

ZEN PROJECT



# ZERO IMPACT CULTURAL HERITAGE EVENT NETWORK



This project is funded by the EU's European Regional Development fund through the INTERREG IVC programme.

# ZEN

is a project aimed at developing a shared methodology to reduce the impact of events and festivals in historic centers and on cultural heritage through the exchange of significant experiences and lessons learned by the participating partners. All over Europe, events and festivals have the ability to draw positive effects on tourism, cultural diversity and local economy but they also have critical impact on local context and, more in general, on the environment. In the UK alone, it is estimated that live music events produce 400,00 t Co2 annually and a 2007 survey carried out by the University of Buckinghamshire on behalf of A Greener Festival on 649 festival goers in Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands found out that 80% were concerned about noise, 82% thought waste had a negative impact, 84% were worried about the impact of travel and transport, 60% expressed concern about water and land damage.





zero impact  
cultural heritage  
event network

A black speaker is positioned on a vibrant green lawn. A blue circle is overlaid on the right side of the speaker, containing the text 'PART ONE' in white, bold, uppercase letters.

**PART  
ONE**

# Why sustainable events?

Events and festivals of one type or another have played a key role in the way we express ourselves as human beings for thousands of years. They are manifestations of our identity both collectively and as individuals. The impact of events can be social (e.g. community pride and community cohesion), economic (e.g. increased number of visitors to a town centre, urban revitalization and promotion) and environmental (e.g. raising awareness about energy use, waste or climate change).

As awareness about sustainability and environmental issues develops, there is a growing level of interest beginning to develop in green and sustainable events. The London 2012 Olympics, for instance, have had the lowest environmental impact Olympics to date and this trend is also becoming evident in smaller events. For instance, recent research\* among festivalgoers across Europe has shown that:

- 50% of festivalgoers would pay a higher ticket price if that helped to reduce the event's impact on the environment
- 71% would travel to the event using public transport if that was included in the ticket price
- 80% of festivalgoers feel they should be personally responsible for reducing waste at events
- 86% would use an event's waste recycling facilities, if provided on site

Similarly, events can have a lasting impact on society in terms of changing people's behaviour. For instance 43% of festival fans surveyed across Europe said that they had changed their behaviour as a result of green initiatives or ideas they had discovered at festivals.

Festival organizers have also recognized these changing trends. In Italy, for instance, event organizers use their festival's green credentials effectively to attract more visitors. In Latvia, sustainability is used by some festivals as a way of nurturing people's bonds with nature and helping them to understand the world around them. In the UK, some festivals actively explore and debate global sustainability issues whilst testing green technologies on site to reduce the event's negative impact on the environment.

If you are interested in these issues and you want to join this growing community worldwide, this handbook is for you.

To find out more, go to:

<http://zen-project.eu/new/>

<http://www.agreenerfestival.com/2013/01/>

[what-fans-want-green-events-and-their-fave-band/](http://www.agreenerfestival.com/2013/01/what-fans-want-green-events-and-their-fave-band/)



# Impact of events and festivals

A key finding of our research is that “zero-impact” is seldom meaningful to key stakeholders. Negative environmental impacts per se are often not considered to be of high priority by policy makers. On the other hand, the positive impacts of events and festivals (e.g. legacy, place branding, economic development, social cohesion/participation) tend to be more relevant to stakeholders. As a result of this, it is important for perspectives on sustainability to be broadened.

Damage variation in historical and urban areas is the result of a series of bad decisions combined with massive exploitation. Today this variations falls into the responsibility of the entire society.

