

Electronic Music Festivals as Drivers of Visitor Motivation and Local Economic Impacts: Evidence From Croatia

Abstract

In recent years, electronic music festivals have become an increasingly important segment of event tourism. As a result of the growing demand, the number of music festivals is constantly increasing. The size of the market represents a great potential for tourism destinations. Many organisers and stakeholders in the destination (as well as scientists) are becoming aware of the importance of cooperation, which results in numerous economic and non-economic impacts. For the purpose of the paper, primary research was conducted within the population of the two largest electronic music festivals in Croatia. The research results showed that the average daily consumption of electronic music festival visitors is higher than the average daily tourist consumption in the Republic of Croatia. Satisfaction with the festival and the destination among festival visitors has a positive impact on the image of the destination. Based on the research results in the segment of festival visitors' motivation, the motive of getting to know the destination and the motive of attending the festival as an opportunity to visit the Republic of Croatia were rated exceptionally highly on average.

Keywords: event tourism, electronic music festivals, tourist motivation, Croatia, economic impacts

1. Introduction

Since ancient times, events have attracted people with the aim of achieving a special experience and personal satisfaction. Today, events have become an important element of tourism supply, increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the destination and stimulating tourist spending (Getz & Page, 2016, p. 593). Creating additional offers by organising events has many positive impacts on the destination, such as “creating a positive image of the destination and inflow of money into the local economy” (Kruger & Saayman, 2019, p. 2399). Also, destinations are motivated to organise various types of events because they will “attract tourists (often in the pre- and post-season), improve infrastructure and accommodation capacities, build a positive image of the destination and animate specific attractions or areas” (Getz, 2007: p. 405, 406). The focus of the paper is on music festivals, namely electronic music festivals, which belong to entertainment and cultural events. The literature related to motivation for visiting events is constantly growing, but there are only a few studies that focus specifically on music festivals (Saleh & Ryan, 1993; Formica & Uysal, 1995; Faulkner et al., 1999; Thrane, 2002; Bowen & Daniels, 2005; Gelder & Robinson, 2009). Music festivals represent an important category in the event tourism segment and are considered unique events that attract audiences for a variety of reasons. As defined by Bowen & Daniels (2005), they are “unique special events in which music is the central theme and where a wide range of performances by different artists are generally included”. In addition, these festivals usually include activities beyond music itself. As a result of the growing demand, the number of music festivals is constantly increasing, which is particularly evident in electronic music festivals

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that have a large and diverse audience around the world. The size of the market represents a great potential for tourism destinations. Many organisers and stakeholders in the destination (as well as scientists) are becoming aware of the importance of cooperation, which results in numerous economic and non-economic impacts. The aim of the paper is to quantitatively examine the motivation of visitors to electronic music festivals in Croatia and to assess the economic impacts of these events, including both physical (tourism and visitor flows) and financial impacts on local economies. The paper should provide answers to the following research questions: What are the key motivational factors for visitors to electronic music festivals in Croatia? What are the direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of analysed electronic music festivals on the local economy? To what extent does the total spending by electronic music festival visitors generate broader economic impacts on the destination? Accordingly, main research goals of the paper are: to identify and analyse the key motivational factors that influence visitors' decisions to attend electronic music festivals in Croatia; to measure visitor spending and evaluate the direct financial impact of festivals on the local economy, including accommodation, food and beverage, transportation, ticketing, and related expenditures; to examine the physical economic impacts of festivals, such as changes in tourist arrivals, overnight stays, and visitor movement patterns in host destinations; to compare the observed impacts with findings from existing academic literature and contextualize the results within current research on festival tourism and the experience economy.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. The role of electronic music festivals in event tourism

Event tourism, an important and rapidly growing part of international tourism, is defined as a special interest tourism based on motives directed towards active or passive participation in an event (Getz, 2007). In recent years, electronic music festivals have become an increasingly important segment of event tourism. Since 1960, the term electronic music has been described as “any type of music produced using recorded sound, tape, machines and sound generators, whether for film, television, stage, dance or in the halls of academic music studios” (Holmes, 2020: p.7). Electronic music can also be defined as “music based on the use of technologically produced sound, including synthesisers and computer programs for audio production” (Kruger & Saayman, 2019; St. John, 2006). Electronic music is therefore broadly understood as music produced primarily for the purpose of use and reproduction in nightclubs or in an environment that focuses on dance-oriented entertainment. Performers (DJs) in the electronic music segment are some of the best-paid musicians in the world, and the increase in popularity of electronic music has also been influenced by large festivals such as Ultra Music Festival. Promoters, organisers and destinations have realised that DJs can generate more revenue than traditional musicians and performers (bands).

Large-scale electronic music festivals have become increasingly common, in some cases with more than 300,000 attendees (Wagner, 2014). Attendance at electronic music festivals, including concerts or festivals, is primarily dominated by the younger age group (under 25), and the number of young people attending these types of festivals continues to expand as electronic music elements blend with other mainstream music genres (McDonald, 2014; Singh, 2014). Furthermore, electronic music festivals are an important component of destination tourism strategies because they have low marginal costs. This type of event typically requires less investment in fixed infrastructure than do music or sports events that require permanent venues (Frey, 1994). Some of the largest electronic music festivals in the world are held in or near large cities such as Miami and Las Vegas in the United States (Ultra Europe Music Festival and EDC Festival), Antwerp in Belgium (Tomorrowland Festival), Cluj in Romania (Untold Festival) and many others. In the Republic of Croatia, the largest festival (Ultra Europe Music Festival) is held in the city of Split, which, due to its tourism supply and infrastructure (accommodation capacities, transport connections, restaurants, etc.), manages to provide support in the organisation of festivals of this type.

