance and questions may not always be asked in the same order. The interviewer initiates topics by asking questions and posses follow-up questions in response to the interviewee's descriptions and accounts. The interviewee selects own terms to formulate answers to questions and the answers are guided by the interviewer's questions (Roulston, 2021, p. 78).

In this research, both interviews were conducted as semi-structured. Whereas they had a clear structure, it gave the respondents the opportunity to answer their way, and the questions were not always followed in the same order.

As Flick (2022) suggests, Six F's of designing interview research have been used: Foregrounding, Focusing, Foreseeing, Framing, Finding and Formulating.

- Foregrounding: This involves clarifying the purpose of the interview and situating it within the broader research design. It means identifying why interviews are the right method for your study (Flick, 2022, p. 369).

In case of this research, the interviews were chosen to support the findings of content analysis and questionnaire.

- Focusing: Choosing the right topics and narrowing down the interview themes. It's about deciding what to explore and ensuring the conversation remains purposeful.

The structure of the interview was inspired by the research questions and the sub-objectives with the goal to enrich answers already provided in the quantitative form.

The focus group consisted mainly of questionnaire respondents who expressed a willingness to be contacted. Of the four volunteers, two participated in the interviews.

- Foreseeing: Planning by anticipating possible challenges, ethical considerations, and preparing for how the interview might unfold.

This included informing both respondents about the anonymity of the answers.

- Framing: Designing the interview structure (e.g., semi-structured, narrative, etc.) and crafting questions to guide the conversation effectively.

Prior to taking an interview, a structure was pre-made in order to frame the conversation around the subject.

- Finding: Collecting meaningful data during the interviews. It refers to the actual process of generating information through the interview dialogue.

Both interviews were recorded with the respondent's consent for the purpose of further transcript analysis.

- Formulating: Interpreting and analyzing the collected data, moving from raw responses to themes, categories, and insights.

In general, both interviews enhance this research as they reveal specific details about organizers' sustainability awareness, their decision-making processes regarding sustainability and philosophy.

6.3 Data Collection

Content Analysis served as an equal resource to a questionnaire and interviews, leading to the triangulation of findings. In 2006, Lopez and Tashakkori discussed the role of triangulation within mixed methods of research, particularly in the context of sequential mixed designs. In such designs, researchers conduct at least two strands of research chronologically (e.g., QUAN→QUAL or QUAL→QUAN). The conclusions drawn from the first strand inform the formulation of questions, data collection, and analysis for the subsequent strand. This approach allows for the confirmation or disconfirmation of initial inferences and provides further explanation for findings from the first strand. By integrating findings from both strands, researchers can achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, enhancing the validity and robustness of their conclusions (Lopez and Tashakkori, 2006).
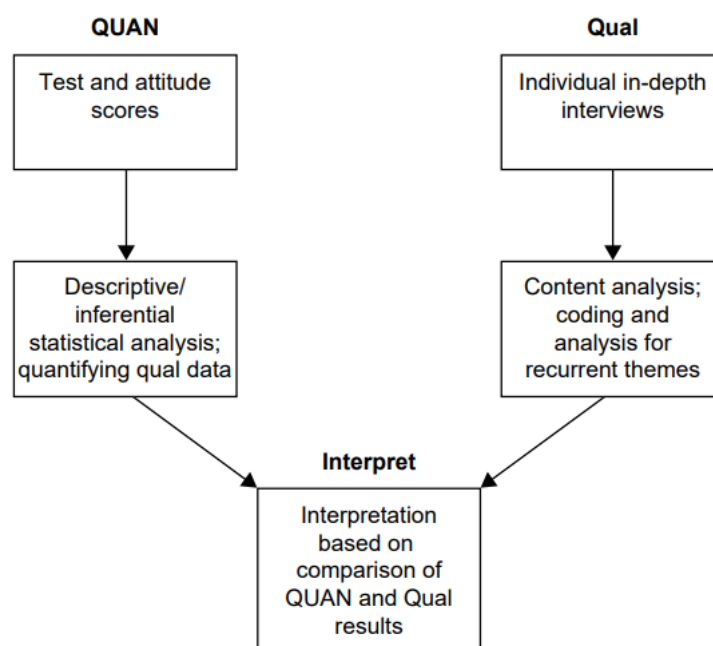

Figure 4 Triangulation Design Procedures

Source: Lopez and Tashakkori (2006)

6.3.1 Content Analysis

This kind of analysis was conducted in order to review sustainability-related information available on the websites of 30 different Czech music festivals. The selection of festivals was made based on whether they maintained an official website, serving as an indicator of a minimum level of public recognition.

The scope of the content analysis included the 15 festivals that completed the questionnaire and 15 festivals that received invitations but didn't participate in the research. The analysis aimed to identify the level of sustainability awareness, environmental commitments that were visible to the public as well as strategic sustainability messaging and sustainability practices that were frequently mentioned. The model followed for the analysis is described on page 43.

6.3.2 Questionnaire

The data collection process started by distributing a structured questionnaire to examine the sustainability awareness among music festival organizers and to identify common sustainability practices in Czech music festival area. SurveyMonkey served as the main platform to create and store a questionnaire which was distributed in the Czech language. The survey distribution used direct email invitations, SurveyMonkey outreach features, and social media message sharing. The contact information for outreach came mainly from official websites and Facebook event pages of Czech music festivals. 80 festivals have been approached.

The questionnaire contained several thematic sections which covered general festival information; environmental sustainability initiatives; motivations for adopting sustainable practices; challenges and barriers; future strategies and goals; environmental responsibility; sustainable procurement; communication and marketing approaches; feedback and continuous improvement efforts; and general sustainability trends.

The survey included a special section which let participants give their contact information if they wanted to participate in a follow-up interview.

The survey remained active from March to April 2025. Out of 80, it obtained 15 valid responses from participants. The response rate is 18,75 %. As Cabelas et al. suggest (2025), whereas the response rate is not an indicator to determine the quality of a piece of research on its own, it must be considered. Low response rates directly impact the confidence

intervals, hindering the possibility of subgroup analysis being carried out, and potentially increasing bias (Rutherford et al., 2023). Different researchers suggest as adequate a response rate higher than 20 % (Agyabeng-Mensah et al., 2023; Getele et al., 2022) or at least higher than 15 % (Navarro-García et al., 2016).

According to Budiu and Moran (2018), this sample size represents a medium level of risk and fair precision, yet the sample is very small, hence follow up interviews were conducted.

6.3.3 Interview

Two semi-structured interviews with festival organizers responsible for implementation of sustainability initiatives at the events were conducted in order to obtain deeper qualitative information.

The first interview took place on April 10th, 2025, followed by the second interview on April 16th, 2025. The interviews took place remotely via Microsoft Teams. The discussions examined the sustainability awareness of music festival organizers and what sustainable practices are implemented at the festivals. The conversation covered the core motivations and strategic direction that guides sustainability initiatives in festival operations.

Each interview was semi-structured and used identical questions for participants which were grouped into thematic sections: festival identity and audience profile, decision-making processes and necessary compromises, long-term vision, team culture and learning.

The questions were as follows:

1) Festival Identity & Audience

Festival Identity:

• How would you describe the core values of your festival?

Audience:

• Who typically attends your festival? (age, interests, values)

• Do you feel that the audience perceives sustainability as an important topic?

2) Decision-making & trade-offs

• Can you describe a situation where you had to choose between a sustainable solution and another goal (e.g., budget, operational efficiency)?

• Did you encounter resistance when implementing environmental measures? (from within the team, from suppliers, from visitors?)

• Was there a measure that you implemented at the festival but later dropped? Why?

3) Vision, team culture & learning

• How do you imagine the ideal state of sustainability at your festival?

• Is sustainability a topic for the whole team or is it just you?

• Where do you draw inspiration from? Do you follow other festivals, networks, experts?

• Do you collaborate with other sustainability-focused organizations?

4) Bonus question

If there were no budget or time constraints, what eco-friendly measure would you immediately implement at your festival?

6.4 Scope and Limitation

This thesis has defined boundaries through its specific scope, which both determines research limits and identifies factors that might affect the results. The research focuses on Czechia to study sustainability awareness on music festivals while specifically analyzing their environmental sustainability practices. The research data consists of a content analysis, combined with a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

The content analysis was conducted using the websites of Czech music festivals, meaning that smaller festivals that only have Facebook pages were not included in this part of the analysis. A total of 30 webpages have been researched.

The questionnaire has a response rate as of N=15 with the primary goal of exploration and description. In this case, inferential statistics (p-values) should be taken with great caution, rather than as an indicator of areas that might be interesting for further investigation in a larger sample.

The study explores the present state, but the restricted scope means it does not represent all music festival types in Czechia, especially those with limited resources and no environmental sustainability focus. To confirm trends and obtain generalizable data, it is necessary to conduct research on a much larger sample of festivals.

6.5 Data Analysis

The questionnaire data was analysed with the features available in SurveyMonkey where the survey was stored. To identify recurring themes and keywords, the digital text analysis platform Voyant Tools was employed. This facilitated the detection of language patterns and thematic emphases across festival websites, thereby supporting the triangulation of findings. The interview transcript from Microsoft Teams taken with participant consent underwent analysis through Google AI Studio.

The research has been guided by the following primary research questions:

- What is the level of sustainability awareness among local music festival organizers?

- What actions are taken by music festival organizers in Czechia to support sustainability?

- What motivates music festival organizers to adopt environmentally sustainable practices?

- What discourages them from taking steps towards sustainability?

7 DATA AND RESULTS

7.1 Content Analysis

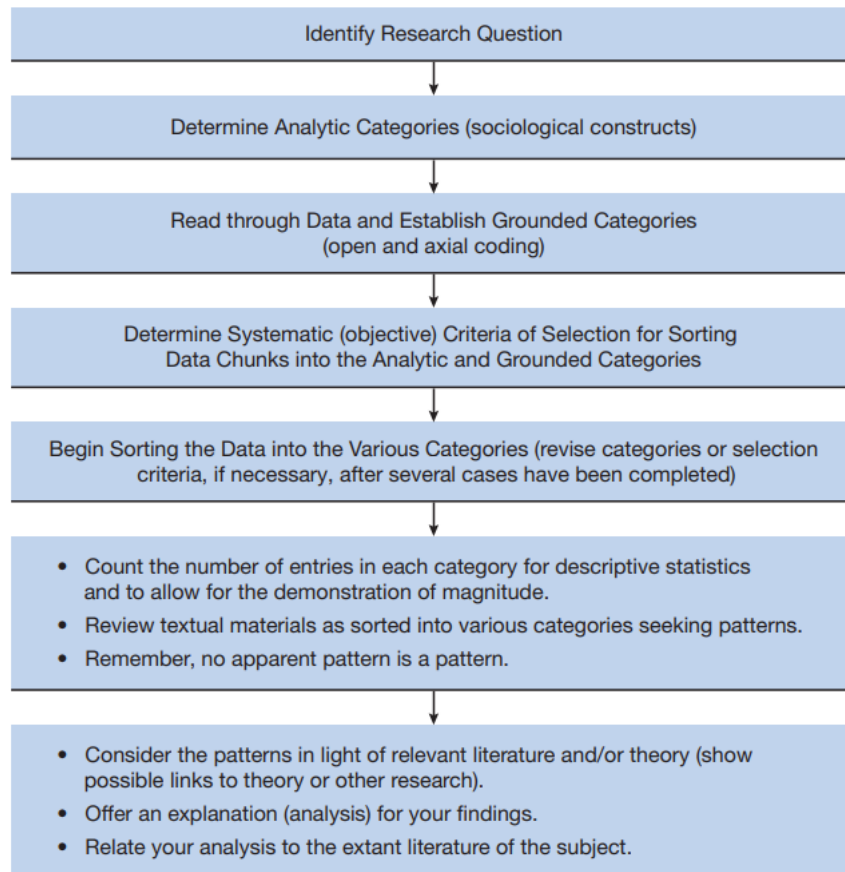### 7.1.1 Model of Content Analysis

Figure 5 Stage Model of Content Analysis

Source: Lune and Berg (2017)

According to the stage model of content analysis (Figure 5), the following plan was implemented:

1) Identify Research Questions

The research questions are focused on how festivals communicate their sustainability practices publicly, what is the level of their sustainability awareness and the analysis of aspects such as waste management, plastic use, and eco-friendly initiatives.

2) Determine Analytical Categories

The sample encompasses a diverse range of 30 music festivals, including small community-based festivals (fewer than 500 attendees) as well as medium-sized and large-scale festivals.

Key analytic categories identified were:

- Waste management

- Plastic use

- Eco-friendly practices

- Sustainability communication

- Sustainable travel

- Partnerships with eco-focused organizations

3) Read through Data and Establish Grounded Categories

Half of the festivals participated in the questionnaire. Their responses were compared with the publicly available content on the festivals' websites.

