





A felsőfokú oktatás minőségének és  
hozzáférhetőségének együttes javítása a  
Pannon Egyetemen

EFOP-3.4.3-16-2016-00009



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## Introduction to event management

### Key definitions and concepts

#### *Definitions*

Events can be described in various ways, but the key elements of the definitions refer to the time, the place and the purpose of a particular gathering of people. Goldblatt (2005) defines an event as a unique moment in time celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs. Getz (2007) suggests that events are temporal phenomena, with a detailed programme and are usually confined to particular places. He also adds that planned events are advertised well in advance. Planned events are created to achieve specific outcomes, including those related to the economy, culture, society and the environment. “People attend events because of the opportunity for an entertainment, educational, cultural or enrichment experience, or to satisfy social, business, or political obligations” (Silvers, 2008:7). Getz (2007) argues that every event experience is personal and unique, arising from the interactions of setting, programme and people.

Within planned events, some authors differentiate *special events*:

- A special event is a one time or infrequently occurring event outside the normal programme or activities of the sponsoring or organising body.
- To the customer or guest a special event is an opportunity for a leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience (Getz, 1997:4)
- Special events are that phenomenon arising from those non-routine occasions which have leisure, cultural, personal or organisational objectives set apart from the normal activities of daily life, whose purpose is to enlighten, celebrate, entertain or challenge the experience of a group of people. (Shone and Parry, 2013:3)
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#### *Features of events*

From the definitions above, we can identify the key features of events as the following:

- They are happening only once – they provide a one-off experience
- They have combined elements, are characterised by complexity
- They have well determined aims
- They have well defined time, and often schedule of programme

- They have well defined location
- They cannot be stored, corrected (or postponed)
- They provide a (hopefully) unique experience

Even recurring events (e.g. held every year) will be different at the different occasions. The circumstances will never be exactly the same two years running – the audience will be different, performers may be different, the weather will be different – and we could list many other factors that determine the experience participants can gain from participating in an event.

Events are complex phenomena, the location and the venue, the timing, the programme elements, and the services available all contribute to the outcome. Events are a bit like jigsaw puzzles: we can enjoy the picture only when all the pieces are in the right place.

Events are always organised with specific aims, depending on the event genres. See *Typology of events* for a detailed description of potential aims of planned events.

Planned events are held at a previously defined time and location, otherwise the potential participants would not know when and where to turn up for the event. It must be noted that occasionally there is a mystery about the exact location of the event. In the case of an innovative gastronomic event, the actual location of the dinner is part of the surprise for the participants.

Like services, events are also perishable. If we do not hold an event at as planned at a given time and location, we cannot hold two events instead another time or at another location.

### Case study: *Dîner en Blanc*



At the last minute, the secret location is revealed to thousands of friends who have all been patiently waiting to learn where “Dîner en Blanc” will take place. Thousands of people, dressed all in white, and conducting themselves with the greatest decorum, elegance, and etiquette, all meet for a mass “chic picnic” in a public space.

Over the course of the evening, guests experience the beauty and value of their city's public spaces by participating in the unexpected. Beyond the spectacle and elegance of the dinner itself, guests are brought together from diverse backgrounds by good taste and a love of beauty. Le Dîner en Blanc recalls the elegance and glamor of high French society, and guests engage one another, knowing that they are taking part in a truly magical event. There are no disruptions: no car traffic, no pedestrian traffic—only amazed and astonished looks from passersby observing the scene before them. And participants, like spectators, wonder whether it's all not a dream... ([www.dinerenblanc.com](http://www.dinerenblanc.com))

## Typology of events

Events range from a few hours performance to a year-long celebration, from local festival to a mega-event drawing people from all over the world. Some are free and some are fee-paying events. To have a better understanding of the different kinds of events, this chapter offers possible classifications to distinguish different types of events.

*Typology according to the aim of event*



Source: own editing based on Getz (2007)

- *Cultural celebrations* are created by and for the public (Silvers, 2008). They usually celebrate some kind of tradition that plays an important role in the life a particular community. These include seasonal or holiday festivals, music and dance events, gastronomic festivals and religious events.
- *Business and trade events* are created by and for the corporation and they support business objectives, such as improving company performance, selling new products, gaining new markets and/or business partners, and improving employee performance and working conditions.
- *Political and state events* are created for or by political parties or national or local governmental entities (Silvers, 2008). These include government meetings, summits, as well as campaigns events, and also official occasions.
- *Educational and scientific events* are designed to provide opportunities for exchanging of information and experience, debate and discussion and relationship (or network) building. Such events can be organised amongst others in the forms of conferences, congresses, symposiums or workshops.
- *Sport competitions* are spectator or participatory events focusing on professional or amateur competitive sport activities. These can be stand-alone events or part of another event (Silvers, 2008).
- *Recreational events* are created for entertainment purposes, with sporting activities and games in the focus. These events can be one-time or recurring periodic events.
- *Private events* are also called social and life-cycle events as they are designed to celebrate or commemorate a societal or life-cycle occasion. As they are private events, participants can attend by invitation only. Private events include birthday parties and anniversaries, graduations and weddings, and certain religious events relating to religious commitment rituals (Silvers, 2008).

- 

#### *Typology according to scale of the event*

According to the scale of the impact of the event, we can differentiate four main types of events:

- *Local events:*

Local events will attract the attention of the local community and potentially that of the neighbouring settlements and the impacts will also be felt only in the vicinity of the event.