Globally, the value of the electronic music industry in 2024 is estimated at \$12.9 billion, which is an increase of 6% compared to the previous year (International Music Summit, 2025). The same source states that the pre-pandemic period saw the highest annual growth in electronic music festival visitors, from 18% in 2017 to 23% in 2018, and that today there are more than 500 million electronic music fans worldwide.

Consequently, the growth of the market and demand leads to an increase in the tourism supply of electronic music festivals. Furthermore, electronic music fans have the highest tendency to go to festivals. According to the *IMS Business Report* (International Music Summit, 2025), in 2024, more than 1,000 electronic music festivals were held worldwide. The largest number of electronic music festivals were held in Europe and North America, followed by Central and South America, while the smallest number were held in Africa and the Middle East, and in Asia and Oceania. In the Republic of Croatia, 20 significant electronic music festivals were held in 2024, with the number of visitors varying from 5,000 to 20,000, except for Ultra Music Festival, where the number of visitors reaches 150,000. Every year, several festivals held in Croatia are included in the list of the top 100 world electronic music festivals (Electronic festivals, n.d.). Electronic music festivals in Croatia are quite distinctive compared to other established festival destinations such as Berlin, Ibiza, or the Netherlands. In Croatia, electronic music festivals are influenced by tourism seasonality. Most of them are concentrated within the summer months, which aligns with peak coastal tourism and favourable climatic conditions. Furthermore, Croatian festivals are predominantly hosted in small coastal towns and islands, which often leads to a discrepancy between the scale of the event and the size of the host destination. Electronic music festivals in Croatia are highly destination-dependent, integrating natural coastal landscapes, beaches, historic fortresses, and maritime settings into the overall experience, which differentiates them from land-based or purely urban festival models elsewhere in Europe. Concerning the structure of visitors, they are predominantly from abroad, without a focus on local music culture. Additionally, economic impacts are associated with hospitality and transportation and are concentrated in short periods of time. However, the Croatian model differs from places where electronic music ecosystems have developed more naturally due to the restricted spillover into long-term cultural production. All things considered, Croatian electronic music festivals are a geographically and seasonally specific model in which the size of settlements, coastal morphology, and climate all significantly influence festival design, audience makeup, and financial results.

2.2. Motivation for electronic music festivals

Motivation for travelling and participation in an event begins when awareness of a need arises and when the individual perceives that the travel and event experience will result in the satisfaction of that need (Beh & Bruyere, 2007; Schoeman, 2010). Motive can be defined as “an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates people’s behaviour” (Iso-Ahola, 1980; Murray, 1964, p. 7), and represents the starting point of the decision-making process (Crompton & McKay, 1997, p. 425). Pizam et al. (1979) define motivation as a set of needs and attitudes that predispose a potential tourist to act in a directed manner towards a specific goal. As Abreu-Novais and Arcodia (2013, p. 35-36) state, most research in the field of event motivation is based on one of three motivational theories. The first one was presented by Dann (1977, 1981) and is based on “push and pull” factors, i.e. internal motives and external factors, and it represents a framework used to formulate and test the motivation for attending events. According to Snepenger et al. (2006), people travel because they are “motivated by internal imbalance and the need to seek an optimal level of excitement, as well as drawn by the offer of a particular destination”. Another theory by the same author (Dann, 1977) is based exclusively on “push” factors. The third, and most frequently used theory is the dichotomy between “escape from everyday life and the search” brought by Iso-Ahola (1980; 1982), which states the existence of two motivational forces: “the desire for escape and the desire for internal reward”. According to this theory, the dichotomy of motives is not mutually exclusive, and it is often possible for an individual to be motivated by both motives. Iso-Ahola introduces motivational theory through four dimensions. The dimensions he proposed include

personal search, personal escape, interpersonal search and interpersonal escape. These motives are considered latent and act as stimulating “push” factors in individuals seeking recreational activities. Described theories were not created exclusively for researching motivation in event tourism and, as such, cannot fully explain the behaviour of music festival visitors. The theoretical basis for understanding the motives of special interest tourism and visitor behaviour based on their qualitative research was presented by Getz and Cheyne (2002), and it contains three different dimensions of motivation: travel and leisure-related motives, extrinsic motives and specific event motives. This theoretical framework has been used in many studies of visitor motivation (e.g. Blešić et al., 2014; Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017; Rivera et al., 2015; Kruger & Saayman, 2019; Kruger & Saayman, 2017), but the number of motive dimensions varies. As a result of existing research, several key motives for music festival visitors are listed: socialisation, music, cultural exploration, escape from everyday life, novelty of the festival, excitement and relaxation. Most of the research includes only individual festivals, while there is a lack of a systematic and comprehensive approach to understanding visitor motivation.

The most popular topic of the research in the segment of understanding motivation in event tourism was their identification and classification. Some authors (Prentice & Andersen, 2003; McMorland & MacTaggart, 2007; Gelder & Robinson, 2009) simply identified the strongest motivations for going to the event. However, most of them used the method of factor analysis of different motives with the aim of obtaining the main and dominant ones. Some researchers have gone further by conducting cluster analysis based on recognised dimensions of motives to identify groups of visitors based on motivational behaviour (Formica & Uysal, 1998; Prentice & Andersen, 2003; Lee et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2010). The analysis of empirical studies led to the identification of seven main dimensions of motivation in event tourism: socialisation, family togetherness, novelty of the event, escape from everyday life, excitement and enjoyment, cultural activities and specific characteristics of the event.