Where available, the number of attendees was recorded. If not explicitly provided, estimates were made based on social media followers and reports published by the festivals.

This triangulated approach allowed the establishment of grounded categories connecting online communication with actual sustainability initiatives.

The conceptual connections between keywords are illustrated on page 45 (Figure 6).

These links highlight all connections between high-frequency words through a dynamic network graph (Sinclair and Rockwell, 2021, p.44).
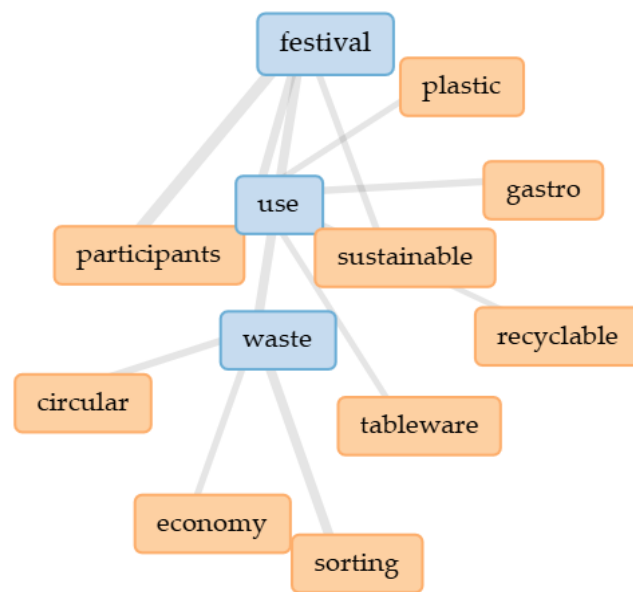
Figure 6 Concept Map of the Sustainability-related Content

Source: Own analysis via Voyant Tools

4) Determine Systematic (Objective) Criteria for Sorting Data Chunks

The following systematic criteria were established:

- Festivals without a social media presence were excluded from attendee estimations.

- Words such as "waste," "plastic," "sustainable," and "eco-friendly" were tracked to assess sustainability communication.

- Only explicit mentions were counted to avoid subjective interpretation.

- Survey participation was cross-referenced with website data for validation.

5) Begin Sorting the Data into Various Categories

Data were sorted into predefined categories.

Festivals were further grouped based on the strength of their sustainability communication:

Strong communication: Festivals D, I, J, K, and O

Moderate or weak communication: Remaining festivals

6) Count Entries and Seek Patterns

Quantitative results:

- "Waste" appeared 79 times; "plastic" appeared 27 times.

- Among 30 festivals, only 20% included a specific sustainability section on their websites.

- Only 9 festivals explicitly referenced recycling and eco-friendly practices.

- 4 festivals promoted sustainable travel options.

- 7 festivals actively encouraged eco-friendly attendee behavior.

- 6 festivals mentioned partnerships with eco-friendly organizations.

Emerging Patterns:

- Festivals with strong survey participation often had inconsistent online sustainability messaging.

- Language used tended to be practical and item-focused (cups, bins) rather than goal-focused ("sustainability" as a broader objective).

- Larger festivals (20,000+ attendees) often lacked dedicated sustainability sections, despite their potential impact.

- Festivals D, I, J, O, and AA were identified as leaders based on multiple sustainability-related efforts and clear communication.

7.1.2 Interpretation of results

The results are presented on page 49. * indicates an estimate of attendees based on social media, and ** represents my estimation.

The most common words related to environmental sustainability were *waste* (79) and *plastic* (27).

Figure 7 Word Clouds

Source: Own analysis via Voyant Tools

The link between the words is shown below:

Among 30 festivals, only 20% include a specific sustainability section on their websites. Sustainability-related terms such as "sustainable," "waste," "plastic," or "eco-friendly" appear rarely throughout most of these festivals. Most of these events lack organized and detailed sustainability content.

Despite participation in the survey, only a minority of the festivals (mainly D, I, J, K and O) demonstrate strong sustainability communication on their online platforms. This suggests a potential disconnect between internal sustainability awareness and online presence, or even limitations in how deeply sustainability practices are integrated into the festival's core.

Several festivals show explicit dedication to sustainability initiatives. Festival D, I, J, O, and AA stand out because they employ the following sustainability characteristics:

- A dedicated sustainability tab or comprehensive information regarding environmental practices.

- The events incorporate recycling programs and sustainable travel choices together with audience-directed sustainability initiatives.

- Partnerships with sustainability-focused organizations.

- The festivals implement concrete sustainability measures through returnable cup programs and biodegradable dishware distribution and waste sorting stations, and mobile applications that minimize printed material usage.

These festivals demonstrate organized environmental communication strategies that establish them as leaders in this field.

9 festivals explicitly make a reference to recycling and eco-friendly practices. For instance, Festivals D, I and O stand out as leaders, with multiple references to "waste," "plastic," "paper," and "energy management". Besides, Festival I has implemented reward-based waste sorting activities in collaboration with an eco-friendly initiative. Festival O also demonstrates a robust eco-friendly profile, with sustainability efforts incorporated in various dimensions.

4 festivals highlight and promote sustainable travel options, such as public transportation or cycling. It seems to be an important yet under-communicated aspect of sustainability initiatives.

Only 7 festivals actively encourage their attendees to behave eco-friendly. It highlights a gap in the strategy, despite the presence of certain sustainability-related information.

6 festivals mention their partnerships with eco-friendly organizations. This limited number highlights an opportunity for festivals to increase their credibility and extend the impact of their sustainability efforts by developing this kind of connection.

The term "sustainable" is not used apart from Festival D. The event uses it explicitly in their online presence. The language chosen by most festivals is more practical and action oriented. It focuses on physical items such as cups or waste bins rather than connecting actions to broader sustainability goals.

Some festivals show minimal sustainability communication despite their survey participation. The observed gap indicates that sustainability awareness within the organization does not translate to external messaging or possibly the deep integration of sustainability practices in festival operations.

Table 1 Content Analysis of the Official Websites

Encoded Festival Identifier	Estimated Number of Attendees	Questionnaire Participation Status	Presence of Dedicated Sustainability Section	Frequency of the Word "Sustainable"	Frequency of the Word "Waste"	Frequency of the Word "Plastic"	Frequency of the Word "Paper"	Frequency of the Word "Energy"	Frequency of the Word "Water"	Information on Recycling or Eco-Friendly Practices	Promotion of Sustainable Travel Options	Asks Audience for Action	Mentions Sustainability Goals	Mentions Collaboration with Other Initiatives
Festival A	550	Yes	No		0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival B	250	Yes	No		0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival C	300	Yes	No		0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival D	45000	Yes	Yes	24	15	9	0	5	4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Festival E	15000	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival F	5000	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival G	3000	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival H	700	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival I	25000	Yes	Yes	0	24	7	6	3	16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Festival J	47000	Yes	Yes	0	8	4	3	0	0	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Festival K	4000	Yes	Yes	0	4	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Festival L	28000	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival M	6000	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival N	20000	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival O	50000	Yes	Yes	0	24	5	5	13	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Festival P	20000-30000	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival Q	20000-25000	No	No	0	1	0	0	0	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Festival R	Unknown	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival S	2500*	No	No	0	0	1	0	0	0	Yes	No	No	No	No
Festival T	3000*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival U	1000*	No	No	0	1	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	No	No	No
Festival V	5000*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival W	10000**	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival X	12000*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival Y	50-65*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival Z	Unknown	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival AA	12000**	No	Yes	0	2	1	1	0	0	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Festival AB	5000*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival AC	7000*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Festival AD	1500*	No	No	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Own elaboration

Based on the analysis (Table 1), we can see A notable gap that exists in the sustainability-related communication of festivals with large audiences (e.g., those with over 20 000 attendees), half of them does do not have a separate section focused on sustainability. Taking into consideration that some festivals implement sustainability practices but do not make the information public, there is a strong need for:

• Standardized sustainability messaging coming from festivals.

• Encouragement for greater collaboration and public commitments to sustainability initiatives.

• Expanded communication on sustainability goals, travel options, and strategies for influencing audience behaviour.

7.2 Questionnaire

7.2.1 Data from Quantitative Survey

The profiles of the festivals that participated in the questionnaire are described below.

Table 2 The Festival Profiles

Encoded Festival Identifier	Number of Attendees	How Many Years the Festival Exists
Festival A	550	13
Festival B	250	16
Festival C	300	2
Festival D	45000	22
Festival E	15000	24
Festival F	5000	30
Festival G	3000	24
Festival H	700	13
Festival I	25000	20
Festival J	47000	22
Festival K	4000	21
Festival L	28000	80
Festival M	6000	5
Festival N	20000	18
Festival O	50000	30

Source: Data from the questionnaire

Question 1: Does your event have a sustainability strategy or policy?
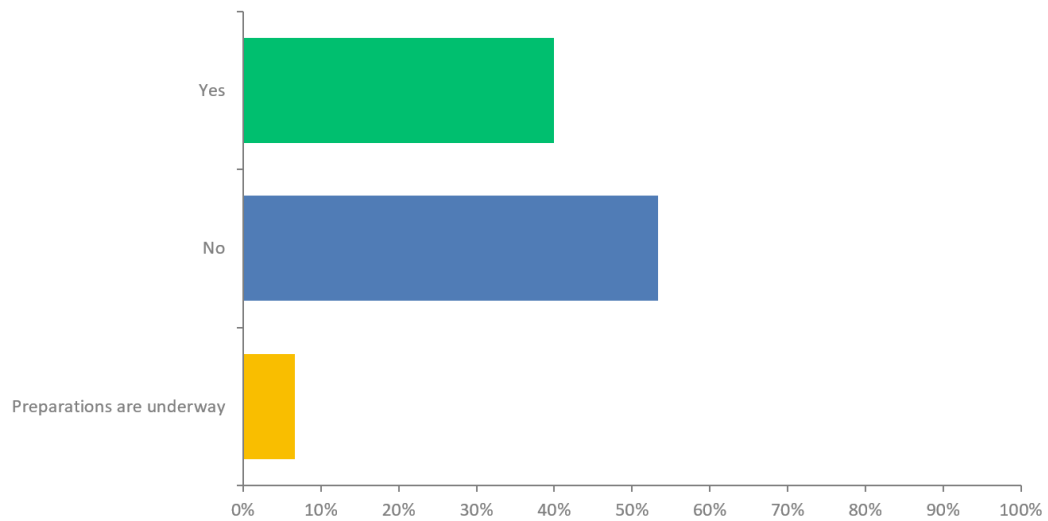
Figure 8 Applicability of Sustainability Strategy

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

According to the data, 8 respondents (53%) don't have a sustainable strategy or policy in place, and around 7% are in the process of its preparation.

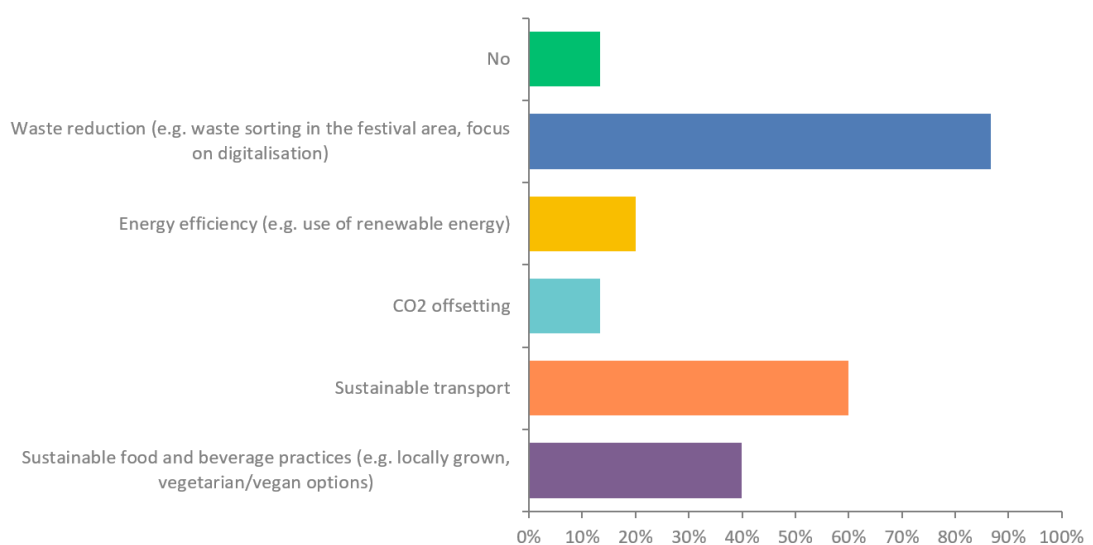**Question 2:** Are there sustainable practices implemented at your event? If yes, which ones?