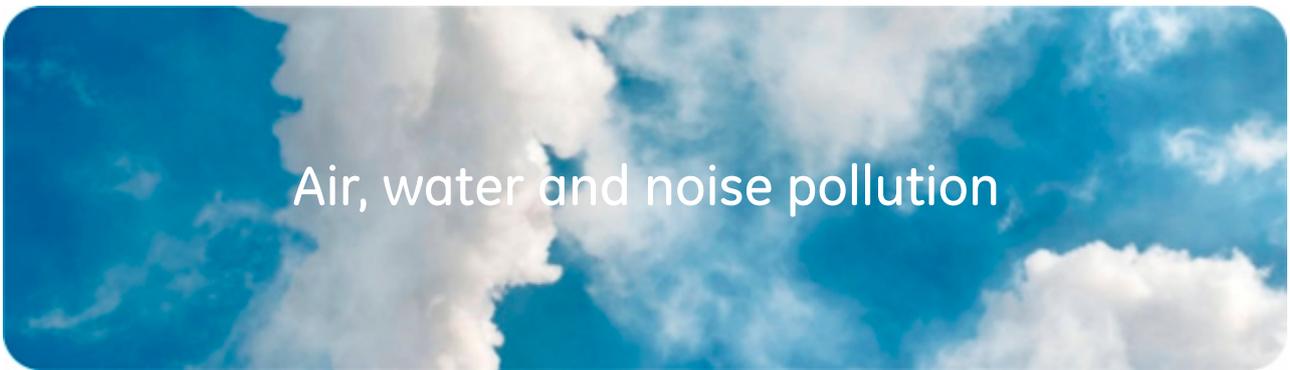




## Traffic

Because the events and festivals are addressed to people (local citizens, visitors, tourists), organizing such an event creates traffic problems that may pollute, affect or damage cultural landscape or historical objectives. To avoid these problems organizers must make a transport plan correlated with the event schedule.

Hay Festival (United Kingdom) is a good practice model. There, the organizers provide a public bus service from Hereford - the nearest train station to the festival's venue - to the festival site, with ten buses a day. This bus service is run in conjunction with a private operator. Separately, with the help of a private sector partner (Sky), a number of minibuses provide direct links to local B&Bs as well as surrounding villages and towns. In 2012, these minibuses carried 1,904 passengers.



## Air, water and noise pollution

Events involve a number of air polluting gas and steam emitting activities such as road and air transport. Moreover, there are significant emissions at catering and accommodation establishments, as well as during the events.

In the city of Drama (Greece), an event of growing importance and magnitude is the Oneiroupolis festival, where the option of introducing high tech elements to attract younger tech savvy audiences is being explored. These high tech options may also include new ways of monitoring the event's impact on the environment.

Noise pollution refers to a type of energy pollution in which distracting, irritating or damaging sounds are freely audible. Noise pollution is usually considered in terms of its effects on human populations, though it is known to affect wildlife as well. Festival noise is an important issue not only for nearby residents but also for the archaeological sites that host the festival.

Large scale festivals such as Culture Night and Street Music Day in Lithuania present very specific noise pollution challenges. These are rather peculiar challenges as the noise generated by these festivals is not comparable to that of heavy machinery or transport systems. Yet, the city center locations of these festivals in the middle of residential areas poses issues related to potential damage inflicted by sound systems on objects of high cultural heritage value, as well as communities of residents.

Festivals, particularly those lasting for a number of days can use considerable amounts of water. This may be through showers, drinking taps and washbasins, as well as water provided for catering etc. The environmental effects of festivals with regard to water could be in the form of unnecessary wasted water, poor disposal of waste water, and potential pollution of water courses.

**In the Hay Festival (UK), several monitoring indicators are used:**

1. Sustainability management – achieving BS8901 minimum standards by 2011.
2. Waste – A yearly 20% reduction in festival carbon emission from the 2006 total of (approx.) 7,500 tonnes.
3. Transport – A yearly 15% increase in public transport users from the baseline figure of 8,500 people in 2008.
4. Energy – A reduction in overall festival energy consumption of 20% by 2013 from the 2006 baseline.



## Waste Damage

One of the biggest negative impacts is the tremendous amount of waste that is generated by these events or festivals. At the European level, in 2010 statistics show 2570 million tons of waste, a small but important proportion of this waste came from all kinds of events. Waste that is not collected properly and on time affects heritage, so emphasis should be placed on consumer discipline and separate collection of waste.

In the Italian city of Perugia, the municipality approved a local law not to use glass for the consumption of beverages during festivals. A compromise has been arrived at so that visitors to festivals may have their beer glasses with them inside, but not outside festival's premises. In addition to this, Perugia's local authority has negotiated a regulation acknowledging that sponsors' contributions should also earn them a voice in key decisions related to events and festivals they sponsor.