Studies on the motivation of festival visitors have usually identified four to six main categories of motivation, which were obtained from 19 to 34 individual motives (Uysal et al., 1991). In one of the earliest studies on the motivation of festival visitors, Uysal et al. (1993) identified five main categories of motivation: escape, excitement, novelty of the festival, socialisation and family togetherness. Later, many authors and researchers used a similar approach in categorising visitor motivation into several major motive factors using factor analysis (Formica & Uysal, 1995; Scott, 1995; Faulkner et al., 1999; McMorland & MacTaggart, 2007; Yolal et al., 2012; Kruger & Saayman, 2009, 2012; Manners et al., 2012; Bowen & Daniels, 2005). While numerous studies have been conducted on the motives of festival visitors, minimal research has focused on the profile and motives of electronic music festival attendees. Due to this fact, sporadic research is not sufficient to draw global conclusions, and it is possible to conclude that there is a need for further research in this area.

2.3. Economic impacts of electronic music festivals

The economic impact of the festival is the net economic change in the host community of the festival (an electronic music festival) resulting from the consumption attributed to that (Crompton & McKay, 1994). The economic impact of the festival estimates the net impacts of money that originates outside the host community and remains in the community, i.e. represents an increase in consumption compared to that which would have been expected without the electronic music festival (Doshi et al., 2001). Namely, it is expected that the consumption of the foreign population will stimulate the local economy to the benefit of the domestic population (Tyrrell & Johnston, 2006). The consumption of visitors at electronic music festivals represents a direct economic impact because it is a direct consequence of the organisation of the festival. However, this consumption stimulates secondary impacts that can be divided into indirect and induced. Indirect impacts arise when the beneficiaries of direct impacts (recipients of the funds spent by visitors) use part of these receipts to purchase goods and services from their suppliers and for their own needs. Furthermore, induced impacts arise because of the cash flow and wages paid by employers in related sectors in the destination. The total

economic impact of an electronic music festival can therefore be defined as the sum of direct, indirect and induced impacts (Fleming & Toepper, 1990). Furthermore, the total economic impacts of a festival can be divided into economic and fiscal impacts. Economic impacts mainly relate to the increase in macroeconomic variables such as value added, employment, exports and investments. The organisation of an electronic music festival and the evaluation of related impacts create added value that has a positive impact on the growth of gross domestic product (Getz, 2007). In addition, local production requires the engagement of production factors (labour and capital), which leads to employment growth. Domestic production stimulates both investment and an increase in demand for production inputs, whereby domestic production in one industry indirectly stimulates demand in other related industries (Crompton, 1995).

Fiscal impacts include increased public revenues from value added tax, tourist tax, corporate income tax, income tax surtax, payroll contributions and payroll contributions, and excise duties. Entrepreneurs engaged in the organisation of electronic music festivals (and those involved in related activities) are liable for income tax for their employees, value added tax, and corporate income tax. Also, to meet the increased demand during the festival, companies employ additional workers for whom they must pay additional income tax and surtax on income tax, as well as payroll contributions (pension contributions) and payroll contributions (health insurance contributions). The income these workers earn from their salaries is used for further consumption, which indirectly increases public revenues from value-added tax. Due to all mentioned, the estimated potential contribution is an important part of the fiscal economic impacts of electronic music festivals (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Croatia, 2023; Burchell & Listokin, 1978).

One of the most commonly used physical economic impacts is the total number of overnight stays of visitors to electronic music festivals, provided that their arrival at the destination is primarily motivated by the festival. The total number of overnight stays can also be estimated based on the total number of tickets sold by foreign visitors and domestic visitors coming from outside the destination of the festival. Furthermore, if the number of overnight stays cannot be recorded or estimated, the total number of tourist arrivals to the destination is used.

The level and structure of consumption at electronic music festivals is the main direct financial economic impact of an electronic music festival. Festival visitors typically spend money on tickets, accommodation, transportation, food and beverages within the festival, food and beverages in the destination, and on the purchase and consumption of various products and services in the destination. The total financial economic impacts of an electronic music festival are the sum of direct, indirect and induced impacts (Fleming & Toepper, 1990).

Most of the earlier research (until 2010) is primarily focused on the economic impacts of the festival (Vrettos, 2006; Long & Perdue, 1990), including the stimulation of economic activity, either directly or indirectly (Formica & Uysal, 1998; McDonnell et al., 1999). Also, most subsequent studies focus on prominent festivals in urban, developed areas, such as the Baker Associates study devoted to the Glastonbury festival in Great Britain (Webster & McKay, 2016). Research taken after 2010 suggests greater use and assessment of the sociocultural impacts, which is not the case with the earlier research (Bayrak, 2011; Woo et al., 2011; Taylor & Slabbert, 2012; Slabbert & Viviers, 2011). There is also a growing body of research on methods for assessing social impact, such as the Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale (Fredline et al., 2003), social impact assessment (Finsterbusch, 1995), social impact perception scales (Small, 2007), and social network assessment and business capacity building (Pickernell et al., 2007; O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002).