Figure 9 Sustainable Practices

Waste reduction is the most popular practice. 13 respondents (87% of total) focus on measures like waste sorting and digitalization.

The adoption of sustainable transport methods is widespread throughout the industry. The survey reveals that 9 participants (60%) choose environmentally friendly transportation methods.

The adoption rate of sustainable food and beverage practices reaches 40% among festivals through their provision of local produce, vegetarian and vegan options as 6 respondents vote for this option.

The implementation of energy efficiency measures and CO_2 offsetting practices exists among 20% and 13% of respondents respectively.

Question 3: Has your organization taken steps to reduce the environmental impact of its supply chain?
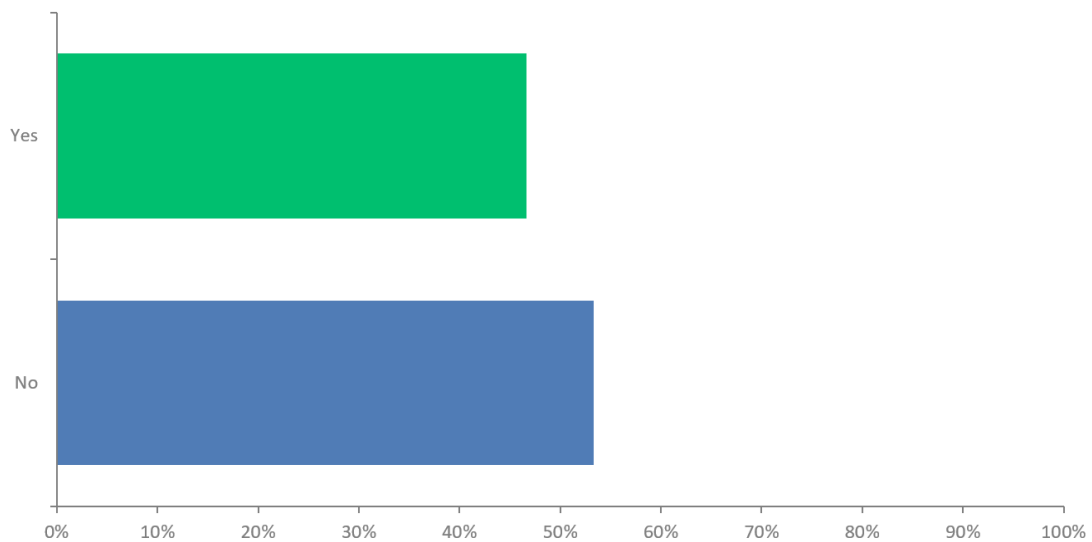
Figure 10 Environmental Impact of the Supply Chain

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

The supply chain reduction of environmental impact remains a vision for 47% of respondents (7 participants) who also consider its effects.

Question 4: What motivates you to adopt sustainable practices for your events?
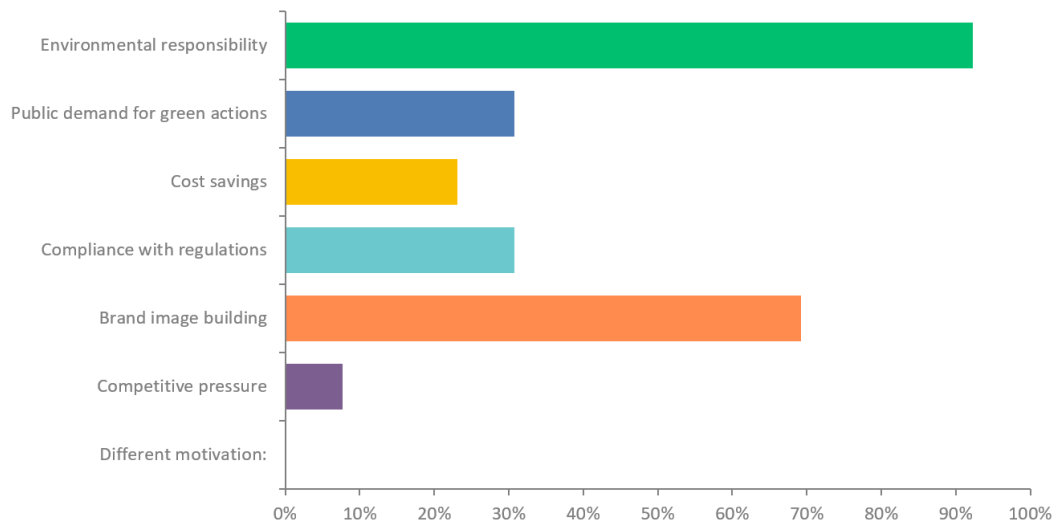
Figure 11 Motivation for Sustainability

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Environmental responsibility stands as the primary motivator which drives 92% of respondents (12 participants).

Brand image building stands as a major motivator for 69% of respondents (9 participants) who choose to adopt green practices.

The combination of public demand for green actions and regulatory compliance affects 31% of respondents (4 participants per each).

The economic benefits of sustainability motivate 3 respondents (23% of total) to adopt sustainable practices.

Competitive pressure serves as a weak motivator which affects only 8% of respondents.

Question 5: What challenges have you encountered in implementing sustainable practices at your events?
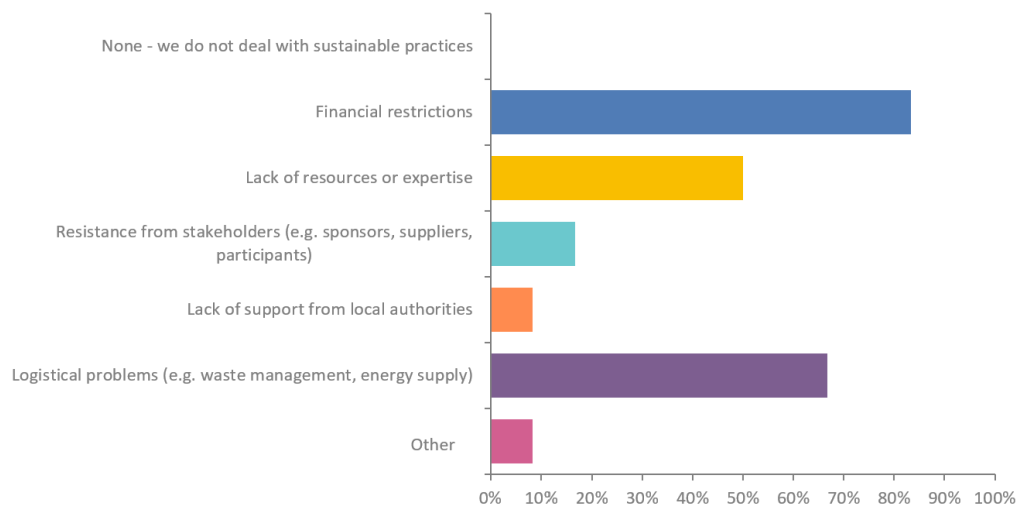
Figure 12 Challenges and Barriers

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Financial constraints represent the biggest challenge which 83% of survey participants encounter (10 respondents).

The logistics-related issues affect 67% of respondents (8 participants).

The lack of resources and know-how represent a common problem which affects 50% of respondents.

Stakeholder resistance together with insufficient local authority support are less common obstacles which impact 17% and 8% of respondents respectively.

Question 6: What steps do you think could help overcome these barriers?
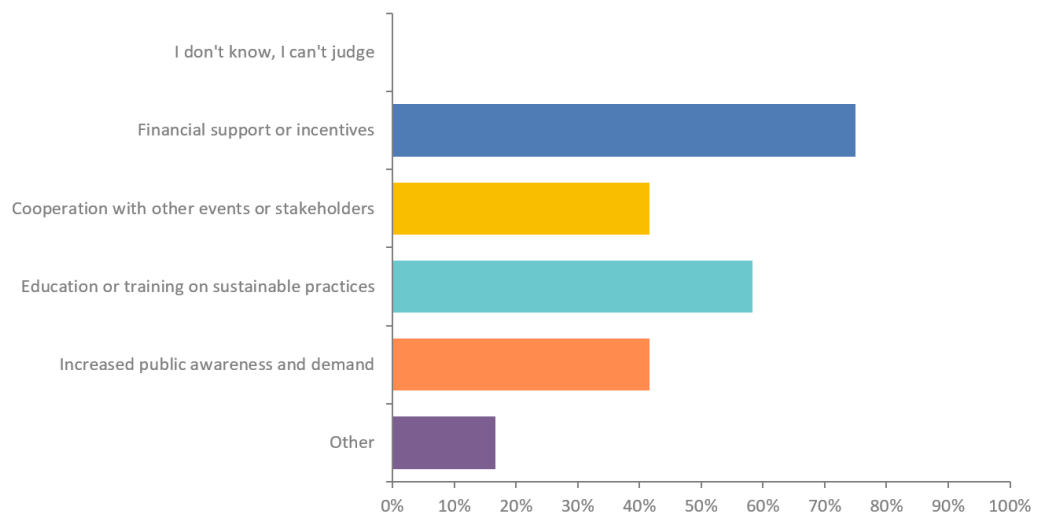
Figure 13 Overcoming the Barriers

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Financial support stands out as the most beneficial support according to 75% of respondents (9 participants).

The education or training of sustainable practices stands as a vital necessity according to 58% of respondents (7 participants).

The implementation of collaboration between events and stakeholders and the growth of public awareness and demand each receive support from 41% of respondents (5 participants).

The remaining 17% of respondents identify other steps including personnel and time capacities as potential beneficial measures.

Question 7: Do you plan to introduce (more) sustainability practices in the future?
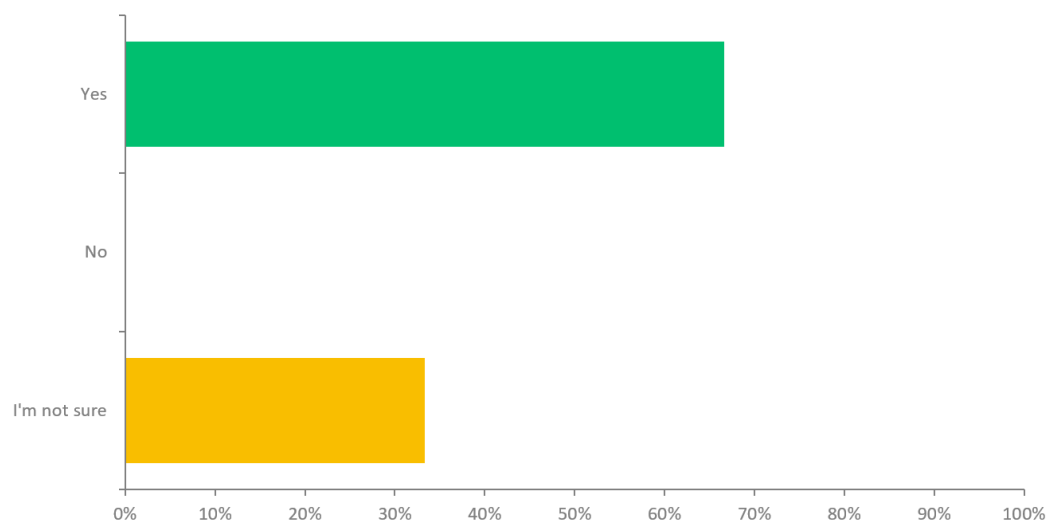
Figure 14 Sustainability Strategy in the Future

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Around 67% of respondents (8 participants) are planning to introduce other sustainability practices in the future.

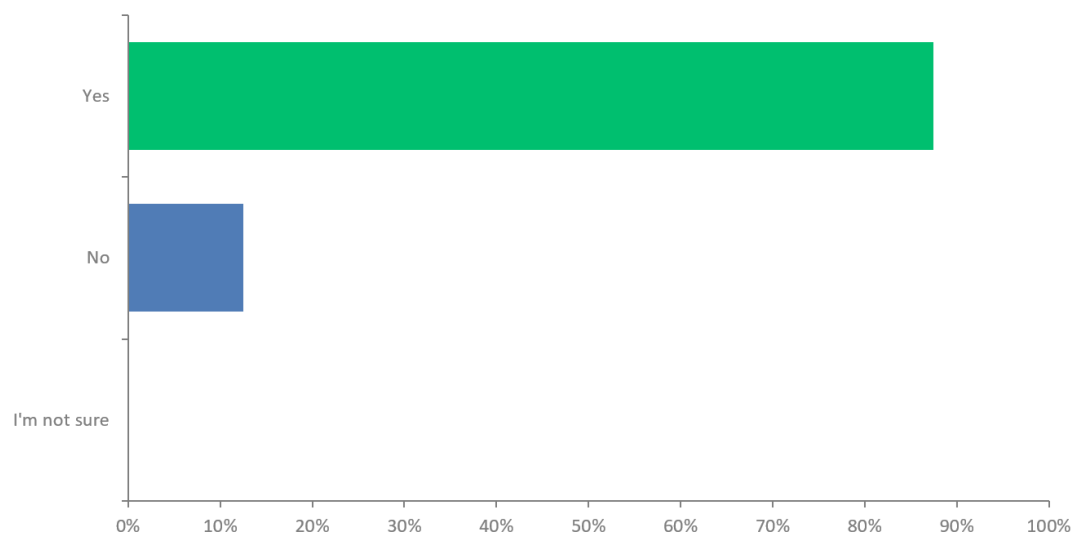**Question 8:** Do you have specific goals for sustainability for the next 3-5 years?