- *Major events:*

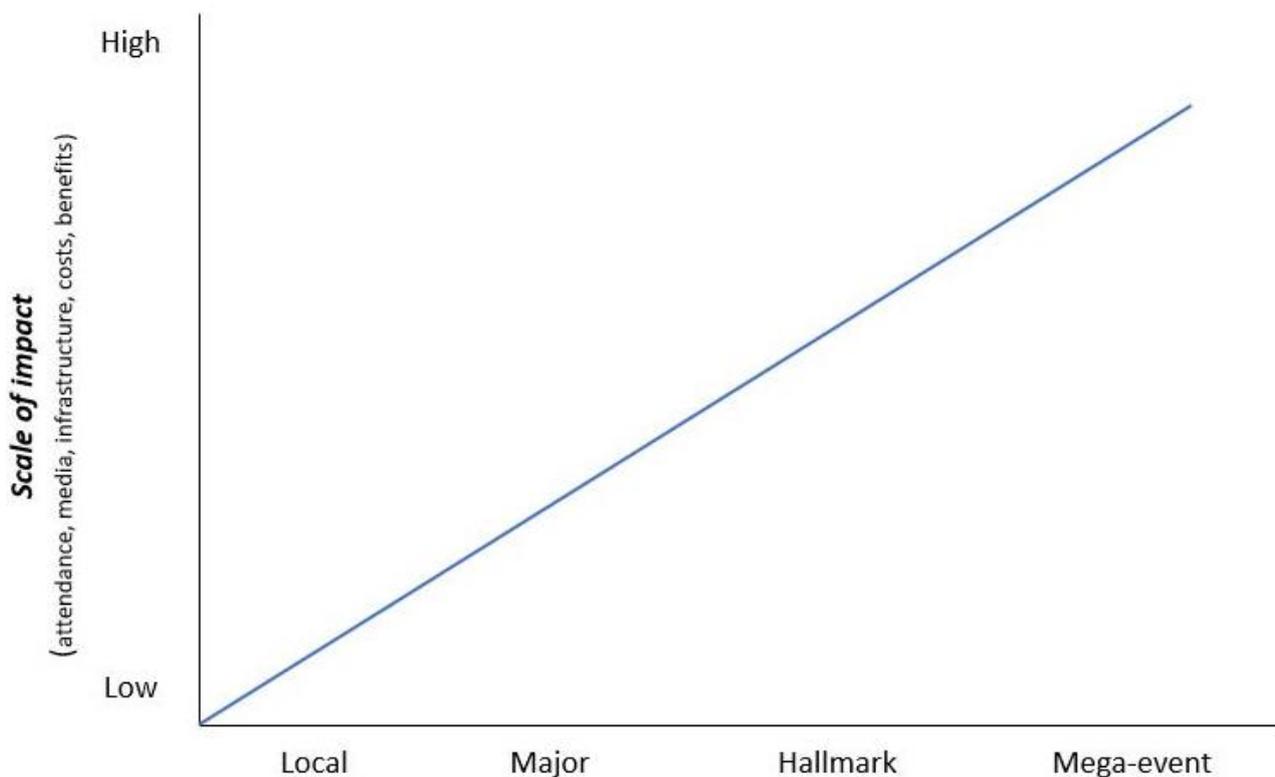
“Major events are that, by their scale and media interest, are capable of attracting significant visitor numbers, media coverage and economic benefits”. (Bowdin et al, 2001:18)

- *Hallmark events:*

“Hallmark events refer to those events that become so identified with the spirit or ethos of a town, city or region that they become synonymous with the name of the place, and gain widespread recognition and awareness.” (Bowdin et al. 2001:17)

- *Mega events:*

Mega events, by way of their size or significance, are those that yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community or destination. (Getz, 1997:6)



**Figure 2: Typology of events according to scale**  
 Source: own editing based on Bowdin et al. (2001)

### *Typology of events according to drawing power*

Depending on where the event is capable of drawing an audience from, the following event types can be differentiated:

- *Local event* - only people living in or near the location where the event is held are the participants of the event
- *Regional event* – people living in the region (up to around 100 km radius) where the event is held would be interested in participating in the event
- *National event* – participants from all over the country can be expected to attend
- *International event* – participants from countries other than where it is held are also attracted to the events (usually from neighbouring or nearby countries within the same continent)
- *Global event* – people from all over the world are attracted to the event, participants would travel across continents to participate in the event

- 

### *Typology of events based on length*

Events vary according to length as well. A merely one hour long product launch is also considered a planned event that needs careful planning although less than a several weeks long festival. Some examples for different types of events with varying length:

- *Few hours* – concerts, theatrical or other performances, product launches, workshops, symposiums, etc.
- *One day* – village or city day, days commemorating important state or family (life-cycle) events such as the foundation of the state or liberation of a country, training events, etc.
- *Several days* – gastronomic, cultural festivals, trade exhibitions, expos, conferences, etc.
- *Weeks* – wine festivals, Christmas/advent fairs, etc.
- *Months* – summer/winter festivals, etc.
- *Full year* – European Capital of Culture Year, etc.

### *Typology based on the frequency of the event*

We can also categorise events according to how often they are held in a particular period of time.

- *Once a week* – Market Day
- *Once a month* - Farmers' Market in villages



- *Several times within a year* – Crafts Fairs, school parties, etc.
- *Annually* - recurring festivals, focusing on music, gastronomy, conferences, etc.
- *Biannually* - usually art festivals such as the Venice Biennale
- *Every four years* - Olympic Games, World Cups in many sports
- *Anniversary events* – commemorating anniversaries of significant events in history or someone's life

*Typology of events based on the venue where it is held*

Event will also form different categories based on the location/venue where it takes place, as these will need significantly different considerations during the planning and the implementation as well. We can distinguish indoor and outdoor events, as well as one venue and multiple venue events.

<i>Venue</i>	<i>Issues to consider</i>
Indoor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capacity limitations</li><li>• Security</li></ul>
Outdoor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dependence on weather</li><li>• Fencing off the area</li></ul>
One venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capacity limitations</li></ul>
Multiple venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordination of tasks, and potentially performers and participants among the various venues</li><li>• Providing the necessary technical and human infrastructure at multiple venues at the same time</li></ul>

## Phases of event planning

Event planning involves the design and implementation of themes, settings, consumables, services and programmes, that suggest, facilitate or constrain experience for participants, guests, spectators and other stakeholders.

### Phases of event planning

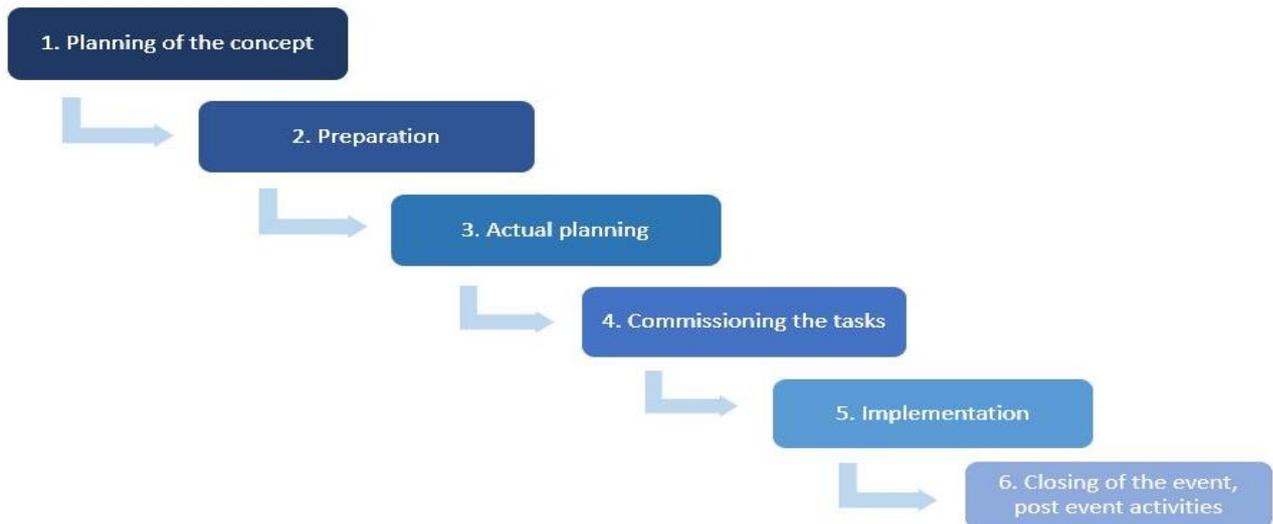
Events do not just happen, usually careful planning precedes the actual event, to make sure that the audience the event is aimed at has a memorable experience. In a simplistic approach, event planning can be broken down into three main phases: 1) before the event phase; 2) during the event phase; after the event phase. Not too dissimilarly, Gyarmati (2005) and Arany et al (2001) propose four phases of event planning:



Arany et al., 2001

#### 1. Figure 3: Phases of event planning

If we consider events as project, we can differentiate 6 distinct phases applying the project management approach:



**Figure 4: Phases of event planning as a project**  
 Source: own editing

*Planning of the concept – aims of the event*

The planning of all events starts with defining the mission of the event: why do we want to stage the event in the first place? The answers to this question can be manifold:

- Demonstrating and transmitting traditions, cultural values
- Organising high quality entertainment programmes for visitors, tourists, local residents
- Prolonging the tourist season
- Raising awareness of certain issues
- Fund raising for good causes
- Gaining revenue, etc.