Due to theoretical background and research objectives, primary research is focused on the motivation and economic impacts of electronic music festivals in Croatia. The financial and economic impacts are analysed by using the Money Generation Model (MGM). The MGM is a method for assessing the financial and economic impacts of a certain event or amusement park on the destination of the event through overall economic and fiscal impacts. The original model was presented by Dr Ken Hornback in 1990, while Stynes (1998) is responsible for the improvements and advancements of the existing model.

The basic assumptions of the MGM are (Hornback, 1990):

- it is designed to assess economic impacts in the destination (local area around the festival zone) and is not designed for use at the regional or national level.
- it is driven by data on festival visitor spending and does not consider economic impacts such as increased property values, inflation, improved social services, etc., resulting from the organisation of the festival;
- it is based on estimates of several economic indicators such as indirect and induced multipliers, average gross profit margin in tourism and multipliers for job creation, and on highly aggregated secondary data;
- it is intended to provide quick and almost free estimates of the economic impacts of festivals on a destination.

The structure, intensity, and distribution of visitor spending during electronic music festivals are directly influenced by motivational patterns, so it is methodologically sound to link visitor motivation analysis with the application of the MGM within the same study. Different reasons for attending, such as the appeal of the destination, social interaction, or the music itself, are associated with distinct patterns of stay duration, accommodation choice, and ancillary consumption, all of which affect the amount of "new money" identified by the MGM. Including motivational variables enables more precise visitor segmentation and reduces methodological bias related to displacement impacts. Rather than interpreting economic impacts in isolation, this integrated approach provides a more comprehensive overview and makes it easier to draw conclusions. Despite the logical connection between motivation and consumption in the field of electronic music festivals, no research has linked them in this way. Therefore, the integrated approach used in this paper advances existing knowledge and addresses this research gap.

3. Research methodology and results

The instrument for conducting primary research was a specially designed and structured questionnaire consisting of three parts. The first part is focused on demographic questions (gender, age, country of origin). The second part of the questionnaire explores visitor motivation through 20 motives, for which visitors rate the degree of importance on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 is completely unimportant, and 5 is extremely important. The third part of the questionnaire concerns questions related to visiting the destination, overnight stays, and consumption. Selected methods of descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the data analysis. The primary research is conducted on a sample of visitors to the two largest and most visited electronic music festivals in Croatia. The first and largest festival in the Republic of Croatia is the Ultra Europe Music Festival, which is held in Split. The festival is held at the Youth Park and lasts three days. The second festival within which the primary research is conducted is the Hideout Festival, which is held on the island of Pag, more precisely on the Zrće beach near Novalja. Data on festivals are collected from a simple random sample of visitor strata (stratified sample). The survey was conducted on-site during the festival days. Eight interviewers were stationed at the main entrances of the Ultra Europe Music Festival in Split for visitors with regular tickets, and two interviewers were positioned at the entrance for VIP ticket holders. At the Hideout Festival on Zrće, four interviewers conducted the survey at the main entrance to the Noa club. The interviewers were using mobile devices and tablets to fill out questionnaires in Google Forms on all days of the festivals and as visitors entered the festival area.

The identification of key variables of demand for electronic music festivals stems from the theoretical framework. The demand variables for electronic music festivals are divided into two groups and represent independent variables. The first group of variables refers to socio-demographic variables and data on demand for electronic

music festivals in the Republic of Croatia obtained from a sample of festival visitors and socio-demographic variables on tourism demand data in the Republic of Croatia, which was obtained from the Tomas research (Institute for Tourism, 2020). The second group of demand variables refers to the motives, satisfaction and opinions of some visitors about the importance of individual elements of the observed electronic music festivals in the Republic of Croatia. The variables connected to the economic impacts of electronic music festivals are dependent variables and can be classified into two groups, namely the group of financial economic impacts and the group of physical economic impacts. Tourist consumption is the key continuous numerical variable in the group of financial and economic impacts. Data on the consumption of visitors to electronic music festivals refer to the average daily consumption excluding spending on festival tickets, and the structure of respondents' consumption is also examined. The second group of variables of the economic impacts of electronic music festivals includes discrete numerical variables that generate physical economic impacts: arrivals, overnight stays and the number of tickets sold.

After eliminating the resident population (only visitors who spend the night in the destination were analysed; others were characterised as local residents), a total of 854 correctly completed questionnaires were obtained, of which 675 correctly completed questionnaires were obtained at the Ultra Europe Music Festival in Split and 179 correctly completed questionnaires were obtained as part of the Hideout Festival on Zrće beach. The survey was conducted by 53.4% of men and 46.6% of women. The respondents came from a total of 39 countries, with the largest number coming from Spain (17.33%), France (14.4%), the USA (10.3%), Great Britain (10.19%), Germany (8.08%), Norway (5.50%), Slovenia and Italy (5.27%). According to the age structure, the respondents in the sample are mostly young people between 17 and 29 years old. More precisely, 23.77% of the respondents are between 17 and 21 years old, 37.35% of the respondents are between 21 and 25 years old, and 22.13% are between 25 and 29 years old. The most frequently used means of transport among the respondents in the sample was the plane (61.47%), followed by their own transport (26.35%), bus (10.42%) and lastly the train (1.76%). Respondents at the Ultra Europe Music Festival most often use air transportation services, while at the Hideout Festival, personal transportation and bus transportation are the most common.