## Deterioration of the historic and cultural centres

Inappropriate exploitation of cultural landscapes and historic centres during the development of an event, may damage them if there is no legislation in this regard.

The Enyovden Festival from Bulgaria has become an important part of the area's intangible cultural heritage, for

which there is a commitment to make this event an exemplary model of quality and low-impact festivals in Bulgaria. It is expected that this new philosophy will include modern methods of waste management, use of biodegradable and environmentally friendly materials, low energy lighting, solar power, reductions in noise levels and light pollution, etc.



## Inappropriate operation of heritage buildings

A current marketing strategy in events or festivals is to organize the event in a historic area to attract tourists. There is potential for damage to occur through this strategy due to the absence of coherent legislation in this field.

Today, with the experts from the "European Network of Classic Buildings for Performances", the management board of Merida Classical Theatre Festival continue to use ancient buildings and spaces as venues for the festival using a symbiotic approach to conservation and culture (Roman Theatre, Merida, Spain)



**PART  
TWO**

# What can you do to make your event more sustainable?

How we can we transform Europe into a better place if we don't involve all social, economic and environmental aspects for this purpose? We must take into account social responsibility and involve all stakeholders to prevent and remove the threats that may cause damage to our cultural heritage:

## Private sector

Companies from the tourist sector often have an economic focus however they often forget that they also use public resources in this process and these resources (natural areas, history centres) are limited. Too few show their concern for its protection and rational use, forgetting that this may affect their economic values or future work.

The Euro-chocolate Festival in the Italian city of Perugia is an example of how the private sector has started to get involved in sustainability issues and has started to adopt sustainability measures. On the initiative of a private sector sponsor managing the festival, investments have been made in solar panels. Other measures have involved an increase in the use of biodegradable cutlery.



## Public sector

The use of cultural and history heritage in order to develop events is a common use all over Europe. Regional lawmakers can use their advantage to create local and specific exploitation rules for those heritages, rules interconnected with the reason to create Place Branding. There is still a need for joined-up government to ensure that the departments responsible for organizing and promoting the events are supported by those departments responsible for environmental and heritage protection.

Iasi Municipality together with the Metropolitan Church of Moldavia and Bucovina (Romania) assign a great importance to the environmental aspects in the organization of the Saint Parascheva Pilgrimage (over 1 million visitors for a 5 day event). During the event, the municipality coordinates the city and street cleaning services which operate at full capacity and continuously until the event ends.



## Individuals

We cannot talk about the involvement of stakeholders to create ZEN events without referring to the individual (tourists, organizers, volunteers). Social responsibility is required for changing or influencing perceptions, beliefs and actions. When we refer to ZEN events, social responsibility is an active component that takes place before, during and continues after the event ends.





## Volunteers

Volunteers must be trained to respect and promote the measures and sustainable event management philosophy.

The organizers should adopt friendly policies and sustainable strategies. The public and tourists should be involved in this process by raising awareness of the positive results and the feeling of inclusivity. The process continues after the event has ended.

## Artists

Artists who are invited to perform at an event could help to promote and realize the need for social involvement in minimizing the negative effects of events and festivals.

Artists can be powerful role models, festivals can demonstrate sustainability in action and influence their suppliers, government can put pressure on event organizers, and sponsors and producers can back acts and events with green credentials.

Between 2007 and 2009, Italian pop stars including Ligabue, Vasco Rossi, Jovanotti and Tiziano Ferro began implementing actions to offset carbon emissions produced by their event venues, particularly in terms of energy consumption, transport and paper (e.g. posters, tickets, invitations) by planting trees.





# high-impact areas for sustainable interventions

## Planning

To organize a sustainable event, the manager should develop a detailed management plan for sustainability that should include solutions for conducting the event and minimising the negative effects.

Creating a sustainable event involves incorporating a combination of the following:

- Environmental best practice;
- Social and economic development;
- Education on, and awareness of, sustainability issues;
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the event-greening initiatives;
- Leaving a positive legacy.



The regulation “Bando Ecofeste” (Umbria Region, Italy) intends to promote the development of sustainable events all over the region. Umbria is the location of several fairs and festivals. These events, represent an important form of aggregation, of great social and cultural interest, but have an inevitable impact on the environment. The regulation's priority is the management of waste produced in the events.