Figure 15 Sustainability Strategy for the Next 3-5 Years

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

87.5% of respondents, respectively 7 participants, have sustainability goals in mind for the nearest future.

Question 9: Do you measure the carbon footprint of your events?
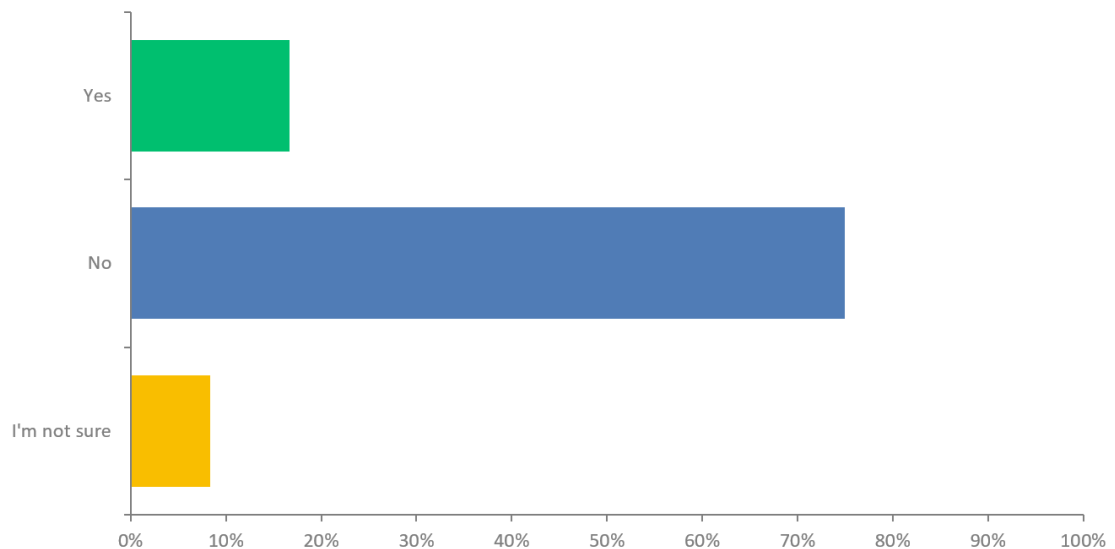
Figure 16 Measuring the Carbon Footprint

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Only 17% of respondents (2 participants) can confirm that the carbon footprint is measured after their event.

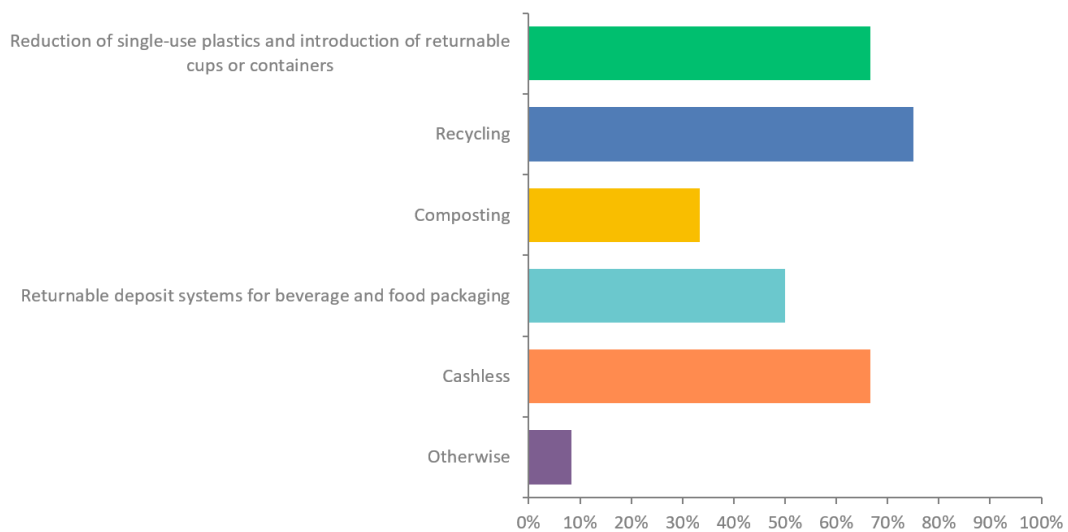**Question 10:** How do you address the circular economy?

Figure 17 The Circular Economy

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

The circular economy practice most frequently implemented by respondents is recycling at 75% of the total (9 participants).

The implementation of returnable cups or containers together with single-use plastics reduction measures has been adopted by 67% of respondents (8 participants).

The cashless system has gained popularity as 67% of respondents use it (8 participants).

The returnable deposit system for beverage and food packaging is used by 50% of respondents.

The practice of composting is implemented by 33% of respondents.

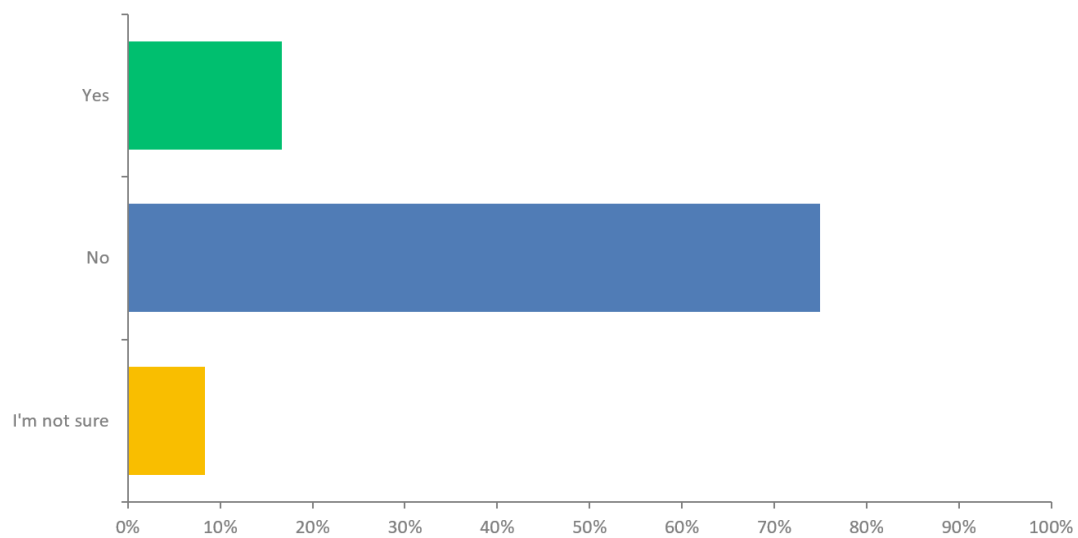**Question 11:** Do you use renewable energy sources?

Figure 18 Renewable Energy Sources

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

17% of respondents confirm they use renewable energy sources at their events (2 participants).

Question 12: Do you prefer suppliers with environmental certifications or sustainable practices?
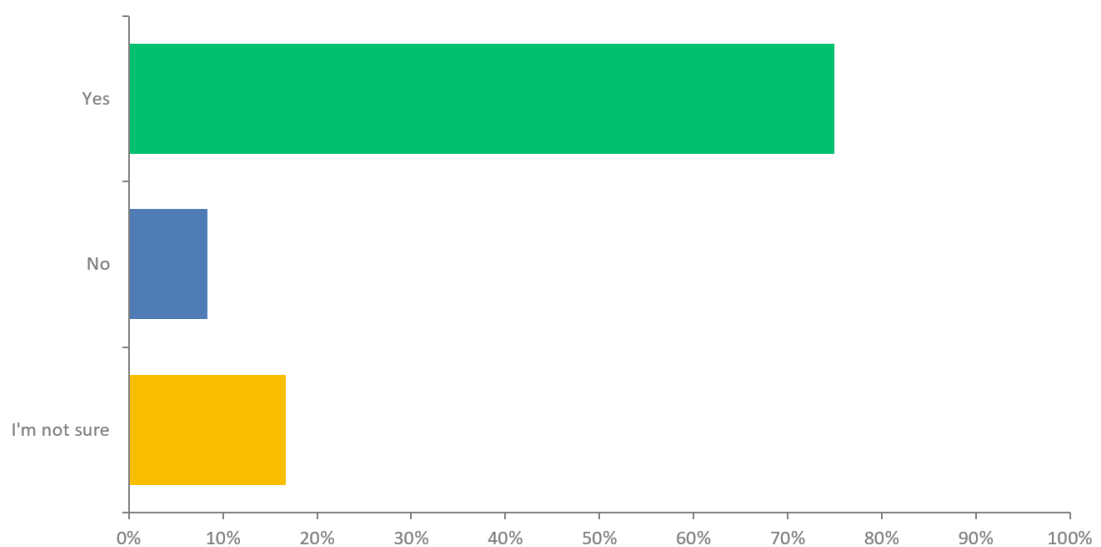

Figure 19 Choice of Suppliers

75% of respondents (9 participants) would give preference to suppliers based on their environmental certifications and practices.

Question 13: Do you use eco-friendly or recycled/recyclable materials in the preparation and implementation of events?
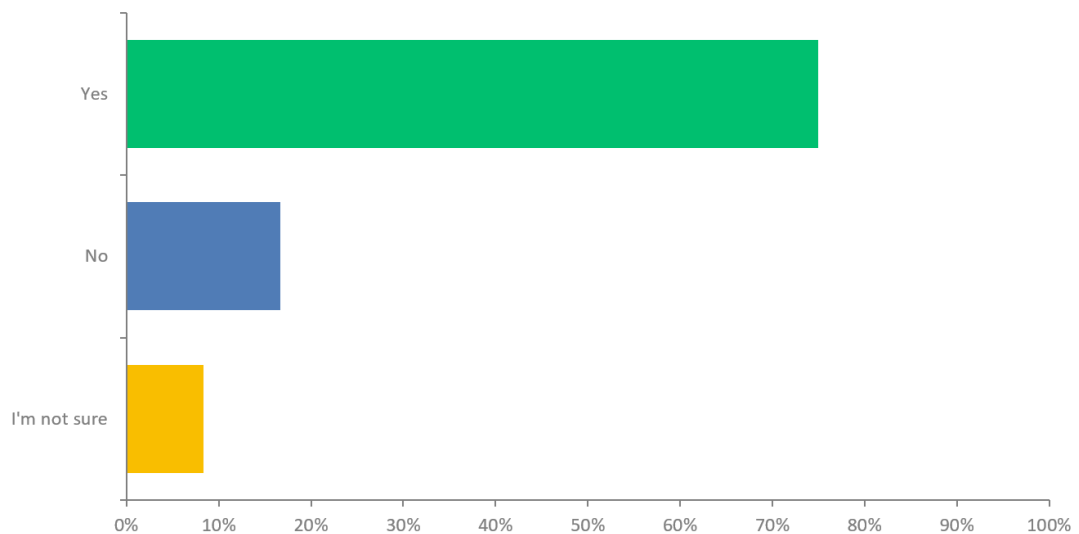

Figure 20 Materials Choice

75% of respondents (9 participants) confirm that sustainable materials are being used to prepare and implement the event.

Question 14: Do you restrict the use of materials that cannot be recycled (e.g., plastic confetti)?
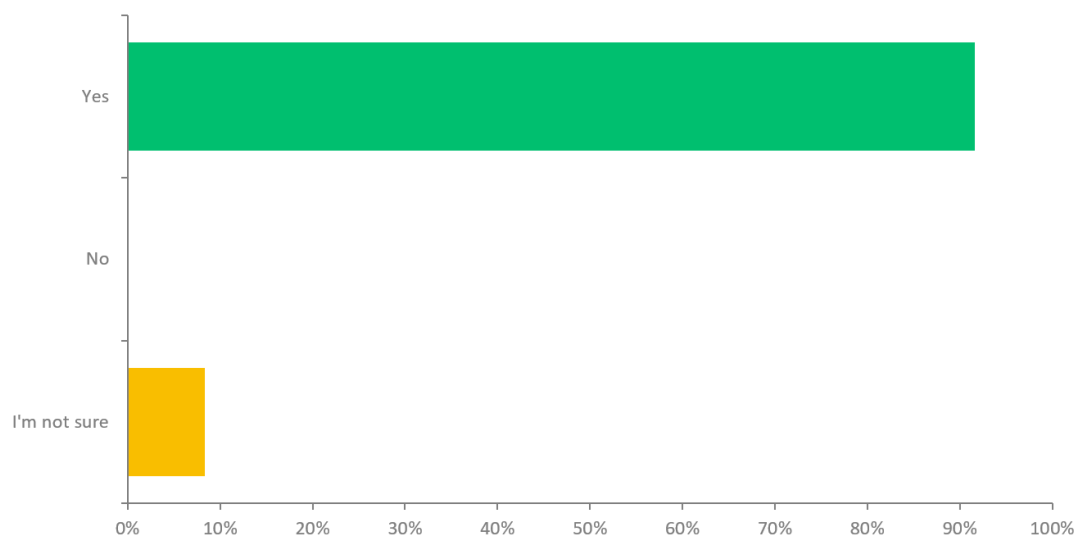
Figure 21 Materials Restriction

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

92% of respondents (11 participants) restrict the usage of material if it proves to be environmentally unsustainable.