Of the total number of respondents in the sample, 46.49% were in Croatia for the first time, and almost 58.32% of them participated in one of the observed festivals for the first time. The repeat visit rate of 53.51% is an excellent indicator of the sustainability of the mentioned electronic music festivals and does not differ between the observed festivals. On average, respondents recorded 7 overnight stays in the festival destination, which suggests that festival visitors stay in the destination for several days before and after the festival. They mostly stay in private accommodation (68.03%), followed by hotels (18.03%), hostels (9.60%) and least often in campsites (4.34%), and the indicators also do not differ depending on the observed festival. Table 1 shows a descriptive statistical analysis of the total daily consumption of respondents in the sample.

Table 1
Descriptive analysis of the total daily consumption of respondents

Descriptive numerical indicator	Total daily consumption
Arithmetic mean of the sample	208.38
Standard error of the estimate of the arithmetic mean	3.91
Median	190
Mod	250
Sample standard deviation	114.14
Minimum data value	40
Maximum data value	700

Source: Primary research.

The respondents spent an average of 208.38 euros per day on accommodation, food and drink, and other products and services in the destination, with an average deviation from the average of 114.14 euros. The average daily consumption does not include consumption on festival tickets. Individually, the average daily consumption at the Ultra Europe Music Festival was 214.52 euros (excluding consumption on festival tickets) compared to the average daily consumption of 186.66 euros spent by respondents at the Hideout Festival. The reasons for the deviation of the average daily consumption of the observed festivals are higher prices in the city of Split (compared to Novalja) and a greater amount of additional content in the destination (for example, museums or sights), as well as greater opportunities for consumption on additional products and services (availability of shopping centres in Split).

The motivation of visitors was analysed based on twenty structured motivational statements, or motives for coming to an electronic music festival. For the purpose of analysis, the motives were coded with scores from 1 to 5 on a Likert scale. The motives examined in the primary research were based on previous motivation research of festival visitors conducted by Kruger and Saayman (2019), Formica and Uysal (1995), Faulkner et al. (1999), Blešić et al., 2014; Abreu-Novais and Arcodia, 2013; Crompton and McKay, (1997). To analyse the dominant motive among visitors, an appropriate exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the principal components method using the SPSS software solution. By analysing the obtained correlation matrix consisting of 20 variables (individual motives), a problem of multicollinearity (when the correlation between two variables is greater than ± 0.8) was observed in 3 motives that are linearly dependent, so these variables were excluded from further analysis.

In order to check whether the data from the sample are suitable for factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's sphericity test were done. The value of the KMO measure in the conducted exploratory factor analysis is 0.921 for the five obtained factors, which indicates that the correlation patterns are compact and that clear and reliable factors have been created, with the application of Kaiser's criterion for separating those factors with eigenvalues larger than 1. Furthermore, the existence of a relationship between the statements is also evident from the p-value of Bartlett's sphericity test. In the factor analysis performed, the p-value is significantly lower than the 5% significance level since a high correlation is required for the principal components method, and the null hypothesis of the Bartlett test is rejected.

Table 2 shows the results of the factor analysis using the principal components method, along with an overview of the factor names, the names of individual motives, the correlation coefficient of individual variables (motives) and factors (factor loading), the eigenvalues of the factors, the percentage of variance explained by the factor, and Cronbach's reliability coefficient for each factor. Cronbach's α is calculated to assess the internal consistency of each factor, while, as a rule, in research studies, an acceptable value greater than 0.6 is used (Cronbach, 1951).

Table 2
The results of factor analyses

Motives	Factors				
	F1 Music	F2 Fun and dance	F3 Tradition and lifestyle	F4 Travelling and the escape of everyday life	F5 Socialization
Main performers at the festival	.789				
Enjoying live performances	.842				
Subgenres of electronic music	.563				
Entertaining at the festival		.806			
Enjoying dancing		.630			

Table 2 (continued)

Enjoying the festival atmosphere		.720			
Going to the festival as part of a lifestyle			.872		
Going to the festival as part of a tradition			.921		
Escape from everyday life				-.612	
Getting to know the destination				-.736	
Love to travel				-.762	
Opportunity to visit the Republic of Croatia				-.882	
Opportunity to explore a new culture				-.860	
Opportunity for new experiences				-.558	
Spending time with family and friends					.851
Socialising with people from other countries					.787
Finding a partner					.560
Intrinsic value	5,168.00	3,045.00	1,674.00	1,230.00	1,030.00
Explained variance (%)	28.31	21.54	9.85	7.24	6.05
Cumulative variance (%)	28.31	49.85	59.70	66.94	72.99
Cronbach's α	0.81	0.83	0.85	0.77	0.75

Source: Primary research.

Principal component analysis (PCA) was used to generate factors, while the Oblimin method with Kaiser normalisation was applied to rotate the factor matrix. Motivational factors were named according to motives within each factor, since they are connected. The first motivational factor is labelled “Music” and consists of all those motives that are related to music (performers, live performance and subgenres of electronic music). This factor explains 28.31% of the total variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.81. The second factor is labelled “Fun and Dance” and consists of motives related to fun and atmosphere at the festival and dance. This factor explains 21.54% of the variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.83. The third factor is labelled “Tradition and Lifestyle”. It consists of motives related to going to the festival as part of lifestyle and tradition, explaining an additional 9.85% of the total variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.85. The fourth factor is labelled “Travel and Escape from Everyday Life”, which consists of motives related to the love of travelling, escaping everyday life, exploring destinations and new cultures. The factor explains 7.23% of the total variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.77. The last factor is “Socialisation”, which consists of motives related to socialising with people, family and finding a partner. The fifth factor explains an additional 6.06% of the variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.75. Cumulatively, the five factors explained 72.99% of the total variance. Negative factor loadings on the fourth factor “Travel and escape from everyday life” indicate an inverse relationship between the variables and the latent construct. The direction of the factor is arbitrary, and negative signs do not diminish the interpretative value of the factor but rather indicate that motives connected with travel and escape from everyday life increase with lower factor values. Furthermore, a descriptive statistical analysis of the mean scores of each factor (group of motives) and individual motives within each factor was conducted.