# Communication

Classical methods of promotion and advertising often cause pollution and damage cultural heritage. We refer to putting up advertising posters on the walls of buildings, distribution of flyers and their disposal, pollution impacts of mobile advertising on vehicles.

Advertising and promotion methods that do not have negative effects should be used. A cheap and effective solution is electronic advertising. In order to reduce waste impacts, flyers should be made from biodegradable materials or advertising materials can be recycling or reused.



A practical example of a good promotion system is Sigulda's International Opera Festival (Latvia) who advertise in local and national newspapers, radio and television as well as social media (e.g. Facebook, twitter, draugiem.lv). They don't use printed advertising materials that could damage or contaminate the environment.

# Transport

Without detailed transport planning events, especially the big ones, can affect the cultural heritage and also the event economy or other aspects of life and society. To achieve an effective transport plan there must be effective collaboration and management between organisers, authorities, public transport managers, suitably located access and egress gates and car parks and well planned event start and finish timings.



Sobota Days' Festival (Slovenia) location has the advantages to be in the city centre where visitors could arrive on foot that reduces transport requirements.

# Resource efficiency

“Resource efficiency means using the Earth's limited resources in a sustainable manner. We depend on natural resources — metals, minerals, fuels, water, land, timber, fertile soil, clean air and biodiversity — for our survival.



A good practice in energy efficiency is Umbria Jazz Festival with its 100% renewable energy accreditation (since 2010). This accreditation is based on the fact that the festival's energy consumption is equal to the amount of energy from renewable sources available in the electricity network. In 2010, this amounted to 130.000 Kwh.

# Campaigns

Awareness campaigns are a good tool used to help organize an event. Beside the role of promoting the event itself, campaigns can be used to attract compatible partners in a ZEN event and for awareness and social responsibility.



The Hay Festival began its environmental impact mitigation programme called “Hay on Earth” in 2007. The festival makes a useful distinction between different factors, including the festival's direct impact, the environmental impact that results from audience behaviour, and the raising of awareness and debate about sustainable development during the festival itself<sup>91</sup>.

# Corporate philanthropy

Most corporations make monetary or other donations to charities or for sustainable causes. It is very important to attract those corporations into the project to fund it, but also to help to promote the idea of sustainable event ZEN.



The Kaziukas Fair is an annual Lithuanian folk crafts fair dating back to the beginning of the 17th century. The fair includes folk art, crafts, music and dance, and attracts tens of thousands of people, as well as many craftsmen from all over the country. In addition to being steeped in the venue's heritage and history - which is itself strongly linked to artisans - the Kaziukas' fair offers crafts created by disadvantaged social groups and orphans.

# Catering and services

For a sustainable event, organizers or authorities can issue a license to those who undertake sustainable measures to protect the environment and cultural heritage.



In Netherland, Green Key aims to educate and empower stakeholders in the tourism sector, including enterprises, local authorities, guests and local communities to change unsustainable behaviours and become actively involved in the protection of the environment. Green Key is a voluntary eco-label for organizations linked to the tourism sector (e.g. hotels) that promotes sustainable tourism by accrediting organizations that have positive environmental initiatives<sup>10</sup> (Source: website Green Key, [www.green-key.org](http://www.green-key.org)). The accreditation criteria designed by Green Key focus on water, waste, energy, guest involvement and awareness, environmental management, staff involvement, use of chemicals, open spaces, and food.

# Are you an organizer of a ZEN event? Here's what you can do:

## Ten easy tips to organize a ZEN event

### 1. Reduce transport impacts

For official travel, walk, bike, carpool or take public transport more often. Set up a car-sharing message board on your website. Offer ticket price discounts to those who travel by public transport.

### 2. Make people responsible

Make it someone's job to check that lights have been turned off, heating is only used when necessary etc.

### 3. Recycle more

Focus on those areas where you can make an easy difference for example cardboard or glass. You can cut back on carbon dioxide emissions and potentially save money on landfill charges.

### 4. Replace with energy efficient lighting

Whether in the Festival office or during the Festival, replacing six regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs will save 400kg of carbon dioxide a year.

### 5. Facilitate increased tap water use

Bottled water has a high impact both in transport costs and in waste. Provide standpipes and encourage the public to refill their water bottles.