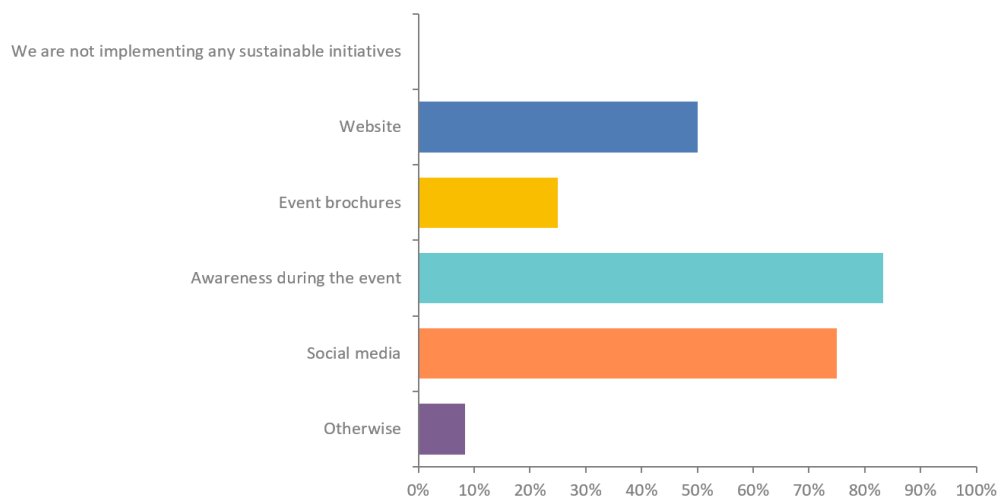**Question 15:** How do you communicate your sustainability initiatives to participants?

Figure 22 Methods of Communication

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Awareness during the event is the most common way to communicate eco-friendly initiatives (10 participants voted for this option). It's followed by social media (9 participants) and websites (6 participants) as popular channels for sharing sustainability efforts. Event brochures are also a used method with 3 respondents voting for this option.

Question 16: Do you actively promote sustainable initiatives to improve the image of the events?
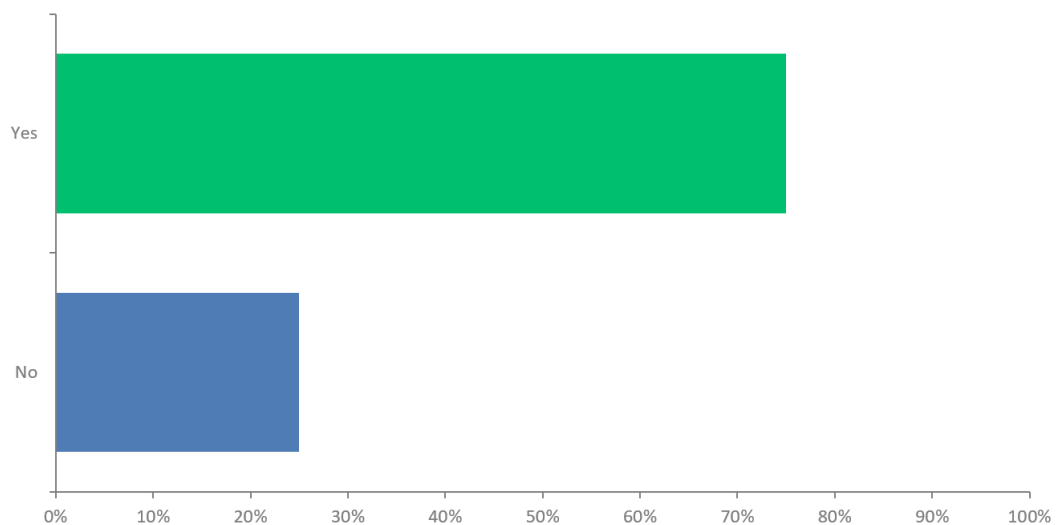

Figure 23 Active Promotion of Sustainable Initiatives

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

75% of respondents (9 participants) actively promote sustainability to improve the image of the event.

Question 17: Are your event marketing specialists focused on promoting sustainability awareness?

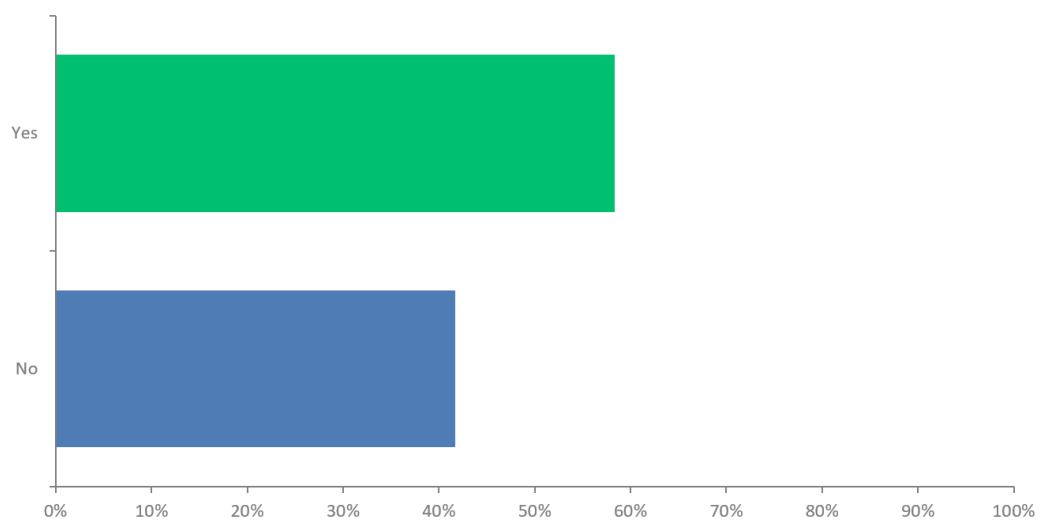Figure 24 Marketing Strategy

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

58% of respondents (7 participants) involve marketing specialists to promote environmental sustainability.

Question 18: Do you work with organizations focused on promoting sustainability (e.g., environmental initiatives, non-profits)?
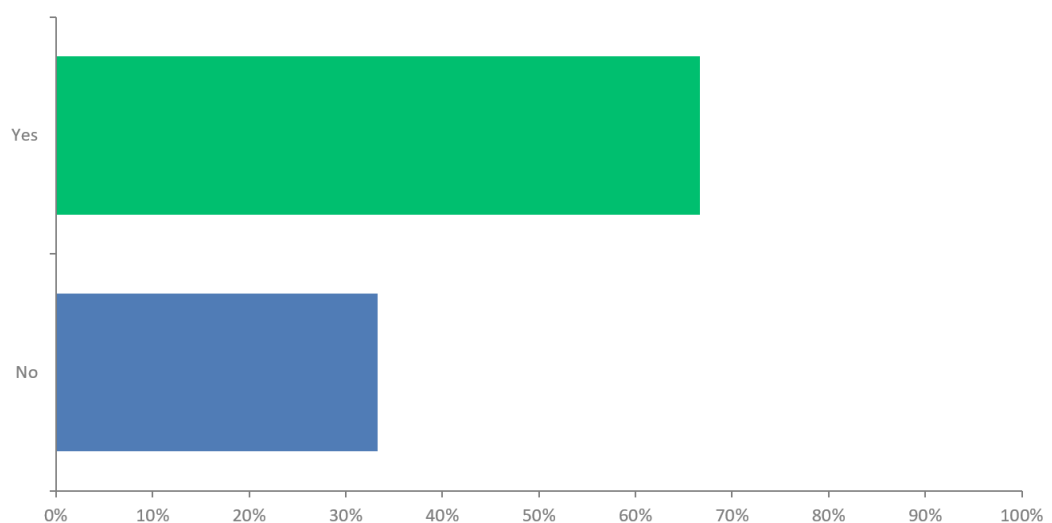

Figure 25 Partnership with Other Initiatives

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

67% of respondents (8 participants) collaborate with other organizations on the matter of sustainability.

Question 19: Do you collect feedback from participants on your sustainability efforts?
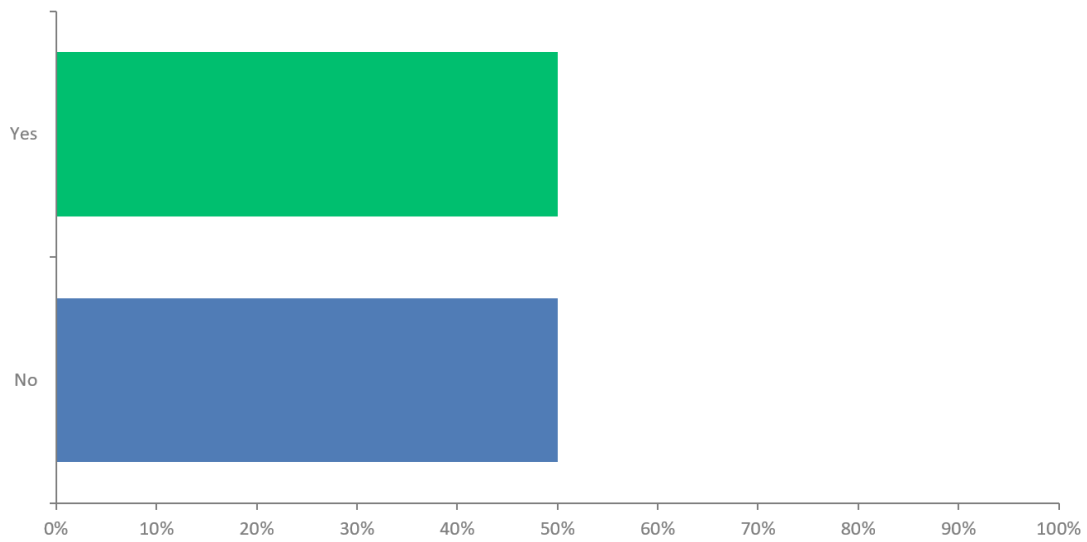

Figure 26 Gathering Feedback

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

Half of the respondents reported collecting feedback from festivalgoers, whereas the other half indicated that they do not take such feedback into consideration.

Question 20: Do you have a system for re-evaluating and improving initiatives based on feedback or new industry best practices?
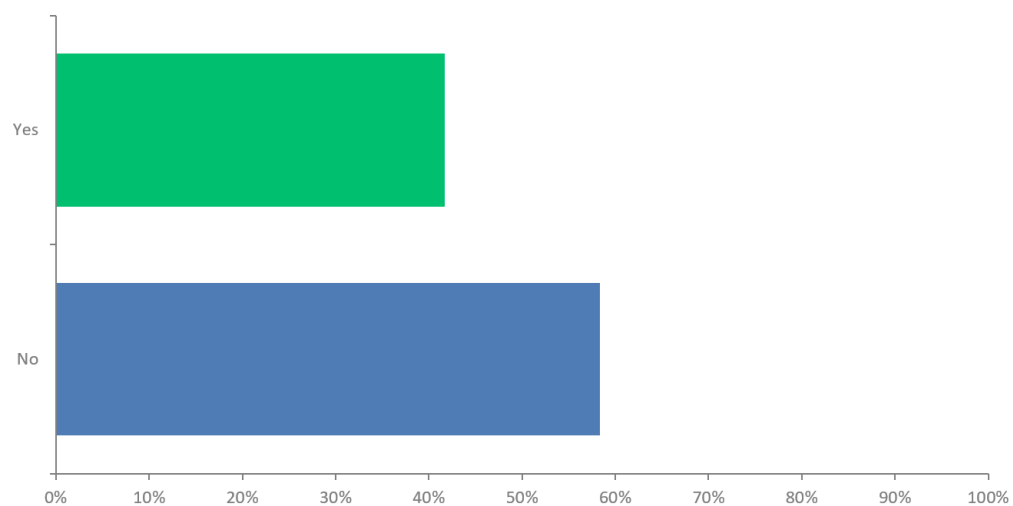
Figure 27 Improving the Sustainability Strategy

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

58% of respondents (7 participants) don't have a system to re-evaluate the sustainability initiatives.