Table 3
Descriptive analyses of factors and motives

Selected factors and motives	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
F1 – Music	4.2377	0.4554
Main performers at the festival	4.4227	1.0217
Enjoying live performances	4.2974	0.9867
Subgenres of electronic music	3.9930	1.0978
F2 – Fun and dance	4.3516	0.2456
Entertaining at the festival	4.5211	0.9283
Enjoying dancing	4.2131	1.0538

Table 3 (continued)

Enjoying the festival atmosphere	4.3208	1.0215
F3 – Tradition and lifestyle	3.6042	0.1341
Going to the festival as part of a lifestyle	3.6991	1.1879
Going to the festival as part of a tradition	3.5094	1.2015
F4 – Traveling and the escape of everyday life	3.9335	0.2367
Escape from everyday life	3.9742	1.2568
Getting to know the destination	3.8115	1.1584
Love to travel	3.9696	1.1877
Opportunity to visit the Republic of Croatia	3.8794	1.2079
Opportunity to explore a new culture	3.8009	1.2590
Opportunity for new experiences	4.1651	1.1114
F5 - Socialization	3.4094	0.5902
Spending time with family and friends	3.6768	1.2575
Socializing with people from other countries	3.9075	1.1385
Finding a partner	2.6440	1.4420

Source: Primary research.

A factor analysis conducted on a sample of electronic music festival visitors in Croatia showed that factor F2 (labelled “Fun and Dancing”) is the dominant factor and the most important motive for coming to the festival with an average score of 4.3516. The factor includes individual motives of having fun at the festival and enjoying the festival atmosphere and dancing. When it comes to the individual motives, having fun at the festival received the highest average score from respondents. The second most important motivational factor with an average score of 4.2377 is “Music”, which is a dominant motive in many previous studies of festival visitor motivation (Blešić et al., 2014; Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001; Bowen & Daniels, 2005; McMorland & MacTaggart, 2007; Pegg & Patterson, 2010), and includes motives related to the main performers at the festival, enjoying live performances and subgenres of electronic music. Furthermore, the third motivational factor is “Travel and escape from everyday life”, which is rated with an average of 3.9335, and the fourth factor, with an average rating of 3.6042, belongs to “Tradition and lifestyle”. Although the motivational factor called “Socialization” and the motives associated with it appeared as a prominent dimension in numerous motivation studies (Schofield & Thompson, 2007; Mohr et al., 1993; Schneider & Backman, 1996; Scott, 1995; Crompton & McKay, 1997; Formica & Uysal, 1998; Lee, 2000; Lee et al., 2004; Chang, 2006), in this research it was marked as the least important factor with an average score of 3.4094. The conducted factor analysis and the principal components method showed that music is not the main motive for inclusion in tourism among visitors to electronic music festivals in the Republic of Croatia, but rather entertainment and dancing.

When it comes to the components of electronic music, festival visitors rated music as the most important component with an average score of 4.59, followed by energy (rhythm) with an average score of 4.55, production with an average score of 4.43, and the last and least important component for the respondents in the sample is the lyrics with an average score of 3.28. Of the individual elements of the festival and destination, the most important element for respondents is the date of the festival with an average rating of 3.91, followed by the attractiveness of the destination with an average rating of 3.82, accommodation prices with an average rating of 3.77, ticket prices with an average rating of 3.74, other services at the festival (food, drinks, transportation, etc.) with an average rating of 3.73, the quality of accommodation with an average rating of 3.71, and last and least important other services in the destination (quality of healthcare, gastronomy, etc.). When it comes to the elements of the festival and destination, the respondents from the sample are most satisfied with the performers at the festival with an average rating of 4.27, followed by the duration of the festival with an average rating of 4.19, the organization

of the festival with an average rating of 4.13, the date of the festival with an average rating of 4.11, the availability of information with an average rating of 3.88, ticket prices with an average rating of 3.83, the products and services in the destination (healthcare, gastronomy, etc.) with an average rating of 3.72, and the products and services at the festival (food, drinks, transportation, etc.) with which they are least satisfied (average rating of 3.7).

Due to the unavailability of the necessary data for the Hideout festival, the economic impacts were analysed and presented only for the Ultra Europe Music festival.

Data on the number of tourist arrivals and the number of overnight stays for the three observed periods (before, during and after the festival) in the period from June 27, 2022, to July 17, 2022, in the area of the city of Split and within a radius of 50 kilometres from the city of Split were obtained from the eVisitor system. If festival visitors do not stay only in Split, the 50-kilometre radius includes arrivals and overnight stays in Trogir, Kaštela, Solin and Podstrana. The data were tested using a one-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) in which the arithmetic means of the samples of the three populations are compared and tested. The corresponding F-test and Tukey test are conducted to detect arithmetic means of physical economic impacts (arrivals and overnight stays) that are statistically significantly different in the three observed periods. The number of days in the observed period is defined based on the survey questionnaire and is the average number of days the respondents stayed in the festival destination.