However, in some cases the mission of an event is not defined by the actual organisers. Some events are the property of an organisation or a committee, and this ‘owner’ will either commission event organisers to plan and realise the event, or invite event planners to bid for the right to organise and implement it. Some mega-events offer a good example for this, like the Olympic Games, or large conferences and other corporate events are the object of a bidding process.

Further questions arise in the case of events where the ‘owner’ of the event is different from the organiser. To what extent can the organisers decide on

- location/venue,

- equipment (stage, lighting, sound, transport, etc.),
- advertisement,
- catering,
- protocol,
- permits,
- security, etc?

### **Stakeholders of an event**

We need to consider who have an interest in and/or who are affected by the event that we are planning, in one word, the stakeholders of an event. “A stakeholder in an organization is (by definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives” (Freeman, 1984:46). If we take the definition in the broad sense, almost anybody could be a stakeholder of an event, either because they can affect the achievement of the objectives of an event (such as the organisers, any of the service suppliers, etc.), or are affected by the event (such as participants, local residents, etc.)

The different stakeholders will have different interests and approaches to a particular event:

- Stakeholder commissioning the event (“owner”): prestige, moral reward
- Organisers: prestige, financial gain
- Locals: tourism experience, enriching the range of programmes – or a source of noise, crowds, littering, etc.
- Businesses: financial gain (accommodation, arts and crafts, vendors, catering) and profit
- Tourists: tourism experience
- Local authority: enhanced image

### **Factors to be considered when planning an event**

#### *1.External factors (no or limited influence of the organisers)*

- External stakeholders’ interests
- Analysis of the neighbouring settlements, region
  - What are they like in general?
  - What is the range of events there?
  - Is there collaboration amongst the settlements?

- Events calendar co-ordinated in advance
- Providing infrastructure jointly (stage, sound, etc)
- Co-ordination of human resources
- Combining tourism products, etc.

1.

2. *Internal factors (can be influenced by the organisers)*

a) *Factors that can be influenced or substituted*

- Existing conditions, products
- Attitude (within limits)
- Human resources (internal capacity, division of tasks)
  - Is the event in line with the capacity of the organisers?
  - Who can be involved in the organisation and implementation: Civic associations, amateur groups, clubs, employees of other organisations (local authority), schools, kindergartens, art institutions, teachers, family members, local activists, etc.

b) *Infrastructure*

- Sound, lighting, audio–visual equipment, conference equipment, furniture, stage and related equipment, additional service areas (changing rooms, cloak room, ticket office), toilets, etc.

c) *Financial conditions*

- Is the budget in line with the resources available?
- What kind of financial resources can be involved? Support from businesses or organisations, sponsors, governmental funding sources, project funding that needs bidding for, etc.
- How can the financial resources be made available: reciprocity, voluntary work, emotional influence (,blackmail'), use of contacts through family and friends

## **Tasks in the phases of event planning**

*Tasks before the event - preparation*

- Choosing the organisers

- Determining the date/time
- Choosing the location/venue
- Providing the necessary equipment and infrastructure
- Compiling the plan and schedule
- Designing leaflets, printed material
- Organising additional services (e.g. accommodation, catering, transport, touristic programmes, etc.)
- Budgeting, financial planning
- Registration in advance
- Legal issues (contracts)
- Risk management, preparation
- Marketing
- Protocol
- Preparing a script
- Other (e.g. obtaining permits for use of public space, police, health authority, medical care, etc.)

#### *Tasks during the event*

- Welcoming guests (organising transfers)
- Co-ordinating programmes
- Providing information leaflets (e.g. in conference bag)
- On-site registration
- Providing an information point
- Ensuring safety and security (e.g. in the venue, cloak room, etc.)
- Marketing, PR tasks
- Protocol during the event
- Other (roll-ups, running technical equipment)

#### *Tasks after the event*

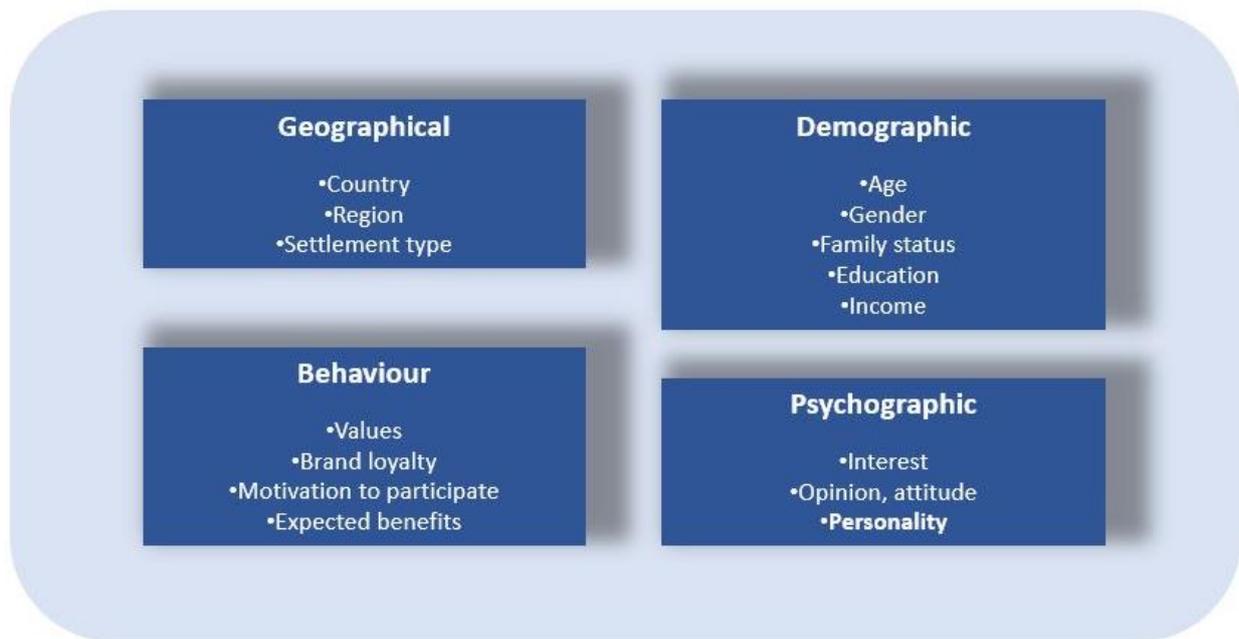
- Taking installation down, cleaning up, etc.
- Financial tasks (paying service providers, etc.)
- Post event calculation