Question 21: Do you engage participants in sustainable practices (e.g., waste-sorting, eco-friendly behavior)?
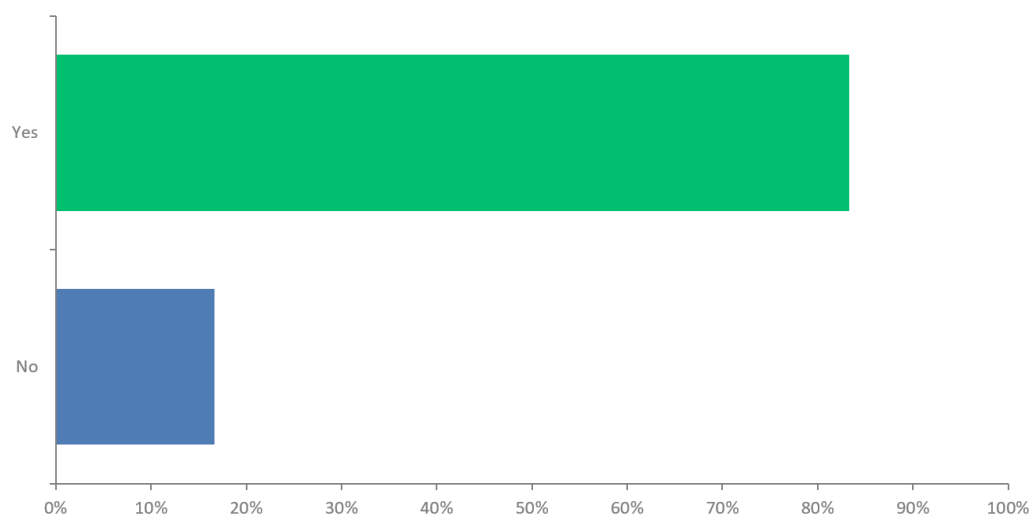

Figure 28 Participants' Engagement

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

83% of respondents (10 participants) confirm that they engage with festivalgoers to promote sustainable practices.

Question 22: How has the approach to sustainability of your events changed over the last 5 up to 10 years?
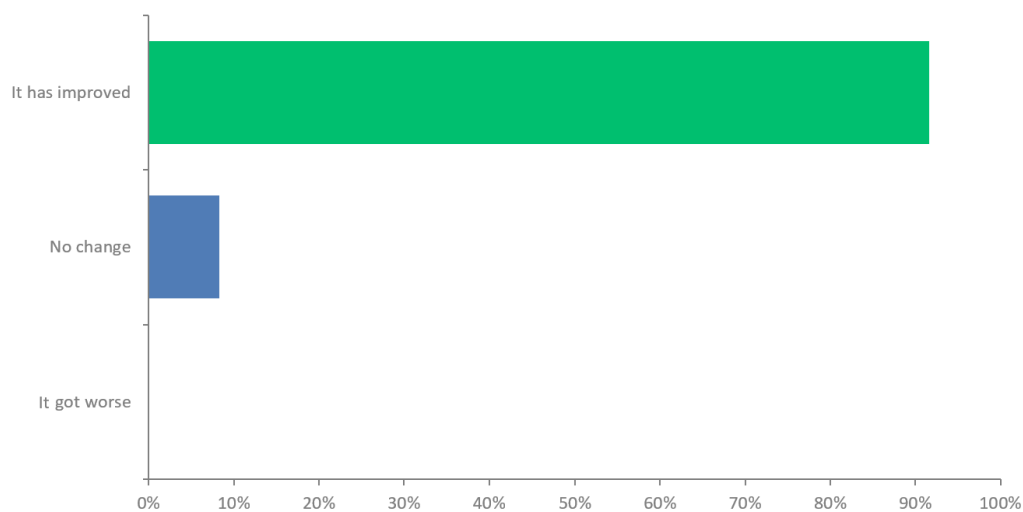
Figure 29 Evaluation of the Sustainability Approach Over the Last Years

Source: Own analysis via SurveyMonkey

92% of respondents believe that the approach towards sustainability at the festival has improved over the last 5-10 years.

7.2.2 Summary of Key Findings

Sample: The analysis covered 15 responses from music festival organizers in Czechia. The festivals varied greatly in size (median attendance 15 000, but range 250-50 000) and length of existence (median 21 years, but range 2-80 years).

Strategy and Practice: Less than half (40%) had a formal sustainability strategy, but one more was preparing one. The most common implemented practice was waste reduction (85% of those who did something), followed by sustainable transport (62%) and food/beverage (46%). More advanced steps such as energy efficiency (31%) or CO_2 compensation (15%)

were less common. Measuring carbon footprint (18%) and using renewable resources (27%) are still rather exceptional.

Motivation and Barriers: The main motivations were environmental responsibility (91%) and image building (73%). Financial constraints were clearly the biggest barrier (91%), followed by logistical issues (64%) and lack of resources/expertise (55%). Financial support (64%), education/training (46%) and collaboration (46%) were perceived as key solutions.

Trends: Almost all (91%) perceived an improvement in the approach to sustainability over the past 5-10 years and the majority (73%) plan to take further steps.

Bivariate Analysis: The analysis (despite the small N) indicated a strong relationship between festival size (attendance) and the existence of a formal strategy, the use of renewable resources and measuring carbon footprint. Festivals with a strategy were also more likely to take steps in the supply chain and implement energy efficiency. Waste reduction was common regardless of the strategy.

Insights: The responses showed specific forms of practices (upcycling banners, collecting cigarette remains, deposit systems for PET/cans, supporting public transport, gastro waste). They confirmed the demands on human resources and management during the event. An interesting finding was the repeated critical attitude towards the environmental friendliness of returnable cups, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive view.

7.2.3 Identification of Patterns and "Hidden Insights"

It seems that larger festivals have more resources (financial and human) and more pressure (public, sponsorship) for a systematic approach to sustainability (strategy, measurement, more advanced technologies). Smaller festivals focus on basic, visible steps (waste sorting), often without a formal strategy.

High intrinsic motivation (environmental responsibility) encounters hard external (finance) and internal (logistics, capacities) barriers. This signals the potential for effective external support (grants, shared infrastructure, know-how).

While "waste reduction" is almost universal, quantitative data point to a wide range of approaches - from basic sorting, through complex deposit systems, composting, to creative upcycling and solutions to specific wastes (cigarette remains). It is not a monolithic concept.

Mentions of the unecological nature of returnable cups point out that popular solutions may not always be the best in each context. The entire life cycle (production, transport, washing, disposal) and local conditions need to be evaluated.

Steps such as optimizing artist transportation or supply chain solutions are not visible to the visitor but can have a significant impact and are more often associated with festivals with a strategy.

Festivals communicate their efforts, but at the same time admit difficulties with managing and controlling practices (e.g., sorting) in real time during the event, which again points to a resource gap.

7.3 Interview

7.3.1 Respondent A

Festival Background and Values

The festival under consideration has been held annually since 1997 and has become an integral tradition within its local community. The festival's core values emphasize the promotion of quality culture and the preservation of cultural traditions. The festival's target audience is diverse, with attendees ranging in age from 6 to 70 years. Families, in particular, are attracted by the festival's children's program. However, the core audience is typically middle-aged, with a distinct focus on individuals who are educated, culturally aware, and inclined towards alternative cultural expressions. These characteristics are reflected in the festival's organizational goals and audience engagement strategies.

Perception and Importance of Sustainability

From the perspective of respondent A, sustainability is an essential consideration in event planning. The audience is believed to regard sustainability as an important aspect of the festival experience. This perception aligns with the cultural and educational profile of the festival's core audience. Within the organizing team, which is composed primarily of individuals with university education and an average age of 40, there is a shared commitment to sustainability. The team has implemented sustainability measures based on both ecological values and economic feasibility. Notably, there is no significant internal resistance to these sustainability initiatives, indicating a cohesive alignment toward environmentally responsible practices.

Current and Past Sustainability Practices

The festival has implemented various sustainability initiatives, both in the past and currently, with a focus on waste management and reducing the environmental impact of catering operations.

Waste Sorting: The festival has engaged in a long-term partnership (approximately 10 years) with the organization *Čistý Festival* to manage waste sorting. This collaboration ensures that waste is properly sorted and disposed of in accordance with recycling standards. The festival has been recognized for its efforts, receiving awards from *Čistý Festival* for its waste management initiatives.

Catering and Cups: The festival's catering operations have evolved to prioritize ecological alternatives. Initially, the festival aimed to eliminate single-use plastics, collaborating with a local energy company for approximately five years to implement paper-based and eco-friendly alternatives. However, the festival has since shifted from this "no-plastic" approach and now collaborates with a beer company to use single-use eco-plastic cups. The festival works closely with a local waste management company to determine the most sustainable way to recycle or dispose of these materials.

Challenges and Barriers

The organizers have identified several key challenges in balancing sustainability goals with economic realities.

Economy vs. Ecology: One of the recurring conflicts in sustainability efforts is the economic cost of implementing environmentally friendly practices. Many sustainable options come at a higher cost, which can create a tension between ecological aspirations and financial constraints. Decisions regarding sustainability are often contingent upon whether they are economically viable.

Reusable Cups: The respondent expressed skepticism regarding the ecological benefits of reusable cups. Challenges associated with reusable cups include logistical concerns (such as transportation to and from washing facilities), water and energy usage for cleaning, and the need for different types of cups for various drinks. Moreover, the direct costs associated with implementing a reusable cup system are significant, with estimates suggesting an additional expenditure of 30-40 thousand CZK.

Audience Behavior: Another challenge involves encouraging festival attendees to properly sort waste. According to the respondent, many attendees, particularly at larger festivals or those with less environmentally aware audiences, are reluctant to engage in proper waste sorting. This behavior places an additional burden on organizers, who must address these issues by providing greater waste management resources.

Logistics and Local Support: The respondent also noted that local waste management companies could offer more tailored support for festivals. In many cases, the simplest and most cost-effective waste disposal option (such as large mixed waste containers) may not align with sustainability goals.

Organizer's Philosophy and Opinions

Respondent A has a pragmatic approach to sustainability, prioritizing practical and cost-effective solutions. While they acknowledge the importance of reducing plastic usage, they question the absolute "plastic-free" movement, noting that some plastics are highly recyclable and effective when managed through functional recycling systems. Respondent A sees some anti-plastic movements as potentially influenced by lobbying interests, rather than being entirely grounded in environmental science. In their opinion, the focus should be on ensuring that materials, rather than banning them outright, are recycled and processed properly.

Furthermore, they believe that true progress in sustainability depends on the personal commitment of the festival organizers. Without a genuine commitment to sustainability and without legal mandates, it is unlikely that substantial changes will occur, especially considering the additional costs associated with sustainable practices.

Ideal Future State and "Unlimited Budget" Scenario

In an ideal scenario with an unlimited budget, Respondent A envisions substantial improvements in their sustainability efforts. Key focus areas would include reducing the festival's waste footprint and increasing the use of renewable energy sources, although they acknowledge the challenges in implementing these solutions.

- **Staffing**: They would increase staff dedicated solely to managing waste sorting on-site. This is seen as the most significant gap in the current sustainability efforts, as effective waste sorting requires substantial human resources.

- **Infrastructure**: In the ideal scenario, the festival would invest in custom-designed, aesthetically appealing waste sorting bins, tailored specifically for the event's needs.

- **Energy**: The implementation of renewable energy sources would be a priority, although the logistical challenges of this endeavor are recognized.

Summary

In general, Respondent A adopts a pragmatic approach to sustainability, balancing ecological goals with economic realities. The festival has implemented various sustainability initiatives, particularly in waste management and catering, while also grappling with challenges such as audience behavior and the cost-effectiveness of certain practices. The respondent emphasized the importance of effective recycling systems. They believe that substantial improvements in sustainability will require both organizer commitment and better logistical support from local waste management services.

7.3.2 Respondent B

Festival Background and Values

The festival under consideration is a metal festival that has been running for 18 years. It began as a single successful concert, with the profits used to fund a free children's day - a charitable initiative that continues to this day. The festival was described as a "matter of the heart" and is strongly rooted in charity, having donated nearly 4 million CZK over its history. The event maintains a non-commercial atmosphere, emphasizing that it is organized by friends rather than a professional team. It is explicitly positioned as a family-friendly festival, attracting attendees of all ages: from young children (with 700-800 children's tickets sold) to seniors. The core audience is estimated to be between 30 and 50 years old.