Table 4
Number of tourist arrivals in the areas of Split, Trogir, Kaštela, Solin and Podstrana in the three observed time periods

Location	Time period		
	(27.06. – 03.07.)	(04.07. – 10.07.)	(11.07. – 17.07.)
Split	29,839	36,178	38,633
Trogir	6,910	8,019	8,147
Kaštela	5,557	7,494	7,364
Podstrana	5,508	6,713	6,842
Solin	856	1,262	1,131
TOTAL	48,670	59,666	62,117

Source: eVisitor (2023).

Table 5
One-factor analysis of variance of realised tourist arrivals in the areas of Split, Trogir, Kaštela, Solin and Podstrana in the three observed time periods

Time period	Number of days	Suma	Arithmetic mean	Variance
1 period	7	48670	6952.857143	2156146.81
2 period	7	59666	8523.714286	2666158.905
3 period	7	62117	8873.857143	3959415.81

ANOVA

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Centre of the square	F-ratio	P-value	F critical value
Differences between groups	14654344.1	2	7327172.048	2.503098747	0.109862367	3.554557146
Differences within groups	52690329.14	18	2927240.508			
Total	67344673.24	20	8873.857143	3959415.81		

Source: Primary research.

With a significance level of 5%, the assumption that the average number of tourist arrivals in all three observed periods is the same cannot be rejected. Furthermore, to test the differences in the average number of arrivals in individual periods (comparison of individual pairs), the corresponding Tukey HSD test is performed using the Astats software. The Tukey HSD test showed that there is no statistically significant difference in the

average number of tourist arrivals in the week before the festival, in the week of the festival and in the week after the festival (in all three observed periods). The same analysis was also conducted for overnight stays and gave the same result, but due to the scope of the paper, it was not presented.

The financial and economic impacts analysed using the Money Generation Model (MGM) are presented below.

For the purpose of the analyses, authors used the data from the primary research, data from festival organisers' reports on the total number of tickets sold, data on tax rates in the Republic of Croatia (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Croatia, 2023), and an estimated multiplier of indirect and induced impacts of 2.3 (World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC], 2020). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2020), it is estimated that for every Euro of direct impact from tourism activity in the domestic economy, an additional 1.3 Euros are generated through indirect and induced impacts; thus, the ratio of total to direct impacts is 2.3. The total impacts are calculated as a result of the total visitor spending generated by the Ultra Europe Music Festival. After that, the fiscal revenues were calculated.

Internally obtained reports from the organisers of the Ultra Europe Music Festival were used to obtain the data on prices and the total number of tickets sold by category. The total value of tickets sold (the festival organisers' income in the destination) is 16,283,262 euros. Furthermore, in order to obtain the total and real number of tickets sold (consequently the total number of festival visitors) required for further analysis and calculation of the total financial economic impacts via the MGM model, two corrections need to be made: 1. Divide the total number of three-day tickets sold by 3 in order to obtain a more realistic picture of the total number of visitors; 2. Subtract the share of residents of 8% from the total number of tickets sold (the percentage obtained based on primary research from a sample of festival visitors).

After the calculation, the actual number of tickets sold (the total estimated number of festival visitors who spend the night at the destination) at the Ultra Europe Music Festival 2022 was 119,342. Based on the total amount of tickets sold, the average daily spending of 214.52 euros (excluding spending on tickets) obtained from the sample of Ultra Europe Music Festival visitors, and the total number of visitors who spend the night at the destination, the total financial economic impacts of the Ultra Europe Music Festival on the destination are calculated using the MGM model. The calculation of the financial and economic impacts of the festival using the MGM model is shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Calculating the financial and economic impacts of the Ultra Europe Music Festival 2022 using the Money Generation Model (MGM)

	Variable description and calculation	Total
A	Number of tickets sold (visitors who spend the night at the destination)	119,342
B	Average daily consumption (excluding tickets)	214.52 euros
C	Ticket sales revenue	16,283,262 euros
D	Direct impacts (A x B) + C	41,884,507 euros
E	Indirect/induced multiplier	2.3
F	Total financial economic impacts (D x E)	96,334,366 euros

Source: Primary research.

For the purposes of the calculation of the total fiscal impacts, the estimate of the average gross profit margin of 29.3% in tourism in 2022 (Croatian Tourism Association, 2022) and the corresponding tax rates on value added and profit are used.

Table 7
Calculation of the fiscal impacts of the Ultra Europe Music Festival in 2022 using the Money Generation Model (MGM)

	Variable description and calculation	Total
A1	Total financial economic impacts excluding ticket sales	80,051,104 euros
B1	Average daily spending on accommodation, food and beverages (76.71% of total average daily spending excluding tickets)	61,407,201 euros
C1	Reduced value added tax rate	13%
D1	Total fiscal revenue from value added tax at a rate of 13%	7,064,546 euros
A2	Total financial economic impacts excluding ticket sales	80,051,104 euros
B2	Average daily spending on other products in the destination excluding ticket sales (23.29% of total average daily spending excluding tickets)	18,643,902 euros
C2	Value added tax rate	25%
D2	Total fiscal revenue from value added tax at a rate of 25%	3,728,781 euros
A3	Ticket sales revenue	16,283,262 euros
B3	Reduced value-added tax rate	5%
C3	Total fiscal revenue from value added tax at a rate of 5%	775,394 euros
A4	Total financial and economic impacts	96,334,366 euros
B4	Company profits with an estimated gross profit margin in tourism of 29.3%	28,225,969 euros
C4	Average corporate income tax rate	14%
D4	Total fiscal revenue from corporate income tax	3,951,636 euros
	Total fiscal impacts (D1 + D2 + D3)	15,520,357 euros

Source: Primary research.