### 6. Avoid products with a lot of packaging

This not only reduces carbon used in the packaging but by reducing the weight, more can be transported for less. There is also the added benefit of reducing the effort and cost to you in getting rid of the waste.

### 7. Reduce your printed materials

Cut back on programme printing saving resources and costs. Encourage the public to use just one programme during their time at the Festival. Have a box at the exits for people to return their programmes if they do not want them anymore.

### 8. Ban the plastic bag

There are plenty of good, sustainable alternatives to plastic bags, banning the issuing of plastic bags from the Festival venues, trade stands and stall-holders will make a sizable contribution to reducing your impact.

### 9. Turn off electrical devices

Simply turning off your televisions, DVD players, stereos and computers when you're not using them will save you thousands of kilograms of carbon dioxide a year. This applies in your Festival offices as much as it does in Festival venues.

### 10. Be part of the solution

Don't get put off by the potential scale of the situation or by thinking that it's not worth trying – every little helps.

(source: <http://www.hayfestival.com/greenprint/toolkit-fixes.aspx?skinid=14>)

# Recommendations for event organisers

The aim towards 'zero-impact' events responds to the desired reduction of the adverse environmental impacts of events and festivals. However, a focus on 'zero-impact' should not result in neglecting opportunities for a positive impact (otherwise referred to as legacy) of events. The pursuit of various positive legacies linked to sustainability is just as important as the reduction of negative environmental impacts:

## From 'zero impact' to positive legacy

1. Festivals and events should be encouraged by policy makers to forge a closer alignment of their sustainability goals with indirect outcomes.

2. The sustainability interventions implemented by events and festivals should be encouraged by policy makers to contribute strategically to a sustainable legacy for their host area. This should include:

- Economic legacy (e.g. local procurement, energy savings that offset costs of energy consultant)
- Social legacy (e.g. community cohesion, social marketing, skills) promoting behaviour change in society w.r.t. sustainability and sustainable lifestyles
- Environmental legacy

## Strategic alignment between events and local/regional development

3. Events and festivals should be encouraged by policy makers to have a greater level of strategic alignment with area-based sustainability local development plans (incl. strategic place branding) in the locations (towns/municipalities/regions) that host them. This could be achieved through the licensing process or, in the case of publicly funded events, the funding selection criteria.

## Innovation and knowledge exchange

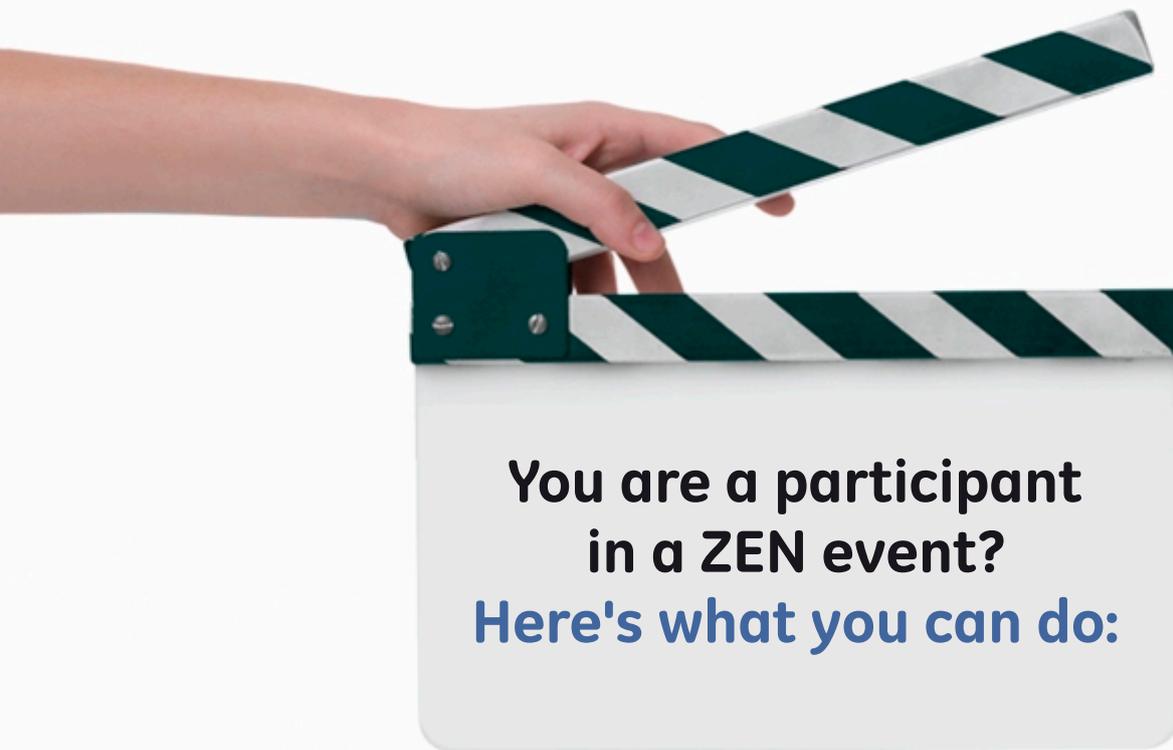
4. A greater use should be made of events and festivals by funders as test beds for innovation, particularly in green technologies, approaches to sustainability education, and local government policy related to sustainability, among other spheres.