Sustainability Perception and Importance

Only a portion of the audience is believed to consider sustainability important, and attention to such matters tends to decrease later in the day. Respondent B is generally supportive of sustainability and eager to implement measures; however, there is a strong insistence that any solution must make genuine sense and be effective, rather than implemented for appearance's sake. While there is no internal opposition, decisions about sustainability measures are guided by a pragmatic mindset and a focus on what truly works.

Current and Past Sustainability Practices

The festival deals with a large volume of waste. For example, eight large containers were filled last year.

Catering and Cups: The main sustainability focus is a collaboration with a packaging company to implement a closed-loop system for R-PET cups. This system aims for 100% collection and recycling of used cups back into new, food-grade cups. The previous pilot was only partially successful due to poor design (e.g., improper bin placement), though smaller test events have achieved nearly 99% collection rates.

The festival explicitly rejected the use of reusable cups about 6-7 years ago, even though subsidies were available at the time. The decision was based on research and a belief that reusable systems are not genuinely ecological but rather serve as a marketing gimmick. Although the festival once considered a partnership with a well-known waste-sorting initiative, it was ultimately deemed too costly compared to the more practical and cost-effective system currently being pursued.

Challenges and Barriers

The main challenge lies in identifying sustainability solutions that are truly effective and not just popular. Reusable cups, in particular, are seen as ecologically flawed. While cost is a consideration, the driving factor is whether the solution makes environmental and practical sense.

Audience behavior presents another obstacle - waste-sorting systems must be intuitive and foolproof, as attendees tend to prioritize convenience. Hygiene regulations also prevent the acceptance of personal reusable cups.

Another issue is the complexity of mixed waste from food vendors, involving a variety of materials, some of which (like compostables) have previously failed in practice. According to the respondent, effective recycling is only possible if all vendors use standardized, truly recyclable materials.

The respondent mentioned there was a perceived lack of comprehensive, ready-to-implement sustainability solutions tailored for festivals.

Philosophy and Opinions

The festival adopts a pragmatic and skeptical approach to sustainability. Eco-friendly measures are only implemented if they clearly make sense both environmentally and operationally. The respondent has a strong belief in material science as the path forward -

specifically, using one highly recyclable material like R-PET and building an efficient, closed-loop recycling system around it. Recycling into lower-value items is considered a missed opportunity compared to full circularity.

Sustainability leadership is driven by personal responsibility, with in-depth research guiding decisions. Inspiration is rarely drawn from other festivals, as many are seen as following superficial trends. However, one prominent Czech festival was recognized for taking a similarly pragmatic approach to sustainability.

Ideal Future State and "Unlimited Budget" Scenario

The ideal scenario of Respondent B envisions 100% collection and true recycling of all single-use items, so that nothing ends up in landfills.

With unlimited resources, the top priority would be material unification. All single-use items (cups, containers, cutlery) would be made from a single, highly recyclable plastic like R-PET. The focus would not be on increasing staff but on creating a system centered around the right materials and recycling infrastructure.

Summary

This festival takes a pragmatic and skeptical stance toward sustainability, avoiding superficial solutions in favor of those with proven ecological and practical merit. The primary focus is on developing a closed-loop recycling system for single-use items, especially R-PET cups. Major challenges include waste stream complexity, audience behavior, and the absence of ready-made sustainable systems for festivals. Long-term goals center on material standardization and true circularity. Personal responsibility and research are key drivers of sustainability efforts, with limited inspiration drawn from other events aside from one standout example within the Czech festival scene.

7.4 Level of Sustainability Awareness and Current Actions Taken

Awareness of sustainability among organizers in this sample can be rated as relatively high at a general and basic level, but lower and less consistent in a systematic and more advanced approach.

Strengths: Perception of the importance of the topic, environmental responsibility, focus on visible issues (waste, plastics), preference for sustainable partners, visitor involvement.

Weaknesses: Less spread of formal strategies, less awareness or implementation in more complex areas (energy, emissions, impact measurement), potentially superficial evaluation of some solutions, not always systematic approach to monitoring and improvement.

There seems to be a gap between general awareness ("we should be doing something") and deeper, systematic understanding and implementation ("what exactly, how to measure it, how to integrate it into management"). Festival size appears to be a factor that likely influences the depth and systematicity of this awareness (larger festivals = more systematic approach).

According to the findings of these studies, the current focus is primarily on waste management and single-use material reduction. The interviews reveal that long-term partnerships between festivals and waste management organizations enable organized waste sorting and recycling operations. Respondent A admitted that the festival works together with a beverage company and local waste firms to establish material-specific disposal systems.

The questionnaire data confirms the observed trends. The survey of 27 festivals revealed that 87% of them implemented waste reduction, and 92% of respondents are willing to restrict the usage of materials that prove to be environmentally unsustainable. The implementation of biodegradable or compostable catering materials received mixed opinions during interviews.

The analysis of publicly available festival sustainability statements on websites reveals recycling, plastic reduction, and reusable cup provision as the most reported actions. The dimensions of sustainability, which include energy use, water conservation, and carbon offsetting, appear infrequently in the data, which indicates that waste management receives more attention than other sustainability aspects.

Another interesting finding was related to the prioritization of sustainable transport. While 60% of respondents confirm that they promote eco-friendly travelling options, out of the scope of 30 festivals, only 4 mentioned this practice on their websites.

And whereas 67% of respondents are engaged in collaboration with other initiatives, out of 30, only 6 festivals had this information publicly accessible on their websites.

This reveals that 50% of festivals that confirmed the usage of official websites to promote environmental sustainability may have limited information shared via this channel.

7.5 Motivation for Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability motivations emerge from two main factors, which are internal values towards sustainability and brand image. Besides, as the public becomes more aware of the environmental issues, there's a bigger demand for green events, which is also sometimes mirrored in the legislation.

The survey results demonstrate that sustainability initiatives stem from voluntary values and personal beliefs of festival organizers instead of legal or regulatory needs, since only 31% of respondents mentioned these requirements.

The content analysis reveals that mission statements consistently present two main themes about responsibility and cultural value alignment. Those having a separate tab related to sustainability present it as an integral part of their cultural values and community outreach goals instead of treating it as a standalone technical matter.

7.6 Challenges and Barriers

A range of financial, logistical, and behavioral challenges complicates the implementation of environmental measures. Interview respondents repeatedly cited economic feasibility as a major constraint, particularly when considering higher-cost alternatives like reusable cup systems or renewable energy solutions. Respondent A estimated the cost of implementing reusable cups at 30,000-40,000 CZK, without conclusive evidence of superior ecological impact.

The questionnaire results confirm these findings. 83% of festivals named budget constraints as their main sustainability obstacle, while 67% of respondents pointed out the logistic-related issues as well.

Half of the respondents pointed out insufficient know-how or limited resources. And besides the public interest in going green, some audience behavior continues to be problematic. As mentioned by Respondent B, the combination of festival size and alcohol consumption makes it difficult for attendees to properly sort waste and follow sustainability instructions after the start of the event.

Greenwashing is another obstacle. For example, Respondent B showed some skepticism towards some "eco-friendly" practices, pointing out that only practical and proven solutions should matter.

7.7 SWOT

The SWOT analysis was developed based on questionnaire findings, content analysis, in-depth interviews and ETC CE Report 2022/5 – Czechia.

It's supported by a mathematical model (Table 4, page 79). This model was developed to determine which opportunities are most likely to enhance environmental sustainability in music festivals and which external threats are most likely to hinder their implementation.

Table 3 SWOT Analysis

	Strengths
1	High awareness of environmental issues among organizers
2	Long-standing partnerships with waste-sorting initiatives (e.g., Čistý Festival, Greiner), enabling effective waste management
3	Audience segments with positive attitudes towards sustainability
4	A strong local or community-based identity of the festivals
5	Festivals' interest in eco-friendly materials and circular economics
6	Use of social media platforms to promote sustainability initiatives
7	Integration of sustainability into festival core values

	Weaknesses
-1	Financial constraints
-2	Festival organizers' scepticism towards sustainable solutions
-3	Audience non-compliance with sustainability practices
-4	Logistical challenges
-5	Limited post-event evaluation of environmental impact
-6	Limited human resources and organizational capacity to manage complex sustainability efforts

-7	Limited promotion of sustainable travelling options
-8	Webpages with missing information about sustainability practices

	Opportunities
A	New eco-friendly initiatives in event management
B	New sustainable solutions on the market
C	Partnership with the Ministry of the Environment
D	Higher awareness of sustainability frameworks among festivals (e.g., Circular Czechia 2040, Sustainable Development Goals)
E	Bigger presence of environmental education and behavioural change among attendees
F	Standardization of waste management practices in Czechia
G	Additional grants from eco-friendly initiatives and the government

	Threats
a	Global political instability potentially affecting the prioritization of environmental issues
b	Lack of centralized or government-backed support
c	Rising prices of biodegradable or recyclable materials
d	Regulatory constraints
e	Prevalence of greenwashing in the industry
f	Low festivalgoer engagement with ecological initiatives
g	Increased risks posed by climate change, including extreme weather events that can disrupt planning and infrastructure
h	Reduced financial support from external sponsors or environmental organizations

| i | Higher costs of alternative energy sources (e.g., solar, biofuel) |
| j | Closure of local waste management companies |

Source: Own elaboration

Table 4 Mathematical Model of SWOT Analysis

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	Σ+	Σ-
	Strengths							Weaknesses											
1	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	−	0	+	0	0	0	6	1
2	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	−	+	−	−	−	−	+	−	0	−	6	7
3	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	−	−	−	+	0	0	0	5	3
4	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
5	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	0	−	−	8	8
6	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	−	0	−	+	−	+	−	0	0	8	4
7	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	−	−	−	−	0	−	+	−	0	−	7	7
-1	+	0	+	−	−	0	+	−	−	−	−	0	0	−	−	−	−	3	10
-2	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	0	−	0	−	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
-3	0	0	−	−	−	−	−	−	0	0	0	−	−	0	−	0	0	0	9
-4	+	0	0	0	0	0	−	−	−	−	−	0	0	−	−	−	−	1	9
-5	−	0	−	0	0	0	−	−	−	−	0	−	−	−	−	−	−	0	12
-6	+	0	0	0	0	−	−	−	−	−	−	0	−	−	−	0	0	1	9
-7	0	−	0	0	−	0	−	0	0	0	0	−	−	0	0	−	0	0	6
-8	0	−	−	−	−	0	−	0	0	0	0	−	−	0	0	0	0	0	7
Σ+	9	6	5	5	5	2	7	0	1	0	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	47	
Σ-	2	3	4	4	5	3	7	9	7	8	8	9	10	4	8	5	6		102

Source: Own elaboration

7.7.1 Results of the SWOT analysis

Financial constraints create a major barrier that prevents music festivals from implementing environmental sustainability practices locally. The research findings along with the mathematical model results demonstrate this constraint. The analysis shows that the most beneficial opportunities to enhance environmental sustainability consist of (A) New eco-friendly initiatives in event management and (G) Additional grants from eco-friendly initiatives and the government. The research demonstrates that festivals need both increased financial support and institutional collaboration to implement sustainable innovations which budget constraints would otherwise prevent.

The development of stronger ties between festivals and eco-friendly initiatives and waste management companies will create beneficial effects on both sustainable practice execution and environmental responsibility development within the music festival sector. The partnerships will function as educational resources and strategic collaborators to help festivals adopt best practices while accessing new eco-friendly solutions and funding opportunities.

Conversely, the greatest risks or external threats identified in the analysis include: (a) Global political instability, (e) Prevalence of greenwashing in the industry, and (f) Low festivalgoer engagement with ecological initiatives. The external risks which affect festivals beyond their control can be managed through internal strategic initiatives. Festivals that maintain robust financial stability demonstrate better resistance to uncertain times. The negative impact of greenwashing can be countered by festival organizers who maintain transparent communication about their sustainability initiatives through clear and accessible information about waste management systems, energy use, sustainable travelling options and other practices. Organizers who educate their attendees while maintaining credibility can develop stronger environmental engagement which leads to a truly sustainable event culture.

7.8 Addressing the Research Questions

The goal of the study was to explore the level of awareness around environmental sustainability present among music festivals in Czechia. Different methods were employed to conduct the research: a structured questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and content analysis of festival websites. The data provides a clearer picture of both the progress made and the limitations that remain.

- What is the level of sustainability awareness among local music festival organizers?

The findings from this research highlight both the progress and the gaps in sustainability awareness among Czech music festival organizers. On the positive side, there is strong motivation driven by environmental responsibility, visible actions in areas like waste management, and increasing engagement with sustainable suppliers and attendees. However, there are also challenges, including a lack of formal sustainability strategies, limited focus on advanced sustainability issues, and inconsistencies in feedback mechanisms and deeper analysis of sustainability decisions. These insights point to the need for more structured and systematic integration of sustainability into festival planning, alongside a greater focus on complex environmental impacts and long-term solutions.