- PR articles
- Collecting media coverage items
- Follow-up (thank you letters, post event party, etc.)
- Documentation (e.g. proceedings)
- Evaluation, reports
- Impact assessment of the event
- Other (e.g. asking for reference)

## Segmentation – Target audience of specific events

As it has been discussed in Chapter 1, when defining the aim of an event, the needs and preferences of the main target audience has to be basis for the decision. The target audiences of events are usually distinguished according to four key characteristics:



**Figure 5: Segmentation types for target audiences**  
**Source: own editing**

Geographical and demographic segmentation are the two most often used types when breaking down people into various groups. As Figure 5 shows, even within these categories there are different factors to consider, which will not be equally important in the case of every event though. For the majority of event, the settlement type where the target audience comes from may not be significant but the region and the country definitely are, from the marketing point of view as well as the point of view of the language of communication. As for demographic segmentation, education may be significant in case of scientific or high-culture events, while it will not be significant for a wine festival or a pop concert.

The behavioural and psychographic aspects have also become significant in terms of defining the target audience. Many psychographic assessments exist that help the understanding of different types of people from the point of view of their personality, which may be of use for event planners as well. Young and Rubicam’s Cross Cultural Consumer Characterisation offers a complex view of different types of people, and some of the notions attached to the

various types need to be taken into consideration for matching the needs and interests of the target audience with the aims of the event.

*Young and Rubicam’s Cross Cultural Consumer Characterisation*

Young and Rubicam developed a theory, based on Maslows Hierarchy of Needs, looking at the brands people purchased/used and how these people thought about them. They centred their ideas around physiological, safety and esteem based needs. As different countries had different influences due to cultural backgrounds, they removed the specific effect of the Hierarchy and so named the theory Cross Cultural Consumer Characterisation which is shortened to 4C’s. There are seven types of people in this which depends on their core motivation. These are:

<i>The Explorer</i>	Need for change, <b>discovery</b> and want to be different.
<i>The Aspirer</i>	Look at how others view them, try products for the visual looks and focus on their <b>status</b> .
<i>The Succeeder</i>	Strong goals and tend to be responsible. They have an aggressive attitude to life as they look for <b>control</b> .
<i>The Reformer</i>	Intellectual and are tolerant. They don’t buy products just because they’re new. Their core is <b>enlightenment</b> .
<i>The Mainstream</i>	Fit in with the changes of society. Stick with value for money, what they know and save money. They strive for <b>security</b> .
<i>The Struggler</i>	Have the ‘You Only Live Once’ approach. They focus on the present and tend not to work hard or have any valuable skills. They consume alcohol, junk food and focus on brand choices. They seek <b>escape</b> .
<i>The resigned</i>	The older generation with unchanging values. Stick to what they’re familiar with and tend not to change with society as they stick with older and more nostalgic values. They aim to <b>survive</b> .

Source: Own editing based on [www.4cs.yr.com/global](http://www.4cs.yr.com/global)

**Choosing the geographical location and venue**

Once we have defined the objectives of the event and the segment(s) we are aiming to attract to the event, we need to consider the geographical location and venue. First, the chapter will suggest considerations that need to be taken into account for the choice of location.

Primary aspects of choosing the country for an event (Getz, 1997:82-87):

- Easy access for the majority of participants
- Ease of entering the country
- Image of the country, attractions – ‘visibility’

- Price
- Other (e.g. professional links, charitable aims)
- High quality infrastructure (airport(s), hotels, transfer options, etc.)
- Easy access for the majority of participants
- Good value for money as expected for the kind of event
- Attitude of the locals
- Appropriateness
- New and therefore attractive location in the market
- (Environmental awareness)

### **Choosing the right venue**

- It is of key importance (access, parking)
- Rental costs
- Weather conditions in case of outdoor venues (sunset, plan B for bad weather)
- Venue and costs:
  - Are there direct transport links to the location/venue?
  - What is the proportion of time spent travelling to and at the location of the event?
  - Does the venue/hotel fulfil all our requirements?

### **General /technical requirements of the venue**

- Different kinds of sockets available (not just the international ones)
- Power generator available in case of power cuts
- Lifts available in the venue

#### *a) Safety*

- Fire safety system, emergency exits, VIP entrance
- Reception hall
- Able to serve different events
- Message boards can be fitted in
- Direct connection to plenary and session rooms is an advantage

*b) Rooms*

- One plenary room
- One larger session room with the capacity of 50% of that of the plenary room
- Two smaller sessional rooms with the capacity of 25% of that of the plenary room
- Session room for posters and available smaller rooms
- Offices
  - Conference secretariat office should have a direct link to the reception hall
  - Spaces for welcoming VIPs, performers/presenters, and for seminars, business meetings

*c) Technical infrastructural needs*

- Lighting and sound (existing connections, use of existing lighting system, microphones, microphone stands)
- Power connections (where, how strong, type of connection)
- Internet connection (Wifi, signal strength, etc.)
- Safety (cordons, security, stage pass, security of stage equipment)

*d) Arrangement of the session rooms*

- Movable furniture and equipment

*e) Exhibition space*

- Access to water
- Rubbish collection points at the venue
- Electricity, phone line, Internet access to every stand
- Space for large installations
- Lockable storage rooms

*f) Other aspects*

- Stage (raised platform, curtains, backdrop options)
- Changing rooms (mirror, toilet, lockable, heating-airing-AC, access to stage, safety)
- Number and size of entrance and exits, (handling masses, parking)
- Toilets (number and state...)

- Buffets (range and price of goods, cleanliness)
- Ticket offices (number, location, opening hours)
- Signs showing guests directions (pictograms)
- Transport and parking of performers and guests
- Access for suppliers
- Medical/first aid room

### *Potential unconventional venues for events*

It is getting more and more common that event organisers choose alternative venues rather than typical event halls, so that they can use the choice of venue as a USP. Various events can be hosted in venues like listed below:

- Museum, art gallery, theatre
- Private property
- Exclusive restaurant, night club
- Airport hangar, storage building
- Yacht club, race course, golf club
- Rented boat

If we decide to move our event to an unconventional venue like any of the above, we have to be prepared for all the potential extra costs of logistics involved.