5. A pan-European "What Works" knowledge portal should be created for sustainable events and festival impact evaluation as a one-stop-shop for practitioners, researchers and policy makers to exchange evolving knowledge, policy and innovation in the sector (e.g. use of smartphones to monitor event noise levels, apps for environmental impact, GPRS-based crowd flows, event-specific policies, etc).

## European recognition and accreditation

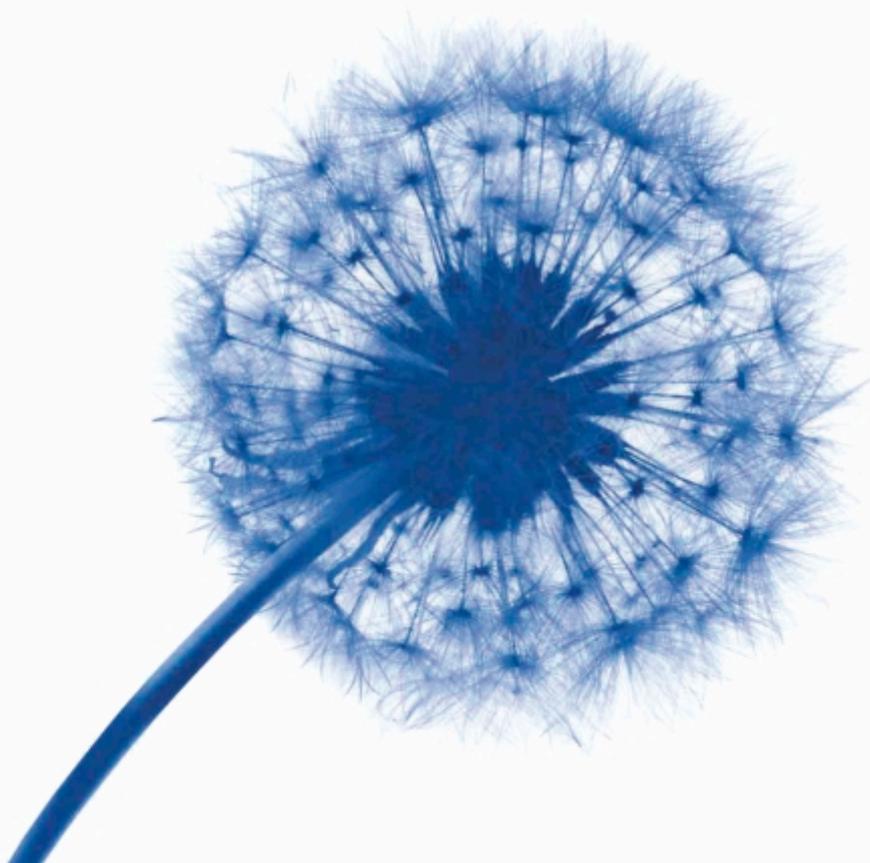
6. A pan-European theme-based accreditation system (or quality mark) for sustainable events should be created building on existing work (e.g. GreenKey, A Greener Festival, ISO20121, etc) to recognise good practice in specific areas (e.g. recycling, energy use), make it easier for funding bodies to reward innovation in the sector with further funding, and connect innovators through the pan-European network outlined earlier (recommendation 5).