- What actions are taken by music festival organizers in Czechia to support sustainability?

According to the findings, waste management represents the primary sustainability practice that Czech music festivals implement. The events either employ reusable cups or plastic cups made of recyclable plastics. Besides, they establish recycling bins, which are taken care of thanks to a partnership with waste-sorting services provided either externally or by the festivals themselves. Various events within the industry implement sustainable materials and support local food suppliers. 60% of the festivals that participated in the questionnaire promote sustainable travelling options. Several events take sustainability principles to the core of their brand identity, but only a few organizations have established sustainability goals. A minority of festivals implement energy reduction and carbon footprint post-evaluation.

- What motivates music festival organizers to adopt environmentally sustainable practices?

The collected data reveals that sustainability motivations stem from internal sources and external influences. Sustainability appears as a moral duty and personal value statement to numerous event organizers. Some festivals are motivated by building a brand image as a key external motivator to serve as positive examples for their audience. The audience's sustainability expectations and demand for green events serve as essential external motivators that particularly impact festivals that target educated and environmentally conscious audiences. The opportunity to receive funding serves as a motivating force for some organizations, but this remains an infrequent occurrence.

- What discourages them from taking steps towards sustainability?

The financial challenges stood as the primary obstacle during data collection. The implementation of environmentally sustainable materials costs more, while staff availability and new system adoption timelines create further obstacles for organizers. The logistics-related challenges are the second main obstacle for festival organizers. Some festival organizers doubt the actual effectiveness of certain eco-friendly solutions because they question the compostable nature of these materials. Some festivals miss the know-how or have limited resources. Not many festivals admit having resistance coming from within the team or external stakeholders, which demonstrates a relatively high engagement on the stakeholders' side. Insufficient local support was acknowledged by only 8% of the respondents.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The questionnaire results pointed out that festival organizers demonstrate relatively strong sustainability awareness, yet their understanding of sustainability varies widely between different groups. Most respondents have implemented waste management initiatives through recycling systems, reusable cups and partnership with waste management projects (e.g., Čistý festival, Greiner), but the number of organizations that have implemented systematic measures to reduce energy consumption and reduce their carbon footprint is lower. However, it is important to note that the sample of the questionnaire is small, that is a major limitation. The results cannot be generalized to all music festivals in Czechia but rather provide an exploratory look at a small group of respondents. Any statistical tests would have very low power and p-values are only indicative.

The study identified the reasons for implementing sustainable practices. Festival organizers consider sustainability an ethical obligation and an integral part of their brand image. In addition, they respond to the growing expectations of their audience. The content analysis showed that festivals either actively promote sustainability initiatives on their websites or do not provide sufficient information through this channel.

The SWOT analysis together with its mathematical model identified the most important opportunities and the greatest threats. The availability of grants and the growing number of environmental groups involved in event organization represent the most important opportunities. The main barriers to environmental sustainability in this area are financial constraints caused by political instability and other external threats, such as greenwashing trends and low engagement of festivalgoers with environmental initiatives.

Based on the findings of the research, several recommendations can be made to boost the environmental sustainability among music festivals in Czechia:

- Stabilize financial funds for green initiatives

To overcome the barrier of financial constraints, festival organizers should consider look for partnerships with eco-friendly initiatives, government bodies or private sponsors. They could apply for grants and subsidies that have been specifically designated for environmental sustainability and that could help fund the adoption of green solutions and practices.

- Implement marketing communications in the field of sustainability

Although 58% of respondents confirmed that professional marketers are involved in promoting environmental sustainability, some festivals advertise sustainability outside the marketing campaign. A mature marketing strategy not only helps to avoid accusations of greenwashing and builds trust among festivalgoers but also promotes behavioral change in the industry and increases public engagement.

- Encourage audience participation and practice environmental education

Increasing audience engagement is essential, especially as many festivals have become community events attended by families and couples. Examples include creating digital educational tools such as waste sorting games, onsite eco-friendly workshops and QR code guides to raise awareness and encourage more responsible behavior during events.

- Use existing frameworks and certifications

A festival could make use of broader national and international sustainability frameworks (e.g., Circular Czechia 2040, the Sustainable Development Goals and even some inspiration from Vision 2025). Seeking public recognition, such as the A Greener Festival Award or Čistý Festival, can also raise credibility and attract environmentally conscious visitors.

- Conduct post-event sustainability assessments

It would be useful if festivals implemented a standardized post-event environmental impact assessment (e.g., carbon footprint, waste metrics). It improves informed planning, benchmarking and continuous growth of sustainability strategies.

- Increase collaboration across the sector on the matter of environmental sustainability

It is important that festivals collaborate with each other to promote unified material use for waste management (e.g., only recyclable plastic cups) and to share the best practices.

In this small group of Czech music festivals, sustainability is seen as an important and growing topic, with the approach improving over the last decade. There is a clear difference between larger festivals, which tend to adopt a more strategic and comprehensive approach, and smaller ones, which focus on basic practices. Despite the strong environmental motivation, finance and logistics are the main obstacles. Waste reduction is the most widespread activity, but it hides a number of different concrete solutions, including innovative and upcycling approaches. There is an emerging need to critically evaluate the impacts of the solutions in place.

Guidance for further research includes:

- The need for more extensive quantitative research: To confirm trends and obtain generalizable data, it is necessary to survey a much larger and representative sample of festivals.

- In-depth case studies: A detailed examination of a few selected festivals (of different sizes, with/without strategy) through observations would provide a deeper understanding of processes, barriers and success factors.

- Developing a methodology for measurement and benchmarking: Developing a consistent framework for measuring the environmental impact of festivals would allow better tracking of progress and benchmarking. Alternatively, existing frameworks (such as Integrative Conceptual Framework) could be applied.

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LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADE Amsterdam Dance Event

AI Artificial Intelligence

CD Compact Disk

CE Circular Economy

CO2 Carbon Dioxide

E.g. Exempli gratia (for example)

EIB European Investment Bank

ETC European Travel Commission

Etc. Et cetera

EU European Union

SDGs   Sustainable Development Goals

S-WELL Sustainability for Well-being

SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

TBL Triple Botton Line

UK   United Kingdom

APPENDICES

Appendix P I: Questionnaire for Event Organizers

APPENDIX P I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EVENT ORGANIZERS

Úvod

Cílem tohoto dotazníku je zjistit, jaké jsou postupy, přístupy a praktiky organizátorů hudebních akcí v České republice v oblasti environmentální udržitelnosti. Vaše odpovědi pomohou prozkoumat přijatá opatření, motivace a problémy, kterým organizátoři akcí čelí při zavádění ekologicky udržitelných postupů.

Odpovězte na následující otázky upřímně. Vaše odpovědi zůstanou důvěrné.

V případě zájmu o sdílení výsledků šetření uveďte svůj kontaktní e-mail na konci dotazníku.

* 1. Název společnosti

* 2. Název akce (akcí, v případě, že pořádáte několik akcí)

3. Průměrná roční návštěvnost (v případě, že pořádáte několik akcí, uveďte návštěvnost největší akce)

* 4. Počet let, co akce probíhá/probíhají

Provedené kroky k environmentální udržitelnosti

Pokud pořádáte několik akcí, odpovězte na následující otázky z hlediska největšího festivalu, který Vaše organizace pořádá.

* 5. Má Vaše akce zpracovanou strategii nebo politiku udržitelnosti?

⃝ Ano

⃝ Ne

⃝ Připravuje se

* 6. Jaké udržitelné praktiky jsou na Vaší akci v současnosti implementovány?

☐ Snížení odpadu (např. třídění odpadu v areálu festivalu, zaměření na digitalizaci)

☐ Energetická účinnost (např. využívání obnovitelných zdrojů energie)

☐ Kompenzace emisí CO2

☐ Udržitelná doprava

☐ Udržitelné potravinové a nápojové praktiky (např. lokálně pěstované, vegetariánské/veganské možnosti)

☐ Žádné

Jiná:

[   ]

* 7. Podnikla Vaše akce kroky k omezení environmentálních dopadů jejího dodavatelského řetězce?

⃝ Ano

⃝ Ne

Motivace k udržitelnosti

* 8. Co Vás motivuje k přijetí udržitelných praktik pro konání Vašich akcí? (zaškrtněte všechny, které platí)

☐ Environmentální odpovědnost

☐ Veřejná poptávka po ekologických akcích

☐ Úspora nákladů

☐ Dodržování předpisů

☐ Budování image značky

☐ Konkurentní tlak

☐ Jiná motivace:

* 9. Na jaké výzvy jste narazili při zavádění udržitelných praktik na Vašich akcich?
(Zaškrtněte všechny, které platí)

☐ Finanční omezení

☐ Nedostatek zdrojů nebo odbornosti

☐ Odpor od zúčastněných stran (např. sponzoři, dodavatelé, účastníci)

☐ Nedostatečná podpora od místních úřadů

☐ Logistické problémy (např. správa odpadu, zásobování energií)

☐ Jiná (uveďte specifikaci)

[   ]

☐ Žádné – udržitelnými praktikami se nezabýváme

* 10. Jaké kroky by podle Vás mohly pomoci překonat tyto bariéry?

☐ Finanční podpora nebo pobídky

☐ Spolupráce s jinými akcemi nebo zúčastněnými stranami

☐ Vzdělávání nebo školení o udržitelných praktikách

☐ Zvýšené povědomí veřejnosti a poptávka

☐ Jiné

[   ]

☐ Nevím, nedokážu posoudit

Budoucí strategie a cíle

* 11. Plánujete zavést (další) opatření pro udržitelnost v budoucnosti?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

◯ Nejsem si jistý/á

Budoucí strategie a cíle

* 12. Máte konkrétní cíle pro udržitelnost na příští 3−5 let?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

◯ Nejsem si jistý/á

Environmentální udržitelnost v oblasti hudebních festivalů

Environmentální zodpovědnost

* 13. Měřite uhlíkovou stopu Vašich akcí?

○ Ano

○ Ne

○ Nejsem si jistý/á

* 14. Jak řešíte cirkulární ekonomiku?

☐ Omezení jednorázových plastů a zavedení vratných kelímků či nádobí

☐ Recyklace

☐ Kompostování

☐ Systémy vratné zálohy na obaly nápojů a potravin

☐ Cashless

☐ Jinak

[   ]

* 15. Používáte obnovitelné zdroje energie?

○ Ano

○ Ne

○ Nejsem si jistý/á

Udržitelný nákup

* 16. Upřednostňujete dodavatele s environmentálními certifikacemi nebo udržitelnými praktikami?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

◯ Nejsem si jistý/á

* 17. Používáte ekologické nebo recyklované, resp. recyklovatelné materiály při přípravě a realizaci akce/akcí?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

◯ Nejsem si jistý/á

* 18. Omezujete použití materiálů, které nelze recyklovat (např. plastových konfet)?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

◯ Nejsem si jistý/á

Komunikace a marketing

* 19. Jak komunikujete své udržitelné iniciativy účastníkům akce/akcí? (Zaškrtněte všechny, které platí)

☐ Webová stránka

☐ Brožury akce

☐ Povědomí během akce

☐ Sociální média

☐ Jinak

☐ Nerealizujeme žádné udržitelné iniciativy

* 20. Propagujete aktivně udržitelné iniciativy pro zlepšení image akce/akcí?

○ Ano

○ Ne

* 21. Jsou marketéři akce/akcí zaměřeni na podporu povědomí o udržitelnosti?

○ Ano

○ Ne

* 22. Spolupracujete s organizacemi zaměřenými na podporu udržitelnosti (např. ekologické iniciativy, neziskovky)?

○ Ano

○ Ne

Zpětná vazba a kontinuální zlepšování

* 23. Shromažďujete zpětnou vazbu od účastníků ohledně Vašich udržitelných snah?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

* 24. Máte systém pro přehodnocení a zlepšení iniciativ na základě zpětné vazby nebo nových best practices v oboru?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

* 25. Zapojujete účastníky do udržitelných praktik (např. třídění odpadu, ekologické chování)?

◯ Ano

◯ Ne

Obecné trendy v oblasti udržitelnosti

* 26. Jak se za posledních 5 až 10 let změnil přístup k udržitelnosti Vaší akce (akcí)?

◯ Zlepšil se

◯ Žádná změna

◯ Zhoršil se

Uveďte prosím další postupy nebo iniciativy v oblasti udržitelnosti, které nebyly zahrnuty do výše uvedených otázek, pokud se udržitelnosti věnujete

Konec dotazníku

Děkuji vám za vyplnění tohoto dotazníku. Vaše příspěvky poskytnou cenné informace o udržitelnosti hudebních akcí v České republice.

27. Pokud máte zájem o osobní dotazování, napište zde prosím svůj kontaktní e-mail.

28. Pokud máte zájem o výsledky tohoto průzkumu, napište zde prosím svůj kontaktní e-mail.