### *Outdoor event venues*

Marquee tents are a popular choice for hosting events in the great outdoors. They provide shelter from rain, wind and scorching sunshine as well. Although these tents come in different shapes and forms (for example, Alpine tents have greater interior height, while military marquees are more solid), not to speak about sizes, there are only a few rules that can be regarded as generally acceptable. Some of the considerations include

- We have to calculate min 2 square metres per person when choosing the size
- We have to provide separate men's and ladies' toilets (1 per 75 guests, twice as many for ladies than for gents)
- We have to secure the tent (pegging to the ground, rope), so that it withstands wind



Even though hiring a marquee tent can be significantly cheaper than hiring a 'built' venue, we have to be prepared for some extra costs, which arise from the necessary or convenience factors such as floor/ground covering, heating-airing, generators (or electricity), furniture, equipment, etc.

## Timing of events

### Finding the right date

Timing is one of the key factors deciding the success or failure of an event. It is impossible to please everyone with the date and time of an event but the needs and preferences of the main target audience has to be in the frontline of the decision on the actual date (and starting time) of an event.

Here we have to make a distinction between corporate and leisure-oriented events as their audiences are different in character. While the participants of corporate events prefer to spend their time with attending conferences, meetings, workshops, etc. during work time, both within the day and within the week, the audience of leisure events spend their leisure time when visiting events, therefore the timing has to concentrate on the evenings, weekends and holidays.

There are some factors to be considered that are generally valid for both corporate and leisure events:

*Major (religious) holidays* – the potential participants may have other plans, as the major holidays such as Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Eid, etc. are the times of the year when families meet up.

*Religious customs* – some religions observe customs that do not allow or make it physically rather difficult for people to attend events. Shabbath – the period from a few minutes before sunset on Friday evening until the appearance of three stars in the sky on Saturday night (Shulchan Aruch – Code of Jewish Law) – for the Orthodox Jews is the time of celebration and prayer spent with family, during this period they would definitely participate in organised events. In the Muslim religion, Ramadan is the holy month of fasting and prayer, when the followers of the religion observe fasting from sunrise until sunset every day. Therefore, it might be rather difficult for them to concentrate and any event where there is the temptation of food or drink is out of question for Muslim people.

There are further factors that influence the availability of the target audience, therefore need to be considered before the decision is made on the date (and time) of the event. Some of them are hindering factors for corporate events and favourable factors for leisure events:

*School holidays during the year* – families may use this time to travel to friends and relatives and may not opt for events even if they are close to their interests.

*Long weekends* – people might use these for short breaks, so the week(s) around it are not a good choice for corporate events but in popular destinations however, this may create an extra audience for leisure-oriented events.

*Major sporting events* – event like the Olympic Games or the Football World Cup attracts the attention of hundreds millions of people worldwide, following the events either live in the various venues or in front of the televisions. These may create a major competitor for events therefore the period of these major events are best to be avoided by event planners, unless watching the sporting events on large screens can easily be incorporated into the planned event. Yearly organised beer festivals are usually not cancelled or postponed just because of football continent or world championships: the organisers can potentially benefit from an enhanced audience if they provide live screening of the matches, as some people prefer to watch the games in company, and accompanied by a significant amount of beer.

*Other major/special events* – events other than those based on sports may be attractive to tens of thousands of people, therefore the time of these also needs to be avoided. A music festival or even a charity event can also take away the audience from local and regional events.

#### *Event specific factors*

Last, but not least we have to mention some other considerations that are specific to certain events.

*Weather* – in case of outdoor events the right weather conditions are crucial. Even though it is not absolutely predictable, especially as a result of climate change, looking at weather statistics from previous years can help organisers decide when to stage an event. Depending on the type of the event, we may want to avoid the heat as well as the extreme cold, especially if elderly people and young children are amongst the target audience, and rainy days of course.

*Availability of the venue* – some events can only fit into specific venues, and some can be accommodated in various venues, so we can choose from alternatives. Either way, we have to have the venue available for the desired time, and we also need to calculate time for arranging the venue, rehearsals, taking installation down, etc. so we need the venue for longer than the actual event.

*Availability of suppliers* – if a supplier is key to the event, we need to set the time accordingly. It may be a performer, a catering supplier or the supplier of a kind of entertainment that would be integral part of our event.

*Sometimes even the time of a well-established, yearly recurring event gets modified to fit with the availability of a key supplier. In 2013, the 10<sup>th</sup> VeszprémFest started unusually to the festival on a Tuesday, as Diana Krall, the world famous jazz singer could fit her performance in Veszprém in only for that particular Tuesday during her European tour ([www.veszpremfest.hu](http://www.veszpremfest.hu))*

### **Scheduling the programme of an event**

The right date is just part of the success for an event, the proper schedule tailored to the needs of the target audience is even more crucial. Event planners have to consider each element of the event from the point of view of the necessary amount of time, and incorporate some extra time to allow for delays when calculating the time frame of each part.

In the case of corporate events, a typical part where the schedule may go wrong is coffee/refreshment breaks. The usually allowed time frame for these is hardly enough for all the participants to use the restrooms, queue up for coffee and use the time for networking, which is quite often one of the most important part of corporate events.

Similarly, in the case of concerts for example, it is rather difficult to estimate the time necessary for the bands to set up and get tuned in. Especially when there are concerts following one another on the same stage the change over time is often underestimated.

#### *Task sheets and scripts for events*

There are no general rules that could be applied to all kinds of events, but event theorists have formulated two recommendations that are universally acknowledged:

- 1) Always count back from the date of the event when designing the schedule
- 2) Prepare a task sheet for the event, detailing what we want, when and how we want it.

A task sheet will also contain the name of the person responsible for the various task the event involves. A simple example of task sheets and a detailed checklist with timelines are presented below.

### Event Running Sheet - Template

<b>INSERT NAME OF EVENT</b> Insert day and date of event Insert time of event Insert location or venue for event  Contact: insert name and number of who to contact in case of emergency					
TIME		ACTION / TASK		WHO	NOTES
Insert time such as 11.30	Insert duration such as 1 hour	Insert action e.g. decoration of facility			
12.30 pm	30 mins	Guests arrive, name tags distributed and refreshments served			
1 pm	E.g. 2 minutes	MC to welcome guests, give brief introduction and introduce next speaker			

Figure 7: Task sheet template  
 Source: Google pictures

Six Weeks to a Month Ahead		Date	Person(s) Responsible
	Determine purpose and event plan		
	Develop budget and marketing strategy		
	Determine volunteer needs		
	Timeline created		
	Request room reservation		
Three Weeks in Advance		Date	Person(s) Responsible
	Turn in any contract information		
	Turn in publicity requests		
	Process requisition requests for payment		
	Request photo shoot needs		
	Place catering requests		
One Week in Advance		Date	Person(s) Responsible
	Finalize your agenda or program		
	Give and confirm final staff assignments		
	Create signage		
	Check on final payment arrangements		
Day of Event		Date	Person(s) Responsible
	Check room to make sure that all equipment and arrangements are in place		
	Post directional signs as needed		
	Check on food and entertainer's special needs		
	Check that greeters are in place with pens, comment cards, etc.		
	Secure any payments due that day		
	Check that photography is in place		
	Check all decorations are in order		
After Event		Date	Person(s) Responsible
	Remind participants to fill out comment cards		
	Secure all pens, materials and monies		
	Deposit monies as soon as possible		
	Check and remove any garbage		
One to Two Weeks After		Date	Person(s) Responsible
	Send "Thank You" notes		
	Have a meeting to review the event for improvements in the future - debriefing		

Figure 8: Checklist sample for events

Source: <http://templatelab.com/event-planning>

## Infrastructural needs, equipment for events

It has been stated earlier that finding the right date is part of the success of an event. A similar statement can be made for the equipment used to stage an event: if any of it is not appropriate to the type of the event, or it fails or malfunctions, then the success of the whole event is jeopardized. Just image a conference where the projectors do not work properly, or a rock concert where the sound system is not sufficient or fails. Therefore, selecting the right amount and quality of infrastructural items and equipment is also crucial.