(source: ZEN POSITIONING PAPER – EUROPEAN APPROACHES TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF EVENTS AND FESTIVALS)



**You are a participant  
in a ZEN event?  
Here's what you can do:**

Engaging the audience with the sustainable aspects of concerts, tours, festivals and other mass music events along with them being receptive to environmental messaging when at the event is one of the key drivers to the success of any campaigns devised. Talking to people prior to a show, getting them actively involved during it, and sending them home with 'sign up' actions or a way to let them know how successful a particular action was, is very important.



# Tips for bringing your contribution to a successful ZEN event:

- Adopt an responsible behaviour in terms of reducing pollution and waste damage by using selective waste collection in the event premises and surroundings
- Minimising the negative effects of traffic by using public transport and by respecting the access to the event and dedicated parking lots.
- Choose accommodation providers that subscribe to specific industry environment code of practice (Ethics and Guidelines of Sustainable Tourism)
- Ensure the hotel chosen has a comprehensive environmental policy and that this policy is in line with your events goals
- Request that the hotels food service abide by the same criteria listed in the food and beverage section
- Use the appropriate recycling units of the rooms and meeting spaces in the accommodation premises
- Read and follow the hotel information provided in guests rooms about the sustainable aspects of the hotels which encourage the guests' participation
- If provided, use the hotel's offer for group pick-up service for participants to the event
- Follow any hotel recommendations for the guests regarding the option of no second-day sheet and towel change to save laundry energy and water
- Use the public transit information available in the registration package, event promotions and exhibitor kits
- Use the shuttle service to and from hotels provided for exhibitors and attendees. Use alternative fuelled vehicles
- Minimise the need for transportation through use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing
- Access the events website and use the information regarding the car-pooling that permits local participants and car rental users to make arrangements
- The pollution emission of a car represents in average, annually three times its weight! If you need to use it, then green your driving style! You can save the fuel consumption by up to 40%
- Slow speed! Increasing from 120 to 130 km/h involves an increase of consumption of up to 1 ltr/100km;
- Use the air-conditioning with prudence! It increases consumption up to 35% in town and 20% on national roads.
- Buying local, you can reduce the indirect transport of good/services purchased! Sometimes the transport of food to an event produces more pollution than the participants travel to the location.
- Buying local goods and services helps to sustain the economy and keep people working.



# ZEN project approach

Events have been an integral part of human existence since ancient times. In some parts of the world, the changing seasons would be a major theme for events whereas in other places births, appointments of new leaders and religious rites would take precedence. Today, in spite of the funding challenges brought about by the 2008 financial crisis, events continue to play a significant role in our society as they continue to reinforce beliefs, values and cultures in addition to marking critical milestones and acting as catalysts for social inclusion, particularly among socio-economically disadvantaged groups. Similarly, as the experience economy continues to grow with tourism as one of its key exponents, events are becoming increasingly key elements in the marketing and branding of places to provide them with a distinct competitive advantage.

Because we care about the European Cultural heritage we have created a partnership working group with twelve European organisations: Svilluppumbria - Italy, Municipality of Perugia - Italy, Municipality of Drama -Greece, Vilnius City Municipal Government Administration - Lithuania, Sigulda District Council - Latvia, University of East London - United Kingdom, Business Incubator Gotse Delchev -Bulgaria, Development Center Murska Sobota - Slovenia, North East Regional Development Agency - Romania, Regional Government for Culture and Tourism – Autonomous Government of Extremadura –Spain, Erasmus University Rotterdam - Netherland, Powys County Council - United Kingdom.

This concern led to the creation of an innovative project (ZEN) in order to find viable solutions at EU level to deal with the reduction of these negative effects on urban settings of cultural and artistic significance and to provide a roadmap to manage and protect cultural heritage during open-air events that attract large numbers of people. The findings of the project will be transferred at policy level through the development of an implementation plan for each participating region.





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[www.zen-project.eu/new](http://www.zen-project.eu/new)





# ZERO IMPACT

## CULTURAL HERITAGE EVENT NETWORK



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