Based on the Money Generation Model, the total financial economic impact of the Ultra Europe Music Festival is estimated at 96,334,366 euros, which is 0.14% of Croatia's total GDP in 2022 and 15,520,357 euros in fiscal revenue. Even if the chosen multiplier is taken with caution and a smaller multiplier applied, the overall effects on the local economy and the destination would still be significant. This is because hosting an electronic music festival involves a large number of service providers in the destination, which strengthens the multiplier effect.

4. Discussion

The demand structure (especially economic demand factors) for electronic music festivals has a positive impact on the economic impacts in the destination. The research showed that the number of tourists in the analysed destinations does not differ significantly before, during, or after the festival. This result is due to festivals being held during the main tourist season, when almost all capacities are filled, making larger deviations caused by the festival unlikely. There is a decrease in the number of traditional holiday tourists and an increase in tourists attending festivals. However, the average expenditure of tourists attending festivals is twice as high as the average expenditure of tourists in Croatia, resulting in greater financial and economic effects for the destination, with potentially unchanged physical and economic effects. This suggests that the festival contributes primarily through higher economic value rather than increased tourist volume. Additionally, the festival is intentionally scheduled during the peak tourist season at the request of the organiser, meaning the destination is already operating at a high level of demand. Consequently, the festival's impact is better understood through increased tourism spending and economic intensity, rather than through observable growth in tourist arrivals. Furthermore, visitors of electronic music festivals generally come from countries that have a very small share in the current structure of tourist demand in the Republic of Croatia. Satisfaction with the festival and the destination among festival visitors has a positive impact on the image of the destination in new and underutilised potential source markets and creates opportunities for attracting new tourists to Croatia.

The research results, which show that motives related to fun and dance predominate while those closely linked to music itself rank second, differ from previous studies mentioned earlier in the paper, where music-related motives were dominant. This outcome may be attributed to generational changes, particularly with Generation Z and the emerging Generation Alpha. These groups remain attached to performers and genres, but to a somewhat lesser extent than earlier generations. If the dominance of fun and dance motives continues to grow, festival organisers and service providers at destinations will need to adapt accordingly. It is also important to consider that, with the increasing number of festivals held in Croatia each year, the country is becoming more widely recognised among young people as a party destination. This reputation can be leveraged both in promotional activities and in the development of tourism products. Furthermore, the motive for getting to know the destination and the motive for going to the festival as an opportunity to visit the Republic of Croatia were rated exceptionally high on average. High scores in the segment of visitor satisfaction with the festival and the destination also have a positive impact on the destination and are an excellent prerequisite for a repeat visit to the festival, as well as a repeat visit to the destination outside the festival period.

Besides all previously mentioned positive impacts, key negative impacts have to be observed too. The seasonality of demand, because of the festival period, can have a negative impact on the destination (for example, the city of Split). Due to the large number of festival visitors, some traditional holiday tourists decide to spend their holiday in some other destination or country. Furthermore, even though private accommodation occupies the largest share of the total accommodation capacity in the Republic of Croatia, the exceptional demand for it by festival visitors in large cities has a negative impact on the destination. Private accommodation, as a first choice of the majority of festival visitors, puts a large pressure on renters in the destination and often affects quality. Furthermore, inflationary pressures occur through excessive and unrealistic growth in real estate prices (partly a positive economic impact) and an increase in rent prices for the resident population. Likewise, many apartments that were not used for tourism are being converted, which has a negative impact on the possibilities of long-term rentals for residents.

5. Conclusion

The research conducted has several theoretical and empirical limitations, the most important of which are: 1) selection and methodology for calculating economic impacts; 2) the complexity of the concept and category of festival visitor motivation; 3) the absence of time series data in primary research; 4) the difficulty of collecting secondary data; 5) the insufficient number of festivals in primary research; and 5) the insufficient sample size and inadequate time and place of the survey.

The applied findings of the research, in addition to the theoretical ones, have broader practical implications that are key to making strategic decisions for both the organisers of electronic music festivals and the local community in the destination. In line with the research results, several recommendations can be made whose implementation could increase positive impacts while reducing negative ones. Tourist boards in coastal destinations, as local destination management organisations, should strategically schedule electronic music festivals outside the peak season to reduce pressure on infrastructure and the accommodation market. However, this is not always possible, as some festivals (like Ultra) do not allow changes to the date. Furthermore, it is important to promote the spatial dispersion of visitors through cooperation with neighbouring destinations and different forms of accommodation, with ongoing monitoring of the festival's economic and spatial impacts. This approach enables data-driven decision-making rather than ad hoc assessments. At the local government level, it is advisable to establish permanent coordination bodies for festival planning that include all key sectors. Additionally, short-term tourist rentals should be regulated to alleviate pressure on the real estate market and protect the local population. Finally, pre-planned adaptation of transport, security, and public infrastructure is essential to reduce negative externalities and increase the festival's acceptability within the local community.

Developing an additional methodology for monitoring and analysing the impact of demand for music festivals on economic impacts in the destination at the international level would greatly help further research in this area, which will certainly be the focus of numerous scientists for a long time to come, not only in the field of economics but also in other scientific fields. Although the research provided answers to the questions posed, it opened numerous new questions and highlighted the complexity and multidisciplinary nature of the field of research on electronic music festivals and the need for further research into this complex area in tourism.

Declaration of Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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