- The equipment needs of an event will primarily depend on
- Location of the event (especially if outdoors)
- Venue of the event (what comes with the venue)

### *Stage*

Most events will require a stage. In case of indoor events, it is best to hire a venue with a stage to save some extra time and cost. In case of outdoor events, temporary stages that fit the type and purpose of the event need to be assembled. Again, stages can be different in

- Size
- Type
- Flooring
- Roof covering.

Modern technology now allows for mobile stages that can fold into a lorry, so that transport as well as assembly is made easier. The video available using the link below allows an insight into how a mobile stage lorry can be turned into proper stage for an outdoor music festival

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGT-OBIUDEA>

### *Stage equipment*

Stage equipment will quite often be tailored specifically to the needs of the event. The most essential technical equipment used on stages are:

- Projection
- Video technology
- Sound
- (Lighting- LED walls).

### *Equipment used for corporate events*

#### *a) Microphones*

Microphones are a necessary equipment at almost all kinds of events however, in the case of corporate events there may be a higher need for more microphones to allow audience involvement as well. Organisers have to ensure microphones for speakers and a mobile one for participants (crowd microphones). The video available following the link below reveals an innovative microphone solutions for effective (and more fun) participant involvement.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apjN3xThfY8>

#### *b) Translation equipment*

Although English has become the language of much of the corporate world and science, some international events may make it necessary to use a translation equipment.

#### *c) Voting equipment*

Business meetings may involve items on their agenda where the participants need to make decisions and vote on a proposal. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century voting machines are used for this purpose, as these allow for anonymity if necessary, and setting up the voting procedure and counting the vote is done automatically.

## Human resource needs for events

People make or break an event. The right quantity and quality of human resource needs to be in place not only to ensure the smooth running of an event, but also to provide the right atmosphere. Event organisers have to allocate an optimum number of staff to the various tasks involved in the event, and also need to have stand-by people in case someone drops out due to illness or another reason. Depending on the tasks, human resources need to have certain knowledge, competencies and potentially experience to perform well in the tasks they were assigned to.

### *Volunteers at events*

There are simple tasks that can be undertaken by people with little or no experience or special knowledge. Event organisers can hire volunteers to fill in simple positions like ticket inspectors or guides who show participants the way to the different parts of the venue, etc. Ideally, there is gain in the involvement of volunteers for the volunteers themselves as well. So why do people volunteer? The reasons for volunteering can be described with the following:

- Personal gain
- Helping others
- For under 25s: learning new things and widening experiences
- Women not working full time may want to gather experiences
- Unemployed and retired people (and housewives) do voluntary work because they want to feel useful
- Motivations of young people:
  - 
  - doing something useful
  - learning useful things
  - being together with others
  - learning new skills (behavioural skills)
  - meeting new people

- meeting famous people

As ideal as it sounds, working with volunteers at events can only work if there is appropriate coordination, and the roles, tasks and benefits are clearly defined. The London Olympic Games was a success due to the proper handling of volunteers while the succeeding Rio Olympics reported a number of problems due to the insufficient number of volunteers - which admittedly was a result of the way they were (or were not) prepared for the tasks and handled during the event

### *Required characteristics of event planners*

For some tasks, there are volunteers. For the major jobs in event planning and management however, professional staff is required. Ideally, event planners have many of the characteristics described below:

- organisational skills
- coordinating skills
- communication skills
- determination
- ability to judge people
- flexibility
- resourcefulness
- passion
- attention to detail
- economic/business knowledge
- people skills
- establishing and maintaining relationships
- time management
- ability to improvise
- working under pressure
- ability to multitask



### **Risk management at events**

Risk can be associated with uncertainty however, not all risk is negative. Risk means the possibility that something good or something bad could happen. According to Silvers (2008:4) in the event industry “risk is any condition or occurrence that might affect the

outcome of an event or event activity and might expose an event organisation to loss measured in terms of probability and consequences". Risk is also associated with hazard. Risk management is seen as an activity which incorporates the purposeful recognition of and reaction to uncertainties (Silvers, 2008). With other words, risk management is the process of anticipating, preventing, minimising costs, losses or problems for the event, organisation, partners and guests.

We can approach risk from different angles. First of all, we can consider *what is at risk*:

- People
- Property
- Finances
- Systems
- Environment
- Image.

Also, we need to recognise *what the risks can be*:

- Injuries or death
- Property loss or damage
- Revenue loss
- Reduced capacity or capability
- Resource availability
- Increased demand
- Loss of reputation.

The kinds of risks listed above do not represent all the risks that potentially occur at events, but these are the most typical risks. Furthermore, the various risks will not all happen at all events, and their impacts will also vary from event to event where these occur.

### *Main sources of risk at events*

Some of the risks listed above occur due to the *crowd* that the event attracts. Damages to people as well as property may be caused by the crowd that gathers for an event – and it is not necessarily the result of deliberate improper behaviour. It may arise due to the *capacity overestimation*, which is another one of the main sources of risk, alongside with capacity underestimation. Another, crowd-related source of risks is *traffic jam* that quite often occurs around event venues, which may even mean some people do not get in in time to enjoy the event. The consumption of large quantities of *alcohol* may also lead to some of the above listed risks. Improper *security* measures are another significant source of risks, which may lead to damage to people and/or property, while *bad communication* is more likely to lead to negative impacts on the environment, financial loss or damage to the image of the event or that of the location where it takes place. In the case of outdoor events, *weather* is one of the most significant sources of risks.

### *Internal and external risks*

We can differentiate internal and external risk categories, depending on whether the organisers have an influence on the factors that may cause the risk or not.

In the case of *internal risks*, with careful planning the organisers can envisage potential risks and undertake activities to mitigate their impacts. *External risks* are the ones which the organiser may be able to foresee but are not able to influence with their actions.

Internal risks can be discussed based on the following aspects:

a) Time-related aspect

- Date of the event
- Duration of the event
- Schedule of activities

b) Financial aspect

- Pricing of event ticket fee and services associated with the event
- Liquidity of the organisation
- Emergence of ad-hoc expenses

c) Technical aspects

- Insufficient technical equipment
- Improper technical equipment
- Malfunction of technical equipment

d) Venue

- Location
- Quality
- Service side
- Quality
- Uniformity

e) Human side

- Personnel (attitude, lack of experiences)
- Target group (different expectations)
- Subcontractors (quality, flexibility)

f) Other risk factors

- Misspelling names
- Wrong files sent to partners, etc.

Several of these potential mishaps can be avoided if the event organisers take the steps and factors of event planning and management discussed in the previous chapters into consideration. However, some risks cannot be avoided by the actions taken by the event organisers, they are beyond the control of the organisers therefore we call them external risks.

*External risks may include*

- Legal aspects (changes in law, regulations)
- Financial aspects (currency exchange)
- Market (parallel events)
- Environmental aspects (natural disasters)
- Political situation
- Terrorism

These cannot be controlled by the organisation and yet have a major impact on the event if they occur. Many examples prove that the political situation and terrorist attacks deter people from going to the places where they do not feel safe, so despite careful planning an event may not happen at all, or participants may be exposed to risk if these happen while the event is running. Natural disasters are unpredictable and may be just as dangerous as terrorist attacks. It must be noted that some environmental happenings may not be considered as disasters but are still able to prevent events from happening. For example, in April 2010 the eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull Volcano in Iceland stopped air travel in and around Europe for several days, and international events were cancelled during those days as participants were not able to travel to the country of the event.

### *How to eliminate or mitigate risk*

As mentioned before, internal risks may be avoided with certain actions and measures. Some suggestions help to either eliminate or mitigate the risk that might occur at the event include the following:

*Effective analytical skills* – predicting the need for the event, the right timing, venue, the necessary human and technical resources, etc.

*Effective strategic planning* – considering the necessary activities in every step of event planning and allocate the necessary resources to the various activities

*Effective people management skills* – finding the right tone and attitude towards employees, contractors and participants

*Contracting* – having a legally binding document detailing the obligations of the organisers as well as the service providers

*Insurance* – having an insurance to mitigate the potential negative impacts and provide compensation for injury, damage or loss

*Ethics* – ensuring the appropriate ethical behaviour towards participants and service providers

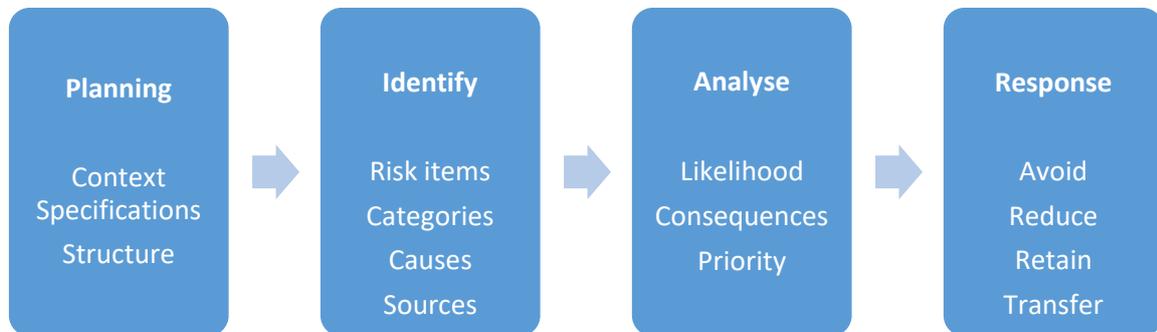
### *Managing risks as hazards to health and safety*

The last section of the chapter will focus on the management of risks which are considered as hazards to the health and safety of people (participants and people involved in staging the event). Even though the importance of damage to property and financial loss are not to be underestimated, human life has to be the number one priority when risk is considered.

As the saying goes "Know the risk before you take them". Identifying the risk is crucial, as that is the basis for the analysis of the potential impacts of the risk and the actions to be taken.

The risk management process can be understood as follows:

## Documentation and communication



## Risk monitoring and control

2. **Figure 9: Risk management process for events**
3. **Source: Own editing based on Silvers (2008:25)**

### *Steps of risk assessment*

1. Identify the hazards
2. Determine who is at risk
3. Determine if the existing controls are adequate and amend if necessary
4. Record the findings
5. Review the assessment if necessary

Relating to the first step of the assessment process, hazard to be identified can be broken down into different categories:



**Physical:** noise, vibration, lasers and electrical hazards



**Chemical:** toxic, corrosive, irritant, harmful materials and fire



**Positional:** work at height, position near water, layout of site, vehicles and use of temporary structures



**Environmental:** heat, cold, wind, pollution and slopes



**Health:** fatigue, dehydration, musculoskeletal injury, psychological stress

***FIRE is sometimes a separate category!***

**Figure 10: Categories of hazard**  
Source: own editing based on Silvers, 2008

When assessing potential risks (hazards), the likelihood of the occurrence of the hazard and the consequences also need to be considered. Various risk assessment matrices exist that help event organisers identify these and to define the necessary responses to the hazard according to its probability and severity. See Figure 11 for an example of a risk assessment matrix.

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX				
SEVERITY \ PROBABILITY	Catastrophic (1)	Critical (2)	Marginal (3)	Negligible (4)
Frequent (A)	High	High	Serious	Medium
Probable (B)	High	High	Serious	Medium
Occasional (C)	High	Serious	Medium	Low
Remote (D)	Serious	Medium	Medium	Low
Improbable (E)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Eliminated (F)	Eliminated			

Figure 11: Risk assessment matrix

Source: [www.plcacademy.com](http://www.plcacademy.com)

When establishing who is at risk, the following groups of people are usually considered as especially vulnerable:

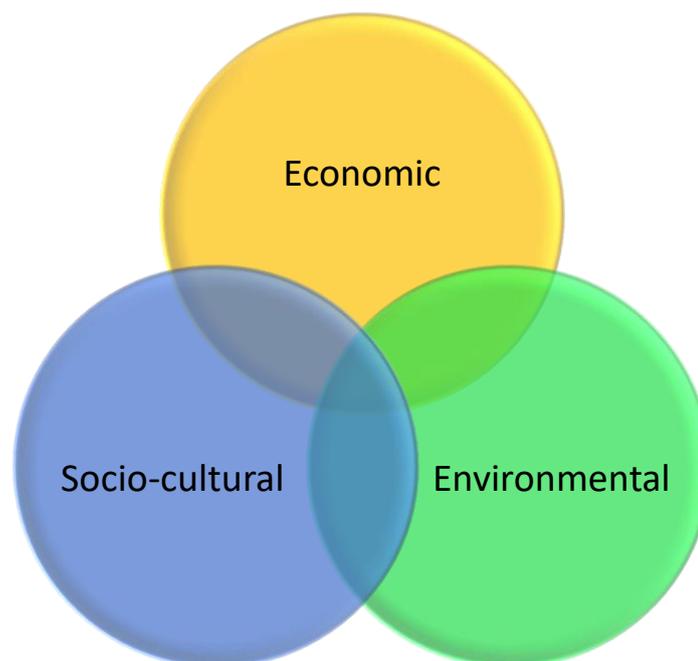
- Children
- Elderly people
- Disabled people
- Expectant mothers
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Those who do not speak the local language
- Those affected by alcohol/drugs/ substance abuse

Some of these groups are more vulnerable because of their physical abilities or condition (like people with disabilities, elderly people or expectant mothers), while others need special attention as they may not be able understand and/or follow instructions in case a hazard occurs (like children or those who do not speak the local language).

Responding to risk starts with taking all the necessary measures to avoid the risks that can be recognised and predicted. Complete avoidance is not possible, event organisers need to attempt to reduce the number of risks and their impacts on the stakeholders of the event. Risk-handling procedures and protocols are vital elements of the risk management process. For small events, these are usually not formal documents but for major or mega events documentation and reporting form an integral part of the event planning process.

## **Sustainable events**

Sustainability is a concept that has been around for decades however, it is constantly gaining more awareness. In the event industry the three pillars of sustainability – economic, environmental and socio-cultural are becoming key guiding principles of event planning and management, admittedly with differing emphasis depending on the type and aim of the event.



**Figure 12: Three pillars of sustainability**

**Source: Own editing based on Butler Bramwell and Lane (1993); (2000); Hall (2011); Choi and Sirakaya (2006)**

*Economic sustainability* has to be considered even in the case of non-fee-paying events as well, where the main objective of the event is other than generating revenue. In the case of profit-oriented events one of the key aims is to generate income as well as profit from the ticket sales and from sponsorship as well as fees the organisers can collect from service providers related to the event (such as rental fees of food stalls, etc.)

In the spirit of *environmental sustainability*, reducing the negative impacts caused by the event is one of the main guiding principles, and quite often it is accompanied by the promotion of green actions and communicating the green aspects of the event.

*Socio-cultural sustainability* – supporting the local economy and society with the aims of the event, and purchasing from local suppliers

The majority of initiatives focuses on environmental sustainability of events however, quite often an environmentally conscious solution also relates to economic and socio-cultural factors. Various green event guides exist that list a number of recommendations event organisers can take into account when planning and implementing their event. Some of these recommendations are presented relating to the three key phases of events – before, during and after.

### Before the Event

- ✓ Choose a preferred green caterer
- ✓ Request compost and/or recycling bins
- ✓ Coordinate bulk beverages
- ✓ Source giveaways responsibly
- ✓ Minimise printed materials
- ✓ Encourage alternative transport
- ✓ Use natural and reusable décor

### Day of the Event

- ✓ Find ways to conserve energy
- ✓ Check for proper waste bin set up
- ✓ Promote your sustainability efforts
- ✓ Educate guests

### After the Event

- ✓ Collect unused materials for future events
- ✓ Coordinate with Campus Kitchens to donate leftover food
- ✓ Turn off all equipment and lights

**Figure 13: Green Event Principles – Before, during and after the event**

**Source: Own editing base on UNEP Green Meeting Guide (2009), and Penn Sustainability Green Events Guide (2019) University of Pennsylvania**

### *Green initiatives at events*

For their efforts to reduce the negative environmental impacts, the Sziget Festival has received the *Green Festival Award* from the Ministry of Environment. The Sziget Group has implemented measures in three fields: recycling, transport and air pollution.

#### *1. Recycling*

- 50 people collecting rubbish continuously
- 40 recycling points
- 4500 kg waste collected for recycling
  - Cans: 700 kg
  - Plastic bottles, plastic packaging: 2500kg
  - Paper: 900 kg
  - Glas bottles: 400 kg
- 150 kg used batteries were exchanged for apples
- Rubbish exchanged for presents

#### *2. Transport*

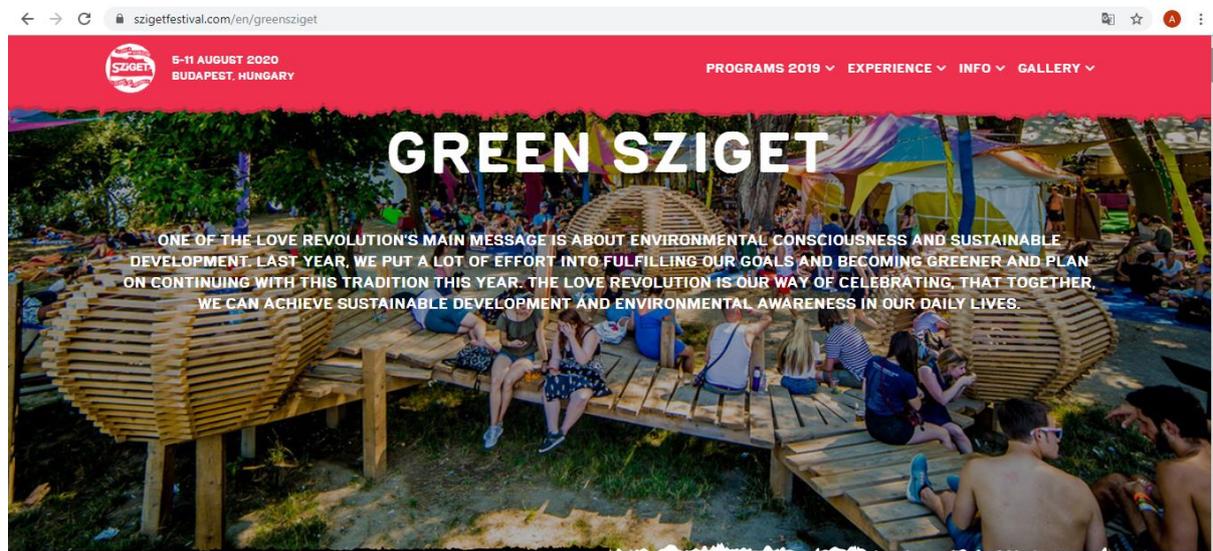
- Bicycle storage for 500 bikes
- Sziget buses from airport, stations
- Sziget accessible by boat
- 50% discount on train tickets
- Car sharing

#### *3. Air pollution*

- Dust proofing in front of stages and on paths to reduce floating particles

## Case Study: The Sziget Festival

The hallmark event of Budapest, the Sziget Festival has earned the Green Festival Award with their initiatives aiming to reduce the potential negative impacts.



“Last year we could replace one and a half million single-use glasses with a few hundred thousand of reusable glasses,” said Ákos Dominus, project manager of the Green Island project.

“This year, the Sziget festival will consume 3 million plastic glasses less, and the number is rising every year. So we can see how sustainable this program is.”

On Sziget’s last day, tents, sleeping bags, and mats that have been left behind will be collected by charity organizations.

<https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/09/sziget-music-festival-in-hungary-showcases-its-green-credentials> (2019. 10.10.)

How to make an event venue green? Watch the video using the link below to find out about unconventional green event spaces at Gardens by the Bay, in Singapore.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgBrjWgHmlc>

Green ideas for conferences and meetings shared in the video about Responsible Business Forum on Sustainable Development, explaining what event organisers can do to make events green and sustainable, complying with the ISO20121 Event Sustainability Standard.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LK856cu6Wj4>

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